

## COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT FOR A SELECTIVE DEPOSITORY LIBRARY

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Harriet Cohen, Manager  
Newspaper & Periodical Division  
Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library  
Indianapolis, IN

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The U. S. Government Printing Office's depository library program distributes documents to approximately 1400 libraries<sup>1</sup>. Of these, 53 are regional depositories leaving the rest to select the documents they wish to receive. These remarks do not apply to all depository libraries. This is not a "theory" or "philosophy", nor is it a comprehensive discussion of collection development. This article tries to provide practical advice for many selective depositories on ways to identify useful government publications. Although depositories can only add publications once a year, identifying what SuDoc numbers might contain useful publications is an ongoing endeavor.

Before deciding what publications to select, a depository library

must know who its primary users are and how the depository collection blends into the general collection of the institution. Besides defining its primary public the depository library should also consider its relationship to other selective depositories in its state. Also, how do the selectives relate to the regional depository collection. In Indiana, the regional depository collection is held by the Indiana State Library.

Besides collecting materials for its primary users, a depository collection should meet the needs of the "wider community". The "Guidelines for the Depository Library System" state that the purpose of depository libraries is to make U. S. Government publications easily accessible to the general public. Each depository should select materials

responsive to the needs of the users in the Congressional district it serves. Neighboring depository libraries should coordinate selections to meet the information needs of the local area<sup>2</sup>.

Citizens of a municipality, township, or county pay taxes to support a public library. If a public library is a depository for federal documents, what is its obligation to serve citizens outside its taxing district? Does the public library have the obligation to collect scholarly/technical documents when it has few scholarly materials in its general collection? The academic library collection supports the curriculum of that institution. If the academic library is a depository, what is its obligation to serve the wider community? Does the academic library have an obligation to collect documents which are not needed to support the institution's curriculum?

The Indiana State Library yearly distributes a directory of Indiana depository libraries. Three categories for size of collection are given. Of the 35 selective libraries in Indiana six libraries collect extensively (nearly all documents available from the GPO), ten libraries collect in moderation (30% or more

documents), and eighteen libraries collect in a limited way (25% or less of the documents available from the GPO)<sup>3</sup>. One half of Indiana depositories select less than 25% of all available documents. The rest of this article points out specific sources to use in developing a good 25% collection.

The Government Printing Office provides a variety of sources to help all document libraries in collection development. The List of Classes of United States Government Publications Available for Selection by Depository Libraries<sup>4</sup> should be the starting point for all collection development. List of Classes provides the item numbers and Sudoc numbers to aid in identification of sources. Although the Superintendent of Document Classification System pulls together materials published by agency, this approach does not always allow for the organization by subject. What if a library is trying to collect materials in the field of aging or gerontology? Health and Human Services Department contains the Aging Administration (HE 23.3001), National Institute on Aging (HE 20.3851), and the National Clearinghouse on Aging (HE 23.3102). Congress has the Select

Committee on Aging (Y4.Ag4/2). There might also be information on nutritional needs of the elderly in Agriculture Department publications, housing for the elderly in publications from the Housing and Urban Development Department, or the impact of crime on the elderly in publications from the Justice Department. The List of Classes, Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications<sup>5</sup>, and the microfiche GPO Sales Publications Reference File (PRF)<sup>6</sup> all greatly aid in identification of specific publications. Be sure to also use:

Consumer Information Catalog. Quarterly brochure lists free and inexpensive publication. GS 11.9.

GPO. Subject Bibliographies. 200 plus bibliographies on topics from Congress to birds. Most bibliographies updated yearly. Brief annotations. GP 3.22/2.

New Books; Publications for Sale by the Government Printing Office. Monthly publication lists titles in broad subject categories. Not annotated. GP 3.17/6.

U. S. Government Books. Published quarterly. Lists many popular government publications

organized into broad subject categories. Brief annotations. GP 3.17/5.

Bibliographies published by individual government agencies can be checked for identification of possible titles. For example:

Census Catalog and Guide. Washington: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1985-. C 3.163/3:

Bibliographies and List of Publications. Washington: Smithsonian Institution. SI 1.17/2:

Publication Catalog. Washington: U.S. Social Security Administration. HE 3.38/3:

General library periodicals can be used for selection of government publications. Many periodicals have regular columns that highlight publications from government agencies. American Libraries, Booklist, Library Journal, RO, and Wilson Library Journal should all be scanned. Many library periodicals also contain feature articles discussing government publications. A non-comprehensive search turned up these articles which annotated documents on a diversity of subjects:

Hoover, Clara. "Style Manuals: a Bibliography." Booklist, (April 1, 1991): 1586-1588.

Kirby, Diana Gonzalez. "Cooking with Uncle Sam: Food Information Resources From the U. S. Government." RQ, (Summer 1991): 487-495.

Moody, Marilyn. "Core Federal Reference Sources." Collection Building 10 (1989): 70-73.

"Notable Documents." Library Journal, (May 15, 1992): 51-58. (appears annually in the May 15 issue)

Smith, Helen. "Agricultural Documents: Acquisition and Control." Special Libraries, (Winter 1991): 23-29.

Swartz, B. J. "Hidden Treasure: Government Documents for Children and Teens." School Library Journal, (August 1989): 40-43.

Other standard reference sources highlight government documents by subject and type of material. Use of these reference sources help to pinpoint specific documents that can be added to a selective depository collection. For all large depository collections a "must" is the Guide to U.S. Government Publications edited by John Andriot<sup>7</sup>. Popu-

larly referred to as "Andriot's," this source provides an annotated guide to important series and periodicals currently published by government agencies. Item numbers for publications are also given.

Some other publications that can be used to identify specific document sources are:

Bailey, William G. Guide to Popular U.S. Government Publications. 2nd ed. Englewood, Colorado: Libraries Unlimited, Inc., 1990.

Robinson, Judith Schiek. Tapping the Government Grapevine: the User-Friendly Guide to U.S. Government Information Sources. Phoenix, Arizona: Oryx Press, 1988.

Spencer, Michael D. Free Publications from U.S. Government Agencies: a Guide. Englewood, Colorado: Libraries Unlimited, 1989.

Since the U.S. government is the largest publisher in the world, identifying all useful publications to be included in a good 25% selective collection may be impossible. Perfection is selecting only the documents that fit the needs of the library and its users. Imperfection is select-

ing almost all the appropriate documents without being forced to accept too many documents that may be useless. Perfection will never be achieved under the current system set out by the GPO. As a goal a selective depository collection should have the least imperfect collection possible.

### REFERENCES

1. "Depository Service Update," Administrative Notes: Newsletter of the Federal Depository Library Program 12:3 (April 15, 1991). GP 3.16/6-2:12/09.
2. Government Printing Office, Instructions to Depository Libraries. "Guidelines for the Depository Library System, with Minimum Standards for the Depository Library System" (Washington, D.C.: Govt. Print. Off., 1988). GP 3.26:D44/988.
3. Indiana State Library, 1991 Directory of Federal Depository Libraries and Librarians in Indiana (Indianapolis, Ind.: Indiana State Library, 1990).
4. U.S. Government Printing Office, List of Classes of United States Government Publications Available for Selection by Depository Libraries. GP 3.24: Quarterly.
5. U.S. Government Printing Office, Monthly Catalog of United States Government Publications. GP 3.8: Monthly.
6. U.S. Government Printing Office, GPO Sales Publications Reference File (PRF). GP 3.32/2: Bimonthly.
7. Andriot, John L., ed. Guide to U. S. Government Publications (McLean, Virginia: Documents Index, 1990).

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