
Newsletter of the ACRL Law and Political Science Section
Volume 11, Number 1

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Notes from the Chair

Big Changes in LPSS Meeting Schedules

The Law and Political Science Section is experimenting with a new format for our meetings at the coming Midwinter Conference in San Antonio. We will be having an all (actually most) committee meeting on Saturday morning, January 20th. We will begin at 9:30am with an extremely brief executive committee meeting and then will move directly in to our committee meetings. ACRL will be working with us and ALA to help us get one room with sufficient space and tables to make this a comfortable arrangement. We will be scheduled until 12:30pm and that should allow for plenty of time for all of the committees to work through their agendas. We will follow the same schedule at the Annual Conference and will evaluate our experience at the general membership meeting. At Midwinter our wrap-up general business meeting will be scheduled for Monday morning, January 22 from 9:30am to 11am.

There will be two exceptions to the all committee meeting. ACRL has been chosen as a model for tracking programs for the New York Conference. Patricia Breivak (president of ACRL) has asked that all the program committees meet together and they will be meeting on Saturday morning. The second exception is the Library Instruction Committee. At Midwinter that committee has traditionally sponsored a discussion session. They will do so again this year. They will be scheduled for Sunday afternoon from 2 to 4. The first hour will be used for discussion and will then be followed by a business meeting. They will be publicizing the discussion topic before the Midwinter meeting. Please watch LPSS-L for details.

Speaking of LPSS-L, I hope that all of you have signed up for the listserv (See sign-on instruction in this issue if you have not signed on yet). We are conducting more of our section business on the listserv and hope that the use of electronic communication can make our meeting time more efficient and productive. Committee chairs will be posting information about agendas and ongoing business before the Midwinter meeting, so the list is the best way to keep up-to-date.

I would like to promote our New York Program which is still in its early planning stages. We are focusing on the 1996 political campaign and the use of cyberspace by the candidates. Lucia Snowhill is chairing the committee and I know she would welcome any suggestions members might have. We will be looking for speakers in the New York City area. She can be reached at: snowhill@library.ucsb.edu.

As always, the section welcomes participation from members who have not yet become active. There are several committees looking for new members. If you are interested in serving on a committee, please contact Cathy Doyle, the section Vice-Chair, at: Doyle@powhatan.cc.cnu.edu.

I am looking forward to an exciting and fast year as chair of the section. I will be posting updates to the listserv and am looking forward to seeing everyone in San Antonio.

--Judy Solberg, University of Maryland
jsl45@umail.umd.edu

Awards

Marta Lange/CQ Award

The Marta Lange/CQ Award Committee held its first formal meeting at the Chicago Conference. With the first award cycle set to begin immediately after the conference, the major topic of discussion was publicizing the award. While ALA and ACRL will do general publicity in the context of their awards programs, there is a need for targeted publicity to scholarly and professional groups in law and political science. Various groups were identified, and award information will be posted to their listservs and newsletters. The award flyer that was on display at the LPSS breakfast will shortly be posted to LPSS-L. Please feel free to repost it to listservs you think would be appropriate.

The committee also discussed the format of the first awards presentation, which will occur at the New York annual conference. One possibility is a continental breakfast/reception preceding the LPSS "all committee" meeting on Saturday morning. Another possibility is to have the presentation during the "all committee" meeting, perhaps at the end of the general session; the award presentation could be followed by a brief reception, after which the concurrent meetings could begin. Congressional Quarterly will probably agree to sponsor whatever we decide to do. If you have ideas about this, please post them to lpss-l.

--Ron Heckart, University of California, Berkeley
rheckart@library.berkeley.edu

Reviews

International Affairs from the US State Department

Government documents on foreign policy and international affairs have always served researchers, students, and agency officials as valuable, primary sources of information. Unfortunately, accessing these treasures has traditionally proved to be a daunting task. For many patrons, especially at libraries with non-integrated depository collections, resources such as the Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS) series, declassified documents, or major policy speeches, remain obscured from public view. Now, thanks to digital technology, access is only a mouse click away!

For Internet users, the State Department has teamed up with the University of Illinois at Chicago Main Library to create the Department of State Foreign Affairs Network (DOSFAN). DOSFAN provides a massive archive of texts, news, and summaries on a variety of topics related to foreign and international affairs. Major reference works and serials are also available, including annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices. Access is available through the World Wide Web at: <http://dosfan.lib.uic.edu/> or via gopher at: <gopher://dosfan.lib.uic.edu>.

The advantage of the web server lies in its Apple Web Search and graphical front-end. The web site also includes photographs of department officials and a pictorial tour of the agency. To locate materials, the user types natural language queries in the search template, and may also narrow the search by selecting particular types of information, such as treaties, historical texts, or business affairs. The primary archive, however, resides on the gopher server, which users can browse by navigating several layers of well organized menus. The gopher may also be searched, though not as efficiently as the web server. Over a dozen directories on the gopher point visitors to materials ranging from business and economic information to White House documents on foreign relations. Note that travel advisories are maintained through a separate cooperative agreement, by St. Olaf College at: <gopher://gopher.stolaf.edu:70/11/Internet%20Resources/US-State-Department-Travel-Advisories>.

Alternately, the State Department publishes the quarterly US Foreign Affairs on CD-ROM, or USFAC. Depository libraries may select this "hard copy" for free from the GPO. Others may purchase the discs for \$28.00 (\$35.00 outside the US), or subscribe annually for the quarterly updates for \$80.00 (\$100.00 foreign). USFAX archives older material and contains documents initially released on DOSFAN. The CD generally reflects a three to four month time lag between the release of source material and publication of the disc. Thus, DOSFAN compliments USFAC by providing current and updated information in real time. USFAC, in contrast, serves essentially the archive role.

The subject arrangement of USFAC is similar to DOSFAN, with slight differences. All documents and charts are in plain ASCII text, though the disc contains files, from selected texts, in the more readable Portable Document File (PDF) format. These later files, located in the `adobe.pdf` directory, require the use of the Adobe Acrobat Reader, supplied for free on the disc

itself. Currently, only recent editions of Dispatch Weekly Magazine and the Background Notes series are available as PDF files.

Unlike DOSFAN, the USFAC CD contains a powerful search and retrieval software. Upon start up, the program opens with a query template. Users may take advantage of several advanced options, or just enter keywords at the cursor in the name/word search box. Alternatively, searchers may type keywords in fields for speaker, country, subject, dates, etc. The software allows both Boolean logic and wildcards. For more advanced options, or for a list of searchable fields, users should view or print the detailed readme file on the disc.

Perhaps the greatest value of the archive is the ease in obtaining obscure or hard to locate materials of primary significance to US history, politics, and international relations. The State Department indeed deserves high praise for the release of this one-stop archival database. Undoubtedly, the public benefits richly from information services of this caliber. Government agencies, including state, local, and international, should follow the State Department's lead in seeking partnerships with public service institutions. Libraries, moreover, should follow the lead of UIC and St. Olaf to guarantee, and even enhance, public access to government information.

--Larry Schankman
lschank@clark.net

Index to Legal Periodicals and Books

Published by H.W. Wilson Company, 950 University Avenue, Bronx, N.Y. 10452. Began with v.1--19--.

The Index to Legal Periodicals and Books (known as Index to Legal Periodicals until October 1994) indexes periodicals published in the USA, Puerto Rico, Canada, Great Britain, Ireland, Australia, and New Zealand. Beginning with its February 1994 issue, the index broadened its scope to include books recently published in the US, Canada, Great Britain, Ireland, Australia, and New Zealand. This index covers more than 560 English language law and law related journals from the countries mentioned above. A seven person Editorial Advisory Committee, consisting of attorneys and law professors (some with a master's in Library Science), meet to select new journal titles for inclusion in the index. The format includes author and subject index entries arranged in a single alphabet. The most specific subject heading is used whenever possible. The index utilizes many "see" and "see also" references. The subjects and cross references used in indexing are listed in each annual cumulative volume. Multiple authors are indexed and full bibliographic descriptions appear under each joint author.

The index appears in 11 monthly issues (none in September) with the monthly and quarterly paper issues being replaced by the cumulated annual bound volumes. Three year cumulations are also published as bound volumes. This index is also available in CD-ROM and online versions. The CD-ROM version are available from Wilsondisc or Silverplatter (Westlaw). It may also be accessed through Lexis, Wilsonline, Westlaw, CDP On-line, and OCLC's FirstSearch or EPIC.

An analysis of the overall usability of this index finds it easy to use. It utilizes the format which the publisher, H.W. Wilson, follows in many of the company's other periodical indexes. It also has two unique sections: (1) an alphabetical list of court decisions that are the subject of journal articles, and (2) an alphabetical list of laws that are the subject of journal articles. Also, beginning in February 1994, the index covers recently published books in law and closely related disciplines. This index is useful to many types of researchers including attorneys, law students, college students, and the general public. The addition of books to the database will enhance the value of this reference source and expand its pool of potential users. The interdisciplinary nature of contemporary society means that law is impacted by every issue facing society. Individuals, such as attorneys, students, and researchers must be conversant with these impacts and the availability of an index such as the Index to Legal Periodicals and Books makes this task possible.

--Submitted by the Vendor/Publisher Review Committee

Listserv

LPSS-L

One may subscribe to LPSS-L by sending e-mail to: listserv@lists.acs.ohio-state.edu. The subject line should be empty and the body of the message **MUST** contain only the following:
subscribe lpss-l Firstname Lastname
Messages must be sent to: lpss-l@lists.acs.ohio-state.edu

--Patricia McCandless, Ohio State University
mccandl@magnus.acs.ohio-state.edu

Highlights from Chicago

LPSS 20th Anniversary Breakfast

The LPSS 20th Anniversary Breakfast, sponsored by Congressional Quarterly, was a success on all counts. About fifty-five LPSS members and a sprinkling of CQ staffers were in attendance at the Palmer House. The keynote speaker was Neil Skene, editor and publisher of Congressional Quarterly. A central theme of his remarks, peppered with humorous asides on the Washington political scene, was that the era of the information intermediary is not over, and that in fact the need is greater than ever for intermediaries who can help make sense of the flood of information inundating the end user. Information companies like Congressional Quarterly, he asserted, will survive and prosper not by contributing to the flood, but by presenting information fairly and accurately. He noted that libraries will likely survive and prosper by following the same course, and that journalists and librarians share a high calling in this regard.

Mr. Skene also made the formal announcement of the new Marta Lange/CQ Award, thus marking the formal start of an ongoing partnership between CQ and LPSS.

Kudos to Congressional Quarterly for sponsoring the breakfast and creating a fine opportunity for LPSS members to network and socialize. An important side benefit of the breakfast was that many LPSS members stayed on for the Executive Board meeting, which immediately followed the breakfast, and a number of others signed on to LPSS committees.

Executive Board and General Membership Meetings

Two topics dominated discussion at the LPSS Executive Board and General Membership meetings. One was a just-released ALA reorganization proposal and an accompanying proposal on reinventing the ALA conference. At the core of the reorganization proposal is a plan to make four occupation-based "societies" (academic, school, public, and specialized) the basis of ALA membership. It was not clear how subject-based sections like LPSS would fare in the proposal. Would LPSS remain an organized unit within the new academic society, or would it become an informal specialized interest group? It was emphasized that the proposal is in a formative stage and that the details remain to be worked out. It is safe to say that the proposal will be widely discussed in the months ahead and will likely be much revised.

The proposal for reinventing the ALA conference is focused on reducing the number of meetings and programs, and on promoting cooperative, theme-based programming. There was general support for the proposal, the underlying goals of which the LPSS Executive Board has supported for some time.

The second major topic of discussion at the meetings was the switch to the "all committee" format for LPSS meetings. Already used successfully in other ALA units, the all committee format condenses all or nearly all meetings in one block of time. There would be a general meeting and then concurrent meetings of the various LPSS committees in the same space. While the all committee format would be a complication for those serving on more than one LPSS committee, it has the great advantage of freeing up time to do other things at conferences. LPSS will implement the all committee format beginning with the upcoming midwinter meeting in San Antonio. At this point the plan is that the all committee meeting will happen Saturday morning, and will be followed by a wind-up Executive Board meeting on Monday. Switching to the all committee format will give new impetus to using lpss-l and e-mail distribution lists for LPSS committee work. If you have thoughts or comments on the all committee format, please post them to lpss-l.

There were also reports from LPSS committee chairs, and reports from the LPSS liaisons to AALL and GODORT. Merle Slyhoff reported that hot issues at AALL are the outsourcing of library services at law firms and the proposed new uniform citation format, developed in response to West's proprietary claims on its format. Brian Carpenter reported that GODORT is dealing with continued legislative assaults on the GPO and the depository program, and was much concerned that there seemed to be no appropriate niche for GODORT in the proposed ALA reorganization scheme.

--Ron Heckart

Marta Lange/CQ Award: Nomination/Application Criteria

This award recognizes an academic or law librarian who, through research, other creative activity, or service to the profession, makes distinguished contributions to bibliography and information service in law or political science. This award honors Marta Lange, 1990/91 ACRL LPSS Chair, whose exceptional talents as a leader were enhanced by a wonderful collegial spirit. Her bright career, cut short in a fatal automobile accident in 1992, was an inspiration to others and a model of professional service.

Award: \$1,000 and a plaque donated by Congressional Quarterly, Inc. The jury is the LPSS Marta Lange/CQ Award Committee.

Criteria: Nominees should have achieved distinction in one or more of the following areas:

1. Planning and implementing a model bibliography/information services program in a law or political science library.
2. History of contributions to the field through research, publications and other activities displaying active participation in the advancement of law/political science librarianship.
3. Service to the profession through ACRL or related regional and national organizations.
4. Promotion or development of an education program for law and political science librarianship that has served as a model for other courses and programs.

Submission Procedure: Nomination should include: 1) a letter of nomination including your name, address, and phone number as well as the name and address of the nominee; 2) narrative supporting the nomination; and 3) a current vita.

Individuals may nominate themselves or others. Send 5 copies to the LPSS Marta Lange/CQ Award Committee Chair: Ronald Heckart, IGS Library, 109 Moses Hall #2370, University of California, Berkeley, CA 94720-2370. If you have any questions, contact Ronald Heckart at (510) 643-6445.

Law and Political Science Information Resources of Interest

Nuremberg War Crimes Trials Online: A CD-ROM

From: Aristarchus Knowledge Industries, P.O. Box 45610, Seattle, WA 98105

Phone: 1-800-435-8221 **Price:** \$995

Government Information on the Internet

From: Forthcoming from Neal Shuman, Inc.

Look in the November issue of *American Libraries* for more information

Gophers:

NATO: gopher.nato.int

From NATO's Integrated Data Service

Human Rights: gopher.igc.apc.org:70/11/igc

From the Institute of Global Communications

Midwinter Conference Meeting Schedule
Please remember to join your friends and colleagues at the LPSS Social!!!!!!

Friday, January 19th

LPSS Social 5:00pm-7:00pm
Hyatt Regency, San Antonio
The Landing

Saturday, January 20th

All Committee Meeting 9:30am-12:30pm

Sunday, January 21st

Library Instruction Committee 2:00pm-4:00pm

Monday, January 22nd

General Business Meeting 9:30am-11:00am

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