DttP

Documents to the People

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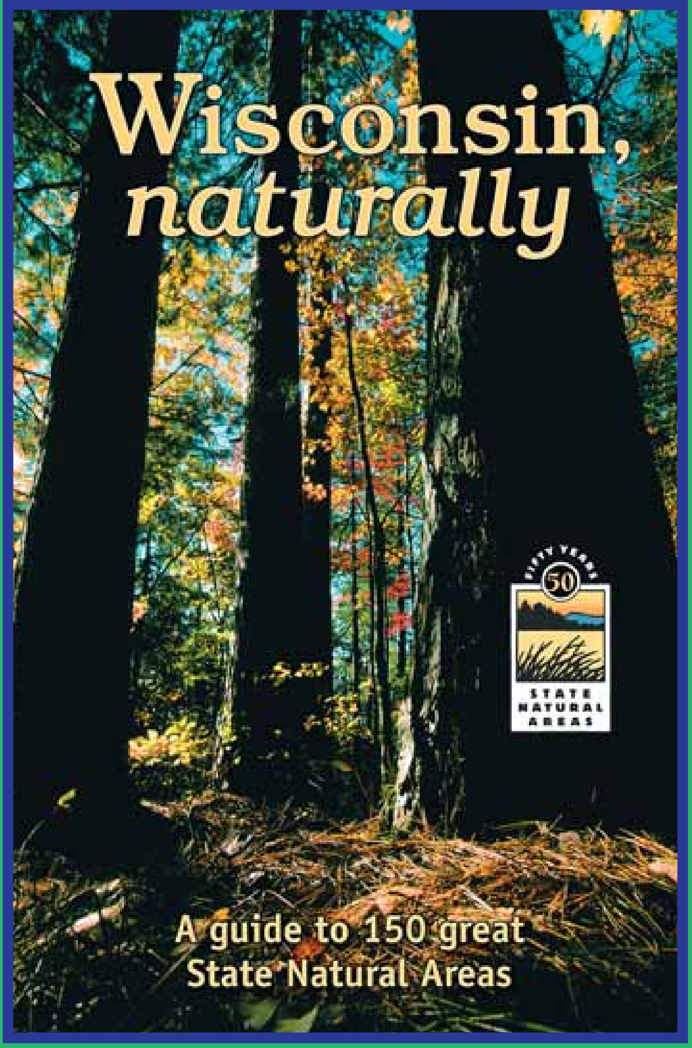
In This Issue



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DttP features articles on local, state, national, and international government information and government activities and documents the professional activities of GODORT. The opinions expressed by its contributors are their own and do not necessarily represent those of GODORT.

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Documents to the People

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Columns

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'Round the Table

About the cover: On our cover is *Wisconsin Naturally*. The cover photo of the book is by Thomas A. Meyer, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The book was selected as one of the Notable Government Documents in the May 15, 2005, issue of *Library Journal*.

Editor's Corner

Andrea Sevetson

I'm on the horns of a dilemma . . . nothing to write about and a lovely hotel pool calling my name on a gorgeous afternoon. Of course, as you read this it's December. But as I write, it's October and I'm in sunny southern California. Shockingly, no one else on the *DttP* Editorial Team has volunteered to write this column. What to do? Well . . . do what all good *DttP* editors do—my share. So here I sit . . .fingers to the keyboard.

To be fair, everyone does an incredible job. I send them articles, they edit them and get them back to me at deadline about 99 percent corrected (there are always a few things we all forget—including me). Well, most of them make the deadline. One always works to deadline, and another editor deals with writers who always work to deadline. But we get used to this, and have figured out the various styles. Among other things, I've learned from them that about 80 percent of the editing work is in the endnotes. So no one was too pleased when we belatedly figured out just how many footnotes were involved in our last issue. Did you notice that one article had more than eighty endnotes? I heard all about it.

This is a great team to be a part of. They're talented, creative, and committed. They tell me when they're going off on vacation, and pick up the slack for me when I'm away. We've put together issues during home moves, office moves, family deaths, and other traumas of various sizes and import. I get calls with problems about *DttP* and I call them with various *DttP* crises (when an article fails to appear, or when we discover in the nick of time that an ad that was supposed to run in black and white was just about to be printed in color . . . how many $$$ would that be?) and hilarious typos found at the last minute (which wouldn't be quite as hilarious had they actually found their way into print), and I get calls with good news that we can celebrate together.

So here's to the *DttP* Team—they're flexible, funny, and fantastic. I thank them profusely for all of their work, but also for making our effort fun.

Enjoy your issue of *DttP!*

From the Chair

Arlene Weible

There has been recent discussion on the GODORT Steering Committee's e-mail list about the future of GODORT. While many feel that there has been plenty of discussion concerning the future of the FDLP and the strategic vision of the GPO, some feel that there has been inadequate consideration of our professional organization's future. How to best address issues surrounding GODORT's future have been on my mind lately, and here are a few of my thoughts on the topic.

Is GODORT meeting the needs of its membership? My sense is that GODORT membership is changing, and we need to gather more information about what our members expect and need from our organization. Many libraries have reorganized their government documents operations, and the result is fewer full-time positions devoted solely to the management of government information. Librarians in positions with multiple responsibilities cannot devote as much time to consideration of government information policy issues. They also need training, hints, and tools to help them navigate the dynamic government information environment. Do current GODORT activities serve these needs? We provide such resources as *DttP*, the GODORT web site, conference programs, and statements and comments on policy issues, but are these activities adequately serving the needs of librarians?

In order to address these concerns about the adequacy of GODORT activities, I plan to work with committee and task force chairs to reexamine the goals and objectives of each of our major committees and task forces. We need to step up efforts to solicit feedback from members so we can ensure that committee activities are in line with current membership needs.

Another source of concern for active GODORT members is the schedule of conference meetings. The upcoming meetings at the Midwinter Meeting in San Antonio will reflect some schedule changes, such as a shorter GODORT update and staggered task force meetings. New ALA guidelines for uniform meeting start times dictated some of the changes, but we have also used this opportunity to experiment with the schedule. Changes that we hope members will find helpful include eliminating Tuesday meetings and reducing the number of conflicting meetings. The schedule will be available on the GODORT web site by the time this column is published. We are eager to hear your feedback about the changes.

An additional issue that has arisen since the last conference is the demise of the GODORT web site's host, UC Berkeley Library's Digital Library SunSite. GODORT will have to find a new home for its web site by February 2006. The Publications Committee is currently exploring options, including the possibility of moving the site to ALA web servers. We hope to have the issue resolved by the Midwinter Meeting.

Finally, I would like to express my concern and support for the librarians who have recently been affected by the devastation caused by hurricanes Katrina and Rita. It will likely take many months to assess the full damage, both physical and emotional, wrought by these storms. If there is anything I have learned in my years as a government documents librarian, it is that our community is extremely generous with its support and assistance for our colleagues in need. I would urge you to consider a donation to ALA's Hurricane Relief Fund, at www.ala.org/ala/cro/katrina/katrina.htm, and to do anything you can to assist our colleagues when they are able to identify more specific needs for their government documents collections. At the time of this writing, it is still uncertain if ALA's Annual Conference will be held in New Orleans. If it does take place, I think there is no better way to show support for our colleagues and fellow citizens than attending the Conference. Here's hoping we can all celebrate a triumphant return to the great city of New Orleans next June!

Washington Report

Patrice McDermott

Legislative Branch

SSCI Threat Hearing Omits Questions for the Record

The hearing record for the February 2005 Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI) annual threat briefing was recently published. For the second year in a row, however, it contains no Questions for the Record (QFRs), which normally were included in the past. They often included penetrating, sometimes provocative, questions from senators, and as often as not the intelligence agencies would respond with concise factual replies that added valuable new information to the public record, according to Steven Aftergood. The October 31, 2003, issue of *Secrecy News* (www.fas.org/sgp/news/secrecy/2003/10/103103.html) provides an example of 2003 QFRs.

Executive Branch

The Executive Branch has been quite busy in recent months.

Presidential Records Executive Order Invocation

The Administration had little control over the release of most of the documents that have come to light from Judge John Roberts's time as a special assistant to then-Attorney General William French Smith and as an associate counsel to the president in the 1980s. These papers had either already been made public by the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library before the nomination or been cleared for release by the National Archives by previous administrations.

White House aides are exerting full control, however, over the documents still under their authority, including those covering advice Roberts gave then-Solicitor General Kenneth W. Starr in the administration of President George H. W. Bush. Under an executive order signed by President Bush in 2001, the White House has the right to review, and in some cases block, the release of presidential papers from previous administrations. Bush's executive order said the "incumbent president may assert any constitutionally-based privilege" after the twelve years have lapsed to block the release of these files. Included among these many "privileges" were "records that reflect . . . legal advice or legal work." Shortly after Roberts's nomination, the National Archives office said it was prepared to release thousands of pages of files from the Reagan Library in Simi Valley, Calif., that came from Roberts' work as a White House lawyer from 1982 to 1986, but the executive order did not permit their release until "the incumbent president" can "review all the records." John Roberts served as a clerk to Justice William Rehnquist, in the Justice Department at the start of the Reagan administration, and later in the Office of the Solicitor General in the administration of President George H. W. Bush.

Declassification at the National Archives

A proposed rule, published for public comment in the *Federal Register* on August 12 (http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/05-16031.htm), on declassification of national security information at the National Archives (NARA) would update current policy to reflect President Bush's March 2003 amendments (Executive Order 13292) (www.fas.org/sgp/bush/eoamend.html) to classification policy in Executive Order 12958. In addition to declassification policy, the proposed rule also sets forth procedures for automatic declassification. NARA proposes revising the section on reclassification to "include a procedure by which an agency head may request the reclassification of records that have previously been properly declassified and released." They also "clarify steps an agency may take to restrict information that was released to the public but was not properly declassified—an "inadvertent release." The proposed rule is set out as a series of questions and answers.

NRC Adopts Policy on Disclosure of Security Information

On March 22, 2005, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), following the publication by the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) of a report titled "Safety and Security of Commercial Spent Nuclear Fuel Storage," directed that a task force be established to review the application of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) to security-related information. The commission expressed a particular interest in the extent to which information may be withheld from public disclosure "under a compilation or mosaic approach applied to either Safeguards Information or sensitive unclassified information."

The report (www.fas.org/sgp/othergov/nrc-disc.pdf) notes that "the NRC developed guidance several months ago for conducting a broad security/sensitivity review under the Sensitive Information Screening Project (SISP) to assess whether documents should be made publicly available in the first instance as a matter of administrative discretion." According to the report, prior to September 11, 2001, "the NRC automatically placed much of the agency's information in the

Publicly Available Records System (PARS), without consistent scrutiny for sensitivity or consideration whether release of the information raised any significant concerns about usefulness for terrorist activity." The task force concluded "that the Commission has considerable authority to withhold from public disclosure information that could be useful, or could reasonably be expected to be useful, to a terrorist, provided that the information is not readily available to the public already." The resulting NRC policy concluded generally that "to the extent practicable," the withholding of sensitive information from public disclosure should conform to FOIA principles for withholding security-related information.

Pentagon Updates Policy on Leaks

The Department of Defense has updated and expanded its policy on investigating unauthorized disclosures of classified information. Attached to the directive is a Department of Justice Media Leak Questionnaire, which includes "eleven standard questions relating to unauthorized disclosures of classified information to the media" that must be answered. Among the questions are: Was the information properly classified? Is the classified information disclosed accurate? (www.fas.org/irp/doddir/dod/d5210_50.pdf)

CDC Issues Policy on Sensitive but Unclassified Info

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is the latest agency to articulate a policy (www.fas.org/sgp/othergov/cdc-sbu.pdf) on "Sensitive but Unclassified" (SBU) information that is to be withheld from disclosure, including "Sensitive by Aggregation"—the mosaic theory redux.

DHS Declares Utility's Database of Topographic Mapping Information to Be Protected CII

Challenged by a local freedom of information request, a New Jersey utility asked the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to declare that a database of topographic mapping information sought by a member of the public was protected from public disclosure as "Protected Critical Infrastructure Information" (PCII). In a June 3, 2005, letter (www.fas.org/sgp/othergov/dhs-brick.pdf), DHS PCII program manager Laura L. S. Kimberly wrote the Brick Township Municipal Utilities Authority (BTMUA) that "your submission has been validated as PCII"—relieving them of any obligation to disclose the data, even under state law.

BTMUA wrote in its submission to DHS that the database "contains all of the information pertaining to the potable water treatment and distribution system, and the sanitary sewer collection system. The totality of the . . . database, in a digital format, is information that is not customarily in the public domain." In response to the requester's rebuttal (www.fas.org/sgp/othergov/dhs-brick2.pdf) to DHS that he had personally obtained similar topographic base map information from other public sources, the utility answered that "Although portions of the information contained in the database may be available from various sources and may therefore be in the public domain, the totality of the information . . . is not in the public domain." DHS accepted the utility's argument.

As a consequence, the requester notes, common "topographic mapping information containing roads, streams, lakes, forests, buildings and structures, topographic contours, as well as virtually any type of information that can be shown on a map" is now "protected" under the CII umbrella.

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)

Following a growing trend, FERC, in a rule on "Non-Internet Public (NIP) Designation" issued June 21, 2005, endorsed the notion that some public information that is readily available in hard copy should not be disclosed in digital form. "Anyone wishing to obtain NIP may get it upon request from the Public Reference Room or from Commission staff; however it is not made available to the public through the Commission's Internet site," the rule stated (www.fas.org/sgp/othergov/ferc-ceii.pdf).

Judicial Branch

States Secrets Privilege

The "States Secrets Privilege" is an area that uniquely crosses the lines between the Executive and Judicial branches. The "state secrets" privilege allows the sitting U.S. President to nearly unilaterally withhold documents from the courts, Congress, and the public. The state secrets privilege is a series of U.S. legal precedents allowing the federal government to dismiss legal cases that it claims would threaten foreign policy, military intelligence, or national security. Judges have denied the privilege on only five occasions

The first case in which the state secrets privilege was invoked came in 1953 in *United States v. Reynolds*. Widows of airmen killed in the crash of a military aircraft sued the government for details. The government claimed that disclosing a military flight accident report would jeopardize secret military equipment and harm national security. Various administrations used the privilege only four times between 1953 and 1976, at the height of the Cold War. Since 2001, it has been used twenty-three times.

It has been invoked recently in three cases that have received publicity. It was used against Sibel Edmonds, a former FBI translator, who was fired in retaliation for reporting security breaches and possible espionage within the bureau. Edmonds filed a lawsuit later that year challenging the retaliatory dismissal. An unclassified public report by the Department of Justice Inspector General contains much of the information the department now seeks to block. The report concluded that Edmonds' whistleblower allegations were "the most significant factor" in the FBI's decision to terminate her. Lower courts dismissed the case when former Attorney General John Ashcroft invoked the state secrets privilege. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), has urged the

Maryland's Peoples Law Library Wins AALL's 2005 Public Access to Government Information Award

At its July annual conference in San Antonio, the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL) honored the Peoples Law Library of Maryland with its Public Access to Government Information (PAGI) Award. The online Peoples Law Library (PLL), a program of the Maryland Legal Assistance Network, represents a ten-year commitment to bring understandable legal and self-help information on Maryland and federal law and government information to low and moderate income residents of the State of Maryland. The web site is easy to navigate, organized into useful topics ranging from benefits, criminal, housing, education, immigration, family law and domestic violence, to name a few. Accompanying user's guides and FAQs ensure its ease of use. A recent enhancement to the site is that low- and moderate-income non-English-speaking people can now find information and resources in six languages and be connected to organizations that provide free legal help in their native language.

The Peoples Law Library (www.peoples-law.org) is unique in many ways. As a legal information and self-help web site, it is supported by Maryland's twenty eight non-profit legal services providers, in partnership with the courts, and is offered as a public service. Individuals can find help to access the site at any public library or at one of thirteen outreach sites that have a computer, legal self help materials, information for the state's legal hotlines, and staff trained to help members of the public find the legal information they need. An important component of its creation and development were the contributions of three distinguished members of Maryland's law library community—Michael S. Miller, former Maryland state law librarian; Pamela J. Gregory, emeriti law librarian of Prince George's County; and Sara Kelley, a research librarian who formerly worked at the Thurgood Marshall Law Library in Baltimore but is now a reference librarian at the Georgetown Law Center. This important collaboration between the state's legal service providers and law librarians who share a commitment to improving public access to legal information in underserved communities should become a model for states all across the nation.

AALL's PAGI Award, established in 1998, is given to recognize persons or organizations that have made significant contributions to protect and promote greater public access to government information. Previous PAGI winners are: Sen. Conrad Burns, Sen. Joseph I. Lieberman, and Michael O. Leavitt for www.regulations.gov (2004); the University of Georgia Libraries for Georgia Government Publications and the Virginia Department of Planning and Budget for Virginia Regulatory Town Hall (2003); FirstGov (2002); LC's THOMAS (2000); and GPO Access (1999). AALL's Government Relations Committee is currently soliciting nominations for the 2006 PAGI Award. The deadline is February 1. More information about the PAGI award and instructions for submitting a nomination are available at www.aallnet.org/about/award_information_application.asp.

Mary Alice Baish*, Associate Washington Affairs Representative, American Association of Law Libraries, baish@law.georgetown.edu.*

U.S. Supreme Court to review a lower court's dismissal of the case (www.aclu.org/NationalSecurity/NationalSecurity.cfm?ID=18870&c=24).

The government also invoked the privilege in the case of Maher Arar, a Canadian citizen who sought to sue then-Attorney General Ashcroft for his role in "rendering" Arar to Syria to face torture and extract false confessions. Former Deputy Attorney General James B. Comey said in legal papers filed at the time, "Litigating [the] plaintiff's complaint would necessitate disclosure of classified information." The Arar case is being appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court and is also being investigated by an independent Canadian commission, with which the U.S. has refused to cooperate.

On August 8, 2005, a the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 4th Circuit ruled (www.fas.org/sgp/jud/sterling0805.pdf) that the state secrets privilege asserted by the director of Central Intelligence is sufficient grounds for upholding the dismissal of an employment discrimination lawsuit brought against the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Former CIA officer Jeffrey Sterling, an African-American, sued the agency in 2001, claiming that he had been the object of unlawful racial discrimination. His case was dismissed after the CIA asserted the state secrets privilege, contending that the lawsuit threatened to result in exposure of classified information. The court noted, "There is no way for Sterling to prove employment discrimination without exposing at least some classified details of the covert employment that gives context to his claim."

Outside Agitators

Court Is Asked To Scrutinize Secrecy Claims

A wide-ranging critique of government secrecy practices was presented in a friend of the court brief filed August 3, 2005, with the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit in a case brought by the ACLU challenging the use of so-called national security letters.

The brief was written by Meredith Fuchs of the National Security Archive and Marcia Hoffman of the Electronic Privacy Information Center (www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB160/index.htm).

IRS Investigative History

An official history of Internal Revenue Service investigations, "75 Years of IRS Criminal Investigation History, 1919–1994," marked "For Official Use Only" and withdrawn from public access in 1996, has been published online by TheMemoryHole.org (www.thememoryhole.org/irs/75_years.htm).

A CIA History of the Bay of Pigs

An internal CIA history of the Bay of Pigs, "The Official History of the Bay of Pigs Operation, Volume III: Evolution of CIA's Anti-Castro Policies, 1951–January 1961," has found its way into the public domain thanks to the JFK Assassination Records Collection Act. Apparently because the Bay of Pigs history touched on the question of assassination policy, the report was caught up in the broad sweep of the JFK Act and declassified, even though most internal CIA histories are routinely withheld from disclosure, regardless of their age.

The document was located at the National Archives by David Barrett of Villanova University, who copied the 295-page volume and posted it on his web site (www14.homepage.villanova.edu/david.barrett/bop.html).

Secrecy Report Card 2005

OpenTheGovernment.org has released its second annual report, *Secrecy Report Card 2005* (www.openthegovernment.org/otg/SRC2005.pdf). Highlights include:

- Federal agencies spent a record $148 in 2004 creating and storing new secrets for every $1 spent declassifying old secrets.
- Federal surveillance activity under the jurisdiction of the secretive Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court has doubled in five years, with 1,754 secret surveillance orders approved in 2004.
- Nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of federal advisory committee meetings in 2004 were closed to the public.
- The executive branch is using the "state secrecy" privilege thirty-three times more often than during the height of the Cold War.

On the Range

Legacy Documents Collections: Separate the Wheat from the Chaff

Brian W. Rossmann

While the Government Printing Office (GPO), the Depository Library Council (DLC), and the government information librarian community wrestle with what the future of the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) will be, one thing that seems to be fairly certain is that if the FDLP continues to exist in any form whatsoever, it will probably be a primarily—if not entirely—digital program. Whether digital documents are housed on a central government server, or agencies' web sites, or (as some in the community advocate) a more distributed model prevails in which files are sent to disparate libraries or other nongovernment entities, it remains clear that virtually all government information produced in the future will be accessed by the public and libraries online. Given that most in the documents community have come to accept this digital model as imminent, much of the debate and conversation has surrounded issues of the permanency of born-digital government information, free public access, fugitive documents, and what role—if any—depository libraries will have. The focus is understandably on electronic government information.

However, tangible collections, while they are rapidly becoming static in nature, have by no means disappeared from the landscape of government information. Most libraries still hold legacy paper and fiche collections, and—despite Google's best efforts and the Public Printer's bold vision to "digitize all known Federal documents, beginning with the Federalist Papers, to allow the entire collection to be searched on the Web and viewed over the Internet from a home, office, school or library,"—I suspect that much of the truly valuable information contained in legacy collections of government information will remain in physical format for many, many years to come; indeed, perhaps forever.[1] And, essentially the only place the public will be able to access these collections is in your libraries.

Many long-standing regional depositories have invested much in building great historical collections. Most of these collections tend to be at large academic institutions, whose libraries have it in their mission to collect and preserve information extensively, even the minutiae, for their future patrons. Moreover, while it may be a cliché, they understand that today's ephemera represent tomorrow's history, and they have the resources and mandates to maintain historical collections indefinitely. Legacy collections of government documents are probably relatively safe in these institutions' libraries.

Legacy collections at many selective depositories, however, may not be so safe. Public libraries, or small and medium-sized academic libraries, may not have the wherewithal, or administrative will, to maintain their tangible collections indefinitely. Priorities and budgets change, and future administrators may not recognize the value of all those dusty documents taking up so much valuable library floorspace—space that could be better utilized for that new information commons, study hall, or to accommodate new additions to the library's other collections. If librarians at selective depositories wish to ensure that their legacy collections persist, librarians should be planning these collections' futures, and they should be doing so *now*.

One action might be to accept the fact that not everything in *every* library's documents collection is worth preserving. Any library collection, documents or otherwise, requires occasional weeding to keep it relevant and healthy—as difficult as it is for many librarians to accept, most realize that we cannot keep everything forever. One of the unfortunate side effects of the item selection process that has been employed by the FDLP over the years is that libraries have had to take unwanted publications in order to get titles that they do want. Much of this chaff is still on the shelves alongside the wheat. Careful and calculated consideration of what will remain important in ten, twenty, fifty years and beyond for a particular library, and then performing some judicious weeding will pare down the collection to one of materials that will remain truly relevant to that library's patrons. Most selective depository collections exist to serve a specific constituency: public libraries serve their local communities; small academic libraries, such as might be found at a liberal arts college, serve primarily undergraduate populations. My own institution, Montana State University (MSU), is a land grant university whose curriculum is largely rooted in the sciences, technology, and agriculture. At MSU, core publications from Department of Interior agencies (such as the USGS), or major series from the USDA (such as the *Circulars* or *Bulletins*) will be essential for generations of students to come, and we want to ensure that these are preserved. However, some of the miscellaneous publications from these agencies are not going to be as essential and perhaps can go.

Again, now is the time to begin planning and working on such a project. If a documents librarian proactively makes a thoughtful and systematic weeding of his or her collection over a period of time, the legacy collection will become one that consists only of valuable materials for that particular library's patrons. It will be easier to defend its value, as a greater percentage of it will be used by patrons and viewed as relevant. It will take up less space (remember, this collection will not grow much). Moreover, weeding—while we have the leisure to do it—will make it less likely that an administrator someday, suddenly out of the blue, demands that your paper documents collection's size be cut in half by the end of the semester, thus forcing you to hastily discard potentially valuable materials that you really should be keeping; you may not then have the time to embark on a leisurely weeding project, but rather find yourself forced into a slash-and-burn mode.

Most depository libraries have paper and microfiche titles that they should ensure remain in their documents collections for the future. Given that tangible documents collections are unlikely to grow much any longer, some judicious house cleaning today will go a long way towards ensuring that a strong and relevant legacy collection remains on the shelves for your library's patrons of tomorrow.

Reference

1. U.S. Government Printing Office. "A Strategic Vision for the 21st Century," Dec. 2004 (www.gpo.gov/congressional/pdfs/04strategicplan.pdf).

State and Local Documents Roundup

A Basic Primer on Collecting Local Government Publications

Yvonne Wilson and Debora Richey

Although local government publications reflect the important and immediate concerns and activities of communities, municipal documents remain the least collected and used of government publications. As far back as 1978, Bernard Fry and other document librarians believed that access to local government information was so limited that it constituted a "domestic intelligence gap" for Americans.[1] This gap grew even further in the 1980s and 1990s as actions by the Reagan and Clinton administrations increasingly shifted public policy decisions from the federal to state and local governments. Although the arrival of the Internet in the 1990s brought the promise of increased public access to local information, online distribution of municipal documents remains haphazard, and long-term accessibility to important publications in an electronic format is still in question. Most municipal web sites exist primarily to present information about governmental activities, and provide for tax, fee, fine, and procurement transactions.[2] There are also no formal mechanisms, such as state and federal depository programs, for the issuance of municipal materials, and the distribution of city, county, and regional documents is usually facilitated through informal agreements between a library (typically a public library) and the local government. Maintenance of these collections relies solely on the creativity, diligence, and expertise of librarians, who must closely monitor planning and political changes within a community.

A critical question for many librarians is: Why collect local government documents at all? The answer is simple.

Local government documents are critical for an informed citizenry, and frequently municipal materials offer the best and only access to certain information. All politics are local, and residents will often ask for local reports that have a direct bearing on their lives. Answers to reference queries related to local issues will most often be found in city and county budgets, land use and planning documents, and local ordinances. Residents and citizens expect libraries to have information on all subjects and issues and frequently are surprised (and annoyed) when even their neighborhood library cannot provide government information specific to their needs. Once established, a local documents collection can raise the awareness of the library in the community, assist in developing local knowledge for reference staff, and contribute materials for a local history collection charting the changes in a community.

Identification and Types of Documents

Local documents are generally defined as the printed publications and nonprint product (for example, microforms, web sites, CD-ROMs) issued by city, county, or regional agencies, and those community-related studies, surveys, and reports issued by private consulting firms. Reports written by local government employees, citizens' groups, and consulting firms often describe or justify a program or plan, present issues for decision-making, report on government operations, investigate a problem, or analyze the local social or economic climate. Although interrelated, local documents should not be confused with *local history materials* or *local records*. Local history collections are comprised of the books, newspaper clippings, photographs, and personal narratives that celebrate the past of a community. Local records are primarily land records, governing body minutes, laws, court records, land deeds, and tax rolls that are seldom part of a library's collection.

Types of local documents include:

- Budgets and comprehensive financial reports
- Annual reports issued by agencies, departments, boards, and commissions
- Directories, rosters, telephone books, and organizational charts
- Bulletins, newsletters, and magazines of agencies, departments, and offices
- Maps, aerial photographs, and satellite images
- Municipal codes and ordinances
- Neighborhood organizations' annual reports, bulletins, minutes, and proceedings
- Planning documents, environmental impact reports/statements, capital improvement plans, general plans, and specific project reports
- Statistical surveys, handbooks, and reports
- Reports of commissions, committees, consultants, and task forces
- Tax and fee information
- Voter pamphlets and election information.

Local documents can range from ephemeral materials to multivolume reports accompanied by extensive maps and fold-outs. Some local materials, such as agendas, minutes, and ordinances, are better accessed through the Internet, while other full-length reports (such as environmental impact statements and planning documents) are better suited to a print format.

Decisions That Must Be Made

Before starting a local documents collection, librarians should make a few basic determinations. First, decide on the geographic area and the level of government—city, county, regional, or a combination—to collect. The next item to determine is how information and documents are distributed within the selected type of government. Materials may be distributed in a print or online format, or both. Local ordinances may also require the release of specific information and, in some cases, officials may consider the release of certain documents a good political move. Lastly, librarians should identify the types of materials produced by the governments chosen and decide which ones should consequently be acquired.

If the decision has been made to acquire local government publications selectively, the next question to answer is whether or not the documents should be cataloged. Fully cataloged records in an online catalog are a major step in establishing the significance of documents and determining their preservation. Subject headings can also connect local publications to other books and journal titles on similar topics. Local documents, however, are rarely cataloged outside their jurisdictional borders and will usually require original cataloging.

Tracking down local publications can be a time-consuming process. City and county clerks usually distribute agendas, minutes, and codes, but they may not receive even one copy of the reports other departments produce. Often agencies overlook libraries as repositories when they publicly distribute reports. Local government staffs also consistently fail to advertise or promote their local publications and reports, no matter how valuable they may be to the community. Government officials may even be hesitant or uncooperative in releasing studies beyond their own departments.

The key to developing a worthwhile local documents collection is awareness on the part of librarians. Not only must librarians know the contents of various types of local documents, they must be acutely aware of local activities, issues, controversies, and how geography can affect certain issues. In order to identify important documents of lasting significance, it is imperative that librarians responsible for the local documents collection have a clear understanding of the community's makeup and its interests and of who will be most likely to make use of the collection.

Tips for Acquiring Local Documents

The size and depth of local documents collections are directly related to the amount of staff time devoted to their acquisition and the resourcefulness of that staff. As there are few bibliographic and reference tools—Greenwood's *Index to Urban Documents* is the only available catalog—acquiring city, county, and regional information requires curiosity, perseverance, imagination, and assertiveness. Acquiring local government publications often requires contacting government staff. Personal contacts with city hall and with agencies, such as planning commissions and redevelopment departments, quickly establish a library as an institution that values local documents and wants to work with the local government to make them as accessible as possible. As letters, order forms, and standard library acquisition processes frequently do not work, acquiring local documents often takes the personal touch. Sensitivity to the needs of civil servants can also go a long way when acquiring specific documents. If government employees need letters or e-mails for the acquisition, oblige them. If they hesitate to send materials because of size or postal cost, offer to retrieve them personally.

Important local government publications can often be identified through news stories, government announcements, meeting agendas, web sites, and council and community meetings, many of which are now available on cable television. Usually the information sources will provide a department or person to contact. It is not unusual for only a few copies of plans or reports to be printed, so it is important to call and request a document as soon as possible. If there is reluctance on the part of agency staff to supply a paper copy of a document, it is wise to development a rationale for why a paper copy is needed for the library collection. Useful tactics can include extolling the significance of the publication, promising long-term preservation, or noting the ease of reading and examination, especially when there are several sections or volumes that need to be compared. Libraries can also offer reference assistance, convenient access, and longer hours for document consultation.

Try to obtain free copies of documents whenever possible. If the library housing local documents is also a state or federal depository, stress that these publications are already received free of charge. Also, ask to be placed on an agency's mailing list for future copies of reports, knowing full well that the list is only as good as the person maintaining it. If publications are not forthcoming from local agencies, librarians should be prepared to appeal to the publics' right to know what is happening in government, stress the ease for citizens consulting the documents, and invoke a law or ordinance that requires public comment on certain types of documents. If it is impossible to obtain a print copy of an important publication, then a decision will have to be made whether to accept the web version as the primary source of access and either attach links to a library web site or direct people to search the city or county web site on their own.

Web-Based Publications

The existence of basic government documentation on the Internet has made the acquisition of local documents more selective and complex. It is estimated that more than 75 percent of local governments now maintain web sites.[3] Most of these municipal web sites provide information about officials, departments, and services, list local events, promote tourism, and post council and commission agendas and minutes. By providing 24/7 access to government information and services, these government-based web sites enhance democracy by informing citizens and facilitating communication. However, posting lengthy, complex city and county development plans and then maintaining them electronically over a period of time can be problematic. Local government web sites tend to place an emphasis on showcasing the community's attractions to draw business and tourism to an area rather than featuring annual reports, in-depth statistical data, and full-text land use and planning documents. Annual budgets and summaries are sometimes posted, but it is rare to find more than the current year. An important survey, report, or plan will be posted, then removed unannounced from a web site without any attempt at archiving. Multivolume documents, especially those in a portable document format, can also be difficult and cumbersome for the public to view online.

As there is no uniform policy on depositing local government publications on city and county homepages, librarians need to be aware of the types of documents that are available online for their communities. Once that has been determined, decisions have to be made on how to collect, organize, and use these types of online materials. If long-term accessibility of documents in an electronic format is in question, then the continued pursuit of significant print publications may still be preferable.

At a time of increased emphasis on local issues and urban affairs, city, county, and regional government publications are too essential for librarians to ignore. Even with 3,034 counties and 35,933 municipalities and townships across the United States, librarians can certainly collect and preserve the publications of their own communities while creating unique collections that will not be duplicated elsewhere. ∎

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2. Christopher G. Reddick, "A Two-stage Model of E-Government Growth: Theories and Empirical Evidence for U.S. Cities." *Government Information Quarterly* 21 (2004): 51–64.
3. Two good web sites for identifying city, county, and regional web pages are *Munisource* at www.munisource.org and *State and Local Government on the Net* at www.statelocalgov.net.

Tech Watch

Are Blogs the Answer?

Megan Dreger

A blog (short for weblog) is a type of web site in which the content is continuously updated with postings displayed in reverse chronological order. Blogs originated in the 1990s, but it is only in the last few years that they have become a popular form of Internet communication. What was once the realm of the tech community has become more accessible to Internet users as software and services such as Blogspot (www.blogger.com) and Moveable Type (www.sixapart.com/movabletype) make it easier for anyone to start a blog on any topic. Blogs have proliferated to the point that millions now exist, many of which are basically online diaries.[1] They generally link to other blogs based on author or topic and thereby create online communities. Estimates on the number of blogs and how many people create and read them vary widely, but their popularity is clearly growing. A January 2005 Pew/Internet memo, "The State of Blogging," found that 27 percent of Internet users said they read blogs—a 58 percent increase from the previous survey in early 2004 (www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP_blogging_data.pdf).

Fans say that blogs will actually cut down on information overload by acting as a filter. Detractors generally admit that blogs can be fun, but are comparable to soapboxes or talk radio. I think they're both right. Blogs can act as information filters if there are blogs out there that covers the topics you're interested in. The problem is that for many people, the blogs are not comprehensive information sources, so they simply become an additional place to look.

Regardless of their use or content, blogs allow immediacy. Some blogs have named authors with comments by readers on each post. Others are open forums that allow anyone to contribute posts of their own. Either way, blogs are generally less formal than other forms of communication. This format encourages interactivity, which is a good way to build communities, debate issues, or gather feedback. Because they are designed for constant updates, blogs offer an immediacy that many users find attractive.

Perhaps the most significant feature of blogs is that they can allow anonymity. Most blogs are open to anyone and allow users to comment without leaving names, e-mail addresses, or other identifying information. This kind of anonymity often allows more open discussion, particularly on controversial issues.

Why Are Documents Librarians Slow to Start Blogging?

A recent thread on Govdoc-l launched a discussion of why the government documents community may be slow to use blogs, such as the Future Digital System (FDsys) Blog (http://fdsys.blogspot.com) and the Depository Library Council (DLC) Vision Outline Blog (http://dlcvisionoutline.blogspot.com). These are both intended to gather feedback and spark discussion, but have not been terribly active.

Theories for the low use of this blog range from people's habit of working with GPO and the Depository Library Council via such professional organizations as ALA, to information overload. But in the end, as was pointed out, these blogs currently are simply another place to check for information.

Blogs are most successful when people have a need to use them. This may seem obvious, but it's important to disregard any "wow factor" to determine what motivates people to use a blog as a source of information. For example, the reason(s) may be the unique information available at the blog, the need to use blogs as part of work, to blog in order to reach out to communities that may be difficult to identify, the ease of use, or for the ability to respond to posts anonymously. The various government information-related blogs were created to be more responsive, but why should librarians—or anyone else—use them?

- *Unique information.* The information available on these blogs is not necessarily unique, although it could be. One difference between the blogs and the Govdoc-l electronic discussion list (http://govdoc-l.org), for example, is the ability to post multimedia files like audio or video to the blogs.
- *Part of our work.* At my library, we use a blog to post information about upcoming assignments, database passwords, or other issues that people working the reference desk need to know. The blog is successful in part because we all have to use it as part of our job. The government information-related blogs probably do not fall into this category.
- *Reach out to a different community.* These blogs could foster better interaction with other communities interested in issues related to government information (for example, people interested in digital library issues).
- *Ease of use.* Although the blogs are easy to use, so are the other, more traditional alternatives such as Govdoc-l.
- *Anonymity.* Anonymity can be an important factor in the success of a blog, particularly because it often encourages discussion. However, it can also hinder discussion by creating a less formal dialog. When comments are attributed to particular people, they are generally more formal and often written more clearly. The attribution also helps provide context (for example, what type of library the writer is from). Also, since many users are commenting as part of their professional duties, it can be frustrating to interact with anonymous posters.

In the end, the question isn't whether or not blogs are a good idea. The question is simply whether the government information-related blogs offer enough reasons for professionals to use them.

Reference

1. Statistics are estimated using a mathematical model developed by Perseus Development Corp. and reported in "Perseus Blog Survey: The Blogging Iceberg," 2004 (www.perseus.com/blogsurvey/thebloggingiceberg.html).

News from the North

Preservation of Born-Digital Government Publications in Canadian Jurisdictions

Lindsay Johnston

In fall 2004, the Canadian Association of Research Libraries (CARL) contracted with the Andrew Hubbertz, former government publications librarian at the University of Saskatchewan, to determine what was being done to collect and preserve web-based information published by provincial and territorial governments. Hubbertz distributed a survey to CARL member libraries and to provincial and territorial legislative libraries through the Association of Parliamentary Librarians in Canada (APLIC). After the survey, Hubbertz followed up on major projects by e-mail and telephone to obtain more complete information.

The data obtained from the survey and follow-up interviews were compiled in January 2005. The survey reveals that the situation is highly variable from one province or territory to the next. As well, Hubbertz discovered that most collections of significance are being created in legislative or government libraries. The most ambitious project is in Quebec, where the Bibliothèque nationale du Québec has a legal mandate to collect provincial web-based publications.

This summary covers Quebec, Saskatchewan, and British Columbia, and updates the situation in the provinces that were discussed in *DttP*'s summer 2004 issue: Ontario, Manitoba, and Alberta. Provinces with preservation projects are listed geographically from east to west. Currently there are no preservation projects in Atlantic Canada: New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland and Labrador; nor in the three Territories: Nunavut, Yukon, and the Northwest Territories.

Existing collections are limited to print-like material—serials, monographs, leaflets, and so on—in PDF, HTML, and other electronic formats. Data files, databases, online services, and material from the "dark web" are not collected. The collections are organized so as to maintain continuity with print collections—serials, monographs, and so on—stored on a server, and cataloged with an 856 tag link to the material itself in library catalog MARC records. The collections are not organized in such a way as to preserve the contemporary context of the documents. For example, the government web sites that host the captured publications are not themselves being preserved.

Quebec

The Bibliothèque nationale du Québec (Quebec's National Assembly Library) has been a legal depository for Quebec publications, including government publications, since 1968. In 1992, legal deposit was extended to electronic documents, which at the time meant documents on physical media such as CD-ROM and diskette. The 2003-2004 annual report of the Bibliothèque nationale indicates that some thirty departments and agencies now deposit electronic publications and some fourteen have made retrospective deposits.

The undertaking has been characterized by close collaboration between the Bibliothèque nationale and the network of Quebec government web site managers. The Bibliothèque nationale provides an online form for electronic deposit, a component in an impressive infrastructure for managing the collection. Unfortunately, these materials are not available to the public directly, over the internet. Quebec university libraries have access to free publications and they are currently negotiating access to priced publications and services.

Ontario

Staff at the Legislative Library of Ontario estimate that the library acquires more than 75 percent of Ontario government web-based publications. The Ontario Council of University Libraries (OCUL) is in discussion with the Legislative Library with a view to supporting their work and perhaps extending it to local and regional governments in Ontario. The Legislative Library is also collaborating with the University of Toronto Library in an experiment using D-Space (called "T-Space" in this application) for management of the collection. (D-Space is digital archiving software developed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.)

Manitoba

Since 2002, the Manitoba Legislative Library has been collecting two to three thousand web-based publications per year from the Government of Manitoba, including monographs and serials. Unfortunately, the library is obliged at present to mount these materials on a network server that is protected by a firewall and hence unavailable to the public. The library continues to explore means to make the collection publicly available. In Manitoba, house documents, such as legislative records, are archived by the Clerk's Office of the

Legislative Assembly. Statutes and regulations are archived by the Department of Justice.

Saskatchewan

Since 2002, the University of Saskatchewan Library has been attempting to build a comprehensive collection of Saskatchewan government web-based publications, including monographs and serials. At present, the collection numbers about two thousand bibliographic items. The collection to date is fully accessible through the University of Saskatchewan Library catalog. Growth of the collection slowed in 2004, and the sustainability of the preservation project may be in question. However, a positive development occurred earlier this year when legislation was passed requiring the deposit of Saskatchewan government web-based publications in the Legislature Library.

Alberta

The Alberta Legislature Library has a collection of provincial web-based information, limited, due to lack of resources, to materials that are available *solely* in electronic format. The library estimates that it collects fewer than 25 percent of material published. The collection is accessible through the catalog of the Legislature Library.

The *Alberta Hansard* and other legislative records are being archived by the Public Information Branch of the Alberta Legislative Assembly Office. Statutes and regulations are archived by the Queen's Printer through *QP Source*, which is only available by paid subscription. The Alberta Heritage Digitization Project *Our Future Our Past* collection includes a law collection with digitized copies of historical Alberta bills, debates, journals, ordinances, and statutes that are openly available to the public.

British Columbia

Staff members at the Legislative Library of British Columbia are building a fairly comprehensive collection. It is a large collection of web-based publications from the Government of British Columbia, comprising more than five thousand items, including monographs and serials. The BC Legislative Library estimates that it is acquiring about 75 percent of such material. The collection has been developed to serve the primary clientele—members of the Legislative Assembly. For this reason, and due to limited resources, the collection excludes some types of publications, in particular curriculum material, scientific publications, and posters. Some ministries have mounted older publications, so the collection includes limited material from the 1990s. The collection is accessible via the library catalog (itself accessible through the Legislative Assembly site, www.legis.gov.bc.ca).

Linking to the Collections

In Quebec and Ontario, CARL academic libraries are, generally, choosing to link through their catalogs to holdings in the Bibliothèque nationale and the Ontario Legislative Library respectively, rather than build collections of their own. Other CARL libraries may be likely to do the same if trustworthy, permanent collections are available to them.

For the most part, building collections of web-based government information has meant downloading, storing, and cataloguing material. This is exactly the right decision, given limited resources and the absence of recognized standards and tools. Nonetheless, it is only the beginning.

Access to the Collections: Summary

In his second report, Hubbertz includes the recommendation that all institutions that include archived URLs for provincial documents in their catalog records should contribute the catalog records to the AMICUS database at the Library and Archives Canada. As a result, AMICUS would serve as a single search tool for all electronically archived Canadian government publications. As this is *not* currently the case, I created the chart on the following page to assist the staff at the U. of Alberta Libraries to recognize and locate archived urls for Canadian jurisdictions. When "acquiring" government publications for our collection, we include archived urls in our library catalog when they are available. The information on provincial jurisdictions is based on Hubbertz's CARL reports.

Next Steps

In the First CARL Report, March 2005, Hubbertz concludes that the immediate challenge is to encourage and assist in the building of comprehensive collections for those jurisdictions currently without preservation projects. Looking beyond the immediate future, the library community will need to consider issues relating to long-term access, such as migration, emulation, and archival standards. We also have to begin collecting digital objects without clear print equivalents, such as numerical data files, online directories, and material from the "dark web," or material accessed from a database via a search engine.

Hubbertz also points out that legislative libraries and CARL members need to raise awareness of preservation issues and seek out natural allies outside of the library world, including law societies, journalists, public interest groups, and scholars. For example, the Canadian Newspaper Association has recently released an article on Canadian freedom of information legislation and how it is being implemented in jurisdictions across the country.[1] Their report has clear implications for current and long-term access to government publications.

For more detail on provincial archiving projects, including the report, survey instrument and response rates, please consult Hubbertz's first CARL report: Hubbertz, Andrew. *Collection and Preservation of Web-Based Provincial/Territorial Government Publications: Report on a Survey of CARL and APLIC Libraries*. Ottawa: Canadian Association of Research Libraries, Mar. 2005, www.carl-abrc.ca/projects/preservation/pdf/provincial_web-pubs_report.pdf.

For recommendations on future electronic preservation activities, including goals, strategies, priorities, and preserva-

Government Institution	**Source(s) of archived URLs** **Search for archived URLs in . . .**	**Root of archived URL** **The document's archived URL will begin with . . .**
Government of Canada	AMICUS http://amicus.nlc-bnc.ca/aaweb/amilogine.htm —not just gov pubs. Includes archived urls for Canadian content Federal Publication Locator www.collectionscanada.ca/7/5/index-e.html Depository Services Program catalogue http://publications.gc.ca/control/simplePublicSearchCriteria (NOTE: not very many "anchor" pages are available for serial publications. Best for monographs.)	http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/ http://epe.lac-bac.gc.ca/ http://dsp-psd.pwgsc.gc.ca/Collection/
Government of Alberta	Alberta Legislature Library Catalogue http://ipac2.assembly.ab.ca/ipac20/ipac.jsp?profile=public2#focusfocus —monographs only Legislative Assembly of Alberta www.assembly.ab.ca/ —*Alberta Hansard* and other legislative records Our Future, Our Past: Alberta Heritage Digitization Project Law Collection http://136.159.239.228//law/ —bills, Hansard, journals, colonial government ordinances, and Alberta Statutes	www.assembly.ab.ca/lao/library/egovdocs/ Already catalogued Already catalogued
Government of Ontario	Legislative Library of Ontario Catalogue www.ontla.on.ca/library/catalogue/ecatlogin.asp —in "Command search", limit to "catalogued web resources". In Catalogue record, to get correct url, click on link that says "Archived by Library…"	www.ontla.on.ca/library/repository
Government of British Columbia	Legislative Library of British Columbia catalogue www.webpac.leg.bc.ca/	www.llbc.leg.bc.ca/
Government of Saskatchewan	University of Saskatchewan Library Catalogue http://library.usask.ca/ —selective e-archiving underway at the University of Saskatchewan	http://library.usask.ca/gp/sk/
Quebec—comprehensive e-archiving underway (e-documents legally deposited by departments), but e-archived documents not directly available to the public over the Internet. Manitoba—selective e-archiving underway at Legislative Library, but e-archived versions of documents not available to the public over the Internet. New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nunavut, Yukon, Northwest Territories—no e-archiving projects for their government documents.		

tion practices, please see Hubbertz's second CARL report: Hubbertz, Andrew. *DRAFT: Collection and Preservation of Web-Based Provincial/Territorial Government Publications: An Action Plan for CARL*. Ottawa: Canadian Association of Research Libraries, June 2005, www.carl-abrc.ca/projects/preservation/pdf/e-docs_report2.pdf. ∎

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Letter to the Community

Ridley R. Kessler

With responses by Brian E. C. Schottlaender, Daniel Cornwall, Bernadine Abbott Hoduski, Marilyn Moody, and Judith Robinson

At the Spring Depository Library Council Meeting in April 2005 Ridley Kessler wrote a letter that was shared with members of the government information community. At the April meeting it was read to attendees, and on June 17 the letter was shared with the Govdoc-l readership. The DttP *Editorial Team was interested in the responses, and also thought it would be interesting to share the letter with some other colleagues and gather additional responses, perhaps representing other perspectives. We're grateful to those who took the time to respond to this challenge and to those who re-wrote the initial responses for our pages.*

Dear Colleagues,

While I am now retired, I still have a great interest in the future of government information and its vital importance in our global Internet world. I have been following the discussions on the current state of print documents vs. electronic information. I read the ALA "Resolution Opposing GPO's Decision to Eliminate Print Distribution of Important Government Information" and the whirlwind that it created.

Since I am not going to be able to attend this Conference, I feel strongly that as a professional documents librarian and a long time participant at Council conferences, I need to take a position on this matter. I have worked in Government Information for over thirty years, served on the Depository Library Council, been Chair of the Council, and have served on committees and task forces on electronic information more numerous times than I can remember.

With this in mind I feel that some of my colleagues are headed in the wrong direction and are not looking ahead to the immediate future or to the long-term future of our profession. Not only are we in the electronic/digitization age, we have been there for years now. We were also the chief instigators of these changes, with such far-reaching reports as the Dupont Circle Group, the Chicago Conference, and a number of other similar studies in which we laid out the electronic future and we fought, begged, and cajoled the Government Printing Office to follow.

Well, they have, and now they are leading and trying to get us to follow them! The usefulness and future of print materials as we know them are over. Our libraries and our users are now wedded to the new technology by necessity, and our clientele ask for information in electronic formats, in fact many demand that format because of the convenience and portability that it gives them. The ability to access and transfer huge amounts of information via the web is a vital part of the new world order and we cannot escape it. Instead we should embrace the technology which gives us unprecedented access and control of information at the local level.

I strongly believe that it is a lack of foresight on our part to request continued duplicate print items from the GPO when they are available in electronic formats. The GPO, like our libraries, is faced with severe financial cutbacks and has limited funds to work with. I would prefer that they take their financial assets and continue to invest in research and systems that support electronic endeavors, authentication, preservation, and unlimited, no fee access to this information. It is unrealistic and unreasonable to ask them to continue print formats until all preservation issues have been solved because that is not going to happen overnight. We cannot at the present guarantee the future of any digital information that we currently have any more that they can!! Also our libraries are fully committed to electronic and digital information and it seems strange and out of sync with current operations to put documents into a separate and less progressive stance.

What kind of message does that send to our administrators and the rest of the library community? It makes us look like Luddites!

Our task is to cooperate and make sure that we have input in future decisions the GPO makes concerning electronic government information. Our library directors understand the importance of the electronic future and are investing heavily in that future. It is time that we begin to support them. From henceforth our job is to continue to develop new and innovative ways to provide access electronically. We must continue to work toward off-site information management.

We must aid in the development of preservation and of high-speed print and information transfer delivery. Fighting the inevitable demise of print and hindering the immediate and future development and growth of electronic information is foolishly nostalgic and counterproductive. The future of print documents will be limited to the few libraries that will be chosen to archive this format because there are not enough finances for everyone to share this. The future of our system is electronic, and, as former Redskins coach George Allan said, "The future is now." If an old, retired librarian can see this, where are the rest of you?—*Ridley R. Kessler, University of North Carolina, retired, April 2005*

Brian E. C. Schottlaender:
I write to express my strong support for the views of retired UNC librarian Ridley Kessler regarding print versus electronic

government publications distributed through GPO. I would guess (and it's just a guess) that Kessler's letter—read at the Spring Depository Library Council meeting in Albuquerque and subsequently posted to Govdoc-l—is as controversial as the FDLP directions it offers support for. More's the pity, because its clear-headedness is admirable—as is Kessler's gumption to write it.

"May you live in interesting times," the Chinese curse has it. GPO must be feeling especially cursed as it struggles to respond to the interesting reality of a federal documents environment that is increasingly "going digital." Bruce James and Judy Russell have been quoted in various venues over the last couple of years as saying that 95 percent of federal documents are available digitally now (true, some still have print analogs). No one considers that a more sobering reality than GPO, which finds itself behind the infrastructural eight-ball insofar as the long-term care and feeding of these documents is concerned. So imagine how "interesting" they must have found the ALA/GODORT resolutions ". . . that the American Library Association urge Congress to require that GPO maintain production and distribution of print materials to depository libraries at no less than the FY 2004 level; and . . . that the American Library Association urge Congress to hold timely oversight hearings on GPO's new initiatives and changes to the Federal Depository Library Program."

The shift to electronic delivery of government information has been underway since the mid-1990s and reflects a trend seen in most areas of information delivery. It was this ready availability and the agency's increasingly tight budgetary constraints that prompted GPO to propose limiting distribution of paper titles in order to reallocate resources to developing the infrastructure needed to manage the growing digital corpus, including authentication services, preservation planning and implementation, improvements to *GPO Access*, web harvesting, and more. Yes, the ALA/GODORT resolution had some Whereases espousing the benefits of the shift to a digital FDLP, but at the end of the day—after GPO's spending almost the better part of a decade working with the library community to manage and facilitate this shift—that part of the community being spoken for in the ALA/GODORT resolution came out in support of print. This despite the fact that the vast preponderance of our print FDLP collections languish unused, a historical reality exacerbated by today's users' almost overwhelming preference for digital, a preference exceeded only by their seemingly insatiable appetite for even more digital.

Which brings me back to Mr. Kessler, who wrote:

> I strongly believe that it is a lack of foresight on our part to request continued duplicate print items from the GPO when they are available in electronic formats. The GPO, like our libraries, is faced with severe financial cutbacks and has limited funds to work with. I would prefer that they take their financial assets and continue to invest in research and systems that support electronic endeavors. . . . Our task is to cooperate and make sure that we have input in future decisions the GPO makes concerning electronic government information. Our library directors understand the importance of the electronic future and are investing heavily in that future. It is time that we begin to support them. From henceforth our job is to continue to develop new and innovative ways to provide access electronically.

Hear! Hear! In June of this year, Carol Pitts Diedrichs, speaking on behalf of the Association for Library Collections & Technical Services (ALA/ALCTS)—of which she was then president and I, past president, shared with Mr. James and Ms. Russell the following sentiment:

> . . . **Whereas**, long-term access to digital information depends upon business, financial, personnel, and technical structures as yet neither commonly understood nor widely deployed; therefore be it
>
> **Resolved**, that the Association for Library Collections & Technical Services encourages the U.S. Government Printing Office to work in close collaboration with the library and information communities to develop efficient and effective mechanisms for the dissemination and preservation of government information in digital form.

Mr. Kessler, I (and I suspect, we) salute you!—*Brian E. C. Schottlaender, University Librarian, University of California, San Diego, becs@ucsd.edu*

Daniel Cornwall:

Ridley Kessler is right when he says, "We must aid in the development of preservation and of high-speed print and information transfer delivery," but I have to disagree with his characterization of the debate on GPO's future plans as one of paper-based Luddites versus electronic-based realists.

Although I see the future of government information as being mostly electronic, I believe that a number of niches for tangible products, especially maps and legal materials, will continue. There is also probably a place for the continued tangible distribution of high-interest reports, such as the *9/11 Commission Report*. Despite its immediate Internet availability, millions of people across the country purchased the paper volume. Clearly there continues to be significant desire for paper-based materials.

Still, for reasons of wider reach and falling budgets, I believe that most government information products will be Internet-based. While there are a few librarians who hate computers, most depository librarians are ready for a mostly electronic future. Our concerns about GPO's future plans revolve around how preservation, access, and privacy will be handled in this future. These have been the concerns of depository librarians for more than a century, and those concerns do not evaporate because the format has changed.

We have serious concerns about GPO dropping tangible formats prior to having an infrastructure in place to preserve digital documents. GPO has ambitious plans for this infrastructure—the National Collection, mirror sites for *GPO Access*, and of course, the Future Digital System (FDSys). But none of these initiatives currently exist in operation. The FDSys is scheduled to be online in December 2007, and as of this writing, no "go-live" dates for the National Collection or the mirror sites have been announced. I know that the National Collection is gathering materials, but it doesn't yet have an address. What will happen to the digital-only materials until these vital pieces of infrastructure are in place? Ridley Kessler tells us "It is unrealistic and unreasonable to ask them to continue print formats until all preservation issues have been solved because that is not going to happen overnight."

We are not asking for that. Some of us are asking GPO to follow the example of states such as Alaska, where we currently make a tangible preservation copy from digital files. We also backup the digital copy through our participation in the Preserving Electronic Publications Project (www.isrl.uiuc.edu/pep). We haven't solved "all the issues" but we have a good shot at ensuring that Alaska documents will be available in 2050. GPO should have something similar up and running before they stop tangible distribution of documents.

Many tech-savvy documents librarians are also concerned about how accessible government information will remain in a mostly centralized system such as the Future Digital System because we understand the financial and political stress the GPO is under. Ridley is right when he says, "We cannot at the present guarantee the future of any digital information that we currently have any more that they can!!" However, having hundreds of institutions charged with preserving materials in all formats will have a greater chance of success than one single federal agency that appears to be perennially overburdened and underfunded.

Instead of endorsing an "It's my way or the highway!" approach to the transition to an electronic future, people who share Ridley's perspective should be working with the majority of government information specialists who have suggestions on how to move towards the future without losing our cultural, political, and scientific heritage.—***Daniel Cornwall**, Government Publications/Technical Services Librarian, Alaska State Library, dan_cornwall@eed.state.ak.us*

Marilyn K. Moody:

The changing nature of government information might nicely be characterized by the varying titles of the editions of a reference book I co-authored with Jean Sears. The first edition was titled *Using Government Publications* (1985–86), followed by an edition titled *Using Government Information Sources: Print and Electronic* (1994), and then *Using Government Information Sources: Electronic and Print* (2001).

The first edition in the mid-1980s certainly did not need a subtitle describing its format, because print (and its surrogate microform) were almost completely predominant. At that time, government documents librarians were the heroes of the library reference world—the only people who could possibly make the confusing, complex, and often hopelessly inaccessible government information available to the average user. Even then, they often only reached the relatively few users who were able to visit a depository library in person.

By the 1994 edition, changes were taking place, and more electronic sources—CD-ROM, diskettes, online databases, online bulletin boards, and gopher sites (remember gopher?) were available; however, their use was still greatly overshadowed by print publications.

Then the web happened. By the time I worked on the third edition published in 2001, almost all of the major reference titles described in the book were available in an electronic format on the web. I wrote most of this edition at a home computer while reading government documents on the web. I rarely had to go to the library to search for documents available only in a print format. The print world was firmly and irrevocably gone, and really, who needed it?

I was also teaching a government publications reference class online to LIS students. I found it exhilarating that my students, some working in the tiniest public libraries in rural Illinois, were now able to access government information in ways that I had not even been able to dream of as a beginning government documents librarian.

Why review this past? Sometimes we forget where we have been, how many changes we have desperately fought for, and how many successful changes we have already gone through when facing the last waves of change. We also might forget how difficult the all-print documents world truly was—yet the nostalgia and the sense of a kinder print world that we sometimes still cling to does us harm now. We forget how inaccessible the nondigital government documents world was, as well as how incredibly difficult it was to provide "documents to the people."

Throughout my career, I have admired the way government documents/information librarians have been at the forefront of social, cultural, and technological change in the library and information world. Now I am puzzled by some of my colleagues' reactions. Of course, print is almost gone and will not and should not return, and we should be putting all of our energy and resources into developing our future digital world.

As usual, Ridley Kessler gives wise counsel and we should heed his advice. He's got it right, folks.

If Jean Sears and I put out a new edition of that book today, it would surely be published on the web and the title would be: *Using Government Information Sources: Electronic and Electronic, and More Electronic.*—***Marilyn K. Moody**, Associate University Librarian for Information and Research Services University of California, Santa Barbara, moody@library.ucsb.edu*

Bernadine Abbott Hoduski:

Electronic access is wonderful. But it is not enough. We have to have a system that not only provides current access but also assures long-term unimpeded access. We need digital documents out in some libraries so we have a dispersed system. We need paper publications for historical preservation and availability to our users for the future.

In the long fight for electronic publications we did not agree to give up paper and force our users to only have electronic access. Giving up paper in order to make the appropriations people on the Hill happy is not a responsible way for we, the protectors of the people's rights, to act. Let's not waste our energy advising GPO on what we are willing to give up today in order to get electronic services for the future. We have already given up more than we should have.

Over the years GPO and Congress have said if libraries just agree to give up one more thing, there will be money to provide all these new electronic services. Let's look at what the public has has lost. Most libraries no longer receive the *Serial Set*, *Congressional Record*, and other historically important documents in bound paper copies. Most libraries receive a greatly diminished number of publications in paper. Libraries now receive most scientific and technical reports electronically and not in microfiche. Public libraries no longer receive free copies of the daily *Congressional Record*. International exchange and bylaw libraries receive a greatly diminished number of paper and microfiche copies.

GPO has promised to give us almost everything we have asked for that will support the new electronic world. They have not promised us paper. The sympathetic ears for paper are in the Congress. With the current funding all those promises cannot be fulfilled. We should be fighting for at least $40 million dollars in fiscal year 2007.

Government agencies are still publishing in paper and electronic formats according to the needs of their primary clientele. Even GPO publishes in paper when they want to convince the community that their vision is the one we should adopt. Note that the GPO annual report and strategic plans are handed out in paper at library meetings. Over the years GPO and JCP told the publishers, print and procure through GPO and we will take care of the libraries' needs at no expense to you. That is no longer true. Agencies are once again paying for and providing hard copies of publications to librarians energetic enough to ask for them.

We librarians lobby for the public access programs run by GPO every year. We did not lobby to have money taken away from producing needed paper copies. GPO staff have attended countless meetings and listened to what we want. Now is the time for GPO to deliver on what we have asked for.

We the library community need to identify and set realistic priorities for the depository library program. We need to recognize that some of these projects will take years. We need to know how long each project will take and what each one of them will cost. We need to recognize that if the goal is to catalog everything published before 1976, to digitize everything ever distributed to the depository library program, and to amass back up libraries and station consultants around the country that those goals will take a lot of money. We need to decide what we want to give up to accomplish those goals and still keep paper in the program.

Is it wise for us to insist that GPO use precious dollars to attend more and more meetings where we demand to know why the promises they have made have not been fulfilled. When the Public Printer, the Superintendent of Documents, and their staffs attend Depository Library Council (DLC), library association meetings, and library openings their expenses are paid for out of depository appropriations. Do we need the DLC to meet in the field? How about every other year in order to cut GPO travel costs? Does the sales program need to make a profit?

We need to ask lots of questions. How could the FDLP nearly run out of money this fiscal year? What happened to the money saved by eliminating paper and microfiche publications? What happened to the money saved from not serving libraries that have dropped out of the program? Has the merger of the library and sales programs meant better services to the public and depository libraries? Has the merger of the *Monthly Catalog* staff and the sales catalog staff meant more and better cataloging records in a timelier manner? Do we want libraries to continue to have some physical publications or just electronic access to them?

The American Library Association includes all types of depository libraries, therefore ALA should be a leader in determining the future of the depository library program. It was ALA in 1895, with the leadership of Adelaide Hasse, ALA in 1962, and ALA in 1993 that persuaded Congress to greatly expand and improve the depository library program. Let's fight for a program that serves the public.—*Bernadine Abbott Hoduski, ALA Councilor at Large, ber@INITCO.NET*

Judith Schiek Robinson:

Depository libraries are like street vendors peddling free broccoli. The depository community knows the unique quality of our wares and yet our product is often overlooked because of a Depository Divide—the knowledge breach ensnaring those who could and should use depositories, but don't. A legislative specialist at the National Archives reports being bedeviled with requests for laws, executive orders, hearings—in other words, depository library staples—sometimes with an invocation of FOIA for added clout. A dutiful MLS, she responds with detailed referrals to "your closest depository library." Year after year, when my straight-faced documents students ask friends and family "What is a federal depository library?" the vast majority receive wildly off target answers such as: the Federal Reserve, the Library of Congress, a library/bank combo, a book drop, kind of like Fort Knox, a place that keeps records of all government grants and loans.

Each day the Internet delivers unwitting laypeople from the jaws of this Depository Divide. An example is Friday, September 11, 1998, when 3.1 million people worldwide logged onto the Internet seeking a single U. S. government publication—the Starr report. Inundated web sites included not only popular portals such as CNN but also *GPO Access*, *Thomas*, and the House of Representatives. A LexisNexis search on the Starr Report limited by time period to only September 1998 explodes with more than three thousand newspaper articles, many pointing to our beloved government web portals. Tack on the concept of depository libraries and watch relevant search results shrink to zero. All that buzz and not a whisper about access through local depositories.

The venerable GPO printing-depository conduit has been ingenious, harvesting publications and scattering them across a geographically ecumenical web. With its classification scheme for shelving, shipping lists, mailed shipments, and lingo such as “deposit” and “distribute,” this infrastructure pivoted upon the concept of place. Now the route to government information is place-independent. The dominance of electronic information delivery is outside our control, as is the perennially inadequate GPO budget. From now on, it’s E-way or the highway for depository collections.

The FDLP must be maintained. Accepting the inevitable transcendence of electronic delivery lets librarians transfer our energy to crafting a regenerated FDLP. We must immediately deconstruct and redesign the core list of essential paper titles, which was created more than a decade ago to fit the old dual format paradigm. We must accept new depository cost sharing that helps a financially strapped GPO pay for such services as local, free public computer access and duplicating paper copies beyond a set GPO allowance. Yes, the new expenses will hurt, but freedom from warehousing will create some savings. And maintaining a depository was always costly—remember the estimate of $10 for each GPO dollars’ worth sent to a selective?

Lately I’ve had the feeling that GPO is avoiding eye contact with depository librarians. Perhaps it’s because GPO administrators have already read the last page of *Depositories, The First 140 Years* and accept the inevitability of change. To justify our continued partnership with GPO in FDLP decision making, we must accept reality too. Then our formidable brain trust can provide the view from the front lines and ask the right questions as we cast the new FDLP mold for permanent, no-fee, public access to Federal information.—*Judith Schiek Robinson, Professor, Department of Library and Information Studies, School of Informatics, University at Buffalo, lisrobin@buffalo.edu* ■

Archives and Special Collections As Supplements to Government Documents Research

Kurt Kuss

Access to federal government information is a vital part of our democracy. The partnership between the Government Printing Office (GPO) and libraries across the nation through the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP) ensures that open access to government information is a reality. Open access to information helps individuals and communities clarify issues, resolve problem, make more informed decisions, and plan for the future.

Generally, then, it is timely access to up-to-date government information that is most in demand: current, proposed, or amended regulations; texts of bills before congress; congressional hearings or investigations; information concerning federal grants; and so on. Government documents, of course, are also rich resources for historical inquiry. It is interesting to note that some depository libraries maintain what amounts to an historical collection of documents.

The publication and dissemination of agricultural research conducted by scientists at the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has been, and continues to be, one of the core mission areas of the department. This research has been published in a variety of USDA publications since the department was established in 1862—including the *Yearbook of Agriculture* and bulletins and reports of various agencies and divisions within USDA. Prior to 1862, agricultural reports were published by the Patent Office—known from 1839–1849 as the Agricultural Division, Patent Office, Department of State and, from 1849–1862, as the Agricultural Division, Patent Office, Department of the Interior. These publications and 3.3 million others are available in the general collection of the National Agricultural Library (NAL). NAL is a GPO depository library, selecting almost 40 percent of what GPO offers including, of course, all of the USDA publications.

Not all government information is published. Unpublished materials that tend to be of historical value are the domain of archives and special collections, historical societies, and the like. Since the USDA is part of the federal government, the department's records of historical value are scheduled by, and transferred to, the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). Descriptions of all departmental and agency records can be found easily on NARA's web site. The realm of government documents, then, encompasses a particular kind of government information. Government records are another form of government information. There is another area to be considered as a kind of supplement to government documents and government records: the personal papers of perhaps countless government figures can be found in a variety of special collections across the country. These collections of papers may certainly contain published materials and they may document the public life of that individual figure. But the historical interest in these documents lies in the nature of these kinds of collections: they contain unique documents—one of a kind, unpublished documents. Hence they contain unique information.

This article will explore ways in which archival and special collections materials can illuminate information found in government documents. I will focus on only two of the collections found in the special collections of one of our national libraries, the National Agricultural Library.

Agricultural Research

Short-grain Japanese rice, Peruvian alfalfa, Egyptian cotton, the Bradford pear, mangoes, dates, figs, bamboo, avocadoes, durum wheat, and strawberries. What do these agricultural crops have in common? These were among the many plant varieties introduced, bred, and tested in the U.S. for viability as economic crops by scientists working with the USDA. Early USDA plant research focused on investigations of plant pathologies—peach yellows, pear blight, grape vine diseases, various cereal rusts, and citrus diseases. To respond more effectively to these devastating crop diseases, the department established in 1888 the Section of Vegetable Pathology. In 1890 the section was reorganized into a separate division—the Division of Vegetable Pathology. Out of this research grew an interest in plant introductions. Plant introduction had obvious merits, particularly for introducing varieties of crops that showed potential for disease resistance, drought resistance, cold tolerance, or simply for better varieties of agriculture or horticulture plants. In 1898 the Office of Foreign Seed and Plant Introduction was formally established. In 1901 all plant investigations were placed under the newly formed Bureau of Plant Industry.

One can conduct a variety of searches in NAL's library catalog and find research conducted by USDA scientists and published in the *Bulletin* of the Division of Vegetable Pathology and Physiology (see figure 1).

One can also browse through publications produced by various divisions, offices, and projects under the wide umbrella of the Bureau of Plant Industry (see figure 2). This is a particularly interesting search as it also reveals the importance of some activities that over time resulted in specific projects (such as The Barberry Eradication Campaign.)

But a number of collections housed in NAL's Special Collections also highlight the early history of plant pathology and plant introduction within the Department of Agriculture.

The Papers of B. T. Galloway

In 1901, when the Bureau of Plant Industry was established by the USDA, several areas of plant research, including plant testing and introduction, plant pathology, and seed distribution, were brought under one administrative umbrella. Beverly T. Galloway was appointed as the first director of the bureau. Galloway began his career at the USDA as a plant pathologist in the Section of Mycology, Division of Botany, in 1887. He became the chief of the Section of Vegetable Pathology in 1888. The section became the Division of Vegetable Pathology in 1890. Galloway's research was published, like other USDA scientists, in various USDA publications. These can be found by searching NAL's library catalog (see figure 3).

Galloway's papers are one of the collections at NAL. The online finding aid includes a biographical sketch, a scope and content note, descriptions of each series within the collection, and a container list—a folder-level listing of the entire collection. The scope and content note indicates the collection includes:

> manuscripts of his [Galloway's] published and unpublished writings (chiefly, typescripts of the same period); pamphlets; clippings; a corrected galley; other USDA publications, including many with Galloway's articles; reports (1897–1935); speeches, addresses, lectures (1891–1927); two notebooks dating from 1916 and 1917; loose-leaf manuscripts (28 pp.) of his scientific notes; correspondence (1914–1937) related to his professional activities, major areas of research, and his interest in plant diseases and plant introduction; biographical information (1914–1938); a photograph album from 1914 with 60 photographs dating 1886–1893 representing Dr. Galloway and his colleagues and their activities in the Section of Plant Pathology; and a few other photographs. [www.nal.usda.gov/speccoll/findaids/galloway/scope.html]

Aside from the intrinsic value of such a collection to the interested researcher, the finding aid provides a lot of information—including a comprehensive list of articles Galloway wrote, identifying which ones were published and where they were published. The list of articles alone will supplement the searches in NAL's library catalog and articles database.

The unpublished materials may be of even more value to the researcher. Here are just a few of the typewritten manuscripts (from the container list) in the collection:

Figure 1. Search Results: Division of Vegetable Pathology and Physiology Bulletins

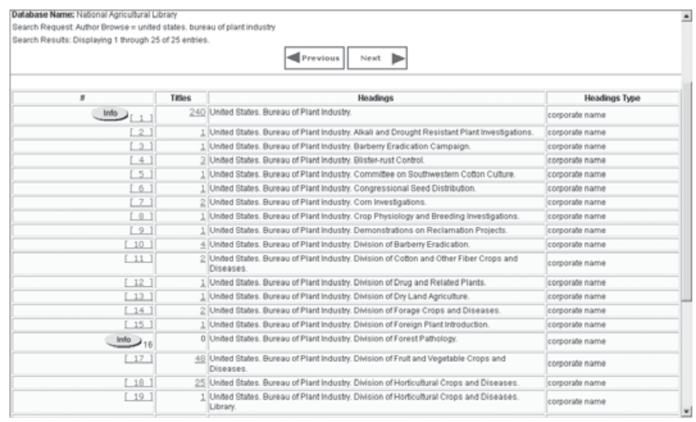


Figure 2. Search Results: Bureau of Plant Industry

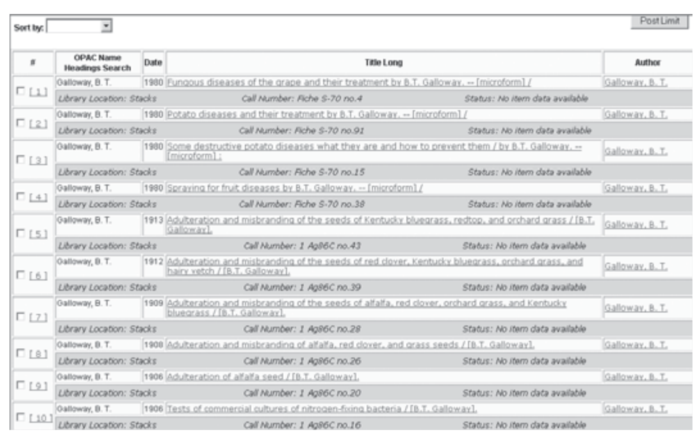


Figure 3. B. T. Galloway Search

- *Notes on Mr. Wilson Popenoe's Avocado Introductions*. Sept. 28, 1916–June 8, 1917]. TMsS. 85 pp. n.p., [1917]. /By B. T. Galloway/
- *Recommendations and Suggestions for Equipment and Methods of Procedure at the Chico, Cal., Field Station to Aid in Securing Clean and Healthy Stock*. B. T. Galloway. August 1917. TMs. 17 pp. + 11 pp. with photos 1–12. 2 dupl. BTG to R. L. Beagles, Plant Introduction Field Station, Chico, Cal. August 23, 1917.
- *Notes, Observations and Comments on a Visit to the Arnold Arboretum. Boston, Mass. and Adjacent Country. May 22, 1919 to May 28, 1919.* By B. T. Galloway. Tms. 117 pp. 1919. Photos 13, 14, 19, 25, 28, 30, 35, 39, 44, 45, 47 of 50.
- Botanical and Agricultural Exploration of J. F. Rock. Western China. 1922–23. Notes on chestnuts and other collections made by J. F. Rock, photographs showing condition of materials at Bell, Maryland, and other data. September 20, 1923. TMs. 47 pp. 11 photos.

The Papers of George M. Darrow

The papers of George M. Darrow documents the life and work of a USDA pomologist. Darrow worked for USDA for forty-six years and was known as the foremost authority on strawberries. Darrow published the results of his work in more than two hundred research articles, bulletins, and book chapters, the bulk of which was published in USDA publications and reports. The papers include correspondence, field notes, and photographs.

The scope and content note indicates Darrow's correspondents included:

> J. Harold Clark, 1933–1941, who was associated with cranberries, rhododendrons, and azaleas; Albert Etter, 1922–1964, who was called the "historian of the strawberry in the United States"; A. B. & Everett Howard, a father and son team who were involved in fruit and farm work; Robert D. Reid, 1940–1964, who studied diseases of strawberries; Harlow Rockhill, 1922–1944, breeder of strawberries, bush cherries, plums, and peach-plum hybrids; and A.B. Stout, 1952–1957, who worked at the New York Botanical Garden. Correspondence on a specific topic was placed into subject categories, such as Daylilies, 1966–1972; Everbearing Strawberries, 1920–1952; Strawberry Selection, 1925–1934, and Strawberry Varieties, 1920–1946.

Also from the scope and content note:

> Darrow was constantly looking for ways to improve strawberries. He was responsible for the development of twenty-eight cultivars of strawberries, twelve of which are still of major importance. His field notes (Series IV) contain items such as notes on strawberry selections (1923–1931); planting plans on graph paper (1917–1923); notes, articles, and reports on strawberry varieties (1938–1960s); and breeding notes (1908–1934). [www.nal.usda.gov/speccoll/findaids/darrow/DarrowScope.html]

Conclusion

There is little debate that the personal papers of our Founding Fathers are national treasures. The personal papers of any number of prominent national figures are also considered to be treasures, though perhaps not as obvious to all. The Library of Congress has a stunning collection of personal papers, and they should. The papers of relatively "unknown" USDA scientists do not resonate like those of the Library of Congress, but should still be considered national treasures.

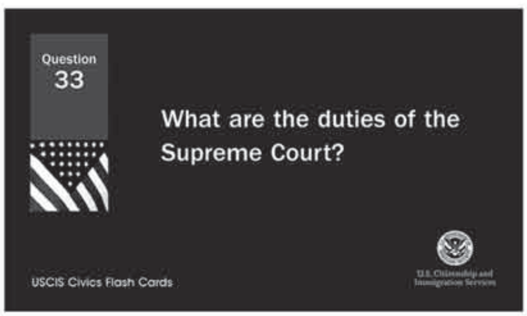
In the two examples above, we can see that the value of these materials—research notes, unpublished research papers, field notes, correspondence, photographs—is that they document the process of research as well as the life of the individuals involved in this work. Scientific research can consume years. And while the results of the research are ultimately what get published, the process that goes in to research can illuminate that work and, in doing so, illuminate the specific functions and even the broader mission of the USDA. Specifically, the personal papers that document the work of USDA scientists are also a form of government information.

Archivists aren't interested in records because there's something necessarily intriguing about the minutes of meetings or the official memos of a university president or the diaries of a plant hunter. What interests archivists is the nature of records in revealing various human activities over time. While archivists have come to define specific kinds of values in records—values having to do with information and evidence—it is sufficient here to merely stress two things—*human activities* and *time*. Groups of records produced by a single entity—an individual, an office, an organization—and kept together will retain more of these kinds of values than if they are separated. Kept together, the records will reveal an organic sequence of events or activities.

In identifying and preserving these collections, archives and special collections serve the research community. ∎

Kurt Kuss, *Special Collections/University Archives, California State University Sacramento; kussk@csus.edu*

New Government Publications for Immigrants!



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03/05

Unlikely Sources for Government Information

The Chicago Historical Society, A Case Study

Julie Thomas

Any layperson who has ever tried to solve the mysteries of SuDoc numbers to find government publications or pry loose government information with Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests can relate tales of confusion and frustration. However, seasoned scholars have learned that local historical societies and libraries can provide a wealth of sources for government information with half the hassle. As a former research specialist and collection manager for Archives and Manuscripts at the Chicago Historical Society (CHS), and after performing consulting services for numerous local historical societies in the Midwest, I can attest to the breadth and depth of government-related documents in repositories such as these. In addition, I know the relative ease of obtaining government information at local historical societies and libraries. Using CHS as a case study, this article will explore in depth various sources for government information, as well as discuss methods for gaining access to these types of records.

All manner of government information can be found at CHS in its collections of printed material, microforms, archives, and manuscripts. Moreover, finding such information there requires no knowledge of SuDoc numbers or FOIA requests, but rather the ability to interpret the informational value of such an unlikely source. For example, the Chicago taxpayer rolls and property assessments provide not only information about who paid property taxes and when, but also a lot of the history of the property being taxed. Property assessments are useful in dating older buildings because increases reflect capital improvements to a parcel of land. Most often a substantial jump in value of the parcel from one year to the next indicates when construction occurred. Further, tax rolls and assessments name the owner of a parcel. Taken over a succession of years, this information can be used to establish a chain of ownership. Assessments over time for a number of neighboring parcels can be studied to determine the pattern of development for an entire area or neighborhood.[1] Bear in mind that some historical societies have a collection scope that justifies accumulating government documents from outside their geopolitical area. For instance, CHS collects papers related to the Revolutionary War. As a result, it holds the Rowley, Massachusetts, tax assessment list from 1772, as it is part of the papers of Revolutionary War figure Zebulon Pike. Union lists, the Internet, and other tools for locating material that is housed outside its geopolitical boundaries is discussed later in this paper.

The fate of most records generated by the federal and state governments are predetermined by the appropriate Records Disposition Schedule, which provides a schema for which records should be preserved at a depository, which records should be destroyed, and when. However, most *local* governments are without disposition plans and will place their records with a local historical society or library. Even the smallest historical society usually holds archival records of various city employees and departments. Mayoral papers and collections of city clerks and treasurers are the most commonly held employee records. Because of its size, Chicago has its own city archives and CHS does not hold any mayoral papers. Instead, CHS offers researchers access to the records of many mayoral advisory commissions, city departments, and statistical compendiums published by city agencies and departments, providing a one-stop shop for these types of items. CHS collects most of the publications by such units as the Chicago Department of Planning and Development; *Demographic and Housing Characteristics of Chicago* . . . and *Births by Race in Chicago's Community Areas* are two examples. Many city departments publish annual reports that provide handy operating statistics, as does the Department of Water and Sewers, or general information handbooks, such as those published by the Chicago Police Department. This type of information might also be found in manuscript collections, such as the Chicago city treasurer's cashier's account book that came with a donation of personal papers. Of course, city councils compile and publish their own government information, such as Chicago's *The Revised Municipal Code of Chicago* and *Digest of New Legislation Introduced in the City Council,* and these are often located in local historical societies and libraries as they are at CHS.

Lucky researchers might be able to find complete archival records of entire city departments at their local historical society or library. For example, many scholars have utilized the records of the Chicago Police Department Red Squad, another name for the police department's surveillance unit from the 1930s to 1986. Access to the restricted material is easily gained by getting a letter of permission from one of three court-appointed attorneys and by signing a confidentiality agreement. Numerous users of this collection stated that they tried to garner this type of information through FOIA requests for years, but to no avail. Another department that was in the process of relocating their entire archives to CHS at last report was the Chicago Housing Authority. This collection includes all their administrative, legal, fiscal, and general subject files as well as physical plant records and even applications from tenants. The primary and secondary value of these records will be a boon for scholars in many areas of study. Sometimes only a small portion of city departmental records are donated to historical societies, but these can be of great research value as well. CHS holds the employee records of the Chicago Police Department from only the late nineteenth century through the early twentieth century. However, these government records are so popular with genealogists that they are held in the reading room for easy access.

Indeed, genealogists learned a long time ago that historical societies can be a gold mine for local birth and death records, naturalization and citizenship records, and census records. In many instances, genealogists and genealogical societies acting on behalf of or in conjunction with their local historical society will provide compilations or bibliographies for researchers of family history. CHS offers genealogists *Vital Records from Chicago Newspapers* and *Genealogical Resources in Chicago, Illinois 1835–1900*, both of which were compiled and published by the Chicago Genealogical Society.

A rich source of government-related information is also one that is very often overlooked by almost all but authors: that is, the papers of politicians. These collections are often composed of much more than administrative papers and constituent correspondence. They usually include legislative files—along with accompanying research material—of laws sponsored and co-sponsored by the politician. Also often found are committee files and caucus files, providing insight into the political process. In addition, the papers of politicians contain the intergovernmental correspondence and memoranda that put the legislation into context. Best of all, this information can usually be accessed by merely filling out a call slip and taking the time to read through the material.

CHS holds the papers of such Chicago aldermen as Jacob M. Arvey and William L. Dawson. As is most often the case, these are career politicians, and their collections reflect the various positions they held over the years. Jacob Arvey was not only an alderman but also chairman of the Cook County Democratic Party as well as commissioner on the Chicago Park District Board in the mid-twentieth century. William Dawson was a member of the Illinois Democratic State Central Committee in the 1930s and a U.S. Representative (Democrat) from 1943 to 1970 in addition to being an alderman. Researchers interested in all three branches of state government can utilize the William G. Clark papers. Clark served as Democratic majority leader of the Illinois House of Representatives in 1959 and 1960, as state attorney general from 1961 to 1969, and on the Illinois Supreme Court from 1976 to 1992. Some politicians have the time and prescience to distill government information and provide it in monograph or report format. Dick Simpson, a former Chicago alderman, wrote a number of grant-funded reports, such as *Citizen Control of Local Government: Budgets and Taxes* and *The City Council's Role in Chicago Budget Making*. These writings provide a clear window into the inner workings of Chicago politics.

Larger historical societies and research libraries may be the depositories of federal politicians' papers. Although these collections may be very large—more than five hundred boxes—archivists and librarians process the collections and provide finding aids, which are descriptive tools created to establish physical and intellectual control.[2] CHS holds the archival papers of U.S. Senators Paul H. Douglas (1949–1969), Charles Percy (1967–1985), and Carol Moseley-Braun (1993–1999). Like the papers of local politicians, congressional collections are replete with government records.

Organizations that provide oversight of government are superb sources for government information relating to specific topics or events. An example would be the three hundred boxes of records from the Better Government Association (BGA) that are housed at CHS. The BGA is a Chicago non-profit, investigative organization that focuses media attention on waste and corruption in city, state, and federal government. The files are arranged topically and contain a slew of government documents as a result of BGA's investigations into such subjects as health care, nursing homes, public housing, and the Metropolitan Sanitary District of Greater Chicago. Also included in their records are the files from the BGA's Washington, D.C., office that investigated the Challenger space shuttle explosion and government contracts with the Frigitemp Corporation, Litton Industries, and Cattle King Packing Company. A similar organization that placed its records with CHS is the Chicago branch of the Citizen Action Program (CAP), a nationwide activist organization that investigates environmental pollution as well as social and political inequities at the neighborhood level, attacks real estate breaks for wealthy corporations, and advocates bank reforms. Shrewd and efficient researchers will let organizations such as the BGA and CAP perform the onerous FOIA requests and compile the information for them.

Many historical societies have topical or genre collections made up entirely of government-related information. These collections are comprised of a distinctive category of records characterized by form, such as the collections of patents, deeds, tax bills and receipts found at CHS. Topical and genre collections can also be characterized by content such as the Chicago Area Topical Collection on Government and the Chicago Area Topical Collection on Politics. Collections such as these are created over the years as small donations and purchases are acquired and are housed together because they have similar forms or content matter. Because of its longevity, CHS has a large volume and wide breadth of genre and topical collections.

Non-traditional collections can also be valuable sources for government information or, at the very least, provide researchers a pathfinder towards finding government records of substance. Any repository with a cartographic collection will contain United States Geological Survey (USGS) maps. The USGS maps at CHS provide scientific information in cartographic format to describe and understand the greater

Chicago area; minimize loss of life and property from natural disasters; and manage water, biological, energy, and mineral resources.[3] Many cartographic collections also include land plats, which are records that chart pieces of land with actual or proposed features. Researchers cull many types of information from land plats, such as ownership of private property, allocation of lands for public use, and the location of specific areas relative to the resources of the surrounding communities. Land plats also make it possible to trace the physical history of a community or region right up to the present day.

Researchers amass comparable information from aerial photographs about the physical environment as they do with USGS maps and land plats. The main difference is the format: photographic versus cartographic. At CHS, the aerial photograph collections of the Chicago Transit Authority, Chicago Department of Planning, and Northeast Illinois Planning Commission allow for a study of the geological and built environment of Chicago over the years.

Oral histories are also excellent primary resources for government information. Large historical societies and research libraries often have their own oral history programs. Indeed, politicians are favorite interview subjects for these programs. Smaller repositories will look to colleges and universities that have centers for government and politics that perform oral histories of local, regional, and state politicians. They will then obtain transcripts of their local politician's oral histories from these centers or even copies of the tapes, when possible. CHS learned of the Illinois General Assembly Oral History program supported by the Legislative Studies Center of Sangamon State University and acquired copies of the oral histories of state representatives Leland Kennedy and Anthony Scariano as well as state senator Esther Saperstein.

Each historical society and research library makes its own rules about gaining access to its collections. For security reasons, large institutions often limit the number of people allowed to work with research collections at any given time, usually with a patron-to-employee ratio. At CHS, the number of researchers is limited to thirty-four people at one time (one librarian for every seventeen people). Some repositories require that patrons be at least eighteen years of age. Due to lack of staffing, many small repositories allow access by appointment only. In almost every instance, collection items do not circulate.

The biggest challenge is locating the desired government-related research material at specific historical societies and research libraries. The SuDoc classification system provides a conduit between the researcher and the material at any government depository. FOIA requests—protracted though the process may be—are a direct link to governmental agencies. So how would a researcher know where and how to look for government information at institutions such as CHS? The Internet and web browsers are powerful tools in connecting patrons of government information and respective repositories. But the output of the web is only as useful as its descriptive input. Other useful guides are electronic union lists, such as *WorldCat*, the *National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections* (NUCMC), and *ArchivesUSA*. Experienced researchers know to look in the bibliographies of their secondary sources. But the best assistance in locating government-related information is garnered from librarians, who know this type of material exists. Obviously, a patron gathering government information about a specific geographical area should be pointed to the respective local historical society. In addition, many repositories have subject expertise in particular areas. For example, CHS is world-famous for its Abraham Lincoln and U.S. Civil War collections. Thorough researchers of these topics eventually contact CHS.

Historical societies and research libraries are rich sources of government information waiting to be tapped by the knowledgeable researcher and librarian. Although it would be impossible to provide a comprehensive inventory of all government-related information in all repositories such as CHS, it is the hope that government document librarians have a better idea of the types of nontraditional sources of government information available for researchers and how to locate them. ■

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Note

The Chicago Historical Society's online catalog is *Archie* (Access for Researching Chicago Historical Information Electronically). It was utilized for this article in May and June 2005 at its web address: www.chicagohistory.org/collections/search.html.

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The Case for "Uniformity"

Standardizing Weights and Measures in Early American Government—A Bibliographic Exploration

Gretchen Gano

When weights and measures present themselves to the contemplation of the legislator, and call for the interposition of law, the first and most prominent idea which occurs to him is that of uniformity: his first object is to embody them into a system, and his first wish, to reduce them to one universal common standard. His purposes are uniformity, permanency, universality; one standard to be the same for all persons and all purposes, and to continue the same forever. These purposes, however, require powers which no legislator has hitherto been found to possess.—John Quincy Adams, 1821.

The original inspiration for this bibliographic exploration came from a paper I read more than a year ago on the social, political, and cultural impacts of standards-making.[1] The now disbanded U.S. Office of Technology Assessment identifies three kinds of standards development: de facto, regulatory, and consensus. De facto refers to standards developed in the market alone as a matter of course; components can be proprietary. Regulatory describes standards made under government contract, and consensus refers to standards made with public and private participation. Different market actors are responsible for each type. Therefore, each involves a different level of government intervention in market activity. This paper explores the story revealed in government documents about how the physical standards for weights and measures developed, and about the consensus standards that arose from the early deliberations that built our current democratic republic. The issues recorded in these documents, the component parts of the story, provide evidence about how these consensus standards came into being.

This paper reviews selected reports, correspondence, and early legislation surrounding the establishment of American standards for weights and measures. Rather than providing a step-by-step legislative history, it highlights documents that exemplify major strands of historical, philosophical, political, and practical arguments for the adoption of uniform standards. Records that provide particular insights into the philosophical arguments for the adoption of standards include the 1821 report of Secretary of State John Quincy Adams upon weights and measures and an international relations-focused report titled "The Place of Standardization in Modern Life," published in 1924 as a part of the Pan American Standardization Conference, with a forward by Herbert Hoover. These two documents in particular link the dry business of converting cubits to feet to meters to the alignment of man with science and the secrets of nature itself.

The paper first provides a historical narrative of the early development of standards for weights and measures drawn primarily from the accounts in two particularly interesting documents written in the 1960s and 1970s: a special publication of the U.S. Department of Commerce titled *Weights and Measures of the United States: A Brief History* and a fascinating Smithsonian Institution publication by Arthur Frazier titled *United States Standards of Weights and Measures: Their Creation and Creators*.[2] It then introduces the theoretical framework surrounding the development of standards, drawn from a modern publication by the Office of Technology Assessment, as a way to view the social and political conflicts that are involved with the slow pace of legislation to edify the standards—a process that appears on the surface to be devoted to scientific accuracy and reason. The paper concludes with an annotated list of the publications reviewed. The historical section references many of these. Others are included because of their treatment of an issue or for their meaty discussions of the history and import of standards making. The annotations highlight philosophical underpinnings, rational and irrational practice, personalities, and the human face of science gleaned from the accounts in these records. The process of standards-making for our most basic units of measure—hundreds of years in the making and decidedly still in adjustment today—is at once a testament to high democratic ideals and a record of the basic and chaotic human condition.

History

The business of establishing standards for weights and measures, some of the most important building blocks for our economic and democratic stability, took a long time to develop. Frazier's history characterizes this process as the most difficult issue that faced the early Congress, bar none. In the earliest years of the new American government over the colonies, the majority of standards for weights and measures emerged from the English system. Units of measure were the yard, the avoirdupois pound, the gallon, and the bushel. These measures had considerable variability in their mother country, England. The local needs of towns further adjusted the measures for use in commerce when they reached American soil.

The desire to legislate consistent standards can be seen in the country's early official documents. The Articles of the Confederation (1781) stated that the convened state legislatures had the right to fix standards of weights and measures. However, this power was delivered to Congress shortly thereafter as provided in Article 1, Section 8, of the U.S. Constitution. In January 1790, President Washington made an address to establish policy priorities for the Congress. Washington included the establishment of uniform standards for measurement in a list touching on topics as varied as national security, citizenship and naturalization, the promotion of scientific innovation, and the value of increasing public knowledge about science and literature to foster "public happiness" and support democratic ideals.[3] In response, Thomas Jefferson prepared a plan that addressed the measures for wet and dry materials and used the principles of decimal multiplication to support the overall system of measurement.[4] The document summary by Jones lends detail about the international context that informed Jefferson's report.[5] Around the same time the French and the English governments were undertaking similar discussions about fixing standards. Just before submitting his report, Jefferson obtained a copy of a statement made by the Bishop of Autun to the National Assembly of France detailing a proposition similar to his own. Jefferson revised his own report to match one of the standards suggested for the measurement of length in the French version. Despite the plans set forth in Jefferson's report, the Congress took no further action until 1792, when a Senate committee appointed to investigate the subject recommended adopting the decimal standard proposed by Jefferson.[6] Still, Congress took no legislative action.

Congress passed a sole piece of legislation regarding weights and measures, the Surveyor Act, in 1799.[7] This act provided for the checking of measures at certain ports and trading posts, and then for the reporting and adjudication of discrepancies. It requested that surveyors do this checking on the first Monday in January and July of each year. According to Judson, this legislation was not enforced initially. Frazier notes that the act did not specify which standards would be used to calibrate the surveyor's findings, which probably hindered the enforcement of this legislation. As a student of public policy, I should also note that the vague pronouncements in the principal text of the legislation are a common feature of most laws. It is generally up to those implementing a law to interpret the policy and turn it into something concrete. Apparently, in this case, the hurdle to fix an authoritative measure in practice was too high.

In 1819, a committee in the House made another proposal to adopt uniform standards, which would look to those in common use (not the metric system, which had been already adopted in Europe). This proposal would maintain official copies of the pound, wine barrel, the bushel, and others (some wet, some dry).[8] According to Judson, the report was never referenced again.[9] However, in 1821, John Quincy Adams wrote a long report as the secretary of state examining the history of weights and measures in the Bible, the ancient world, in Europe and the United States. He also considered the pros and cons of the metric system. This document, from which I draw some philosophical points in the later annotation, lays out the case for fixing what could then be tied to a uniform system and to introduce these standards gradually. He also urged that the United States cooperate with foreign nations on this issue to broaden the reach and importance of uniformity in measures pertaining to commerce and trade.[10]

At the time, however, there was a major obstacle to adopting the metric standards that had been developed in France and England. Many of the measures did not have analogous counterparts in the U.S. system. Additionally, legislators were uncertain as to whether the European systems would be permanent. Similar vacillation between measures was evident in reports coming from various places in England.

The continued fluidity in standards for commercial transactions was captured in a report authored by F. R. Hassler in 1832.[11] Frazier provides a biographical sketch of Hassler: a Swiss mathematician, surveyor, and meteorologist. Apparently, Hassler had originally come to the New World with his family and a number of other Swiss citizens to begin a colony somewhere in the South (Frazier notes that his luggage included ninety-six large pieces of baggage). However, this plan quickly failed, as Hassler's partner lost the funds that would have financed the founding of the colony. Hassler found himself out of work and without vocation. Quickly, he came to the attention of the federal government; Hassler was recognized as a valuable scientist. Among other projects, he was granted $50,000 to undertake a comprehensive topographic survey of the east coast.[12] The annotated list contains several Hassler reports; their formal structure and ever-present set of accompanying instructions give the reader an idea of the formidable man he must have been.

Hassler became a central figure in the formation of standards policy, not least because he brought copies of the best European weights and measures with him on his original journey. Hassler's report of 1832 compares the weights and measures of major customhouses and ports. Not surprisingly, there were many differences that were illustrated in great (quantitative) detail in this report. In 1838, Congress included standardization language in an amendment to an act passed in July 7, 1838, to follow the recommendations that Hassler had made, suggesting that a set of weights be conveyed to each state.[13] The Treasury, which had recently taken steps to standardize coinage, stepped in to construct a set of uniform measures for customhouses by 1838 (the Judson pamphlet has some lovely black-and-white photos of the balances that were constructed for this purpose).[14] Hassler was given use of the U.S. Arsenal (which could be found where the Potomac and Anacosta rivers met) to begin fabricating copies of the weights he had brought with him. A careful process of manufacturing molds and special tools ensued. Frazier notes that Hassler's process was so painstaking (and his ego so large) that his long timeline for producing the copies resulted in the 1835 resolution (and a number of subsequent ones) to distribute weights posthaste to various customhouses.[15] In the end, Hassler and his son produced only a single full set of the weights. Hassler met an untimely death by chest cold, but not before he had finished a final annual report on his progress to Congress.[16]

In 1843, Hassler's work was taken over by Alexander Dallas Bache (Benjamin Franklin's grandson), who then became the superintendent of the Coast Survey and the Office of Weights and Measures.[17] Joseph Saxton was appointed as his assistant. Saxton set about speeding up the process of producing the balances. Saxton made alterations to the original set to reduce the number of pieces from 612 to 264, reducing production time considerably. Frazier has much praise for the machine shop and twelve machinists who worked under Saxton's watch to create the balance sets.[18] By 1850, most of the states had received a complete set of the standard measuring devices devised by the Treasury. The last state to receive a copy was Hawaii in 1960.

During this same period, legislation adopting the metric system for use was also moving forward. The act that legalized the use of this system was passed July 28, 1866.[19] A resolution that, Judson points out, passed one day before the metric system was officially legal, asked the Treasury to supply a second set of weights and measures to the states. The Office of Weights and Measures set about making copies of the replica they had already acquired from France. Judson tells us in detail about each of the special iron bars and other variously heavy objects that were selected and carefully duplicated to form the metric standards.[20] With this detailed account of the appearance of these objects, down to the stamps of authenticity, the novice could probably deduce (should he ever have occasion to) whether an otherwise nondescript iron bar is part of one of these original sets.

Annotated List of Sources

The documents I concentrate on originate from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and, save for a few exceptions, do not cover much past 1924. There are some documents related to the creation of the Office of Weights and Measures (the post held by Hassler and later Saxton) and the creation and involvement of an International Bureau of Standards and Measures. The process of standards-making nearly always involves institution building. Thus, the process of fine-tuning and adjusting these measures continues today.[21]

Adams, John Quincy. Weights and Measures. Communicated to the Senate, February 22, 1821. *American State Papers*, 38, *Miscellaneous* 2: 656–750.

This report reviews foreign efforts to standardize weights and measures, looks at current regulations in the states, and makes proposals for how to move forward. Though his outline seems straightforward, what ensues is a philosophical, historical, and religious diatribe on the permutations of measurement across time. The basic structure of his argument is that the necessity of measurement originates in the individual man—who uses his arm (variable among individuals) to measure length. When a man meets a woman and they get married, he has the need to measure surface, distance, and capacity (or weight). These are measures arising from social existence. Naturally, from these, larger social groups arise, and thus the need for government. Adams's arguments have at their base the concepts of individual freedom, social responsibility, and democracy. Here is my favorite passage:

> When the child goes forth into the world to make a settlement for himself, and found a new family, civil society commences; government is instituted—the tillage of the ground, the discovery and use of metals, exchanges, traffic by barter, a common standard of measures, and mensuration by weight, or apparent specific gravity, all arise from the multiplying relations between man and man, now superadded to those between man and things (658).

The details associated with the building of Noah's Ark are also invoked during the explanation of the cubit!

Council of National Defense. *Check Your Weights and Measures*. Series A, Consumer-buyer Problems, no. 6. Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1941.

I was unable to find this physical publication; however, I wanted to list at least one consumer guide from the later period and point out that the Council of National Defense issued it. It is interesting to note that the defense council would publish a general consumer publication on the topic during the Second World War. The idea of standards as a matter of national security as a rationale for their upkeep is akin to John Quincy Adams's invocation of God and country.

Frazier, Arthur H. *United States Standards of Weights and Measures: Their Creation and Creators.* Smithsonian Studies in History and Technology, 40. Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1978.

This document is summarized at length in the historical background section.

Hassler, Ferdinand R. *Comparison of Weights and Measures of Length and Capacity.* 22nd Cong., 1st sess., July 2, 1832, H. Doc. 299, Serial Set 221.

This report was submitted along with a resolution of the Senate that concerned the result of an examination of the weights and measures used in several customhouses in the United States. The full report contains a few letters from the secretary of the treasury that record the correspondence between the Treasury on its progress in carrying out various comparisons of measures of length and capacity. The rest of the report provides the results of the various experiments and comparisons, detailing the differences between the eighty-two-inch scale on the yard, the differences between the meter and the yard, the results of the comparison of the platinum meter, and a litany of other measures. There are a number of fold-out plates showing plans for comparison apparatus. One can see from the fastidious organization of this report how detail-oriented Hassler must have been—and why his building of the balance sets for the states took forever.

Hassler, Ferdinand R. Report on the Plan for U.S. Standard Metric System. 25th Cong., 2nd sess., July 4, 1838, S. Doc. 500. *The New American State Papers: Science and Technology* 3, *Weights and Measures*. Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 1972–73.

This report was delivered to Congress on what must have been the completion of the first set of balances for the states. The most interesting aspect of the report is that it provides the directions for the use of the weight sets, which gives the reader another view into Hassler's personality and into the view of scientific accuracy that his work must have represented. The directions include:

- Never to touch the weights with the hand for any reason; instead, they are to be moved with a hook or fork. When one is removed from its box, it must be placed on clean, white paper.
- The weights must not be transported—to make comparisons, other weights must be brought to the place of deposit of the standards.
- Weights should not be exposed to open air when not absolutely necessary.

It is also interesting to note that the values of Hassler's weights were not stamped onto the weights—instead, they were written on pieces of paper that were affixed to their boxes, which he writes "should never be removed."

Hassler, Ferdinand R. Letter on Weights and Measures. 27th Cong., 1st sess., July 13, 1841, H. Doc. 33. *The New American State Papers: Science and Technology* 3, *Weights and Measures*. Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources, 1972–73.

This time, Hassler is inspecting ounce weights. This report also states that the "final set of ounce weights" is complete—evidently, the last set machined for the single infamous states set. Hassler reports that there are twentynine boxes, marked for each of the states. Metal objects and things of higher value were measured with ounce weights—they are used at the mints. He again provides instructions for the safe-keeping of the ounce weights:

- Box must always be kept right-side up (so the weights can’t slide out).
- Again, hands off the weights.
- Also, weights must not be wiped—instead they should be dusted with feathers, preferably those of wild birds (it really says this). They should not be exposed to dampness.

Hayes, Prest. *Message on the Bureau of International Weights and Measures*. 45th Cong, 2nd sess. H. Exec. Doc. 96, Serial Set 1809. Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1878.

This message comes from the secretary of state and responds to the House of Representatives resolution to help establish an International Bureau of Weights and Measures. The correspondence enclosed discusses the process by which France convened an international conference in Paris in 1870 to form the international body and how the meter was adopted as the international standard of length. The report also includes the official methodological statement for how to machine the new international meter.

Jefferson, Thomas. Plan for Establishing Uniformity in the Coinage, Weights, and Measures, of the United States. Communicated to the House of Representatives, July 13, 1790. *American State Papers, 37, Miscellaneous* 1: 13–20.

In this document, Jefferson lays out a plan for establishing uniformity in the coinage, the measurements of weight, and other measures of length for the United States. He points out the uncertainty associated with choosing any standard that would have “invariable length” by which to compare other measured portions. For instance, he discusses the difficulty of measuring the circumference of the Earth, the motion of the Earth around its axis, and the movement of a swinging pendulum. To circumvent the vagaries of the measures, Jefferson puts forward the proposal by Mr. Leslie (an ingenious artist of Philadelphia) to replace the pendulum with a cylindrical rod, giving careful consideration to its design such that the center of oscillation would be two-thirds its length. The rod should be made of iron. Having proposed a standard of measuring length, Jefferson moves to discuss coinage and weight measures and their histories in the early Congress. After devoting detailed discussion to the existing inconsistencies in the measures and proposing solutions, Jefferson recommends that new standards be introduced gradually into the customhouses, the centers of commerce at that time, to acquaint the merchants with the system.

Jefferson, Thomas. Coinage, Weights, and Measures. Communicated to the Senate, January 18, 1791. *American State Papers 37, Miscellaneous* 1: 36–37.

This document provides a postscript to the previous plan document. The document gives a disclaimer that the mathematical descriptions of the measures to be adopted in the larger report were intended only to give an idea of what the new measures, weights, and coins would be when compared with the old. In the spirit of a true scientific intellect, Jefferson devotes this addendum to a discussion of measurement inaccuracies. He writes that even the highest authority, Sir Issac Newton, has observed measurement inaccuracies such as he describes at length here.

Jones, Sarah Ann. *Weights and Measures in Congress: Historical Summary Covering the Period of the Continental Congress to and including the Adoption of the Joint Resolutions of 1836 and 1838*. NBS Miscellaneous Publication M122. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce, National Bureau of Standards, 1936.

Jones provides a detailed summary of the key reports and legislation associated with the establishment of uniform weights and measures. This document summary preceded both the Judson and Frazier accounts by nearly thirty years. In fact, the document’s introduction claims that it is the first to pull together reference citations on this topic. Though the author’s narrative sticks closely to descriptive facts about the documents, she frames the piece with the assertion that many achievements possible in her current day in the early 1930s are possible because of the existence of exact “scientific” standards of measurement. One example is the ability to measure the temperature, absolute zero, to those hotter than the surface of the sun, more than ten thousand degrees Fahrenheit. The pamphlet is the culmination of Jones’s master’s thesis in library science at George Washington University.

Judson, Lewis V. *Weights and Measures Standards of the United States: A Brief History*. NBS Special Publication 447. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Commerce, National Bureau of Standards, 1976.

This text is summarized at length in the historical background section.

McLane, Lewis. *Report on Weights and Measures in Custom-Houses*. 22d Cong., 1st sess., June 20, 1832, S. Doc. 168, Serial Set 214. Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1832.

This very lengthy document is the influential report comparing the measures used at various customhouses. It begins with records of correspondence between Lewis McLane, the secretary of the treasury, and Hassler, among others, about the progress of the comparisons. The later part of the report includes many tables of the numerical comparisons. This report is significant not only as scientific data, but also as a valuable policy object—real concrete evidence of the discrepancies that any congressman can understand and use as a tool to support an argument for standardization.

U.S. Congress. House. *An Act Directing Certain Experiments to be Made to Ascertain Uniform Standards of Weights and Measures for the United States . . . Passed the House of Representatives, May 19, 1796*. [Philadelphia] Printed by John

Fenno [1796]. Available from the Library of Congress, American Memory Project, http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.rbc/rbpe.22300700.

I examined the digital scan of this actual bill, classified on the site as "ephemera." Apparently it was ephemeral, given that Congress did not take action to forward its proposals.

U.S. Congress. House. *Weights and Measures Standardization*. 75th Cong., 1st sess., 1937, H. Rep. 1588, Serial Set 10085.

This report reminds Congress that while the metric system has been formally adopted through legislation, the "customary" (English) system has never been specifically endorsed in a law. The report assures Congress that this proposed bill is not intended to make the use of the metric system compulsory. Instead, the bill aims to align the inch and pound in relation to the (official) international meter.

U.S. Congress. House. Commerce Committee. *Report on Standard Weights and Measures*. 24th Cong., 1st sess., 1863, H. Rep. 449, Serial Set 249, Washington, D.C., 1863.

This is the report referred to in the historical section. It compels the secretary of the treasury to start the production of the sets of standard weights and measures for each of the states. There is a sense of urgency in the language here. The report calls attention to the fact that Congress has been invited to do this repeatedly over a number of different administrations. Hassler's influence and slow progress in machining the weights may also be an influence on the tone of this document.

U.S. Congress. Office of Technology Assessment. *Global Standards: Building Blocks for the Future TCT-512*. Washington, D.C.: U.S. GPO, 1992. Available: www.wws.princeton.edu/~ota/disk1/1992/9220_n.html

Chapter 1: Summary, Findings and Policy Options and Chapter 2: Standards Setting in the United States. This report examines how the development of standards of many types in the United States could affect United States trade. It is a very through and thought-provoking analysis that introduces the concepts "de facto, consensus, and regulatory" types of standards-making processes. This report provides insight into the political, social, and cultural motivations for building common frames of reference.

U.S. Congress. Senate. Manufactures Committee. *Metric System, Part 1*. Hearing on S. 2267. October 11–13, 1921. Pt. 1, 1–50. Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1921.

This hearing on the Senate bill debates making the metric system the single standard of weights and measures for certain types of use. This later Senate action, evidencing continued discussion over the use of the metric system in place of the accepted English standard for certain situations, shows that the debate over adoption continued well into the new century.

Weights and Measures—Defects in the Judiciary System in the Northwestern Territory. Communicated to Congress, January 8, 1795. *American State Papers* 37, *Miscellaneous* 1: 115–117.

An excerpt of a letter from Fauchet, the Minister of the French Republic, contained in this document discusses the possibility of the adoption of the metric system by the United States—a system that was recently adopted in France. Fauchet represents the process that has been going on in France as "tedious and constant" (1795). At the time of writing, France had devised a set of standards that consisted of both written specifications and models. Fauchet had hoped to dispatch a respected "natural scholar" to America to make a presentation of the metric standards; however, the esteemed citizen Dombey had recently perished in an expedition to Montserrat. Therefore, the materials were sent to President Washington without an envoy. This letter represents the pressure that Congress was under to keep up with developments abroad and to forge ties on this basic level with other nations, while dealing with a decidedly balkanized system at home.

Whitney, Albert W. *The Place of Standardization in Modern Life*. Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1924.

This publication, published in both English and Spanish for the First Pan American Standardization Conference in Lima in 1924, asserts that standardization should be viewed from a broad "thoroughly human" point of view—in contrast to merely an economic or business perspective. The pamphlet's philosophical premise is that the process of developing standards is much like natural evolution. Those standards that are hardy will survive, while those poorly designed will wither. There is a heavy natural metaphor used throughout the pamphlet to address not only the weights and measures issues, but the gamut of issues facing the developing world: health, sanitation, and so on.

Conclusion

As I discovered these documents, I was reminded of a strand of qualitative methodology associated with the study of public policy concerned with the use of physical objects and texts as research data. The researcher who considers only data contained in documents sometimes misses the human subtleties that formed their context. Though these legislative documents were quite formal in their nature, I found that with the help of texts such as Judson, Frazier, and the poetical treatments of John Quincy Adams I was able to view this collection as a testament not only to the pursuit of scientific precision, but also to the human processes of trial and error and the painful process of building consensus. ∎

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12. Frazier, 8.
13. *Military Academy at West Point*, 25 Cong. Ch. 169; 5 Stat. 264, July 7, 1838, 25th Cong., 2nd sess.
14. Judson, 7.
15. Frazier, 9.
16. Ibid.
17. An example report penned by Bache not reviewed here can be found in the Serial Set: *Report from Superintendent of Construction of Standard Weights, Measures, and Balances*, 29th Cong., 1st sess., 1846, S. Doc. 483, 29-1, Serial Set 478.
18. Frazier, 9.
19. *An Act to Authorize the Use of the Metric System of Weights and Measures*, 39 Cong. Ch. 301; 14 Stat. 339.
20. Judson, 14.
21. The cover of the 1976 Judson report has an old-style atomic molecule drawing on it with the caption "On October 14, 1960, the meter was redefined in terms of a wavelength of the krypton 86 atom." The iron ingot first machined by Hassler has apparently fallen into disuse.

Tips from Tim

Top Ten Things We Give Away Free

Tim Byrne

With the growth of the Internet, libraries have experienced a decrease in the amount of questions coming in to our reference desks. But if other libraries are like mine, there is an area of requests that has not decreased—the requests for those free things that supplement our services, such as staplers, hole punches, tape, scissors, rulers, tissues, financial aid forms, and, dare I say it, tax forms. Here are some of my thoughts on these give-aways.

1. Staples: I am not sure if we are getting more requests for staples because people are printing more material from the web or if it just seems that way, but it is safe to say that far more people come to our reference desk for staples than they do for information. We used to have a stapler that was probably acquired sometime prior to World War II. It was heavy and looked funny, but it worked great. Eventually, it quit working and we had to replace it with a sleek new stapler that lasted a couple of weeks before it started misbehaving. We got an electric stapler that works pretty well but appears to be a bit too high tech for many of our students. Most seem to prefer to use the manual stapler even when it jams or doesn't staple all the way. We have tried a variety of staplers and they all have had problems. I don't know what tools other libraries keep at their reference desks, but we have a pair of needle-nose pliers at our desk that get heavy use unjamming staplers.

2. Three-hole punch: I have developed a real fondness for people who prefer the three-hole punch over the stapler. We bought an electric hole punch a number of years ago and it worked fine until a couple of days ago, when I first started thinking about writing this column. It is dead now, but we are replacing it because we don't want to force any more people to use our staplers.

3. Paperclips: Other than the occasional spill, paperclips are probably the least troublesome of all the free supplies we offer. Despite their benign nature, most people still prefer staples.

4. Catalog cards: We put out old recycled catalog cards next to our public computers for people to write down stuff such as call numbers. We still have two big boxes of catalog cards that we can put out, but when that runs out, I don't know what we will do . . . until we don't need our shelf list anymore.

5. Pencils: We also put out little golf pencils along with our recycled catalog cards. It seems like we have been putting out these pencils forever. I always thought it weird that people come to the library without a pen or pencil, but then will take our free pencils home with them when they leave. However, I was wrong. They aren't taking them home, they just leave them in other parts of the library. The other day, one of the library security guards brought us a large box full of thousands of golf pencils. The security guards patrol the building at closing time and apparently they pick up the pencils they find around the building. They finally decided that rather than just letting the pencils pile up in the security office, they should take them back where they started. We won't be buying pencils for many years to come.

6. Wite Out: You would think that if students are writing their papers on a computer, they wouldn't need Wite Out, but . . . I may apply for a Reynolds Research Award to find out what they're doing with it.

7. Scissors: The best way to keep scissors from walking away is to break off the tips of each scissor. They still work well, but people aren't quite as interested in stealing them.

8. Tape: It always cracks me up when someone comes to the desk and asks if they can borrow some tape. Seldom does anyone return the tape when they are done holding together whatever they needed the tape to hold together.

9. Rulers: These disappear a lot. When this happens, we have to resist borrowing the ruler used to measure all of our newly added documents from the new book truck. The person doing the measuring gets very testy if the ruler is missing. We keep a very accurate count of the total linear footage of the government documents collection; nothing gets added to or withdrawn from our collection without getting measured, except for maybe lost or stolen books. Now, if I could figure out how to subtract the number of cataloged items from the number of linear feet in our collection, I wouldn't have such a problem with the ARL statistics each year.

10. Tax Forms: Providing tax forms is a service that my staff loves to hate, but would never dream of stopping. We give out a lot of forms. I keep expecting that we will be able to cut back on the number of forms and instructions we request each year as more people get their forms from the web, but this doesn't seem to be happening and every year we have to request more forms to get us through April 15. Last year we distributed more than 25,000 forms and close to 9,000 instruction books. That is down from a high of 80,000 forms in the days before the forms were on the web. One benefit of giving out tax forms is that we do get to meet a lot of interesting people who would probably never come in our library otherwise. But that's another *Tips* column for another day . . . ∎

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Reviews

Local and Regional Government Information: How to Find It, How to Use It. Edited by Mary Martin. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Pr., 2005. $65. ISBN: 1573564125.

Mary Martin has edited a useful new book about finding local and regional government information. By regional information, she means governmental entities larger than municipalities but smaller than states. This is an area of government where it is hard to generalize about the location, or even the existence, of information among governmental bodies, but Martin and other chapter authors are able to give valuable guidance to researchers and librarians in a well-organized and readable way. This book is part of the How to Find It, How to Use It series currently published by Greenwood Press.

The stated purpose of the book is to attempt to "provide a framework for understanding how local governments are organized, how they produce information, where that information may be located, and how to go about finding it and using it" (xiii). Wisely, the authors use specific municipalities as examples of some principles of finding local government information, rather than trying to comprehensively describe municipal information. Chapter authors are very diverse geographically, so there are a variety of examples to draw from.

The decision to provide a framework rather than trying to be comprehensive makes the book useful for finding municipal information from governmental bodies that, due to their small populations, would never be covered in a comprehensive listing. These municipalities do produce useful information, though, and this book will give researchers the knowledge they need in order to find information about any local or regional government.

Also, the resources covered are *about* local and regional information, not necessarily produced *by* local and regional governments. Much local information is compiled and published by federal agencies, such as the U.S. Department of Education and the Census Bureau, as well as by private publishers and non-profit agencies, and these sources are included. Sources covered range from extremely expensive online indexing services to free web sites to a wide variety of print sources.

The book is a useful tool for librarians providing reference service for local and regional government information as well as for researchers. It describes bibliographies with detailed information about many online and print reference tools as well as suggestions about where to start when patrons are looking for various types of information.

The first three chapters set out some baseline issues that most researchers looking for local and regional government information will encounter: forms of local government; issues encountered in government archives; and access issues, including privacy and freedom of information laws as well as some practical issues such as missing records and overlapping jurisdictions.

The remaining chapters each describe a type of resource: general indexes and bibliographies; codes; administrative sources; court records; genealogy; maps; and information about the census, health, crime and law enforcement, parks and museums, the environment, education, planning and zoning, transportation and public works, finance and taxes, and small businesses. The book has a detailed index, but each chapter also starts with a detailed outline listing the topics covered and sources discussed in the chapter so readers can easily tell if the chapter contains the information they seek.

Finding local and regional information can be a challenge for both researchers and librarians. This book does an excellent job of pointing them in the right direction for a wide variety of topics.

Karen Hogenboom, *Assistant Government Information Librarian, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign; hogenboo@uiuc.edu*

Industry Research Using the Economic Census: How to Find It, How to Use It. Jennifer C. Boettcher and Leonard M. Gaines. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Pr., 2004. $85. ISBN: 157356351X.

The wealth and quality of data offered in the economic census makes it an invaluable resource for business-related research. Additional obvious factors that make this resource attractive include its availability both in print and online and at generally no direct cost to the user. However, combing through this vast amount of business- and industry-related information in the economic census to locate specific data, without a navigational tool or assistance, can seem like a daunting task for the average researcher.

Industry Research Using the Economic Census is a much-needed, practical guide on how to find and efficiently use the valuable economic census data. Boettcher and Gaines explain that this resource has a double purpose, namely "to explain Census concepts, methods, terminology, and data sources in an understandable manner; and to assist Census users in locating needed Census data" (ix).

This reference source is basically divided into three meaningful sections. The first section, "Understanding the Economic Census," comprises the first six chapters. It includes the history of the economic census starting from its infancy in 1810, the introduction of the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) System in 1947, and then the replacement of the 1987 SIC System by the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) in 1997.

Some of the major changes to the NAICS in 2000 are also discussed. Further, terminologies and concepts applied in the economic census as well as procedures used to collect and manipulate data are tackled.

In chapter four, Boettcher and Gaines stress the difficulty of accessing time series data in transitioning from the SIC system to NAICS. A chapter is devoted to special reports and publications, including advance reports, which provide preliminary data about the U.S. economy, while industry reports and geographic area series provide detailed information at the industry and geographic levels respectively.

The second section, "Selected Industries," explores five examples of major industry sectors, including agriculture, transportation, and warehousing. The six chapters in this section contain SIC-NAICS comparison (bridging) charts that help readers to understand how the industrial definitions have changed in transitioning from the SIC system to the NAICS. The final chapter (chapter twelve) gives concise coverage of the remaining sectors, such as mining, utilities, and construction—industry sectors that were not discussed in the earlier chapters of section two.

The third and final section of this reference book consists of the appendixes, which contain a list of acronyms applied in the book, sample economic census questionnaires, and a list of the regional federal depository libraries, state data centers, and Census Bureau regional offices.

This reference source provides several noteworthy features. At the beginning of each chapter, the subheadings within the chapter are accessible as a numbered list containing a number of tables and figures as well. Another useful feature at the end of most of the chapters in section one (chapters one through six) of this book is a bibliography. Readers also find sprinkled in some of the chapters a mind-jogging question and answer feature called "Test Your Knowledge." I took a stab at answering some of these questions and I have to say they make this guidebook interesting and readable. Some of the chapters in the first section also include summaries. The index at the end of the book is another helpful tool.

In summary, *Industry Research Using the Economic Census* makes navigating the economic census efficient and less intimidating for the business researcher. As part of the How to Find It, How to Use It series currently published by Greenwood Press, it is an excellent addition to any library.

Meseret Gebremichael, *Business Reference Librarian/Assistant Professor, Southern Illinois University Carbondale; mgebremi@lib.siu.edu*

Report from World Library and Information Congress: 71st IFLA in Oslo

Jackie Druery, Princeton University (GIOPS member 2005-2009)
Sandy Peterson, Yale University (GIOPS member 2003-2007)

Norway was a wonderful venue for the 71st International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) Conference—the country is beautiful, the people friendly, and the weather excellent. Oslo is a city that has excellent public transportation, and it's also very walkable. The theme of the conference was "Libraries—A Voyage of Discovery." The IFLA conference, not unlike other conferences, is a kaleidoscope of overlapping events, including exhibits, business meetings, programs, plenary sessions, country caucuses, poster sessions, and receptions. The cultural evening and the musical component of the opening and closing sessions provide the perspective of the host country. More than 3,000 conference participants from 117 countries attended.

At the opening ceremony on Sunday morning, the Norwegian Minister for Culture Valgerd Svarstad Haugland, IFLA President Kay Raseroka, and the keynote speaker Francis Sejersted all focused on the importance of libraries for freedom of expression.

"Freedom of expression is based on truth, democracy, and the free formation of opinions," emphasized Sejersted. Professor Sejersted was chair of the Norwegian Commission of Freedom of Expression (1996–1999); the Commission proposed Article 100, on freedom of expression, in the Norwegian Constitution. Article 100 was adopted in autumn 2004. Elisabeth Sundholm, a member of IFLA's Government Information and Official Publications Section (GIOPS) for eight years, provided a publication to GIOPS members that included excerpts from the report of the commission.

The opening session concluded with an impressive ceremony of candles and flags from all countries, accompanied by a violinist. Although neither of us saw him, the King of Norway attended the conference opening.

The country caucuses were held Sunday evening. There was a large attendance at the United States caucus. Speakers reviewed the results of the recent IFLA elections; the most exciting was the election of a former documents librarian, Barbara Ford, to the IFLA Governing Board.

GIOPS promotes the discovery, collection, bibliographic control, preservation, and dissemination of information from and about governments, intergovernmental organizations, and public nongovernmental organizations. Eleanor Frierson, National Agricultural Library, United States, organized and chaired an excellent and well-attended GIOPS program held on Monday morning. In keeping with the theme of the conference, the GIOPS program theme was "Sailing the Treacherous Seas of Digital Government Information: From Pamphlet Boxes to Digital Libraries." Six papers were accepted and five were presented at the conference. Mariam Ansari, head of the Selection and Acquisition Section, Management and Planning Organization (MPO), Iran, discussed the types of publications produced and the role of the MPO as one of the largest governmental establishments in Iran. Fay Durant, from the department of Library and Information Studies, University of the West Indies, shared her research on "The World Wide Web Enhancing E-government in the Caribbean." Her research closely assesses a number of Caribbean web sites that facilitate e-government and identifies roles of libraries in enhancing citizens' access to e-government information.

Rajen Munoo's (National Library Board, Singapore) paper addressed "The Challenge of Creating and Sustaining a Socially Inclusive E-citizenry: The Proactive Advocacy Role of the National Library Board, Singapore." The dilemma faced by Singapore is that its major resource is its human population, so the need to renew and re-skill is imperative for its survival. "Developing the Digital World of Government Information and Official Publications: A View from the United States" was the paper submitted by Eleanor G. Frierson, Robin Haun-Mohamed, and Thomas F. Lahr (presented by Lahr). Lahr outlined three federal government programs—the National Biological Information Infrastructure, the U.S. Government Printing Office digitization plans, and Science.gov. The paper presented by Geoffrey D. Swindells, University of Missouri-Columbia ("Informed Citizens in the Global Information Commons"), discusses the political literacy of the citizenry and argues that political literacy in the network society depends on how well we bring the reference structure of the library to the network itself. The complete text of all of the papers can be found at www.ifla.org/IV/ifla71/Programme.htm#15August.

Monday concluded with a reception in the park opposite the renovated National Library. Only invited guests actually got into the National Library that evening, but the musical and dance performances were transmitted to large screens in the park. Tuesday evening was an evening to remember—it was the cultural evening held in the Open Air Museum of Norwegian Culture at Bygdoy. The weather was excellent. The museum features more than 150 buildings, mostly from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The buildings have been gathered from around the country and are clustered according to region of origin. Another highlight is the restored stave church, built around 1200. The mayor's reception was held at the Oslo Radhus (town hall) on Wednesday evening. The building was completed in 1950 to commemorate the city's 900th anniversary. The interior halls and chambers are decorated

with splashy and impressive frescoes and paintings by some of Norway’s most prominent artists. It’s here that the Nobel Peace Prize is awarded on December 10 each year.

Library visits are usually scheduled on Thursday. One of us (Sandy) visited the Statistics Norway Library. This library was established in 1917 and is open to the public. It contains statistics from more than one hundred countries and has ten employees (seven librarians). It became an Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) depository in 2005. Its basic services are free of charge; approximately 60 percent of questions come in by e-mail. It maintains a useful web site with links to primary statistical agencies in other countries (www.ssb.no/en/links). The library is in an attractive setting, built in the center courtyard with glass and wood. The web site for the library is www.ssb.no/english/library.

Jackie visited the Norwegian Nobel Institute Library, which is located in a building close to the Royal Palace. The institute has been located in this building, a classic mansion house, since 1905. Anne Cecilie Kjelling, head librarian, spoke to us in the room where the winner of the Nobel Peace Prize is announced each year in October. We even had our photo taken standing at the podium! Anne then showed us the room where the Nobel Committee deliberates and the morning concluded with a tour of the library. The library collects in the fields of political history from 1800, peace, international law, and international economics. It is a depository for several international organizations, including the League of Nations, the United Nations, International Labour Organization, International Court of Justice, and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. The library currently has about 193,000 volumes and 220 current journals. The library’s holdings obtained after January 1991 can be searched through the web site and are also in OCLC, and can be borrowed through interlibrary loan. Materials obtained prior to January 1991 are listed in a card catalog. There is also a comfortable and well-equipped reading room where researchers can work with materials onsite. More information about the institute and the library can be found at www.nobel.no.

The Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression World Report 2005 on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries, titled “Libraries, National Security, Freedom of Information Laws and Social Responsibilities,” was launched during the IFLA Conference. For more information, see www.ifla.org/faife/report/WorldReport-pr-2005.htm.

GIOPS held two business meetings, on Saturday preceding the opening, and on Friday morning following the closing. All sections were asked to do a section review and develop a strategic plan, so part of our meetings was focused on planning. Jane Wu (Food and Agriculture Organization) was elected chair, Jackie Druery (Princeton) was elected secretary, and Peter Raggett (OECD) was elected treasurer. Jackie Druery is the one of the new members on the committee (a complete list of new members is yet to be received). Sundholm received a certificate of thanks from IFLA. She also provided GIOPS members with a treat of cloudberries and cream at the Friday meeting—excellent! If you are curious about cloudberries see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cloudberry. ▌

2005 Resolutions Written or Endorsed by GODORT

Resolution on Access to National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency Publications (Midwinter 2005); Adopted CD#20.3.

Resolution on FY2006 GPO Salaries and Expenses Appropriations (Midwinter 2005); presented to ALA Council as Resolution Opposing GPO’s Decision to Eliminate Print Distribution of Important Government Information; Adopted CD#20.2

Resolution on the USA PATRIOT Act and Libraries; COL Privacy Subcommittee resolution, endorsed in principle by the GODORT Membership (Annual 2005); Adopted CD#20.6

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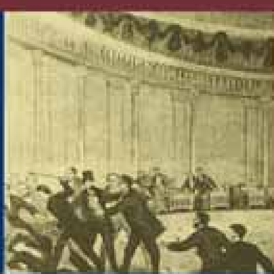

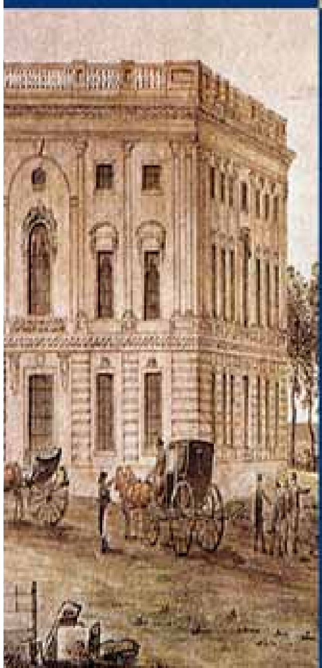

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