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Caution or Censorship?

Terrorism's impact on electronic government information

Op-Ed by Karen Russ

September 11th was a tragic day for all. The feelings of insecurity created by the terrorists' ability to infiltrate four commercial flights struck people worldwide. In an instant, everyone's life changed, even as our leaders asked people to carry on with their normal lives and not let the terrorists win. Unfortunately, not even the government could heed its own advice. Within hours of the attacks, government agencies were pulling hundreds of databases and thousands of files from their web sites in an attempt to prevent information from falling into the wrong hands. Which of these files will be restored and when remains a major concern to users of electronic government information.

Information quickly disappeared from obvious sites like the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, NASA, and the Departments of Energy, Transportation, and Health. Within days, other agencies were pulling large numbers of files that contained any information on the location of chemical plants, weapons sites, mines, or airports, or anything else that might provide a potential attacker with useful information. Almost overnight, the process expanded from caution to near chaos. Calls went out asking for the Census web site to be taken down because terrorists could find information on the largest population centers and corresponding maps. Once it was known that most of the suspected hijackers had Social Security numbers, the cry went out to remove the Social Security Death Index from the Administration's site. It was feared that identity theft was being assisted by providing the Social Security numbers of the deceased. While the process has slowed of

late, almost daily, reports come out stating that another agency has pulled a favorite research database.

As you can imagine, the cries of censorship rang out as loudly and quickly as did those for caution. While each researcher will have their own feelings on the issue, the depository library community remains committed to providing access to government information. The over 1300 libraries nationwide are working to convince our leaders that public access to government information cannot be brushed aside out of paranoia. Because Congress has pushed the Government Printing Office to rely on online versions of reports rather than produce them in paper or fiche, many of the pulled documents have no tangible back-ups in the depository libraries. Until this issue is resolved through new screening procedures or a return to paper production, researchers are strongly encouraged to print or download files from any government agency site to be sure they have a copy for future reference. This is clearly a time where "Here today, gone tomorrow" is a very good possibility. Anyone who is interested in knowing what has been removed or would like to report the removal of a database or file is encouraged to check the Office of Management and Budget web site at www.ombwatch.org/ and select *List of Government Info Removed since Sept. 11*.

To date, the Ottenheimer Library has not been asked to remove any materials from the collection and the URL links in our catalog are being checked regularly to be sure we are not providing bad information.

New Documents Available for Circulation

Black Family Research Records of Post-Civil War Federal Agencies at the National Archives

(US Doc AE 1.124: 108)

This guide, summarizes the NARA holdings of the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, the Freedman's Savings and Trust Company, and the Commissioners of Claims. Descriptions are provided of the types of information these files hold for African-American historians trying to "bridge the gap" between slavery and freedom.

Electronic Crime Scene Investigation A Guide for First Responders

(US Doc J 28.8/3: EL 1)

Electronic technology is a large part of modern life. As a result, they are part of a criminal's life as well. This manual, designed for law enforcement, outlines the necessary steps for those first on the scene of a crime involving electronic equipment. It touches on all aspects of investigation from identification to seizure to analysis.

Family Involvement in Children's Education: Successful Local Approaches

(US Doc ED 1.302: F 21/3/2001)

Drawing on 30 years of research and numerous existing programs, this book provides guidelines for educators, parents, and policy makers developing school-family partnerships. It addresses common fears and roadblocks and the communication techniques to get around them. Summaries of 20 successful programs are provided with basic demographic data for the schools involved.

The New Structure of Policing

(US Doc J 28.24/3: P 76/2)

Based on the conclusions that policing is undergoing a historic restructuring, the report describes the forms, reasons for it, and issues raised by the restructuring. The study did not undertake original research, but combined information from other sources, primarily in democratic nations, to explore the topics that will need further study.

Policing on American Indian Reservations

(US Doc J 28.24/3: IN 2)

This study, for the National Institute of Justice, looks into current means of policing reservations, the challenges faced by the officers, and the possibility of new strategies, like community policing. Included in the analysis is the need for policing means to blend agreeably with tribal beliefs.

Privacy in the Information Age: A Guide for Sharing Crime Maps and Spatial Data

(US Doc J 28.8: M 32)

Aimed at law enforcement agencies nationwide creating and using crime maps, the guidelines address the techniques available for protecting privacy and data confidentiality. The growing access to information on the Internet is creating an urgent need to address the privacy rights of victims, while providing citizens with data on crime in their communities.

Calendar of Events

Final Exams

12 - 19 December

Hep Cat Cafe

12, 13, 17, 18 Dec

5:00 pm - midnight

Outer Lobby

Ottenheimer Library

Semester Break

Library Closed

22 December -- 7 January

Classes Resume

14 January

Library Celebrates November as Literacy Month

Most days, weeks, and months designated for national library-related celebrations claim school and public library users as their primary audience. This year, Ottenheimer staff decided to designate November as Literacy Month and created their own events for the UALR campus.

1 -- 20 November, a "Vote for Your Favorite Children's Book" contest was held in the Library lobby. [See sidebar for results.] Most college students have little personal reading time, but almost everyone recalls a favorite book from childhood.

On 12 November, Linda Dorn and Deborah Williams from the College of Education's Reading Recovery Program and Little Rock School District board member Tony Rose presented a panel discussion on current programs to improve literacy rates in the early grades.

15 November was devoted to Storytime @ Your Library. Ottenheimer Library provided stories and refreshments for 30 fourth and fifth graders from Campus and Community Partnership's Neighborhood Homework Center. Patsy Rains read Rudyard Kipling's "How the Camel Got His Hump;" Tony Rose read from *Jack Tales*, a collection of folk tales from South Carolina, and Peter Stuckey read *If I Ran the Zoo* by Dr. Seuss. In addition to a fun visit to the Library, each child got to choose a book, generously donated by Scholastic Book Fairs, to take home.

Arkansas author Grif Stockley was featured during the "Authors @ Your Library" program on 20 November. He read short passages from his two latest books and spoke about the racial issues which sparked both *Blood in Their Eyes: the Elaine race massacres of 1919* and *Salted by Fire*, a "lawyer novel" about two UALR history professors.

All four events were well received by their audiences. Ottenheimer Library plans to annually celebrate November as Literacy Month. To suggest programs you think will interest the campus community, e-mail Linda Stipsky (lbstipsky@aulr.edu) or Rob Cash (racash@ualr.edu).

Results of the "Favorite Children's Book" Poll

From a total of 40 votes cast by Library users, the clear winner of the Ottenheimer Library "Favorite Children's Book" poll was the *Where the Wild Things Are*, by Maurice Sendak, with 18% of the vote. Sendak's story of the wild thing, Max, was the winner of the 1964 Caldecott Award for Outstanding Illustrated Children's Book. Perennial favorite, Dr. Seuss, garnered 15% of the Ottenheimer vote, divided among four titles (*Oh, the Places You'll Go*, *The Lorax*, *Green Eggs and Ham*, and *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*). Other works receiving multiple votes were J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series, C.S. Lewis's *Chronicles of Narnia*, and *The Best Christmas Pageant Ever* by Barbara Robinson.

Ottenheimer News

Tony Rose
Editor

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Contributors

New Reference Books

African American Frontiers: Slave Narratives and Oral Histories
REF E 444 .G68 2000

The lives of these subjects are told in their own words. Among famous slaves included are William Wells Brown, Frederick Douglass, and Harriet Tubman. Subjects of oral histories include Madge Copeland, beauty shop operator; LaVerne Davis, licensed practical nurse; Herb Jeffries, actor; Gwendolyn Knight, artist; Bruce Lee, biologist; Tony Lott, ranch cowboy; Charles Simms, attorney; Jesse Thomas, blues musician; Marvin Williams, baseball player; Barbara Wood, teacher.

Building Design and Construction Handbook

REF TH 151 .B825 2001

Reference works are not always compendia of curious lore. They are often essential to doing the world's work. Topics examined in this title include building materials; structural theory; soil mechanics; structural steel construction; cold-formed steel construction; concrete construction; wood construction; wall, floor, and ceiling systems; roof systems; heating, ventilation, and air conditioning; plumbing; electrical systems; vertical circulation; construction project management.

Business Plans Handbook

REF HD 62.7 .B865 2000

This is a compilation of actual business plans developed by small businesses throughout North America. Among types of businesses included are the following: accounting service, auto sales company, bowling alley, coffee bean plant/exporter, desktop publishing company, event planning company, financial services company, general contracting company, hotel

resort, medical billing company, mortgage company, nightclub, nursery, restaurant, roller rink, special needs clothing store, specialty car wash, wireless internet service.

Collector's Encyclopedia of Niloak

REF NK 4210 .N537 G54 2001

This title provides evidence that there is some truth in the old cliché that one person's junk is another's treasure. This encyclopedia surveys the entire product line of a famous Arkansas pottery manufacturer. Vases, plates, and other pieces are illustrated in full color along with their estimated value on the current market. A lengthy introduction provides a history of Benton's Niloak Pottery firm.

Encyclopedia of the U.S. Census

REF HA 37 .U55 C66 2000

This encyclopedia examines the U.S. Census during all periods of the country's history. Lengthy articles by experts address the following topics among others: African-origin population, agricultural censuses, census tracts, dissemination of data, genealogy, immigration, metropolitan areas, occupation and education, state data centers, three-fifths compromise. Appendices include reproductions of the long and short forms of the 2000 U.S. Census.

Historical Dictionary of the 1960s

REF E 841 .H58 1999

Typical entries include Affirmative Action, American Indian Movement, Bay of Pigs Invasion, Black Panthers, Club of Rome, Counterculture, the Grateful Dead, Immigration and Nationality Act of 1968, Job Corps, Ken Kesey, Laser, Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, New Left, Roy Orbison, Sylvia Plath, Space Race, Vietnam War, Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Apologies and Corrections

The contributions to this newsletter by Ottenheimer Library Government Documents Librarian Karen Russ have gone unnoted in two previous issues. The editor apologizes most humbly for this omission.

The previous newsletter also erroneously described the forthcoming home of the Institute of Government. The IOG will be moving to the 6th floor of Ross Hall, not the new Reynolds Building.

Conference Presentations

In mid-October, various members of the Ottenheimer Library faculty and staff gave presentations at the Arkansas Library Association Annual Conference in Little Rock.

Karen Russ, documents librarian, and Frances Hager, of Arkansas Tech University, demonstrated the various search methods of *the Lexis-Nexis Government Periodicals Universe*. The presentation included a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of the software and the coverage of the database compared to other popular periodical products purchased in Arkansas.

Kathy Sanders, director, and Terri Thevenet, administrative secretary, presented a program on a controversial issue in library ethics. In the skit, entitled "The Right to Write," the circulation department head is not happy with the new support software and chose to write a letter to the director, copying the staff and local newspaper. As a result, she is reprimanded by the library director. A discussion of each person's view and the appropriateness of the actions followed.

Carol Macheak, reference librarian, was a member of the panel discussing Internet use policies in academic libraries statewide. The program, "Did You See What that Student had up on that Computer Screen?" allowed the panel and audience to discuss their libraries' policies and why each library does or does not allow certain activities on Internet-accessible computers.

On October 16th, Karen Russ spoke at the Federal Depository Library Conference in Washington, DC. The program, "Organizing or Re-juvenating Local Documents Interest Groups" was based on her experiences reinvigorating the Mid Arkansas Documents Consortium. Included in the presentation were tips for getting a group together, and summaries of projects and programs the consortium has undertaken in the past two years.