

Delving into the U.S. Congressional Serial Set - Transcript

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Document has 350, 51 through 150 and they would all be found in numerical order but because some things might be large like, for example, the Civil War Atlas which is volume 2998, because that's folio, that's going to be taken out and bound separately. So with the 96 Congress, there was a rule created that said they'll have to be the same size. Reports and document numbers carry through each Congress except for what I note here and for the 15 through 59th congresses with documents and for reports with 16 through 46, they renumber each session. They start at one all over again and like the 16th Congress first section, the 16th Congress second section and if there's a third session, they renumber those as well. When you're looking at citations, usually the serials and volume numbers are not part of the citation. So I don't really like that. Probably none of you do if you have ever encountered that. You have to go back and then find out what the volume number is for each session. So this is an example from 105th Congress and you can see that it's a Senate report 105-eight. The 105 minutes from the 105th Congress and the eight means it was the eighth Senate report. From that Congress. So you have set up at the top. Was interesting here, I love this is this is a report from 104th Congress but published in 105th. So that could be a little bit of a confusion for you a user. This is the numerical list and schedule of volumes for the 105th Congress and it shows you that Senate reports one through 22 are bound into volumes 14402. So there is various findings that takes you back in time. You can also see them on the spines of volumes. So on the left, I'll see if I can find my notes here. Sorry, you can see my little mouse moving around as I try to remember which place to look. On the left, you can see volume 718. You can also see above the year, 1853, 1854, it's sessional volume number six. So this is volume 718, and it has two documents in it. You can see that on this particular volume. It has cost executive document 37 and has executive document 38 in it. You can see up in the red band at the top, it gives you first session and I can't read the part on the right. In the middle, you can see them all the different serial set volume numbers up at the top sort of left. You can see volume 4841, etc. Once you have got to the volumes that GPO does more recently, you can see fairly clearly on the spine with the 14488, you have house document 255 to 279 and it's the 105th Congress second session. So I think on the middle shelf you should be able to see all of that as well. I think it will tell you for a lot of these what the document number it is. So sometimes you can put a scan through and see on the spine with the volume number is or what documents are bound in each volume number, but it's not always that easy so it's good to have that volume number. So the 1909 checklist also has, you can see him looking at page 156 of the 1909 checklist. It tells you what's found in the first couple of volumes from that session and the journals always start out each Congress. So they reserve those few volumes and publish them later on and have those filled in. And then I give you the order in which they are bound. When you get to the citation, most citations show the title of the publication, the date of the publication. The reporter document number they usually do not, as I said before, don't show the serial set volume number or the session number. I think I've only ever seen sessional volume numbers shown by mistake once you get beyond like it starts in the 16th Congress. Once you get beyond the 20th Congress, they are really easy to spot because then the [Indiscernible] will be way too low for the serial set volume. Of course I remember the days when we had to go look up the serial set volume number in the publication. The good news is that assuming that each of the reports and documents for individually indexed in what you are using online, the serial set volume number isn't as important in the online environment. Because generally you're looking up the report or the document number. There you go. So here's an example of a citation. You have got the U.S. Congress, the committee, the title. 93rd Congress, second session. The year and the report number. This happens to be over 1000 pages [Indiscernible]. So now I'm going to talk about

the individual publication types within the serial sets. I'm going to try to be really specific in my language in these slides about whether I'm talking about publications broadly or reports documents, journals etc. here. The journals, I actually probably use journals more than most other folks in my not because of the sorts of questions I would get in the job that I have. They are the minutes of what happened each day. You can see roll call votes, motions made, with the executive branch communications. The biggest problem with the journals was that until quite recently, probably and I don't remember the date but I think it's within the last 20 years or so. There wasn't a table of contents. And then I think only one chamber added a table of contents. So you just need to scroll through or open it up and go to the back to find content or to find the indexes. So the helpful hints for the Journal, at the top of each page, the date is listed or there was the time. Where they listed by section. You sort of have to get a sense of what's going on with the section. The subject index starts at two thirds of the way through the volume so if you need to find, for example, all the agriculture bills were everything a particular member of Congress did, you need to go back and find the index at the back of the volume. There is always a bill index. Is just a matter of how it's handled within that journal. In the early years, the bill index was incorporated into the subject index so for example, you find house built under letter H, [Indiscernible] bills under F. And I don't know where they are now but you would find the bill index is first and then I think they were later or it may vary by chamber. So you have to keep an open mind as you're looking for the bill sometimes. This is in effect what I would use myself is the bill index is. The journals are included in the serial set up through 1952, and then before this. So after 1953, and before the 14th Congress, they are published not match. Each session, and the Journal, each session starts for the role number of who was there. After the role number, they will give you the proceedings of each day including roll call and you can see the following numbers quoted for and there's Emerson Etheridge. So in 1861, at some point after that they started doing columns which is a lot easier to see the rollcall notes. There we go. Sorry. You can also see bill numbers noted. So in addition to using the bill index at the back of the volume, if you're using an online version, you can do a fulltext search to come up with mentions of the bill number. So this is an example of one of the house bill indexes and so you can see it goes all the way back through and tells you what page. For example, house bill 16 is listed on and reported that if you turn your head to the left, not back the house when it passed the house, past of the Senate. Other proceedings and then when it was approved. So if you went back and looked, you might see if there is a report number, it would be included in that. Sorry. All right. So that was the last page on the drive. Going to reports. Sorry, I'm having my problem with my pages turning at the same time. Sorry. All right. Reports comprise about 75% of the content by title in the serial set. They tend to be shorter, so documents might actually make up a lot in terms of the donation. So there's a lot of really short reports in there. They get longer as they come up to the present time. So reports can be on public bills, private bills, on special topics. Reports on public bills generally report to the committee recommending that a bill be passed and that is not true of private bills. A conference report is generally most sought after of the reports because they explain the differences between the House and the Senate version. Many conference reports also contain a public joint explanatory statement or statement of the manager that explains the various elements of the conferees' agreement. So they will say for the first part, we went here, we went there. and at the end they will also list the members of the conference committee. There aren't that many conference reports in the 19th century and I think conference reports really contained a table of contents because when I was looking for examples of this, the first conference report I came on at a table of contents which was not something I had ever seen before. So mostly there aren't tables of contents, but, of course, some to have tables of contents. So [Indiscernible] and Easton boat public publications of this is updated by information from Rich McKinney, published in the law library and society of DC and the URL and citation is included in the footnotes. They tell you what happens in the different series here. House reports confusingly in the 15th Congress are published as house documents. The 16th to the 56th Congress, they are published as house reports. From the 57th to the 95th

Congress, they are put into three different categories listed here. Then from the 96th Congress forward, there are published as house reports. You see the same thing under Senate reports. Just slightly different years because of course it's not confusing enough that they do all of these different things. Here are some examples of reports. You can see the bill number that they refer to just underneath the title, by the date. So here we have from 1862, on emancipation and colonization. Then we have the exportation of distilled spirits in the 43rd Congress. So just two different examples. You can see, you have the company of Bill 2081 and it references it a couple of times in that. There is also reports on private bills and it's not something I ever worked a whole lot with until I sort of started working with an online version of the serial set. They make up about 51% of the reports found in the serial set. They tend to be really short. Just a couple of pages. Private legislation is for the benefit of a specific person or entity, rather than the general public. You can see I just sort of prior to 1950, they tended to be on land claims, military justice and pension. I think there's one I used to look at and I thought it was, it was either in the lab it was either invalid or invalid. I think it was invalid. I think it was invalid pensions. I think that's what it was. Yeah, invalid pensions. Anyway. Unlike reports on public bills, reports on private bills are published with both favorable and recommending passage or not recommending passage and they generally [Indiscernible] there. so of course here is private relief of Ruth Hairston. This is more recent and this was on a survivor annuity. So she apparently missed a filing deadline for her survivor annuity. There are also some for Paula and I don't know how to pronounce her last name. And then for the Oregon short line railroad company. Relief for the Oregon short line railroad company and it gives you the bill number. Then our final one and you can see there's going to be a whole story here, the quantity of coffee from New York to Amsterdam. Exit accepting the execution of the bond for exportation which was not executed within the 20 days required by law. So they are asking for relief on that. So documents. This is where, for main libraries, not law libraries, this is where a lot of the interest comes in because of the types of materials that are in the second and third bullet more specifically. Material originating in Congress tends to be rules of committees, ceremonial things, general business. Publications from the executive committee, executive branch departments and then reports of special investigations and research authorized by the president. That research authorized by the president, that category is a little fuzzy with that second bullet when we are looking at things and don't necessarily have the background on them. One of the other areas is the annual reports of executive branch agencies. That's also very interesting, but there's more than just annual reports of executive branch agencies and we will go look at a number of examples. I will show you some resources where you can find more of that stuff. Then the fourth bullet is material originating for private Congress and different organizations. They tend to have congressional charters and that's why they are included. Then Senate treaty documents. Again, we have a little bit, it's not just that they are published at House documents all the time. From the 30th to the 53rd Congress, they are published as House executive documents and House miscellaneous documents. In this case, the Congress from the 30th to 53rd, the Senate executive documents and Senate miscellaneous documents. Again, the footnote for the slide is at the end. So this is examples of material originating in Congress. Investigating the Tennessee Valley Authority and then the Senate. So that's, I'm sorry. On the right side we have an example of the Senate of committee rules and Senate rules. The committee on rules publication there. There you go. Now we get into I call this the good stuff because this is all the unexpected stuff. So it can be a fabulous resource if you don't necessarily have all the great historical collections. Not. I tend to different serial publications in here. State of the union messages. If you went back, you would find out until about 1914, the president actually send the state of the union message via letter and they state that in the [Indiscernible]. He also sent along all sorts of different things with it like foreign relations of the U.S. Different annual reports we also have included from the executive branch, the economic report of the president. Statistical abstract of the U.S. That's run of this particular abstract from 1878 through 1968. Foreign relations in the United States from 1861 through I think the date is 1953 on that published outside the serial set. Navy

register and other military registers. A great source for genealogist. Names may be published by first name and last name or [Indiscernible] of course. Mineral yearbook and consular reports. Savings and trust. Water supply papers. Ethnology Bureau bulletins. Geological survey. Immigration statistics . So before the INS published the INS yearbook but before it was the INS, they had passengers on cruise ships because everybody came over on a cruise ship. So they had data on that. Office of the Indian affairs, ethnology Bureau, [Indiscernible] think of all the different bureaus and agencies. And then there are many many more annual reports listed than just those few but those are some of the very interesting ones. A great resource for the executive branch documents is Worcester colleges guide, U.S. zero set finding list. I pulled up agency series found in the serial set and this is just an alphabetical listing. If you click through, [Indiscernible], you could see the years in the serial set and it would give you the volume numbers that each report is in. So you can see at the agency series, this is what I'm looking at. You also have SU doc classes found in the serial set, serial set agency finding list and additional resources. So these are fabulous resources if you don't have [Indiscernible] so you should bookmark this Wooster colleges guide. With your college.edu and then search for serial set and you should be able to find it. But fabulous resource. It was off-line while they were converting it to a [Indiscernible] guide but I'm glad it's there now. This was the book that I and many other people did that really goes through a lot of documents that were published within the serial set. Yes, there are some reports in here but I think 60 to 70% of this talks about documents in here. So this is the table of contents, looking through. Let me catch my slides here. All right. More on publications from the executive branch departments. Most of the reports on Western exploration were published as part of the serial set. Not all of them. So things like the visit to the Grand Canyon, the exploration of Yellowstone National Park. The war of rebellion records. I'm sure everybody in the southern United States and not the United States has that pulled out separately. It's not like those are published in 30 different volumes or I think it's 200 some volumes. They are published throughout the serial set so they are not published in numerical order. I think they scanned two or 3000 volumes for 2000 volumes I should say. The Atlas is one of the last volumes and that's volume 2998. It's actually two parts. There's also information on infrastructure so highways and transportation. All sorts of things on river systems. So, for example, I live in the West. In fact I live in Oregon. There is about seven volumes on the Columbia River system, dams and not just the Columbia but then all of the tributaries. So you get that with the Missouri, the Mississippi. Other large river systems. They will study the [Indiscernible], the fish so they are actually a fabulous resource. You also get improvement of harbors or for creation of harbors. There's a place just north of where we are about half an hour where there's a study and they were thinking about putting a harbor on the north side of the nod back into the Pacific Ocean and did not do it. But there's a study about not back in Oregon and everybody knows that that's great, there is something there. But they have studied it I think back in 1905 and decided not to do anything. Of course material on bridges, building, repair. Annual reports from the Smithsonian. Also on different issues. Eugenics, women's rights, Asian exclusion are special issues of the day and of course scandals that have happened along the way. There you go. Leaving behind is one of the more exciting areas, we get the material originating outside the government. These are some different examples of nongovernmental materials so the American historical Association. Annual report of Boy Scouts. Annual report and of course materials dealing with DC. For the Boy Scouts report, it's from the 93rd Congress, second session. Of course I didn't write the serial set volume down in my notes. It is 251. You can see you have the information on the other ones. And then looking at Senate treaty documents. Those are only included after 1979. Before that, they were not published as part of the serial set. So the Senate treaty documents contained the treaty and then any material that was forwarded by the president so the Senate could ratify the treaty. From the 96th Congress forward, I'm sorry, until 1981 they were called Senate executive documents. So if you're looking for them, you have to look for them under that application there are two examples of Senate treaty documents. I'm looking for my not back for my screen here. There it is. Sorry. Maps and

illustrations. So there are more than 320,000 illustrations of various types. Little outline drawings, black and white images . Full-color images. Full-page images are often not included in the pagination and the verso as well, because of the paper type. So you will get a good paper for printing and then you will get the quality of paper for the images on them. You can see an example of that here. Page 31 and page 32. This is from volume 505, the [Indiscernible] expedition. Notice also, and we see more examples on the next slide, that many images, most images will have captions. So the caption information can be searchable either through the metadata, depending on who you're serial set provider is or through fulltext searching. Some reports also have a list of color plates in them, depending on what they are. So for example the survey of the Mexican boundary as a page that lists all of the color [Indiscernible] in them. When searching the PDF, don't specify the case because the captions be in all caps. Here are just some examples of the lovely, lovely illustrations . Again, I have footnotes at the back of the presentation. Just to show you the variety of where these come from, the fish in the upper right-hand corner, I actually did a presentation on fish in the serial set with a colleague from the OSU Newport campus, Miriam [Indiscernible]. This is from the Perry expedition to Japan from volume 703. Below that is an Indian burial site from the Pacific Railroad commission report. And the Pacific Railroad commission looked at all of the maps and information they had to decide the best route for railroads [Indiscernible]. In the bottom right is Mount Wrangell up in Alaska, and that is from an expedition, it names all of them but it's various rivers in Alaska and volume [Indiscernible]. The 1900 report of the Governor of the Hawaii and its volume for the 104. In the middle, we have the petroglyphs of Owen Valley, Virginia, and that's the annual report of the American ethnology. [Indiscernible]. We have the raising grapes from the yearbook of agriculture. There is also, I remember seeing, somebody had published a whole collection of botanical prints and I have the URL from the U.S. CA site and there are other sites that will sell these botanical prints. But if you need some for some reason, you can download them. You can search them, etc. So that's volume 3693. Than the volume center, we have a report on the highway needs of the national [Indiscernible]. Is volume 11318 and that's an example of a [Indiscernible] curve in Tennessee. It gives you in the citation. So three days after the picture was made to illustrate the report, a motorcyclist died because a car hit a disabled 9 who had to stop because the shoulder was too narrow. So that was for improvement. Now there are more than 56,000 maps and about 70,000 map sheets. There is one map that I'm aware of, I think it was a weather map that had more than 100 map sheets that went with the map title. Most of them are just one sheet, but there are some that have two. Like the illustrations, some are simple outline maps. Others are a little more complex like the volume in the middle which is from the 1891 annual report of the Smithsonian. The Gulfstream. From 1945 to 1960. Volume 3001. On the left, we have from volume 861, the survey of the Mexican boundary. It's a [Indiscernible] and geology map of the United States and the territories between the Mississippi and the Pacific ocean and then part of Mexico. On the right is a map of non-Mac Iowa. Volume 7194 and it's a [Indiscernible] map. You can see on the right side all the different kinds of soils highlighted there. It also shows you where there are dwellings. So I actually looked at this. I was looking to see, I had some ancestors who are retired. Not too much in death. I'm not crazy about it yet but I started working in genealogy and some of my relatives settled, if I can get my back over to the right in this area and there's a little cemetery in that area. I think if you have been [Indiscernible] on that map, it would show you where those things were. The map is used for things other than soil but they are also quite pretty. So that's volume 7194. There's a lot of different soil maps and then of course soil surveys started being bound outside the serial set. If I can find this again. There we go. Not all serial set providers list each map in the metadata. With the OCR, titles and information listed on the map should be searchable, but if you have a commercial serial set, you will want to check and see whether all the map data is in there. but know that even with good metadata, not all regions are shown on the map. So, for example, this is the geographic divisions of the world. It doesn't necessarily list North America, South America, etc. in there. It doesn't list Commonwealth countries. You have to sort of know I'm looking at world map and

it's probably because it's a world map, it will have everywhere in the world except of course in this case, Antarctica. Okay. So two more slides and we are right on 45 minutes. This is good. The content of the serial set is governed by legislation and politics from the joint committee of printing. Regulated both content and format. One of the most important pieces of legislation was the 1907 legislation and that was also the land grants university legislation. Land grants institution legislation. So libraries, libraries may have received two copies of executive branch documents so they may have left a version of the serial set and then they may have published a version, they may have received a departmental version outside the serial set and kept that separately. But with the 1907 legislation, libraries are only going to get one version of that. So it took a few years. You will still see a lot of things trickling in to like 1913, 1914, but then it was basically discontinued. There are a couple of notable exceptions. The two that I know about offhand or foreign relations of the U.S. which continued in the serial set until the 1950s, and then also the [Indiscernible] of the U.S. which was included until 1976. So earlier, I misspoke. The 19th century really is the Halcion time for those documents in the serial set and then after 1907, a lot of the non-congressional material that might have been included was distributed outside the serial set. So non-congressional material or my definition of non-congressional material is material created within agency for different [Indiscernible]. But you still also do see those annual reports from congressional chartered materials. Is the executive branch materials that really stopped being published in the serial set for the most part. Also remember then, when you are looking, when you're using the serial set, pagination can be tricky. So sometimes there are multiple parts within the same document together and each part may start on page 1. I think this is true. I think I have the right example here. I'm just going to give survey [Indiscernible] boundary again. There may be three or four parts. Each may start, yeah, there's my example down on the page. [Indiscernible]. So the boundary is 607 pages. 607 PDF pages. So there's actually fewer pages in the report if you look at the pagination, because there are so many illustrations. There illustrations. So the end of part one, page 258, is on PDF page 380. So there's more than 100 pages of illustrations, maps. Also there may be an introduction in there. Part two starts on PDF page 383 with its own introduction, table of contents and pagination. To be sure you know what you're being, what's being cited. Illustrations, maps, usually not included in the volume pagination. They of course might be included in the pagination for a PDF. So it gets a little bit tricky. So try to be sure about what you are citing. I want to talk a little bit about how to learn more about the serial set. How to expand your knowledge. Of course you can do a review of the literature. You can research the publication types. Some of that, for example, you might be able to find CRS reports on specific publication types. There are older government document textbooks that might talk about them a bit. And researching the types of legislation. So private legislation [Indiscernible] reports. There are reports materials from other vendors like CQ's guide to Congress. They have background on this kind of thing as well. And old textbooks and indexes. For example, the 1909 checklist has all sorts of information about other indexes that were published before that in the introduction material. So if you have that, you might want to go back and take a look at that and make sure that you've got everything. You have the Intel that you need from that. Of course, you can check out the bibliographies of books that you think should be included in their. One of the things I did when I was learning about the serial set is I literally went through and went decade by decade. The 1880s, 1890s, 1900s, 1910s, 1920s. What kind of information I think would be included in the serial set. What kind of topics I think would be included in the serial set. So the 1910s, you would find something out about the Spanish flu. You would find things about World War I. I thought you would find things about mustard gas in there. I don't think there was anything about mustard gas in the serial set that I could find. So make a list and sit somewhere quietly or if you're in a meeting that's really boring, you can make a list and then what would I find in here? What am I going to find in 1860s, 1870s? Then go back and do some looking around and check to see if you're right. Or generally make a list of subjects you think should be included and then check to see if you are right. Think about the history of your state or the state you were born or states you have worked. Where has the government

been interested in that state? Where has the government sort of been involved? I live in Oregon. We had [Indiscernible] improvement. We don't have any Civil War battles. We have Native American tribes. We have the Columbia River dams. We have tribal lands. We have harbors., I'm sure there must be mining. We also have different sites where different parts of the government have been here. There's an area out by [Indiscernible] which everyone knows is a weapons ground. The sort of thing you used to see if you drive by Highway 84. So think about these things look them up. Find a report. Note what's around them but also your findings. Sorry, hang on a second here. That way, you can learn a little bit more about what's going on in your state and sort of be better at helping [Indiscernible]. The last thing, the very last slide is not everything is included in the serial set. Depending on the issue, it may be covered by other types of congressional publications. So for example, the Reverend Martin Luther King assassination is covered in the congressional record and the investigation which is covered in hearings. Pearl Harbor is covered extensively in hearings. So there really isn't much discussion on that within the serial set. So think about that . Where you actually are going to find the material. After about 1900, there weren't many hearings you really start seeing hearings come on in the 19 9. So before that, more would be covered within the serial set. So okay. Questions? Hallie, what do we have?/Thank you so much Andrea. That was a wonderful presentation. We truly appreciate you coming and presenting on this content. Unfortunately, we can't in fact take questions because of our cap. We have to [Indiscernible].

Okay. All right.? Thank you so much and thank you everyone. Stay tuned for September 28th's release on the serial set collection on government.

I would say if you have a question that can't be answered, you can contact me through linked in and I am happy to see what I can answer for you.

Thanks Andrea. Thanks everyone. [Event Concluded]