**“Information Creation as a Process:**

**Putting Together the Pieces through Disparate Resources”**

Dr. Pam Dennis

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**(Slide 2)** In the old days, our research took a completely different path. We drove or walked to a library, searched a card catalog, and pulled physical materials. But in this day and time, we have so many more options. Not only do we have millions of physical books and periodicals to choose from, but we also have electronic resources.

**(Slide 3)** I no longer have to drive across the country to get to primary documents. Archives are digitizing these materials, and I have access with the touch of a button.

**(Slide 4)** So, why are our students just nibbling at the edges when there’s so much available out there? Let me show you some examples from my own research and ways to entice our students to use more resources. And, in the process, note that we are using many of the Threshold Concepts, including Information Creation as a Process, Information Has Value, Research as Inquiry, Scholarship as Conversation, and Searching as Strategic Exploration.

**(Slide 5)** My research on German musicians who taught in West Tennessee has led me to the lives of these men. Except for the fact that they appeared in the college bulletin or annual for that year and may have a short blurb on educational background included, there is no information available on that person. But, being the curious soul that I am, I wanted to know what he did besides work for a couple of years in a small West Tennessee university. For example, I traced Erwin Schneider (a very common German name) from Germany to Alabama to Tennessee. But he left Union University in 1902, still fairly young. What happened to him?

**(Slide 6)** I was always told not to search names on the Internet, because it was too overwhelming. But I’m stubborn, and about every 6 months or so, I Google the names of these men to see what is new.

Lo and behold, I found that the University of Virginia had digitized one summer school bulletin, and it contained the name of Erwin Schneider. With it, I see all the places he taught before and after UVA, who he studied with in Germany, and who was on the faculty with him. See any familiar names?

Since I am a former archivist, my first thought was to contact the archives to see what else they might have on him. They didn’t have anything, but they did find that Prof. Schneider’s son had attended the school, so I contacted the Alumni Office (no university office is safe from my questions!!).

**(Slide 7)** Not only had the son attended, but the son’s son attended and was still living. They gave me his address. I have since visited with Dr. Thomas Schneider in Atlanta, was allowed to copy his grandfather’s musical scores, and had a wonderful afternoon with this 85-year-old man. Also, the alumni office informed me that the Schneiders were buried in Charlottesville, and my new friend in that office took pictures of the graves for me. All of this was because one library scanned one college bulletin and posted it on the Internet through its digital archives. And, I enjoyed the strategic exploration, inquiry, and process of the Framework at the same time!

**(Slide 8)** DigitalNC already has over 11,000 yearbooks digitized, making it a valuable resource for those doing North Carolina research.

**(Slide 9)** Prior to here, I was at the University of Memphis, where they had just begun digitizing their archival photos. I could see first-hand pictures of the Sanitation Workers Strike, university history, and much more. While these photos are copyrighted by the institution, inquiries will gain access to copies at little cost.

**(Slide 10)** So, when I came to Gardner-Webb a few months ago, I was excited to see that digitizing had begun and had become one of the priorities in the library. Under Holly Mabry’s leadership, the collection is growly in leaps and bounds and is receiving support from various entities on campus. We are seeing that all kinds of information have value.

**(Slide 11-12)** One of the keys to gaining faculty and campus department participation is to be their champions. An early digitization project was adding thesis and dissertations from our graduate school. Access to these papers provides not only that research but access to bibliographies of related information.

The School of Education, one of our earliest departments to get on board, has been very proactive with launching their journal and gathering submissions. Their enthusiasm and creativity has started to catch on with other departments. *The Journal of Organizational and Educational Leadership* is a national, peer-reviewed journal that targets practitioners in the education field. The School of Education also recently added an open access educational materials collection called IMPROVE, and a psychology journal is in process.

We also encourage our faculty to submit their publications for open access viewing. A link to our Faculty and Staff Book Gallery promotes other work by our GWU faculty.

Our acquisitions librarian contacts publishers of out-of-print books that are important to our Baptist heritage and gains permission to include those in our digital repository.

What Holly and others envisioned for Digital Commons at launch has evolved tremendously, and will continue to do so in the future. Plans include adding papers, images, and multimedia from more academic departments and schools, additional journals and publications, and developing a partnership with area churches, museums, and community organizations to build a local history archive.

**(Slide 13)** Another place to look at digital collections is the State Archives of North Carolina. There’s great stuff here including images, maps, videos, etc.

**(Slide 14)** Another is the Library of Congress’s American Memory Collection. Not only did I find great maps of the areas I was researching, but I found hundreds of pages of sheet music, many by these German composers. Notice there are 38 pieces of music by Erwin Schneider, all available online. And, I can even see where they were published!

**(Slide 15)** Newspapers

What else can I do? Well, there are newspapers that are now available online. What if your students are working on a current topic like police brutality? Many local newspapers have online versions that will let you search for articles at least during the current week.

**(Slide 16)** So, I could look in the *Charlotte Observer*. I can find lots of articles about various brutalities throughout the world. I also find other keywords – police violence, police accountability, police killings. Those will help me with my searching. Our students have access to this newspaper and others through Newsbank’s America’s Newspapers back to 1978 in addition to searching the newspaper online.

**(Slide 17)** I can also use databases such as EBSCO’s Newspaper Source Plus or ProQuest’s US Newstream or Gale’s Infotrac Newstand. Many libraries subscribe to ProQuest’s Historical New York Newspapers, and libraries such as ours have microfilmed copies dating to 1851 to help researchers with the historical background of topics.

**(Slide 18)** There’s also Lexis-Nexis, where I can find tons of articles from newspapers around the world. Each newspaper is giving me new keywords and information on people, places, laws, organizations, and much more so I can continue the informational process. Now I see a bigger picture and realize it’s not just a local issue.

**(Slide 19)** And, if you have extra money, you can subscribe, like I do, to Newspapers.com. While searching for Prof. Utermoehlen, I learned that his wife died in 1923 as a result of a cellar door falling on her six years previously, causing insanity. Prof. Utermoehlen moved away within days of the worst tornado in U.S. history. With a little searching, I found that another tornado had gone through the area 6 years before and may be why Mrs. Utermoehlen was hit in the head by a cellar door! What an incredible find! By allowing my curiosity (inquiry process) to run wild, I explored Pennsylvania tornado history to attempt a solution to a problem.

**(Slide 20)** There are 22 Charlotte historical newspapers in Newspapers.com.

**(Slide 21)** Google Books

How about Google Books? What can I find there?

**(Slide 22)** Here’s a book that shows that William and Oscar Utermoehlen were members of the Kappa Sigma Fraternity. These were Prof. Charles Utermoehlen’s sons. By the time of the printing, Oscar was a merchant in Cowan, TN (his father originally taught at a school there and Oscar took over ownership of a hotel when his grandfather died), and William was in Columbia, SC (where he taught music at Columbia College), all information I was able to gather by strategic exploration and inquiry. Notice that I can download this item as an ebook for free and I can get this book in print. If I click on that link, it takes me to WorldCat, where I can also find a citation, export the citation to RefWorks, and order the book on ILL.

**(Slide 23)** Here’s another book that is available as an ebook that lists W.G. Utermoehlen as Treasurer of the Southern Music Teachers’ Association in 1908, having previously served as President. And, there is great biographical information! He went on to write music for silent movies and played a huge theatre organ in Miami. I also know that he has auburn hair and green eyes, but that was from looking at military records!

People think I make this stuff up, but it’s just part of the inquiry process!!

**(Slide 24)** Google Scholar

**(Slide 25)** Well, how about Google Scholar? A couple of years ago, students would call the reference desk and say – “I found this article in Google Scholar, and it says I have to pay for it.” I’m thinking – “You dumb student (not really). Why are you using Google Scholar when we have hundreds of databases free for the asking?” Well, Google Scholar has changed a lot since then, and I know a lot more also. Google Scholar is a great place to go. But here’s what you need to know.

Before you type in your search term, click on the Settings button. Notice you can also set it up to import your citations to RefWorks. Then click on the library links button on the next page.

**(Slide 26)** Now type in the name of your university and check everything that comes up that includes that name – my example is for Gardner-Webb University. Save that and then do your search.

What you’ve done is link Google Scholar to your databases. Many of your students will not know that.

**(Slide 27)** Now, let’s search for police brutality here. Several of these articles are open source. We can go directly to the database.

Notice what else we can do. We can find out who has cited this article, see related articles, import into RefWorks, and find the citation for the article. We are also seeing more search terms – excessive force, minorities, misconduct, etc. And we can look at various vantage points – causes (behavior – psychology), law, social sciences, quality of life, cycles of abuse, etc. Now we have more information to go to our databases and do some really good searches.

I tell our students – “Don’t use Google Scholar alone. Use it in addition to our databases. No one resource is going to find everything.”

As you would not just eat one type of food all the time, sample everything and see what works for you. Make use of the Framework concepts and take advantage of our great digital age of information!

**(Slide 28)** Questions and Sharing

**(Slide 29)** Contact information