

2004

Honoring the past and creating a new future

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Recommended Citation

Quinn, Aimée C., "Honoring the past and creating a new future" (2004). *Library Scholarship*. 71.
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Editorial

Honoring the past and creating a new future

This issue of *Journal of Government Information (JGI)* marks the last issue of the journal and the beginning of a newly revised and expanded version of *Government Information Quarterly (GIQ)*. As we noted in Volume 30, no. 1 of *JGI*, *JGI* will be merged into *GIQ* beginning in volume year 2005.

During the 31 years of *JGI*'s existence, appearing first as *Government Publications Review*, it has made a significant contribution to the scholarly study of government information in its many forms, topics, and issues. When the journal appeared, it was one of the first, if not the first, journal entirely devoted to the study and practice of government publications. Founding editor Bernie Fry, a professor at Indiana University, set in motion the development of a professional journal that significantly increased the attention given to government information as an area of scholarly research. His introductory editorial in Volume 1, no. 1 (1973) of *Government Publications Review* stated (p. i):

Papers reporting research and studies, new developments and solutions to long-standing problems, as well as guidance to good practice, require a professional journal to provide the necessary cohesion and leadership in the field. This is the goal of *Government Publications Review*.

Bernie deserves a great deal of credit for having this vision, establishing the journal, and nurturing the development of a scholarly field of inquiry related to government publications and then government information.

Over the years, *GPR*, later as *JGI*, evolved into a well-known, highly respected professional journal that attracted the contributions of leading researchers and practitioners. Indeed, one of the unique aspects of the journal was its ability to bring together a scholarly research perspective with the knowledge and insights of those who actually managed or worked with government information. A review of these volumes of *JGI* is a veritable catalog of the history and development of government information as a field of inquiry and scholarship.

There are too many individuals who have been involved in *JGI* during its history to thank personally. The contributors to the journal, the reviewers, the editors, the editorial staff, the members of the various editorial boards, the publishers, book reviewers, and of course the readers all combined to produce a highly successful journal. To all those who have been directly or indirectly involved in the publication of *JGI*, the current editors offer a well-deserved thank you.

With *JGI* merged into *GIQ* at the beginning of 2005, *GIQ* expects to become the premier scholarly journal related to government information management, access, and policy. *GIQ* will remain a cross-disciplinary, international in scope, and refereed journal that covers the spectrum of government information, from practice to policy at all levels of government within the United States and internationally. The context of life cycle management still provides a powerful means to study government information:

- government information requires policies, procedures, and management as it moves from creation to disposition;
- government information is often a public resource and a public commodity, albeit one that has different characteristics from durable goods and other information resources;
- government information requires management at various stages throughout its life cycle that can involve a number of different organizations (agencies, archives, interest groups, libraries, research institutes); and
- government policies, laws, regulations, and rational public management practices should govern and facilitate government information during its life cycle and remain a strategic asset to government organizations to achieve their goals, missions, and maintain an accessible flow of information to the public.

In the digital and networked environment, these principles remain especially relevant to the study of government information.

The new *GIQ* will be an international, scholarly journal that covers research, policy, and practice related primarily to (1) international, national, provincial, and local government agency interaction with, and management of, the information life cycle; (2) information and telecommunications policy at all levels of government; and (3) access, dissemination, use, and preservation of government information to meet the needs of a wide range of stakeholders and the public.

GIQ is especially interested in original scholarship that (1) analyzes current information policies and practices; (2) presents new developments; (3) provides theoretical and philosophical theses; and (4) discusses current issues and strategies for managing government information-based services and resources. Another focus of interest is research on instructional issues and methodologies related to government information and its role in the educational process. Of particular note is how the above aspects affect the availability, distribution, and preservation of government information. In addition, *GIQ* will offer editorials; best government information practices; state-of-the-art reviews of books; journals; Web sites; electronic resources; and reports germane to the study of government information, and essays from leading researchers, practitioners, policy analysts, and information scientists.

The overall purpose of the enhanced and enlarged *GIQ* is to provide an informed, scholarly, and high-quality publication issued four times per year. *GIQ* will strive to provide a cross-disciplinary perspective to inform and educate readers from a wide range of disciplinary backgrounds. We encourage the readers of *JGI* to become familiar with *GIQ* and contribute to this expanded and evolving journal (see <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/0740624X>). Contributions and correspondence to the editors should be directed to giq@lis.fsu.edu.

While we honor the accomplishments of *JGI*, the newly expanded and invigorated *GIQ* will serve as an important forum for exchanging knowledge regarding government information and telecommunications policy, information and technology management, and other aspects related to government information on a global scale. As the topics and policy issues related to government information become more complex, our challenge is to provide *GIQ* readers with insights, knowledge, and understanding of a range of government information topics and issues. We look forward to *JGI* readers participating in this exchange in the future pages of *GIQ*.

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