



Eat Your Veggies: Sneaking Government Documents into Popular Library Programs





A little bit about CPL...

We've been around for a while

- Created in 1869 as the "Public School Library" for Cleveland
- Joined the FDLP in 1886 (then under the Dept. Of Interior)
- Became a Patent and Trademark Depository Library (now PTRC) in 1871
- We have 28 branches plus the Main Library downtown (including 6 Carnegie library branches!)
- We are part of Clevnet, a consortium of 45 libraries all over northern Ohio
- We have access to over 140 online databases – including Rosetta Stone and Lynda.com
- We are consistently ranked a 5-Star Library by *Library Journal*

And, then there's Gov Docs

- We're one of the smallest departments
 - 3 staff members (clerk, library assistant, dept. supervisor)
 - For comparison: Social Sciences has 7 staff members (2 clerks, 1 library assistant, 2 librarians, 1 senior librarian, dept. supervisor)
- None of our material circulated before 2016
- We're considered the most intimidating subject department in the library
- Mostly "boring" laws and regulations
- ...and taxes

So how do we compete with...

- Author visits?
- Maker Faire?
- Rosetta Stone and Sesame Street Kids e-books?
- Popular movies and best sellers?
- Genealogy clinics?
- Summer Reading Club?
- E-Sports?

Answer:

We don't!



The Government Documents
Department is the supporting
role to CPL's blockbuster
performances.





How do we do it?

Sarah's 5 Steps to inner-department collaboration

1. Find the cool kids.
2. Convince them to let you sit at their table
3. Scrounge up some fun gov docs to prove that you aren't as boring as your reputation says you are
4. Offer to help with a few things here and there
5. Become a vital part of their programming because they realize that government is in everything and we usually have a free handout to go with it.



Step 3

Scrounge up some fun gov docs to prove that you aren't as boring as your reputation says you are

Infiltrate!

Health Fair table



Gov Docs to sneak in

- Free handouts from NIH (or FDA, CDC, etc.)
- Books from the Department of Health and Human Services
- Bookmarks!

Sarah's 5 Steps to inner-department collaboration

1. Find the cool kids.
2. Convince them to let you sit at their table
3. Scrounge up some fun gov docs to prove that you aren't as boring as your reputation says you are
4. Offer to help with a few things here and there
5. Become a vital part of their programming because they realize that government is in everything and we usually have a free handout to go with it.



Step 5

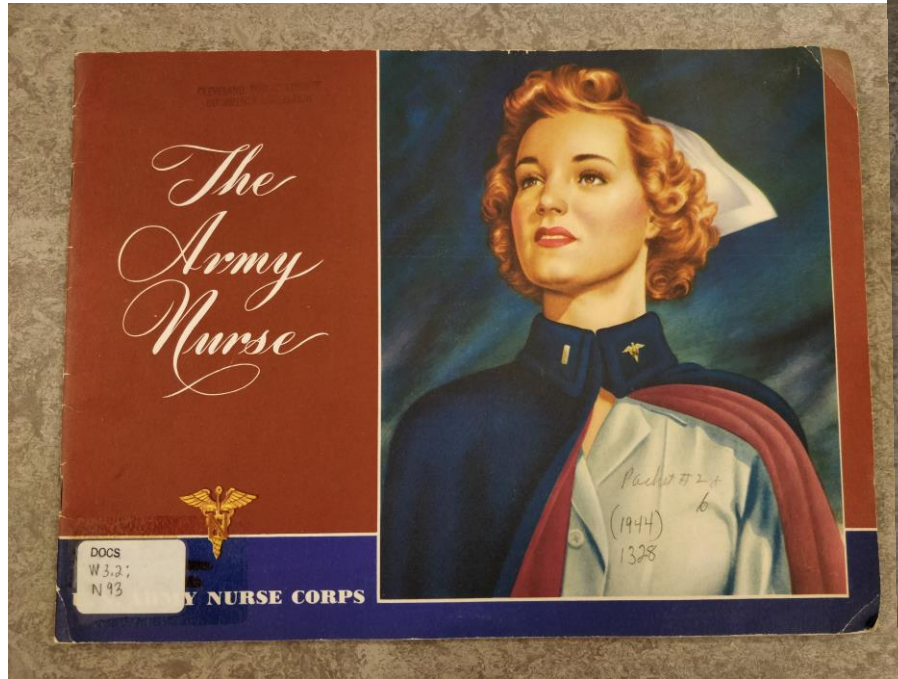
Become a vital part of their programming...

Women at War



- Author Talks
 - Kathryn J. Atwood - Women Heroes of World War I: 16 Remarkable Resisters, Soldiers, Spies, and Medics
- Primary Resources (Government Documents)
 - World War I & II posters
 - Vietnam era pamphlets for enlisted women
- Documentaries
 - PBS MAKERS (Women who make America)
- Fight the Power: Music as a Social Force

Women at War



Class Visits / Research Days



- How to search the Internet & identify authoritative sources
 - Site:gov
- Project specific research
 - Brownfields
- Locating Primary Sources
 - Treaties, Census, etc.

National History Day

- Collaboration with Western Reserve Historical Society (Region 3, Ohio History Day)
- Library Research Day
- Regional and State Judges & Volunteers
- Most used government documents
 - Public Papers of the President
 - Department of Defense publications (WWII, Korean War)
 - Department of Interior – National Landmarks
 - NASA *Hubble* series





Be careful what you wish for....

Hard work is often rewarded with MORE WORK!



Photo credit: www.datadayscle.org

Photo credit: <https://courtneycoverscleveland.com/event/startup-scaleup-2019/>

Photo credit: <https://connect.sla.org/ac2019/home>



Data Days CLE 2019

A different approach

Real library questions asked in the last 3 years:

- I'm doing research on Lorain County farms in the 1800s. Can you tell me how many gallons of milk were produced from 1870-1890?
- I'm a private investigator looking into asbestos for a client. Can you tell me if these ships (with ship names) were on the Great Lakes between 1965 and 1972?
- I have a group of doctors doing research in metropolitan areas on death and disease. Can you tell me how many people died of gastroenteritis in Cleveland in 1896?
- My property taxes just went up because the city re-appraised my house. Can you tell me when this guy was registered with the state, where he lives, and how much money he makes? I want to complain to city council.



Real library questions asked in the last 3 years:

- My firm just bought this building downtown and I need historic photos to create a portfolio for our investors to track the restoration process. Can you get me something from the 1930's?
- I clipped a recipe for Italian Easter Bread from the newspaper and now I can't find it. Can you get me a new copy? I think it was from 1961 or maybe 1960? I don't know if it was the Plain Dealer or the Cleveland Press. But can you help me?
- I went to the Beatles concert when they were here in Cleveland and the next day I flew to New York. For some reason I thought I got into the city in the morning, but I can't remember. Can you tell me the flight that left Cleveland on September 15, 1964?
- My neighborhood is losing its history to these developers. Can you pull photographs from before they put in the highway so I can show my council member what a disaster all the construction causes?



Resources at the Cleveland Public Library

■ Census Records

- Demographics from 1790 to today – including local demographics NOT AVAILABLE ONLINE!
- Individual census records as well as Ancestry.com census access (from CPL in-house computers)

■ Business Records

- Annual Reports from Cleveland companies including the first American Greetings annual report – in the form of a greeting card!
- Cleveland Chamber of Commerce records from the 1940's-1960's
- Historic Daily Stock Price records

■ Photograph Collection

- City Hall photos
- Neighborhood photos through the 1990's

■ Map Collection

- Historical Cleveland Maps



Civic Data Workshop

Federal, State, and Local government resources

- Census – American Fact Finder
- HUD - User Housing and Community Development Research and HUD maps
- Ohio Secretary of State business filings
- Cuyahoga County property data
- City of Cleveland neighborhood planning

CPL – specific resources

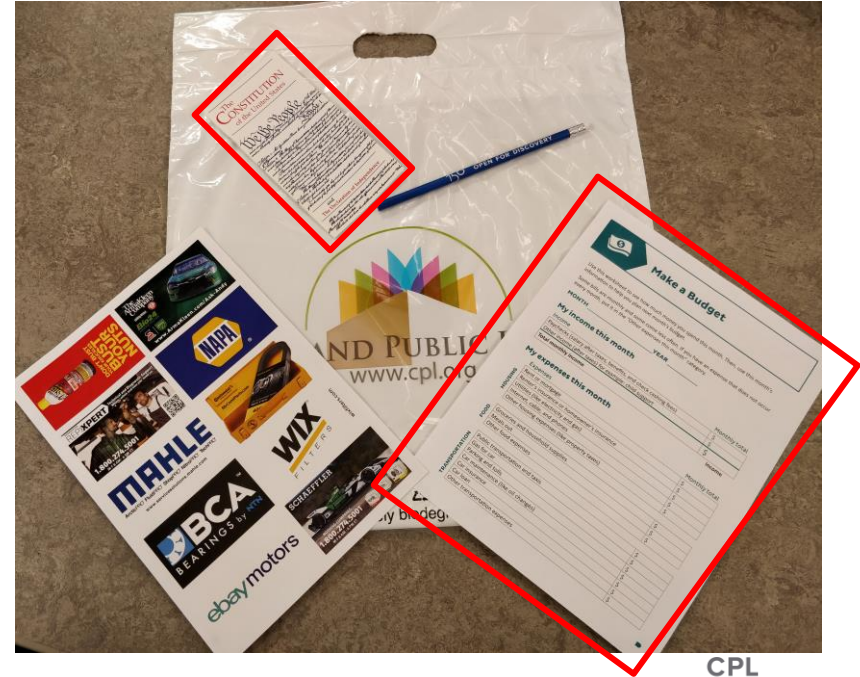
- Historic Maps (Cleveland)
 - Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps
 - G.M. Hopkins Maps
- Mergent archives (business resources)
- Genealogy
 - Cleveland Necrology File and Cleveland News Index



When you're ready
to leave the nest...

...and finally go on your own

All that hard work partnering with other departments and organizations starts to pay off



Mad Skillz Challenge

- Complete a series of tasks/skills
 - Learn how to unclog a toilet using an auger
 - Perform a basic multi-point inspection on a car
 - Name all the symbols on the dash
 - Master the angle grinder, miter saw, and tile cutter
 - Match all the retirement options to the correct definition*
 - Show us that you're a registered voter or register to vote
 - Complete the budget scenario using the CFPB 50-30-20 rule*
 - Show us your library card or sign up for one

- * federal government resources

Partners

- Lowe's
- Ohio Technical College
- Home Repair Resources Center (Cleveland Heights)
- Cuyahoga County Board of Elections*

Tips for success

- Don't be afraid to ASK!
- Don't be afraid to exploit a friendship – you never know if your coffee buddy could use your federal government resources and expertise.
- Get creative - you might not have a budget.
- Think like a patron!
- Use code words
 - "Market research and neighborhood trends" = Census statistics
 - "Health Fair information" = FDA, CDC, and NIH/NIA resources
- Be prepared for failure – and learn from it.
- Have fun!

CPL CLEVELAND
PUBLIC
LIBRARY

150

OPEN FOR
DISCOVERY

Questions?



Contact Information

Sarah Dobransky

Government Documents Supervisor

Cleveland Public Library

sarah.dobransky@cpl.org

(216) 623-2870

Olivia Hoge

Manager, Center for Local and Global History

Cleveland Public Library

olivia.hoge@cpl.org

(216) 623-2864

Thank you!