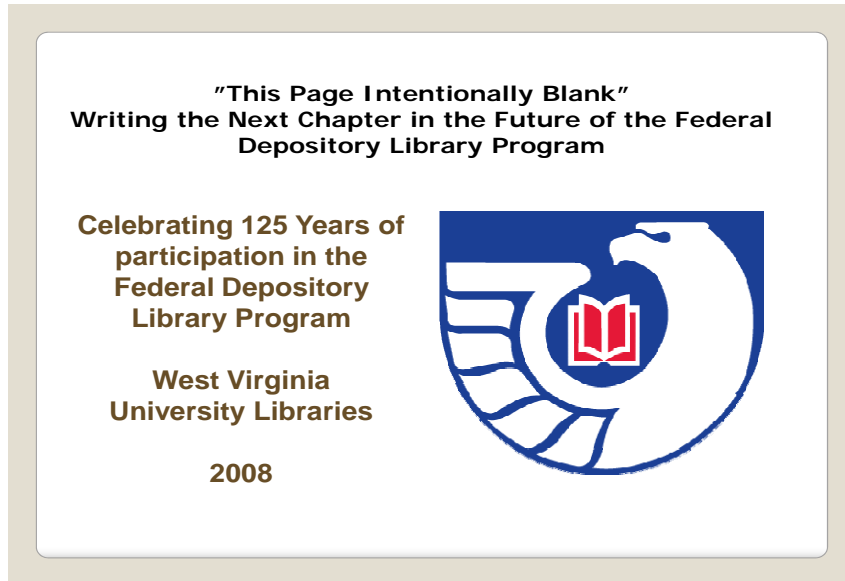


“This Page Intentionally Blank”

Writing the Next Chapter in the Future of the Federal Depository Library Program

Bill Sleemanⁱ

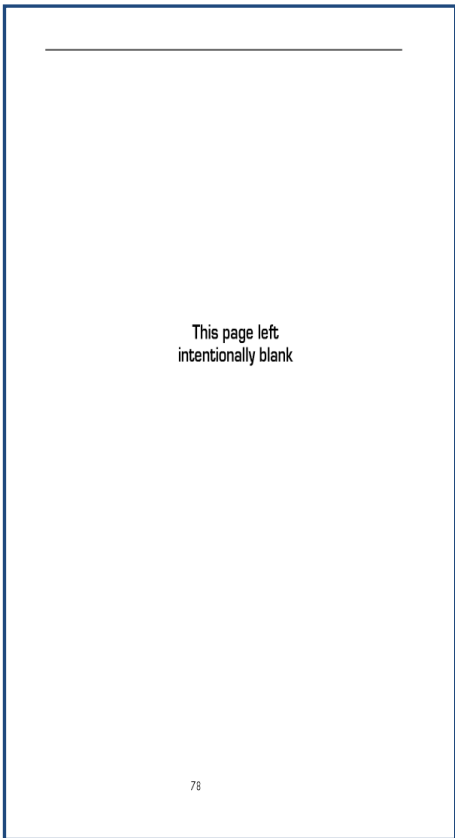


Congratulations

Good afternoon and congratulations to you on your 125 years of participation in the Federal Depository Library Program. I want to thank Dean O’Brien for the invitation to be with you today. It is indeed an honor to be here and on behalf of the American Library Association’s Government Documents Round Table and its nearly one thousand members I offer our congratulations and join with you in celebrating the important contribution that the West Virginia University Libraries and the Federal Depository Program makes to informing and educating the public.ⁱⁱ

Introduction

“This page intentionally blank.” Have you ever come across a page in a government document that says that? I have and I when I do I am simultaneously amused and challenged by it. Amused because – as a closet cynic – one of my first thoughts is that the creator of the document doesn’t think much of her audience after all, how many of us REALLY need to be told that we are looking at a blank page, never mind the obvious question of if it really is a blank page if it says on it that it is a blank page.



That aside these blank pages, intentional or otherwise, in government documents serve for me, an important purpose as they are break on my otherwise headlong rush through a document. The blank page challenges me to pause and take note of what I have just read. I believe that most documents librarians have a similar reaction to “this page blank” and we are forced to consider how what we have read will help us as we turn to the next portion of the document.

In many ways the FDLP and government information has also reached the blank page in our shared text. I believe that after more than a century we have closed the first chapter on the FDLP as we know it and now is the time for us to take our experience, our knowledge and our skills to begin writing the next chapter of access to government information.

I hope today to share with you why I think this is and what I – and many of our colleagues in the government information community – see as next steps for the future of the Federal Depository program that we all value.

Background/history of the FDLP –

The libraries at West Virginia University are to be congratulated for your years of participation and also for your foresight and commitment in becoming part of the program; the effort to ensure that all of our citizens have equal access to the information and resources produced by our government is not just a value that librarians share but it is, I believe, a fundamental responsibility for good government. A government that operates in the dark; that seeks to hide its information or mislead its citizens is not a *government at all but tyranny*.

The United States is unique in its commitment to public access to government information and the Government Printing Office and the Federal Depository Library program remain the central components of that system of access.

Although aspects of the program existed from early in our nation’s history the depository program as we know it really began in 1860 with the Public Printing Act signed by President Buchanan. The Government Printing Office got underway at a less than auspicious moment in our nation’s history though, given that just a few months after its creation, the nation was embroiled in the Civil War. The War, while it might have slowed down printing activities, did not sap the interest or desire for a centralized printing plant and distribution office for government publications - it really was viewed primarily at that time as a production focused task - not the information dissemination network we think of today. The years following the American Civil War saw a series of legislative efforts to not only expand the duties of the Government Printing Office but to pull more and more government entities into GPO’s sphere of production and distribution, until, with the Public Printing Act of 1895, GPO was official acknowledged as *the* printer and primary (although not sole) distributor of government produced information. This unfortunate exception that kept it from being the sole distributor continues to haunt the program in the form of what we have come to call ‘fugitive documents.’

1895 Legislation providing for public printing and distribution

CHAP. 23.—An Act Providing for the public printing and binding and the distribution of public documents. January 12, 1895.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That there shall be a Joint Committee on Printing, consisting of three members of the Senate and three members of the House of Representatives, who shall have the powers hereinafter stated.

Sec. 2. The Joint Committee on Printing shall have power to adopt such measures as may be deemed necessary to remedy any neglect or delay in the execution of the public printing; and the committee shall have power to order reprinted not exceeding three hundred copies of a public bill pending before either House of Congress, when the supply shall have become exhausted, and the interests of the public service demand immediate action.

Sec. 3. The Joint Committee on Printing shall fix upon standards of paper for the different descriptions of public printing and binding, and the Public Printer shall, under their direction, advertise in two newspapers, published in each of the cities of Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, Cincinnati, Saint Louis, Louisville, Omaha, Denver, San Francisco, and Chicago, for sealed proposals to furnish the Government with paper, as specified in the schedule to be furnished to applicants by the Public Printer, setting forth in detail the quality and quantities required for the public printing. And the Public Printer shall furnish samples of the standard of papers fixed upon to applicants therefor who shall desire to bid.

Sec. 4. The advertisements shall specify the minimum portion of each quality of paper required for either three months, six months, or

Public printing,
Joint Congressional
Committee.
R. S. sec. 3756, p. 741.

General powers.
R. S. sec. 3757, p. 742,
amended.

Reprint of bills.

Paper.

Advertising for bids.
R. S. sec. 3767, p. 742,
amended.

Standard samples.
R. S. sec. 3769, p. 743,
amended.

Quantity.
R. S. sec. 3768, p. 742,
amended.

In 1869 the United States Congress created the position of the Superintendent of Documents to coordinate the distribution of the documents created by agencies and by the Government Printing Office. This position was, in the 1895 Act, tasked with the additional duty to coordinate an index to the publications of the government – something that had never been done before. This was eventually to become the print monthly catalog and more recently morphed into the Internet based Catalog of Government Publications. ⁱⁱⁱ

In 1895 there were, according to GPO's website, 420 depository libraries. And each designated depository at that time was required to hold 1,000 books in addition to those issued by the Government. A depository also had to agree that the publications forwarded to them would be made available for the free use of the general public and must not be loaned outside of the institution or disposed of, "except as the Superintendent of Documents shall direct. A library could be removed from the list of depositories ... for failure to meet the requirements of the law."

Until 1922, all designated depository libraries received all publications, but that was changed in the language of an appropriations bill passed in 1923 [42 Stat. 436]. Even then, libraries complained about waste, lack of space and staff, and low use of materials. As an alternative, a Classified List of United States Government Publications was developed. Each library received two copies, annotated and returned one copy to GPO. This list was the predecessor of the item selection list we use today.

1962 Legislation revising laws related to depository libraries

Public Law 87-579
August 9, 1962
[H. R. 8141]

AN ACT
To revise the laws relating to depository libraries.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That this Act shall be known as the "Depository Library Act of 1962".

Depository Library Act of 1962.
"Government publication."

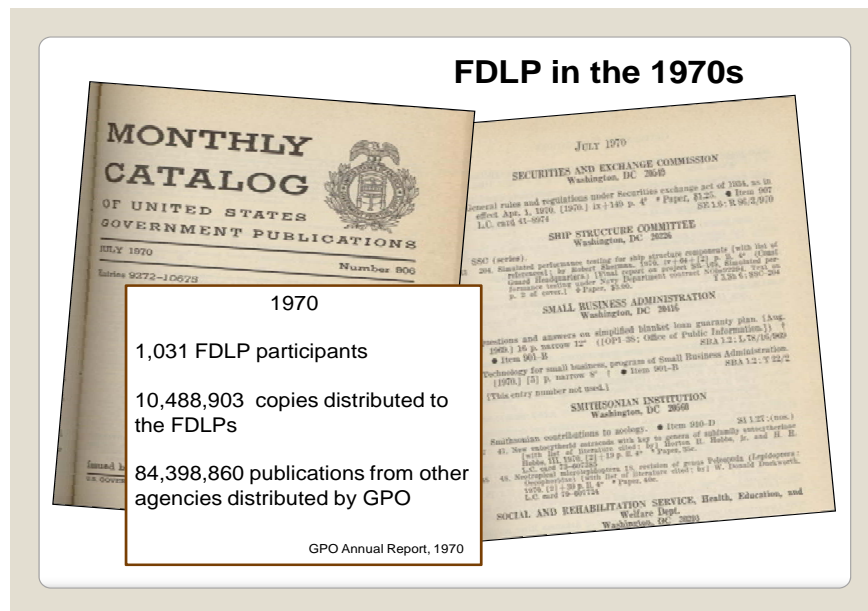
Availability of Government publications through Superintendent of Documents.

The term "Government publication" as used in this Act and the amendments made by it means informational matter which is published as an individual document at Government expense, or as required by law.

Government publications, except those determined by their issuing components to be required for official use only or those required for strictly administrative or operational purposes which have no public interest or educational value and publications classified for reasons of national security, shall be made available to depository libraries through the facilities of the Superintendent of Documents for public information. Each component of the Government shall furnish the Superintendent of Documents a list of publications, except those required for official use only or those required for strictly administrative or operational purposes which have no public interest or educational value and publications classified for reasons of national security, which it issued during the previous month that were obtained from sources other than the Government Printing Office.

Although tweaked here and there the 1895 legislation remained virtually unchanged until 1962 and the passage of the Depository Library Act. This act re-vamped the network of libraries – then at 594 institutions – allowing them more latitude in managing their collections and distribution of documents. Most importantly though the Act of 1962 paved the way for the expanded system of selective, regional and law library participants that we have today. The Act also provided for distribution to depositories of non- GPO publications

The 1970s saw the inclusion of microfiche from GPO although it wasn't until 1981 when the Superintendent of Documents announced that the "future of distribution" would be in microform. The reaction to this proposal in the library community was met with a reaction that may seem familiar to anyone working in depositories today; librarians embraced the new technology of microfiche but worried about access, preservation and the authenticity of the content. Ultimately, it was the library community and particularly the FDLP participants that helped to work out the parameters of how and what would be distributed in microfiche.



The other major development that came out of the 1970s that directly affected the Federal Depository program was the creation in 1972 of the Depository Library Council. The intent was to provide a venue for the library community to directly advise the Public Printer and the Superintendent of Documents on best practices for the program. Although dominated primarily by librarians for most of its tenure the Depository Library Council has seen, in recent years, its membership expanded to include other interested members of the information production and distribution community. While some librarians have complained about this shift I think it has been good for the program to have these other communities part of the conversation – but make no mistake, librarians continue to play a leading role in the DLC and in shaping GPO Policy.

Following the changes of the 1962 legislation federal government information faced a number of challenges but the major impact doubtlessly was the continued growth in production of government information. This came about primarily as a result of changing technologies in printing and production methods. This increase placed a burden on participants and on GPO. It lead initially, as I said, to the distribution of microforms but by the 1980s came to include floppy discs of various sizes, hard computer discs, Data Files (including the original Census Bureau Tiger Files) and eventually by the end of the decade CD-ROMs. We were blessed with a multitude of content and containers and many librarians began to wonder how we were going to deal with this ever growing mass of material.

FDLP in the 1980s

1986

1,394 FDLP participants.

25.5 million copies (51,000 individual titles) in paper and fiche distributed to FDLPs.

2.1 million copies of microfiche from DOE distributed to FDLPs.

1986 was the first year of the USGS Map distribution via the FDLP – 1.1 million individual sheet maps were distributed.

GPO Annual Report, 1986

REVIEW OF PRESIDENT'S FISCAL YEAR 1987 BUDGET PROPOSALS
FOR THE FOOD STAMP PROGRAM, THE TEMPORARY
EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, THE COMMODITY
SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD PROGRAM, AND RELATED NUTRITION
PROGRAMS

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON DOMESTIC MARKETING,
CONSUMER RELATIONS, AND NUTRITION
OF THE

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NINETY-NINTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

MARCH 7, 1986, DETROIT, MI
APRIL 16, 1986, WASHINGTON, DC

Serial No. 99-26

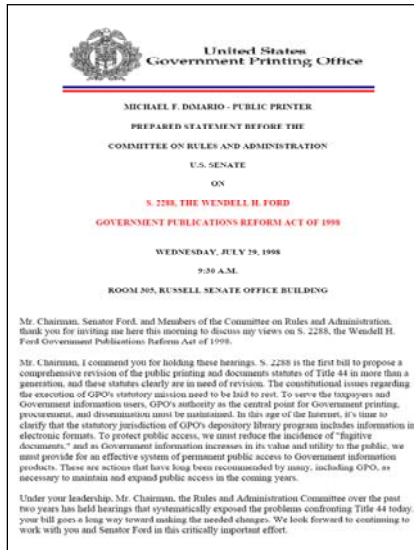


GPO was concerned too. As they were increasingly challenged to contend with the production side of this material and the challenges of getting it into the bins and then to the familiar brown boxes and on the way to us and they recognized that we were struggling just as much to manage in our libraries. So it was in 1981, operating on a suggestion by the Superintendent of Documents, that the Depository Library Council and members of the FDLP crafted the first “List of Superseded Documents” and paved the way for a more organized and focused weeding process in the participating libraries. While this didn’t immediately solve the challenge presented by the incoming material it allowed our institutions to begin opening up shelf space by providing some focused and agreed upon weeding guidelines.

Change to FDLP since the 1990s

While I am tempted to call the changes of the 1990s the greatest challenges that GPO and the FDLP have had to face the reality is that every decade has presented its own challenges. One factor, which is present now but that really has come to the fore in the last decade, is the rate of technological change and the affect of that change on user behavior. Foremost has to be the demand from Congress that the GPO migrate to a more electronic environment. The challenges presented by this demand still reverberate today and continue to drive our decision making.

FDLP in the 1990s



The Wendell H. Ford Government Publications Reform Act of 1998

In this age of the Internet, it's time to clarify that the statutory jurisdiction of GPO's depository library program includes information in electronic formats. To protect public access, we must reduce the incidence of "fugitive documents," and as Government information increases in its value and utility to the public, we must provide for an effective system of permanent public access to Government information products. These are actions that have long been recommended by many, including GPO, as necessary to maintain and expand public access in the coming years.

Michael DiMario

- Let's begin with the obvious – the Internet. Only a few people really understood the potential that the graphical based Internet held as it developed. In the FDLP we struggled with how to apply our skills with government information and libraries to make this new system usable for our communities. As the threat to access was real, Congress expected, demanded change and we had to work together...and we did develop solutions – GILS – the Government Information Locator Service – was probably one of the best of these and certainly one of the most successful for a brief period. Also, in 1993, as a direct result of the rapid growth in interest in the Internet, Congress passed the *Government Printing Office Electronic Information Access Enhancement Act* (P.L. 103-40). This legislation required GPO to create an electronic listing of federal documents and provide access to electronic versions of the Congressional Record and the Federal Register. Again, GPO worked closely with its supporters in the FDLP and the library associations to craft a response and from this was born GPO Access [<http://www.gpoaccess.gov>] which has gone on to be one of GPO's signature tools.
- 1995 saw more legislative action in support of electronic information when the Joint Committee on Printing mandated that GPO produce a "Study to Identify Measures Necessary for a Successful Transition to a More Electronic Depository Program." Federal Depository Librarians were involved in all aspects of the study and the final document. As librarians we should be proud of the role that we played in working with GPO through the FDLP to improve access to government information.
- Agency production and Fugitive documents – part of the challenges of the 1990s, particularly the mid to late '90s was agency production of information – this time it wasn't the volume (although that continued) but the distribution that caused us in the FDLP to begin pulling out our hair. Many agencies began to believe that if they just stuck a document onto their website they had met their mandate to make that material available; which while true at the most basic level did not really make it usable, reliable or dependable. At that time I was working at the U.S.

Department of the Interior Library and I recall that I spent a great deal of time running down print copies of publications that had gone directly onto the web as a result of some project or initiative and then disappeared after a usually all too brief window of public availability. This was done oftentimes with no paper copy ever being transmitted to the library or other agencies in DOI. By publishing directly to the Web the agencies, some consciously; some unknowingly, were also working against the purpose of GPO and creating hundreds of fugitive documents that were not available for distribution to the FDLP. In fact, the recent decision of OMB to not produce the federal budget in paper is a legacy of this type of thinking and suggests that we still have quite a chore ahead of us to educate government officials about the realities of information production and dissemination.

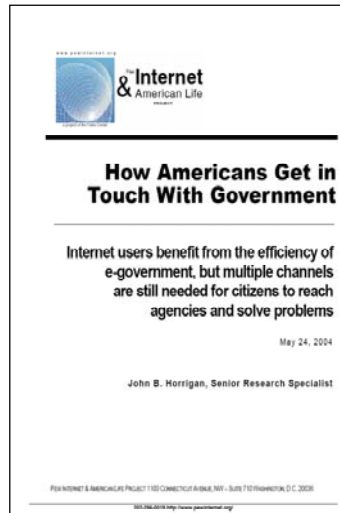
- Diminished funding because of Internet access. “It is all on the net so why do we need books?” Certainly in the 1990s we heard that a lot and we continue to hear it from otherwise intelligent people who really ought to know better. While it has been a long time since GPO has been funded at a level commensurate with the job it has been tasked to do – one factor (in a host of political and economic factors) was, and in some ways continues to be, what I call the “myth of the Internet and ubiquitous access” that continues to plague us. Other entities in the information community have outrun us on the public relations side and now, when we point out the challenges and shortcomings of relying solely on the Internet we are not seen as the leaders in information policy we have always been but rather as Luddites or sore losers.
- The effect of change on enabling legislation. Title 44 of the United States Code is the portion of the code under which the Government Printing Office operates, it provides the legislative power to create depository libraries and most importantly for the future – identifies exactly what is a public document. In the late 1990s (96-98) there were several different efforts to revise Title 44 to expand what could be considered a public document and to change the way that GPO and the FDLPs operated. Most notably the “Wendell H. Ford Government Publications Reform Act of 1998” (s.2288) which would have expanded the definition of government publication to include information distributed in electronic form and included far stronger enforcement efforts to ensure agency compliance with the production and distribution components. Unfortunately this bill died at the end of the Congressional term and wasn’t revised in the next session. Pieces of the bill were included in a subsequent effort in 1999 titled the *Next Generation Electronic Government Access Act of 1999* drafted by members of the various library associations but this “ideal” bill never found a sponsor and was never introduced. Certainly a challenge for the future is the sad state of Title 44. It needs to be revised and updated, particularly the aspects that define what is a government publication and the portions that dictate agency compliance.

Current challenges

Today as we head into the downhill side of the first decade of the 21st century there are new challenges facing us, facing our users and facing our institutions. Many of these come out of the changes of the previous decade, in some ways they are familiar challenges but yet come with new twists. These challenges are also an opportunity for the FDLP to grow and reach new audiences in new ways – in that way they are a positive not a negative but they hold the potential to radically change the way we operate and how we serve our clients.

E government – Future of the FDLP?

- Internet users are about three times as likely as nonusers to get in touch with government to transact business or to seek help with a problem.
- Three in 10 Internet users have E-mailed a government official to try to influence policy or change a politician's position on a law.
- Half of all Internet users and 59% of online users with broadband connections at home say that the Internet has helped their relationship with government.



Electronic government. One of the most exciting things to come out of the Internet age is the notion of e-government; of a direct participatory relationship with those entities that regulate, license, distribute and fund so much of our lives. The government information literature and the professional community are abuzz with the promise of e-government. Although the jury is still out, according to Donald Norris, author of Current Issues and Trends in E-Government Research^{iv}, on just how “transformative” e-government actually is at this juncture I think we can say with some degree of assuredness that government information librarians need to be ready to deal with this service expectation. In the recent OMB Watch Report Hiding in Plain Sight^v the authors wrote that “many Americans [relying on commercial search engines, by far the most popular method to access government information on the web] are failing to find authoritative government information sources, or worse, concluding that the information or services don’t exist.” The question for us in the FDLP then is how do we translate our knowledge and skills with these agencies and producers of information to make E-government services accessible and understandable? We have done it for years with print tools like the Green Book and local court forms, it isn’t new to us. We must step up and communicate to our communities not only that we are the experts on finding and using government information but that we are familiar with the electronic tools required to help our users to help themselves.

Proliferation of sources - As members of an academic community we are blessed, or perhaps cursed, with a wealth of resources literally at our fingertips – as quickly as we can type in a search we can often find what we need from Google, Lexis/CIS, Hein or whoever. But this Proliferation of sources and access points presents a challenge for the Federal Depository Library program – and libraries generally - it is a challenge that, if we get it wrong, could change the nature of information access in a fundamental way.

Just how reliable are these tools and collections of databases over the long term? Can we - or should we – depend on them for future access? Projects like Portico and LOCKSS/CLOCKSS help to some extent but not every publisher or vendor is on board with these plans and unfortunately for us in the FDLP neither are many federal agencies. GPO has looked at LOCKSS and while they rejected that as an option they are

to be commended for their efforts to explore that method. Unfortunately they have also failed at this point to articulate a long term data preservation plan or backup that takes advantage of the built in network of resources and libraries that they already work with. GPO and the library community must come together to create a mechanism for the deposit of authenticated digital copies of publications in a similar way that FDLP members can select tangible resources. As we have seen so many times in the past with print publications lots of copies, spread throughout a network of Federal Depository Libraries does indeed keep stuff safe...so why not authenticated digital copies for libraries willing to take on this task?

Another challenge has been the growth of digital collections. This challenge comes in two forms: commercial products which many libraries have used to replace or provide access to older print material but which, because of licensing restrictions, may not be available to the larger community of users that the FDLP serves. The second are the large scale document conversion projects similar to those from Google or the Open Access initiative. While I believe that these types of efforts are generally a good thing – especially their ability to throw a lot of money at the task - they also present unique challenges to be overcome – including the lack of control over the use and the association with commercial results that, because the researcher doesn't know how a search was conducted, raises concern about the validity of the results.

While these digitization projects have been much in the news I don't think these big box projects are the only way to go. Federal Depository Libraries, particularly selectives, can better serve their respective communities by applying the methodology that has long been employed – of focused collection building – in creating digital collections. These new digital projects and collections should mirror the needs of our community in the same way that our print collections have. The work of my own library to digitize the publications of the Civil Rights Commission is a good example of this. By focusing on one area that met the research needs and interests of our faculty and student community we have been able to create a unique resource that has become a valued tool beyond the law school. The FDLPs, by striving to craft smaller, focused, and more manageable digital projects ultimately will ensure that our digitization efforts will be successful and a real contribution to researchers.

Many of our users still demand paper documents and – despite some efforts to the contrary – not everything is on the Net. And even if it were most preservation librarians would tell you that digitization is not the same thing as preservation. Good stewardship requires that we continue to deal cost effectively and realistically with our legacy tangible collections. The collections we have built continue to have value and we must commit to identifying and maintaining the relevant portions of those collections.

Training and professional growth. The Future of the FDLP is as much about our staff as it is about GPO or our collections. As managers we have a duty to the staff we supervise to ensure that they have the skills and abilities necessary to contribute successfully to our shared future. As librarians we also have to take care of ourselves and make the effort to stay abreast of new technologies and new practices so that we can lead effectively.

GPO. While Ted Priebe is going to talk specifically about his agency and what they are up to, the Government Printing Office's plan for the future as expressed in the Strategic [Vision for the 21st Century](#)^{vi} is a solid document and one that we in the Federal Depository Library system should support.

Still our colleagues in GPO are in a difficult spot. This is not GPO's fault at all but it is a fact nonetheless so let me briefly touch on a couple of the challenges facing GPO as I see them.

First, and because in many ways everything hinges on it, is GPO's overall funding situation. In the face of two full years of continuing resolutions GPO has struggled mightily to keep their initiatives on track. The most recent omnibus budget bill passed shortly before the December congressional recess still fails to give GPO all that they need to do their work. As their partners, we in the FDLP should be doing everything we can to advocate for full funding for GPO. The Government Documents Roundtable of the American Library Association passed a resolution in support of just that at Midwinter in Philadelphia last month and I encourage each of you to visit the ALA website, download that resolution and send it on to your representatives in Congress with an explanation of why full funding for GPO is so important.

As I said GPO has struggled to move ahead in the face of this funding situation and there is much to be – as political pundits like to say – “cautiously optimistic” about. Certainly the FDSys project which is designed to support the electronic and print production of federal agencies is a step in the right direction. Unfortunately that old problem of Title 44 holds us back as it still lacks the language we need to require agencies to participate.

GPO's harvesting project that looked at the EPA site and attempted to identify and capture “in scope” publications is another exciting project but it too is affected by the funding situation as GPO lacks the staff support to create the needed indexing and cataloging points to access these resources. The government information community has tried to step in here and use new online collaboration tools to try and address this. One example is the project underway by the librarians at Free Government Information who have created an EPA – social tagging project using documents from the EPA harvesting project.



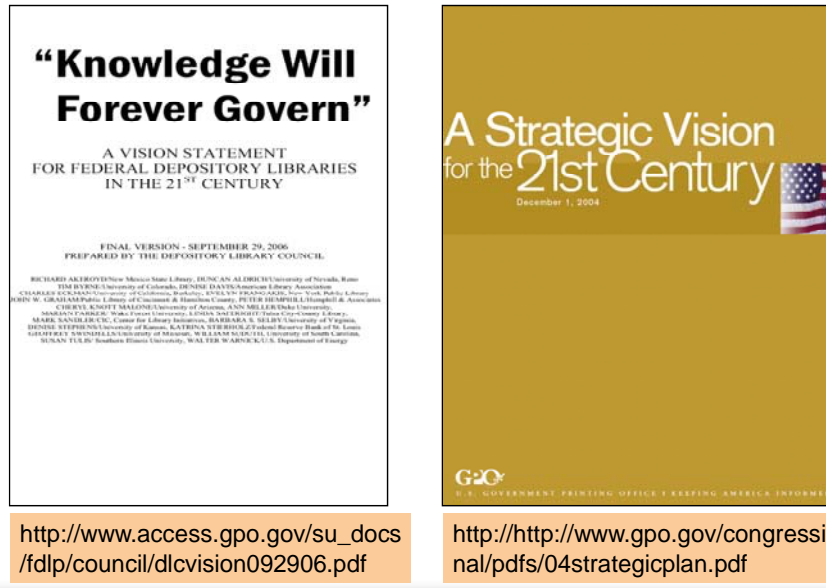
GPO is also to be commended for understanding the need to consider possible new structures, and new partners for the FDLP. The ever growing community of GPO partners is one approach. I think the concept of the shared regional, an idea that is being tried out right now in Kansas and Nebraska, is another exciting way to look at the changing nature of institutional support for the FDLP, particularly in the academic community.

So where does that leave us? What must we consider as we talk about the future of Federal Depository Library Program?

First – let me begin by saying that there is a strong future for the Federal Depository Library Program if we want it to have one. Much of it depends upon us – on our ability to work collaboratively with our colleagues and those outside of the library community who share our values; to make the FDLP important to our users and to make government information in the future reliable and retrievable. The recently released 2007 environmental scan from ACRL identifies the “demand for free, public access to data collected, and research completed as part of publicly funded research programs will continue to grow” as the ninth item in their list of top ten assumptions for the future of academic libraries and librarians.^{vii} Our user communities – students, faculty, staff, independent researchers and the general public community we serve require this content.

The specifics of what the future of the FDLP might be are best detailed in the document– Knowledge Will Forever Govern – a Vision Statement for Federal Depository Libraries in the 21st Century.^{viii} In that vision statement then Depository Library Council Chair Barbie Selby spelled out some of the issues that need to be dealt with to guarantee a strong future for the FDLP – some of these were: Developing networks of government information specialists – perhaps by working with other partners like the Association of Research Libraries or the Association of Government Records Managers; providing access to information in appropriate formats; ensuring continued access to digital government information and building collaboration between institutions both within and outside of the FDLP.

Recent Vision Documents



What are the key steps to achieving this vision for a successful FDLP program into the future? I offer you six steps that I believe we need to accomplish before the next decade ends in order to be ready for the future.

Key Next Steps –

1. I think that we must collectively determine how best to maintain our tangible collections. This may mean looking at different methods for dealing with them than we have in the past; perhaps shared housing and off-site storage for little used materials. We have to stop talking about how we will deal with this material and actually do it. However we respond we must recognize that the future of our program is electronic and that while the tangible pieces of our collections represent the public history of our nation and we owe that material responsible stewardship that doesn't mean that we must keep everything in our main library building.
2. We must move beyond a focus on the containers. The future of government information departments will be about E government services. Having worked in depository libraries almost my entire career I know for a fact that service has always been a point of pride for government documents librarians. But a future built around E government service will demand more of us. It will of necessity extend to how we use content, how we create content, and how we help our clientele interact with that content. To be successful in the future we must design our service points and our institutional visions – at least for the FDLP – around service and support for information in electronic form and not around the containers.
3. In designing these new services I believe that we have a responsibility to ensure that our solutions embrace not the latest technology but the best technology for the project. The future

(and to some extent the current) expectations of our users will be for electronic resources and not just static files, but dynamic resources that they can capture and manipulate as they see fit using either tools we provide or that they bring to their particular task. Libraries have always been about creating tools to access information. We need to regain that public image, to get it back from the advertising firms that masquerade as information providers.

At the same time we should recognize that not every user will be on the cutting edge. As the recent Pew Report – Information Searches that Solve Problems: How People use the Internet, Libraries and Government Agencies when They Need help - illustrated many Internet users remain 'low end' with old machines, old software and dial up access and our future service models must support those users so that they can continue to be a part of the conversation.^{ix}

4. We need to recognize that it will not be just our clients who may not be up on the latest technology but also our colleagues. As we plan for future services we must make sure that our own co-workers receive the training they need to stay current and to provide the value added service that your library, my library...all FDLP libraries need to be successful.
5. We have an obligation as professionals to support and participate in our professional associations. GODORT, the organization that I represent, is planning for its own future through a strategic planning effort designed to bring our organization in line with the larger goals that ALA has set for itself but other groups – such as SLA and AALL - are also working to respond to the changes in tools and technology. If we are to remain relevant in the coming future of government information, we must strive to ensure that our professional organizations are able to best represent and advocate for our interests and we can only do that by being active participants.
6. Finally, I would not be representing GODORT or my own personal beliefs if I did not conclude my list by re-affirming that the participants in the FDLP, like the libraries at West Virginia University, must continue to not only support but to defend the concept of free, permanent and un-encumbered (that is NO embedded digital rights management software or controls) public access to tax payer paid for research and government information.

Conclusion

This is an exciting time to be in libraries and to be a government information librarian. We have an opportunity right now to shape the future of the program, to work with our colleagues at GPO and in our professional associations to create a new vision for access to government information – Now is the time to turn that 'intentionally blank page' and begin to write the next chapter of the Federal Depository Library Program.

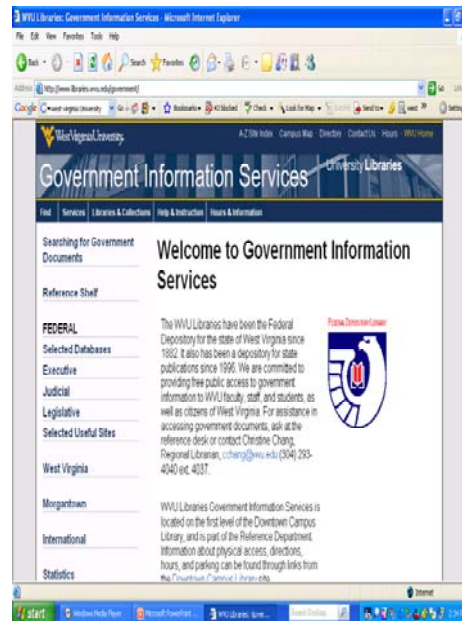
Let me conclude today then by offering again my sincere congratulations to West Virginia University Libraries as you celebrate your 125th Anniversary as a participant in the Federal Depository Library Program. I hope that the program and your institution's commitment to access to government information will be something that future librarians and researchers will celebrate again in 2133.

Thank you for your time and your attention.

...Depository libraries are essential to my effective teaching. A primary goal of teaching is to impart knowledge concerning a particular subject matter, but just as important is teaching a critical set of skills: writing, research, and critical thinking. By assigning documentary research I can train students in good research skills....

Jeff Worsham,
Assistant Professor
Dept. of Political Science
West Virginia University

From: Fulfilling Madison's Vision.
GPO, 1996.



ⁱ Bill Sleeman. Assistant Director for Technical Services, Thurgood Marshall Law Library, The University of Maryland School of Law and Chair, the American Library Association's Government Documents Roundtable, 2007-2008.

ⁱⁱ NOTE: FDLP = Federal Depository Library Program. GPO = Government Printing Office but particularly that smaller portion of the agency that deals directly with distribution of public documents to libraries and citizens.

ⁱⁱⁱ Catalog of U.S. Government Publications. <http://catalog.gpo.gov/F>

^{iv} Current issues and trends in e-government research / Donald F. Norris. Hershey, PA : Cybertech Pub., c2007.

^v Hiding in plain sight: why government information cannot be found through commercial search engines / OMB Watch, Center for Democracy and Technology. 2008. <http://www.ombwatch.org/info/searchability.pdf>

^{vi} A Strategic vision for the 21st Century / United States Government Printing Office. Washington, D.C.: GPO, 2004. <http://www.gpo.gov/congressional/pdfs/04strategicplan.pdf>

^{vii} ACRL environmental scan 2007 / Association of College and Research Libraries. Chicago, IL: ACRL, 2007. http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlpubs/whitepapers/Environmental_Scan_2.pdf

^{viii} "Knowledge will forever govern:" a vision statement for Federal Depository Libraries in the 21st Century / Barbie Selby; Depository Library Council. [Washington, D.C.: GPO, 2006]. http://www.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/council/dlcvision092906.pdf

^{ix} Information searches that solve problems: how people use the Internet, libraries, and government agencies when they need help / Pew Internet and American Life Project.; Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois-Urbana-Champaign. 2007. http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/Pew_UI_LibrariesReport.pdf

