The Public, a project of the Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center, is an independent, collectively-run, community-oriented publication that provides a forum for topics underreported and voices underrepresented in the dominant media. All contributors to the paper are volunteers. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to submit articles or story ideas to the editorial collective. We prefer, but do not necessarily restrict ourselves to, articles on issues of local impact written by authors with local ties.

EDITORS/FACILITATORS:
Sandra Ahten
Sarah Boyer
Lisa Chason
Darrin Drda
Belden Fields
Meghan Krausch
Durl Kruse
Jan Kruse
Dorothy Martirano
Paul Mueth
Bijan Warner

THE PUBLIC
Urbana-Champaign IMC
218 West Main St., Urbana, IL, 61801
217-344-8820
email: imc-print@publici.ucimc.org
Websites:
http://publici.ucimc.org
www.ucimc.org

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You don't need a degree in journalism to be a citizen journalist. We are all experts in something, and we have the ability to share our information and knowledge with others. The Public is always looking for writers and story ideas. We invite you to submit ideas or proposals during our weekly meetings (Thursdays at 5:30pm at the UCIMC), to post a story to the website (http://www.ucimc.org), or to contact one of the editors.

• Become a citizen journalist; write a news story or opinion piece.
• Make a tax-deductible contribution.
• Help distribute the Public throughout the Champaign-Urbana area.
• Help with fund-raisers.
• Join the editorial board.

The Public wishes to express its deep appreciation to the following sustaining contributors for their financial and material support:

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A MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTRY OF HOMELAND SECURITY
DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR GOVERNMENT INFORMATION IS?
FIND OUT ON PAGE 6

Letters from Guatemala
Meridith Kruse
Page 9
IMC Poised for Big Things in Fall

by Zachary C. Miller

SUMMER IN CHAMPAIGN-URBANA BRINGS A SLOWER PACE TO volunteer organizations but this summer volunteers at the Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center (IMC) have been laying the groundwork for what could end up being the most active chapter in its nearly three-year history.

On August 30th, the IMC will host IMCfest in downtown Urbana. IMCfest celebrates the IMC’s Grand Reopening and kicks off a season of major outreach and training efforts. By December, the IMC hopes to finish raising $100,000 for its Capital Campaign to purchase a building of its own. These projects are expected to bring over a thousand new people into the IMC and bring independent media and the tools to produce it out to a broader community.


The IMC was shaken by the surprise closure of its performance space in May by City of Urbana inspectors. At that time it was unclear whether or not the gallery and production areas were in danger of closure. More than a dozen volunteers had to put in many hours of work and donate over two thousand dollars to satisfy the inspectors and receive an occupancy permit. The back room performance space remains closed but the production facilities and the Middle Room Gallery, having passed inspection, are now ready for the Grand Reopening at IMCfest on August 30th.

“Just because we don’t have a performance space doesn’t mean we can’t have shows at the IMC. There’s always the street.” That thought by IMC Shows Group members was the genesis of IMCfest 2003, the IMC’s first outdoor festival.

The purpose of IMCfest will be to showcase the unique services that the IMC provides to residents of the Urbana area. The IMC is dedicated to providing the tools to produce and distribute independent media to the residents of Urbana-Champaign. Independent media may take the form of music, video, spoken audio, news reporting, visual arts, Internet media, and print. IMCfest will therefore be a multimedia event featuring presentation of various forms of media as well as hands-on production workshops.

The primary feature of IMCfest will be its main music stage. The stage will feature about ten local music groups from a variety of genres (e.g., punk, indie-rock, world, goth/industrial, jazz, blue). This main music stage will give area residents the chance to hear music in a free, all ages, non-smoking, outdoor environment that could normally only be heard in bars. In addition to the main stage, a second more intimate folk/acoustic stage will be set up with another dozen local acoustic performers.

In addition to music IMCfest will feature independent media of many other types. Authors of independently produced zines will read poetry and prose from their published works, independent video and film will be screened after the music is over, poetry will be read, visual art will be displayed.

In the Indymedia spirit of participatory open publishing, there will be several ways in which the festival participants can get involved on the action directly. Musicians from the crowd can perform a few songs on the main stage during the cabaret period in the middle of the festival. Anyone will be able to speak on any topic for 5 minutes at The Festival Showcase. Throughout the day, IMC working groups will offer workshops on media skills at the IMC.

By the end of the festival, dozens of new volunteers will have gathered audio, video, photos, and interviews with festival participants. With this raw material, seasoned IMC staff will teach the new volunteers how to produce audio, video, and print news stories.

As this story goes to press the IMC Shows Group is still working on acquiring the appropriate permits and funding for the festival. If you would like to be involved in the planning of IMCfest please attend festival planning meetings every Thursday night at 7pm at the IMC, 218 W. Main Suite 110, Urbana. Additional details about the festival will appear at http://www.ucimc.org by August 15th. If you would like to get involved with the IMC Gallery effort as an artist, curator, or volunteer, please contact gallery@ucimc.org.

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN—INVESTMENT IN THE COMMUNITY

The IMC’s Capital Campaign to buy a building of its own, establishing a permanent presence in our community, is in full swing. The capital campaign seeks to raise $100,000 by this December. In just a few months of active fundraising the Capital Campaign already has $37,000 in the bank (that’s up $10,000 from the last issue of this paper). An additional $20,000 has been pledged but not yet collected.

IMC grant writers are working on several grants to raise additional funds. The IMC has been able to do many things in its current rented space at 218 W. Main. The current IMC location houses an audio/video/print production facility with 5 workstations and professional audio equipment, an active art gallery with a different show each month, a radical library with over a thousand items, a consignment shop for independent media, snack sales from the common ground food coop, and a public meeting space. With these facilities the IMC has been able to produce a weekly radio show for WFRT 90.1 FM, a monthly newspaper distributed regionally, a weekly video compilation for Urbana Public Access TV, a monthly art gallery, and an ongoing open publishing website. IMC volunteers have reported on thousands of stories. Until recently the IMC’s performance space hosted an average of four all-ages non-smoking independent music concerts per week. Several local organizations use the IMC as their community meeting space.

The Capital Campaign seeks to give these successes a permanent home in the community.

All of the buildings under consideration by the campaign are significantly larger in size than the current IMC space. Purchasing such a building would allow the opening of a very large all ages music venue, the expansion of the library, better production facilities, and larger meeting spaces. A larger building would also allow the IMC to become the home of a pan-progressive resource center in our community. Capital Campaign members imagine many of the local progressive organizations and services now scattered around town, or meeting in people’s homes, all able to be headquartered in the same building. Such a building could house an artist’s coop, a food coop, a concert venue, an art gallery, a community web hosting service, the hub of the community wireless project, an expanded consignment shop for independent media and arts, coop housing for artists and activists, some local progressive businesses, environmental organizations, labor unions, political parties, a center for GLBT resource center, a theater space, and general office space for other organizations.

IMC members have learned over the last 3 years that given space and excited volunteers, anything is possible. Some IMC planners imagine something like a year round indoor weekly Farmer’s Market could be possible in one of the potential buildings.

Although the IMC had some, now resolved, trouble with the City of Urbana in May involving permits and code issues, many individuals from the city government and local businesses owners are interested in the IMC’s efforts to purchase a new building and Capital Campaigners expect significant cooperation from the city in terms of getting the appropriate inspections and permits for public assembly in the new building. Local residents who are concerned about the closure of the IMC’s venue space can directly help reopen a safe all ages IMC venue space by contributing to the capital campaign.

The IMC is a 501c3 not-for-profit organization. All donations to the capital campaign are tax deductible as allowed by law. If you’d like to make an anonymous or one-time contribution to the IMC capital campaign, you can send donations by mail to:

Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center
ATTN: Treasurer/Capital Campaign
218 W Main St, Suite 110
Urbana, IL 61801-2725
You can also make donations online by clicking on “Donate!” at http://capital.ucimc.org/

The majority of the funding for the new building will come from individual members of the Urbana-Champaign community. If all of the thousands of readers of this newspaper were to donate $50 each, the IMC would well surpass its fundraising goals and be able to purchase a new building immediately.

IMC Mission Statement

Indymedia is a global network of collectively run media outlets for the creation of radical, accurate, and passionate tellings of truth. We are motivated by a love and inspiration for people who work for a better world despite corporate media’s distortions and unwillingness to cover efforts to develop an egalitarian and sustainable society.

The Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center (IMC) is a grassroots organization committed to using media production and distribution as tools for promoting social and economic justice in the Urbana-Champaign area. We are dedicated to addressing issues that the mainstream media neglects and we do not conceal our politics behind a false objectivity. We will empower people to “become the media” by providing democratic access to available technologies and information.
IMC Statement

The IMC Emergency Response Team released the following statement on May 19th, 2003:

On Thursday, May 8, the City of Urbana shut down the Urbana-Champaign Independent Media Center (IMC),而导致towns for code violations. The IMC deeply regrets this situation and wishes to comply fully with the Urbana Fire Code.

We are pleased to say that after meeting with officials from the City of Urbana, many misunderstandings have been cleared up, and city officials are supportive of our efforts to serve the community. We have been assured by the city that the office space library, radio, video, and print production room, and the art gallery area of the IMC are excluded from the new code enforcement requirements. We will continue to ensure that 50 people will continue at the IMC. Our community space is still open during scheduled hours. However, our music venue space is now closed.

WHAT HAPPENED

Throughout the community center’s existence, the IMC has acted in good faith in regard to fire code compliance and will continue to act in good faith in the future. We are not only responsible members of the community, but also from lack of communication from the City of Urbana before, during, and immediately after the most recent inspections. The IMC has consistently been transparent with the City of Urbana about the use of the room as a performance space, and has publicly advertised events for the past year and a half. The performance space, the focus of the recent citations, was inspected eight months ago and the minor issues raised at that time were promptly resolved. All of the major violations that have been cited by the city precipitated the IMC’s use of the space and the majority of the issues presented the annual inspection that occurred eight months ago.

After an inspection on May 5, the City gave the IMC twenty-four days to complete six repairs in order to comply with the Urbana Fire Code. The violations were mostly due to minor repairs to walls and doors, and were not due to lack of compliance with the fire code.

IMC members formed a plan of action and began fixing the problems on hand. On Thursday, May 8, officials returned unexpectedly to the IMC and issued an additional three-day deadline to complete the repairs. If we were not able to comply, the city stated that it could shut down the IMC.

Instead of bringing together a diverse group of people to formulate solutions to world hunger, the WAF, according to many farmers, scientists, and biotech critics, is merely a public relations vehicle for the interests of big agribusiness companies.

Response to such pro-business meetings, activists have organized an alternative conference, known as “Biodevastation,” in order to discuss critical issues about agricultural biotechnology on a global scale. During the seven years of its existence, the conference, has been held in the same city as the Biotechnology Industry Organization (BIO), during its annual meetings held within the U.S. and Canada. Biodevastation features panels and workshops led by some of the leading critics of the biotech industry. It has generally drawn between 100 and 150 participants, usually culminating in a protest outside BIO’s meeting, with the number of demonstrators ranging from a few hundred to upwards of 2,500.

The WAF certainly is not a protest of the biotech industry. While the WAF organizers may be concerned about the impact of agricultural biotechnology on a global scale, the WAF is clearly neutral, inclusive, forum that allows for the comprehensive discussion of global agricultural policy. World officials and members of corporations and nonprofit groups are invited to the lavish event, held this year at Union Station in downtown St. Louis. In reality, while members of groups with opposing views may be included, the WAF receives its primary funding from Cargill and other agribusiness giants. Its Board of Directors includes executives from Monsanto, Edward Jones, Anheuser-Busch, and the Emerson Electric Company.

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Finding a Permanent Home for the IMC

In the short term we will be forced to cancel some performances. The IMC is seeking temporary relocation alternatives for our shows. The IMC’s goal is to provide a safe and educational space for youth and adults alike. The only long-term solution to the current situation will be the acquisition of a new space.

To this end, we are kicking our Capital Campaign into high gear. This campaign will raise funds to purchase a permanent home for the IMC. The IMC will not be able to reopen our previous performance space, but we hope to within the next 12 months to buy a building of our own that complies with all city requirements for a public assembly space. Our goal is to raise $100,000 by December; we have already raised $30,000 towards that goal in just a few short months.

To those of you who wish to help with the Capital Campaign or become a member of the IMC, please contact the Independent Media Center at 344-8820 or info@uicmr.org.
Letters from Guatemala

by Meridith Kruse

Meridith Kruse, a local activist from the Urbana community, just returned from Spanish Language School in Guatemala. She was the former Executive Director of the Illinois Disciples Foundation in Champaign and just completed a three month stay at Proyecto Lingüístico Quezalteco de Español in Quezaltenango, Guatemala Central America. Meridith is back in the Urbana area for a few weeks before returning to Guatemala with a human rights organization where she plans to assist with the documentation of human rights violations and the current political situation in Central America.

SUBJECT: HELLO SWEET FAMILY

Hi parents and sis,

Let me back up and let you know where I have been.

We left Saturday morning around 7am for Santa Anita. This is a community of former refugees. Many fled to Mexico during the war and many of their sons and daughters were involved in the guerilla movement. Renaldo, the guide for the school, lives here along with his father. We were to hear the testimony of his father and participate in the community celebrations around the construction of their new school.

Santa Anita is nestled deep in the mountainous jungle. After a long, packed bus ride, we squeezed into a pickup and rode on bumpy, rock-laid erosion roads through garbage dumps and pristine wilderness and then walked into the village. When we arrived, the festivities were in full swing. There was a soccer game going on. It was a really hot, muggy day and only men were playing soccer. We moosed to the main plaza where an outdoor Catholic mass was underway. Under a blazing sun elderly people sat in the shade. As we arrived, I explained the history of San Jose. This was an incredible story that I am sure. Toilet paper, to wrap food, other things....

After about an hour, I remembered that we needed to return to Renaldo's house for our meeting with his father. From Renaldo's house we walked to an abandoned house. As tradition would have it, on this hot day we went to Renaldo's father's house for lunch. It was a cinder block house with a latrine and a natural well in the backyard. After the services, the community came together to give students a connection with rural communities in Guatemala. I was happy to have a change of pace. But people here are definitely suffering direly from the fall in coffee prices as well.

Each day I would eat my meals with Irma, who is 22, and her two young children, Glendi and Rodriguez. Her husband was working construction in Xela. He earned slightly more than his brother-in-law, who got 18Q a day for work on the finca. That is $2 a day. Most men were trying to support their families on $2 a day...impossible.

Food. There is not enough food here for people to eat. I was given very small portions of boiled bananas, fried potatoes, and boiled egg. Some mornings I had pancakes or mosh, a runny but tasty oatmeal drink. I was often hungry after meals. I never served fresh fruit and I had a vegetable one time a week. Fruits and vegetables are just too expensive here.

Nothing goes to waste. Here the dogs are so skinny. I threw my usual newspaper into the trash in my room at school and immediately the woman cleaning asked me if she could have the paper. This will be used for many things other things....

On the bus this morning I was explaining the Fourth of July to a funny old man. He asked me if I was from Germany since my eyes were so blue. I told him I was from the U.S. with grandparents from Germany. I had also added that I wasn't a very good citizen since I forgot Independence Day. We laughed. He asked me what year we got our independence and from whom. I explained 1776 from Britain. And then I had a funny thought about how messed up this world is. We did have an armed revolution to throw off a colonial power. But never mind that it was imperfect and only benefited rich, white men. And never mind all the indigenous people that we killed. It is an odd challenge every day to find my place here. I am the tall, white gringa on a bus with almost all indigenous Maya who wonder curiously who I am and why I am here. It is good. I need to be able to answer this. And I think I am coming into this better each day.
Favorite Alternative Media Outlets

by various authors

AlterNet

A self-described “infomediary,” AlterNet is a like Dante’s Virgil, guiding us to the Web and helping us drudge through hellish corporate-drive-ven, merger-loving, war-supporting mainstream media. It is John Edwards for the information-obessed, like myself, or for progressives who go online hoping to find signs of critical resistance and candid discussion. Allow me to make just one more gross over-statement: Awaah in a hyper-torrent of information, we need infomediaries like AlterNet. It has a frequent-ly-updated collection of articles into a searchable database that includes other alternative sources. It also archives by date, collects in “content files” articles related to pressing issues, and keeps tidy and timely its main newswire. Part of the Independent Media Institute, AlterNet synthesizes investigative journalism too – the stories available online come from these and other published and respectable sources in partnership. Heavily hyperlinked, it is easy to follow citations and reach other sites, sources, and viewpoints as well as peruse such vivacious and vigorous opinionistas like Molly Ivins and Arianna Huffington. Deeply, I remain curious about the site that I will not launch here. I find AlterNet.org a solid starting point for Web sessions that undoubtedly lead far beyond it in a scavenger for information, analysis, and discussion. Via AlterNet’s database, those aiming to research a specific topic would surely find left-leaning gems. Finally, hard-core netizens can participate in a number of forums hosted by AlterNet in its admirable effort to mitigate against mega-media’s information onslaught.

LAURA STENGUM

Common Dreams

http://www.commondreams.org/

Founded in 1997 by a former Congres-sional staffer who learned the value of distilling the mountains of available information into manageable “Daily Clips,” Common Dreams presents pro-gressive perspectives on the news of the day in their NewsCenter. The site also publishes in their Progressive Newswire the press releases and position statements from the progressive community that mainstream publications often ignore. Common Dreams accepts no advertising or corporate sponsorship, with a small staff and a lot of volunteers they have created a site that promotes progressive visions for America’s future and could, in the words of The Washington Post, “shake the world.”

KEN FORTENBERRY

Counterpunch

Counterpunch.org is the website of Alexander Cockburn and Jeffrey St Clair; they have a magazine of the same name. Founded in 1977, the magazine focuses on a wide range of topics, from politics to culture, with a particular emphasis on the war and the militarization of society. The website features a wide variety of content, including articles, essays, and videos, and is known for its critical and independent perspective.

http://www.counterpunch.org

When Are Our Sons, Daughters, and Spouses Coming Home From Iraq?

In an effort to learn more about the situation in Iraq, I sometimes listen to WEFT radio and Democracy Now! on weekdays. On July 8th, I heard the story of a military base somewhere in Georgia where a large number of spouses/parents of those deployed in Iraq are based. I missed the city of deployment in Iraq by the number attending this meeting and a number of the details. However, I knew I could find out what I had just missed by going online to www.democracynow.org. I found the details of July 8th story. The fort is Fort Stewart and the number of 800 family members were crying, curse, and yelling at the Pentagon official (a colonel) who had to be escorted out of the gathering. I appreciate knowing details like this, which you never hear on the usual mainstream media. These family members want their loved ones home and not left in harms way. Morale is low and the danger is high. The mood is changing and the fact that this took place on a military base and the number of 800 family members voicing this kind of attitude seemed signifi-cant to me. To read this very story go to www.democracynow.org and look into the archives for the July 8, 2003 story and read the details for yourself. The questions seem to be growing...

JAN KRUSE

Democracy Now!

www.democracynow.org

When is our military coming home from Iraq?

For his leftist father’s pseudonymous novel, made into a movie, Bogart’s last, that was centered around control of a uranium mine in Africa...hard to not comment on that presently.

The website features a wide variety of provocative essays from authors around the globe, most of whom aren’t in any media’s rolodex. Others are published like Edward Said or Robert Fisk, who are well known but don’t get much coverage. While they don’t have a full team of 秋田 editorial staff, they do have an editorial staff that is constantly working to bring you the best possible content. They are known for their editorial staff that is constantly working to bring you the best possible content.

PAUL MUETH

Portside

http://www.portside.org

e-mail: portside@yahoo groups.com

I am especially fond of Portside because, more than any other website I know, it offers important information on racial issues and developments in Africa. To be sure, it covers the globe as well as most other websites but it offers more con-cer-ning race and Africa the others that I have seen. This is probably due to the fact that Portside is the news, discussion, and debate site of the Committees for Corres-pondence for Democracy and Socialism (CCoC). This organization was created over a decade ago by independent socialists and former members of the Communist Party/USA. The latter were largely African American party members who felt that the Communist Party was not giving them a proper representation at the national level. It contains a number of prominent intellectual activists, including Angela Davis. In case you are wondering, the name Portside derives from the nautical term of the left side of the boat.

BELDEN FIELDS

Smirking Chimp

http://www.smirkingchimp.com/

SmirkingChimp.com, so named because of the remarkable resemblance of our commander in chief to a...well...smirking chimp, is as you might suspect, more anti-Bush than pro-any-thing else. But it’s a lot of fun and the arti-cles they choose to reprint from a variety of credible sources while not balanced, are informative, and taken in such a large dose they are scary enough to move you to act or at least click over to the ACLU site and buy a card. “Ask not at whom the chimp smirks – he smirks at you.”

KEN FORTENBERRY
Confederation were taking place (see the article elsewhere in this issue by Selviilla Mann). When I heard on NPR that protests in St. Louis were being arrested, I went to the St. Louis IMC website and could follow what was happening there, by the people it was happening to.

Did you know that last month 10,000 people gathered in Los Angeles to protest against the Bush administration at a fish raising dinner? Not if you only tune in to mainstream media. You can read about it at the LA-IMC.

Did you know that on June 21 twenty-nine people were arrested protesting against the EU Summit in Thessaloniki, Greece and that solidarity activities have been taking place in many cities across Europe? Check the Athens-IMC for more info.

Interested in what will happen at the WTO meetings in Cancun, Mexico in September? Many IMC sites show local organizing efforts to go there.

IMCs are above all dedicated to disseminating media skills, so that people can produce radio, video, film, and newspapers, comics, and other forms of the media. The bout health-good as what is posted – so become a citizen-reporter and get the word out.

LISA CHASON

__Book Review__

By Sandra Ahten

_1-69 Does Not Stop Here_

**BY SEAN CONNELY**

This four hundred page novel is fiction which should go without saying, but needs to be clarified because it is based on a real-life struggle over a battle that has taken place in Bloomington Indiana for the past ten years. The real-life battle is between the community and the mixture of corporate interest, the Indiana Department of Transportation, and Federal Agencies who want to see the I-69 interstate extension accommodate increased NAFTA trade by having a corridor from Canada to Mexico. Seven of nine Bloomington City council members oppose the I-69 extension through their community. They point out alternative routes (runningsouth through old US 41) which would make more sense and do less harm to the environment and to the communities involved.

Sean Connelly, the author, and his partner Kay lived in Urbana and I met them through activist work on the Lincoln Trailer Park project back in 1996. He sent the book to me and asked me to review it. I was hesitant. Four hundred pages from the building of community being worth a lesson in the ruthless means taken to squash political dissent and to undermine the will of the people when that will does not fall in line with corporate interest.

As it became more and more clear that the intent of the novel was to educate the reader who might not know this history I worried that at some point the storyline was going to overlook the education. I thought that at any moment I might be beaten over the head. Instead I found myself wanting to get back to the book to find out what happened next to Fionn (the tree-talking main character), and the band of activist, anarchist, farmers, sorority sisters, sheriffs and others who through alternative media, web activism, personal contact, education, music, and more come together as a community. I found the information regarding how PR firms work, the history of why we have highways instead of mass transit all played to the plot and not the other way around.

I found myself hopeful. The author’s goal is that this novel is about protest in the face of corporate government, corporate media, and largely about what it takes – unity to combat these forces that create reality through repeated illusion. I know it’s fiction. There are some places in the plot that stretched a little thin, but I wanted to be honest and believe that unity could stop a highway. For after all, what else will? I am allowing for the possibility that this work of fiction, of unity prevailing, of the building of community being worth the effort, is a foreshadowing of things to come. I find myself hopeful that life will imitate art (having taken its inspiration from life) and art will imitate life, and that some battles will be continued to be won.

One copy of the book is available for borrowing from the IMC library and more are available for purchase. You can order directly from www.unknownarts.org or www.amazon.com.
A true fact, but unfortunately not widely known, is that over 1300 US Government depository libraries exist for the public's free use. The US Government is the world's most prolific publisher, and depository libraries receive 1000s of government titles annually at no cost for the publications. Two important corollaries, these libraries are required to provide direct access to electronic government information and databases on the Web, and to have specialists available to help anyone and everyone locate and utilize government documents in all formats. Locally, the Government Documents Library at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign is a designated Federal Depository. It is a community, as well as a campus, resource. Its librarians are specialists and advocates, who help users access government information. UIUC's Law Library, although more selective in terms of its collection policies, is also a Federal Depository.

**WHAT A DEPOSITORY LIBRARY HAS**

Depository libraries include the obvious, such as a 1980 congressional hearing, "Effect of Iraqi-Iranian Conflict on U.S. Energy Policy," or a 1996 congressional hearing, "Iraq: Can Saddam Be Overthrown?" Even Frank Zappa's official testimony on song lyrics may sound like standard fare. However, the range of subject matter which government information encompasses may surprise the uninstructed, and its educational and instructional value in a rapidly changing society environment such as ours extends far beyond the campus.

Libraries continue to receive depository shipments of government documents in paper, and audio-visual materials, CD/DVDs, maps, microfiche, posters, videos, etc. The passage of the Government Printing Office Electronic Information Access Enhancement Act of 1993 marked the beginning of the official trend towards a predominately digital Federal Depository program. This initiative evolved into the present GPO Access site, a marvelous resource for tyro and technocrats alike, which has official information from all three branches of the US Government. The possibility of relatively easy, unparalleled access to government information led to visions of "downloading democracy" and increased awareness of US Government practices and programs. Then and now, Federal Depository librarians develop web sites for their local congressional districts and communities, and promote government resources through a myriad of access tools. Examine the Affirmative Action web site, created by Graue York. Documents Center, University Library, U of M, Ann Arbor, or The War with Iraq, a weblog, done by James Jacobs, Data, Government and GIS Services, UCSD Libraries. Or in your own virtual world, Government Information for a Changing World, the work of many, Government Documents Library, UIUC Library.

The depository library system originated in the country's oldest right-to-know laws. To many, an informed citizenry is fundamental to our vision of American democracy. Federal Depositories, encompassing tangible and virtual government documents, also function as the "nation's collective memory." These collections and services, combined with basic government information literacy, represent at least one major means of finding out what's what, and holding our public servants, elected or otherwise, accountable.

**THE "FUGITIVE" DOCUMENT**

Throughout the country's history, "fugitive" documents have existed. Although the web environment has given new meaning to the concept, fugitives are basically government documents not cataloged in, nor distributed through, the Federal Depository Library Program. This would include, for example, a government agency fee-based electronic journal or database that was unavailable for free at a Federal Depository.

Another example, Congressional Research Service reports, prepared specifically for Congress, are not distributed for free to Depository libraries. Three recent titles, Low Power FM Radio Service Regulatory and Congressional Issues, Substantive Due Process and a Right to Clone, or Patient Protection and Managed Care could conceivably be of interest to area residents.

The meaning of "fugitive" took on another dimension in the aftermath of the devastation on September 11, 2001. On September 14, 2001, President George W. Bush issued Proclamation 1463, declaring a national emergency by reason of the terrorist attacks. The vulnerability of electronic government publications, databases, and records did not originate with the 9/11 tragedy. However, the US Government's procedural response to it in terms of openness precipitated the removal of thousands of important government documents and information resources from the Web. In many instances, these web-based editions were the only official depository copies disseminated. Between September 11, 2001, through mid-October, 2001, US Government agencies and the Executive Office of the President either immediately shut down or restricted access to electronic government information. The Federal Aviation Administration took away its enforcement files, which included information about security violations, and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission removed publications that had detailed specifications for energy facilities. The Centers for Disease Control and its Agency for Toxic Substance and Disease Registry removed individual reports from agency sites. A number of Department of Transportation agencies, including the Bureau of Transportation Statistics' Geographic Information Services, the National Imagery and Mapping Agency, and the International Nuclear Safety Center, all removed maps or at least from their web sites. The list of agencies is long, and ranges from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry to the US Geological Survey. Selected actions by some of the agencies may seem justified. In many cases, it has been excessive. The Department of Energy eliminated over 15,500 reports from its DOE Information Bridge. These resources were part of the Federal Depository Library Program electronic collection. The Environment Protection Agency and the Department of Defense would sweep up what it considers sensitive, accessible e-information, journalists, lawyers, librarians, and many Americans really, wondered why the Department of Education, the Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Internal Revenue Service felt compelled to do so.

**THE GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE GETS INTO THE ACT**

The Government Printing Office rarely asks Federal Depositories to remove paper or other tangible format publications from the shelves. Since 1995, twenty tangible items, out of a total of 230,000 titles disseminated, have been recalled or withdrawn. In October, 2001, the Government Printing Office instructed libraries to "withdraw and destroy" a webliography, done by James Jacobs, Data, Government and GIS Services, UCSD Libraries. It points to problems, including the lack of a statutory definition, individual agency interpretation, and the potential expansion of the applicability of the "sensitive but unclassified" label. The Office of Management and Budget is apparently developing guidelines. In light of increased secrecy and further limitations on government information, many activist groups, think tanks, organizations and professional associations, and individuals
... are speaking out, lobbying and campaigning, and challenging such restrictions in the courts and elsewhere. For example, the American Library Association adopted a resolution on Security and Access to Government Information at its June 2003 annual conference. Another group, The Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, has released Homefront Confidential: How the War on Terrorism Affects Access to Information, a White Paper, March 2003 (see RCFP’s web site). On a related note, the Information Security Oversight Office’s fiscal year 2002 Report to the President indicates that 23,745,329 classification actions – original and derivative – occurred. This is 2,909,520 more than the previous fiscal year, a 12.2% increase. The Department of Justice reported an increase of 39%. A dramatic jump occurred in fiscal year 2000, when the number of actions went from 8,038,592 in fiscal year 1999 to 22,965,363. This represents an increase of 64.9%, and each successive year, the number has grown.

Stephen Aftergood describes the Bush Administration’s secrecy as an “empirical fact,” and predicts, given the state of military affairs, that this pattern will continue and expand (“The Bush Administration’s Suffocation of Secrecy,” Forward, March 28, 2003).

**Who Am I?**

I am not art or poetry
I am not philosophy, magic, christmas morning
I am not sister, father, mother, neighbor
I am not brother
I am not heart
I am not egg
I am not sun or moon or stars
I am not the wind upon your face
I am not warthiness, compassion, courage
No, not I
I am not serenity
I am not laughter
I am not sunrise or the silver slippers morning
I am not you or she or he
I am not sunrise or the silver slippers morning
I am not laughter
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