

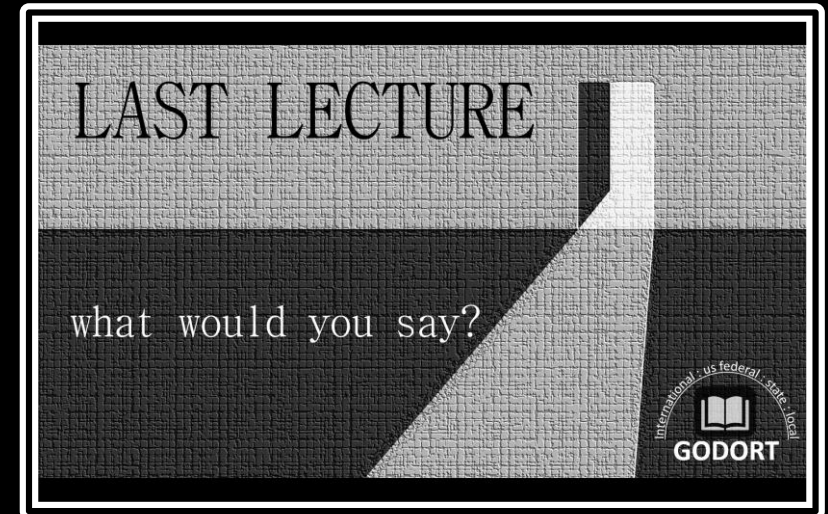
# LAST LECTURE

what would you say?



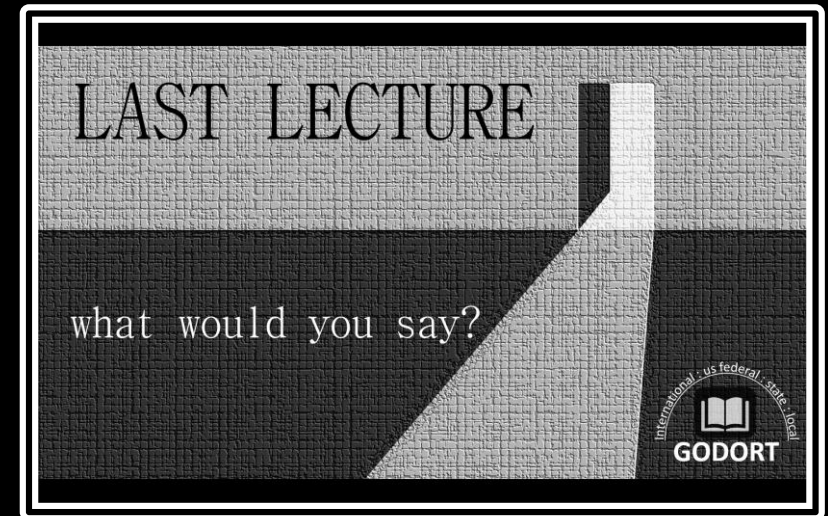
# Linda Johnson

Head of the Government Information Departments  
University of New Hampshire



# Stephanie Braunstein

Head Government Documents Librarian  
Louisiana State University



# Personal Historical Musings

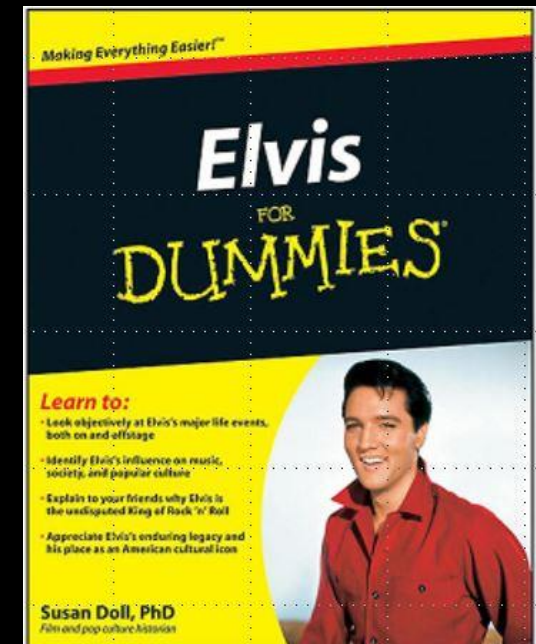
- Federal Government Documents have been good to me—going all the way back to Library 60-B in Sacramento.
- First evidence: scored my own BIG office because of the need for lots of space for receiving those shipments of boxes, bags, and envelopes (Thank you, GPO!).
- Also, first opportunity to really supervise (again, needed an extra body or two to keep up with all of that stuff!).
- SuDoc Classification—an eye-opening experience (provenance, what a concept!).

A day without the Serial Set is a lonely day indeed!

Anyone want to work with me on a publication called *The Serial Set for Dummies*? I know there's a market for that somewhere!

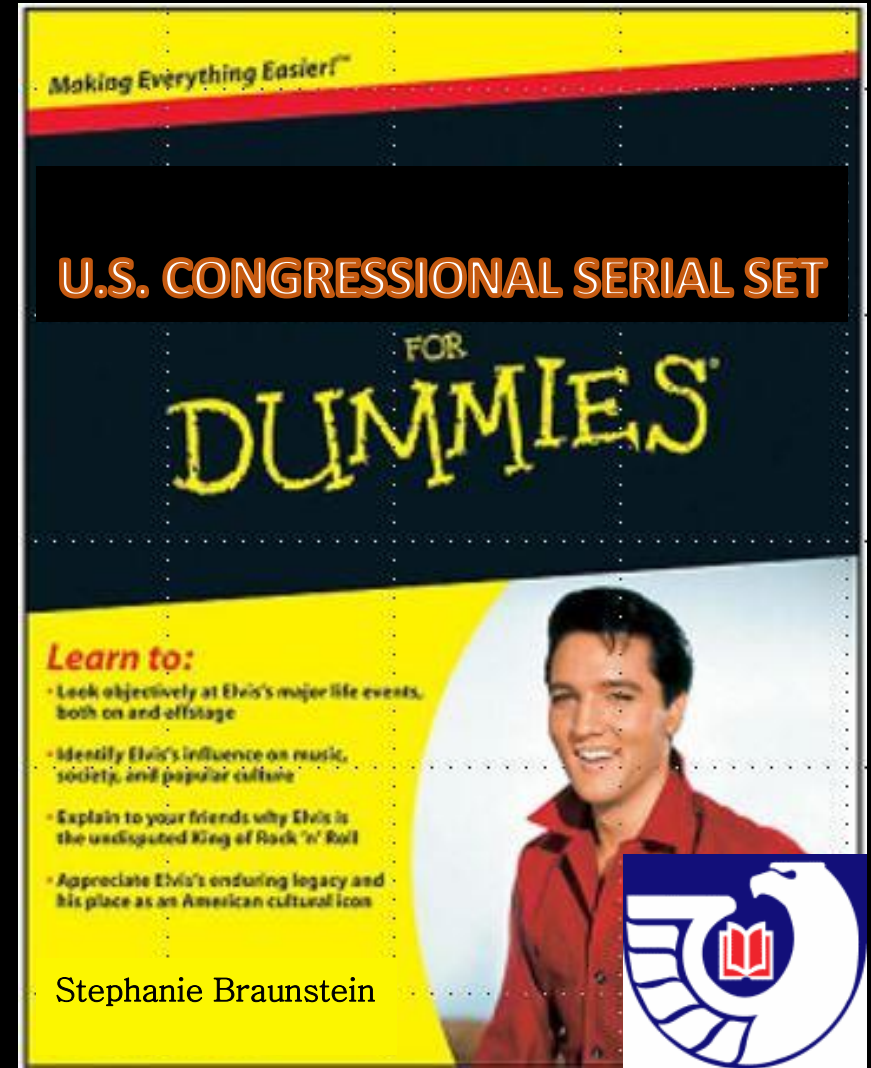
Hey, if there's an *Elvis for Dummies*, anything is possible!

—See next slide.



# *The Serial Set for Dummies*

Elvis (or someone  
who looks like him)  
endorses federal  
government  
information!



# On a more serious note (part one)

- Some of us lament the fact that our ranks are thinning—not simply because of retirements but also because of the tendency by administrators to not replace retirees with dedicated Government Information Librarians.
- This lamentation falls on ears deafened by years of lack of support for libraries (especially academic libraries) as budgets shrink and costs of providing resources balloon.

# On a more serious note (part two)

- Within this world of shrinking resources, administrators are forced to operate from the point of view that “everything is online” and all of those online documents are easy for patrons to use (everyone is computer savvy, right?).
- While many of our own colleagues suggest new and better ways for libraries to provide government information (see, for example, discussions on [\*Free Government Information\*](#)), in some instances, it is already too late for the libraries that have dropped FDL status or have shrunk their collections and staffing to such low levels that potential users of government information are lucky to find anyone in those libraries who can serve even their most basic government information needs.

# And, Finally, Looking Backward—Looking Forward

## Leaving the Field?

- Don't forget how long it took to gather the knowledge that you have.
- Don't forget to acknowledge all who helped you gather that knowledge.
- And continue to share your enthusiasm for the nuggets of amazing information found in those musty old volumes.
- Good Luck with your retirement!

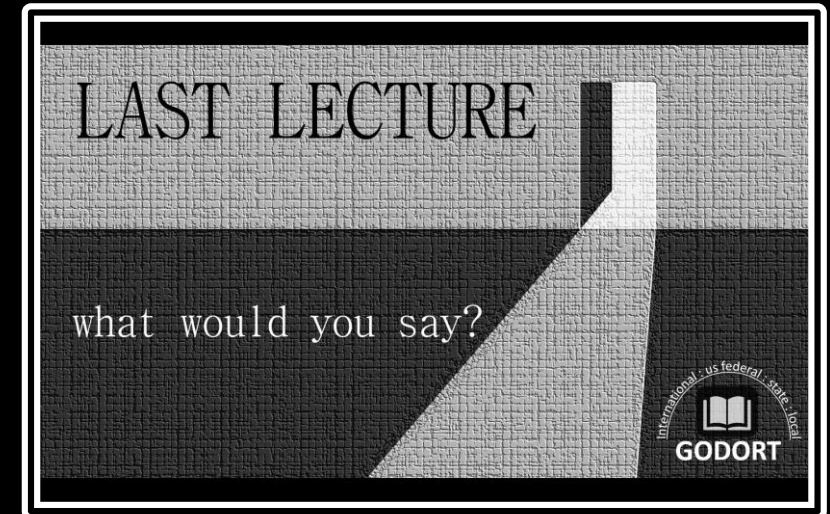
## Recently Entered the Field

- Finding the correct resource is often a group effort; you are not in this alone.
- Formats may come and go, but government information must be kept freely accessible.
- Remember and honor the “Good Old Days,” but keep moving into the future and gathering new knowledge!
- Good Luck carrying on the cause!



# Lori Smith

Government Information Librarian  
Southeastern Louisiana University



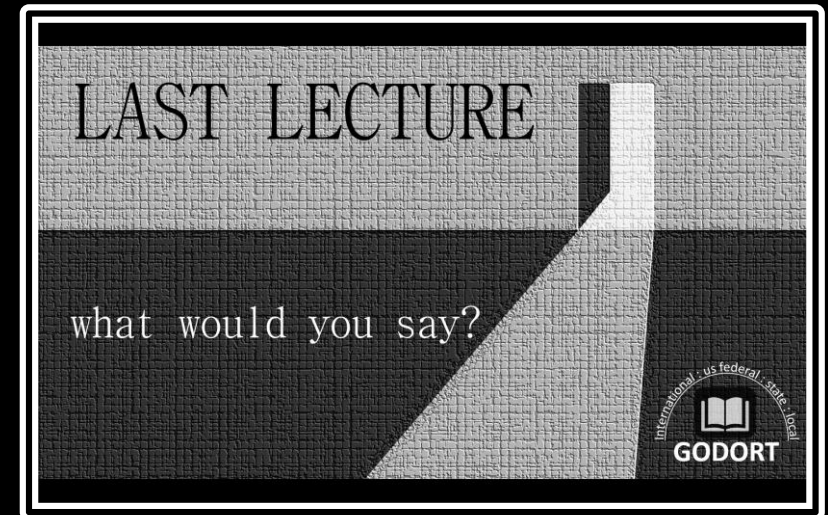
# My Final Thoughts

- The transition from physical to digital -- a good thing or a bad thing?
- Where have all the specialists gone?
- How can I learn this stuff?
- It's important!



# Linda Spiro

Government Information Librarian  
Rice University



# Top 5 Great things about GODORT

1. GovDoc-L for instruction and communication
2. Intelligent, knowledgeable, involved members dedicated to free government information especially founders like Bernadine Abbott Hoduski who is still leading the way
3. Off-shoot projects started by GODORT members like the Free Government Information (FGI) blog and Help! I'm an Accidental Government Information Librarian Webinars (North Carolina Library Association.)
4. GODORT's welcoming and mentoring initiatives (GODORT Buddies and ALA information session explaining the basics of GODORT)
5. Member's willingness to be flexible and change as evidenced by the present movement to re-examine GODORT's structure and functions



# The Issues

1. Communication Tools (not including GovDoc-L or DttP)
  - Online meetings – still dependent on tools the GODORT Chair or committee chairs have institutional access to
  - Wiki – good for collaboration but has limitations for “findability” and capacity
  - ALA Connect – has helped, but it has often taken far too long to get people in the system and only ALA members have full access
2. Follow through
  - with committee projects for the long-term once leadership changes



# Don't lose

Face-to-face meetings once a year.  
Conference calls and online meetings to conduct routine  
business are great, but in-person networking and personal  
connections are vital.

Throughout the years **THANKS** for your:  
Inspiration,  
Advice ,  
Support ,  
And Friendship!

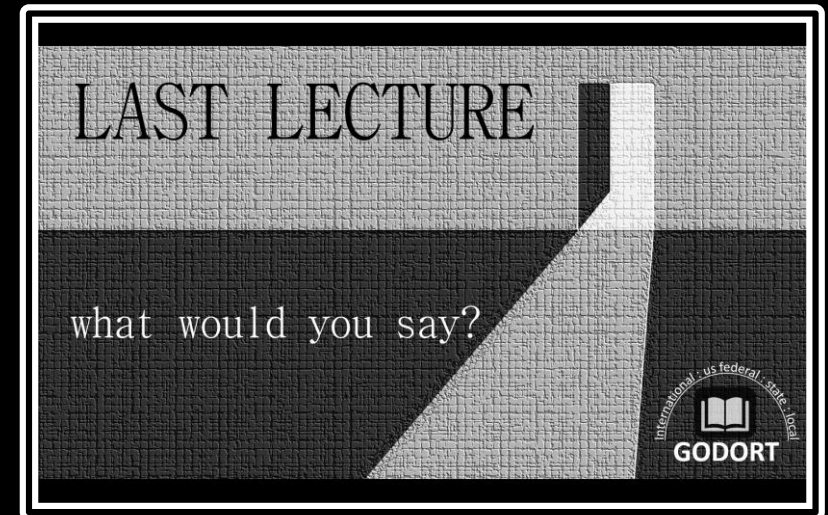
Linda Spiro, [lindas@rice.edu](mailto:lindas@rice.edu)



ALA 2007 ( Shari Laster took the picture )  
Linda Spiro, Siu Min Yu,  
Esther Crawford, Samantha Hager

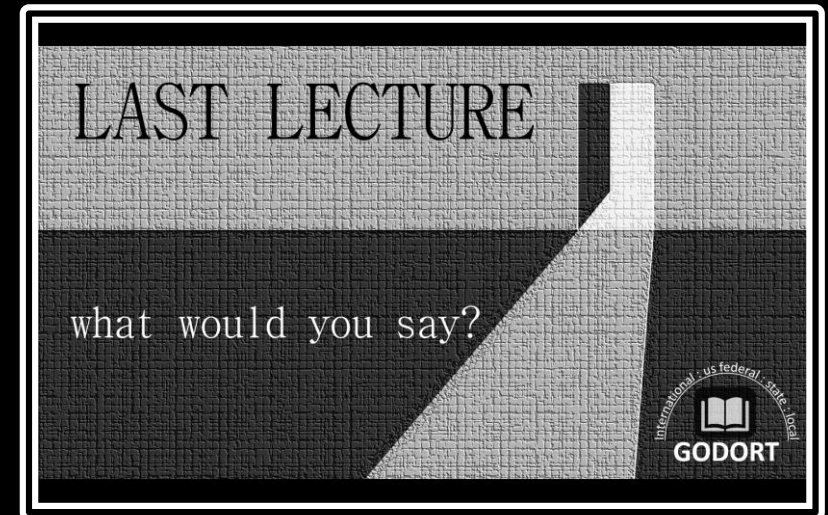
# David Cismowski

Chief of the State Library Services Bureau  
California State Library in Sacramento



# Barbara Miller

Government Documents Librarian  
Oklahoma State University





# Quotable GODORT advice

Words to live by, or, How to move forward in Government Information

Barbara Miller



# Who's on First?

- Know your colleagues in GODORT, but remember
- There are LOTS of players in government information
- Publishers, authors, ALA Council members
- Know all the players : in ALA, FDLP, GPO, ACRL, ARL, etc
- Joint Committee on Printing, Hathi, Trail, GPO/FDLP partnerships, etc.
- Keeping govinfo out there in public access is more important than GODORT, the ALA, the FDLP, so work together



# Keep your friends close and your “enemies” closer

- Wisdom is achieved by pondering different points of view
- Spend time in GODORT but also spend a little time in other units of ALA who are interested in govinfo if you can. Make your “enemies” your friends. Work outside the round table as a liaison!
- Attend DLC if you can
- Network at meetings, get to know those whom you might disagree with



# Don't fire until you see the whites of their eyes

- Don't waste time grumbling about people who are “impossible to work with” and work out a solution around or with them...
- Take time to **learn** about their reasons for their thoughts; get to know them
- Compromise is better than getting your way or blocking all forward movement



# If Moses had been a committee the Israelites would still be in Egypt...

- Take a deep breath and determine to get along before you enter the committee room...
- Keep purpose of committee and who decisions affect at forefront
- Leave grudges, opinions, similar baggage at home
- Think about what YOU, and what GODORT, can best offer to the mix at the table
- Leading us to...



# Know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em

- Present your information, then LISTEN to other points of view
- “The needs of the many outweigh the needs of one” (paraphrased from Mr. Spock)
- Larry Romans, in committee work, knew when he had lost, and moved forward
- Grudges have no place here
- Keep your sense of humor
- And finally...



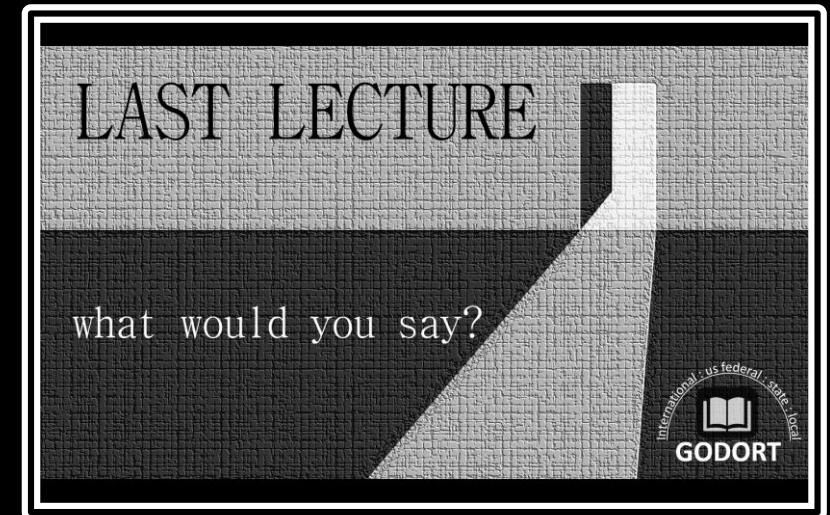
# Keep the home fires burning

- Mentor new GODORT members, but
- Don't infuse YOUR ideas, give them different points of view on issues and let them form opinions
- Give them names to consult for information on certain topics, but
- Encourage them to listen to all players and work towards solutions
- Tell them THEIR opinions are important too!
- And remember, this is a new friend who also is committed to free Government information!



# Kathy Amen

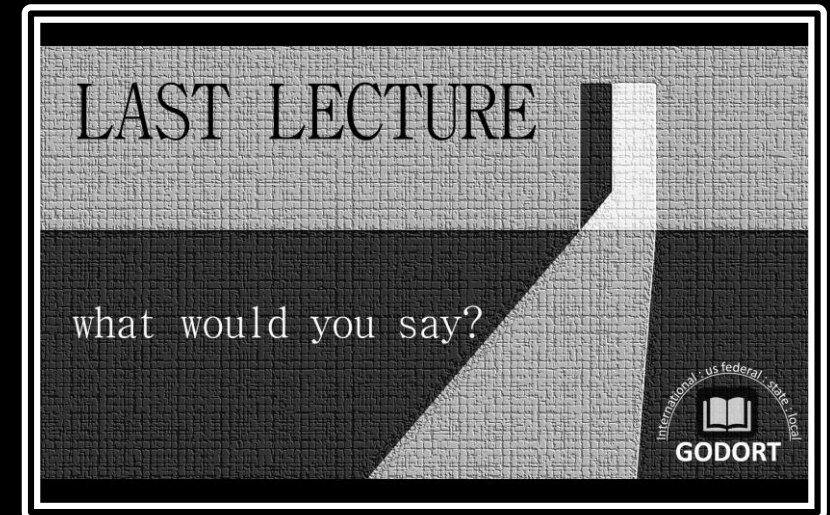
Government Information Librarian  
St. Mary's University





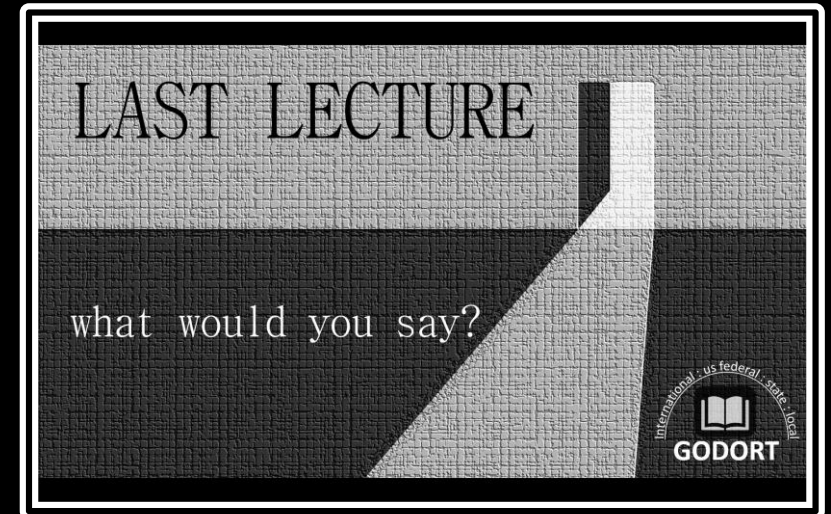
# Kathy's Recommendations:

1. Be flexible
2. Get your hands dirty!
3. Network, network, network
4. Remember the value and importance of your work



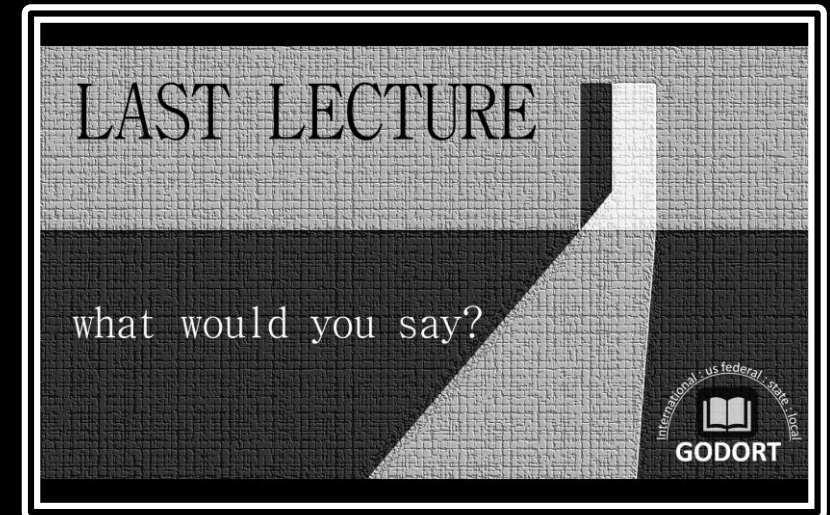
# Cathy Hartman

University of North Texas



# Preservation: What is most at risk?

- Born Digital Government Publications are most at risk of loss
- Community support needed to capture, preserve and provide access to this content



# Mary Alice Baish

Former Superintendent of Documents  
Government Publishing Office

