DttP

Documents to the People

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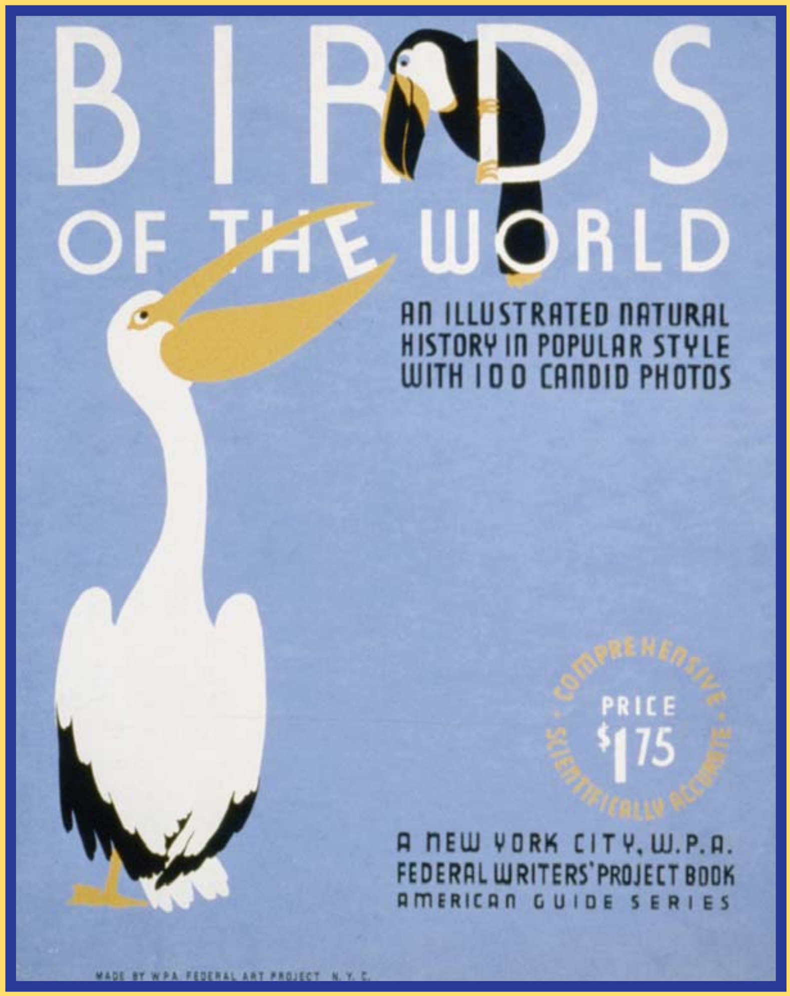
In This Issue



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Columns

Articles

About the cover: The cover image is a poster advertising WPA Federal Writers' Project illustrated guide to natural history of birds of the world. *Birds of the World* (http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3b48865) is available from the Prints and Photographs collection of the Library of Congress. It was created as part of the WPA Federal Art Project, between 1936 and 1939. The image is attributed to Sidney Jacobson.

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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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Editor's Corner

Andrea Sevetson

Many moons ago, after serving as GODORT chair, I served on the ALA Conference Committee as a representative of the round tables. One of the things I learned from that experience is some of what it takes to organize a conference such as ALA. Some of the fascinating facts include:

- Meetings were scheduled using a hospital room scheduling program. Nothing else was out there that could handle the level of complexity that we demanded.
- There are conference cities with more big ballrooms than small meeting rooms. We like the cities with more small meeting rooms—though of course we use the ballrooms.
- Rooms are set up once each day for AV.
- The exhibits for the Annual Conference and Midwinter Meeting make a profit for the association, so much so that when an event like the SARS scare in 2003 affects both the number of conference attendees and exhibitor attendance, association revenue is significantly impacted.
- From the perspective of my pocketbook, renting an eight- by ten-foot exhibit space for two or three days is amazingly expensive.
- Finally, exhibitors like to our smiling faces in the exhibits halls. If they don't see you, it's not worth their time and money to attend the trade show. (In the interest of full disclosure, I need to tell those of you who don't know already that I'm now one of those exhibitors.)

Back when I was on the other side of the fence, working in a library, I used to maximize my scarce time in the exhibits hall by "scheduling" my exhibit time. I took the list of exhibitors, wrote down vendor names and booth numbers, and then put the list in numerical order to take best advantage of the time I had. With documents as the subject, I never had more than fifteen to twenty booths on my list, and, I'll admit to sometimes just eyeballing what was in a booth and moving on. I would have to navigate those vendors out in the midst of the aisles trying to pass off their kiddie lit on me (the magic words "documents librarian" served to fend them off!), but I could usually get through my list in about ninety minutes if I didn't dawdle too much along the way . . .

Why do I bring this up? Well, several years ago, one of our colleagues boasted proudly that he never went into exhibits. I still remember this because I was rather taken aback at the time. But this boast made me try to figure out what I got out of exhibits.

I'm not one of those librarians who brings back bags and bags of material. One of the other ALA journals had an article about conferences that advocated bringing extra suitcases just to bring back the books and other fun items picked up at conferences. Truth to tell, I bring back very little. I prefer to bring back a bookmark with a URL to shop, or order the item to have shipped than to pick up materials to lug around the conference. My goal is to bring home less paper than I brought.

So what did I accomplish in exhibits when I worked in a library?

- Picked up new sales catalogs or flyers;
- eyeballed product demonstrations to make sure I knew what was the latest or what I could expect;
- checked I had the latest edition of "x" on my library shelves;
- checked for new vendors for material I was interested in;
- chatted with my sales representatives (the vendors) to make sure I had the latest information (and some gossip) on what was coming down the pipeline so I might save money for it (because I also handled international documents, some of my vendors were IGO representatives and could be extremely helpful with information about upcoming events and publications);
- picked up pencils or other small goodies from the IRS booth for my student workers, who kept the forms stocked for our students;
- ran into friends and people I needed to talk to about GODORT business; and
- picked up only choice goodies.

I never: purchased a book or took a free one (contributed to the return weight); kept anything I didn't honestly think I would use . . . except bags and those I periodically have to pitch, as they seem to reproduce like rabbits in my dark closets. I've made a few mistakes along the way—I've got a pencil cup or two that is useless, and I think I still have some really nice thermoses tucked away in the basement I've never, ever used.

Essentially, I viewed exhibits as an extension of the part of my job that works to stay abreast of new developments and keep an eye out for my collection—kind of like looking at the ads in *DttP*. It may not have been the most fun I've ever had, but I always got something out of it, and it certainly wasn't as tortuous as some of the badly run meetings I've had the pleasure to sit through in my life!

And frankly, you'll see remarkable things going on in exhibits. Since leaving my library employment: I've had my picture taken with Elvis, stood in line for coffee with Cleopatra, watched a robot chat up every woman walking by, seen Henry Winkler (wearing a really awful yellowish-tan suit) strolling with his handler, shaken hands with a cowboy, seen all kinds of authors (whom I didn't recognize) awaiting their adoring public at book signings, and, I'll be candid here, I've seen some really badly dressed librarians, and some really sharply dressed ones, too (but why is it the bad ones are so much more memorable? And do you know, some librarians actually DO have glasses and buns!). Some of the exhibitors are pretty funny. One conference I attended had the guys next to my booth and across the way throwing some balls during dead times in exhibits. One ball got stuck in the rafters and they had to use others to shoot it down. At the same conference, one (married) exhibitor kept getting hit on by attractive conference attendees, much to the delight of my colleague in the booth, who was taking note of all of the activities.

There's a whole other life out there—if you've got a spare hour, you should come and check out the spectacle, if not the information that's being provided for you.

Some Goodbyes

Goodbyes are always tough—especially when the individuals have contributed to a great team effort. This is the last issue for both Lynne Stuart and Dena Hutto of our editorial team. Lynne has been our advertising editor for these past eleven issues and has done a phenomenal job. Even the ALA staff give her kudos, telling other editors "*DttP* has the *best* ad rep" (some of the other journal editors wanted her name, but I refused to give it out). We have more ads, from more sources, than a lot of the other journals published by ALA. Lynne has always had a great sense of humor, been organized, and met her deadlines—and those are traits that all editors love and appreciate. Dena has edited all of the columns (except mine!) for the past eleven issues. That's roughly one-third of the journal each time. She has coordinated with each of the columnists and dealt with their needs for extended deadlines, thereby taking that weight off of me. She's a great editor, and she hates the split infinitive (which I wouldn't know from Adam's housecat).

Both Dena and Lynne have contributed to the entire team effort as well. They help plan issues either by recruiting authors for articles or by serving as a sounding board for the ideas of others. They vote on issue covers (such as this one), and when their lead editor is feeling a little insecure about making the deadlines, they're able to tell her where things are and reassure her. Lynne and Dena, thank you so much for all you have done for these past eleven issues—we'll all miss you!

Enjoy your issue of *DttP*! ■

From the Chair

Arlene Weible

Because this is my last column for *DttP*, I've undertaken the inevitable task of reflecting over the last year. When I began thinking about our accomplishments over the last year, my first impulse was to wonder, did we accomplish anything? Upon further reflection, however, I think there are several achievements over the last year that have helped GODORT to move further down the path of planning for its future.

The migration of the GODORT web site to ALA servers is one such achievement. It is my opinion that GODORT needs to be more attuned to the larger organization in which we reside, and a simple way to achieve this is to make better use of the services offered. The web site migration will provide GODORT with a more integrated presence within the ALA web site, and it will give us an opportunity to interact with and provide feedback to the staff. Hopefully, this will allow us to funnel some of the energy we expend in criticizing ALA down a more productive path. Make sure you check out the new site: www.ala.org/ala/godort.

Another achievement during the 2006 Midwinter Meeting was the successful passage of a GODORT-sponsored resolution to expand round table representation on ALA Council. The proposal allows eligibility for council representation when a round table's membership reaches one percent of total ALA personal membership, rather than the current method, which determines eligibility based on being one of the five largest round tables. While it still needs to be approved by ALA membership, I think the support received for this proposal is evidence of the respect that members have for the work that is done in round tables, and the recognition that our voices are important in shaping the direction of ALA. I ask everyone to join me in extending thanks to Larry Romans, author of the resolution, for crafting a practical proposal that kept the issue from becoming controversial.

Midwinter also brought an opportunity to experiment with the GODORT meeting schedule. The schedule reflected efforts to consolidate meetings, shorten meeting times, and coordinate agendas and content of meetings. The initial feedback received about the changes was positive, with particular emphasis on the desirability of creating time for GODORT members to attend the meetings of other ALA groups. One proposal suggested that GODORT committees concentrate on accomplishing their work at the Midwinter Meetings, freeing members to attend other groups' meetings the Annual Conference. I think this proposal bears further scrutiny, and I plan to encourage committee chairs to experiment with this idea when planning their upcoming meetings, as well as encouraging all members to attend the programs and meetings of other groups at the Annual Conference. When members do attend meetings of other groups, I encourage them to tell others about what GODORT is doing, so we can build relationships and keep government information issues from being marginalized.

Finally, I believe the recent attention given to GODORT membership issues will bear fruit into the future. The decline in membership has had an impact not only on GODORT's budget and standing within ALA, but also on its psyche. Recent questions about the value of GODORT membership raised on Govdoc-l have challenged GODORT leaders to evaluate how our activities are addressing membership needs. I have tried to get the ball rolling by charging GODORT committee and task force chairs to summarize how their current activities serve member needs, but this is really just an initial step in planning for GODORT's future. A fundamental reevaluation of GODORT's mission, goals, and organizational structure is needed, and I have every confidence that Aimee

Quinn, our incoming chair, and future GODORT leaders will continue to tackle these needs and concerns.

I'd like to make one final note of thanks to the members of GODORT's Steering Committee, and all the GODORT members that have provided me with advice and feedback over the last year. Your encouragement and support has made this past year a highlight in my career, and I am truly grateful.

Washington Report

Patrice McDermott

There appears to be increasingly strong conflation of interests between the White House and the executive branch agencies to the detriment of public access to good, reliable information.

Toxic Release Inventory (TRI) "Burden Reduction"

While the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has not officially announced the number of comments it received on its proposed rule to change the threshold for detailed reporting, OMB Watch reports that, according to the more than a dozen organizations that provided online tools for submitting comments, at least 70,000 comments were submitted. According to EPA sources, comments against the proposals continue to pour in, despite the comment period having ended on January 13. OMB Watch reports that, at first glance, the comments submitted show extensive opposition and little support for the agency's plans. Those speaking out against EPA's proposals included state agencies, health professionals, scientists, environmentalists, labor, attorneys general, and even Congress, all of whom raised substantive concerns with the plan.

Reps. Frank Pallone (D-NJ), Hilda Solis (D-CA), and Luis Gutierrez (D-IL) coordinated a letter signed by more than fifty members of the U.S. House of Representatives urging EPA to "immediately withdraw [the] proposed changes to TRI requirements" (see www.ombwatch.org/tricenter/HouseTRILetter.pdf). As previously reported, members of both the Senate and House have written EPA expressing their misgivings about the proposed changes.

According to OMB Watch, the EPA has begun gathering stakeholder input on the possibility of alternate-year reporting under TRI. Under the law, EPA must notify Congress about its intent to alter the frequency of TRI reports. Then the agency must decide whether the change would harm the usefulness of the program to states, health professionals, and the general public. Congressional approval is not required for either the TRI threshold reporting changes or reduction in the frequency of TRI reporting. Congress can intervene, however, before either proposal is finalized.

Deep Budget Cuts to EPA Libraries

EPA officials have proposed a budget that would deeply cut funds for EPA libraries. The proposed budget includes a $2 million cut that will likely result in the closure of the EPA Headquarters Library as well as many of its twenty-seven regional and laboratory libraries. This change will make it more difficult for the agency's policymakers and the public to leverage the extensive, accurate knowledge found in these libraries and to make important decisions that affect the environment, thereby potentially compromising the public's health. Additionally, half of the FY 2006 serials budget, $500,000 out of $1 million, has been cut from the serials budget of the Office of Administration and Resources Management research libraries in Cincinnati and in Research Triangle Park (RTP), North Carolina. The total budget cut to the EPA libraries is $2.5 million.

Already, several libraries have closed or are on the brink of closing. According to informed reports, the fate of the EPA's regional libraries will be up to each regional office. An additional problem is that the libraries are sometimes staffed by the same contractor, but under different contracts with different terms. An EPA region can unilaterally close its library. It is reported that the Cincinnati library and the larger of the two RTP libraries will remain open; the National Enforcement Investigations Center library will remain open, but staff hours have been cut back; the Region 8 library will likely remain open; and the Region 9 library has reduced its hours and cut staff hours.

EPA and Science

A flood of bad news about the politicization of science and the repression of government scientists' views has been occurring of late. For the best coverage, refer to the "Scientific Integrity" section of the Union of Concerned Scientists' web site (www.ucsusa.org/scientific_integrity/interference/scientific-integrity-in-the-news.html). Here are a few examples:

EPA Rejects Recommendations of Scientific Advisory Committee

On February 26, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* reported that, for the first time, the EPA is rejecting recommendations from its Clean Air Scientific Advisory Committee as it moves forward with revised rules governing how much soot and dust can be permitted in the air, and has decided to exempt rural areas as well as dust generated by agriculture and mining from the revised rules. This action on the part of EPA has led the government-appointed advisory committee to formally dispute an agency decision in a letter sent to members for their signatures.

CRS Report Accuses EPA of Slanting Analysis

In December 2005, the *Washington Post* reported that a November 23 Congressional Research Service (CRS) report found that the Bush administration skewed its analysis of pending air pollution legislation to favor its bill over two competing proposals. According to CRS, an EPA analysis exaggerated the costs of controlling mercury and underestimated the benefits, such as reducing premature deaths and illnesses linked to air pollution, and imposing more stringent pollution controls. Interestingly, the CRS report was not commissioned by a lawmaker.

The administration's "Clear Skies" legislation aims to achieve a 70 percent cut in emissions of sulfur dioxide and nitrogen oxide after 2018. The alternative legislation, by Carper (D-DE) and by Jeffords (I-VT), demands steeper and faster cuts and would also reduce emissions of carbon dioxide, which are linked to global warming. The Bush plan would cut emissions of neurotoxic mercury by 70 percent; the Jeffords' bill reduces them by 90 percent.

An EPA spokeswoman said the agency based its cost estimates on mercury controls by gathering comments from boilermaker workers, power companies, and emission control companies, whereas the Research Service used a single study to reach its conclusions on mercury.

Information on Federal Civilian Workers Withheld

Now for something that is not about EPA. The Transactional Records Access Clearinghouse (TRAC), a research group at Syracuse University, has sued under the Freedom of Information Act to get the names and work locations of about 900,000 federal government civilian workers.

This information had enjoyed a tradition of openness that began in 1816. The Bush administration has, without explanation, withheld the information.

TRAC has, since 1989, been posting a database online with the name, work location, salary, and job category of all 2.7 million federal civilian workers except those in some law enforcement agencies. Some examples of how this information is used by reporters and government watchdogs groups include:

- The Union of Concerned Scientists and Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER) used the database to identify and locate U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service scientists for a survey about political intervention into their research.
- TRAC used the data to monitor the Bush administration's (unmet) promise to increase security along the Canadian border after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks.
- The *New York Daily News* used the data to find the names of guards at a federal detention center where prisoner abuse was alleged. Another reporter used it to find the names of Transportation Security Administration guards assigned to New York's LaGuardia Airport to pursue cargo theft allegations. ∎

Tech Watch

PDF/A

Megan Dreger

PDF (portable document format) has become a ubiquitous format for electronic documents. We create PDF documents, view them on the web, send them as e-mail attachments, and convert other formats (such as geographic information system-generated maps) to PDF so that they are easier to use. The fact that the format is so common and that the reader software is free causes many of us to take it for granted. However, it is precisely because this format is so widely used that it is important that it can be archived so that we don't lose the content.

Many government publications online are in PDF format, and agencies have developed guidelines to deal with archiving these files. For example, in the National Archives and Records Administration's *Transfer Instructions for Permanent Electronic Records* there is a section on "Records in Portable Document Format (PDF)" (www.archives.gov/records-mgmt/initiatives/pdf-records.html). The Administrative Office of the U.S. Federal Courts is another example—they require many documents related to court cases be in PDF. Those files are put in the case management and electronic case files system so that attorneys, judges, and the public can access them online (http://pacer.psc.uscourts.gov/cmecf/index.html).

Problems with Archiving PDFs

PDFs were designed to be used on any operating system, and thus be "portable." PDF is proprietary, but the specification has been publicly released, which allows others to produce software that can read and manipulate PDF files. A PDF file includes both text and graphics so that authors can control content as well as layout. It also allows such things as special fonts, multimedia content, JavaScript, and encryption that are useful but make archiving problematic.

Fonts are a good example of the difficulty, in part because we don't always give them much thought beyond their appearance. Fonts are actually small software programs that describe the characters in a particular typeface. The problem is that not everyone has the same fonts on his or her computer. A PDF created by Person A and sent to Person B will render properly only if Person B has all the fonts used in the file. If the fonts are not there, the file (or parts of it) will not look like the original and may even be gibberish. To get around this, Person A can use *embedded* fonts to create the PDF file. Embedding means that the font software is bundled with the PDF file so that Person B has both the file and the fonts necessary for it to display properly. However, like other software, fonts are subject to licensing restrictions that may restrict or prohibit embedding.

Other PDF content is similarly problematic because it is not self-contained. For example, JavaScript is often used with PDF files to create interactive documents such as forms. This a useful feature, but it makes it difficult to archive because the JavaScript may require interaction with the originating host in order to work. Because the archive will not necessarily have this capability (either by design or because the originating host no longer exists), the document's functionality, and possibly content, is lost. These and other problems can be summed up by saying that a PDF file is not necessarily self-contained and doesn't necessarily have enough documentation. That's where PDF/A comes in.

PDF/A

PDF/A is a subset of PDF that addresses the issues related to archiving PDF files. It is officially called "Document management—Electronic document file format for long-term preservation—Part 1: Use of PDF 1.4 (PDF/A-1)" and was approved as an ISO standard (ISO 19005-1) last September, which will likely cause it to be widely adopted.

PDF/A requires that all fonts be embedded, and does not allow JavaScript, executables, external content, or encryption. It also is designed to produce files that are self-documented through metadata. A more detailed list of these requirements can be found on the digitalpreservation.gov site at www.digitalpreservation.gov/formats/fdd/fdd000125.shtml. The standard provides for two levels of compliance: PDF/A-1a (stricter) and PDF/A-1b (less stringent).

Although this may mark a major step forward in archiving electronic files, experts warn that PDF/A alone does not guarantee easy preservation. It also isn't necessarily the best solution for archiving electronic files. In any case, it will probably be a commonly used archival format. There is already a new version (PDF/A-2) being developed to address additional archiving issues. ∎

State and Local Documents Roundup

State Data Centers

Kris Kasianovitz

"Things are intuitive after you have done them once, or twice . . ."—B. Pecotte

Most of us possess a certain knowledge of and facility with census data and statistics. We probably help our library users with it on a daily basis. Working at a university library, with access to a data archive and social science research center, I never really investigated who or what the Census State Data Centers are. Well, I found out. At the 2006 ALA Midwinter Meeting GODORT Update, the State and Local Documents Task Force sponsored speaker Beverly Pecotte from the Texas State Data Center (SDC). As I listened to Beverly's engaging presentation, I realized that the data centers provide the same kind of services that I have on my campus for those who do not have access to such resources! After the conference, I went through the SDC web site, looked up my SDC in California, and phoned them for more information.

The SDCs are part of the U.S. Census Bureau's State and Governmental Programs Team, which includes the Data Centers, Governors Liaisons, and Census Depository Libraries. The Governor's Liaisons program began in 1997 with the goal of making the Census 2000 data collection more accurate and less expensive. It is essentially an outreach program to keep governors informed of census activities and programs taking place in their state. The Census Depository Library (CDL) program functions just like the Federal Depository Library Program but just for census materials. There are approximately 123 CDLs in 37 states.

The third program in this team is the State Data Centers (SDC). They are a cooperative program that began in 1978 between states and the Census Bureau. The SDC program's mission is to provide free public access to census data and statistical products, as well as increase statistical and data literacy. SDCs form a network of affiliate agencies that can be state agencies, universities, and regional and local governments. In my state, the California Department of Finance, Office of Demographic Research, located in Sacramento, is the lead agency and includes five regional centers and thirty-six affiliate data centers to provide easier local access. In 1988, the Business and Industry Data Center (BIDC), a second component to the data centers, was established. The purpose of the BIDC is to provide access to economic data to local businesses. Not every state that has a SDC network participates on the BIDC; it is up to the participating agencies to decide whether or not to become a BIDC.

The California SDC handled 24,000 requests in 2004, 94 percent of which were at no cost to the data users. About 1,200 customized products, based on census data, were also created. Of these requests, 30 percent were for state and local governments; 21 percent businesses; 20 percent academic and researchers; 14 percent private citizens; 8 percent nonprofit organizations; 6 percent media; and 1 percent other.

The SDCs mainly provide assistance via e-mail and telephone. With the Census Bureau making more and more of its resources available from its web site, the California SDC noted a decrease in overall requests for data and reports—a trend perhaps many libraries also are experiencing. While they still run reports for users, they now find that they do more teaching about census data collection and how to use the many online census products, such as American FactFinder.

SDCs provide a wide array of services and access to the gamut of census resources—processing machine-readable data files; providing user consultation, data analysis, and technical assistance; preparing research and statistical reports; educating and training users to utilize Census Bureau products; and offering training workshops for data users. California's SDC dedicated about forty-one employees to the State Data Center program. While the SDCs do not assist the census with data collection, they do assist the bureau with

Census State Data Centers

Select a state for a Census State Data Center in your area

developing and reviewing products by evaluating plans, recommending improvements, developing and coordinating geographic programs, and testing software and data delivery systems. They also contribute to the overall administration and development of the census program. For example, in 2004, the California network:

- made 250 speeches or presentations;
- conducted 38 general information workshops;
- prepared about 80 newsletter articles and press releases;
- provided data information and training for approximately 2,300 data users; and
- assisted in or sponsored about 8 media activities.

"How much Mexican candy does California import?" SDCs are equipped to answer almost any demographic, social, or economic question and beyond, provided the data exists within one of the various census products. The SDCs have print collections and raw census data for the 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000 decennial censuses, Census of Agriculture, the Economic Censuses, and special surveys. My SDC noted that they most frequently use the decennial census Summary Files, Public Use Microdata Samples, and the Current Population Surveys.

In addition to filling research requests, the SDC offers training and workshops to government agencies and their staff to fulfill their mission of promoting statistical literacy. Training on SAS statistical software, American Community Survey (ACS), and ArcGIS (ArcView) have been offered. The SDC offers workshops on imputation, sampling, and allocation in the Census 2000; the 2002 Economic Census; appropriate use of data; data comparability; finding census data online; and an overview of the state, county, or city estimate methodology and data sources. The California SDC offered the following specific workshops: 1990 local review, in which they explained to local government officials and their designated liaisons the purpose of the local review program and emphasized the resources available for the preparation of housing unit counts; and the 2000 Complete Count Workshops, in which they met with Complete Count Committee members in fifty-eight California counties to encourage them to improve their mail response rate and reduce their undercount in Census 2000.

SDCs and BIDCs are perhaps the better-known components of the Census Bureau's Data Centers partnership programs. However, there are also Census Information Centers (CICs). Established in 1988 by the Census Bureau and the National Urban League, CICs make census information and data available to underserved communities that may not have access to census data through other means of the data dissemination network. This CIC partnership, unlike SDC/BIDC, is between the Census Bureau and fifty-two national nonprofits, community-based organizations, and a whole host of other nongovernmental organizations in the United States. Their primary goal, like the SDCs, is to provide local access, education, and technical assistance on census data for planning and decision-making by underserved communities.

The SDC, BIDC, and CIC partnerships form a vast network of data support for all aspects of the population. Check out the Data Center's web site to find out who your SDC, BIDC, and CIC are: www.census.gov/sdc. ■

Special Thanks to Beverly Pecotte, Texas State Data Center and the California State Data Center for providing input and information.

News from the North

Early Canadiana Online

Beth Stover

By spring 2006, Canadiana.org will be close to completing its rather ambitious project to digitize Canada's major official publications from the seventeeth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries. Upon completion, more than 1.5 million pages of some of Canada's most important documentary heritage, such as its acts, debates, legislative journals, and sessional papers, will be available, with full-text searching, on Early Canadiana Online (ECO) at www.canadiana.org. Some content is openly available, while some is available by subscription. Throughout this project, Canadiana.org has worked closely with many organizations, most notably Library and Archives Canada (LAC) and the Library of Parliament.

Canadiana.org, formerly known as the Canadian Institute for Historical Microreproductions (CIHM), was launched in 1978 by the Canada Council in response to recommendations by the Report of the Commission on Canadian Studies titled *To Know Ourselves,* and the *Report of the Consultative Group on University Research Libraries.*[1]

Both reports noted two key concerns: a lack of access to Canada's published heritage, and a need for this heritage to be preserved for future generations. Researchers were having difficulty accessing older collections because they were so unevenly distributed across Canada. Much money and time was being spent traveling to libraries that were understandably unwilling to loan out their rarest materials. As well, many of the older publications were deteriorating due to heavy use.

Created with the mandate to preserve and provide access to early Canadian printed publications, the nonprofit organization microfilmed materials to preservation standards, storing the masters at LAC and then producing copies on microfiche for distribution to subscribing libraries. Over the course of twenty-eight years, Canadiana.org has created several products, and in the process has built the world's largest single collection of early Canadiana.

For the first twenty-two years, Canadiana.org's collections were distributed in microfiche format. Its microfiche collection of early Canadian books, annuals, and periodicals comprises more than 90,000 titles on 270,000 microfiche. In 1996, while still involved in microfilming, Canadiana.org began to move into the digital realm. As a pilot project, Canadiana.org, along with fellow project partners—LAC, the University of Toronto, and Laval University Library in Quebec City—and with substantial support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, undertook one of the first large-scale Canadian digital projects. A selection of three thousand microfiche titles were digitized and published on the ECO web site. These digitized titles were grouped into six thematic collections: English Canadian Literature, Native Studies, Canadian Women's History, History of French Canada, Hudson's Bay, and Jesuit Relations.

ECO was an instant success! Researchers were enthused with the accessibility and convenience of the digital versions of the books. Encouraged by this success, Canadiana.org decided that its next project, Canada in the Making (CITM), the reproduction of early Canadian official publications, would be distributed solely in digital format.

The Canada in the Making (CITM) Collection

Canadiana.org's mandate to digitize early government publications was explored in a survey conducted on its behalf in 1997. The survey was aimed primarily at the two groups that collaborate most closely with the organization: librarians and scholars. When asked what Canadiana.org's next project should be, older official publications were given top priority.[2]

Indeed, it's not too difficult to understand why such high importance was given to these types of publications. Official publications were some of the first items to roll off the printing presses when the publishing industry was first introduced in mid-eighteenth-century Canada. From that time onwards, government documents have played a key role in chronicling Canadian policy, thought, and culture. They are essential for the study of Canada's development and governance.

Yet, no single library has a complete collection of even the major government publications (such as acts, parliamentary journals, debates, and sessional papers). By digitizing these scattered collections, Canadiana.org is able to bring them together in a single accessible collection, thereby providing a valuable resource for the study of Canada in all disciplines.

As an initial step in getting the new project underway, Canadiana.org established an advisory committee and a focus group made up of scholars and librarians with interest in the field. The collection parameters were set after extensive discussions with these two groups, as well as consultations with government documents librarians across Canada.

It was decided that the project would focus on materials published pre-1901, and that main legislative materials (bills, statutes, sessional papers, debates, journals, and so on) would take priority. Canadiana.org would digitize pre-Confederation (pre-1867) colonial materials from the legislatures of British Columbia, Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Ontario (Upper Canada), and Quebec (Lower Canada), as well as the Province of Canada (the 1841–1867 union of Upper and Lower Canada). However, for the 1867–1900 post-Confederation years, only federal materials would be included. To add provincial and territorial materials for the post-Confederation period would have expanded the life of the project by several years.

The highlights of the collection are listed below. All materials, except where noted, are available by subscription only.

- **Acts/statutes**: Almost 150 years of acts, from Nova Scotia's acts beginning in 1758, up to the federal acts passed in 1900.
- **Debates:** For many of the jurisdictions, debates were not published in the earlier years. For example, in pre-1867 Canada, only the provinces of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island published official debates. The House of Commons and the Senate *Debates* (including the Reconstituted Debates) from 1867 to 1900 are available in the open access part of ECO.
- **Sessional Papers:** This collection includes more than 800 volumes (more than 600,000 pages) of Sessional Papers (in English and French) for the years 1860 to 1900. These papers are prized by researchers because they cover such a diverse range of subjects: international affairs, education, immigration and colonization, commerce, banking and trade, transportation, natural resources, law, military affairs, technology, science, and health care.
- **Journals and their appendices**: These are the official records of the decisions and transactions of the legislatures. The journal appendices contain reports on a wide variety of topics. Thanks to funding from Canadian Heritage's Canadian Culture Online program, all pre-Confederation assembly journals and appendices, as well as the *Journals of the House of Commons* for the years 1867 to 1900, are available in the open access section.
- **Royal Commission reports**: These commissions have traditionally been established to investigate extraordinary problems or solicit informed opinions on controversial matters and to set government policy.
- **Official publications from France and Great Britain relating to the governance of Canada**: This collec-

tion consists of more than one thousand documents, including acts, bills, correspondence, reports, and British Parliamentary Papers. These records are significant, as much of Canada's early history was largely determined by decisions made in the British and French parliaments.

- **Treaties and conventions:** Includes dozens of treaties that directly or indirectly affect Canada, from the peace treaty between France and Native Canadians in 1666, to agreements relating to the Alaska boundary dispute in the 1890s.

The above items form the main part of the CITM collection. However, also being digitized are other materials, such as bills, civil service lists, guides for prospective immigrants, committee and departmental commission reports, ordinances, regulations, and a selection of speeches.[3]

Because the histories of Canada and the United States are so intertwined, there are thousands of references to the United States in the database. A recent search reveals that there are 40 titles authored by the American government, and 138 volumes that include the words "United States" in their titles. All titles are catalogued conforming to the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules,* 2nd ed. (AACR2). English and French publications are catalogued in the language of the original publication.

Books are scanned in-house with a Zeutschel OS 10000 scanner at 400 dpi in black and white. The images are manually cleaned and then reviewed by staff. OCR is then applied to the text, making it fully searchable.

There are currently close to 14,000 volumes (about 2.2 million pages) on ECO, with approximately 250,000 pages being added every year. ECO usage continues to rise substantially. In its first year, ECO received 8 million hits. By 2005, there were over 46 million hits, with an average of almost 27,000 pages viewed per day.

Over the years, Canadiana.org has borrowed books from more than two hundred cultural organizations across Canada, as well as from some American libraries.[4] Because Canadiana.org is not a library and holds no books of its own, this cooperation is vital. Canadiana.org is especially indebted to LAC and the Library of Parliament, which, from the beginning, have generously allowed access to their collections.

In 2005, this cooperation with the Library of Parliament extended into new areas, as Canadiana.org became the fortunate recipient of the library's digital images of the *Reconstituted Debates.*[5] Currently, this collection consists of the House of Commons *Debates* (for the years 1867/68, 1869, and 1870) and the Senate *Debates* (for the years 1867/68, 1869, 1870, and 1871).[6] The Reconstituted Debates for additional years will be added to ECO as they are made available to Canadiana.org.

Looking toward the Future

The six-year CITM project has proved to be a model of private-public partnership. Revenues were obtained from the following sources: ECO subscriptions, private and corporate donations, government grants (most notably Canadian Heritage's Canadian Culture Online program), and microfiche sales. In addition, LAC has provided substantial in-kind support. A complete list of Canadiana.org's partners and subscribers can be found at www.canadiana.org/eco/english/partners.html.

In January 2006, Canadiana.org signed a three-year agreement with the Canadian Research Knowledge Network (CRKN) that has seen the ECO database licensed to forty-six Canadian academic and research libraries. With this agreement, as well as licensing agreements with non-academic libraries, 85 percent of Canadiana.org's operations budget will now come from subscription fees. Although far from assuring Canadiana.org's long-term future, the CRKN agreement does gives the organization a good measure of stability as it begins its next major project this spring—the digitization of pre-1920 Canadian periodicals.

Despite providing many challenges over the past six years, the Canada in the Making project has been a success. Thanks to the generous cooperation of many organizations, particularly LAC, the Library of Parliament, and Canadiana.org's subscribers, an unprecedented number of Canada's early government publications have been made easily accessible to researchers. ■

For the past seventeen years, ***Beth Stover*** *has had the pleasure of working at Canadiana.org. Beth has, like all staff at Canadiana.org, worn many hats. She initially worked in Toronto as a Regional Researcher, and then in 1993 accepted a position at the Ottawa office as a Cataloguer. She currently is the Bibliographic Research Coordinator and also is responsible for selecting titles to be digitized for ECO.*

Notes and References

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3. A more detailed collection description is available at www.canadiana.org/eco/english/collection_govdocs.html.
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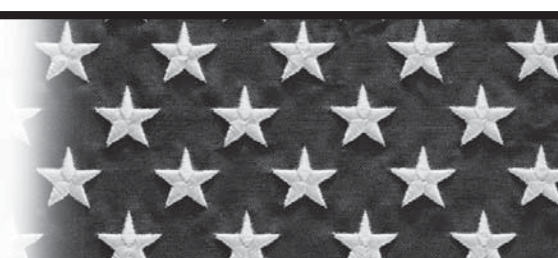

Statistical Information from the Government

Teaching the General Reference Librarian

Sherry DeDecker and Eric Forte

In June 2005, GODORT sponsored a preconference in Chicago titled "Demystifying Government Sources: Government Information for the Rest of Us." With government information increasingly available free online, and with government information reference work decreasingly the realm of specialists, this preconference program was designed to introduce reference librarians to sources from federal, state, local, international, and foreign governments that they could use when working at a general reference desk. The authors of this article were asked to present an hour-long segment on government statistics. This article will briefly discuss our strategy for conducting such training of librarians without government information experience, a strategy that may be adapted to a library's local reference training needs.

Despite a short time frame and our belief that giving too much information is counterproductive in such a session, we felt that there were a pair of introductory topics that needed to be covered in order to insure a proper understanding of government statistics: (1) the nature of government information itself; and (2) an overview of the nature of gathering statistical data regardless of the source.

For the former we restrained ourselves from a lengthy discussion of the past, present, and future of the Federal Depository Library Program, item selection, self-studies and the like. We did introduce the idea of government information, stressing its public nature and mission to serve the government and, therefore, its citizens. We discussed efforts to make government information widely available, from having documents in hundreds of libraries around the nation, to aggressively mounting information on the web; and the free (well, paid via taxes) and generally non-copyrighted nature of government information. We tailored this brief lesson to government statistics, mentioning the United States Constitution's call for a census in order to apportion Congressional representation and the subsequent development of myriad statistical programs and agencies mandated by various legislative acts. As is typical in almost any general discussion of government information, we focused somewhat heavily on the U.S. federal government, but provided contrasts throughout with information from smaller government entities, and also foreign and IGO government information.

The first introductory point broadly described *why* the government gathered statistics, while the second point discussed *how* statistics are gathered. The key for the reference librarian is that without an understanding of how and why a desired statistic might be gathered, he or she cannot make an efficient determination about the existence of such a statistic. We discussed and made examples of data collected via a census of every potential statistical subject: data collected via surveys or samples of a population; data collected via administrative records (such as birth or death statistics); and data that results from estimates and more robust statistical work.

We also gave a basic primer on what statistical data looks like and how it translates from the initially collected raw data to the published tables. In most cases the tables will fill the patron's request, but researchers wanting to crunch the numbers their own way need to be able to access the raw data. An illustration of the statistical life-cycle, from survey question to raw data to published table, is contained in figure 1.

With this conceptual background in place, we moved on to the next step: the reference interview. In addition to understanding exactly what a patron needs, we stressed how the interview must contain an analysis of why and how statistics are gathered in order to get an idea of where and how likely the data is likely to exist. First, does the subject matter lend itself to statistical collection? For instance, if a patron needs to measure the happiness level of some population, is such a concept measurable at all? Not really, but surveys do exist that measure people's perceptions of their happiness. How do the factors of geography, time period, and population affect the availability of statistics? For instance, if a piece of data is only gathered via a survey of 50,000 U.S. households, there probably won't be available data specific to a small town, or perhaps for a specific subset of the population, such as thirty-five-year-old women; likewise, trying to piece together data on abortions over the years gets trickier before Roe v. Wade. These factors should all flash, or at least meander, through the reference librarian's mind as he or she makes the initial assessment of how to find the needed information.

This article is based on a presentation given at the 2005 GODORT preconference "Demystifying Government Sources: Government Information for the Rest of Us," held in Evanston, Illinois. The editorial team would like to thank the presenters for making the necessary changes and updates to move the presentation to an article format.

After this somewhat lengthy introduction, we finally hit the sources themselves, with the preliminaries paving the way for a deeper understanding of the sources. The most important government document in this area is, of course, the *Statistical Abstract of the United States* (apologies to those whose favorite might be the *Congressional Record*, the *Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents*, or those with a *Fisheries Bulletin* fetish). For the "*Statab,*" the lesson is familiar: it's a source of data itself, but also an index to further data, with summary tables always citing the original, usually much more comprehensive, source. Also important is understanding that although a federal government product, the *Statab* includes data from all levels of government, and even private entities that produce statistics. Similarly, its companion, the *Historical Statistics of the United States,* provides a narrative within each chapter outlining source material, time period covered, and including non-

Statistical Flow:

1. A survey asks a number of questions, such as:

What kind of cancer was it?
01 Bladder
02 Blood
03 Bone
04 Brain
05 Breast
06 Cervix
etc.

2. The results exist in raw data files:

30200400000201010293770040642 50310101010119050401520135 22 2
30200400000301010124370021472 600632061404531652011212222 22
30200400000501010137270018212 503184127619110217061 9935 77 2
etc.

3. And the most popular data is compiled into statistical tables, the level librarians typically deal with data:

Table 5. Frequencies of cancer among persons 18 years of age and over, by selected characteristics: United States, 2004

Selected type of cancer[1]							
Selected characteristic	All persons 18 years of age and over	Males 18 years of age and over	Females 18 years of age and over	Any cancer	Breast cancer	Cervical cancer	Prostate cancer
Number in thousands[2]							
Total[3]	215,191	103,552	111,640	15,024	2,581	1,108	1,688
Sex							
Male	103,552	103,552	...	6,462	†	...	1,688
Female	111,640	...	111,640	8,562	2,573	1,108	...
Age							
18–44 years	110,417	54,813	55,604	2,046	160	506	†
45–64 years	70,182	34,056	36,126	5,551	1,089	430	379
65–74 years	18,360	8,368	9,993	3,428	555	79	488
75 years and over	16,232	6,315	9,916	3,999	778	93	815
Race							
1 race[4]	212,861	102,472	110,389	14,931	2,555	1,090	1,688

Etc.

Figure 1: A Question, the Raw Data, and a Resulting Published Table from the National Health Interview Survey

governmental sources or whether the source was unpublished data. After showing these sources, one should probably show them again, making sure everyone realizes that understanding these sources is the most important lesson in government statistics, or statistics in general.

Next we explored major portals and search engines for federal government statistics: *FedStats*, *Google UncleSam,* and *FirstGov*. We pointed out the failings of each; they're more useful if you're trying to find something major, but less so for more detailed or specific statistics: a statistic that is buried in one table of a large statistical volume has difficulty moving toward the top of most statistical search results lists. And sites that search only .gov domains miss some federal government publications that use a different domain.

One of the basic requirements for locating government statistical data (or any government information) is simply a knowledge of civics—know the major agencies, what type of information they produce, and what statistics-gathering programs they conduct. While this may be a tall order for a reference librarian (well, not the basic civics, but the civics specifically related to statistical agencies), this agency-based approach is effective and often the strategy undertaken by experienced government information specialists. At this point we did list and briefly mention the major federal statistical agencies, spending a few moments showing key publications of several of them. Quite a few of these publications are standard fare at many reference desks, such as the *Digest of Education Statistics*, the latest *Budget of the United States Government*, *Crime in the United States,* and *Health, United States.*

Although our presentation focused on free sources, it's difficult not to include a reference to *LexisNexis Statistical* and its print counterparts from LexisNexis for those librarians who might have access in their libraries. Although an expensive database, *LexisNexis Statistical* saves much digging, as it indexes the contents of statistical publications from federal, state, international, and private sources from roughly 1970 (the precise start date for the indexing depends on the whether the source is federal, state, or international), with references to older publications.

As we headed toward the homestretch of our presentation, we focused on major statistical sources for other governmental bodies. Many states, foreign governments, and international organizations, such as the UN and World Bank, publish general statistical volumes that will lead the user to the sources of data, much as *Statab* does. We took a minute to point out the pitfalls of data from foreign countries: depending upon the country, the statistics collected could have a significant time lag. So the question to consider: did a particular country collect that data?

Finally, any discussion of government statistics should probably cover the Census Bureau in more detail. While at heart the census has been counting the population of this country since 1790, there is much more to the decennial census, and we spent quite a bit of time talking about what information is collected, how to find data from the 2000 Census, how to find historical census data, and what publications update census data between the decennial censuses.

For the 2000 Census, data is published in four summary files. Two of the files cover questions from the short form of the census, those asked of the entire population. The other files cover data from the sample questionnaires that were distributed to 17 percent of the population, and ask more detailed questions on population and housing topics. As the 100 percent files do not overlap with the sample files, it's important to understand which files would contain the needed data.

We also pointed out that, due to privacy concerns, many statistics are not available for a geographic area unless there are at least one hundred people who fall under that topic. For the genealogists among us, data is not available on individuals for seventy-two years after that census (hmmm, maybe they need to revisit that number . . .). Understanding the concepts of census publication will go a long way in understanding how to find data from earlier censuses, as is understanding that every census did not ask identical questions.

As a wrap-up, we reinforced the major lessons to be taken from our presentation "So, What Should the Generalist Know about Statistics from the Government?"

1. Use the *Statistical Abstract of the United States,* both for its data and to lead to more in-depth sources.
2. Understand that most recent statistics are online, which one can find with . . .
3. Be familiar with the principal statistical agencies and civics in general.
4. The same goes for your state: Does it have a *Statistical Abstract* equivalent? What are its major statistical publishing agencies?
5. Repeat with foreign countries, with knowledge of such flagship international publications as *World Development Indicators.*
6. Know the name of your closest depository librarian; find that in the Federal Depository Library Directory (www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/tools/ldirect.html). We're always willing to help out—remember, we love this stuff!

We hope this overview will nudge those of you documents librarians to try out a similar presentation with your general reference librarians. We plan to do just that this spring—wish us luck! ∎

Authors' note: Our presentation can be viewed at www.library.ucsb.edu/subjects/gov/stats/godort1.html.

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Demystifying Government Sources

Government Business Information for the Rest of Us

Stephen Hayes

My objectives in this preconference presentation were to provide: a practical approach; specific information for a basic business plan; general comments on sites and sources as applied to a business plan; and general comments on sites and sources for general business applications.

Some general comments on this presentation. First, the target market was the generalist reference librarian—particularly a public librarian. It was not intended for a government information librarian who knows far more than I do about sources. It was a conversational presentation meant to place non-documents librarians at ease and reinforce that they too could use that scary "government information." It was based on my twenty years of being a documents librarian and my more recent ten years of being a business librarian teaching undergraduates to create business plans and perform feasibility studies. This was *not* an academic, scholarly presentation. So, be kind and pass this on to the correct "target market." Have I "CYAed" enough here . . . ?

Second, only government information sites and sources are covered. OK, well, plus one fee-based site—*so shoot me.* You won't become business experts by reading this humble summary of the preconference. These sources should be a good beginning for the budding entrepreneur who walks in looking to develop a business plan for the "money people." For all practical purposes the difference between business and economics is—*spelling!* A key suggestion for all non-documents librarians—become friendly with documents librarians. And whenever possible, refer users to the federal depository library near you. Finally, I have placed each resource within a specific piece of the business plan; those same resources can provide valuable data in several sections of the plan.

I used the Business Plan template from WordPerfect as the outline for a basic business plan. Plans vary, but usually contain a similar list of information needs. For the purposes of this preconference, the information needed, as specified in the template, is:

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Market analysis/market research

1. Competitors: direct and indirect, strengths and weaknesses, emerging, and substitute products.
2. Market segments: segment you will be competing in; demographics and geographic area.
3. Target market: primary and secondary; demographics and geographic area.
4. Marketing mix strategy: how you intend to market.
5. Product/service differentiation: unique features, potential for innovation, customer service plan, inventory control, and so on.
6. Competitive advantage: proprietary protection, other competitive advantages.
7. Distribution: plan to distribute your product or service.
8. Pricing.
9. Suppliers.
10. Marketing goals.

Note that marketing mix strategy, distribution, pricing, and marketing goals do not typically involve government information. Now let's cover the areas of the business plan step by step.

Market Analysis/Market Research

1. Competitors: Identify current and future competitors and determine their strengths and weaknesses. These may be existing or emerging. They may be exact head-to-head competitors or acceptable substitutes for the entrepreneur's product or service.
   - U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) (www.sec.gov). All publicly traded companies must file quarterly and annual reports with the SEC. These are the forms 10-K and 10-Q. Specific financial data is required and therefore available for use. This is one of the few areas where the government provides specific company-related information.
   - *County Business Patterns* (www.census.gov/epcd/cbp/view/cbpview.html). Provides the number of establishments, number of employees for all the establishments, and the total payroll figures. These will be total figures and not specific to any one particular establishment, but may allow the businessperson to draw some conclusions about possible competing establishments as well as some guesses as to payroll costs. Conclusions are usually based

on such geographies as county and state, or at the national level, if the businessperson will be competing nationally.

- *State and Metropolitan Area Data Book* (www.census.gov/statab/www/smadb.html). Broad demographics at the state, city, or metropolitan level.
- *Statistical Abstract of the United States* (www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/statab.html). I use this for two purposes: locating specific data on the number of establishments, companies, and so on, and as an index to further sources. If the table gives information close to what is needed, I use the citations to go to that agency hoping for better data that are more on point.
- *Industry at a Glance* (www.bls.gov/iag/iaghome.htm). This gives a broad overview of the industry landscape for a state. Very broad, but in some cases it's the best the businessperson can get from a non-fee-based resource.
- *1997 Economic Census: Bridge between NAICS and SIC* (www.census.gov/epcd/www/naicstab.htm). I use this useful tool to help the businessperson identify the specific industry they will be competing within. SIC is Standard Industrial Classification, and NAICS is North American Industry Classification System. These codes are used in many sources of information. Note that data is usually provided to a general three- to four-digit SIC code or the four- to five-digit NAICS code, and is rarely as specific as your businessperson would like. I have the businessperson review the codes and determine what industry they feel they are competing within.

2. Market segments: Analyze size and growth of the market, be that the city, state, region, or the specific industry itself; industry trends, such as products and services being developed; is the market growing or shrinking, mature or just beginning, and so on; market structure—a few big players or a lot of little ones? Identify problems and potential niches—gaps in services that your businessperson can fill, needs that do not seem to have solutions, and so on.
   a. Demographics—more broad numbers . . . people or the industry in general.
      - *Current Industrial Reports* (www.census.gov/cir/www) give you product numbers for some segments and products. I use them to guesstimate the size of the industry that your businessperson may wish to try and capture a piece of.
      - *Statistical Abstract of the United States* (www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/statab.html) can be used for the statistics, or the footnotes can be used as an index to material in different agencies.
      - Business—Trade and Services (www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/business.html). These Census Bureau publications are a good source for a variety of industries.
      - *Agricultural Statistics* (www.usda.gov/nass/pubs/agstats.htm) are obviously for the agricultural-related entrepreneur.
      - Women's Bureau—Statistics (www.dol.gov/wb/stats) provides interesting background for the entrepreneur targeting women as a market. For example, the title *Nontraditional Occupations for Women* gives some interesting perspective and could influence the directions a business might take.
      - *State and Metropolitan Area Data Book* (www.census.gov/statab/www/smadb.html). Broad demographics at the state, city, or metropolitan level.
      - *TradeStats Express* (http://tse.export.gov) displays the latest annual U.S. merchandise trade statistics at national and state levels; in maps, graphs, and tables; as exports, imports, and trade balances; and custom-tailored to year and dollar ranges and display preferences. May give the entrepreneur some glimpse of non-U.S. competition.
      - *STAT-USA* (www.stat-usa.gov) is THE source for information to assist the U.S. businessperson in marketing products and services overseas. Provides market research and profiles specific to countries and products. Great background on how to do business in particular countries. Specific contacts for actual people your entrepreneur will have to talk with—not everything they will need or want will be in a published source.
   b. Geographic area—similar analysis, but specific to the potential geography an entrepreneur will be competing within: a state, city, region, and so on (for example, Latin America or a specific country).
      - Regional Economic Conditions (*RECON*) (www2.fdic.gov/recon)—regions of the United States.
      - *World Factbook* (www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook) covers the very basics of the economic environment a businessperson will encounter—the 50,000-foot view.
      - International Trade Administration (ITA) (http://ita.doc.gov) is one of several federal agencies whose information is potentially valuable to the entrepreneur. Have them explore the site.
      - Virtual World Trade Reference Room (www.ita.doc.gov/td/industry/otea/ref-room.html)—same.
      - International Economic Accounts (www.bea.gov/bea/di1.htm)—same.
      - Business—Trade and Services (www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/business.html)—same.
      - *U.S. Economy at a Glance* (www.bls.gov/eag/home.htm) provides baseline data the entre-

preneur needs to be aware of but that may not directly impact the product or service.
- State Department, Business Center (www.state.gov/business). A major agency site that gives great content, such as the *Investment Climate Statements,* which provide a thorough description of the overseas environments in which U.S. investors must operate.

3. Target market: Primary target markets, secondary markets, demographics. Here the entrepreneur must actually decide the specific targets—the people they think they can actually sell the product and service to—and try and put some numbers to that population.
   a. Demographics—broad people numbers.
      - *Statistical Abstract* (www.census.gov/prod/www/abs/statab.html).
      - *Agricultural Statistics* (www.usda.gov/nass/pubs/agstats.htm)—for example, "farms."
      - *BEARFACTS*—BEA Regional Facts (www.bea.gov/bea/regional/bearfacts). Regional numbers, such as "Midwesterners."
   b. Geographic area—people numbers by geography.
      - *County Business Patterns*—great for business-to-business target market.
      - *World Factbook* (www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook).
      - Regional Economic Conditions (*RECON*) (www2.fdic.gov/recon).
      - *North Star*, Minnesota State Government Online (www.state.mn.us) is an example of a state-specific site (for example, selling to Minnesotans).
      - *MapStats* (www.fedstats.gov/qf) can be used to represent the target market on a map. This can help the money people visualize the potential consumers of the product or service.
      - *STAT-USA/Internet* (www.stat-usa.gov)—sometimes there is an actual report of a potential market of interest to the entrepreneur.
   c. Mapping—showing the potential consumer populations on a map is often more informational for the money people then a table or narrative.
      - *American FactFinder* (http://factfinder.census.gov) has tools for creating, viewing, printing, and downloading maps. For example, Census Bureau Thematic Maps allow an entrepreneur to display areas of a city with specific income levels they intend to market toward.
4. Marketing mix strategy: How the entrepreneur intends to market the product or service. This is their decision. You will not be able to find this for them.
5. Product/service differentiation: Those unique features, potential for innovation, customer service plan, inventory control, and so on, that make the consumer want to buy the entrepreneur's product and service.
6. Competitive advantage: Proprietary and intellectual property protection and other competitive advantages.
7. Distribution: Plan to actually distribute the entrepreneur's product or service. The sites below have reports that may provide information or list contact people the entrepreneur may talk to that can help the entrepreneur arrive at a distribution plan. There is not a plan to find—the entrepreneur must create it.
   - Bureau of Industry and Security (www.bis.doc.gov/about).
   - *STAT-USA/Internet* (www.stat-usa.gov).
   - State Development Agencies for Trade and Investment (www.ita.doc.gov/td/industry/otea/submenu4.html).
8. Pricing: How to actually price a product and service is entirely the entrepreneur's to develop.
9. Suppliers: Who will sell or manufacture for the entrepreneur the components they will need for their product. In my opinion the government will usually be useful only in providing potential overseas suppliers. The *Country Commercial Guides* and other reports within *STAT-USA* (www.stat-usa.gov) provide the names of in-country people that wish to cooperate with U.S. businesspeople.
10. Marketing goals: The set of incremental goals an entrepreneur will set to capture a market and become profitable. Only the entrepreneur can set these goals.

General Sources of Business-Related Information—U.S.

- Bureau of Economic Analysis (www.bea.doc.gov). Broad economic figures that most entrepreneurs should have under their belts.
- Bureau of Labor Statistics (stats.bls.gov). Should help benchmark some of the overhead costs, such as salaries and wages for a region, state, or city.
- Census Bureau, Publications (www.census.gov/prod/www/titles.html).
- Department of Education—Statistics (www.ed.gov/searchResults.jhtml?ct=1348353648&cl=1)—for a target market; for example, "student populations."
- *FRED II* (Federal Reserve Economic Data) (http://research.stlouisfed.org/fred2). Great source for economic data.
- *FRASER* (Federal Reserve Archival System for Economic Research) (http://fraser.stlouisfed.org).
- *Fed in Print*—a comprehensive index to Federal Reserve economic research (www.frbsf.org/publications/fedinprint).
- *FedStats* (www.fedstats.gov).
- National Center for Education Statistics (http://nces.ed.gov).
- U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (www.sec.gov).
- Small Business Administration (www.sbaonline.sba.gov) has a wealth of support for entrepreneurs.
- *STAT-USA/Internet* (www.stat-usa.gov).
- State Department, Business Center (www.state.gov/business).

General Sources of Business-Related Information—State

These are sources where I would send an entrepreneur either physically or virtually for data and information from non-federal-level people. Often these are developed by the specific state to encourage investment.

- State Development Agencies for Trade and Investment (www.ita.doc.gov/td/industry/otea/submenu4.html).
- North Star, Minnesota State Government Online (www.state.mn.us).
- Your local SBA office (www.sba.gov).
- State libraries (www.loc.gov/global/library/statelib.html).

General Sources of Business-Related Information—International

If the entrepreneur intends to market overseas, these are example of sites that may prove useful and should be reviewed if the entrepreneur is serious about marketing.

- *AusStats* (www.abs.gov.au).
- *OFFSTATS*—Official Statistics on the Web (www.library.auckland.ac.nz/subjects/stats/offstats). Important non-government resource site.

When all else fails, Google—I mean, "punt." *Google UncleSam* (www.google.com/unclesam) indexes all .gov and .mil sites.

Good luck. Providing business information to an entrepreneur is both hard work and rewarding. ∎

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Government Information for Parents and Teachers

Suzanne Sears

In April 1997, then-president Bill Clinton sent a memorandum to the heads of executive departments and agencies titled "Expanding Access to Internet-based Educational Resources for Children, Teachers and Parents."[1] The memorandum directed them to develop web sites specifically for use by parents, teachers, and children. They responded with creative, fun, and informative web sites that cover virtually every area of curriculum.

Teachers and Homeschoolers

Government web sites offer authoritative, up-to-date resources that are often not copyrighted. This makes them a gold mine for teachers looking to expand their resources on limited budgets. The problem is that many teachers and homeschoolers are unaware of the valuable information awaiting them in the untapped universe of government web sites. For those that are aware, it is a question of having the time to find the right material. Time is in short supply for teachers, just like money. That is why finding a good web portal can be so important.

There are five major web portals available to aid in accessing government information for teachers and homeschoolers: Gateway to Educational Materials (GEM), Federal Resources for Educational Excellence (FREE), Browse Topics, the Educator's Reference Desk, and FirstGov for Kids. These portals offer keyword and subject access to many of the lesson plans, primary source materials, free classroom resources, and fun learning sites for children that are available through government agencies.

GEM (www.thegateway.org) is designed to allow teachers to search by topic, grade level, and type of material. GEM searches more than 40,000 records from more than 600 consortium member collections. Consortium partners include federal agencies, nonprofit organizations, and private publishers. To experience the value of this web site, search with the keyword "holocaust." Limit the results to lesson plans and primary sources. This search will result in information on the "Voyage of the St. Louis" section of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum web site. This wonderful resource offers eighth- through twelfth-grade students a historical case study of Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi Germany. One downside of GEM is that not all of the material accessed is available for free, as commercial sites are included in the search results.

FREE (www.ed.gov/free) is a collection of links to federally supported teaching and learning resources. It is organized by curriculum area, such as mathematics. The search tool is not as precise as GEM, but the results direct teachers to material available at no cost. In addition, FREE offers a feature resource section. The feature resource is often geared toward holidays or commemoration of events. Examples of topics are resources for Presidents' Day, Black History Month, and the U.S. Constitution. The latter is most helpful to schools trying to fulfill the new federal requirement to offer an educational program about the U.S. Constitution in September.

Browse Topics (www.library.okstate.edu/govdocs/browsetopics), a partnership between the Government Printing Office and Oklahoma State University, is a listing of government web sites by general topics. The categories are broader than those on FREE. The links within each category are provided and updated by depository librarians around the country. The two areas that are probably most helpful to educators are "Teaching" and "Education." You will find links to the U.S. Mint lesson plans designed around the fifty state quarters, the National Archives "Our Documents" lesson plans for the one hundred milestone documents from American history, and many more sites designed especially for teachers to use in their classrooms under the "Teaching" category. The "Education" category focuses more on education research, statistics, and information resources, although you will find a few links to classroom instructional material.

The Educator's Reference Desk (www.eduref.org) is maintained by the Information Institute of Syracuse. In addition to more than two thousand lesson plans and three thousand links to education information on the web, this site has a question archive with responses to questions sent to AskEric from 1992–2003. Access is provided separately for resource guides, lesson plans, and the question archives. The resource guides are arranged by broad categories and subcategories. Under the category of "Family Life," there is a resource guide specifically on "Home Schooling" that has some wonderful links to information for homeschooling parents. Teachers may find the guides on "Classroom Management" or "Beginning

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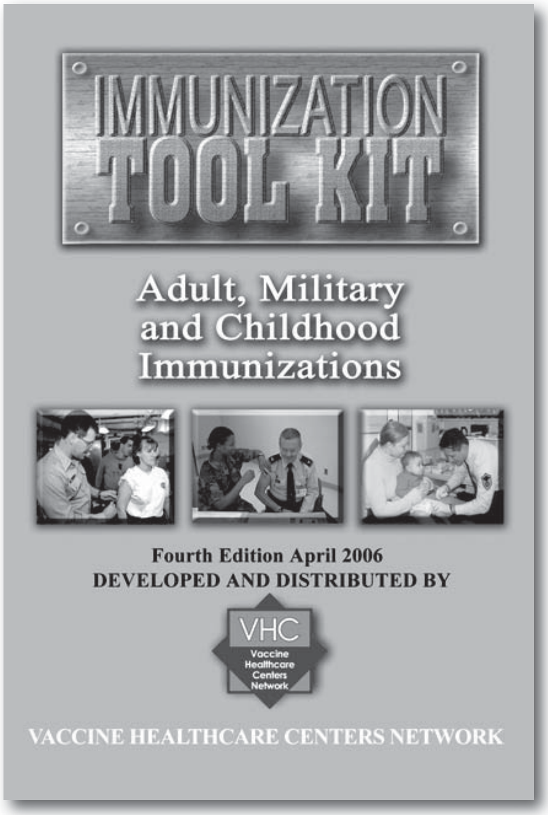
Now: A vital resource for health care workers at all levels

The Immunization Tool Kit



The Immunization Tool Kit is a pocket-sized, readily available source of the latest essential information about vaccines and immunization recommendations for all levels of health care workers in and out of the U.S. military. It was developed by the Walter Reed National Vaccine Healthcare Center (VHC), based on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), as part of its mission to support continuous quality improvement of immunization healthcare delivery throughout the Department of Defense.

The tool kit is a set of laminated, pocket-sized reference cards held together on a sturdy ring. The cards are divided into four color-coded sections:

- General information and recommendations on immunizations
- Adult and military immunizations
- Pediatric immunizations
- Storage and handling instructions

You can use the entire tool kit or select and carry only the cards you would use most frequently.

Any health care workers involved in immunization of children or adults will find the Immunization Tool Kit a vital source of the latest immunization information.

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
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The Immunization Tool Kit

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The total cost of my order is $______. Price includes regular shipping and handling and is subject to change.

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Check method of payment:

❑ Check payable to Superintendent of Documents

❑ SOD Deposit Account

❑ VISA ❑ MasterCard ❑ Discover/NOVUS ❑ American Express

(expiration date)

Thank you for your order!

Authorizing signature

03/06

Teachers" to be the most useful. The lesson plans are by curriculum area and can be searched with keywords and specific grade levels. Do you need a lesson plan on religious tolerance for ninth to twelfth graders? You will find it here under "Social Studies" and then "Civics."

FirstGov for Kids (www.kids.gov) is designed more for children than teachers. Like GEM, it includes commercial sites that have some free information and some available for a fee. However, the results are clearly separated into those that are government sites, organization sites, and commercial sites. It is maintained by the Federal Citizen Information Center. Teachers and parents can use this site to find interactive games and activities for children in a given subject area. Looking for an endangered species coloring book or an online geography quiz? This site is the place to go.

Some individual agency web pages for teachers that stand out are the Learning Page from the Library of Congress (http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu), America's Story from the Library of Congress (www.americaslibrary.gov/cgi-bin/page.cgi), Ben's Guide from the Government Printing Office (http://bensguide.gpo.gov), Our Documents from the National Archives and Records Administration (www.ourdocuments.gov), Educators and Students page of the National Archives and Records Administration (www.archives.gov/education), and the USGS and Science Education from the United States Geological Survey (http://education.usgs.gov). Ben's Guide in particular includes a section with links to additional agency pages for students (http://bensguide.gpo.gov/subject.html) and parents and educators (http://bensguide.gpo.gov/pt/subject.html).

So far, I have mentioned online resources available to teachers and homeschoolers; however, the federal government is also a supplier of free classroom materials. Teacher Resources (www.federalreserveeducation.org/teachers) is a search tool for supplementary classroom materials provided by the Federal Reserve. In most cases the material is available free of charge. Ed Pubs (www.edpubs.org) is another web site where you can order free educational publications. Publications are available in English and Spanish for teachers, parents, students, and administrators. The Environmental Protection Agency also provides educational materials free of charge. You can order coloring books, posters, and teacher kits from their Teaching Center (http://epa.gov/teachers).

Parents

Parents will find parenting and child care resources, education resources, and science fair resources on government web pages. Just as for teachers, there are web portals that are specifically designed to help parents access online government information. The four basic portals are: FirstGov for Parents, Childcare.Gov, Afterschool.Gov, and Students.Gov.

FirstGov for Parents (http://firstgov.gov/Topics/Parents.shtml) provides links to parenting resources by age of child, from newborn to young adult, as well as resources on pregnancy. There also are links to major categories of interest, such as adoption, child care, child support, education financing, and safety. Some of the links you will find on this site include child growth charts, helping your child become a reader, newborn care, career guidance, Internet safety, bullying and your child, and childproofing your home.

Childcare.Gov (www.childcare.gov) is designed to provide information to child care providers, but it does include a section of parenting resources. The parenting resources section has several links to information on how to choose the right day care center for your child, including a link to an on-site interview checklist. Afterschool.Gov (www.afterschool.gov) is another site that is not designed specifically for parents, but has a lot of good information for them. The site provides links for community service opportunities, online activities for kids after school, and homework help. Both of these sites are currently being updated and are temporarily unavailable. I am looking forward to seeing all the fabulous new information that they are adding to make these sites even better.

Students.Gov (www.students.gov) is a student-centered interagency portal to government information that will help students during the transition to life beyond high school. Information on planning and financing a college education, military service, student internships, and travel can be found using the links from this site.

The portals for parenting information are not as extensive in coverage as the teacher portals. It therefore becomes all the more important to know about specific agency web sites aimed at informing parents. The Parent's Corner from the Food and Drug Administration (www.fda.gov/oc/opacom/kids/html/parents__corner.htm) is one to put at the top of your list. It contains dozens of links to health and safety sites for parents. You can find everything from how to administer medicine to a child to information on petting zoos.

The parents section of the Department of Education (www.ed.gov/parents/landing.jhtml?src=pn) is another agency site to direct parents to. The *Helping Your Child* series, which is available in English and Spanish, is one of my favorites on this page. It provides practical lessons and activities for parents to help their children develop skills they need to succeed in school. *Healthy Start Grow Smart* is another good series. This one is for parents of newborns to one-year-olds. Of course, information on how to pay for your child's college education is another very popular section of the Education Department's web page. In fact, there is a web portal for college information run by the Department of Education called Student Aid on the Web (http://studentaid.ed.gov).

One of the most frequent questions from parents involves finding resources for science fair projects. There are some wonderful government web sites with science fair activities and links to additional resources. One of these is the Agriculture Department's Agriculture in the Classroom Kids Zone (www.agclassroom.org/kids/index2.htm). This web site has information on how to conduct a science fair project, how to document it, and ideas for possible projects. There also are links to other web sites for additional ideas.

Another good site for science fair ideas is the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Education Center (http://education.wes.army.mil). You can access the projects by general subjects or by the keyword search box.

Internet safety is a big concern of parents today. There are two online publications that are must-reads for parents whose children spend unmonitored time on the Internet. One, titled *A Parent's Guide to Internet Safety,* is on the Federal Bureau of Investigation web site (www.fbi.gov/publications/pguide/pguidee.htm). The other is from the Justice Department's May 2001 *OVC Bulletin* and is titled "Internet Crimes against Children" (www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ovc/publications/bulletins/internet_2_2001/welcome.html).

Conclusion

If you are not finding what you need using the web sites above, you might try your local depository library web site. Depository libraries will sometimes include links to web sites for children and teachers and can be a place to find state and local government information for teachers, students, and parents. In addition, some tangible teacher kits that are not available online are available in the depository library collections. For a sample listing of kits you can view the Teacher Kits and Resources list for the Tulsa City-County Library at (www.tulsalibrary.org/govdocs/teacherkits.htm). To locate the depository library in your area, go to the Federal Depository Library Directory (www.gpoaccess.gov/libraries.html).

Each of the sites provides a wide variety of resources for teachers, parents, and students. They are, of course, just the tip of the iceberg. There are many more out there that are sure to appeal to teachers and parents. Other valuable web sites worth visiting can be found at http://kids.tulsalibrary.org/homework/govdocs/index.htm. ▮

Author's note: The web sites in this article were all accessed in February 2006.

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Reference

1. Clinton, William J. *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: William J. Clinton, 1997.* Vol. 1 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1997), 460–61.

Government Information for Consumers

Megan Dreger

The U.S. government produces countless consumer resources on everything from how to cook eggs to how to buy a home. This information has traditionally been published in pamphlets or reports and made available at local libraries, through the mail, or from a variety of distributors. For example, the government reaches out to consumers through such avenues as television and radio commercials for the *Consumer Information Catalog* publications based in Pueblo, Colorado. The catalog is still around, and the government still produces commercials for it. As with many other government publications, it also is now online (www.pueblo.gsa.gov/catalog.pdf).

The shift from government information in print to online had a significant effect on consumer publications. For many people, they are now easier to find due to the indexing, particularly in such specialized search engines as Google UncleSam (www.google.com/unclesam) and the various government portals. Before covering the search process, let's first look at some examples of government information for consumers that's available online.

Examples of Consumer Information

Government information for consumers covers pretty much all aspects of our lives. The format varies from brief pamphlets or fact sheets to in-depth, book-length publications and databases. Here are some examples of the brief, topical subjects covered:

- Internet Auctions: A Guide for Buyers and Sellers, www.ftc.gov/bcp/conline/pubs/online/auctions.htm
- Safe Internet Banking, www.fdic.gov/bank/individual/online/safe.html
- Take Charge: Fighting Back against Identity Theft, www.ftc.gov/bcp/conline/pubs/credit/idtheft.htm
- Predatory Lending, www.hud.gov/offices/hsg/sfh/pred/predlend.cfm
- Spam, www.ftc.gov/spam
- What Your Telephone Company Knows about You (and Controlling How They Use It), www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/phoneaboutyou.html
- Barbecue Food Safety, www.fsis.usda.gov/oa/pubs/facts_barbecue.pdf
- Botox, www.pueblo.gsa.gov/cic_text/health/botox/botox.pdf

Other resources are more in-depth. Here are some examples of databases of detailed information:

- **Household Products Database** (http://hpd.nlm.nih.gov). This database lists the chemical ingredients found in common household products. The health effects are also included. Users can search or browse by brand, product category, manufacturer, or chemical. There is also a way to search the Material Safety Data Sheets for health effects (for example, dizziness).
- **Nursing Home Comparison** (www.medicare.gov/NHCompare/home.asp). This database includes information about the facilities and past performance of Medicare- and Medicaid-certified nursing homes. Searchable by geography, proximity, or name of the nursing home.
- **Drugs@FDA** (www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/cder/drugsatfda). A searchable database of FDA-approved brand name and generic drugs. Common uses of the database include finding the label information for a drug and finding generic drugs for a name brand drug.
- **Plants Database** (http://plants.usda.gov). A searchable database of plant information. The advanced search is very detailed and includes such categories as growth habit, foliage color, bloom color, shade tolerance, and so on. The site also includes a plant image gallery, plant distribution maps, and other related information.
- **Popular Baby Names** (www.ssa.gov/OACT/babynames). This database of the most popular baby names can be browsed by year, decade, or state. Users can also search for specific names to see the relative popularity over time.

These and other resources are useful for consumers. Some are specifically targeting consumers, some have a wider audience. The online pamphlet type publications are very similar to their printed counterparts. The databases, though, in many cases, provide information that was not previously easy to access. The fact that there is so much useful information available online for consumers makes it

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particularly important that it be easy to find, which is where portals come in.

Portals

There has always been a great deal of consumer information published by the government. Much of this is now online, but it is still produced within the same organizational structure. To get around this, the government has been creating portals on topics. This is a major shift, because it means that consumers can search for a topic without needing to know the sometimes complicated jurisdictional divisions between agencies.

For example, take a consumer issue such as food safety. There are a number of agencies involved with some aspect of food safety. Obvious examples include the Food and Drug Administration, the Food Safety and Inspection Service, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Environmental Protection Agency. There are many others that might not spring immediately to mind, such as the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms, which addresses food safety issues related to alcohol. Even the Department of Homeland Security gets involved when it comes to issues of agroterrorism. There is a document describing each agency's role (www.cfsan.fda.gov/~lrd/foodteam.html) in order to clarify these complex jurisdictional lines.

Government publishing has traditionally reflected these jurisdictional lines. The advantage of portals is that they ignore inter-agency boundaries. The government has made a concerted effort to simplify finding the information by creating such sites as www.foodsafety.gov, which includes links to information from all these agencies. Even the portal's URL is unique and does not reflect the organizational structure of the government.

Of course, the average consumer may not realize there is a portal about food safety. It does show up in search results (#1 in a Google search for "food safety" right now), but may not rank highly for more specific searches. That is where the two big portals for consumer information come in.

- **Firstgov.gov.** This is the main portal for all government information, including consumer information. It can be browsed by categories or searched. Searches for "food safety" bring up the food safety portal (#1) as well as many other related hits. There is a "Consumer Guides and Protection" section, which includes such categories as "Food Safety Questions and Answers," "Food, Drugs and Cosmetics Safety," and "Food-Borne Illnesses and Food Product Complaints."
- **Consumer.gov.** As the name implies, this portal is specifically aimed at consumers. It has browseable categories for food, product safety, health, and so on. It also can be searched; though the search results appear less useful than those of Firstgov.gov (a search for "food safety" did not highlight the portal). Nevertheless, it is a useful site and does draw attention to many useful consumer resources.

Other topical portals of interest to consumers include:

- Car Safety, www.safercar.gov
- Consumer Action, www.consumeraction.gov
- Consumer e-Commerce Complaints (international), www.econsumer.gov/english
- Consumer Publications, www.pueblo.gsa.gov
- Customer Service and Satisfaction, www.customerservice.gov
- Emergency Preparedness, www.ready.gov
- Fire Safety, www.firesafety.gov
- Food Safety, www.foodsafety.gov
- Fuel Efficiency and MPG Ratings, fueleconomy.gov
- Loans, www.govloans.gov
- My Money, www.mymoney.gov
- Nutrition, www.nutrition.gov
- Recalls, www.Recalls.gov
- Recreation, www.Recreation.gov
- Regulations, www.Regulations.gov ∎

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Index to Advertisers

Government Regulations

Protective, Restrictive, and Influenced by the Public

Cass Hartnett

Being a documents librarian at a large research university affords me regular opportunities to speak to groups about various government information topics. One of the topics I enjoy the most is one that makes some other people cringe: regulations. If you want a blank stare or the "deer in the headlights" look, just mention regulations. This a shame, as government regulations, at the local, state, federal, and even international levels, affect our everyday lives, and are most definitely a consumer issue. What follows is a brief, nonthreatening review of the basic federal regulatory process and a primer on our own role in that process as citizens, consumers, and librarians. And, yes, this can be fun.

When I think of my own professional education, I have to credit professor Judith S. Robinson of the State University of New York at Buffalo for making federal regulations fun for me. Along with hundreds of my colleagues, I read the first edition of her much-appreciated book, *Tapping the Government Grapevine: The User-Friendly Guide to U.S. Government Information Sources,* back in 1988. Suddenly, considering the number of aphids that can be present in a pound of commercially sold frozen broccoli became hilarious, not obscure. I eat broccoli and I am glad there's a guideline. I just never considered where the rules were written down, or who wrote them.

Most of us have the notion that regulations, by whatever definition, *protect* us—we would feel much less safe if airlines had no Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regulations with which to comply—and that regulations *restrict* us (for example, we might say "You can't do that—IRS regulations say you can't"). But do we know how much we influence regulations? Because regulations affect nearly every sector of our lives in one way or another, this is an important concept. Once we understand it and can communicate it to others, librarians should be evangelical on this point: the public influences regulations.

I start out many of my talks with an EPA-produced photograph of a polluted hillside (see figure 1). Consider how this situation came to pass, who is responsible, who will be responsible for cleaning it up—and what laws or regulations were broken? This stimulates participants to think of all the ways the trash might have ended up on the ground—thrown there by individuals, perhaps intentionally, perhaps unintentionally, but undoubtedly the mess accrued over the course of years. What in the environment is affected by the pollution? Definitely the soil; probably the water and wildlife. Have government rules have been broken? We are thinking like regulators now!

Pull back from the polluted hillside for a moment and consider the three branches of our federal government. The distinct roles of the three branches are easy to forget for most people, who may perceive government functions as being performed by a faceless group of "feds." The executive is probably the most mysterious branch to the average person. We elect members of Congress to pass laws in our legislative branch. We know that the federal courts consist of appointed judges who decide cases in our judicial branch. But, what happens in the executive, also known as the administrative, branch?

All three branches of government "make" law. The legislature's laws we call "statutes" or "laws," and the courts' "laws" we refer to as "decisions" or "opinions." The executive

Photo credits: U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Title: Hillside dump.

Date: May, 1972

Location: Sonora, CA

Photographer: Gene Daniels

Control No.: NWDNS-412-DA-92

www.epa.gov/history/photos/p07.htm

Figure 1. EPA-produced Photograph of a Polluted Hillside

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branch, with agencies as far reaching as the FDA and NASA, writes "regulations" or "rules" (the terms are synonymous). This also is sometimes known as bureaucratic or administrative law. Some find it helpful to remember that a legislature *passes* laws, an executive agency *enforces* laws, and a court system *interprets* laws (this same model applies state and local levels, with minor variations). Still others find it helpful to consider that the legislative branch, in passing its laws, *empowers the executive branch* to write corresponding regulations. Pass a law mandating the labeling of cigarette boxes, and you can expect that the appropriate executive agency will come forward with regulations about the warning labels, their placement and prominence on the box, even, perhaps, the required font size on the label.

To emphasize how specific regulations can be, consider this example. In 1972, Congress passed a law creating the Consumer Product Safety Commission, an agency founded to reduce the number of injuries caused in using everyday consumer products. In 1977, the Consumer Product Safety Commission, because it was empowered to do so, put forth regulations regarding baby pacifiers. As codified in 16 *CFR* 1511.6, "A pacifier shall not be sold or distributed with any ribbon, string, cord, chain, twine, leather, yarn or similar attachments." An accompanying diagram (www.access.gpo.gov/nara/cfr/waisidx_06/16cfr1511_06.html) gives further specifics about appropriate physical properties and dimensions that would help make pacifiers safe (see figure 2).

What exactly is the *CFR*? The *Code of Federal Regulations* is a codified, or topically arranged, version of all regulations currently in force. New regulations may strike out, amend, or update older ones, and the *CFR* is updated over the course of one year. In the print-on-paper realm, this means that the superseded volumes must be withdrawn to make way for the new. (Note: Law libraries are an exception here, as they generally retain historic editions of the *CFR*.) Watching the (printed) *CFR* covers change color is a marker of a year's passage for many documents and law librarians. One title, Title 3—The President, does not supersede: all of its volumes must be

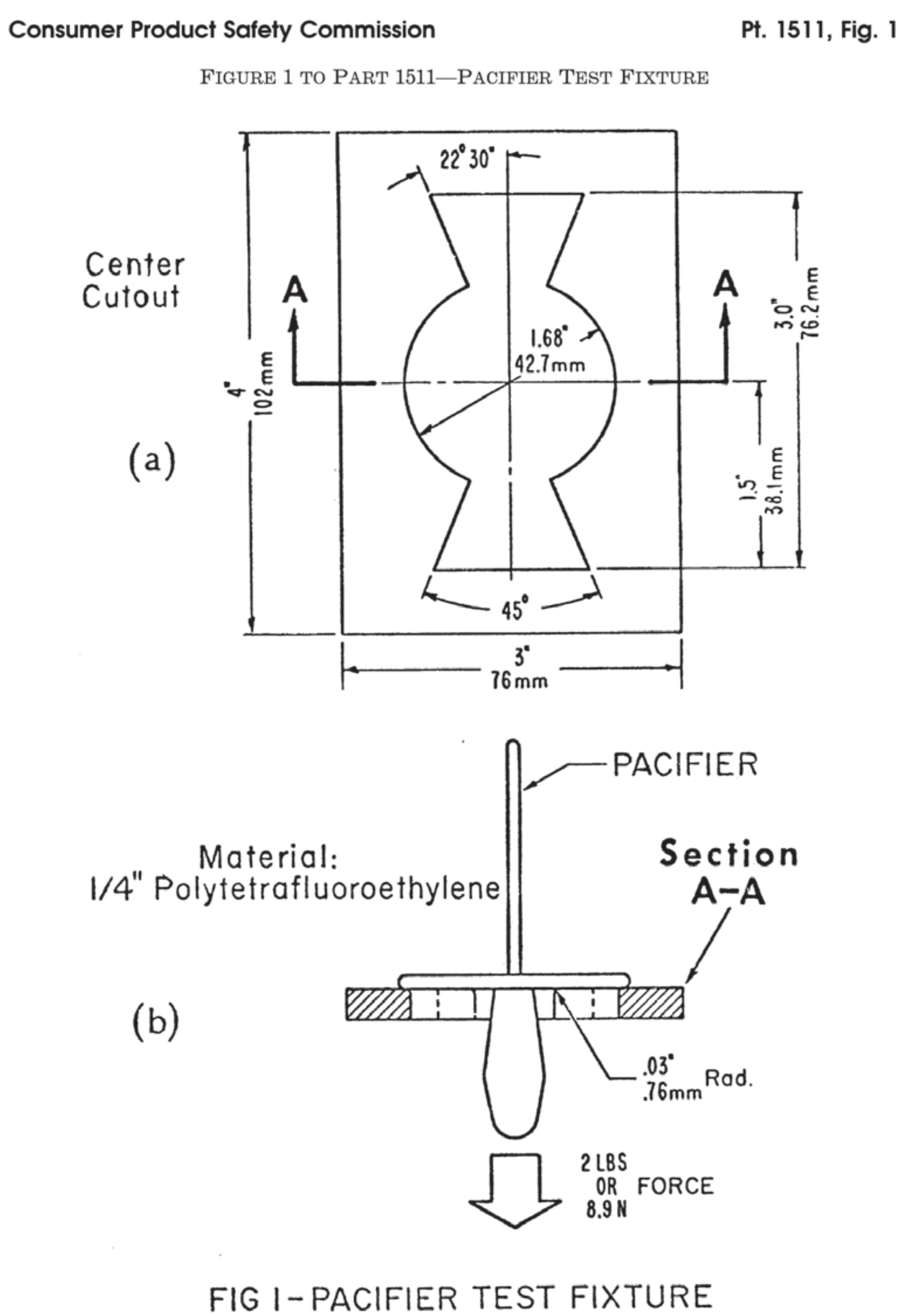

Figure 2. Pacifier Diagram

retained for historic purposes (it contains Executive Orders and Proclamations). When you visit another library, visually scan their *CFR* shelves, which should include all the old Title 3 volumes back to 1938. If those volumes are absent, that library's collection is incomplete.

The regulatory publication cycle begins with the *Federal Register*, an unglamorous but very important daily (Monday–Friday) periodical. It is considered the official newspaper of the executive branch of government. When agency staff determines a need for changes to regulations or new regulations altogether, they must first publish a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking in the *Federal Register*. Then, after stakeholder input is reviewed (from the public or any concerned party—this means us, and we are usually given thirty days to do so via letters, e-mails, web submissions, and statements at public hearings), the agency has performed its analysis of the issues, and the federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has weighed in, the agency puts forth in the *Federal Register* the first published draft of their proposed rule. The legal requirement to publish proposed rules in the *Federal Register* also mandates a second public comment period of sixty days. At this point, the agency may hold a public hearing, usually not required, but potentially a valuable source of citizen's opinions and ideas. An interim rule is another possibility at this stage: these become effective immediately, without a notice and comment period. Interim rules are less common, but are sometimes established to grant immediate relief from an existing regulatory requirement (public comment is required before interim rules are finalized). After this second round of citizen input is reviewed, the agency promulgates its final rule, and publishes it in the *Federal Register*. Congress, the OMB, and the Government Accountability Office all get to take a look at final rules before they are published. Final rules will be codified and published in the next revision of the *CFR*. A wonderful map of the rule-making process is available at www.reginfo.gov/public/reginfo/Regmap/regmap.pdf.

To discover how regulations are all around us, reflect on the events of your own life today. Consider your morning and your trip to work. Recall any products, services, or resources you used, and think about which federal agencies regulate those domains. Can you come up with ten agencies that affected your morning? For me, the list in figure 3 applies.

The biggest development in regulations in recent years is the dawn of e-rulemaking, the attempt to make the entire process more efficient, transparent, and user-friendly with the aid of technology and the Internet. The most salient example of how far we have come is the launch in February 2003 of *Regulations.gov* (www.regulations.gov)—where "you can find, view and comment on regulations for all Federal agencies." Its deceptively simply interface belies the fact that its creation took months of planning and agreement from diverse federal agencies and their general counsels. Some agencies also have put up portals for their own rulemaking activities. See a list at www.archives.gov/federal-register/public-participation/rulemaking-sites.html. Will we eventually move away from reliance on the printed *Federal Register* altogether? This remains to be seen.

Activity	Federal Regulatory Agency
Consumed cereal and milk	1. Dept. of Agriculture for regulating agricultural products 2. Food and Drug Administration for food labeling requirements
Poured hot herbal tea into commuter mug	3. Consumer Product Safety Commission for enhancing appliance and product safety (electric tea kettle and plastic mug)
Drove car to "park and ride" lot	4. Dept. of Transportation for vehicle standards 5. Dept. of Energy promoting scientific innovation in energy
Got on commuter bus	6. Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration for its focus on reducing bus-related injuries
Rode on bus on Interstate 5	7. Federal Highway Administration for insuring that roads are safe and up to date
Listened to radio on headset	8. Federal Communications Commission for regulating communications by radio
Purchased latte at market rate	9. Federal Trade Commission for protecting consumers against unfair business practices
Breathed cleaner air than people in many other cities of the world	10. Environmental Protection Agency for protecting human health and the environment

Figure 3. Ten Agencies That Affected the Author's Morning

Lastly, one more nugget to chew on: everything described above has a close parallel at the state level. Become familiar with your state's equivalent of the *Federal Register* (my state's publications are the *Washington Register* and the *Washington Administrative Code*). Understand that, as librarians, we play an important liaison role between citizens and government. Get some hands-on experience with regulations: attend a regulatory hearing or briefing, submit comments on a proposed regulation via www.regulations.gov. And most importantly, read, watch, or listen to news with the regulatory process in mind. The profession of librarianship will be better for it. ∎

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Tips from Tim

A Small Rant

Tim Byrne

I don't always read all my e-mail. There is just too much every day. The biggest culprit, of course, is Govdoc-l. *[Editor's Note: Tip to Tim, learn how to delete without reading.]* There are numerous messages on Govdoc-l that I don't need to read and don't want to read. There are a lot of postings that don't need to be there. Some of them are basic questions relating to the Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP). When I see these queries I usually wonder whether the poster knows that this sort of question can be sent to their regional depository librarian. I am a regional depository librarian, and I frequently get phone calls and e-mails with just these sorts of questions. I am happy to answer them. In fact, I take it personally if depository librarians in Colorado or Wyoming send FDLP questions to Govdoc-l without running them by me first. How can I face my fellow regional librarians if my selectives are posting basic depository-related questions to Govdoc-l? Probably there are depository librarians in my states who would post more on Govdoc-l but they are afraid of me harassing them if they do, except for Sharon Partridge, who has my permission to post anything she wants. *Tip: Try sending FDLP-related questions to your regional librarian first. See how many questions you have to ask before you get blanket permission to post them to GovDoc-l.*

I probably don't have as much patience as I should with messages that get sent to the list by mistake. You know—the ones that were meant as replies just to the sender, or were supposed to be forwarded to a co-worker but went to the list instead. I should have more patience with these because I do this a lot myself. When sending a message to someone not in my address book, I usually just look in my inbox for a message from them and then hit reply without noticing that the message was to Govdoc-l. I must confess that the Govdoc-l moderators have caught a number of messages that would have been a bit embarrassing had they gone to the list. Let's all take a moment to give silent thanks to the Govdoc-l moderators. *Tip: Try to stay on the good side of the Govdoc-l moderators.*

There is a lot of ranting that gets posted on Govdoc-l. Ranting is healthy. There are rants about our current administration, about Congress, about a lot of different federal agencies and, naturally, there are a lot of rants about GPO. A lot of these I find myself agreeing with, but some of them really bother me. I think what bothers me is the fact that many of the people making critical comments about GPO seem to forget that agencies are made up of people, and the comments seem more personal and negative than constructive. I know some of these people, and they are good folk who work hard and do the best they can. If I worked for GPO, I would certainly be bothered by the tone of some of the comments on Govdoc-l. A few of the postings following the unveiling of the new *Catalog of U.S. Government Publications (CGP)* seemed a bit extreme. *Tip: E-mail is not therapy. Sure it may make you feel good to express yourself, but sometimes you may want to wait a couple of hours after writing your message before hitting the send button. When I do this, I find I usually end up toning down my remarks. I also don't later regret sending the message.*

Of course, a lack of sensitivity toward GPO staff is not new to the Internet age. It is pretty easy to make an inappropriate comment at a national meeting too. A classic example is the GODORT meeting a number of years ago, when Superintendent of Documents Don Fossedal took offense at a comment and stormed out of the room. It was a big room, and he had quite a distance to storm. He stormed back to tell everyone that he had given up his weekend to attend the meeting and he didn't come there to be insulted. He then turned around and stormed out again, signaling the GPO staffers in the room to follow him. They trailed out, but none of them could exit a room quite the way the big guy could. Now, I really don't believe the person who made the offending comment (and I don't want to name names, so we'll just call him "Steve") really intended to insult anyone from GPO. In the heat of the discussion he just forgot that GPO is made up of people and those people were sitting in the room. *Tip: Don't say what "Steve" did. Whatever that was. We don't need GPO staff storming from the room again, and it was really agonizing to watch anyway.*

When the Colorado depository librarians get together, I always expect that there will be some time devoted to ranting about whatever is going on with the depository library program. Everybody feels better afterwards, but rarely is there anybody from GPO in the room with us. We did have Judy Russell at a meeting a couple of years ago, and we did have our rant session, but we cleaned it up a bit and called it "positive suggestions on the future of the depository library program." Judy seemed to take it very well. *Tip: People appreciate positive feedback, so it's much better if you can phrase it that way.*

I do feel a lot better. ∎

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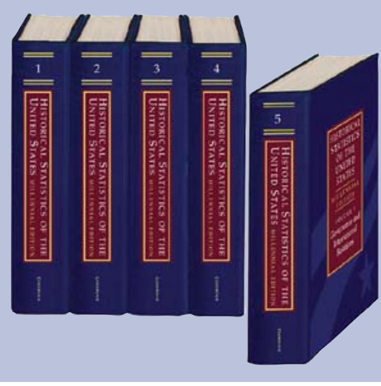

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