2005 Spring DLC Educational Program Depository Library 201: Myths and Monsters

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An educational session entitled Depository Library 201: Myths and Monsters was held during the 2005 Spring DLC on April 19, 2005, at 8:30 pm in the Turquoise Room to include the following people:

Moderator:	Janet Scheitle
Presenters:	Tim Byrne, University of Colorado, Boulder
	Janet Fisher, Arizona State Library
Attendees:	About 50-60 attendees were in this session, most of them new government documents librarians or with less than three years experience as a government documents librarian. There was no sign in sheet.

Designed as an intermediate educational program for government documents librarians with over a year of experience, Tim Byrne, University of Colorado, and Janet Fisher, Arizona State Library continued their program in depository basics by presenting some of the commonplace myths that have developed in the Federal Depository Library Program and debunking them. The session also explored the issues that are problematic for the program and offer experienced insight in dealing with them.

Some of the myths that are debunked include:

- Myth: You have to isolate government documents from the rest of the library collection.
- Myth: Government documents collections must be housed in basements.
- Myth: All government information is available on the Web.
- Myth: Government documents don't get used.

Some of the big issues that have developed into monsters include:

- Some institutions believe the space used to house government document collections can be better used by housing more popular collections.
- The size and age of many tangible collections pose collection management and preservation challenges.

Presenters offered sufficient time for attendees to discuss each myth and monster and to present some of the misconceptions they face at their own institutions. The presenters also encouraged networking and the sharing of knowledge about operations to debunk myths and whittle down the big issues.

The general conclusions GPO might draw from this educational session are:

This session was well received by the government document librarians that are new or fairly new to the FDLP. Several attendees specifically requested that this program be presented again at the 2005 Fall DLC.

The Office of Education and Development is previewing technologies to webcast and archive such educational opportunities. The software under review also allows for live webcasts that would be viewable by librarians unable to travel to the conference.