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Permanence and Access Issues in
Government Information

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Introduction

The materials in this bibliography relate to two broad and related issues regarding Government Documents, the Government Printing Office and the Federal Depository Library Program. My initial focus was on the withdrawal of publicly distributed information in the period following the 9/11/2001 attacks on the US, and questions regarding an increase in classification and secrecy on the part of government agencies. I came to feel that this issue was closely related to issues of permanence, standards and access policies in the transition to electronic publication that was ongoing at the time of the attacks, to the extent that neither issue could be addressed in isolation in a survey of relevant publications and websites (I should note here that NARA policy states that websites ARE publications, making that last phrase redundant). A third aspect of the topic is the Freedom of Information Act, and resources to aid in its implementation and documentation of institutional resistance to compliance. While many of the sites I compile here provide access to FOIA materials in fulfillment of missions to counter government secrecy, the need to limit my subject scope to a more manageable breadth led to the decision not to compile FOIA resources per se.

The following bibliographic survey is divided into four sections. The first surveys some articles addressing the issue from recent journals. The second compiles relevant government documents relating to electronic access, classification and secrecy. The third section contains links to web sites of organizations and initiatives that address these issues, and the final section lists digital repositories of withdrawn, orphaned or otherwise difficult to access material.

Journal Articles and Other Non-Government Documents

Block, Marylaine. "Disappearing Data." *Ex Libris* #161 (December 6, 2002).
http://marylaine.com/exlibris/xlib161.html (accessed 12/2005)

> "Librarian without walls" Block published and/or posted a number of variations on this
> article, this one appearing in her e-zine. She lists several examples of government
> information that was removed from government websites in the year following 9/11,
> noting that while much of it clearly has national security ramifications, some does not.
> The concern is raised that post 9/11 security measures could be used to justify restricting
> information that the public has the right and need to know. Sites and organizations that
> address the issue are compiled. Full disclosure/credit: a version of this article was among
> the primary inspirations for me to explore this topic.
> See also her "Beware the E-vanishing Act" in *Library Journal* (Dec. 15, 2003)
> http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA339604.html (accessed 12/2005).

Block, Marylaine. "Dealing with Digital." *Library Journal* 128, no.12 (July 2003), 40-43.

> A profile of Government Documents librarianship in the "Day in the Life" series, the
> article discusses the uses patrons find for FDLP material. Includes some discussion of
> electronic documents and secrecy issues, including concerns that GPO is trying to pass off
> digital access and preservation control as "unfunded mandate" to libraries, or through use
> of commercial aggregators (conflicting with the need for free access).

Davis, Michelle R. "No URL Left Behind? Web Scrub Raises Concerns." *Education Week*
22:3 (9/18/2002), 1-2.

> The proposed overhaul of the Department of Education website in 2002 drew considerable
> attention to the issue of permanence of electronic government information, including this
> cover story from *Education Week*. The DoE site is one of the oldest and most heavily
> trafficked information sites. The department proposed an overhaul of the site to remove
> outdated files that were no longer accessible through the site, but also to be considered for
> removal was material that "does not reflect the priorities, philosophies, or goals of the

present administration... everything on the site dated before February 2001, just after President Bush took office, will be removed unless it is needed for legal reasons or it supports the "No Child Left Behind Act" of 2001—the president's key education measure—or other administration initiatives." The bluntness with which department directives expressed this made this story a lightning rod for controversy.

Jacobs, James A., James R. Jacobs and Shinjoung Yeo. "Government Information in the Digital Age: The Once and Future Federal Depository Library Program." *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 31:3 (May 2005), 198-208.

Discusses the impact of digital publishing and critiques GPO's response to the current situation. The authors feel that GPO may be overlooking some of the successes of the FDLP system, and being too quick to move into a new cost recovery model. The mission of the FDLP to provide free and comprehensive access to government information is stressed, and sources of strategic institutional partnerships that can help to continue the fulfillment of that mission are suggested.

Miller, Barbara. *Chronology of Disappearing Government Information – Data collected through October 31, 2002*. http://tigger.uic.edu/~aquinn/access/chr.html (accessed 12/2005)

Table compiled for ALA/GODORT Education Committee about removed and/or restricted information from 1988-2002. Includes references and links to news items and organizations' web sites addressing access to government information in the year following the 9/11/2001 attacks. Very rich resource but subject to a certain amount of "link rot" in pointers to external resources.

Nather, David. "Classified: A Rise in 'State Secrets.'" *CQ Weekly* 63:29 (July 18, 2005), 1958-1966.

In this cover story from CQ Weekly, Nathan describes the escalation of the amount of material classified by governmental agencies since 9/11, noting that secrecy "has become the default position." (1959) Describes struggles between legislative and executive branches over access to information, while also noting that congress "routinely make[s] crucial decisions in private, notably in closed-door meetings of conference committees."

(1960) Sidebars discuss the use of new terminology for types of restricted material, particularly "sensitive but unclassified." (1964)

Peterson, Karrie, Elizabeth Cowell and Jim Jacobs. "Government Documents at the Crossroads." *American Libraries* 32, no. 8 (Summer 2001), 52-55.

Discusses the effect of policy changes in the FDLP resulting from the transition to electronic publications, and the proposals for a further reorganization of the program. The authors are not sanguine regarding the emerging state of affairs, expressing concern over preservation, consistency in cataloging and the loss of local collections tailored to community needs. Issues of cost and free access are also raised, along with concerns about the potential for untraceable revisions to online materials. The authors urge librarians to take a leadership role in monitoring government information policies.

Baldwin, Gil and George Barnum. "Government Documents for the Ages." *American Libraries* 32, no. 11 (Dec. 2001), 38.

GPO's director and electronic publications manager responded briefly to the issues raised in the above article, concluding, "We believe that the road GPO is traveling leads to expanded public access to government publications, both today and into the future."

Richelson, Jeffrey, William Burr and Thomas Blanton. *Dubious Secrets - National Security Archive Electronic Briefing Book No. 90*. Washington, D.C., National Security Archive: 2003 (updated 2004). http://www.gwu.edu/%7Ensarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB90/index.htm (accessed 12/2005)

This article, based on research and experiences of the National Security Archive, details what can be determined about the process of classification and redaction in the release of information. Rich in documentation and examples, the article includes some absurd cases, such as the seasonal example of the "annual courier flight of the Government of the North Pole (GONP)... [by] Prime Minister and Chief Courier S. Claus," redacted by the CIA in 1999 (although the same document had been released with the item included in 1997). Less humorous examples indicate that saving face and otherwise obscuring policy decisions is sometimes considered a security issue.

Shuler, John A. "Beyond the Depository Library Concept." *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 27, no. 4 (July 2001), 299-301.

> Provocative editorial discussing reports from GPO, GAO and NCLIS on the future of the Depository Library program as more information is born digital, including proposal to transfer GPO responsibilities to the Library of Congress. Asserts that "a national system of depository libraries is no longer needed" (299), but that there is a role for libraries to help insure accuracy, authenticity and access to government information.

Warner, Robert M. "Secrecy and Salesmanship in the Struggle for NARA's Independence." *Prologue* 37, no. 1 (Spring 2005), p. 4-5.

> This brief piece by the former US Archivist under Ronald Reagan discusses how the National Archives and Records Administration became an independent agency in 1985, no longer a component of the GSA. To be precise, this was return to the independent status of the National Archives as constituted by FDR, which had been placed under GSA in 1949. In light of the leadership role NARA is taking in both electronic records archiving and in declassification – both cited elsewhere in this bibliography – this event is significant. It is also interesting as a first hand account of bureaucracy in action.

Government Sources (and related commentary)

Classified Documents

President of the United States. Executive Order 13292--Further Amendment to Executive Order 12958, as Amended, Classified National Security Information *68 FR 15315*, March 28, 2003.

> Executive order on classified national security information describes classification at three levels of security: top secret, secret, and confidential, and sets out criteria for each. There is no mention of terms such as "sensitive but unclassified" that have been discussed in recent literature. Also noteworthy in light of the National Security Archive's "Dubious Secrets" report is the following:

"Sec. 1.7. Classification Prohibitions and Limitations.

(a) In no case shall information be classified in order to:

(1) conceal violations of law, inefficiency, or administrative error;

(2) prevent embarrassment to a person, organization, or agency..."

Office of the Secretary, Dept. of Homeland Security. Classified National Security Information – Final Rule. *70 FR 61211-61217,* October 21, 2005.

This is the rule that implements EO 13292 for the Dept. of Homeland Security, describing the authority structure for classification decisions within sections of the department. Includes an analysis and administrative history. Also of interest in regards to concerns about the vague "sensitive" pseudo-classification is the following:

"Sec. 7.21 Classification of information, limitations.

(a) Information may be originally classified only if all of the following standards are met:

... (4) The original classification authority determines that the unauthorized disclosure of the information reasonably could be expected to result in damage to the national security and such official is able to identify or describe the damage.

(b) Information shall be classified as Top Secret, Secret, or Confidential in accordance with and in compliance with the standards and criteria in Executive Order 12958, as amended. No other terms shall be used to identify United States classified information except as otherwise provided by statute."

Federal Geographic Data Committee (NSDI). *Guidelines for Providing Appropriate Access to Geospatial Data in Response to Security Concerns*. http://www.fgdc.gov/fgdc/homeland/revised_access_guidelines.pdf (accessed 12/2005)

Includes a review process for access/publication decisions, with a "decision tree" flowchart to ensure that security issues will be addressed, which could be adapted by other agencies. Cited by GODORT as a model for clarity in implementing policies responsive to Homeland Security issues. Also includes a bibliography of laws, policies, hearings and memos upon which the guidelines were based.

ISOO Reports. National Archives and Records Administration Information Security Oversight Office. http://www.archives.gov/isoo/reports/index.html#declass (accessed 12/2005)

"The Information Security Oversight Office (ISOO) is responsible to the President for policy and oversight of the Government-wide security classification system and the National Industrial Security Program." This office advises the President on compliance with EO 12958, as amended. "Each year ISOO gathers relevant statistical data regarding each agency's security classification program. ISOO analyzes these data and reports them, along with other relevant information, in its Annual Report to the President." Reports dating back to 1993 can be found on the site. Also noteworthy are Declassification Reports assessing progress towards creating a system for declassification of materials older than 25 years, as called for in EO 13292, to be in place by the end of 2006. The report for 2005 states that "the Executive branch has made significant advances in the past year."

H.R.5630 Title VII: Public Interest Declassification Act of 2000 – Sec. 703 Public Interest Declassification Board. (section posted on FAS site)
http://www.fas.org/sgp/congress/2005/pida.html (accessed 12/2005)
House Report 109-119 – Department of Defense Appropriations Bill, 2006. Operations and Management, Defense-Wide.
http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/cpquery/?&dbname=cp109&sid=cp109yWjtd&refer=&r_n=hr119.109&item=&sel=TOC_16583&

The first cited document establishes a Public Interest Declassification Board:

"(1) To advise the President, the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, and such other executive branch officials as the Board considers appropriate on the systematic, thorough, coordinated, and comprehensive identification, collection, review for declassification, and release to Congress, interested agencies, and the public of declassified records and materials (including donated historical materials) that are of archival value, including records and materials of extraordinary public interest.

(2) To promote the fullest possible public access to a thorough, accurate, and reliable documentary record of significant United States national security decisions and significant United States national security activities..."

After five years of existing without funding, the board will begin to function in 2006 with one million dollars from defense appropriations, as provided in HR 109-119.

Withdrawal of FDLP Items

US Superintendent of Documents. *Information Dissemination Policy Statement ID72*.
http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pubs/sod72_policy_rev.pdf (accessed 12/2005)

The current guidelines for withdrawal of information products are described in ID 72. It is encouraging to note that a thorough process of review is laid out in the policy, and that for both print and electronic documents, copies of withdrawn materials "are maintained in the National Collection of U. S. Government Publications and/or an equivalent collection of the National Archives and Records Administration to be held without public access until such time as the restriction is lifted. If (when) the restriction is lifted, the content is returned to public access through the appropriate Information Dissemination collections or distribution programs." (section j. items 1 & 2) The current policy statement is considerably more detailed than the policy statement it supersedes (SOD72), suggesting that GPO is cognizant of and responsive to recent concerns about fulfillment of GPO's mission to provide permanent access to government publications.

ALA Government Documents Round Table (GODORT). *GODORT's concerns with ID 72*.
(Attachment to letter from GODORT to Judith C. Russell Managing Director, Information
Dissemination (Superintendent of Documents), February 9, 2005).
http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/GODORT/communications/letters_2005/id72attach.pdf (accessed
12/2005)

GODORT identified several concerns regarding ID72, the current policy on withdrawal of documents from depository libraries, including the switch in name from SOD (Superintendent of Documents) to ID (Information Dissemination), made without clear statutory authority. GODORT also points out that no clear definition of "sensitive" information exists. Other suggestions to strengthen and clarify the policy are provided.

US Government Printing Office, Office of Congressional and Public Affairs. *News Release 02-04: Statement on Request to Withdraw USGS Source-Water CD-ROM from Depository Libraries*. (posted on FAS site) http://www.fas.org/sgp/news/2002/01/gpo.html (accessed 12/2005).

> Following 9/11, the GPO requested that a CD-ROM about source water be withdrawn from depository libraries. FDLP materials remain the property of the US government, and this press release discusses both this specific case and general policies regarding to the GPO's exercise of its right to withdraw documents.

Susman, Thomas. *Removal or Destruction of Federal Depository Library Documents.* Memorandum prepared for the Association of Research Libraries. March 13, 2002. http://www.arl.org/info/frn/gov/Susman.html (accessed 12/2005).

> In response to the above action, ARL had a memorandum prepared by a lawyer, to addresses "important questions concerning the removal and/or destruction of federal depository library documents, including factors that libraries might consider concerning public access to copies of withdrawn FDLP materials. The memo reviews the legal responsibilities of both the federal depository libraries and the Government Printing Office while highlighting a number of key policy considerations." The memo provides a concise but thorough legislative summary.

Electronic Access & Preservation

US General Accounting Office. *Information Management: Electronic Dissemination of Government Publications: Report to Congressional Committees* (GA 1.13:GAO-01-0428). Washington, DC: GAO, 2001. http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS10962 (accessed 12/2005)

> This report occasioned wide comment in the library literature following its appearance in mid-2001. GAO was required to study two issues relating to GPO: "[1] study the impact of providing documents to the public solely in electronic format and [2] assess the feasibility of transferring the depository library program to the Library of Congress." (p 2) The study includes considerable analysis of the functioning of the print FDLP regarding the first issue. Not surprisingly, GPO opposes the second proposal, and even LC was found to be of mixed opinion. The introduction to the study admits to the narrow focus

required by its mandate, but this report will likely be a major document in the ongoing
discussion of the future of the GPO and FDLP.

Westat, Inc. Report on the Assessment of Electronic Government Information Products.
Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1999.
http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/nclisassessment/report.html (accessed 12/2005)
and
U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science. A Comprehensive
Assessment of Public Information Dissemination, Final Report. Washington, DC: U.S.
Government Printing Office, 2001. http://www.nclis.gov/govt/assess/assess.html (accessed
12/2005)

Two massive reports from NCLIS studying the transition into electronic content. The first
study, commissioned by NCLIS, identifies issues in the practices of electronic publishing
then in place. It details the lack of consistency and standards in format, content
management, metadata, permanence and pretty much everything, based on a broad set of
research methods. The second is a report requested by Sens. McCain and Leiberman in
2000, setting forth 36 recommendations to improve public access to electronic
information, including the establishment of a new agency, the Public Information
Resources Administration, along with other less head-smack-inducing (if occasionally
platitudinous) suggestions. The pairing provides an interesting contrast in the types of
material that can be created by throwing government money at an issue.

US Superintendent of Documents, *Information Dissemination Policy Statement ID73*.
http://www.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/pubs/policies/id73_07-06-05.pdf (accessed 12/2005)

Policy governing the harvesting of electronic information from federal agency web sites.
GPO will use both manual and automatic harvesting. The policy applies to both agencies
and any content providing partners, such as the University of Albany, which hosts the BoJ
Sourcebook of Criminal Justice Statistics. See discussion of NARA and university web
sites in concluding sections of this bibliography.

Library of Congress. *National Digital Information Infrastructure and Preservation Program (NDIIP)*. http://www.digitalpreservation.gov/index.php (accessed 12/2005)

> LC "collaborative initiative" to address the preservation of electronic media, creating and funding partnerships with institutions that establish practices and host archives, including a major grant to the California Digital Library to explore the preservation of US government documents (see below), and a more recent initiative to preserve state government documents (http://www.digitalpreservation.gov/about/states_announce.html).

California Digital Library – Digital Preservation. *Final report for The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.* http://www.cdlib.org/programs/Web-based_archiving_mellon_Final_corrected.pdf (accessed 12/2005)

> The CDL has been and continues to be a leader in digital archiving. They have been recipients of major grants from both the Library of Congress NDIIP and Andrew Mellon Foundation to study the creation of infrastructure for collecting and preserving "born-digital" government publications. The 79-page report cited identifies the issue:
>
>> Digitally published materials are more volatile, uncontrolled, and at much greater risk of being lost than those that are published in printed formats. Unlike the printed publications of U.S. governments [sic], digital ones do not flow through central printing offices, making their existence, number, provenance, and orientation impossible to record. The most volatile and at-risk government information is that which is made available exclusively via the World Wide Web, where 65 percent of all government publications that are distributed by the Government Printing Office are now produced without printed analog (p. 5)
>
> and provides a detailed discussion of technical procedures and administrative structures for implementing digital preservation.

Websites – Resources

ARL Federal Relations and Information Policy
http://www.arl.org/info/

> "A primary goal of the Federal Relations and Information Policy program is to influence
> legislative action that is favorable to the research library and higher education
> communities. To achieve this goal, the program helps ARL members keep abreast of the
> legislative landscape, as well as rapidly changing issues, players, regulations, and
> community priorities. The program staff tracks the activities of state and federal
> legislatures as well as regulatory and government agencies in North America and abroad."
> ("About Us") The site compiles links to news and other information on a variety of
> information access issues.

Federation of American Scientist's Project on Government Secrecy
http://fas.org/sgp/index.html

> "The Federation of American Scientists (FAS) was formed in 1945 by atomic scientists
> from the Manhattan Project. Endorsed by nearly 60 Nobel Laureates in biology, chemistry,
> economics, medicine and physics as sponsors, the Federation has addressed a broad
> spectrum of national security issues of the nuclear age in carrying out its mission to
> promote humanitarian uses of science and technology." ("About FAS") "Through
> research, advocacy, and public education, the FAS Project on Government Secrecy works
> to challenge excessive government secrecy and to promote public oversight." (from the
> project home page banner) This site compiles press reports and government news
> releases, testimony and policy statement regarding secrecy and access to information.

Free Government Information Blog
http://freegovinfo.info/

> "The future of government information is in peril from many economic and political
> forces. *Free Government Information* was initiated by Jim A. Jacobs, James R. Jacobs,
> Shinjoung Yeo, three librarians at University of California San Diego, along with Daniel
> Cornwall, librarian at the Alaska State Library, in order to raise public awareness of the

importance of government information and create a community with various stakeholders to facilitate an open and critical dialogue." ("About Us") This blog seeks to create a community of users that includes both FDLP librarians and those outside the traditional library community, to raise awareness and facilitate dialog to address issues of access to government information.

GODORT Task Forces
http://tigger.uic.edu/~aquinn/access/publicaccessindex.html
http://www2.library.unr.edu/dept/bgic/Duncan/RAGI.html

The Government Documents Round Table of the American Library Association is the professional organization for librarians dealing with government information sources, particularly the FDLP. There have been two task forces addressing the issues of access vs. security and permanence of electronic information. The first site listed above contains both a report on permanence and an extensive bibliography covering a variety of aspects of the topic. The second site contains a list of links to news stories, government documents and web sites dealing with restrictions to access to government information.

GPO LOCKSS Project pilot
http://www.access.gpo.gov/su_docs/fdlp/lockss/index.html

The GPO has begun a pilot project to explore implementing the LOCKSS digital storage and archiving model to improve access and permanence of government documents. The first stage of the project has just gotten underway.

OMB Watch - Information and Access project
http://www.ombwatch.org/info
http://www.ombwatch.org/article/articleview/213/1/1

"OMB Watch is a nonprofit research and advocacy organization dedicated to promoting government accountability and citizen participation in public policy decisions." ("About") "The Information and Access Program focuses on defending and advancing the public's right to know. Unfortunately access to government information is under near constant attack. This program tracks and analyzes policies that affect the public's right to know and

works to improve them. Our goal is to increase the quality of, access to, and use of government information." (program home page) The site contains links to news stories and press releases. The second link is to a list of information removed from government sites post 9/11, which at this point seems to have been orphaned from the main page, despite listing a recent update date.

Websites – Digital Libraries

Government Agency Hosted

NARA:
 Presidential Web Harvest
 http://www.webharvest.gov/collections/peth04/

 Clinton Library – Presidential web sites archive
 http://clinton.archives.gov/welcome/welcome.html

 Two examples of a digital archive of government websites, using contrasting methods. The Presidential Web Harvest of the first term of GW Bush was created through automatic collection of web pages by crawlers similar to those used by search engines. In a presentation at Fall 2005 MARAC, NARA reps pointed out some of the limitations of using automated harvesting to create digital archives, which are also discussed on the site. The Clinton Library web archive was created by a combination of manual and automatic techniques, and may well help set the standard for effective web archiving. Through ISOO, as noted elsewhere, NARA is charged with advising the executive branch regarding digital preservation. Let's hope someone listens.

FirstGov RSS Library
http://www.firstgov.gov/Topics/Reference_Shelf/Libraries/RSS_Library.shtml

 RSS feeds, a technology that underlies the current popularity of "blogs," is yet another means of digital distribution of electronic documents that will have to been taken into account in preserving government information. FirstGov has at least taken the first step in providing a forum where government blogs can be cataloged.

University Hosted Sites

American Association of Law Libraries - Fugitive & Electronic-Only Documents Committee. http://www.law.yale.edu/outside/scr/library/fugdocs/index.asp (accessed 12/2005).

> This site includes a database for recording "Federal government publications (print or electronic) that have not been reported to and are not cataloged by the Government Printing Office," which can then be searched by keyword. The committee also actively monitors federal agencies for "fugitives."

CyberCemetary
http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/

> This cooperative project between the University of North Texas and the US government exists to provide access to web content created by agencies that have ceased to exist, taking their web portals with them. Features robust browse and search features that make it a model digital library, albeit one that relies on university funding and resources.

National Security Archive
http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/
http://nsarchive.chadwyck.com/

> Hosted by George Washington University, the National Security Archive is a library of primary source material, much of it obtained through the FOIA, documenting US history and the actions and policies of the US government. The digitized materials are organized into "Briefing Books" on a variety of topics.
>
> The NSA has recently partnered with commercial vendors to create database available by subscription: "Through the *Digital National Security Archive*, the National Security Archive and ProQuest Information and Learning Company (formerly Chadwyck-Healey) have joined forces to produce the most comprehensive collection available of significant primary documents central to U.S. foreign and military policy since 1945. Over 55,000 of the most important, declassified documents – totaling more than 420,000 pages – are included in the database. Many are published now for the first time." ("About")

State Department Archive – Richard J. Daley Library, University of Chicago
http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/ERC/

> Another university-government web archiving project, the home page noting that the
> "Government Printing Office, which is responsible for the national system of federal
> depository libraries, officially recognizes this unique partnership as the first electronic
> partnership agreement between an executive agency and a depository library." This site
> stores State Department web sites and pages from 1990-97. The State Dept. has created its
> own archive for materials after this date. (see http://state.gov/index.html)

Thurgood Marshall Law Library (University of Maryland) Historical Publications of the US
Commission on Civil Rights
http://www.law.umaryland.edu/marshall/usccr/index.asp

> Digital library of civil rights documents from 1957 on. "In conjunction with the Thurgood
> Marshall Law Library's strategic plan to enhance its civil rights collection in support of the
> School of Law's teaching and research mission, the Library has worked since 2001 to
> create a complete electronic record of United States Commission on Civil Rights
> publications held in the Library's collection and available on the USCCR Web site."
> ("About the Project") Access is provided by title, subject, date of publication and
> Superintendent of Documents number.

Private/Partisan Sites

The Memory Hole
http://www.thememoryhole.org/about.htm
http://www.thememoryhole.org/new.htm
http://www.thememoryhole.org/foi/yanked_govt_docs.htm

> "The Memory Hole exists to preserve and spread material that is in danger of being lost, is
> hard to find, or is not widely known... The emphasis is on material that exposes things that
> we're not supposed to know (or that we're supposed to forget)." ("About") This site is a
> privately produced by Russ Kirk, an author on disinformation and propaganda. The scope
> of the site is very broad, including police reports, news articles and corporate memos along

with removed or difficult to find government information and FOIA materials. While it contains a great deal of valuable information, there is little indexing and the selection and description is clearly ideological. The third link above provides access to a list of withdrawn FDLP documents, 1987-2000.

Outraged Moderates Government Documents Library
http://www.outragedmoderates.org/GovernmentDocumentLibrary.html

This overtly partisan site, critical of the Bush administration, is a filesharing blog where people can post text and media. Documents available include the Downing Street memo, and the DoD List of proposed base closings which the Senate had some difficulty in prying loose, if memory serves. As with The Memory Hole, this is a worthwhile source of information that may be otherwise difficult to track down, but it is likewise inconsistent in its holdings, lacking in authority and devoid of any sort of system of access.

Conclusion

At the time of the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001, the GPO and FDLP were already in a state of rapid change, if not crisis, due to the transition to electronic documents publishing and a proliferation of means of distribution. The policies of the Bush administration, shaped by the events of 9/11, complicated the already difficult questions of access through restrictive and secretive information access policies. It may turn out that these policies, by drawing attention to issues of access, may serve ultimately to create more dialog and thus a faster resolution of the myriad interlocking issues covered in the materials compiled in this bibliography. In the current state of affairs, much of the slack is being taken up by universities, subject to changes in administrations and funding that may affect their ability to maintain their efforts, and by individuals who have ideological axes to grind. While these projects serve current needs, ultimately the provision of information to the citizens of a democracy should be the responsibility of their government.