

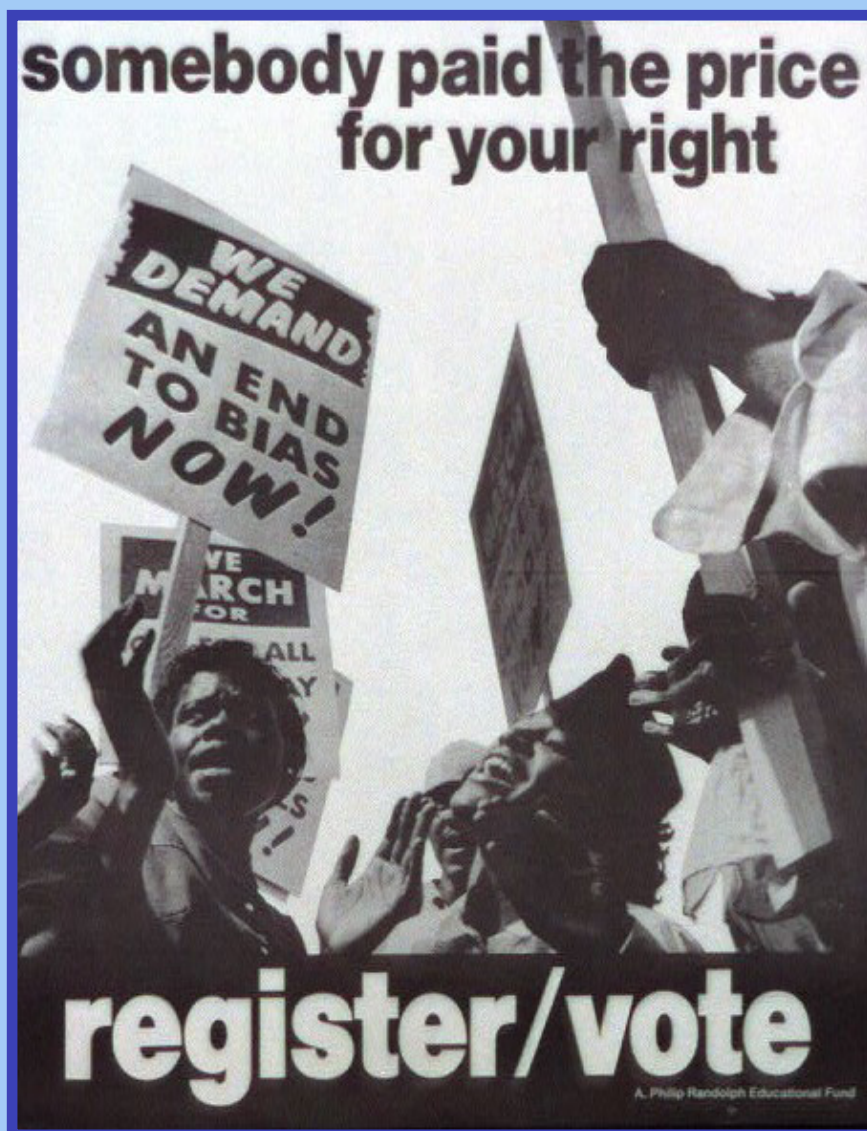
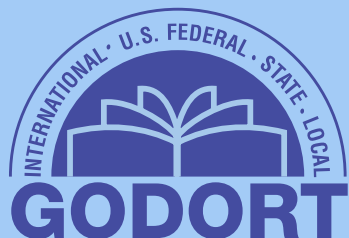
In This Issue:

- Gift to the Delta, Past and Present: US Government Documents and Resources at the Delta State University Library
- The Merger of Government Documents and Reference at a Mid-Size University: A 24-Year Retrospective
- GODORT Midwinter Committee Updates

DttP

Documents to the People

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House Bill to Ban TikTok: Protecting National Security or Limiting Free Expression?

Jennifer Castle

The recent passage of the House bill that could potentially ban TikTok in the United States has ignited fervent debates across the digital landscape.¹ As the popular video-sharing app, owned by China-based company ByteDance, faces scrutiny, we find ourselves at the intersection of national security, data privacy, and the ever-elusive quest for truth in the digital age.

The bipartisan bill, which sailed through the House with a 352–65 vote, aims to pressure TikTok into parting ways with its Chinese parent company.² The underlying concern? TikTok's potential exploitation as a conduit for accessing American data and disseminating harmful information. Speaker Mike Johnson minced no words when he labeled China as America's "largest geopolitical foe," emphasizing the need to safeguard against data breaches and manipulation.³

This legislation would give TikTok a limited timeframe to sever ties with ByteDance or face being banned from US app stores.⁴ This move could have far-reaching consequences for the app's 170 million American users and the creators who rely on it for their livelihoods.

President Joe Biden, ever the diplomat, has signaled his readiness to sign the bill if it clears both chambers of Congress.⁵

Meanwhile, TikTok creators are rallying their followers with the hashtag #KeepTikTok.⁶ They've built entire livelihoods on the app and are not about to let it fade into digital oblivion. The company argues that the bill infringes on First Amendment rights and has urged users to voice their opposition to their representatives.⁷ Meanwhile, China's foreign ministry has condemned the vote as bullying.⁸

But here's the plot twist: Biden's campaign team is still dropping TikTok content like confetti at a virtual party. The irony? Ban the app, but keep campaigning on it.

However, TikTok is just one tile in the mosaic of social media platforms. Fueled by algorithms and artificial intelligence, these digital arenas wield immense power over our lives. Social media companies employ these algorithms for various purposes: curating content, tailoring ads, and even detecting hate speech. However, their most intriguing role lies in identifying false information—those conspiracy theories and dubious claims that proliferate like digital dandelions.

Public opinion on these algorithmic sleuths is a mixed bag. Some hail them as defenders of truth, while others view them skeptically. According to a Pew Research Center survey, 38 percent of US adults believe that using computer programs to

ferret out falsehoods is a boon for society.⁹ However, 31 percent consider it a bad idea, and a sizable chunk remains unsure.¹⁰ Perhaps these algorithms are akin to well-intentioned detectives, but their methods and biases remain under scrutiny.

In this digital dance, let us tread carefully. TikTok's fate hangs in the balance, and the algorithms continue their tireless waltz through our feeds. As we navigate this intricate web of data manipulation, may we remain vigilant, discerning, and occasionally amused by the absurdity of it all. But it also raises the question: Shouldn't we also be looking at US billionaires who are also profiting from our data and exploitation?

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From the Chair

Benjamin Aldred

I'm writing this having just returned from LibLearnX in Baltimore, a week after the GODORT Virtual Midwinter Meetings, and have been feeling reflective on the value of relationships developed through GODORT and ALA. Professional friendships are distinct from other types of friendships, what brings you together is a complicated combination, one part shared sense of purpose, one part co-mentorship, one part venting about the same struggles, one part excitement over career developments and just a dash of shared work humor.

Getting involved in GODORT has been an excellent opportunity to form some of these friendships, but in the current environment, things have changed from the conference of generations past. It's harder in a business driven environment to justify the cost of attendance, with travel, lodging, etc. just to support the development of friendships, but those professional friendships bring benefits to individuals and organizations alike. Professional friendships bring shared expertise. Professional friendships reduce feelings of burnout. Professional

friendships help reinforce a sense of mission. These benefits are often overlooked by libraries who seem to think that only direct support of library work is worthwhile. It's a shortsighted view but one that librarians should continue to push back against.

In GODORT, one of the ways we push back is with trying to find ways to develop these relationships virtually. The GODORT Virtual Conference Meetings are one way, facilitating collaborations without requiring costly travel. The GODORT Friday Chats are another, allowing for social contact and relationship development without the need for costly travel. But there's nothing quite like meeting in person. I hope to see many of you in San Diego this summer and I hope you all find ways to build your relationships within GODORT and ALA.

Benjamin Aldred (baldred2@uic.edu), Assistant Professor, Reference and Liaison Librarian, University of Illinois Chicago.

Get to Know . . .

Chris Bloodworth

Gwen Sinclair

Chris Bloodworth might be a fairly new government documents librarian, but he is no stranger to government information. He has been an Adult Services Librarian at the main branch of the Detroit Public Library (DPL) since 2022. Prior to that, he had a long tenure as a research librarian at Honigman Miller, a large law firm in Detroit, and he also worked in the Arthur Neef Law Library at Wayne State University and at Ohio State University's Moritz Law Library. Most of his training with government information has been practical, beginning when he was a graduate assistant while working on his MLIS at Wayne State University. "Though my library science graduate education has helped me become successful in my career, the knowledge and experience I've gained working in government documents has been learning and acquiring on the fly," he noted.

Chris' subject areas at DPL include social sciences, science and technology, business, and religion, in addition to federal, state, and local government information. He is also responsible for developing educational programs for adult patrons. "In this culture, you have to be a near-jack of all trades," he noted. DPL became a federal depository library in 1868 and was formerly a regional federal depository. The federal documents collection is vast, encompassing 14,500 linear feet. DPL has three "crown jewels" in its federal documents collection: the Serial Set, the *Congressional Record*, and the *American State Papers*. Chris is also responsible for preservation of the documents collection, which has been affected by a series of floods and water-related events. He was pleased that volumes of Secretary of War correspondence and National Weather Service chronological reports that had water and mold damage can be transferred to DPL's regional depository, the University of Minnesota, for conservation work.

Asked what qualities a good government documents librarian should have, Chris replied, "Keen organizational skills, the ability to process a rather complex and multilayered call number system, and having a broad-based subject knowledge. It's impossible to know everything, but you should at least have general awareness of a diverse range of subject areas." His advice for a new government information librarian: "If there's a formal government documents course, take it." He added, "Don't be afraid to learn on the fly. Acquiring new knowledge and skills, you will make mistakes. It's a certain level of discomfort

that you'll have to accept until you become more trained and proficient."

Chris is proud of his work with DPL's African American Booklist Committee, a team of librarians who collaborate on an annual bibliography of recommended books by or about African Americans that is published on DPL's website. He also participates in GODORT by serving on the Publications Committee and the State & Local Documents Interest Group. Outside of work, Chris is a big football fan and is "happy living in a state where we finally have a successful professional NFL team and a college team that is competing for a national title." He is also a huge vinyl record collector and has over one thousand LPs and 45 rpm records. His collection leans heavily towards jazz, R&B, especially Motown, and classic and alternative rock. According to Chris, "The metro Detroit area is a vinyl lover's dream. There is a plethora of used record shops spread throughout southeast Michigan." In addition to collecting records, he also enjoys reading about music and is currently making his way through Questlove's *Music Is History*.

Like many of us, Chris especially enjoys using his subject expertise to answer challenging reference questions. "What I most love is when I get to play to my strengths: basic and in-depth research, analyzing and synthesizing information, and that includes making sense of and processing complex information resources and collection management systems that entail federal government documents," as he put it. A favorite resource is *Statistical Abstract of the United States*, a handy go-to reference for quick statistics. He is also a big fan of GovInfo with its collections of House and Senate documents, the *Congressional Record*, and other statutory and regulatory titles.

Although it has been quite a shift to transition from a law firm to a public library, Chris feels fortunate to be part of the team at DPL. In his words, "I'm blessed to work in a public library environment that has government documents and a broad range of collections that are both historically significant and relevant to not just the diverse community it serves but also to the state and the nation at large."

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Not Just in English Anymore

Good Nutrition, Buena Nutrición . . . Everyone Deserves a Healthy Diet

Jane Canfield

Many immigrants to the United States face not only a language barrier for being able to purchase food but also cultural and socioeconomic barriers. Immigrants often cannot read English and are significantly handicapped in their access to nutritional information. Additionally, many new residents of the US face significant socioeconomic barriers, such as the inability to access available government programs and living in food deserts or food swamps. Food deserts are those areas with a lack of availability to sufficient food and food swamps are those areas where the available food is high calorie but nutritionally lacking.¹

Immigrants are also subject to misinformation about government food programs and often fearful of any involvement with government programs. For example, believing various rumors about the SNAP/WIC programs resulted in an 85 percent lower participation rate among Latin immigrants. Those rumors included believing that children should be taken away, that relatives could be deported, and that the money would have to be repaid.²

For those of us who work with government documents, we can provide numerous resources in languages other than English to combat this mistrust and misinformation. Major government information sources include the Catalog of Government Publications (CGP), USA.gov, MedlinePlus, PubMed, and Science.gov among others. There follow some individual examples of materials in other languages, information on resources in other languages, and some ideas for how and where to search.

Information in Other Languages

Catalog of Government Publications

Examples from the Catalog of Government publications:

- Agua: una gran opción (Water: a great option). <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/GOVPUB-A98-PURL-gpo131205>.
- Comidas Saludables Con Mi Plato (Healthy Meals with My Plate). <https://www.govinfo.gov/app/details/GOVPUB-A98-PURL-gpo131051>.

USA.gov

USA.gov in Spanish offers resources from a variety of agencies including the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the Federal Nutrition Service (FNS) and the Supplemental Nutrition and Assistance Program (SNAP). For example:

- Cómo solicitar cupones para alimentos (SNAP)(How to apply for food coupons). https://www.usa.gov/es/solicitar-cupones-alimentos-snap?_gl=1*ukht08*_ga*MTg5ODgwNzI0LjE3MDIzOTkwMDE.*_ga_GXFTMLX26S*MTcwNTkzNzUzNy4zLjEuMTcwNTkzNzUzOC4wLjAuMA.

Medlineplus.gov

Medlineplus.gov (<https://medlineplus.gov/languages/nutrition.html>) offers numerous resources in other languages including Arabic, Tagalog, Urdu, Portuguese, Russian, Japanese, Korean, Thai, Hmong, and Hindi. One example of the information in Arabic is https://myplateprod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/2020-12/MyPlate_Arabic.png.

Scholarly Sources

PubMed

A search for nutrition and immigration resulted in 1,906 articles with titles such as *Parental Immigration Status, Medicaid Expansion, And Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participation* and *Supporting Food and Nutrition Security Among Migrant, Immigrant, and Refugee Populations*.

Science.gov

A search for nutrition in other languages resulted in 1070 articles ranging from information on pregnancy and nutrition to scholarly studies on how students describe their nutritional intake. Of the 1070 article, 540 are public access and include federally funded research studies. Science.gov is managed by the US Department of Energy (DOE) and provides information from multiple agencies, including some state level and international information.

Where and How to Search

CGP: <https://catalog.gpo.gov/>

The CGP includes information on laws, Congressional Hearings and actual publications in other languages.

USA.gov: <https://www.usa.gov/es/> (Spanish)

<https://www.usa.gov/> (English)

The Spanish version of USA.gov allows for direct searching using Spanish terms and will result in Spanish language information from various agencies and state governments. The English language internet site allows for searching of nutrition and related topics with the phrasing “in other languages.”

MedlinePlus: <https://medlineplus.gov/>

A search in MedlinePlus reveals multiple resources in a variety of languages for our users.

PubMed: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/>

Science.gov: <https://www.science.gov/index.html>

Both PubMed and Science.gov offer scholarly research information on the topic of nutrition, and both offer some international-level resources as well.

Keywords that were useful in my search were nutrition, nutrition in other languages, direct search in Spanish, food desert, immigrants, and nutrition, diet and nutrition, diet and culture, and diet and immigrants. If your library has users who need nutritional information in other languages, start with these resources and then continue to a more in-depth search.

Jane Canfield (jcanfield@pucpr.edu), Pontifical Catholic University of Puerto Rico.

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Gift to the Delta, Past and Present

US Government Documents and Resources at the Delta State University Library

Michael Mounce, Laurie Muffley and Mike Emerson

The historic Mississippi Delta is home of the blues, Fannie Lou Hamer, and Delta State University (DSU). In the tightly knit agricultural town of Cleveland, DSU, whose unofficial mascot is the Fighting Okra, is a public university in the heart of the Mississippi Delta. It is here that DSU's Roberts-LaForge Library houses a mid-sized collection of US government documents and provides access to online US government resources. The library is a selective depository library that receives about 40 percent of the United States government documents that are issued in tangible formats by the US Federal Depository Library Program (FDLP). Also, DSU's library is the only US government documents depository library in the Delta region of Mississippi.

Founded in 1924, DSU is one of two public universities in the vast Mississippi Delta region. As is often the case in rural areas, this institution of higher learning is, and has been, an integral part of the people's lives in its home county, Bolivar County, and beyond. Before the Digital Age, DSU's library was one of the few places where the public, in addition to the students, faculty, and staff of DSU, could exercise their rights to access government documents on diverse topics such as civil rights and voting rights. The library officially became a US government documents depository library in 1975, about a decade after the passing of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. These historically significant events are reflected in the titles of some of the library's US government documents, such as "School Desegregation in Greenville, Mississippi: A Staff Report of the United States Commission on Civil Rights" (published in 1977).¹ Other relevant US government documents in the library include "Twenty Years After Brown: A Report of the United States Commission on Civil Rights" (published circa 1977), "Consultations on the Affirmative Action Statement of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights" (published in 1981), and the "Voting Assistance Guide, 90-91."²

Those titles, which are still part of the government documents collection of the library, demonstrate the efforts put forth by the US Commission on Civil Rights and other federal governmental groups to disseminate vitally important information to American citizens during the Print Age of the late-twentieth century by way of the US Government Publishing Office's designated depositories. To that end, the purpose of this paper is to discuss how the Roberts-LaForge Library at DSU became a US government documents depository library and to discuss patron usage of the library's US government documents and resources.

History

In July 1975, the Director of Library Services at the time, Dr. Rush Miller, sent an official letter to the US Superintendent of Documents Office. In that letter, he requested that the W.B. Roberts Library, as it was then called, become a US government documents depository library. Mr. David Bowen, the US Representative for District 2 in Mississippi at the time, had made Dr. Miller aware of his eligibility to apply for the status of government documents depository for the library.³ When Dr. Miller applied for the depository status, he submitted some statements of justification for the library to become a depository library, such as the "tremendous expansion in its enrollment and programs during the past few years."⁴ In October 1975, the Assistant Public Printer for the Superintendent of Documents C. A. LaBarre mailed a letter to Dr. Miller informing him that the library had qualified as an official depository.⁵ An acceptance of designation form was enclosed with the letter. After Dr. Miller signed that form and mailed it back to LaBarre, who countersigned the form, the library became a depository for receiving US government documents.⁶ The news of this significant milestone for the library was noted in the news, including in the Jackson, Mississippi newspaper *The Clarion Ledger Jackson Daily News*.⁷ It should also be noted

that the milestone for the library happened about one year after another milestone occurred for DSU. In 1974, DSU officially had its name changed from Delta State College to Delta State University. The name change of the DSU Library occurred much later in 2003, when its name changed from W. B. Roberts Library to Roberts-LaForge Library.

At the time that the DSU Library became a US government documents depository library, DSU’s home county, Bolivar County, had a population in which African Americans were a majority. According to the USA Facts website, in 1970 the African American community was at 61.4 percent, the white population was at 38.1 percent and the remaining population under the “other” category was 0.5 percent. By 1980, 62.4 percent of the county’s population was African American, 37.2 percent identified as white, with 0.4 percent of the remaining inhabitants being classified as “other.” The total population of Bolivar County in 1970 was 49,500 versus 45,837 in 1980, reflecting a population decline of 7.4 percent. In 2020, the total population of Bolivar County was 30,849. African Americans have continued to be a majority of Bolivar County’s population. The African American population consisted of 64.4 percent, white residents were 33.6 percent of the population, with the remaining inhabitants in “other” categories.⁸

Government Documents: Resources and Usage

The tangible US government documents in DSU’s library include over 26,000 government documents in various formats (books, booklets, posters, flyers, and pamphlets). They also include over 1,500 CD-ROMS, over 200 DVDs, and fifty-six rows of microfiche slides in file cabinets. In addition to tangible US government documents, the library also has over 50,000 online US government documents available in full text in the online catalog and access to many US government websites on the library’s Government Documents website. DSU and non-DSU patrons can come into the library and use the US government documents in all formats, and they can receive help from reference librarians in finding and using government documents. Many tangible government documents can be checked out by DSU and non-DSU patrons for seven days. Those that cannot be checked out can be used in the library when it is open. Online government documents and resources can be accessed by all patrons.

Mike Emerson, one of the authors of this paper, provided usage data about the government documents. Usage data includes the total number of times particular government

Table 1: DSU Library’s Top Ten Checked Out US Government Documents

Title of Government Document	No. of Checkouts	Latest Activity
Violence in the Media	7	2/17/2014
No Child Left Behind: A Toolkit for Teachers	6	9/9/2008
Research-Based Web Design & Usability Guidelines	6	4/29/2012
Violence Against Women	6	4/27/2004
Predictors of Youth Violence	6	12/5/2007
The Youth Gangs, Drugs, and Violence Connection	6	12/5/2007
Children’s Exposure to Violence: The Safe Start Initiative	6	4/27/2004
What You Need to Know About Prostate Cancer	5	3/12/2007
Violent Neighborhood, Violent Kids	5	12/5/2007
The Youth Gang Drug Trafficking	5	12/5/2007

Table 2: Other US Government Documents Checked Out

No. of Checkouts	No. of Government Documents Checked Out Specified Number of Times
4	8
3	24
2	28
1	132

documents were checked out during the time period 2002–2019 and the dates of latest activities of government documents during that time period. This time period was selected because it begins when the library migrated to a new integrated library system (ILS) and ends just before the COVID-19 pandemic began. Records brought over from the older ILS lacked the granularity the authors wished to analyze that necessitated the use of records that were created in 2002 or after. The pandemic caused such chaos with the library’s circulation counts that it was decided to not use records from 2020–2022 to prevent the historical event from skewing results.

The latest activities of those government documents include all types of activities: items being checked out, items being checked back in, a patron being billed for an overdue item, and an item being transferred to another library for an interlibrary loan request. In the time period 2002–2019, 202 of the library’s government documents were checked out by patrons. The authors do not have data for any government documents check outs that occurred after 2019. Table 1 includes the titles of the top ten checked-out US government documents, the numbers of times the documents were checked out between 2002–2019 and the dates of those documents’ latest activities.

There are a substantial number of the library’s government documents that were checked out in the 2002–2019 time period, but do not appear in table 1—each of those government

Table 3: US Government Departments/Groups and Check Outs

US Government Departments/Groups	No. of Documents from Department/ Group Checked Out
Justice Department	59
Health and Human Services Department	45
Education Department and Congress	16 (each group)
Transportation Department	11
Defense Department	7
Interior Department and the Executive Office of the President	6 (each group)
Environmental Protection Agency, Homeland Security Department, and the President of the United States	4 (each group)
Labor Department, Agriculture Department, Commerce Department, Smithsonian Institution, and the Census Bureau	3 (each group)
Energy Department and the Social Security Administration	2 (each group)
Civil Rights Commission, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), National Archives and Records Administration, Government Publishing Office, Library of Congress, and the Geological Survey	1 (each group)

Table 4: Library's Government Documents Website Usage

Webpage Title	Views	Users	Views Per User	Ave. Engagement Time (Seconds)
Government Documents (Home Page)	32	14	2.29	123
Finding Statistics (US gov docs)	28	17	1.65	37
Locating Government Information (US gov docs)	7	4	1.75	11
Popular Government Resources (US gov docs)	7	4	1.75	20
Circulation of Government Documents (Library Policy)	35	30	1.66	110
Depository Access Policy (Library Policy)	4	3	1.33	174
Government Information in Electronic Formats (Library Policy)	4	3	1.33	767

documents were checked out one to four times. Table 2 provides data for these government documents regarding the number of checkouts during the 2002–2019 time period and shows many government documents were checked out one to four times.

Table 3 lists the names of various US government departments and other groups and the numbers of the library's US government documents from those departments that were checked out 2002–2019.

In addition to usage statistics for the library's tangible government documents, it is also helpful to explore the usage of the library's government documents website. Thanks to the Google Analytics program that the DSU Library uses, the authors were able to capture some data regarding recent usage of webpages of the government documents website, such as the number of views. The government documents website includes the home page, federal documents webpages, one state documents webpage, and webpages containing library policies regarding its government documents. Table 4 contains the titles of visited webpages of the library's government documents website from

September 19, 2022–September 19, 2023. The table also provides the following data for each webpage: number of views, number of unique users, views per user, and average engagement time. It should be noted that table 4 excludes the webpage for Mississippi government documents, since the scope of this paper is limited to US government documents.

Conclusion

This paper ends as it started: as a record of the contributions that the selected US government documents collection at the Roberts-LaForge Library has made in print and electronically to both DSU and the larger community. Significantly, the collection's founding occurred in the wake of the Civil Rights Movement, in which civil rights activists from Mississippi played a pivotal role. When there was not the convenience of 24/7 online access to vitally important public information, DSU's mid-sized depository provided the physical information that the students, faculty, staff, and the local community needed. Its establishment as a collection was visionary, timely, and a true gift to the Mississippi Delta.

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The Merger of Government Documents and Reference at a Mid-Size University

A 24-Year Retrospective

Claudene Sproles and Anna Marie Johnson

The University of Louisville (UofL) Libraries consists of the main library, Ekstrom Library, along with five branches. The Libraries are a member of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and possess approximately 2.2 million items. UofL has served as a Federal FDL Program. As of 2023, the University of Louisville Libraries' Government Documents Department and the Reference Department have been merged for 24 years, beginning in 1999.

Several writers argued that the key to successful documents reference is knowledgeable staff and brisk user instruction of documents collections.¹ Maggie Farrell stated that a "merged reference center must 'intellectually' integrate the documents collection into reference services, library instruction, and library promotion activities."² She believed that integrated reference service would lead to higher documents use. So did this intellectual integration occur with the department mergers at the University of Louisville and what was the outcome when government documents became the responsibility of every librarian in the merged department? This paper explores how the University of Louisville Libraries handled the documents merger, what changes have occurred since the merger, and the state of the library's government documents reference services today.

Literature Review

Storing and servicing government documents collections have always been problematic in libraries. Historically, libraries housed government documents in three distinct ways:

1. Integrating documents with other library materials,
2. Maintaining a separate collection of government documents,

3. Combining features of integrated and separate collections.³

Peter Hernon noted that separate government documents collections were present as far back as the 1890s at the Los Angeles and New York Public Libraries.⁴ Servicing these collections, became a challenge. Mahala Saville argued in 1940 that possessing dedicated, experienced documents personnel was essential to making collections publicly available.⁵ In 1961, George Caldwell asserted that a separate collection offered a "superior quality of bibliographic service"⁶ over integrating a collection and believed patrons would quickly learn the separate bibliographic navigation tools. Peter Hernon indicated that over the years, "the trend toward separate collections"⁷ allowed for better reference service and better bibliographic control of the collection. Presumably, a separate collection would be staffed by knowledgeable and experienced staff that could provide specialized reference service not received at a traditional service desk.⁸ In contrast, Frazer et al. noted that many small depositories "have always offered documents service from a central reference department."⁹

In 1976, the Government Printing Office (GPO) began producing Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules (AACR) cataloging records, distributing them through both OCLC and the Library of Congress Distribution Service¹⁰ making records readily available and easily affordable, opening up additional, broader and more readily obtainable access to government documents. By 1978, library administrators questioned the "cost-effectiveness and convenience of a separate documents collection,"¹¹ due to the associated costs and benefits of full cataloging and the sheer volume of government information

published. Barbara Kile also pointed out that a separate documents collection implicitly “implied that the documents were not cataloged to the same level as other materials” and OPAC records should “make the physical location of a document less important.”¹²

However, even though the integration of documents collections and services had been discussed, the topic lacked quantitative research. In 1977, Michael Waldo contended that the “lack of scientific evidence to substantiate the claims of the various approaches”¹³ left libraries’ decisions based on anecdotal evidence and opinion, a trend that continued into the 1990s.¹⁴

In 1983, Peter Graham advocated for the necessity of a separate collection with a separate knowledgeable staff, allowing agency-related materials to stay together. He dismisses the argument of placing documents with other materials on the same subject, as, according to him, the sheer size of a research library’s collection “has made [subject] browsing undependable.”¹⁵ Peter Hernon and Charles McClure reiterated that a separate collection allows for experienced, specialized library staff to service the collection, rather than a random person staffing the general reference desk.¹⁶ This was the prevailing view as demonstrated in a 1987 survey of ARL libraries by Carol Turner and Ann Latta which found that of 77 libraries surveyed, only 9.5 libraries (12.3 percent) had decentralized or integrated documents collections.¹⁷

The tide shifted in the early 1990s, as it became apparent that stand-alone documents collections received little use.¹⁸ Staffing and maintaining these lightly used collections with full time experts started to attract the attention of library administrators who were grappling with library budgets that had been shrinking for the last decade or more.¹⁹

From the mid-1980s forward, case studies began to emerge about integrating documents collections and services with other library departments and services,²⁰ with the majority of stand-alone documents departments merging with the general reference department as opposed to other library units.²¹ In addition to mergers with general reference services, government documents departments also merged with other smaller library units, such as business,²² maps,²³ health sciences,²⁴ and social sciences.²⁵ Little information was found concerning the effects of documents department mergers on technical services or long-term outcomes of these mergers.

Initial reasons to merge services included budget cuts, more staff serving the collection, and loading of GPO records into the OPAC, making documents easier to locate,²⁶ and lessening the need for a separate department. Other reasons cited included retirements and institutional reorganizations.²⁷ Hernon and McClure observed that “government publication

within separate collections became isolated from other library holdings and branded with a stigma.”²⁸ However, June Parker’s 1996 study indicated that reference questions were more successfully answered at a stand-alone government documents rather than a combined reference desk.²⁹ Indeed, this was a long-standing concern with documents/reference desk mergers.³⁰ A 1989 survey conducted by Philip Van De Voorde found that overall circulation of the documents collection went down as well as the overall quality of the reference service offered to patrons.³¹

It was noted that mergers would require users become more self-sufficient and increase the need for user education in government materials³² as well as continual staff training in documents resources;³³ still, the mergers continued, resulting in documents librarians being physically removed from the collections they served.³⁴

Presumed advantages included all staff now being competent in basic documents reference and additional coverage at the reference desk.³⁵ Government information becomes part of the overall collection decisions in the library as well as part of the standard reference tools.³⁶ Subject librarians could familiarize themselves with relevant government information for their areas, creating a more holistic resource view.³⁷ Mergers could also increase the number of users of the collection as well as extend the hours of operation.³⁸

Much planning and preparation was needed to disband a documents department and reassign its functions. Usually, depository functions and staff would be split between the technical services and reference department.³⁹ Several libraries⁴⁰ found moving “in-depth and individualized” documents reference assistance to a busy reference desk required “a significant commitment to training for librarians and other desk personnel.”⁴¹ Frazer et al. employed a team based approach to plan department training. Both reference and technical services departments would see increased workloads.⁴² As Thura Mack and Janette Prescod noted, “government information reference is no longer a specialty but the responsibility of every librarian.”⁴³ However, Amata noted a general reluctance of non-depository staff to tackle documents questions.⁴⁴

By 2000, documents/reference department mergers were becoming commonplace.⁴⁵ A 1997 study found 72 percent of small, private academic depositories serviced depository collections from a single reference desk.⁴⁶ The Government Printing Office’s 2007 *Biennial Survey* reported that 82 percent of depositories provided a merged reference/government documents desk.⁴⁷ In 2018, Laura Sare surveyed 280 depository libraries and found that 226 (81 percent) had a combined service desk. Only 18 libraries (7.9 percent) still staffed a separate documents service point.⁴⁸

By 2019, the merger of government documents with library reference services was virtually complete. Claudene Sproles and Angel Clemons wrote that 86.7 percent of government documents librarian job advertisements listed reference services as an essential duty and 84 percent of ads listed information literacy as a job responsibility.⁴⁹ Nicole Trujillo and Kathryn Tallman confirmed this observation. The majority of government documents librarians surveyed stated that general reference and instruction was a primary duty of their positions.⁵⁰

Case Study

In 1999, two paraprofessionals and one of the two librarians from the staff of four in the stand-alone government documents department left the University. Instead of refilling the positions within the department, the decision was made to merge the department with the much larger Reference Department, due to shifting organizational priorities, budget concerns, and a desire to streamline services. This restructure would save on the cost of staffing an entire department, allow the integration of the document collection into the general collection, and enhance services offered at the main reference desk. UofL's rationale of cost savings and collection integration mirrored the reasoning many libraries gave for integrating their stand-alone documents department.⁵¹ Some of the changes were quickly implemented. For example, the phone number was easy to roll over to the main reference desk. One of the paraprofessional staff moved her office down to the reference office suite, microforms were transferred to the adjoining Media Department, and the government documents reference collections were re-cataloged and integrated into the main reference collection.

However, other changes were much more difficult and time-consuming. Government documents periodicals were re-cataloged into the Library of Congress system and integrated into the larger print Library of Congress collection. A bibliographic control project consisting of purchasing Marcive bibliographic records and barcoding over 160,000 government documents occurred simultaneously with the move. The service desk move, the partial reclassification, and Marcive barcode project placed the collection in flux, further complicating reference service and bibliographic control from approximately 1999–2003.

The remaining government documents librarian provided three training sessions for the reference staff, but retired in early 2000 due to the stress of the merger. This left the reference department with the expertise of one paraprofessional staff member and no depository librarian. While there are no studies (that the authors could find) relating to how many staff members choose to leave as a result of mergers, this was certainly an unintended outcome of the transition. It certainly created a

loss of institutional knowledge about the collection and diminished the amount of expertise that users had access to for some amount of time.

Similar to Frazer et al.,⁵² the check-in and processing piece of the stand-alone department moved to the Technical Services unit, along with the vacant librarian and paraprofessional position. The reference and instruction piece remained with reference and the head of reference took on the depository librarian role. However, the department lacked a professional documents specialist.

The reference department agreed that a documents librarian was needed, not only for the in-depth reference expertise but also to manage the depository operations and be the official liaison with the GPO. After the new depository librarian was hired into the Reference Department in 2001, knowledge of government documents and common documents questions became more routine and widespread among the librarians and professional staff. In keeping with the literature, the government documents librarian had regular general reference desk shifts and provided information literacy instruction, both in government documents and also in several subject areas such as geography and history. Clearly the government documents librarian was integrated into the reference department, but did government documents become a part of regular reference work and training?

Well, yes and no. To some extent, just the presence of the government documents librarian at department meetings ensured the inclusion of government documents into collection development discussions and decisions. The documents librarian would also report occasionally on changes at the GPO or take-aways from the Federal Depository Library Conference or show a particular government resource, especially if the resource had been updated or changed in some way. In no way was this training regular or systematic though and most department members continued to refer questions involving government documents to the librarian or the professional staff member with expertise in this area. The overall quality of government documents reference services decreased, as also reflected in the literature.⁵³

Was there any way to measure the use of the merged collection? Unfortunately, reliable records from the pre-merger period do not survive. The merged department used Gimlet as the statistics recording software and a tag was used to designate when a reference question made use of a government document. This provided some small measure of usage, but it was dependent on staff members remembering to tag the question or even in some cases being aware that they were making use of a government resource to answer a question.

The incorporation of government documents into general information literacy instruction was somewhat more successful. The Government Documents Depository Librarian assisted with some one-shots that specifically requested government documents instruction, but in other cases, the head of the instruction program and the department head included examples using government documents in lower-level, standardized instruction, especially instruction involving lower-level communications and English classes where students typically conduct research on interdisciplinary topics. Close association with the Government Documents Depository Librarian ensured that government documents would be more readily considered for instruction.

Due to turnover in the technical services department and the need for someone with documents expertise in cataloging in 2005, the Government Documents Depository Librarian was reassigned to the Technical Services Department for 50 percent of her time. This dual posting lasted for 10 years until she was permanently transferred to technical services full time in 2015. The permanent transfer was due to the need for another professional in technical services rather than to address government documents. Even though she was still the Depository Librarian, little of her job involved working with government information. Because of the ever-decreasing number of tangible receipts of government documents, the paraprofessional position was reassigned to non-documents duties in the early 2010s. Over time, the professional government documents cataloger in technical services was assigned other duties and documents cataloging became only a small part of her position.

In 2017, the Depository Librarian became head of library collections, further reducing the time spent on documents librarianship. This left one legacy documents staff position in reference and no professional documents specialist. While there are still close ties with the Reference Department and the depository librarian, the change of focus for the former government documents librarian has understandably resulted in some reduced efforts to promote government documents. What was learned from this experience? There were many positives to come from the merger, but there were also some negatives.

Pros

- Better overall awareness of government resources by both patrons and library reference staff. Subject librarians are now expected to know the government information resources within their area.
- Patrons now don't necessarily need to know about government resources to be referred to them.

- Integrating the documents collection within the main library collection certainly increased usage as government information became easier to locate.
- Patrons are now referred to government documents more frequently than before, particularly in the electronic environment.
- Usage of the documents collection increased, in part because of being tied to general reference and in part because the reclass into LC classification.
- Cost savings from closing a service point.
- Incorporation of government resources fostered increased collaboration between subject librarians.
- The steady increase of online government information happened after the merger, so the librarians learned the emerging resources together.

Cons

- Patrons did not always get referred to a documents specialist when needed.
- Documents reference services were superior when the library contained a stand-alone documents department.
- Bibliographic control suffered when the collection became integrated.
- Due to the perception that everyone should be able to field documents questions, the Reference Department no longer possesses a professional documents specialist.
- Government documents are no longer anyone's primary reference responsibility, instead it is shared throughout the department.

In many ways, the experience of the University of Louisville during the period 1999–2019 is typical and mirrors what has happened with government documents departments in academic libraries all over the country. As the internet has become the go to reference resource and an easy means of accessing information of all types, including government documents, reference questions in general have decreased along with questions involving the finding or use of government documents. With fewer questions, a corresponding increase in the need for specific subject expertise has emerged. In many ways, this inevitable shift reflects the moves libraries have made to new areas of information expertise: copyright, scholarly communication, data management, visual literacy, and other new areas of librarianship. Government information plays in these emerging areas, through policy directives, legal rulings, agency mandates, and data access and curation. The amount of information that US federal, state, and local governments provide is still relevant and necessary for many people's information

needs. Perhaps, it becomes a functional type of librarianship, similar to data librarianship where ideally, one librarian can be the expert, but all librarians have some baseline level of knowledge.⁵⁴

Conclusion

From the literature and from the experience at the University of Louisville, several conclusions can be drawn regarding the benefits and drawbacks of integrating a government documents and reference department.

Lessons learned

1. If government documents are everyone's responsibility, they can become no one's responsibility.
2. Government documents still need an advocate if they are to be promoted and utilized to their full extent in a library.
3. A training system needs to be implemented to familiarize reference staff with government information. We lacked this and reference service suffered.
4. Basic government documents orientation and training cannot be a one-off experience but must be regularly integrated into professional development.
5. Integrating documents into instruction is both easier and more likely with merged departments where an advocate for them is present.
6. Overall documents reference quality decreased, while the usage of the government information has increased.
7. Emphasis on bibliographic control has lessened in favor of increased focus on reference services.

Even 20 years ago, according to the 2003 Biennial Survey of Depository Libraries, the majority of libraries had merged documents and reference services.⁵⁵ Taking a look back at this transition, government documents librarianship has changed from managing a stand-alone department focused on bibliographic control of a print collection to a more holistic approach that focuses on subject integration in an electronic era. The advent of an all-electronic FDLP means that the University of Louisville Libraries needs to continually adapt their collections and services to ensure continued access to electronic government information. This will need to be achieved through continual training, specialized knowledge, increased data management and consistent marketing of government resources. We need to continue our approach of the last 24 years, providing an integrated service to government information.

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Review

What Can U.S. Government Information Do for Me? Librarians Explain the Discovery and Use of Public Data, Documents, Maps and Images. Edited by Tom Diamond and Dominique Hallett. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2023. 299 pgs. \$75.00 (978-1-4766-8949-4).

The importance of government resources to information professionals cannot be overstated. *What Can U.S. Government Information Do for Me?* demonstrates the depth and breadth those resources can bring to researchers and how librarians can benefit from learning more about them. The editors are Tom Diamond, collections and materials selector librarian at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, and Dominique Hallett, government information and STEM librarian at Arkansas State University. They introduce us to the volume with a long-familiar rhetoric evangelized by information professionals across the country and within multiple professional domains: “U.S. government publications are an incredible resource waiting to be used and discovered by the public” (p. 2). The book aims to provide information about US government resources, how to use them, and provide examples for use in our respective libraries. This up-to-date tome provides information about agencies and departments, what their websites contain, and what each provides. The editors describe the work as “hands-on” and practical, serving the needs of library workers in the government information environment at academic, public, school, federal, and special libraries. Some of the highlights of this book include curricular development examples and practical resources for educators to use in the classroom.

The book is conveniently split into seven parts, making it easily accessible as reference material for different subject areas covered by multiple, varied, and often surprising government agencies, and therefore useful to myriad librarians across disciplines. It is not meant to be read in one, linear sitting. Rather, use it as needed by subject area to help guide your teaching, public displays, reference interactions, collection development, etc., and refer back to it as often as is necessary.

Part I. General

Part I. General begins with Claudene Sproles and Amy Laub’s “The United States Congressional Serial Set: A Rich Primary Resource of American History.” In it, the authors detail the rich history of the Serial Set and expertly inform readers of what it is, why it is, and what it isn’t, that is, what it doesn’t contain. It includes detailed access points for both online and print resources, listing specific Serial Set numbers as well as finding aids, freely available online resources, and commercial subscription options. We continue with Elisabeth Pearson Garner’s “Department of State and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services. The article goes in-depth detailing policy issues covered by the Department of State, such as “Climate and Environment,” “Countering Terrorism,” “Global Health” and “Human Trafficking,” giving good examples of the materials one might find there. Part I. proceeds with Ariana Baker and Allison Faix’s “Discovering Crime and Justice Data on Government Websites,” where they “offer some strategies for finding, navigating, and getting the most out of that data” (p. 30). Notably, this chapter focuses on multiple agencies and departments, and even

includes some useful non-governmental resources. The General section continues with Amanda McLeod’s chapter titled “What’s in a Policy? Government Information Resources to Help Inform Policy Analysis and Research.” McLeod articulates goals of policy research and analysis, while sharing tools and resources from multiple agencies along with practical examples of those tools in action and when readers might find them useful. Jennifer Castle rounds out Part I. with “Finding and Contextualizing Government Images.” This chapter can be considered, if not a comprehensive, at the very least, an intensive and incredibly well-researched list of agencies offering freely available images and their (mostly public domain) copyright statuses. In addition, Castle offers a section on Citing and Contextualizing, detailing the information needed to correctly cite images for academic integrity (p. 63).

Part II. Education

Part II. Education begins with Nicole Wood’s “A Guide to the U.S. Census for History Teachers.” Wood helps guide teachers through the census using questions focused from a historical lens, such as, “How are questions on race, ethnicity, and immigration informed by an ever-evolving understanding of what it means to be an American?” (p. 69). It includes a historical overview of the census and where different surveys exist, as well as tutorial guides for using and interpreting census data. This chapter is a thorough and detailed document that will help any educator (or student) trying to answer historical, social, and cultural questions about the United States using the census. In “Back to School: Education and Teaching Resources from the

U.S. Government,” Emily Rogers and Laurie Aycock cover government information from various agencies that librarians can recommend to educators, largely K-12 but may also include higher education, including quizzes, games, and even complex online learning modules. This chapter is divided by topic: civic engagement and literacy, science technology and math, health and medical, data and financial literacy, and history, arts and the humanities. Educators will find the resources listed in this section helpful for building lesson plans and continuing their own education for professional development. The Education section continues with “Financial Literacy 101: Combating Misinformation and Debt with Freely Available Government Resources” by Caterina M. Reed. It focuses on college students and recent graduates. The “essay will help librarians examine and consider government resources available relating to budget, money management, credit scores and history, student loans, filing taxes, and consumer protection” (p. 99). The essay is conveniently broken down by financial topic: budgeting and money management, credit scores and history, student loans, filing taxes, and consumer protection.

Part III. Genealogy

The Genealogy section begins with “Using Federal Government Documents for Genealogy Research” by Jennifer Crowder Daugherty and Andrew Grace. In it, the authors detail how to go beyond birth dates and places to find a family member’s movements or dealings with the government. The essay includes creative pathways to finding information, such as through the Freedman’s Bureau, immigration and naturalization records, war records, or BLM records, to name a few. Even the Serial Set contains hidden gems for genealogical research. In “Geography and Genealogy: Using Maps and

Aerial Imagery from Government Agencies for Genealogical Research,” Kelly Bilz writes, “Historic maps can bring neighborhoods to new light, spark the imagination about the day-to-day lives of our predecessors, and illustrate new connections” (p. 126). Bilz demonstrates this through various agency tools, such as Census Bureau maps or USGS tools, providing detailed information on exactly how to search for and access the data.

Part IV. Health and Social Programs

Part IV. begins with “Learning the Basics of Social Programs and Services Through Federal Government Sources,” by Angela L. Bonnell. Bonnell details key government sources librarians can share with individuals as well as professionals in social work, health care, and education.

Bonnell demonstrates the importance of the role libraries can play on the well-being of individuals and families in their communities (p. 144). Emily Alford continues Part IV. with “Public Resources for Public Health.” As the title suggests, this essay focuses on individual health needs and resources to help them make decisions for their well-being. Topics covered include health coverage, nutrition, substance abuse and mental health services, medicare and medicaid, benefits, and others. This chapter will be helpful for librarians assisting patrons with questions related to their healthcare needs. It also lists helpful professional development tools to keep abreast of developments in the public health sector of government. Closing out Part IV is Isabella Folmar and Blake Robinson’s “Finding and Using Federal Information Relevant to People with Disabilities.” The essay covers key resources from healthcare, employment, and education that may help librarians serving patrons with disabilities. Significant legislation is also discussed. This article helpfully

navigates various agency sites for concepts related to disabilities.

Part V. Military

“From Service Records to Special Collections: General and Specialized Military Resources” by Heather Seminelli and Lauren B. Dodd discusses military-related history and the excellent government resources available for the subject. The authors write, “Military data sources are useful for a variety of topics of interest for users such as genealogical information, military history, awards, historical sites, military leadership, veteran’s history projects, oral histories, and many other subjects” (p. 17–80). A detailed record of resources available, this article covers a vast array of resources available by type of research support, such as military education, service records, or obituaries. Michelle Shea continues Part V. with “Using Government Sources to Support Military Queries in Academic Libraries.” Shea’s essay addresses academic research needs for military sources, but also includes services for veteran and active-duty students, such as locating service-based scholarships or help finding information for filing VA paperwork for health needs. It focuses on publicly available resources for information needs in an academic context. Shea writes, “While librarians are not expected to have the same expertise as an education training center or recruiter, we can direct patrons to government and military sources that get people started on the right path,” which just feels like an apt quote for librarianship in general (p. 194).

Part VI. Native Americans and the Federal Government

Brandon R. Burnette starts off Part VI. with “Native American History from Government Documents and Maps.” It includes a link to Southeastern Oklahoma’s State University subject guides that

include many of the links listed in this resource. This essay provides extensive resources relating to the laws, land cession, population, culture, and history of Native peoples in the United States, and includes detailed descriptions on how to access them. Resources from both government and non-governmental sites are listed, as well as the content and resource types available. Burnette notes there are more websites with Native American materials that can be found on the Oklahoma State University's Native American Historical Resources subject guide. (p. 214) Connie Strittmatter continues Part VI. with "Researching Indian Treaties and Other Related Documents: An Annotated Bibliography." Strittmatter's article goes into further detail about the process of researching Indian treaties and provides a detailed history of treaties between the United States and various tribes, including dates and different parts of government involved. The article gives a fantastic historical overview of Indian treaties in the US, and also includes an annotated bibliography of primary resources for treaty research.

Part VII. Science

"Finding Current and Historical Weather Data" by Claudene Sproles and Angel Clemons begins the seventh, and final, section. This chapter discusses navigating the National Weather Service for data, including forecast data covering local, graphical, aviation, marine, sun/moon, climate, and space weather, among others (p. 234). It includes extensive information about natural disasters

and weather-related hazards, including a storm events database that can be used to research significant weather events. There is a breakdown of where to find information for different types of natural disasters. In "National Park Service: The Importance of Place," Connie Hamner Williams discusses the importance of the NPS as a source for scientific, cultural, and historical research. Some of the gems included are the ways National Parks have influenced our history as a nation, like how the West influenced voting rights for women. There is significant historical data available about the Parks via the NPS website, data related to social science and science, and lesson plans for teachers. Mark Love continues with "Government Information Resources from the U.S. Department of Energy." Love explores the DOE's policies related to clean and fossil energies. There are good ideas about who might benefit from different policies and sections of the website, like those wanting to build businesses for clean energy, for instance. There is a data section and educational resources for STEM research, which include lesson plans. Nathan A. Smith finishes out the Science section with "Science Images and Where to Find Them." This chapter is an invaluable resource providing a detailed resource list capturing public domain science images and how to find them. Using example research questions, Smith guides us through different agency websites to find corresponding images that help support or outright answer the queries.

Each chapter contains a reference list and some include additional resources.

There is an index on pages 285–99. It is worth noting that the language used in each section mirrors the federal language around that agency or area of government. For instance, the section "Native Americans and the Federal Government" often interchangeably uses Native American and Indian, as does the federal government.

There are areas that could be developed further. For instance, a future edition might include chapters explicitly devoted to race, class, gender, or sustainability and researching them within government documents. While some chapters addressed those topics within a larger context, each one might prove useful to explore further as a stand-alone concept or chapter.

There are many surprising and creative ways a single agency can be used to cover various reference questions peppered throughout the book. Of course, with a reference book as varied as this, it is important that you verify the websites exist in the same way as when this book was published. This will be a welcome addition to the bookshelves of any students and information professionals working with government information and should be required reference material for those pursuing librarianship as a career. This reviewer's only wish for this book is that an accompanying webpage or LibGuide were created for each chapter that includes links to the invaluable resources described here.—*Brianne N. Hagen* (brianne.hagen@humboldt.edu), Librarian, Cal Poly Humboldt University

GODORT Midwinter Committee Updates

Find below recaps provided by committee chairs of their committees' meetings at the 2024 GODORT Midwinter Meetings, held virtually the week of January 8.

Awards

The awards committee met to review numerous impressive nomination materials. A full panel of GODORT awardees were selected.

Conference

The Conference Committee meeting's primary focus was on selecting an appropriate venue for the 2024 GODORT Award Reception, considering multiple options. In an effort to minimize costs, the committee explored potential sponsorships to support the reception. Additionally, a thorough review of the Policies and Procedures Manual (PPM) was conducted to identify any sections requiring updates. The meeting encapsulated discussions ranging from venue selection strategies to financial considerations and procedural revisions within the PPM.

Development

At the meeting, the Development Committee finalized the data request for the creation of an aggregated demographic profile of GODORT membership. This is for use in the media kit/sponsorship solicitations that the committee will complete this year. The committee also worked on Preservation Grant information for potential donors.

Education

The GODORT Education Committee met virtually on Thursday, January 11, 2024, at noon CST. Committee members

provided working group updates about Sunshine Week, the GODORT Advocacy Plan, and the GODORT Voter and Elections Toolkit. Several state Voter and Election Lib Guides require updates. More information regarding states in need of editors will be posted on the GODORT Homepage of ALA Connect after February 1, 2024. The committee will provide further updates on their work at their next virtual meeting, scheduled for March 8, 2024, at noon CST.

Government Information for Children (GIC)

The Government Information for Children's Committee discussed the creation of a new History Day Guide and is currently seeking volunteers to assist with the project. This guide will be an expansive guide for History Day and will discuss archives, have a page for each state, and more. Volunteers do not need to be a member of GODORT to assist with the History Day Guide. In addition, the GIC is exploring ways to promote government information for children through participating in webinars or other presentations. We also continue to monitor and update our current guides.

Legislation

The Legislation Committee hosted Gavin Baker, Deputy Director of ALA's Public Policy and Government Relations Office, who gave a presentation about the work of that office, including Gavin's own involvement with issues related to government publications, the Federal Depository Library Program, ALA's Committee on Legislation (COL). Prior to this year, there was a Government Information Subcommittee within the COL. However, it sunsetted last year.

The current Chair of COL, Ed Garcia, created a liaison position between COL and GODORT. Lisa Pritchard will serve in this position through 2025. The Legislation Committee recommended to the Steering Committee that the FDLP Advocacy Plan for GODORT be updated to reflect the recent changes made to the program by the Government Publishing Office and offered to create draft language for consideration.

Program

Reported that two GODORT-supported program proposals for ALA 2024 Annual were not accepted by the ALA Juries, but that one of those proposals is expected to be supported as a GODORT Chairs Program per our PPM. Some good discussions took place on a number of questions: what kinds of program formats are preferred in light that some may have limitations in attending conferences, having more broad programs on government information resources that would appeal to more than just government information specific librarians.

Publications

The GODORT Publications Committee held its public midwinter meeting on January 8, 2024, during which updates were delivered and new projects for the upcoming year were discussed. Jennifer Castle, editor of *DttP: Documents to the People*, reported that the Winter issue was released, and the Spring issue is underway. The *DttP* editorial team also celebrated the recent publication of Occasional Paper #10: Presidential Task Force on Missing and Murdered American Indians and Alaska Natives Publications, 2020-2021 by Elizabeth Sanders. The editor of the Notable Documents

Panel, Emily Alford, submitted a report that numerous volunteers have offered to serve on the judging panel this year. The list of selected Notable Documents will likely be included in the print and digital June issues of *Library Journal*. Finally, the Publications Committee is completing the search for a new *DttP* editor, and the final selection will be announced in the Spring. Proposed new projects include: creating a published list of all previous Notable Documents, petitioning the Directory of Open Access Journals to include *DttP*, and the creation of a new monograph-length guide to citing government information.

Rare & Endangered

The major discussion item at the Rare and Endangered Government Publications Committee meeting focused on the need to easily identify item-level holdings data for historic government serials. In the current depository landscape—notably as GPO moves to a Digital-first depository program where the number of print titles and the number of copies of the print titles will decrease—it will be important to easily locate holdings data. The main action items for REGP's future meetings will be to (1) identify tools or sites (such as the GPO Preservation

Steward Partnership and ASERL Center of Excellence Collections pages) with item-level or holdings statements from libraries with extensive runs of print government serials titles, and (2) link these sources at the committee's At-Risk guide. The committee will also look for opportunities to align historic titles with the new GODORT Preservation Grant.

Social Media & Outreach

The GODORT Social Media & Outreach Committee was excited to launch its new Instagram account (@godort_ala) this past November—now featured as a widget on the homepage of the GODORT website thanks to the GODORT Technology Committee. During this committee's Midwinter meeting, attendees discussed the possibilities of leveraging Instagram (both posts and stories) to reach out to library professionals who might not already be familiar with GODORT, friends of GODORT, and those generally interested in the world of government information and data (and related news). Also discussed was how GODORT socials can be used as a channel to not only talk about GODORT-centric matters, but to also promote, advertise, and share stories about the variety of government information-related events,

projects, and initiatives happening at GODORT members' workplaces and respective communities. Lots of social media content suggestions were talked about including but not limited to: the Voting and Election Toolkit, state agency databases, resurfacing older *DttP* articles.

Federal Information Interest Group (FIIG)

The Federal Information Interest Group (FIIG) meeting included a presentation by Scott Matheson, the Superintendent of Documents and Cindy Etkin of the Government Publishing Office (GPO) in which they shared information on the future state of the federal depository library program, updates on the limited print distribution framework and national collection service area model, as well as general GPO and Library Services and Content Management (LSCM) updates.

State & Local

In August and December the interest group met along with the State Documents Collaborative Group. Recordings can be found at <https://godort.libguides.com/c.php?g=1035038&p=9498572>.

Mid-year meeting was a discussion of possible topics for 2024 meetings.