In This Issue

- Access to UN Documents
- Presidential Control of Executive Branch Agencies
- Enhancing a Collection with Digital Documents
- Improving Government Documents Instruction

DttP

Documents to the People

Fall 2009 | Volume 37, No. 3 | ISSN 0091-2085

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DttP: Documents to the People (ISSN: 0091-2085) is published quarterly in spring, summer, fall, and winter by the American Library Association (ALA), 50 East Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611. It is the official publication of ALA's Government Documents Round Table (GODORT).

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

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Subcriptions/Claims: *DttP* is sent free to ALA/GODORT members on a per volume (annual) basis. For subscriptions, prepayment is required in the amount of $35 in North America, $45 elsewhere. Checks or money orders should be made payable to "ALA/GODORT" and sent to the Distribution Manager. Changes of address and claims six months of the date of issue should be sent to the Distribution Manager. To purchase back issues, write to: UMI, 300 North Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

Contributions: Articles, news items, letters, and other information intended for publication in *DttP* should be submitted to the Co-Lead Editors. All submitted material is subject to editorial review. Please see the website for additional information, above.

Indexing: Indexed in Library Literature 19, no. 1 (1991) and CSA Worldwide Political Science Abstracts 33, no. 1 (2005), and selectively in PAIS 33, no 1 (2005).

Editorial Production: ALA Production Services—Troy D. Linker, Chris Keech, Tim Clifford, and Justine Wells.

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About the Cover: The cover photo is of the 2009 GODORT Award recipients. They are (left to right) Daniel Cornwall, Andrea Sevetson, and Justin Joque. Not pictured: Eleanor Chase and Aimée Quinn. See wikis.ala.org/godort/index.php/Announcing_the_2009_GODORT_Awards_Winners for more information.

Editor's Corner

Our First Issue

Beth Clausen and Valerie Glenn

This issue marks a new beginning for *DttP*, as we take the reins of editorial responsibility from the previous team. As we mentioned in the last issue, we intend to stick with the same framework of content for the rest of this volume, and will introduce some changes in the Spring 2010 issue. Some of these changes will be based on your feedback—thanks to all who took the time to complete the *DttP* readers' survey this past spring. It is gratifying to know that so many people appreciate *DttP* as it stands and its potential. More information on the survey results can be found in John Stevenson's piece in 'Round the Table.

This isn't just the first issue for us as editors, it also marks Amy West's initial From the Chair column in which she introduces readers to the various "meanings" of data. Familiar columns By the Numbers and Geospatial News feature guest columnists. This is the last Washington Report by outgoing Legislation Committee Chair, Kirsten Clark. If you were unable to join us at the Annual Conference in Chicago, you can get caught up with GODORT news in the Conference Highlights.

The articles in this issue were selected from proposals submitted in response to our call for papers. Regular readers will see some familiar names, along with some new voices. Becky Byrum and Cheryl Truesdell have a follow-up piece to their piece on the unitary executive theory and presidential signing statements (*DttP* 36:3). Susan Kurtas presents information about the Dag Hammarskjöld Library's effort to use a wiki to make information about UN member states more readily available and easily accessible. Rebecca Blakeley compares the features of two free Internet-based repositories she used to rebuild a documents collection damaged by a natural disaster. Marilyn Von Seggern and B. Jane Scales discuss systematic efforts to improve the learning and teaching results of course-related instruction of federal government documents.

As always, we encourage all authors, both new and seasoned, to submit manuscripts or manuscript proposals to us at dttp.editor@gmail.com. We welcome your comments about *DttP* at the same address.

GODORT Membership

Membership in ALA is a requisite for joining GODORT.

Basic personal membership in ALA begins at $50 for first-year members, $25 for student members, and $35 for library support staff (for other categories see www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=Membership).

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From the Chair

Data 101

Amy West

As many of you probably know, I spent my first seven years at the University of Minnesota as an official, card-carrying government publications librarian. Then, in 2007, the libraries did a bit of reorganizing and decided it was time to formalize the work I'd been doing and now I'm a card-carrying data librarian. Of course, because so much of the data floating around in the world is generated by governments or through government funding, I remain deeply interested in public access to government information. Thus, I've been thrilled by the surge of interest in "government data" during the last year. I've also been a bit frustrated by just how broadly data has been construed without any routine acknowledgment of the many flavors of data that are of such interest. Conveniently, while I'm GODORT Chair, I have this column in which to discuss various elements of government data and what data might mean to government information specialists with respect to dissemination, access, formatting, usability, and preservation of increasingly large quantities of government information at all levels. This first installment will cover some of the primary meanings of "data."

First, there's data that we're familiar with—numeric data files representing censuses, surveys, geospatial coordinates, and sensor measurements. These files may be true data, in that they represent content at the level of observation, or they may be summary tables or statistical visualizations generated from the numeric data. Typically, data is excluded from depository programs, but summary tables and statistical visualizations are regularly included, either on their own or as part of larger textual publications.

Key to this conceptualization of data is that it is separate from text. Text equals publications equals the rows and rows of books and microfiche in libraries. However, from the perspective of a computer programmer, data is anything that may be structured. Anything. For example, in H.R. 1105, "bulk data download" referred to availability of legislative branch textual material in bulk and in a structured form.[1] This is a perfectly acceptable use of data, but it's not the one typically used by government information librarians. More importantly, the government has finite resources. If efforts to get agencies to expend their energies on the development of structured textual data are successful, then it will most likely be at the expense of the traditional publication. This isn't a bad thing, but it is most definitely a *different* thing. Data as a way of structuring text, rather than something other than text, will most likely have profound effects on what it is that libraries collect from governments, whether through a depository program or not.

Academic libraries are talking about data primarily in terms of the biomedical, physical, and natural sciences. Data from these disciplines are often produced on very large scales and have massive storage, description, analytical, and preservation challenges. However, equally important is the relationship of federal funding to research, the government's definition of research data, and the role of copyright. The reason that so many academic libraries have become so interested in scientific data is that, in addition to being an opportunity to create new kinds of collections while participating in the advancement of information management, that's where the action is. According to the National Science Foundation, the federal government expended more than twenty-two billion dollars in fiscal year 2005 on research in science and engineering at universities and colleges in the United States.[2] Thus, many academic libraries are now looking at the research data resulting from federally funded research as a potential target for collections. However, in this context, "research data" is not only different from what any librarian might expect, but it's especially different from what a government information librarian would expect because, unlike typical government publications, copyright is an issue.

In OMB Circular A-110, research data is defined as "the recorded factual material commonly accepted in the scientific community as necessary to validate research findings . . ."[3] Effectively, research data is defined as a typical journal article, with (possibly) some supporting data. Further, "the recipient may copyright any work that is subject to copyright and was

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developed, or for which ownership was purchased, under an award."[4] In short, researchers may claim copyright (despite a provision allowing the government to also claim a nonexclusive right to the research data) to their research data, e.g., journal articles or work for which copyright is routinely reassigned to the publisher. It's because of the interrelationship between federally funded research data and journal publications that the National Institutes of Health Open Access law has been fought so strenuously by academic publishers. Unlike government information produced as work for hire, which is not subject to copyright, research data as defined here is.

This brings me to the last kind of data that I want to cover: open data. Open data is not just the data version of open access journals. As indicated above, there's an element of open access to the concept, but copyright isn't the only factor that might inhibit open access to data. Ethical research methods and local, state, and federal law all require that much data be kept from the public for at least some period of time, if not permanently. Existing academic rewards systems also mitigate against large-scale data sharing, as do the familiar issues of proprietary hardware and software and media obsolescence. Privacy concerns also play a role here when data refers to government records (and it often does).

So what's the takeaway from all this? Government information librarians need to stay abreast of all of the activity around "government data" because it often means wildly different things, may have massive implications for collections, and may involve copyright. It's also a fabulous opportunity to explore new ways of serving our users through new modes of information delivery. For example, the Obama administration has recently launched Data.gov (www.data.gov), a catalog of data resources produced by federal agencies. At the moment there's nothing tying the records in Data.gov to any bibliographic catalogs, but because Data.gov is using modified Dublin Core, those records certainly could be made catalog-friendly—thus increasing the variety of resources findable via library catalogs. What's nice about Data.gov is the high standards for including data sets and those listed are usefully described. Thus, you'd be adding content to library resources that, even if still relatively specialized in nature, is adequately described for those users with the requisite skills to use it.

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2. National Science Foundation, "Federal Obligations for Research Performed at Universities and Colleges, by Selected Agency and Field of Science and Engineering: FY 2005," *Federal Funds for Research and Development*, November 2008, www.nsf.gov/statistics/nsf09300/pdf/tab57.pdf.
3. OMB Circular A-110 www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/a110/a110.html#36.
4. Ibid.

Announcing the Fourth Annual Cover Contest

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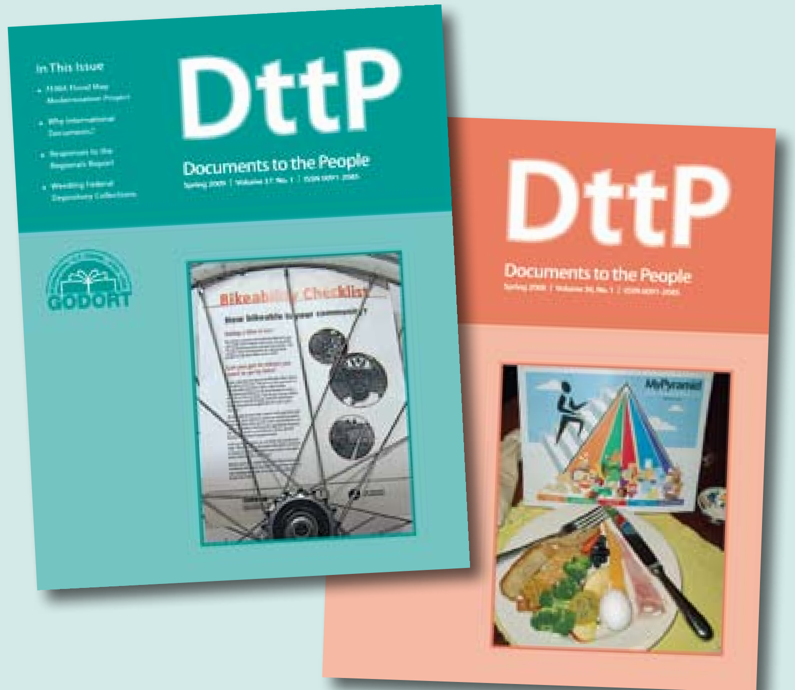

We had such fun with the photos we received for the previous contests, and we already had requests for another contest, so here we go again!

Put your favorite government comic book together with its superhero . . . industrial guides with your neighborhood factory—the sky (and perhaps TSA) is the limit!

Details:

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- All photos submitted must include citation information
- Photo orientation should be portrait (not landscape)
- Digital photos must be at least 300 dpi

Please submit all images to the Co-Lead Editors of *DttP* by December 1, 2009. The winning photo will be on the cover of the spring 2010 issue. All submitted photos will be posted on the GODORT wiki.

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DttP
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Washington Report

Current and Recent Legislation

Kirsten Clark

In my last column, I touched on several parts of the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009* (P.L. 111-5). In recent months, several groups have been involved in positioning libraries and other entities to lead efforts surrounding a national broadband plan as outlined in the law. ALA recently joined the Schools, Health and Libraries Broadband Coalition, which also includes the American Hospital Association, EDUCAUSE, Center for Rural Strategies, Microsoft, Consumer's Union, and Center for Media Justice, just to name a few. This coalition focuses on improving "broadband capabilities of schools, libraries and health care providers so that they can enhance the quality and availability of the essential services they provide to the public and serve underserved and unserved populations more effectively."[1] In particular, ALA points out that libraries serve as the premier public computing centers and information hubs for American communities and as such are in the perfect position to serve as the backbone for a national broadband plan.[2]

Movement continues forward with regard to transparency and open government within the Obama administration (although not at as fast a pace as some might want to see). The administration is developing a set of recommendations to guide agencies in more transparency and the Office of Science and Technology Policy (www.ostp.gov) has opened the recommendation development process up to the public. Although the dates to participate have already passed at the time of this printing, information about this process is available through the Open Government Initiative website (www.whitehouse.gov/open). See also the May 21, 2009, *Federal Register* (edocket.access.gpo.gov/2009/pdf/E9-12026.pdf) for more information. As this process moves from comment to implementation it is imperative that libraries participate to ensure that transparency and open government become a reality.

Several bills have been introduced that affect access to government information. Mentioned briefly in my last column, the *Preserving the American Historical Records Act* (H.R. 2171, H.R. 2256) was introduced by Rep. Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) in May. This bill authorizes the archivist of the United States to make grants to states to protect historical records, to use these records in new ways, to provide education and training for those that care for these records, and to create access tools on state and local organization websites. Many depository libraries, with their documents collections being a huge historical record of the government's history, could be included in these grants. This bill has been referred to the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform.

Senate Resolution 118 (S. Res. 118), sponsored by Sen. Joseph Lieberman (I-CT), focuses on providing Internet access to certain Congressional Research Service (CRS) publications. For many years, CRS reports have provided a well-researched snapshot of a particular issue at the time of publication. They provide not only a current events view of what is happening, but also a historical record of what information was known at that time. These reports, however, have not systematically been made available online. This resolution provides for a centralized electronic system for access and retrieval of information made available through the CRS website, including issue briefs and reports available to members of Congress. This resolution has been referred to the Senate Rules and Administration Committee.

While, as yet, there has been little movement on the reauthorization of the *USA PATRIOT Act*, action will start to pick up, especially after the 2009 ALA Annual Conference. The *Safe and Secure America Act of 2009* (H.R. 1467) extends the *2005 Reauthorization Act* (P.L. 109-177) through 2019 for provisions related to wiretaps, and to the FBI's access to tangible items such as records (Section 215). For libraries, this has included library records related to patrons. The ALA Washington Office provides an overview of the *USA PATRIOT Act* that includes information about the original law and the reauthorization (www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/wo/woissues/civilliberties/theusapatriotact/usapatriotact.cfm).

Ongoing information sources for legislation

In writing this column for the past year, the question of timeliness comes up with each issue as I prepare it. With today's simultaneous news sources, keeping up with legislation that affects libraries, and in particular GODORT, relies on websites, e-mail, RSS, Twitter, and blogs, more so than columns such as this. That is not to say that the Washington Report does not serve a purpose. It provides a snapshot of legislation at the time of its writing; yet, this column isn't published for another couple months when whatever bills mentioned have become law or been vetoed or died in committee. There are many sources that people use to keep up-to-date with what Congress and the executive branch are doing on a daily basis. In pulling together these columns, here are some of the sources I check to keep up-to-date with what is happening in the Beltway. Between this column and the next, take time to check these out.

ALA Washington Office District Dispatch (www.wo.ala.org/districtdispatch)—This blog from the ALA Washington

Office provides information on what staffers are currently lobbying with Congress or working with librarians to discuss with their Congress members. There is also the Legislative Action Center (capwiz.com/ala/home/) to find out about specific issues and advocacy.

GovTrack (www.govtrack.us)—This is an independent, nonpartisan, noncommercial source for tracking Congressional activities. There is a lot available at this site but of special interest is the tracking services it provides. RSS feeds and e-mail updates are available for specific tracks of legislation—either for a specific bill, a particular Congress member, a congressional committee, or by broad subject (www.govtrack.us/users/trackers.xpd). What legislation is potentially affecting libraries? Check out the subject trackers for "libraries and archives" (www.govtrack.us/congress/subjects.xpd?type=crs&term=Libraries%20and%20archives) or "freedom of information" (www.govtrack.us/congress/subjects.xpd?type=crs&term=Freedom+of+information). Want to be informed of movement on H.R. 1467? Check out its page and subscribe to the RSS feed (www.govtrack.us/congress/bill.xpd?bill=h111-1467).

The Library of Congress THOMAS (thomas.loc.gov)—While this site may not have the bells and whistles of other resources, it is still the backbone of legislative research. The RSS feed for the *Congressional Record* provides a daily dose of Congressional action and gives a nice update of what is happening right now.

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1. ALA Washington Office, "ALA Joins Schools, Health and Libraries Broadband Coalition," *District Dispatch*, June 11, 2009, www.wo.ala.org/districtdispatch/?p=3023.
2. ALA Washington Office, "ALA Files Comments to FCC on Development of National Broadband Plan," *District Dispatch*, June 8, 2009, www.wo.ala.org/districtdispatch/?p=3003.

By the Numbers

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Data Sources

Robert Tolliver

Concerns over changes in the earth's climate increase the importance of knowing where to find relevant data. In the United States, the major source of government-produced climate data is the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Data from NOAA cover a broad range of topics from the atmosphere to the ocean and from the earth's surface to its interactions with the sun. This column is intended to give readers a brief overview of the wide range of data that NOAA makes available through its subunits.

The National Environmental Satellite, Data, and Information Service office of NOAA provides access to most of these sources of data via three data centers that are important sources of earth science data: the National Climatic Data Center, the National Geophysical Data Center, and the National Oceanographic Data Center.

National Climatic Data Center (NCDC)

The National Climatic Data Center (www.ncdc.noaa.gov/oa/ncdc.html) is the world's largest archive of weather data, covering recent and historic climatic conditions, storms and other extreme climatic events, and paleoclimatology. The NCDC produces many important data products covering hourly, daily, monthly, and annual time frames. Some of their most popular products include:

- U.S. Local Climatological Data
  - Monthly summaries from major airport weather stations
  - Daily temperature extremes, degree days, precipitation, and winds
  - Hourly precipitation and three-hour weather observations
  - Data available in PDF and ASCII formats
  - Note: degree days are a measure of how much the temperature is above or below a reference temperature (65° F in the United States) and are useful for estimating the amount of energy needed for heating or cooling

- U.S. Climate Normals
  - Daily normals for 1971–2000 of temperature, precipitation, and degree days for nearly 8,000 weather stations
  - Monthly, seasonal, and annual normals, along with precipitation probabilities and quintiles
  - Data can be displayed as a text file for importing into a spreadsheet
  - Note: normals are the average value of a meteorological element (such as temperature or precipitation) over a thirty-year time span

- Storm Data
  - Chronological listing, by state, of hurricanes, tornadoes, thunderstorms, hail, floods, drought conditions, lightning, high winds, snow, temperature extremes, and other weather phenomena
  - Includes statistics on personal injuries and damage estimates

- Hourly Precipitation Data
  - Contains hourly precipitation amounts obtained from the National Weather Service, Federal Aviation Administration, and cooperative observer stations
  - Includes maximum precipitation for nine time periods ranging from fifteen minutes to twenty-four hours for selected stations

- U.S. Annual Climatological Summary
  - Annual summary of monthly temperature means, departures from normal and extremes, heating and cooling degree data, and precipitation totals
  - A monthly tally of rain days, snow days, and days within selected temperature thresholds.

All of the NCDC's data products are free to educational, government, and military organizations, and some of their products are free to everyone, making the NCDC a good place to start for data sources.

National Geophysical Data Center (NGDC)

The National Geophysical Data Center (www.ngdc.noaa.gov) makes available a wide variety of data covering the ocean, land, atmosphere, and solar-terrestrial environments. The NGDC has data available in more than 400 digital and analog databases. Topics covered in their data holdings include natural hazards (earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanoes, wildfires), geomagnetism, gravity, topography, marine geology, satellite data, snow and ice, and solar-terrestrial physics. In addition to the wide variety of data topics, the NGDC has a number of online access systems for specific types of data. These include Interactive Map Services that provide access to interactive maps with the data available for download; SPIDR (Space Physics Interactive Data Resource) for data on cosmic rays, magnetic data, the ionosphere, nighttime lights, solar images, and space weather events; GEODAS (Geophysical Data System) covering marine geophysics, hydrographic surveys, coastal relief, bathymetry, and aeromagnetic surveys; and seafloor composition data. The NGDC is also affiliated with the National Snow and Ice Data Center at the University of Colorado, which archives and manages NOAA data on snow and ice, including data on sea ice, glacier photographs, the world glacier inventory, and other data from the world's cold regions that may be major indicators of changes in the earth's environment.

National Oceanographic Data Center (NODC)

The National Oceanographic Data Center (www.nodc.noaa.gov) focuses on oceanographic and coastal data, which are very important for understanding the overall climatic and environmental conditions around the earth. The NODC website states that they have the largest collection of publicly available oceanographic data, including physical data, such as ocean currents, salinity, and sea level, as well as biological data such as chlorophyll, nutrients, and plankton. The NODC also has significant holdings of international data available through products such as the World Ocean Atlas and the World Ocean Database.

Other sources of data at NOAA

Additional sources of data within the NOAA include the National Ocean Service (NOS) and the National Weather Service (NWS). NOS data, which can be accessed from their Data Explorer site (oceanservice.noaa.gov/dataexplorer/), consists primarily of spatial data and includes bathymetry/topography, environmental monitoring, geodetic data, hurricanes, marine boundaries, images, shoreline data, and tide/current data. The NWS offers data on forecasts, current weather, and past weather, which is spread throughout their website (www.weather.gov). The NWS also makes available a great deal of graphical map data and satellite imagery, such as the National Digital Forecast Database (www.nws.noaa.gov/ndfd) for accessing forecast data in various formats, and the GIS (Geographic Information Systems) Data Portal (www.nws.noaa.gov/gis/), which provides access to KML (Keyhole Markup Language) files and shapefiles.

Other ways to access NOAA data

There are other ways to access NOAA data on the web, in addition to the NOAA website (www.noaa.gov). One good source is the Global Change Master Directory (gcmd.nasa.gov) produced by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA). Along with data from NASA research, the Directory includes NOAA data and data from other sources such as the United States Geological Survey and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Additionally, some data are available through the National Atlas (www.nationalatlas.gov) as data layers for creating maps.

Conclusion

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is the primary U.S. government source of climatic and meteorological data. In addition, NOAA offers a variety of earth science data covering just about every type of physical data, as well as some biological data that could be used to understand Earth's environment. Data users for NOAA's products include scientists, industry, government, and many others. Understanding the various organizations within NOAA and what kinds of data they produce can be a great aid to providing the right information to fit users' needs.

Robert Tolliver, Geosciences Subject Specialist, Penn State University, rlt17@psu.edu.

Geospatial News

[Underground] Mine Maps

Linda Musser

Mine maps aren't your usual government documents. In general they are not distributed to libraries by the government or the issuing body. Essentially mine maps are created by the mining company for internal, operational use and to fulfill regulatory requirements. As such, few copies are created, although many editions may be generated as mining operations progress. One of the earliest examples of a government imposing regulations for mine maps was that of Swedish King Gustavus Adolphus in 1628. For most countries, mine map regulations were adopted in the latter half of the nineteenth century as major mine accidents became more common and safety regulations began to be formulated. For example, Britain's *Coal and Metalliferous Mines Regulation Acts of 1872* required operators to prepare and provide governmental access to plans of coal mines, and in 1873 Pennsylvania supplemented its 1870 anthracite miner health and safety law to require mine operators to prepare accurate mine maps for government inspectors. Ideally, and according to current regulations, when a mine ceases operation a copy of the final mine map is placed on file with the regulatory agency. Unfortunately, for a variety of reasons, this has not always occurred. One of the most common reasons relates to the type of mine. For many years, regulations concerning mine maps only applied to underground coal mines, exempting other types of underground mines and surface mines or allowing exemptions due to the size of the mining operation. This column focuses on the most common type of mine map, maps of underground mines.

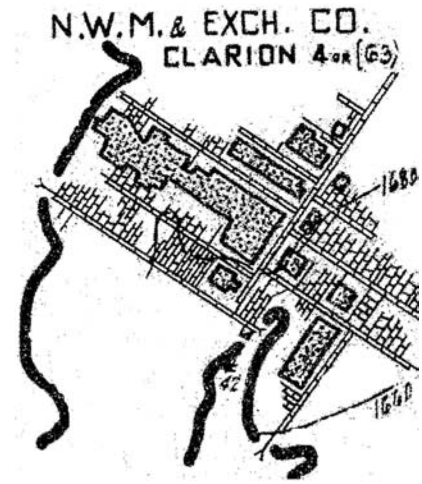

Figure 1. ***Brockwater 9 Upper Kittanning seam [Bituminous coal mine maps of Pennsylvania],*** **(Harrisburg, Pa. : Works Progress Administration of Pennsylvania, 1934–1938).**

Mine maps are useful for a variety of reasons. Maps from previous mining operations can help determine the amount of resources remaining that could be mined in the future. For those doing construction above a mine, it is useful to know the depth and other details about the mine so that appropriate foundations can be built and to mitigate subsidence (ground sinkage). Finally, because mines pose health and safety hazards, mine maps are crucial for protecting miners. For example, in July 2002, nine miners were trapped underground when water from a nearby abandoned mine flooded the Quecreek, Pennsylvania, mine where they were working. All the miners were rescued and investigators later concluded that the primary cause of the accident was a reliance on a nonfinal map of the abandoned mine that didn't show the full extent of the mine.[1] Less than a month later, a similar incident was narrowly avoided at the Dugout Canyon mine in Utah, further illustrating the critical need to have accurate maps of abandoned mines available.

With well over 100,000 abandoned mines in the United States, most located in the eastern portion of the country, the scope of the challenge to provide access to mine maps is quite large. By far, West Virginia has the largest number of abandoned mines (over 46,000), followed by Pennsylvania (approximately 11,000), then Michigan (over 10,000); in the western United States, Colorado has the most abandoned mines (approximately 7,000). The Mine Safety and Health Administration began to address this need in December 2003 when it announced that $3.9 million in grants would be awarded to thirteen states to create databases of abandoned mine maps for those states.[2]

Historically, mine maps have been created on all types of materials ranging from paper to canvas to more unusual materials such as oilskin. Unlike traditional map publications such as highway or topographic maps, mine maps come in many sizes. Mine maps can range in size from 8.5 x 11 inches, to the more common 36 x 24 inch sheet, to 3 x 4 feet (e.g., anthracite coal mine maps), to maps large enough to carpet rooms (e.g., bituminous coal mines maps, such as that in figure 1). Mine map creators sometimes use color to delineate different seams or rock types; however, use of color is not common.

Mine maps are created at a large scale in order to show in great detail the features and reach of the working mine. Federal regulations specify a map scale of "not less than 100 nor more than 500 feet to the inch,"[3] while many states have their own regulations regarding mine map specifications. The required elements detailed in Title 30 of the *U.S. Code of Federal Regulations* include (among other elements):

- Name and address of the mine
- Scale and orientation of the map
- Property or boundary lines of the mine
- Contour lines of all elevations
- Active workings
- All pillared, worked out, and abandoned areas
- Elevations of all main and cross or side entries
- Escapeways
- Adjacent mine workings within 1,000 feet
- Mines above or below
- Water pools above[4]

Given the amount of data required to manage an active mine, many mining operations rely on map overlays to convey additional information required for operation of the mine. Typically only the general mine map showing the details required by law is provided to the regulating agency. Upon closure of the mine, regulations require that a final mine map be placed on deposit with the appropriate regulatory agency or agencies. In many cases, the agency involved is whichever state department is charged with oversight of mining activities; however, federal agencies, such as the Bureau of Land Management, also require and receive mine maps.

In the United States, most collections of mine maps are held at the state level, usually in the regulatory agency, geological survey, or environmental protection agency. At the federal level, the Office of Surface Mining manages the National Mine Map Repository (NMMR), which maintains a database of scanned images of abandoned mine maps from across the United States. The NMMR database (mmr.osmre.gov/MultiPub.aspx) is searchable online, but map images are available only upon request. While the NMMR database contains over 134,000 records, it has large gaps in its holdings for specific states and partially duplicates some state repository holdings and is therefore considered an incomplete resource. West Virginia and other states also maintain publicly accessible databases of mine maps online, but full-text (i.e., full-image) resources are in the minority. Outside the United States, mine map information is generally held at the national level and resources similar to the NMMR exist. For example, the British Geological Survey has an online Mining Plans Portal (www.bgs.ac.uk/nocomico/home.html), which provides access to plans (maps) of abandoned underground noncoal mines in Britain.

Outside of government agencies, mine maps are collected largely by archives and historical societies as parts of their collections on local history or company records. Geological libraries collect these materials to support future exploration or resource development. Due to their format, mine maps can also be found in the collections of map libraries. The most common way that mine maps are acquired by these organizations is through gifts, such as donations of corporate records. Since mine maps are not produced for sale, few copies are ever created. It is rare that a mine map is available for purchase (although one can occasionally find them on websites such as eBay) unless it is part of a larger collection or report, such as those issued following mine accidents (e.g., the Quecreek accident). In the case of mine accidents, mine maps may be reproduced as part of a legislative or investigative report. Mine maps even appear in the *U.S. Congressional Serial Set*.

So, are mine maps of interest to anyone besides a geologist or engineer? Certainly, they are important from a safety aspect. Abandoned (and current) mines are ongoing safety hazards and local authorities, commonly called upon in search-and-rescue operations, find these maps useful for that reason. Some older mine maps show locations of buildings, railroads, and other features of interest to planners, historians, and genealogists. For example, a mine map was useful in helping a genealogist who wanted to locate a particular stope (a stope is a particular portion of a mine) that his grandfather worked in years ago. In another example, a historian used a mine map to determine the location of various buildings as part of the reconstruction of a historic site. In another case, a planner wanted to know the exact location of a mine tailings pond (essentially, a wastewater site) as part of the environmental history of a potential development site. Ultimately, while mine maps are limited in their appeal, they are valuable records of local industry and history and are worth collecting and retaining.

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At the UN

Access to Documents about Member State Participation in the United Nations

Susan Kurtas

Throughout its history, the United Nations (UN) has worked to provide public access to its documents, first through depository libraries and UN Information Centres, and then, as technology developed, through online databases providing citations to documents and eventually full-text documents.[1] As the organization charged with resolving the world's most pernicious problems, the UN's documents reflect a slow progression of ideas, statements, positions, and diplomatic negotiations. The documents provide a rich source of information about international affairs, as well as about the substantive areas of work of the UN, such as human rights, international law, and economic and social development.

However, the UN and its documents are extraordinarily complicated. The unique system of document symbols reflects the structure of the organization and its complexity; inside the documents one may find repetition, diplomatic phraseology, and innumerable initialisms and acronyms. Even interpretation of search results in UN databases requires a strong understanding of the types of documents produced by the UN and their relative importance. In short, UN documentation presents challenges to even the most experienced researchers.

Because the UN deals with issues of such importance, many people interested in the work of the organization may not be experienced researchers, but expect to easily find information online. Most UN websites designed for public information have very general information that serves as an introduction, but with few hints about how to learn more. Other systems and websites, initially designed for use within the organization to facilitate its work, have been made public. These tend to require an advanced understanding of the UN to be used effectively.

The idea

As an experiment, the UN Dag Hammarskjöld Library reference team decided to explore new technologies to lower the barrier to information within certain key UN databases. We chose to create a wiki about UN member states.

General information about the UN member states is available on the public website: the number of members, the order in which they joined the organization, the contact information for the permanent mission to the UN. More detailed information about members' participation in the UN is available in documents, if one knows where and how to look: statements in formal meetings are recorded in meeting records, as are votes on resolutions and decisions, and other information appears in other types of documents. But to access this information requires a much more advanced knowledge of the UN, its documentation, and the document databases.

The basic idea was to create a page for each member state, with links to the official documentation related to its participation in the UN. The work of knowing how to find the information in the various databases would be done by us in the library, and the user would click to access the documents. Thus, for example, not only the date of membership would be given, but links to the Security Council resolution with the recommendation, the General Assembly resolution granting membership, and the meeting records at which the resolutions were adopted.

The experiment

As the reference team does not have web management software or highly skilled web designers, we thought the built-in features of a wiki would simplify the management of the estimated 200 pages of content (192 member states, plus various supporting pages). In addition, over time, the collaborative nature of the wiki might allow us to share the maintenance or expansion of the content to others in our globally distributed organization. The availability of free web-based services to test the idea and to develop the framework made a wiki a reasonable option.

During the initial stages of development, we discussed many of the most intellectually interesting questions. The first was to which databases should we link? By preference, we chose databases maintained by UN libraries. UN-I-QUE (UN Info Quest), a citation database produced and maintained by the reference team, has historically comprehensive information and reflects the most commonly asked questions. UNBISnet, the library's catalog, has (with some modification) stable links, is updated daily, and provides links, when available, to the full text of documents in all official languages. In addition, the Security Council membership database and the Press Release database were chosen as they provide a specific kind of information not available elsewhere and frequently requested by our clients.

What kinds of documents should be included? There are many UN documents with country information: documents about programs carried out by UN bodies in the field, documents about the political situation in a country, statistical publications, reports of country visits by special rapporteurs for human rights, meeting records with statements, reports of the country to human rights treaty bodies, etc. Because of the potentially politically sensitive nature of many UN documents, we decided to include documents that provide information produced by the member state and published by the UN. So, for example, country reports to human rights treaty monitoring bodies were included as they are prepared by the member state, but reports of country visits by UN special rapporteurs or missions were excluded; that is to say, documents by the member state, but not necessarily documents about the member state, are included. It was decided that the following documents or database results would be included for each state:

- Resolutions granting membership and the related meeting records
- Statements by representatives in:
  - General Assembly General Debate
  - General Assembly
  - Security Council
  - Economic and Social Council
- Participation in the Security Council
- Draft resolutions sponsored
- Periodic reports on human rights conventions
- Biographies of permanent representatives

Another interesting challenge during the initial development was how to handle changes to countries. Over the course of the sixty-plus years since the founding of the UN, not only has there been an incredible growth in membership, from 51 states to 192, but countries have changed names, joined with another country or countries to form a larger state, broken into several smaller states, and sometimes done all of the above in succession. Each of these transformations represents a momentous political decision for the state in question. As international civil servants, we need to maintain neutrality, and yet we also want to provide access not only to the current information, but also to the historic record. Sometimes the decisions were straightforward. For example, Czechoslovakia was a founding member; for both the Czech Republic and Slovakia, "Czechoslovakia" is included in the searches in UNBISnet. Other times, the decisions became more difficult.

The breakup of the former Yugoslavia presented particular challenges. Not only were there legal questions about the succession of states, there were technical challenges related to how these issues had been handled in the database in the past. A search in the UNBISnet Index to Speeches with the term "Yugoslavia" retrieves both the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (UN member 1945–early 1990s) and the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (UN member 1992–2000). If we wanted a search for a particular current member state to be comprehensive historically, which current member states should have "Yugoslavia" as a search term? In this case, we chose to include the search term "Yugoslavia" in both Serbia and Montenegro, successor states of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, but not in the searches for the other successor states of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Slovenia, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, as there would have been results for the current state, the simultaneously existing Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, and the former Yugoslavia, the predecessor state. This was deemed misleading rather than informative.

Technicalities

On the more technical side, we were also learning about the strengths and weaknesses of wikis. As we did not wish to create new content per se, and were linking to well-maintained databases with structured data, what we really needed was a container to hold a series of saved searches for each state. Features built in to wiki software, such as tracking and showing who made changes to each page, are nice during development, but present problems when the site is ready to be launched publicly, as the UN has strict rules about the attribution of authorship.

Rather than linking heavily within itself, this wiki links mostly out of itself to UN databases where the real content is updated daily. The dynamic searches mean the links are always relevant and the only time the wiki needs to be updated is when there is a new member, an initial report for a human rights treaty body, or a new type of information becomes available and the reference team decides to include a link for each state. In fact, many of the decisions about linking were made with the idea that little maintenance would be required. In a wiki, however, this looks like the site is stale, as there is little updating. It is not possible to use wiki features, such as creating an RSS feed to notify subscribers of new documents, as the real content we are trying to bring to users does not reside in the wiki, but is external to it. Searching the content of the wiki does not search the content of the documents to which the wiki links. Most significantly, we did not harness the collaborative nature of a wiki; rather, we had a small team working on adding the content in a well-defined manner with a set amount of information to be added, and then we would stop the development of the wiki and move on to making it available.

The aim of this project was not to revamp the entire UN information provision system or to develop a new separate database with its own complexities, but to quickly develop a simple tool that would provide access to UN member states' information and to experiment a bit with collaborative tools.

Migration

During the initial phase, we focused on the content and worked out certain issues related to the presentation of the information, but after we had about fifty pages completed, we decided to look for more institutional support for the project. Colleagues within our division connected us with others in another department who had wiki software and were hosting it; they graciously offered us both the software and server space to develop our project and were extraordinarily helpful in resolving the technical challenges we faced migrating to a new platform.

There were many surprises even in the migration of such a small site. We realized, for example, that UNBISnet URLs contain a character called a vline (vertical line: |), which is non-standard and was used by the wiki software as syntax. This caused some confusion when we discovered all our links were "broken" and required a workaround, but in the end forced us to really examine the links and prodded us to create link templates without vlines that made our work much faster. Previously, we would go to the UNBISnet native interface, run a search a certain way, wait while the search ran (on our old servers this could take upwards of a minute), then copy and paste the resulting URL, deleting certain sections. In the new templates, we could quickly change one section of the URLs to reflect the country name, save the page and check the links, resulting in much faster progress in completing the country pages.

Managerial support

With technical support and some experience in creating pages, the new wiki began to take shape and we completed the majority of it, approximately 4,000 saved searches, in about two months. Next we had to inform our management. While the reference team had been regularly reporting progress to our direct supervisors, in order for the project to get off the ground and be launched publicly we needed higher-level approval. Once we were able to show it to our superiors, they saw the benefits and encouraged us to share it with colleagues to get feedback and then work toward the public launch.

At this point we ran into some difficulties. As another department provided the software and the server space for the wiki, we became concerned whether the arrangement would be supported over the longterm. In addition, the URL of the wiki did not begin www.un.org, and concerns about the perception of the information authenticity of the website were raised. Although all links go to well-established UN databases, the wiki itself could be perceived as external to the UN. Several proposals to resolve these issues have been raised and are under consideration. At the time of writing, we expect to migrate the content out of the wiki into a website. This will involve a bit of transformation of some of the information architecture, but the main content will not be affected and the usefulness of the project might be improved. The main cost will be in time to develop and maintain another website.

Conclusion

The Dag Hammarskjöld Library reference desk at the UN is an amazing place to work. The people of the world keep us busy all day long with questions about every aspect of the work of the organization, and our research takes the most complicated paths through the devilish details of the documentation. At any given moment we might be deep in the details of a query, but over time, we notice patterns emerge. One of the strongest themes of the requests is: what has [country] done at the UN? What have [country]'s representatives said? How did they vote? How was [country] involved in this situation?

While we strive to help everyone who contacts us, there are many others in the world who could benefit from the librarians' expertise in navigating the daunting world of UN information. The documents are there, the information is there, but it is so hard to learn how to get to them. Our goal was to create a tool that would answer a specific type of question for every member state of the UN. Whatever its final form, this project will provide a starting point for research on UN members and has given us the opportunity to begin to explore new ways of enhancing access to the deep wellspring of information in UN documents.

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Notes

1. UN depository libraries (www.un.org/Depts/dhl/deplib/index.html) were established in 1946 and continue to provide access to UN documents and publications to people around the world.
2. UN Information Centres (unic.un.org/) are resources for public information about the work of the UN in sixty-three countries around the world.
3. UNBISnet, unbisnet.un.org, the library's catalog, was started in 1979 and provides citations to UN documents and publications beginning with that year; full-text links are available from 1993 onwards and for some historic documents. UNBISnet works with the Official Document System (ODS) (documents.un.org), the UN's document repository. The ODS provides full text search capabilities and links to the full text; UNBISnet provides the metadata to the ODS.

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Presidential Control of Executive Branch Agencies

OMB and Signing Statements

Cheryl B. Truesdell and Rebecca H. Byrum

In Steven G. Calabresi's 2001 article, "Advice to the Next Conservative President of the United States," he states that the president can influence public policy through executive orders, regulations and rulemaking, and presidential signing statements (presidential signing statements are issuances put forth by the president upon signing a bill into law). By doing so, the new president will defend the institutional powers of the presidency, presumably from congressional encroachment and "activist" judges.[1] As Calabresi notes, by tying regulations and rulemaking more closely to the president, control can be exerted over the agencies to make sure that they are in line with the policies of the administration.

Calabresi knows well of which he speaks, having been a member of the Reagan administration who played a large role in developing the concept of a strong president, known as unitary executive theory. A major component of the theory is the view that the executive branch is a highly centralized structure with the president at the top and all agencies subordinate to him. It reasons that "because no one individual could personally carry out all executive functions, the president delegates many of these functions to his subordinates in the executive branch," and "because the Constitution vests this power in him alone, it follows that he is solely responsible for supervising and directing the activities of his subordinates in carrying out executive functions."[2] The unitary executive assumes that it is the president's responsibility to set priorities, establish policy goals, and allocate resources, and it is the executive agencies' responsibility to see that these directives are faithfully executed. The effectiveness of signing statements in instructing executive branch agencies on the implementation of legislation is dependent upon presidential control of the executive branch agency rulemaking process. This article examines, through government policy documents, how modern presidents have attempted to gain control of executive branch agency implementation of laws.

Executive orders on regulations and rulemaking

While the Reagan Justice Department was busy establishing signing statements as the president's interpretation of legislation for the courts, the administration was also using signing statements as a tool for communicating White House policy and implementation instructions to executive agencies and launching a program to bring agency rulemaking under presidential control.[3] Historically, agency decision making was governed by a reliance on career professionals with appropriate scientific or technical expertise, but modern presidents have sought ways to make the agencies conform to administration policy objectives.[4]

In 1970, during the Nixon administration, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), formerly the Bureau of the Budget, was created in the Executive Office of the President, in an effort to exert some pressure on executive agencies to execute the law according to the president's agenda. In addition to its budgetary functions, OMB was charged with the coordination and clearance of all proposed, pending, and enrolled legislation by executive agencies. Executive agencies were directed to take into account the president's known legislative, budgetary, and other relevant policies, including signing statements, before proposing legislation, issuing a report, or giving testimony outside of the executive branch.[5]

President Reagan expanded presidential power by issuing two executive orders aimed at consolidating review of executive rulemaking in OMB. Executive Order 12,291, signed in 1981, required executive branch agencies, excluding independent agencies, to submit all rules to OMB prior to publication in the *Federal Register* and required agencies to prepare a cost-benefit analysis to justify the necessity of regulatory action.[6]

The stated purpose of E.O. 12,291 was "to reduce the burdens" of regulations, to provide accountability, and to provide presidential oversight. The order required agencies to submit all major rules that were likely to result in "an annual effect on the economy of $100 million or more" to the director of OMB at least sixty days before publication, and all other rules at least ten days prior to publication of notice of proposed rulemaking. It also required that any regulatory action "shall not be undertaken unless the potential benefits to society for the regulation outweigh the potential costs to society." Every major rule required a regulatory impact analysis that contained a description of the potential benefits, costs, and alternative approaches that could "substantially achieve the same regulatory goal at a lower cost." It essentially centralized review of agency rulemaking within the OMB.[7]

Anticipating objections by agencies and others to this executive order, the Office of Legal Counsel issued an opinion supporting its constitutionality.[8] It states, in part, that the "President's authority to issue the proposed Executive Order derives from his constitutional power to 'take care that the laws be faithfully executed.'" It further claims that "it is well established that this provision authorizes the President, as head of the Executive Branch, to 'supervise and guide' Executive officers in their construction of the statutes under which they act in order to secure that unitary and uniform execution of the laws which Article II of the Constitution evidently contemplated in vesting general executive power in the President alone." This language is indicative of unitary executive theory.

Executive Order 12,498, issued in 1985 by President Reagan, built upon E.O. 12,291 by establishing a regulatory planning process requiring each executive agency to submit to the director of OMB "an overview of the agency's regulatory policies, goals, and objectives for the program year" and how they are consistent with the administration's regulatory principles.[9] The new order allowed OMB to "return for consideration" any rule submitted for review that was not in the agency's regulatory program for that year, or was "materially different" from the rules described in the program. This executive order gave OMB advance notice of forthcoming agency actions in time to "stop or alter an objectionable rule before the rulemaking process developed momentum."[10]

Every president since Reagan has strengthened the OMB review of agency rulemaking. When President Clinton was elected it was thought that the Democratic administration would relax control over the executive branch, but instead presidential control of executive agencies expanded significantly.[11] Indeed, one official from George H.W. Bush's administration observed that Clinton aggressively asserted the "unitarian premises of the Reagan and Bush administrations."[12] While President Clinton's Executive Order 12,866, issued in 1993, revoked Reagan's E.O. 12,291 and E.O. 12,498, it did not eliminate the OMB review process and actually extended it to include independent regulatory agencies.[13] In 1993 the Office of Legal Counsel defended the president's use of signing statements to direct "subordinate officers within the Executive Branch how to interpret or administer the enactment" as "legitimate and defensible" under Article II of the Constitution that vests executive power in the president and instructs him to take care that the laws are faithfully executed.[14]

E.O. 12,866 ordered that centralized review of regulations remain in the OMB. Each agency had to put forward a regulatory plan "of the most important significant regulatory actions that the agency reasonably expects to issue in proposed or final form in that fiscal year and a statement of the agency's objectives and priorities and how they related to the president's priorities." OMB was still charged with providing oversight of agency plans "so that each agency's regulatory actions are consistent with . . . the president's priorities." This executive order broadened the scope of OMB review to include independent regulatory agencies in the planning process.

Under previous administrations, OMB operated through informal off-the-record contacts and oral communications with no public record. E.O. 12,866 required that all communications between the OMB and any outside group be published. Some of the stated objectives of the order were "to affirm the primacy of Federal agencies in the regulatory decision making process; to restore the integrity and legitimacy of regulatory review and oversight; and to make the process more accessible and open to the public." These objectives represented a change in philosophy and more respect for agency expertise and recommendations.

As the administration of George W. Bush began, a memorandum was issued regarding OMB's Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) by its administrator, John D. Graham. The purpose of the memo was to call attention to E.O. 12,866 and notify the agencies that the Bush administration would "implement vigorously" its "principles and procedures" until a new executive order could be issued.[15] The memo contains a detailed description of how the reviews are carried out. Graham noted his intent to make use of the "Return letter," which sends a rule back to the agency due to inadequate analysis. In addition, Graham introduced a new "Prompt letter" that suggests an issue that OMB believes is worthy of agency priority. The letter was to be sent on OMB's initiative and contain "a suggestion for how the agency could improve its regulations." In a speech, Graham said that the review is a way to "combat the tunnel vision that plagues the thinking of single-mission regulators."[16]

After more than six years of study, President Bush issued E.O. 13,422 in 2007, which retained most of E.O. 12,866, but introduced yet another layer of review.[17] This executive order required each agency to prepare a "guidance document," in which the agency was to identify "the specific market failure (such as externalities, market power, lack of information) or other specific problem that it intends to address (including, where applicable, the failures of public institutions) that warrant new agency action, as well as assess the significance of that problem, to enable assessment of whether any new regulation is warranted." In addition, the executive order required each agency "to designate one of the agency's Presidential Appointees to be its Regulatory Policy Officer" and required that this officer give approval of all new rulemaking. While this raised the hackles of many watchdog groups who worried that the order would actually allow for more deregulation, the order was relatively short-lived.[18]

On January 30, 2009, President Barack Obama issued E.O. 13,497, which revoked E.O. 13,422.[19] In a memorandum issued at the signing of E.O. 13,497, Obama affirmed the value of government regulations for protecting public health and safety, but noted that the process of regulatory review can be improved.[20] He then directed the director of OMB to produce recommendations for a new executive order on federal regulatory review within one hundred days of the writing of the memo. He asked for recommendations on the "relationship between OIRA and the agencies," transparency, public participation, and fairness.

Whether adherents to unitary executive theory or not, presidents have and continue to influence public policy through regulations and rulemaking, as these executive orders prove. But how effective have signing statements been in presidential influence of public policy?

Presidential signing statements

Christopher Kelley, a political scientist specializing in presidential signing statements, argues that the George W. Bush administration has "far surpassed previous administrations in its reliance upon the signing statement as a valuable resource in protecting the prerogatives of the president and in controlling the executive branch agencies."[21] In response to President Bush's aggressive use of signing statements, the American Bar Association (ABA) appointed an independent, nonpartisan task force to provide a scholarly analysis of presidential signing statements and their impact upon the separation of powers doctrine. The ABA calculated that from 1789 to 2000 fewer than 600 signing statements had been issued, but that in his first one and a half terms President Bush had produced more than 800.[22] President Bush's use of signing statements differed from previous administrations primarily in their routine and generalized objections to innumerable provisions throughout legislation. In fact, it was reported that all bills were sent through Vice President Cheney's office where they were checked for threats to the "unitary executive" and, when threats were identified, a boilerplate objection was inserted.[23] The most numerous of these objections have been inserted in appropriations bills in which the president was most adamant about preventing any of his subordinates from reporting directly to Congress.[24]

Were President Bush's efforts to implement the unitary executive and to use presidential signing statements to influence executive agency rulemaking successful? In 2007 Senator Robert Byrd (D-WV), chairman of the Senate Committee on Appropriations, and Representative John Conyers (D-MI), chairman of the House Committee on the Judiciary, requested that the Government Accountability Office (GAO) "examine the fiscal year appropriations acts and the President's accompanying signing statements to identify provisions in the acts to which the President took exception" and, more importantly, whether the agencies responsible for their execution carried out the provisions as written."[25] In 2008 the same chairmen asked GAO to examine ten more provisions to determine how the agencies were executing them.[26]

The studies found that the president issued signing statements for eleven of the twelve appropriations acts passed by Congress. These signing statements singled out 170 specific provisions in these acts. GAO examined agency action in thirty of these instances and found that sixteen provisions were executed as written, five were not triggered so there was no agency action to examine, and in nine cases the agencies had not yet executed the provisions or had not executed them as written.

Of the nine provisions that the agencies did not execute as written, the presidential signing statements objected to three on the grounds that the provisions interfered with "the President's constitutional authority to supervise the unitary executive branch."[27] Presidential signing statements objected to three provisions on the grounds that they violated the bicameralism and presentment clause of the Constitution. The president objected to two provisions based upon the Supreme Court's ruling that a law categorizing people by traits such as race, ethnicity, or gender may violate the Fifth Amendment right to due process. Finally, one signing statement objected to any "burden" placed upon the president's "exclusive constitutional authority" to serve as commander in chief or conduct foreign policy.

In March 2008, the House Committee on Armed Services' Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations requested the

GAO general counsel Gary L. Kepplinger to testify before Congress about the use of presidential signing statements in general and to report specifically on the presidential signing statements accompanying the *National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008* (NDAA). The committee was concerned that the president issued a signing statement objecting to four provisions in the act and that the signing statements were so broad that they seemed to object to numerous other provisions in the act on principle. Based upon the two previous studies of provisions not executed as written, the GAO recommended that the subcommittee "stay abreast of DOD's implementation of the provisions in the 2008 NDAA to which the President objected in his signing statement."[28]

In the final analysis, GAO admitted that although the agencies did not execute some provisions as written, it "could not conclude that agency noncompliance was the result of the president's signing statements."[29] GAO recommended that "to reduce any effect signing statements may have on an agency execution of statutes," Congress should "focus its oversight work to include those provisions to which the President objects to ensure that the laws are carried out," and refers to a 2002 law that requires the attorney general to report to Congress any instances in which the Department of Justice, president, heads of executive agencies, and military departments establish or implement a nonenforcement policy.[30] Ironically, President Bush objected to this provision of the statute in a signing statement that stated "the executive branch shall construe section 530D of title 28 . . . in a manner consistent with the constitutional authorities of the President to supervise the unitary executive branch and to withhold information the disclosure of which could impair foreign relations, the national security, the deliberative process of the Executive, or the performance of the Executive's constitutional duties."[31]

Conclusion

As Calabresi suggests, presidents can exert great power and control over the executive branch agencies. By using OMB's review of regulations and rulemaking, presidents have consciously implemented policies and procedures designed to insure that the agencies follow the course the president wants, whether conservative or liberal. This practice, which started with President Reagan and continued through President George W. Bush, is now under review with the Obama administration. The effectiveness of presidential signing statements as a means of controlling agencies' implementation of laws is less conclusive. A signing statement might signal how the president will interpret a law, but there seems to be no guarantee, in spite of all the procedures in place, that the agencies will follow suit.

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What Was Lost, Now Is Found

Using Google Books and Internet Archive to Enhance a Government Documents Collection with Digital Documents

Rebecca Blakeley

This article compares two free online repositories, Google Books and Internet Archive, used to discover, collect, and disseminate digitized government documents in the context of augmenting a government documents collection. Positive and negative aspects of each repository will be examined, including various search strategies used to unearth the digitized government document treasures contained within. The damage McNeese State University's government documents depository sustained from Hurricane Rita must be acknowledged as it led to the idea of using Google Books and Internet Archive to find and replenish the collection of documents that was lost.

Google Books (books.google.com) was the first online repository used to find digitized government documents for patrons, especially those documents that were lost to Hurricane Rita. I learned of its "My Library" feature that allows you to collect, share, and promote books found within the Google Books repository.[1] The McNeese Government Documents Department used it to create the MSUGovDoc's Google Book Library (tinyurl.com/4z6cf5) that consists mostly of government documents, complete with RSS feeds to keep track of new additions and tagging features to group books by topic (figure 1). One such tag, "immigration," depicts several books about immigration, including the government document *Importing Women for Immoral Purposes* (figure 2).[2]

Clicking on any of the book entries within your Google Books Library or within Google Books search results, including *Importing Women for Immoral Purposes*, opens up the PDF full text, which may or may not be of high quality. Since Google partners with large libraries to scan books in mass quantities very quickly, you may at times find a hand or finger covering a page or the occasional blurred text. Such quality issues aside, the default display of the digital document contains several efficient features for viewing the document, including a zoom button, a one-page view (the default), a two-page view, thumbnails, full screen, and plain-text view. Clicking on the PDF button downloads a copy of the document for you to open or save. The Clip button allows you to highlight, share, and embed chunks of text, either as text or image. The Link button gives you the option to paste a link to the document or embed the document in a website. The search box on the left allows you to search for keywords throughout the entire book and displays the highlighted search term as a snippet view from each page in relevancy-ranked order. Clicking on the Overview link displays some metadata that is often sparse or contains inconsistent periodical titles or publisher names. Keywords and broad subject terms to describe the document are also listed and linked so that they can be searched for within the document.

Government documents can also be found by using the advanced search for entering keywords and using this search string in the publisher field: "GPO" OR "Government Printing Office" OR "Govt. Print. Off." OR Gov't. This search string was created and recommended by Julia Tryon in her August 2007 Free Government Information (FGI) blog posts about federal documents in Google Books.[3] Tryon was unable to locate any information or data on the amount of government documents within Google Books, so using this search string to gain an estimate, Tryon received 187,522 results. Eighteen months later, I tried the exact search and received 364,170 results. However, to claim this number as the total number of government documents digitized within Google Books would be misleading, as both of our searches were conducted a day or so later and the results had either drastically risen or fallen by 30,000 results. It is truly a mystery and one explanation for this might be that certain metadata or duplicate documents were removed or added.

You can also try searching by agency (e.g., "Department of the Interior") by simply typing the name of the agency in

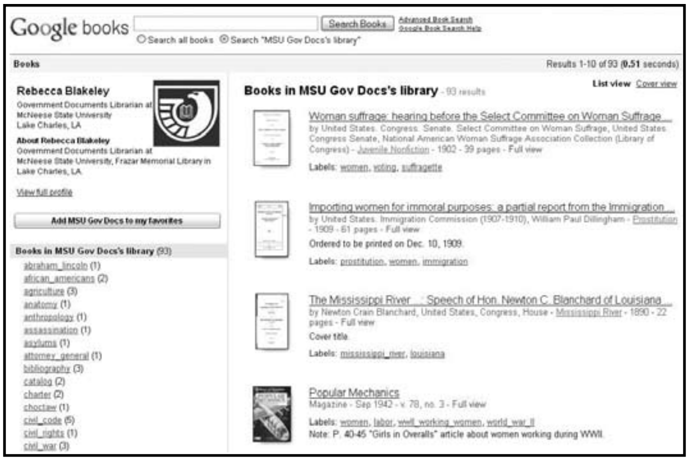

Figure 1. MSU Gov Doc's Google Book Library

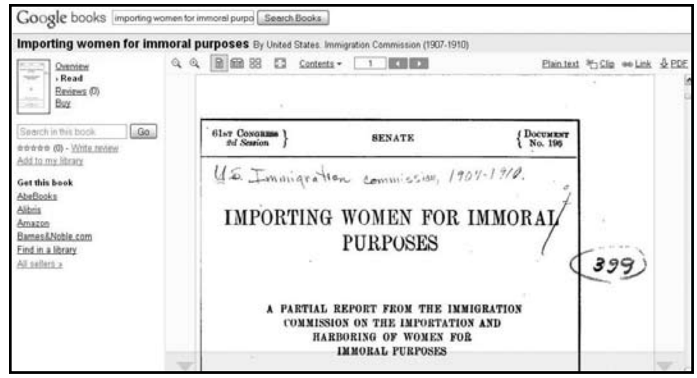

Figure 2. First screen of a document tagged "immigration" in Google Book Library

the author field. For finding state documents, use the advanced search and plug in the name of the state and any keywords and, in the publisher field, enter "state" OR "department" OR "agency." Or simply enter the name of the state agency in the author field, e.g., "Louisiana Supreme Court." There are a variety of ways to discover international, federal, state, and local digital government documents using the Google Books advanced search feature, depending on your information need.[4]

In order to view the complete text of government documents in Google Books, be sure to select "Full view only" in the advanced search mode. Otherwise, you will receive snippet views or mere citations for works deemed copyrighted by Google. You might assume that government documents within Google Books would be available in full-text view because most federal government documents are in the public domain; however, Google Books treats most post-1922 government documents as copyrighted material and allows only a "limited snippet" view.[5] Upon contacting the Google Book Search Team to explain that most federal government documents are in the public domain as mandated by law, their response was:

> Our approach is to err on the side of caution and display at most a few snippets until we have determined that a book is no longer under copyright. We're looking into solutions to increase the number of books accessible in full view worldwide. Please note that some books that are available as PDF downloads in one location may not be available in other countries, depending on local copyright laws. Our goal is to make Google Book Search as useful as possible, and that means including books as soon as we can rather than waiting for a perfect determination of public domain status.[6]

There is another free online repository of digital works that is guaranteed to never display snippet views, and that is the Internet Archive (archive.org). While Google has been hastily, and sometimes messily, scanning millions of books and disregarding that most U.S. government documents are in the public domain, the Internet Archive is diligently and carefully digitizing thousands of public domain works every day. The Internet Archive is a nonprofit organization founded in 1996 to build an Internet library, with "the purpose of offering permanent access for researchers, historians, and scholars to historical collections that exist in digital format."[7] Their text collection is the world's largest free online collection of books and, like Google, they partner with libraries to complete various digitization projects. Unlike Google, individual users are also encouraged to contribute and upload to its ever-growing collection of archived webpages, open source and public domain documents, books, films, audio, and government documents.[8]

A notable text collections within Internet Archive is the American Libraries Collection (archive.org/details/americana) containing over 900,000 items, many of which are government documents. The subcollection US Government Documents (archive.org/details/USGovernmentDocuments) contains over 9,000 items so far (figure 3). This subcollection can be browsed by subject/keywords; title and author are not searchable. This could change as the collection grows. To discover government documents across all the collections in Internet Archive, including government produced films or user uploaded government documents, use the advanced search mode to conduct similar search strategies used in Google Books, such as the name of the government agency in the creator field (e.g., "Environmental Protection Agency" OR EPA). If you enter

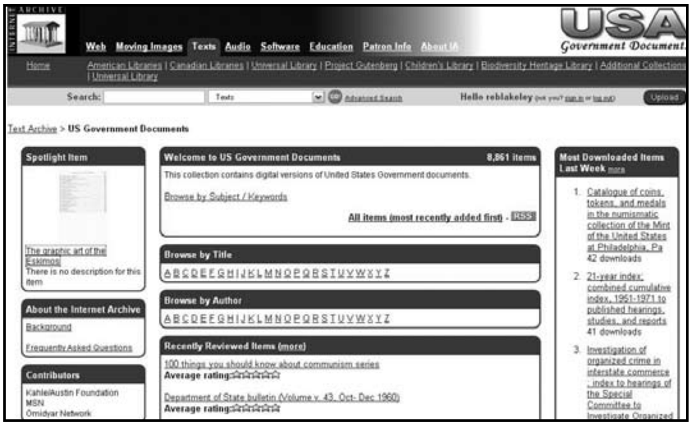

Figure 3. Internet Archive US Government Documents Collection

the same search string used in Google Books ("GPO" OR "Government Printing Office" OR "Govt. Print. Off." OR Gov't) in the creator field, you will retrieve 923 results. There are thousands more government documents within Internet Archive, but this result indicates that many of the records will mention the agency rather than GPO as the author/creator. Also, many of the resulting digital government document records state that they were taken from Google Books (i.e., the record metadata declares "Book digitized by Google from the library of X and uploaded to the Internet Archive by user X") and thus lack some metadata in their records. Some state documents can be found, especially within the U.S. Government Documents subcollection's browse by subject/keywords feature, but you are more likely to find documents *about* a state, not *by* a state agency. Again, this may change as the collection grows.

This sample book record (figure 4) of a government document from the Internet Archive's American Libraries Collection depicts a high-quality digitized document entitled *100 Things You Should Know About Communism*, originally published by the U.S. House Committee on Un-American Activities in 1949. The full text of the document can be downloaded as a high-quality PDF or HTTP file, or viewed in a flip book format by clicking on the Read Online link where you can "flip" the pages of the book using a mouse. No random images of hands can be found covering pages within these high-quality scans! Also, unlike Google Books, the record clearly states that the work is "not in copyright" since it was thoroughly checked using various software, databases, and other methods for determining copyright status.[9] The metadata is rich with information and the consistency, although not perfect, rivals that of Google Books. The metadata tends to be more consistent with particular collections or library contributors.

Figure 4. Sample book record for a government document in the Internet Archive

Unlike Google Books, there is no "My Library" or tagging feature within Internet Archive. However, there is a link in the record to add a book to your Bookmarks, which can then be shared via RSS feed. You can also explore other interesting and popular bookmarks using the Bookmark Explorer feature (www.archive.org/bookmarks-explore.php). With regard to the concern over dead links, rest assured that the Internet Archive's URLs (a.k.a. "Identifier-access") appear to be stable, as do those in Google Books. Both services recommend ways to use their identifiers when linking to a book from your website or library catalog.[10]

Google Books and Internet Archive each have their idiosyncrasies, but Internet Archive is certainly superior with its overall quality of digital text, the amount and consistency of metadata, and the reliability of obtaining the entire fulltext of public domain government documents. The vast amount of government documents in Google Books dwarfs that of Internet Archive, but as the collections within Internet Archive grow, they could overtake Google Books in this feature as well. It is my sincere hope that depositories and other libraries will take advantage of these coffers of historical, rare, or just plain interesting digitized government documents waiting to be found within these online repositories, whether or not these precious treasures were lost in the first place.

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Announcing a New GODORT Award

The Margaret T. Lane / Virginia F. Saunders Memorial Research Award

The award will be given annually to an author or authors of an outstanding research article in which government information, either published or archival in nature, forms a substantial part of the documented research. Preference may be given to articles published in library literature and that appeal to a broader audience. The award is not restricted to articles in library journals. This award is to honor the memory of two women who worked with endless enthusiasm to make the ideal of citizen access to government information a reality. The award winner receives a plaque and a contribution of $2,000 from LexisNexis Academic & Library Solutions and Readex Newsbank.

Please see the GODORT Awards Committee wiki for additional information.

The Assessment Cycle

Improving Learning and Teaching in Government Documents Instruction

Marilyn Von Seggern and B. Jane Scales

The challenges of the "one-shot" library instruction session have been experienced by many instruction librarians and documented in articles, presentations, and books.[1] A typical scenario is a request from an instructor or professor for a single session, lasting either one or one-and-a-half hours, covering specific resources or services to supplement a full course. As government documents librarians we may happen to meet the opportunity for a one-shot session as a request from various academic departments to teach about general documents access and use, or to focus on specific government resources or processes.

In spring 2009, the government information librarian and the instruction librarian of Washington State University Libraries began a process of evaluating introductory level government documents instruction in order to adopt a fresh approach and a more holistic view that would incorporate information literacy, assessment, and student engagement. Though library instruction about government information is included in upper undergraduate and graduate courses for specific subjects such as history, law, political science, and business, general courses on finding and using government information tend to be requested by the English department for 200–400 level classes, averaging seven per semester. Instructors of these classes understand the potential of government information for use in research papers and want students exposed to documents sources.

Our goal was to do a critique of the pedagogical practices used in these sessions and then turn to a formal improvement planning process described by Gilchrist and Zald as the "Assessment Cycle," which promised "a framework in which to value, experiment with, and apply assessment for the improvement of learning, teaching, and information literacy programs."[2] This article outlines the use of the assessment cycle for redesign and revitalization of one-class instruction sessions focused on government documents.

Assessment cycle

The assessment cycle looks at the student experience and actions to draw conclusions about the efficacy of instruction with the intention of improving both teaching and learning. The process facilitated our desire to incorporate information literacy standards in the design stage because it explicitly draws on and "aligns the information literacy concepts, teaching strategies, and evaluation techniques with the [learning] outcomes."[3]

The assessment cycle outlines an instructional design that has five discrete tasks:

1. Write learning outcomes. ("What do you want the student to be able to do?")
2. Design an information literacy curriculum. ("What does the student need to know in order to do this well?")
3. Select a pedagogical approach. ("What type of instruction will best enable the learning?")
4. Choose assessment techniques. ("How will the student demonstrate the learning?")
5. Select criteria for evaluation. ("How will I know the student has done this well?")

Learning outcomes—what do you want the student to be able to do?

The first task, writing specific learning outcomes, uses the Association of College and Research Libraries Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education (ACRL Standards; www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/acrl/standards/standards.pdf) and a suggested outcome sentence formula: [verb phrase] ["in order to"] [why] and criteria for workable outcomes.[4] The ACRL Standards have been discussed with government documents in mind by Downie, and Miller and Mann.[5]

For example, ACRL Standard 1 states, "The information literate student determines the nature and extent of the information needed." Miller and Mann explain that the student should understand "how and when information is created . . . and that different types of resources address different information needs."[6] In terms of federal government information, students should know about the organization of government, that information is produced in all three branches, and that many different bodies and agencies make available a range of information types for varied uses. Standard 1 could be divided into two learning outcomes for government information instruction:

> Learning Outcome 1—Students learn how to explore the organization and hierarchy of government entities and governmental publishing bodies in order to anticipate how government information can fill their information needs.
>
> Learning Outcome 2—Students recognize different types of government publications in order to identify which type will provide material appropriate for their information need.

The lesson plan for any particular class includes the outcomes that match the course instructor's request for government documents instruction, whether it is getting acquainted with databases, knowing how to evaluate documents, or being able to correctly cite government information.

Information literacy curriculum—what does the student need to know in order to do this well?

The second piece of the assessment cycle addresses the specific skills that will be taught in order to achieve the learning outcome. If we expect the student to explore the organization and hierarchy of government, she or he needs to know where to find information about government organization and to develop techniques for locating the committees, agencies, and other groups that provide the exact information needed. Tools with an organizational overview could be introduced.

If students must learn to identify different types of publications we can help them acquire knowledge about the various publication types that are produced, each with different purposes and audiences. The range and intent of documents are so vast that many research topics can draw on multiple types for relevant information; helping students to understand the possibilities fulfills the second learning outcome.

Appendix 1, Learning Outcomes for Government Documents Instruction Based on ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education, lists the five ACRL Standards with examples of eight government documents learning outcomes and related information literacy skills.

Pedagogy—what type of instruction will best enable learning?

The third task in the cycle addresses the instruction that will enable this learning. Following are collaborative instruction ideas for Learning Outcomes 1 and 2 from Appendix 1:

- **Learning Outcome 1—Students learn how to explore the organization and hierarchy of government entities and governmental publishing bodies in order to anticipate how government information can fill their information needs.** In class discussion the librarian asks what government entities, agencies, or other groups come to mind when students think about the federal government, and a chart of the three branches is sketched showing basic organization. The instructor shows the online *U.S. Government Manual* (www.gpoaccess.gov/gmanual/) for further description of the organization. The Federal Agency Directory (www.lib.lsu.edu/gov/) is accessed, showing the hierarchical and alphabetical lists, links to each entity's webpage, and the Directory Tool Box, which finds agencies by title word. Ask students to use the Tool Box to find one or two agencies that might provide information for their research topic, noting the distinction between topic keywords and words that might be expected to appear in agency names.
- **Learning Outcome 2—Students recognize different types of government publications in order to identify which type will provide material appropriate for their information need.** Design an exercise wherein students, working in pairs or groups, handle paper copy or view online examples of publication types (e.g., data table, research report, congressional hearing, bill, pamphlet), identify the type, and add their view of the purpose and audience. At the end of the exercise, ask students to review their ideas. Hollens describes a similar teaching technique.[7]

Assessment—how will the student demonstrate learning?

Outcomes assessment is the fourth critical piece in the cycle. The time available in one-session instruction is short, and the assessment must be brief, incorporated into the assignment, or take place outside of class time. The following are suggestions:

- **Assessing class discussion** or verbal responses to exercises requires listening for levels of understanding or mastery of concepts and terminology; the feedback can be used in the same class session to address information not well understood. "When students are not able to outline the issues or points that you would like them to know, this gives you information about their level of knowledge."[8]

- The **minute paper** is a well-known technique that does not take extensive time for planning, preparation, or completion.[9] The instructor poses a question or questions, prompting students to think and then write for one to three minutes. Example: How did the government organizations and agencies you learned about today provide ideas for research sources?
- A variation on the minute paper is asking a few **knowledge-based questions** at the end of class to gauge student learning. An example for the first learning outcome: Which branch of the federal government contains the Department of Homeland Security and the Executive Office of the President?
- Fourth, ask the course instructor for **access to student papers or bibliographies** to review the government sources that were selected. This collaborative assessment with the course instructor reveals what types of documents are being found and noted or used as sources for research papers.

Criteria for evaluation—how will you know the student has done this well?

"Criteria are standards, benchmarks, or descriptions of a good response."[10] For any given exercise or teaching technique, criteria for evaluating the response (assessment) must be mapped ahead of time.

In *Creating the One-Shot Library Workshop,* Veldof describes four levels of evaluation.[11] Two of them adapt easily to the brief, one-time session. The first, reaction evaluation, asks "Did they like it?" Responses from the minute reflective papers could include Likert item questions, e.g., on a five-point scale: one, did not learn about anything useful; five, learned about very useful resources. The librarian instructor sets an average as acceptable for the class response, a lower score indicating that change in the instruction should be considered. Questions need to be specific so that the responses directly address the learning outcome.

The second level, learning evaluation, asks, "Did they get it?" Using class discussion as an example, have a colleague assist by observing and measuring the level of class comprehension, e.g., percent of students paying attention, percent of students contributing to discussion, percent of students with accurate answers. Level of student understanding can also be measured with the knowledge-based or performance tests. Questions relate specifically to the learning objectives that are taught in that session and, again, performance standards are set before class. Evaluation of the one-minute test technique is detailed in a project developed by Choinski and Emanuel.[12]

Rubrics, charts organizing levels of performance, have often been used to provide criteria for more extensive assessment. Librarian instructors can use a rubric to rate student bibliographies and lists of resources, examining the relevancy of the document to the topic. Categories might be "developing, transitional, and proficient," with definitions of what is meant by those terms. Another aspect is determining how well the topic lends itself to the inclusion of government documents at the level of undergraduate research. Clearly, one can find almost any topic addressed by some type of document, but certain issues lend themselves better than others to the use of documents as sources. Evaluating bibliographies based on these considerations would provide some measure of the effectiveness of the instructional session. Discussion of the rubric and examples are in several books on instructional assessment.[13]

Using evaluation for improvement

Beyond the assessment cycle the most critical and essential step follows: using assessment data to improve teaching and learning. Wehlburg writes about closing the feedback loop, using data that is collected to "inform the process" and "ensure that what students should be learning is what they are being asked to learn."[14]

As a case in point, the project to assess a one-hour class with one-minute test results found, through student averages, that one low-scoring concept was related to evaluation of websites. The authors discussed a change in instructional technique because web resource quality has changed over a number of years.[15] The literature on library instruction and information literacy provides numerous suggestions on creative teaching methods.

Conclusion

In the fall of 2009 we plan to incorporate new instructional activities in the classroom, encouraging students to think more actively about how their topic could be supported by government documents resources. The learning outcomes, curriculum, and instruction that we select will depend on the course instructor's request.

The assessment and evaluation criteria techniques mentioned above will be used to assess the effectiveness of new teaching strategies. Discussion evaluation and one-minute papers with both objective and reflective questions will provide substantial quantitative data if employed throughout the semester. We will be prepared to rate selected aspects of student bibliographies due to a set made available to us from a summer term government documents instruction session taught for a 200-level English course. Documenting the student response to these instruction sessions will provide insight on the teaching and learning that is taking place and suggest changes needed for improvement, and the cycle will begin again.

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Appendix 1. Learning Outcomes for Government Documents Instruction Based on ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education

Standard 1. The information literate student determines the nature and extent of the information needed.

Outcome 1. Students learn how to explore the organization and hierarchy of government entities and governmental publishing bodies in order to anticipate how government information can fill their information needs.

What does the student need to know in order to do this well?

- Where to find information about government organization
- How to drill down through the hierarchy to find appropriate agencies and resources

Outcome 2. Students recognize different types of government publications in order to identify which type will provide material appropriate for their information need.

What does the student need to know in order to do this well?

- there are many different types of government information published by agencies, committees, etc., such as legislative (bills, hearings, laws); administrative (data and statistics, research reports); and judicial (court cases, opinions).

Standard 2. The information literate student accesses needed information effectively and efficiently.

Outcome 3. Students identify characteristics of information such as primary/secondary sources, popular/scholarly material, breadth, etc., as applied to government information in order to seek proper and relevant resources.

What does the student need to know in order to do this well?

- Definitions of information characteristics
- Examples that represent those characteristics

Outcome 4. Students access appropriate government document databases that fit the informational needs they have identified in order to begin actively searching for information.

What does the student need to know in order to do this well?

- Database names and descriptive information
- Where to locate these databases

Standard 3. The information literate student evaluates information and its sources critically and incorporates selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system.

Outcome 5. Students apply appropriate search features and construct effective search strategies in order to efficiently find government information that fits their need.

What does the student need to know in order to do this well?

- How to access database features and help screens
- Information about search strategy

Outcome 6. Students apply methods of evaluating a government document in order to determine its reliability, authority, and accuracy.

What does the student need to know in order to do this well?

- Definitions of evaluative terms such as reliability, authority, bias, timeliness, etc.
- Evaluative methods (e.g., investigating the publishing agency's mission or the qualifications of the author)

Standard 4. The information literate student, individually or as a member of a group, uses information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose.

Outcome 7. Students integrate government information with other sources in order to create a balanced and informed view of issues.

What does the student need to know in order to do this well?

- How government and non-government sources differ from one another (publisher, purpose, vocabulary, etc.)
- How to support arguments with sources

Standard 5. The information literature student understands many of the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and accesses and uses information ethically and legally.

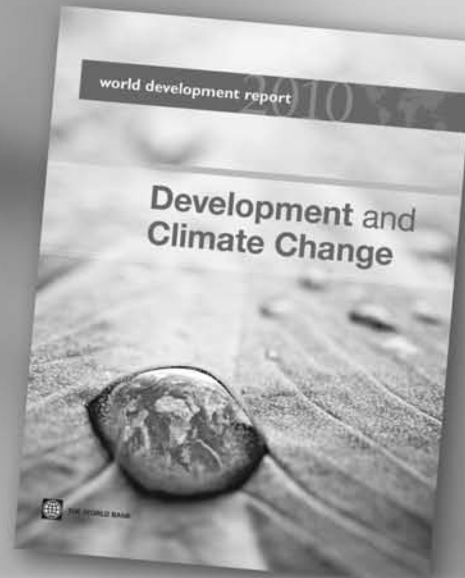
Outcome 8. Students recognize the proper methods of using, attributing, and citing government information in order to use such information in an ethical and legal manner.

What does the student need to know in order to do this well?

- Government information copyright rules
- Citation methods for government information
- Authentication issues of government documents

World Development Report 2010

Development and Climate Change



In the course of the last two decades, the world has seen significant development progress. However, substantial challenges remain. Climate change will add to the many stresses faced by developing nations. Climate-smart development policies are needed to both tackle the challenges of adaptation and mitigation, and exploit the new competitive landscape created by climate change. But an adequate, achievable and equitable solution to climate change also requires a climate framework that meets the needs and concerns of developing countries. Access to the necessary financial and innovation instruments is critical.

In the crowded field of climate change reports, the *World Development Report 2010* will uniquely:

- emphasize development
- take an integrated look at adaptation and mitigation, focusing on the competing demands for land, water, and energy
- present evidence that the elements of a global deal exist
- highlight opportunities in the changing competitive landscape—and how to seize them
- propose policy solutions grounded in analytic work and in the context of the political economy of reform

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DttP Reader Survey Results

Journal editors receive few comments about the publications for which they are responsible, which sometimes makes it seem that their work is done in a vacuum. While comments are always welcome, those made by friends and close associates (rather than the general reader) may not be the best foundation for knowing what readers want or need. To supplement such anecdotal evidence, the GODORT Publications Committee conducted a survey in spring 2009 to get more feedback on how *DttP* is meeting reader expectations and needs, and to determine where GODORT's flagship publication should be focused.

Who took the survey?

The survey was administered using SurveyMonkey (www.surveymonkey.com), and 255 responses were gathered. Results have been shared with both the previous and current editorial teams. Of the 255 respondents, 152 identified themselves as GODORT members, indicating that 19 percent of GODORT members responded to the survey. About one-third of the respondents identified themselves as former GODORT members. Those who took the survey are diverse in their years of experience, having worked with government information from zero to thirty-seven years. This underlies the importance of *DttP* presenting information for both new and experienced government information professionals. Almost 90 percent of respondents indicated that they work with government information, but of these people, only 12 percent indicated they work exclusively with government information. Survey respondents considered the value of *DttP*, and a great majority—more than 83 percent of respondents—described *DttP* as a "good value" for their membership dollars while another 15 percent found it an "okay value," suggesting that the publication is currently meeting various needs of members. Many like the convenience of reading the publication in paper and nearly 60 percent of respondents choose to read paper copies even though *DttP* is available online.

What do people read and what would they like to read?

Over 86 percent of respondents read some part of each issue, and many read it from cover to cover. When asked "What's the most useful type of material you read in *DttP*?" there was a range of selections as first choice: 41.8 percent favoring practical, 36.3 percent current awareness, 14.3 percent scholarly, 4.8 percent opinion pieces, and 2.8 percent reviews. Articles, columns, and reviews all enjoy a substantial readership. Regardless of the type of material preferred, 70.2 percent of respondents affirmed that *DttP* provides enough of their favored material. All of the articles published in 2008 were listed in one of the questions, and people chose the article they most liked and appreciated. Not surprisingly, a range of topics appeals to readers. "Docs 2.0: An Introduction" led the pack with 38.4 percent listing it among the "most helpful" *DttP* articles from 2008.

Clearly, members read content about GODORT. Of the respondents who reported being GODORT members, nearly 60 percent responded that they read 'Round the Table news about GODORT, and 84.2 percent of those read 'Round the Table to keep up with GODORT activities. Many members (23 percent) responded that they read the column because they missed the conference and need to keep up with what happened.

The survey included some questions devised to obtain content suggestions for future articles and thematic issues. The open-ended answers included 144 respondents sharing "the biggest challenge" their jobs currently offer that they would like *DttP* to address, while 121 suggested content they would like to read in *DttP* over the next two to three years. Topics range widely and reflect the diversity of readers and libraries; suggested topics include Web 2.0 technologies, outreach and marketing, e-government, and data.

The Publications Committee and *DttP* editorial staff thank GODORT members and *DttP* readers for participating in the survey and sharing their many insightful and honest comments. The time you invested in sharing ideas with the people pulling these issues together will pay dividends as future issues seek to address your interests and needs.

—John A. Stevenson, GODORT Publications Chair

GITCO Holds Virtual Forums on Challenges of Access, Provision, and Distribution of Electronic Government Information

One role of the Government Information Technology Committee (GITCO) is to identify current and future challenges associated with access to, and provision and distribution of, electronic government information. In order to drive its future work and represent these issues to the GODORT Ad Hoc Strategic Planning Committee, GITCO held three virtual forums during the months of March, April, and May 2009 to identify key and emerging issues in the access to and provision and distribution of this material. Participants brainstormed about potential outreach activities to the rest of the library community and beyond, in addition to surfacing issues associated with the future of the committee.

GITCO members hosted the one-hour virtual chat forums via the free online chat service Meebo (www.meebo.com). The forums were advertised via membership discussion lists and web-based means, such as blogs, to invite participants from GODORT, ALA, and outside the organization. Each forum focused on a broad topic: the first, emerging issues for users of electronic government information; the second, emerging issues in advocacy for electronic government information; and the final session in May was an internally focused discussion about the committee's structure. Roughly ten-to-fifteen participants attended each forum, the majority of them non-GITCO members. All chat session transcripts, along with summaries, are housed on the GODORT wiki. GITCO intended to use the content for discussion during the Annual Conference, so check the meeting minutes for additional updates.

For more information on the forums and to access transcripts and summaries, see: wikis.ala.org/godort/index.php/Virtual_forums.
—*Gretchen Gano, GITCO Chair*

GODORT 2009 Annual Conference Highlights

July 10–13, 2009

More than 28,000 people attended the ALA Annual Conference in Chicago, and GODORT provided them with a variety of activities in which to participate. Members were active as always. Below are some highlights.

The preconference, "All Government Information is Local: Building on a Century of Local and Regional Information in Libraries" was a success, with eighteen of twenty-seven registrants attending. Cosponsored by MAGERT, featured panelists included librarian and academic experts on urban planning information.

The **GODORT Update** was organized around the theme "Need Data—But Don't Know Where to Go?" Three speakers covered topics such as the role government agencies play as producers of statistics and data; the reference interview for data; and the surveys behind numbers for employment, unemployment, and inflation. Amy West of the University of Minnesota Libraries, Kathleen Murphy of Northwestern University Library, and Paul LaPorte with the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics informed and entertained an audience eager to learn more about data resources and services.

"Gov Doc Kids" was the informative **GODORT Program** held Monday morning. Speakers provided information intended to help attendees promote government information while teaching K–12 students about history, culture, and government. Librarians and federal agency representatives highlighted primary source materials and U.S. government websites geared toward children.

Due to the threat of rainy weather, the **GODORT Reception and Awards Ceremony** was moved inside, but that didn't stop attendees from having a good time and celebrating award winners. Award recipients were: Andrea Sevetson, LexisNexis Academic & Library Solutions (James Bennett Childs Award); Daniel Cornwall, Alaska State Library (LexisNexis/GODORT/ALA *Documents to the People* Award); Eleanor Chase, University of Washington (Bernadine Abbott Hoduski Founders Award); Aimée C. Quinn, University of New Mexico (NewsBank/Readex/GODORT/ALA Catharine J. Reynolds Research Grant); and Justin Joque, University of Michigan (W. David Rozkuszka Scholarship). Francis J. Buckley was also honored, as the first person to set up a legacy gift with GODORT as a beneficiary. For more information on setting up a legacy gift, contact Steve Hayes, Development Committee chair. Organized by the **Conference Committee**, the reception was sponsored by Readex (a division of NewsBank), LexisNexis, Marcive, Inc., Bernan, CQ Press, and Renouf.

During the conference, GODORT members paid tribute to two individuals who left their own unique stamp on the government information community—Margaret T. Lane and Virginia F. Saunders, who passed away recently. Their memories and their contributions to government information will be honored with a new GODORT award. Funded jointly by LexisNexis and Readex, the award will be given annually to an author or group of authors of an outstanding research article in which government documents form a substantial part of the documented research. Thanks to the hard work of the **Awards Committee**, the award was proposed and approved during the Conference. The deadline for nominating a publication for consideration is December 1, 2009. See p. 41 of this issue for more information.

The **Federal Documents Task Force** (FDTF) meeting included discussion about the status of the seven recommendations from the most recent meeting of the Depository Library Council, as well as the Association of Research Libraries' whitepaper on strategic directions for the FDLP. Some members felt that GODORT, and specifically FDTF, should craft a response regarding the strategic direction of the FDLP. Discussion will take place on ALA Connect between conferences, and this will be a discussion topic at the FDTF meeting in Boston.

The **International Documents Task Force** (IDTF) heard from Andrea Goncalves, marketing officer at UN Publications Office, about the present state and digital future of UN publications. There was also an update on IDTF's Publishing Policies and Practices Project (wikis.ala.org/godort/index.php?title=Publishing_Policies_and_Practices), which is being created to provide full coverage of such matters for a broad range of international agencies.

The **State and Local Documents Task Force** (SLDTF) had several interesting discussions, including how the current financial crisis is affecting their institutions (or not), and how to find data and statistics to answer local government information questions. After a remembrance of Margaret Lane, the group discussed the future of the Committee of 8. It was decided that the Committee as currently structured has outlived its usefulness and the way that information is received from the fifty states will be reformulated.

The **Bylaws and Organization Committee** approved changes to the FDTF section of the *Policies and Procedures Manual* (PPM), as well as other changes that will improve the consistency of language used in the PPM. At the second Steering Committee meeting, a policy change was approved that allows the PPM to be updated twice each year, following the Midwinter Meeting and Annual Conference.

Jennifer Davis from GPO updated the **Cataloging Committee** on several initiatives, such as the efforts to break out separate records and items numbers for different formats, changes in the policy for electronic records with the new "provider neutral model" for cataloging records, and the creation of minimal records from the GPO's pre-1976 shelflist.

The **Development Committee** continues to be active, and will be conducting a fundraising appeal to GODORT members this fall (watch your mailbox for this!). At second Steering, the Committee approved the Development priorities: 1) funding of the Rozkuszka Scholarship, 2) financial support of the Emerging Leaders Award, and 3) sufficient funds to establish an interest-bearing endowment.

Following their newly-established pattern, the **Education Committee** spent the first hour of their meeting discussing how to improve patron statistical literacy. The second half was spent discussing committee business. The draft core competencies focusing on federal information will soon be revised and released on ALA Connect as a potential model for a more comprehensive set of government information competencies covering additional types of government information. Following a discussion of online programming options for GODORT, the committee recommended developing librarian-targeted programming consisting of snippet tips and modules that take no more than one hour based on the draft core competencies.

At the **Government Information Technology Committee** (GITCO) meeting, attendees received an excellent update from GPO on recent developments and new collections through FDsys. The committee discussed the status of the online e-competencies toolkit and the feasibility of forming a GITCO subgroup to address numeric data issues. After reviewing the ideas generated from the three virtual forums held this spring, GITCO members voted to form a subcommittee to explore and report on the various platforms and novel topics that can extend GITCO's capacity to provide training opportunities in support of government information provision in a sophisticated electronic environment. The committee also expressed interest in collaborating with the web developers group, in order to increase the ability of the committee to support applied technology projects.

The Legislation Committee met four times during the conference, primarily discussing the ALA-wide meeting "Government Information: A Topic for all Librarians," which was held Friday morning, and working on resolutions. Seven resolutions were presented for approval at the Membership Meeting, including memorial resolutions for Margaret T. Lane and Virginia F. Saunders. All of the resolutions were endorsed in principle by the membership.

The **Membership Committee** discussed the GODORT Buddy pilot program and decided that the demand for the first offering (nine new members were paired with active GODORT members) was enough to extend the pilot through Annual 2010. A survey of participants will be sent out after the conference to determine what improvements can be made. The Membership Committee also planned a successful GODORT happy hour.

The **Nominating Committee** will be soliciting nominees for Depository Library Council soon—for more information see p. 42.

The **Publications Committee** announced that the first two GODORT Occasional Papers have been published and are available at wikis.ala.org/godort/index.php/GODORT_Occasional_Papers. David Griffiths has been named as the new Notable Documents chair. The deadline for the GODORT Logo Contest is December 1, 2009.

The **Rare and Endangered Government Publications (REGP) Committee** is conducting a survey of New Deal documents from bibliographies by Jerome Wilcox, and project volunteers will be using the wiki, ALA Connect and conference calls to coordinate efforts to identify class numbers and/or OCLC records for items listed in Wilcox. Volunteers are still needed for another REGP project, an inventory of the fifty states, meant to assess the digital preservation and access to state information in electronic format.

The **GODORT Membership Meeting** included an update on the Oral Histories Project (wikis.ala.org/godort/index.php/Oral_Histories); work is continuing and Tanya Finchum has recruited five more members to record. Also, the membership voted to omit the GODORT Update from the schedule for the 2010 Annual Conference. That timeframe will not be filled with other GODORT activities, and instead will be a time when members can attend programs, meetings, or other non-GODORT activities.

GODORT Councilor Mary Mallory introduced two resolutions on accessibility of library websites and the purchasing of accessible electronic resources. Both were endorsed in principle by the membership. A detailed report of the councilor's activities will appear in the winter issue of *DttP*.

The long-anticipated Strategic Plan was submitted at the second meeting of the Steering Committee. The plan will be voted on by Steering shortly following the Annual Conference, and sent to the GODORT membership before the Midwinter Meeting. Also at second Steering, an Ad Hoc Committee on GODORT Communications was approved.

The new **Steering Committee** and committee appointments were approved. Please see the Steering listing starting on p. 42 of this issue. Complete committee listings and liaison appointments are found on the GODORT wiki.

Complete minutes of various meetings will be listed on the GODORT wiki at wikis.ala.org/godort/index.php/GODORT_Minutes.

Awards Nominations Due December 1, 2009

The GODORT Awards Committee welcomes nominations of documents librarians recognized for their contributions and achievements to the profession. Awards will be presented at the 2010 Annual Conference in Washington D.C., and will be selected by the Awards Committee at Midwinter in January 2010. These awards are:

James Bennett Childs

The James Bennett Childs Award is a tribute to an individual who has made a lifetime and significant contribution to the field of documents librarianship. The award is based on stature, service, and publication, which may be in any or all areas of documents librarianship. The award winner receives a plaque with a likeness of James Bennett Childs.

LexisNexis/GODORT/ALA *Documents to the People*

The LexisNexis/GODORT/ALA *Documents to the People* Award is a tribute to an individual, library, institution, or other noncommercial group that has most effectively encouraged the use of government documents in support of library service. The award includes a $3,000 cash stipend to be used to support a project of the recipient's choice. LexisNexis Academic & Library Solutions sponsors this award.

Bernadine Abbott Hoduski Founders Award

The Bernadine Abbott Hoduski Award recognizes documents librarians who may not be known at the national level but who have made significant contributions to the field of state, international, local, or federal documents. This award recognizes those whose contributions have benefited not only the individual's institution but also the profession. Achievements in state, international, or local documents librarianship will receive first consideration. The award winner receives a plaque.

Guidelines for all award nominations are available from the GODORT wiki (wikis.ala.org/godort/index.php/AboutAwards) or can be requested from the Awards Committee chair. Nominations will be accepted via e-mail (preferred) or mail. Please send to: GODORT Awards Committee, c/o Dan Barkley, Zimmerman Library 1 University of New Mexico, MSC05 3020, Albuquerque, NM 87131-0001. Phone: 505-277-7180, e-mail barkley@unm.edu.

Research and Scholarship Applications due December 1, 2009

The GODORT Awards Committee welcomes applications by December 1, 2009, for the Catharine J. Reynolds research grant, the Margaret T. Lane/Virginia F. Saunders Memorial Research award, and the W. David Rozkuszka Scholarship. Awards will be presented at the 2010 Annual Conference in Washington, D.C., and will be selected by the Awards Committee at Midwinter in January 2010.

NewsBank/Readex/GODORT/ALA Catharine J. Reynolds

The NewsBank/Readex/GODORT/ALA Catharine J. Reynolds Award provides funding for research in the field of documents librarianship, or in a related area that would benefit the individual's performance as a documents librarian, or make a contribution to the field. This award, established in 1987, is named for Catharine J. Reynolds, former head of Government Publications at the University of Colorado, Boulder. It is supported by a contribution of $2,000 from NewsBank/Readex.

LexisNexis-NewsBank/Readex ALA/GODORT Margaret T. Lane/Virginia F. Saunders Memorial Research Award

This award will be given annually to the author(s) of an outstanding research article in which government information, either published or archival in nature, form a substantial part of the documented research. Preference may be given to articles published in library literature and that appeal to a broader audience. The award is not restricted to articles in library journals. This award is to honor the memory of two women who worked with endless enthusiasm to make the ideal of citizen access to government information a reality. The award winner receives a plaque and a contribution of $2,000 from LexisNexis Academic & Library Solutions and NewsBank/Readex.

W. David Rozkuszka Scholarship

The W. David Rozkuszka Scholarship provides financial assistance to an individual who is currently working with government documents in a library and is trying to complete a master's degree in library science. This award, established in 1994, is named after W. David Rozkuszka, former documents librarian at Stanford University. The award recipient receives $3,000.

Guidelines for the research grant and scholarship are available from the GODORT wiki (wikis.ala.org/godort/index.php/AboutAwards) or can be requested from the Awards Committee Chair. Nominations will be accepted via e-mail (preferred) or mail. Please send to: GODORT Awards Committee, c/o Dan Barkley, Zimmerman Library, 1 Univ. of New Mexico, MSC05 3020, Albuquerque, NM 87131-0001. Phone: 505-277-7180, e-mail barkley@unm.edu.

Interested in Depository Library Council?

The Depository Library Council is an advisory board to the Public Printer of the United States. Are you interested in being considered for possible nomination or do you wish to nominate someone for consideration? If so, please fill out the online application form at (www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/rts/godort/godortcommittees/godortnominating/dlcform.cfm) before December 1, 2009. Please note, resumes cannot be substituted for the application form. The GODORT Steering Committee will select up to five names at the Midwinter Meeting. Names of the selected nominees will be forwarded to the ALA Executive Board for their consideration and submission to the Public Printer. Questions? Please contact a member of the GODORT Nominating Committee: Marilyn Von Seggern, chair (m_vonseggern@wsu.edu); Beth Clausen (b-clausen@northwestern.edu); David Griffiths (dngriffi@uiuc.edu); Jill Moriearty (jill.moriearty@utah.edu); Jill Vassilakos-Long (jvlong@ csusb.edu)

Steering Committee 2009–2010

For complete contact information, see http://wikis.ala.org/godort/index.php/godort_directory.

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