

**ALA Annual 2007
Washington, DC**

Preliminary LPSS event schedule

Saturday, June 23

Executive committee meeting: 10:30 am-noon.

Annual program: "Can Blogs be Trusted?"
1:30-3:30 pm.

Marta Lange/CQ Press Award reception
(note time, format change): 4:30-6:30
pm. Details and invitations to be
distributed via LPSS-L. *RSVP required.*

Sunday, June 24

All-committee meetings: 8-10:00 am.

8-9:00:

- annual program (DC)
- membership
- review & planning
- vendor/publisher review

9-10:00:

- annual program (Anaheim)
- publications
- instruction
- nominations (2008 election cycle)

General membership meeting: 10:30-11:30
am. Door prizes to be awarded.

Presentation/discussion: "Blogs and related
technologies." 4-5:30 pm.

Monday, June 25

WESS program cosponsored by LPSS: "The
European Union Today: Forging European
Identity." 10:30 am-12:30 pm. (See
<<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~wessweb>>.)

All locations to be announced.

Watch LPSS-L for details on a Cato Institute
reception Sunday night.

*Read the minutes of the Midwinter
2007 (Seattle) business meetings on
the LPSS website:
<<http://www.ala.org/acrl/lpss/>>.*

LPSS 2007 annual program

Can blogs be trusted?

Erik Estep

Yes? No? Only liberal ones? Only conservative ones? Only ones by
librarians?

Jason Zengerle, senior editor at *The New Republic*, Eric Alterman, host
of the blog *Altercation*, and a special guest librarian/blogger will have
answers for these questions about political weblogs at the LPSS annual
program in Washington, DC, Saturday afternoon, June 23. Watch the
LPSS listserv for location information.

As political science and law librarians we are custodians of political
information. Whether it is a student who asks you how to cite <<http://andrewsullivan.theatlantic.com/>>, or a professor who wants to start his
own blog, or even a request to include a blog in your OPAC, it is important
to know about this phenomenon. It is here to stay.

This panel will go beyond the basics and give you a sense of what blogging
is like from the trenches.

Zengerle covered the Daily Kos convention for *The New Republic*. A
columnist for *The Nation* and author of several books, Alterman has writ-
ten incisively about weblogs for many years.

Librarian Jessamyn West (creator of the *librarian.net* blog), originally
scheduled, withdrew from the panel for personal reasons. A
replacement had not been secured by *News* press time.

This program is a must for anyone interested in librarianship, technology,
and politics. Do yourself a favor and bring some non-LPSS members along
with you but be sure and arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of the
presentation; it is first come, first served, and LPSS cannot guarantee you
a seat. And come with questions of your own – even if you get all the
answers there will be something to talk about. You will not be
disappointed.

LPSS panel presentation and discussion:

Blogs and related technologies

Sunday June 24, 4-5:30 pm
Location TBA

Blogs: Who Reads 'em? Jennie Gerke, University of Colorado, Boulder

Blogs for Anticipatory Reference and User Awareness. Jennie M.
Burroughs, University of Montana

Philadelphia: City of Brotherly Love and Political Blogging. Julie Still,
Rutgers University

Blogs...now Wikis? What's Next in Social Software. Cathy Carpenter,
Georgia Tech

Section chair's message:***Information literacy's real-world implications***

Kathi Carlisle Fountain

Last spring, my typical day revolved around researching the latest information on Tamoxifen's long-term side effects, the options for treating ovarian cysts, or advising women of the risks of hormone therapy during menopause. I consulted our drug reference books, used MedlinePlus or PubMed to find some up-to-date study that a patient might understand, or copied pages out of *Our Bodies, Ourselves* to send to a particular woman.

You see, at that time, I was spending my sabbatical interning with a women's health interest group, the National Women's Health Network, in Washington, DC. In its clearinghouse, four interns devoted each day to finding information to help individual women make their own health decisions. Instead of consulting full-text subscription databases, an academic reference collection, or a million-volume library collection, we relied on our wits, the internet, and a book collection that could fit in my living room.

In my day to day work at the Network, I saw first-hand the importance of sending our students into the world with information literacy skills. The three interns I worked with, all in their early twenties, were either just finished or were finishing college. Two had public health backgrounds and one studied art in college. I, of course, knew about politics.

All of us had a lot to learn about the topics we would confront, but we all used our information literacy skills to help women get the health information they needed.

When we first arrived, we did background reading to get familiar with commonly asked questions. We learned which books would best answer most questions in the course of our work. When the books had gaps, we sought out more up to date information online from reputable sources.

Since the Network's mission is to advocate for scientifically sound policy, medications, and treatments for women's health concerns, we needed to ensure that whatever information we used met the high standards of our organization. Although we could search PubMed, we had few other online resources that we knew we could trust implicitly. We had to rely on our good sense to help us recognize drug company marketing in "women's health information" sites and tell the difference between *proven* results and *predicted* results in scientific literature.

What I witnessed when working with these college students and recent grads was this: all of the time and energy we devote to teaching information literacy is extraordinarily valuable. Sending our students into internships and careers with a sense of how to find, evaluate, and use information effectively is *the* challenge of this era. (Well, they could use some writing help, too, but that's a job for another profession.)

Not all students will need to find scholarly articles after they graduate, but they will have some authentic, personal information need, and they will need to find

quality, reliable sources. They may need to know the most common treatments for their own illness, background on their political candidates, or statistics to support a grant application at the local police station. Luckily, we are the people who will help them be successful.

This is why I am so pleased to announce that the LPSS Executive Committee endorsed the "Political Science Research Competency Guidelines" in January of this year. This document helps bridge the gap between information literacy theory and practice. Alongside the ACRL learning outcomes, examples illustrate the application of those outcomes in the fields of political science, public administration, law, criminal justice, and civic education.

We hope that you, as practitioners, will use this document as you work to integrate information literacy into the political science curriculum on your campus. You are training our future policy makers (or their staff), activists, researchers, scholars, citizens, and health information interns. We hope this tool helps you achieve your mission.

You can find the "Political Science Research Competency Guidelines" on the LPSS homepage <<http://www.ala.org/acrl/lpss/>>.

Thanks

In the three years it took to develop the Political Science Research Competency Guidelines, Barbara Norelli provided the leadership on the Education Task Force necessary to keep the committee members moving forward on this project. Under her excellent direction, she, John Hernandez, Lorena O'English, Rebecca Ohm, Bruce Pencek, Connie Stoner, and I contributed, edited, talked to our colleagues, led focus groups, and otherwise developed this product. Chris Palazzolo donated his time and conducted a thorough edit of the guidelines and its companion "Repository of Examples."

LPSS members attended multiple focus groups and shaped the guidelines' final structure with their comments. Other members contributed examples of the outcomes to ensure that they represented the various subfields. Many political science faculty, especially our friends in the American Political Science Association, helped us understand the information literacy challenges of their students, and our work reflects their concerns. And, finally, CQ Press championed this project and supported it in both spirit and deed. Their support was critical in forging relationships outside of librarianship.

A big thank-you is due to all of you who have helped us reach this point. We shall all now wait with bated breath to find out if ACRL approves our work.

In the meanwhile, make your travel plans to join us at ALA Annual in Washington, DC. We have a terrific schedule of events lined up, including an all-star blogger panel on Saturday, June 23, and a corresponding panel the next afternoon on blogging with your peers. Please join us.

LIBRARIANS AFIELD

From the editor

GO UNTO THE DISCIPLINES — AND REPORT BACK

Bruce Pencek

To the degree this edition has a theme, it is our members' work with organizations outside ALA.

Lucy Lyons's report and bibliography from the ISA meetings calls attention to a specialized organization within the broad domain of political science.

Elsewhere in this issue are reports from the American Political Science Association teaching conference in February and a summary of the joint LPSS-GODORT preconference (a.k.a. "short course") at the APSA annual meetings in Chicago this coming August.

As I write, the American Society for Public Administration annual meetings just ended. LPSS belongs there, and at the public administration teaching conference every May.

Attention to the law side of LPSS has ebbed in the past few years. We need to know more about public law scholarship, publishing, and teaching within social science organizations as well as across professional legal education and, perhaps, practice.

So go out to those meetings and tell LPSS about what you saw, heard, and did.

As an instruction and reference librarian, I find the value of going to disciplinary conferences is strongest in the interaction at the panel level with faculty and students. That's where the trends reveal themselves, with broader ideological and methodological diversity than you'll find at most ALA events.

It's also where we can make the occasional point on behalf of our collections, our craft, and our contributions as fellow academics.

Patrolling the book displays as a selector has parallel benefits. Even though book displays at disciplinary conferences skew to titles publishers want to have assigned in courses the range on display gives a thumbnail view of trends in the discipline. And the discount book-order forms are useful ways to save some firm-order money.

For those who find value in being active in organizations, a lot can come from working with like-minded people in a relevant APSA section — which is why LPSS has for several years had a presence in the Political Science Education section at APSA Annuals and the Teaching and Learning Conferences.

(See EDITORIAL NOTE, page 6)

International Studies Association panels give global perspectives on policy, scholarship, blogs

Lucy Eleanor Lyons

As many of us have discovered, attendance at a subject-specific conference, as opposed to exclusive attendance at conferences for librarians, can be immensely valuable. For example, the annual conference of the American Political Science Association is an opportunity to (among other things) better grasp the current needs of those whose work we seek to support.

There are other opportunities LPSS members should consider. I attended the 48th Annual Convention of the International Studies Association (ISA) in Chicago, Feb. 28 and March 3.

Almost upon arrival, I realized that the ISA is not a subset of the APSA. Although the APSA includes international relations, it is the American-centered fields that dominate (hence the "Perestroika" movement). Even if this were not true, however, the chief characteristic of the ISA would still greatly distinguish it from the APSA — that is, not only is the dominant emphasis on international studies, there is also a prominent presence of international attendees.

[See ISA PANELS, page 7]

APSA Teaching & Learning Conference tracks methodology and grad education

Elizabeth L. White and LeRoy LaFleur

The **Teaching Research Methods track** at the 2007 American Political Science Association Teaching and Learning Conference sought to tackle what many students detest as dry, overly statistical, and widely inapplicable beyond the classroom: the research methods course.

The Teaching Research Methods working group sought to share alternatives to traditional teaching of research methods and to brainstorm ways to make the introduction to scholarly research more practical, applicable, and even fun.

Over three days a group of 30 political scientists (and one librarian) shared papers and best practices about obstacles to teaching research methods, exploring alternative paths to instilling research skills into undergraduate students.

Papers presented during the track covered the ways that research methods is taught in a variety of institutions and techniques. Several papers grounded the methods class in the students' experiences, addressing examples of research methods in popular culture, using institutional level service projects and other real-world projects for instructional purposes. Others contrasted mentoring-themed courses for students interested in graduate school and explicitly developed for the purpose of providing guidance through research methods in academic work with courses for students not on an academic career track that aim to provide a general understanding of how research methods fit into everyday life.

Also discussed was how library research and information literacy would fit into research methods courses that retain the traditional emphasis on establishing proficiency with statistical modeling and the composition of data-gathering tools.

(See APSA TLC RECOMMENDATIONS, page 4)

Tell your faculty:**LPSS, GODORT prepare preconference for August APSA meetings in Chicago**

Bruce Pencek

In an experiment in outreach, LPSS and the ALA Government Documents Roundtable will jointly offer a "short course" on "Maximizing the Value of Your Library for Scholarship and Teaching" for participants in the 2007 annual meetings of the American Political Science Association.

The event will be held Wednesday afternoon, Aug. 29, at the Chicago-Kent College of Law, 565 W. Adams St., a 10-minute walk west from the Loop.

There will be no charge to participants, but registration will be capped at 30. Participants who register between June 15 and Aug. 1 will be able to shape the program by selecting from a menu of lab and discussion topics.

The event is one of 17 short courses posted on the APSA conference website <http://www.apsanet.org/section_222.cfm>.

Registration will be by email to Bruce Pencek <bpencek@vt.edu> or Kevin McClure <kmclure@kentlaw.edu>.

The event will run in concurrent tracks. Lab sessions will address power-searching techniques in core databases such as Worldwide Political Science Abstracts and the new-look Lexis-Nexis, along with important resources on the free Web. Topics for conversations in the seminar room will include using our new information literacy standards, assignment design, and the hidden political economy of libraries.

The APSA Political Science Education section and Chicago-Kent College of Law are additional sponsors. "I am pleased that the Political Science Education Section can help publicize this great short course," says PSE section chair Michelle D Deardorff.

Presenters will be John Hernandez (Princeton), Kevin McClure (Chicago-Kent), Chris Palazzolo (Emory), Bruce Pencek (Virginia Tech), and Lynne Rudasill (Illinois). McClure and Palazzolo made the local arrangements. Bill Sleeman coordinated on the GODORT side. Pencek chaired the task force that set up the event.

Future APSA annual meetings, 2007-12

2007: Aug. 30-Sept. 2, Chicago.

2008: Aug. 28-31, Boston.

2009: Sept. 3-6, Toronto.

2010: Sept. 2-5, Washington.

2011: Aug. 31-Sept. 4, San Francisco.

2012: Aug. 29-Sept. 2. New Orleans.

APSA TLC recommendations*(Continued from page 3)*

Several of the papers reported on courses that contained little statistical instruction and primarily used the embedding of analytical material to develop critical thinking skills and understanding of the issues involved in the research process.

At the end of the conference, the working group came up with the following recommendations, to be presented to the APSA:

- 1) A more nuanced approach to the teaching of research methods is needed, with different types of research methods courses developed for both graduate school-bound and terminal-degree students.
- 2) Research methods instruction should be integrated across the curriculum, with other political science classes supporting the skills taught in the stand alone research methods course. This requires greater dialog among members of departments, and a whole picture approach to teaching research methods.
- 3) Long-term assessment of teaching methods should be utilized across the curriculum.
- 4) More practical examples of research methods should be integrated into the course, with hands-on student involvement in entire spectrum of research, from compiling a literature review to creating survey modules and analyzing data.
- 5) The importance of becoming involved in campus-wide dialogs on incorporating research into the curriculum, including how a political science research methods course could build upon foundations established in courses in other social sciences.



The focus of the **Graduate Education track** at was on the needs of graduate students in political science and related disciplines. Discusants and presenters represented a diverse range of interests and backgrounds, including retired, tenured and new teaching faculty, departmental administrators, librarians, and graduate students.

In keeping with the design of the conference, the Graduate Education track met for five distinct sessions that each addressed different themes, including teaching strategies, international views, and the use of evidence in graduate education. The presentations and papers themselves covered a wide array of topics.

In addition to Lee LaFleur's presentation on the use of the LPSS Information Literacy Standards for graduate education, other presenters shared their experiences in providing online and hybrid model education, teaching with technology and integrating simulation/role playing into the public administration curriculum.

One presentation in particular detailed an NSF funded Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship (IGERT) program between the Michigan Technological University and Southern University in Louisiana that provided collaborative, interdisciplinary training for public policy and engineering students. Other discussions touched on the importance of providing classroom instruction training for PhD students and the needs and treatment of foreign graduate students with regards to issues of recruitment and retention.

(See TLC GRAD TRACK, page 6)

Redesigned LexisNexis Academic: something old, something new

Mary Gilles

To quote Yogi Berra, "It's déjà vu all over again." That's what some of us may have thought when we first looked at the new LexisNexis Academic Beta version. LexisNexis has undertaken a significant redesign of its academic product, which incorporates many features of the early law school version of Lexis-Nexis.

As a member of the LexisNexis Academic Content Advisory Committee I've been following the redesign. This article will provide information about some of the changes relevant to legal researchers. A different reviewer will provide an evaluation of the redesigned LexisNexis Academic, and its strengths and weaknesses will be provided later.

The Academic Beta became available to subscribing institutions this past spring. Migration to the redesign product is scheduled to be completed in July, and the current version will be disabled in September 2007.

The redesign process has been underway for well over a year and the early stages included user surveys and focus groups. As the redesign has taken shape, webinars and online tutorials have been available to users.

Changes of interest to legal researchers include the ability to search: legal resources and other resources in a single search; all federal and state cases, combined; federal court cases, combined; federal code by topic, such as transportation, labor, bankruptcy, health; and state codes, combined.

The redesign also features the ability to Shepardize all federal and state cases and law review articles. Hotlinks in legal resources such as case decisions and law review footnotes connect users to the source referenced.

Users will be able to download, print, and email the full text of all documents, selected documents, or the current document.

The user interface has been significantly redesigned; this article highlights three types of searches. The database opens at a display with a single search box and a tool bar at the top listing General, News, Legal, Business, and People sources.

A Search icon and a Sources icon appear at the top of most displays. Control icons for Start, Sign Out, Contact Us, and Help appear at the upper right of the screens. A right tool bar features Terms and Conditions and Related Links to user assistance for the specific part of the database being searched.

The initial search screen provides a General Search. The Easy Search option enables the user to do a comprehensive search of all materials in LexisNexis Academic or to select among the various types of resources: U.S. and world publications, wire services, broadcast transcripts, blogs, web publications, company, SEC filings, and legal.

The Power Search enables the user to select specific sources that might not be available on other search forms, to search by field within a document, and to use Terms

and Connectors (Boolean operators, wildcards, and truncation) or Natural Language (a search in plain English or a question).

Search results can be grouped and displayed by category (e.g. newspapers, statistics, cases, law reviews & journals), publication name, subject, industry, company, geography or language. A General Search of all resources on the terms "Guantanamo and enemy combatants" will retrieve cases, statistics, law reviews & journals, newspapers, news transcripts, newswires, etc.

When a user selects Legal sources from the top tool bar the Law Reviews search screen appears. A search box, pull-down list of sources, box to enter a journal title and date range choices comprise the search options. The right tool bar, on all legal searches, provides hotlinks to the legal resource types: Law Reviews; Federal & State Cases; Shepard's Citations; Federal & State Codes; Tax Law; Canadian Court Cases; Canadian Legislation; European Union, Commonwealth & Foreign Nations; and Patents.

The Federal & State Cases search screen features a search box, a pull-down sources list, date choices, and several specialized search options: required terms, case name, citation number, judge's last name, and counsel or firm name. A single search screen facilitates the various types of case searches.

The Sources icon above the top tool bar opens to a screen that enables the user to Browse Sources or Find a Source. The browse option can be limited by Publication Type, News & Business Topics, Industry, or Area of Law. The user can filter by country and topic, and then select a category to view the sources. Coverage and other information are available for each source.

Alternatively, the user can enter the title of a specific source or can enter keywords and then limit by publication type and topic. The user can also view an alphabetic list of sources. After the desired source(s) have been selected the user clicks through to a screen to search those specific sources.

Call for help:

Improve LPSS website

The section's Publications Committee wants more suggestions for enhancing the LPSS website as a resource for section members.

"What we are seeking is substantive content for the website," says committee chair Dennis Lambert.

"A small number of interesting possibilities were submitted in response to an earlier call for ideas," he adds, "but the committee would really like to have a larger pool before moving forward."

Send suggestions to Lambert at <dennis.lambert@villanova.edu>.

PRESENTING...

Here are abstracts of papers librarians authored and presented at the APSA teaching conference in Charlotte Feb. 9-11, 2007. If you present at a disciplinary conference, please send *LPSS News* a copy of the abstract or, better, a low-jargon summary.

Integrating Information Literacy into the Political and Policy Science Curriculum: Standards and Best Practices for Professional Masters Degree Programs

Graduate students enrolled in professional masters degree programs differ considerably from their undergraduate and doctoral level counterparts and present unique challenges for both teaching faculty and librarians who work extensively with these groups. This applies to graduate students in masters level political and policy science programs, who come from a wide array of educational and experiential backgrounds and disciplines.

In 2006 the Law and Political Science Section (LPSS) of the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) continued work on the draft version of the Political Science Research Competency Guidelines, for which focus groups were held at last year's Conference on Teaching and Learning. These guidelines, which are based in part on the ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education, represent a directed attempt to adapt the more general set of research standards and guidelines to the specific needs of students in these academic programs and departments.

The goal of this presentation is to open a dialogue with political and policy science faculty and staff members in attendance at the APSA Conference on Teaching and Learning, about the ways to best integrate library and information research strategies into the course syllabus at levels of mastery appropriate for graduate professional students. The presentation will review concepts related to information literacy and the use of the LPSS Guidelines for the development of a course-integrated library instruction initiative with George Mason University's School of Public Policy.

- LeRoy LaFleur,
Arlington Campus, George Mason University

First Impressions: Information Resources in Political Science Departmental Websites and Syllabi

Syllabi and departmental home pages frequently form the foundation of students' first impressions of a department or class and carry substantial influence on their perceptions of the program and its focus.

Because of this, they offer a wealth of opportunity in setting standards and expectations for students to learn the skills and knowledge necessary to do comprehensive, ethical research. These standards and expectations are especially important to the field of political

science, which requires a wide range of scholarly, non-scholarly, and grey literature (both domestic and international) for thorough research.

This study seeks to understand how information resources and information ethics are being represented in political science syllabi and departmental home pages. It is also an attempt to seek out best practices and present a variety of ways in which departments and faculty can promote information resources and stimulate discussion of research methods in their classes.

- Kirsten L. Allen and Anne C. Osterman
American University

Discover, Retrieve, Forage, Recapitulate: Integrating Modes of Library Research

In an earlier paper (2006) the authors outlined a hypothetical model of the literature-search process that distinguished two modes of knowledge acquisition: discovery and retrieval. Taking issue with the one-dimensionality of conventional discussions of information literacy, we argued that student research, and learning more broadly, is distorted insofar as the move to online information sources isolates information from the physical, spatial, and human cues that help searchers frame and meaningfully integrate the information they gather. Without the framing provided through what we term the "discovery mode," research tends either to become excessively grounded in accepted, all-too-narrow venues of knowledge on the one hand, or it tends to be scattered across amorphous knowledge fields with little if any concern for what links them together and why.

This paper distills the hypothetical model as a diagnostic tool, describing how the authors — one a librarian, the other a professor — redesigned and implemented a research assignment in a senior seminar in international studies. Mindful of the two tendencies, library instruction sessions were designed that addressed issues of content searching and emphasized the virtues of depth and breadth of the research process. Scaffolded assignments were introduced and time in every class session was given over to discussions and exercises expressly concerned with questions of intelligent knowledge acquisition. The paper includes discussion of the authors' assessment techniques and findings from an earlier iteration of the same seminar.

- Bruce Pencek and Scott G. Nelson
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

TLC grad track

(Continued from page 4)

Members from the international community also shared their experiences and progress in other areas. One thread of discussion detailed the use of literature written by diplomats in foreign policy courses at Pontificia Universidade Catolica in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and another highlighted the establishment of an initiative to provide training for first-time university teachers across the European Union.

There were a number of synergies between the presentations including a focus on the development and training of graduate students and instructors in the field. Additionally, strategies for empowering graduate students to play a more active role in their own education and the future of the profession was a common thread.

Access TLC 2007 papers at <http://www.apsanet.org/section_383.cfm>.

No location had been determined (as of February) for next year's TLC, but the speculation at the meeting of the Political Science Education section pointed toward Anaheim. TLC organizers continue to refine the conference's working-group model.

Editorial note

(Continued from page 3)

Just as within ALA, after a while attending panels and business meetings you become known, credible, and part of networks. Perhaps you'll pick up some work refereeing for a journal, meet a collaborator, and strengthen your promotion and tenure dossier.

One sad aspect of crossing boundaries is that it is so one-way. Librarians have many good reasons to venture to the disciplinary meetings, but academic faculty have very few incentives to come to our meetings or write in our journals, and the most relevant meetings, like ACRL, are priced so high as to negate the benefit.

ISA panels prefigure LPSS program on political blogs

(Continued from page 3)

The 3,700 convention participants, in 830 panels, came from approximately 63 countries. The perspectives of academics from all regions of the world were heard, including those from countries such as Australia, China, Israel, Kazakhstan, the Netherlands, Mexico, Serbia, Singapore, and Turkey.

The theme of this year's conference was "Politics, Policy and Responsible Scholarship." Numerous roundtables were devoted to responsibility, and to related topics such as ethics, within the academic community, in terms of both writing and teaching.

ISA events were not, however, narrowly defined by the conference theme. With the LPSS's main program — "Can blogs be trusted?" — for the 2007 ALA annual meeting in mind, I found numerous panels related to new media and politics, which included presentations such as "Unleashing the Blogs of War: New Media and New Conflict." Others



approached the topic broadly in studies of e-government and information technology development.

Still others used countries as case studies to analyze the evolution of media. I attended, for example, a fascinating panel called "New Media, New Politics: Mediating Change and Challenging the Status Quo" which included three speakers who covered China, Egypt, and India. I left with a deep doubt in the pervasive American belief that an increase in weblogs, Internet access, and other new media leads to an increase in American-style democracy.

What are blogs to political scientists? ISA scholars are analyzing, examining, debating, and describing blogs as information gathering tools for professional journalists, as triggers in altering the political function of journalism, and as generators of media salience for ignored stories. Blogs are also knowledge sharing platforms that negate physical and political borders; agenda setters; shapers of public opinion; monitors of real-time collective response; distributors of expertise; and disseminators of unofficial information, with an ability to bypass established information filters.

Additionally, blogs are thought to be mouthpieces for political opposition, measurements of free expression, and tools of empowerment, mass mobilization, democratization, and transparency, as well as tools of misinformation and propaganda that lack accountability for accuracy, verification, reliability and other standards of professional journalism, and that, in the end, provide information overload to such a point that we are potentially less-informed citizens than before.

On one fact all seem in agreement: The lasting effects of blogs upon economics, political systems, and academic scholarship is still quite unclear.

Here are a number of papers particularly relevant to the upcoming LPSS program:

- Brodsky, Lauren. "Internet News, the Changing Nature of Journalism and Misinformation: What are the Risks for Scholars?"
- Bruyninckx, Hans. "Environmental Accidents in China: Virtual Reality's Challenge to the Central State."
- Der Derian, James, and Santos, John. "Terror Tales, Information Operations, and New Media." (abstract only; contact authors for full-text)
- Fiddner, Dighton. "Government Policy as a Necessary Condition of Digital Equality."
- Holmes, Marcus. and Bozovic, George. "The Politics of Developing an Information Society: The Case of Serbia."
- Lacy, Mark. "My man Salam...Tells it like he sees it, sees it like I can't: The Baghdad Blog, Minor Literatures and Global Politics" (abstract only; contact author for full-text)
- Pallaris, Christopher. and Costigan, Sean. "Shared Knowledge, Joint Pursuits: International Relations Beyond the Age of Information."
- Radsch, Courtney. "Speaking Truth to Power: The Changing Role of Journalism in Egypt."
- Rogerson, Kenneth. "The Impact of Political Ideology and Government Structure on Information Technology Policy: A Comparison of Technologically Sophisticated Countries with Differing Types of Governments."
- Wehrenfennig, Daniel. "'Do You Hear Me Now?' — The Use of Modern Communication Technology for Conflict Management"

If you are interested in any of the papers or abstracts above, please do not hesitate to contact me at <l-lyons@northwestern.edu> or visit the ISA site at <<http://archive.allacademic.com/one/isa/isa07/index.php?cmd=isa07>>; no password needed. (Note: It is unclear how long the paper archives remain available at the ISA site.)

(Editor's note: Take a look at Ms Lyons's related reflections in the March 2007 Journal of Academic Librarianship: "The Dilemma for Academic Librarians with Collection Development Responsibilities: A Comparison of the Value of Attending Library Conferences versus Academic Conferences.")

Submission deadline for fall edition

The deadline for the next edition of the *LPSS News*, subject to decisions by ACRL, will be around Sept. 10. Expect to receive the *News* by mail about mid-November. For the next spring's edition, figure March 10 and mid-May, respectively.

Email articles, illustrations (at least 300 dpi resolution, grayscale preferred), and correspondence to the editor at <bpencek@vt.edu>.

Length: most articles should run fewer than 400 words. This issue's announcement of the preconference at ASPA is about 250 words; the chair's message is about 850.

Write in short paragraphs. Use the most direct, energetic style you can muster. Have a point, and don't be reluctant to have a point of view, too.

And above all, be interesting (or at least useful) to LPSS members.

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