

**Sleuthing Websleuths: A Serious Leisure Information Community**

Corrina Oates

School of Information, San José State University

INFO 200: Information Communities

Dr. Michael Stephens

4 December 2020

### **Abstract**

Websleuths are an effective information community that exhibit the self-fulfillment and social responsibility components of the serious leisure perspective (SLP), the two components that make SLP an especially fruitful area of study in LIS. Yet, websleuths are little studied, especially in regard to their information behavior. This paper explores the literature of SLP in LIS and the available, relevant literature on websleuths in order to establish this community as a serious leisure information community and to establish a framework for discussing their information behavior. As a community, their information need is at once both definite and ambiguous. This leads to information searching and seeking that is multi-faceted, open-ended, and iterative. This also means that they value diverse information sources and are eager to harness the power of emerging technologies. Due to their unique information behavior and secure position in the serious leisure (SL) framework, websleuths are an important community to study in LIS and warrant further research. Importantly, libraries and information centers have a unique opportunity to serve the needs of websleuths, law enforcement, and the public at large.

## Introduction

In 1829, the London Metropolitan Police was established, the first formal, centrally organized police force of its kind in Europe or North America (Burger, 2016). That same year, a French criminal-turned-investigator named François Vidocq published his memoirs (Burger, 2016). His memoirs, and the techniques described therein, not only influenced real-life police detectives, they also inspired some of literature's most notable sleuths: Hugo's Inspector Javert, Poe's Auguste Dupin, and Doyle's Sherlock Holmes (Burger, 2016).<sup>1</sup> More importantly for the purposes of this paper, Vidocq was arguably the first documented amateur sleuth.<sup>2</sup>

As is the case with many communities, today's amateur sleuths have taken to the internet, forming a global virtual community. While they are known by many names (internet detectives/sleuths, citizen detectives/sleuths, amateur detectives/sleuths), they will be referred to as websleuths in this paper. Websleuths utilize their wide range of expertise and skills—or even just their free time—to help solve cold and active cases. These cases range from property crime to murder (Yardley et al., 2018, p. 92); however, websleuths have been particularly instrumental in matching unidentified bodies to missing persons (Halber, 2014, p. 15). Websleuths have a distinct information need—that one piece of information that will help solve or progress a case—but no assurance that that information exists. This means that websleuths have developed robust information seeking and searching behaviors, and frequently share and source information in a variety of trusted online channels. In short, websleuths are an active, dedicated community “that

---

<sup>1</sup> The Vidocq Society, a group of professionals from a variety of disciplines who provide pro-bono assistance to law enforcement in solving cold cases, was named for Vidocq (The Vidocq Society, 2020).

<sup>2</sup> Vidocq did become a professional private detective, but his methods were developed independently without formal training in his unofficial, self-organized security brigade (Eugène François Vidocq, 2020).

blurs boundaries between information seekers, users, and providers” (Fisher & Bishop, 2015, p. 22).

In the following literature review, the serious leisure perspective (SLP) in LIS, a particularly relevant perspective in examining websleuths’ information behavior, will be explored. Additionally, the pertinent extant literature on websleuths will be reviewed in terms of their motivations, activities, and implications. From the literature review, websleuths as a serious leisure information community will be discussed. This paper will then address how libraries currently serve this community and identifies a unique opportunity for libraries to better serve websleuths and, by extension, law enforcement and the public at large.

## **Literature Review**

### **The Serious Leisure Perspective**

The serious leisure perspective (SLP) is an arm of everyday life information seeking (ELIS) behavior, which encompasses the information seeking behaviors of individuals for non-work purposes (Savolainen, 2010). However, as the name implies, SLP explores the information behavior of individuals engaged in a leisure pursuit that requires a significant time commitment and involves a certain level of challenge and complexity, such as volunteers, hobbyists, and amateurs (Stebbins, 2009). Importantly, serious leisure (SL) is the most fruitful form of leisure to study for LIS professionals because such pursuits exhibit self-fulfillment and social-world related qualities, which are key motivations in information retrieval and dissemination (Stebbins, 2009).

Building off Stebbins’ foundational bridging of SLP and LIS, Hartel et al. (2016) employ Hektor’s (2001) human information behavior (HIB) model to further examine information behavior in SL. Hektor’s model lends itself particularly well to further developing a framework

around the information behavior of SL because it centers on people's every-day, outside-of-work lives; the model is microsocial, meaning it incorporates the social world of the user; and it prioritizes information seeking and searching behavior (Hartel et al., 2016, p. 4). Additionally, "Hektor widened the lens to include how information is used, created, and shared—a substantially more complete, inclusive, and realistic conception of information behaviour that suggests a more capable and empowered human being" (2016, p. 4) Hektor's model provides an accessible model for researchers to define information behavior in SL and dovetails nicely with the SLP as it pertains to LIS, yet it needs further refinement (Hartel et al., 2016). Specifically, the model should be expanded to take into account today's abundance of information and information sources (Hartel et al., 2016).

Mansourian (2020), in a way, does just this. In an analytical literature review of LIS literature in HIB and SL, Mansourian distills three groups of SL participants: appreciators; producers/collectors; and performers (2020, p. 22). Each group has their preferred information sources and dominant information behaviors (Mansourian, 2020, p. 23). This shows that SL participants have specific, yet varied, information sources and behaviors. Moreover, SL participants are searching for meaning and are passionate, knowledgeable individuals, which positively affects their engagement with information (Mansourian, 2020).

### **Websleuths: Motivations and Implications**

Research on websleuths' information behavior is scant, and the available literature is firmly rooted in the disciplines of criminal justice, psychology, and sociology. Yet, insights into the information behavior of websleuths can be gleaned from this literature, especially in conjunction with some closely related communities. Significantly, this literature establishes key motivations and implications for websleuths.

In their ethnographic content analysis of 97 news articles about websleuths and websleuthing, Yardley et al. (2018) assert that websleuthing encompasses a wide range of motives, manifestations, activities, networked spaces, and types of cases (p. 81). These are echoed by Frampton and Fox (2020), who describe websleuths' online social information seeking behavior thusly: they retrieve information online about a specific person or case, either do this collaboratively or alone; they share information about cases, suspects, and other pertinent details with each other online; they are motivated in their information searching in part by curiosity, but mostly to resolve injustices or to exact punishment; and, depending on their motivation, websleuths may seek information in a sustained manner, or they may only seek information fleetingly. Additionally, websleuthing has far reaching impacts on victims, friends and families of victims, suspects, criminal justice organizations, and websleuths themselves (Yardley et al., 2018). Three key themes around websleuthing can also be distilled: the multidirectional flow of information between websleuths and mainstream media; the change in the level of participation with cases afforded by networked technologies; and the new participatory nature of true crime infotainment (Yardley et al., 2018, pp. 102-103).

In addition to victimization and the prevention of the victimization of others, websleuths' motives are centered around infotainment witnessing and wound culture: "fascination; immersion; feelings of proximity; the desire to participate in achieving the type of ending more commonly seen in fictionalized representations of crime; the prospect of discovering a new lead; the naming and shaming of a suspect; and justice or 'closure'" (Yardley et al., 2018, p. 104). While some websleuths are motivated by vigilantism, as a group, their activities are much more varied and removed from vigilantism: they create and maintain online spaces as a gathering space; participate in discussions; conduct research; build and maintain case databases; and host

content (Yardley et al., 2018, p. 104).

Contrary to this assertion, that websleuths as a whole are not motivated by vigilantism, Myles et al. (2020) argue that websleuths on the Reddit Bureau of Investigation (RBI), a sub-Reddit, call upon depictions of policing, including “retributive vigilantism”, in their investigative activities (p. 319). Interestingly, the RBI websleuths establish and enforce participatory guidelines by invoking contemporary policing entities through their online discursive practices, while also “[invoking] the institution’s (real or perceived) limitations to justify undertaking their investigative activities” (Myles et al., 2020, p. 333). A similar dichotomy can be seen in China’s delectably named human flesh search engine (HFSE) phenomenon. An HFSE is a group of online citizens, aided by emerging technologies, to publicly name social wrong doers as a means to restore public morality (Cheong & Gong, 2010) and as a response to China’s shift from an ethic- to legal-oriented society (Zhang & Gao, 2016, p. 602). Both groups are undertaking online vigilantism in spite of and in support of government and law enforcement agencies.

This highlights the somewhat fraught relationship between websleuths and law enforcement. Yardley et al. (2018) found that law enforcement frequently noted the limitations of websleuths and a general reluctance to acknowledgement websleuths’ assistance in cases (p. 101-102). Yet, for other communities, the amateur-professional relationship has been strengthened by the advances in technology, particularly social media technologies (Dowaithe & Sprinks, 2019). This is particularly true of citizen scientists, where professionals are starting to formally acknowledge and recognize the work and contributions of amateurs (Dowaithe & Sprinks, 2019) and incorporate them in academic and professional spaces.

## **Methodology**

As an avid true crime consumer, I am fairly familiar with the contemporary work produced by and about websleuths, namely docuseries, podcasts, and books. However, I was quick to find that very little scholarly, peer-reviewed research has been conducted on this community. Searches for “websleuths,” “web sleuths,” “web detectives,” “internet sleuths,” “internet detectives,” “citizen sleuths,” “citizen detectives,” “amateur sleuths,” “amateur detectives,” “armchair sleuths,” and “armchair detectives” returned little relevant information on this community, let alone its information behavior. When paired with “information behavior” and other such iterations, nothing was returned. These searches were conducted across the King Library’s OneSearch and Google Scholar. Still, a few pertinent articles were returned, and from these I was able to conduct reverse searches based on these articles’ references. Conversely, and as hinted at above, there is a plethora of mainstream media documents available on websleuths. These were mined both from personal knowledge and searches conducted through OneSearch and Google. These documents also pointed me towards community resources, such as Websleuths (<https://www.websleuths.com>), NamUs (<https://www.namus.gov>), and the Doe Network (<http://www.doenetwork.org>). For foundational LIS theories and methods, I referred to our course’s readings and conducted iterative searches through OneSearch.

## **Discussion**

### **Websleuths: A Serious Leisure Information Community**

The research detailed above lays the groundwork to discuss websleuths as a serious leisure information community with unique information behaviors and motivations. When looking at websleuths in terms of Christen and Levinson’s (2003) four key angles of community, they fit primarily into the affinity and instrumental angles: they are interested in true crime beyond just consuming it as entertainment (affinity), and they want to help solve criminal cases



or identify the unidentified (instrumental). They also meet the proximate angle in that occasionally websleuths have a proximal or relational connection to a case. Additionally, they demonstrate the characteristics of an effective information community: they emphasize collaboration among diverse information sources; they are able to form around their members' needs to access and use information; they harness the information-sharing capabilities of emerging technologies; they are able to exceed limitations on information sharing; and they foster social connections (Fisher & Bishop, 2015). These attributes also demonstrate that websleuths firmly fit in the SLP and are a community built around the elusiveness of the information that would satisfy their need.

### ***Bonjour, Internet!: Information Sources, Use, and Access***

Websleuths' online spaces can be categorized as social media; chat; case specific; products/services; content sharing; search; other; maps; and messenger services (Yardley et al., 2018, p. 96). Perusing Websleuths, you can see users directing fellow websleuths to such sites. One poster, new to websleuthing, asked for resources to help get started, and users responded with everything from a site for missing people in the OP's state, to NamUs, to genealogy sites, to how to file an FOIA request, to tips on how to conduct wildcard and fuzzy searches on Google (LifeoftheSearchParty, 2018). The thread, started in 2018, is still active—the latest relevant post was a crime classification manual shared mid-November 2020 (imstilla.grandma, 2020)—showing that users on Websleuths are an active and helpful bunch.

This knowledge of sources and eagerness to share them can be seen in other spaces designated for, and frequented by, websleuths. The Doe Network, a volunteer-run organization dedicated to assisting investigative agencies worldwide in resolving missing and unidentified cases (The Doe Network, n.d.a), has an extensive list of resources for its users. The list links

mainly to missing and unidentified persons by geographic location, but also to other volunteer-run sites dedicated to locating the missing and identifying the unidentified (The Doe Network, n.d.b). The Reddit Bureau of Investigation (RBI), a sub-Reddit, has a list of “Tools that may help you” on its sidebar (Reddit Bureau of Investigation, n.d.). Whereas Websleuths’ users provide information for fellow websleuths, the RBI’s provided information sources are geared more towards crime victims. For example, they list sites for finding stolen electronics, stolen mail, stolen identities, and stolen hearts (R.I.P. Craigslist’s Missed Connections) (Reddit Bureau of Investigation, n.d.). This highlights not only the difference in these sites’ users, but the instrumental and proximate angles of the websleuth community. Also highlighted is the diverse set of information sources valued by the community.

### ***Liminal Space: Emerging Technologies, Exceeding Limitations, and Social Connectedness***

Websleuths have harnessed the power of emerging technologies from the start. In the late 1990s, three regular citizens used Yahoo! newsgroups to create sites dedicated to the missing, the unidentified, and the murdered, all independent of each other (Halber, 2014, p. 44-45). One of those sites, Stormcritters.com, eventually morphed into the Doe Network (Halber, 2014, p. 47). A few years later in 2003, an intrepid coroner in Las Vegas started the Las Vegas Unidentified, a website that posted carefully selected photos and case details of the unidentified bodies in their morgue (Halber, 2014, p. 112). Just forty-eight hours after the site went live, a websleuth connected a missing man in California to one of the unidentified bodies in the Las Vegas morgue (Halber, 2014, p. 115). While this is an unbelievably serendipitous example, it illustrates that not only are websleuths early adopters of emerging technologies, but they are clued into the newest sources of gathering and sharing information.

This same sort of dynamic can be seen in websleuths today. One of my favorite examples of this is *Jensen and Holes: The Murder Squad*, a podcast hosted by a true-crime journalist and a retired detective (2019-present). Every episode, Jensen and Holes examine an unresolved case of missing, murdered, or unidentified individuals and task their listeners, who they call citizen detectives, with a “weekly assignment” (2019-present). These assignments can range from reviewing and sharing the photos of unidentified women found in a serial killers’ belongings in order to help identify them (Jensen & Holes, 2019a) to encouraging listeners to upload their DNA to GEDmatch (Jensen & Holes, 2019bx), a third-party website that collects and compares autosomal DNA from different testing companies (e.g. 23andMe) and has been instrumental in solving some of the coldest cases, including identifying the Golden State Killer (“GEDmatch,” 2020). This is, as Jensen calls it, crowdsolving: “utilizing the eyes, ears, and expertise of individuals, both locally and across the globe via social media, to aid in the solving of crimes” (2020, para. 2). The significance of this podcast in terms of the websleuthing community is three-fold: podcasts, an increasingly popular medium, reaches a broader group of people, therefore widening the net of crowdsolving participants; the relevant information on a case is available in one space, thus decreasing the time spent gathering information and bypassing barriers to the information; and a community of listeners, called Squaderinos, has grown up around the podcast, increasing the group’s sense of social connectedness.

In fact, this podcast introduced many listeners to the websleuthing community’s latest use of emerging technologies: the CrimeDoor app. The app utilizes augmented reality to accurately recreate crime scenes, allowing users to “experience and investigate them—just as detectives at the actual crime scenes did” (CrimeDoor, 2020). Users can review case files, examine cold cases, and help solve the unsolved. One only needs a relatively new smart phone and an internet

connection, and through this app they can access an expanse of information about a case, including a complete representation of the crime scene—something not even law enforcement professionals would have had access to ten years ago. Again, this further illustrates websleuths' adoption of emerging technologies to transcend barriers to information access.

***Peak Experience: ASK, Sensemaking, Information Encountering, and SLP***

And yet, all of this information searching, seeking, sharing, and adoption of new technologies is in the hope of satisfying an information need that is simultaneously definite and nebulous. This is anomalous in information seeking theories: most theories take for granted that the information sought, no matter how hard to find, exists. However, Belkin's Anomalous State of knowledge (ASK) states that "inadequacies in a state of knowledge can be of many sorts, such as gaps or lacks, uncertainty, or incoherence, whose only common trait is a perceived 'wrongness'" (1980, p. 137). This "perceived 'wrongness'" is at the very heart of websleuths' information behavior and encompasses both the informational and humanitarian motivations to their work. Also, "the ASK framework assumes that the users' ASK will be changing on receipt of information, leading to a different ASK," and "that it is unlikely that any one text will ever satisfactorily resolve any ASK" (Belkin, 1980, p. 141). This implies an iterative process, one much like websleuths', where they follow one source of information to another, refining along the way, in pursuit of their amorphous information need.

Dervin's Sensemaking methodology highlights this iterative, experiential information seeking process. The methodology is rooted in the idea that sense-making is "a behavior, both internal (i.e. cognitive) and external (i.e. procedural) which allows the individual to construct and design his/her movement through time-space" (Dervin, 1983, p. 3) where human beings are "coming out of situations with history and partial instruction, arriving at new situations, facing

gaps, building bridges across those gaps, evaluation outcomes and moving on” (Dervin, 1998, p. 39). This gap-bridging and fluid movement through the process evokes the non-linear approach websleuths take when investigating a case. This naturally leads to Erdelez’s Information Encountering, which is the sometimes-inactive process of acquiring information through accidental means (1999). The theory addresses how one thinks and behaves in an information-rich environment (Stephens, 2020).

This amalgamation of LIS theories and methods can be best exemplified by a situation detailed by Halber (2014, pp. 47-55): one websleuth, searching for her ex-husband on the now defunct Missing Persons Cold Case Network (MPCCN), came across the details of a missing disabled teenage boy out of New Jersey, thought to be housed in a care home in Canada; dismissing the case since it did not fit her ex-husband’s description and thinking that there must be a paper trail, the websleuth moved on; remarkably, later that same day, the websleuth came across a notice posted by the Vermont State Police that included details matching the post on MPCCN. It was the missing teenager. A websleuth, searching for anything that could lead to the whereabouts of her ex-husband, found unrelated information that she then connected to information provided by a different source.

While from these examples it may seem that these identifications happen with ease, websleuthing takes substantial effort, especially in regard to time—it is not a casual hobby (Jensen, 2019, p. 324). A websleuth should expect to spend hundreds, if not thousands, of hours if they go full bore, and will receive little, if any, credit for their work (Jensen, 2019, p. 335). So why do it? “Some amateur sleuths say working on a challenging case is like exercising a strong muscle” and that the process of investigating a case is just as satisfying as solving one (Halber, 2014, p. 55). And solving a case, where others have failed, is a particularly appealing challenge

(Halber, 2014, p. 56). Some, as seen above, have a personal connection. Others, though, have that one case that has stayed with them for years, and they devote their time to solving it in order to bring closure to the victim’s family (Jensen, 2019, pp. 328-329). These self-fulfillment and social responsibility components of websleuthing are the same key components of SL that makes it an important area of study in LIS.

Outside of the larger motivations behind websleuthing, websleuths’ information activities are particularly enlightening in terms of Hektor’s (2001) model of HIB. Hartel et al. (2016) detail Hektor’s model as having four general modes of information behavior and eight surrounding information activities. This model lines up particularly well with websleuths’ activities as reported in news articles, outlined by Yardley et al. (2018, p. 99), shown in Figure 1. One can see

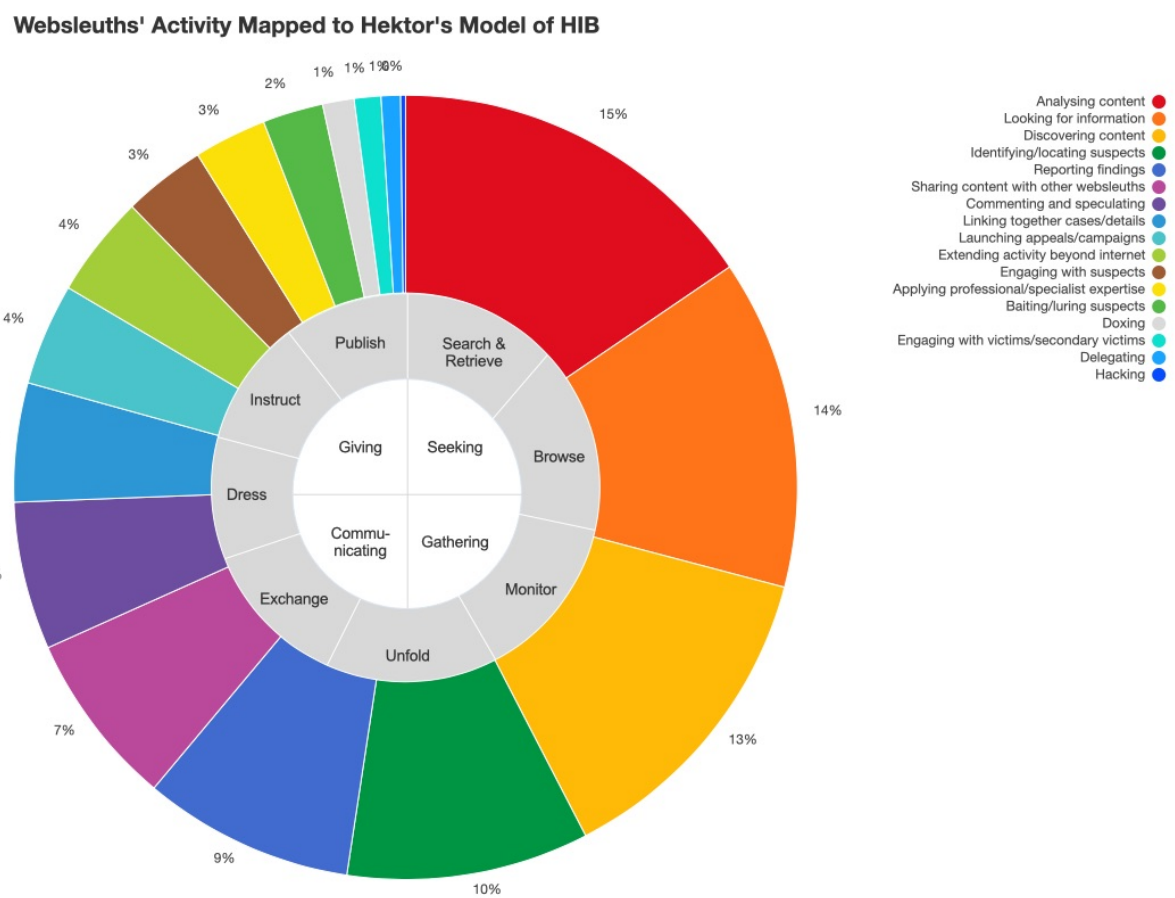


Figure 1. Websleuths' activities (Yardley et al., 2018, p. 99) mapped to Hektor's model of HIB (Hartel et al., 2016, p. 5).

how some activities straddle multiple information behaviors, indicative of websleuths' iterative, non-linear process. Further, when looking at the information sources shared within the community, an image of their preferred sources coalesces (NamUs, the Doe Network, NCMEC are common), an important angle of SL communities as outlined by Mansourian (2020).

### **Websleuths and Libraries**

From above, one can see that websleuths fit quite nicely in SLP. As has been argued, SLP is a particularly fruitful area for study for LIS (Stebbins, 2009; Hartel et al., 2016; Mansourian, 2020), including library programming (VanScoy et al., 2020). In this section we will see that that is not necessarily represented in the current library programming, but there is a unique and timely opportunity for libraries to support this community.

### ***Current Programming and Learning Opportunities***

As is the case with scholarly research on websleuths' information behavior, programming and learning opportunities provided by libraries and geared specifically towards websleuths is fairly non-existent. Still, there are existing programming and learning opportunities that would benefit websleuths. This includes programming centered on genealogy, like Fort Bend County Libraries' day-long genealogy lock-ins, featuring an "Introduction to GEDmatch" workshop (n.d.); or, if a websleuth was interested in starting a podcast and lived in Vancouver, British Columbia or Charlotte Mecklenburg, North Carolina, they could take advantage of their library's podcast creating and recording services (North Vancouver City Library, n.d.; Charlotte Mecklenburg Library, n.d.). There are also a number of programming opportunities provided for the true crime enthusiast, a community that overlaps with websleuths. Such options include Austin Public Library's True Crime Corner Vimeo series (n.d.) and Radnor Memorial Library's Creeps YouTube series (2020).

### *Proposed Programming and Learning Opportunities*

Prior to 2020, library services were already changing. Now, libraries must not only explore new programming options, they have to pivot in how they deliver those experiences. As libraries and other agencies stop triaging from the pandemic-induced turmoil, they will find that they have developed some innovative ways in providing their services digitally. This mode of delivery is important for global virtual information communities like websleuths. If you couple this shift with the call for defunding the police and re-allocating some of their funding, a space opens up for a unique opportunity to serve law enforcement and the community by training and empowering websleuths to undertake some of the more time-consuming tasks faced by law enforcement.

To do this, libraries can audit their current programming utilizing the SLP lens, which will allow for strategic decision-making in adapting and growing their program offerings to ensure serious leisure communities are being equally served (VanScoy et al., 2020, p. 7). Moreover, libraries can review their current programming to see if it addresses the information activities of serious leisure communities. With an understanding of their current programming, libraries could then proceed to work with law enforcement professionals to develop a guideline for websleuths that outlines legitimate information seeking/searching techniques and sources. This set of guidelines should also outline certain ground rules, such as do not name names publicly, do not post side-by-side photos online, do not contact family members, do not dox fellow websleuths, and be civil (Jensen & Holes, 2019-present). On a recent episode, Jensen and Holes (2020) discussed how defunding and reorganizing the police could reform how agencies investigate crime, including incorporating websleuths, so the conversation has already started. I



argue, though, that there is an important role that information professionals can play in this reformation.

As VanScoy et al. (2020) assert from their study of serious leisure programming in libraries, “public library programs unevenly represent across the serious leisure sub-type of hobbies” (p. 7). By developing programming for websleuths, libraries could not only address a gap in their offerings, but they could also create a framework for developing opportunities for other serious leisure information communities. This would, in turn, attract a more diverse set of serious leisure participants, such as citizen scientists, activists, or the avid home cook to their libraries (VanScoy et al., 2020, p. 7).

### **Conclusion**

The available scholarly literature on websleuths show that while vigilantism motivates some of its community members, websleuths, as a whole, have a more humanitarian objective. This is seen in community generated sources and monographs, such as the Doe Network and *Jensen & Holes: The Murder Squad* (2019-present). Such an altruistic motivation leads participants to invest a large amount of time, champion emerging technologies, and form community around their enigmatic information need. It further establishes websleuths as a serious leisure information community, one worthy of further study in LIS. And while there is current available programming that may be of interest to websleuths, there is a particularly unique opportunity for libraries to serve this community, law enforcement, and the larger public. Libraries can do this by being instrumental in developing information seeking, searching, and sharing guidelines for websleuths. In all, websleuths exist at a fascinating intersection of infotainment, criminal justice, emerging technologies, and information science. Further study of this community will not only be enlightening, it will be important to a wide range of disciplines.

## References

- Austin Public Library. (2020, September). *Slender Man is Watching* [Video]. Vimeo.  
<https://vimeo.com/461274329>
- Belkin, N. J. (1980). Anomalous states of knowledge as a basis for information retrieval. *Canadian Journal of Information and Library Science*, 5, 133-143.  
<https://tefkos.comminfo.rutgers.edu/Courses/612/Articles/BelkinAnomolous.pdf>
- Burger, P. (2016, August 24). *The bloody history of the true crime genre*. JSTOR Daily.  
<https://daily.jstor.org/bloody-history-of-true-crime-genre/>
- Charlotte Mecklenburg Library. 2018, August 29. Create your own podcast (for free!) with your library card. Charlotte Mecklenburg Library Blog.  
<https://www.cmlibrary.org/blog/podcast>
- Cheong, P. H., & Gong, J. (2010). Cyber vigilantism, transmedia collective intelligence, and civic participation. *Chinese Journal of Communication*, 3(4), 471-487.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/17544750.2010.516580>
- Christensen, K., & Levinson, D. Introduction & reader's guide. In K. Christensen & D. Levinson (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Community: From the Village to the Virtual World* (pp. xxxi-xxiii). Sage Reference. <https://link-gale-com.libaccess.sjlibrary.org/apps/pub/5CEZ/GRNR?u=csusj&sid=GRNR>
- CrimeDoor. (2020). <https://crimedoor.com>
- Dervin, B. (1983, May). *An overview of sense-making research: concepts, methods, and results to date* [Conference paper]. International Communication Association Annual Meeting, Dallas, TX, USA.

<http://faculty.washington.edu/wpratt/MEBI598/Methods/An%20Overview%20of%20Sense-Making%20Research%201983a.htm>

Dervin, B. (1998). Sense-making theory and practice: An overview of user interests in knowledge seeking and use. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 2(2), 36-46.

<https://doi.org/10.1108/13673279810249369>

The Doe Network. (n.d.a). *The Doe Network: International Center for Unidentified & Missing Persons*. <http://www.doenetwork.org>

The Doe Network. (n.d.b). *Resources*. <http://www.doenetwork.org/resources.php>

Dowaihte, L., & Sprinks, J. (2019). Citizen science and the professional-amateur divide: Lessons from differing online practices. *JCOM*, 18(1). <https://doi.org/10.22323/2.18010206>

Erdelez, S. (1999). Information encountering: It's more than just bumping into information.

*Bulletin of the American Society for Information Science*, 25(3).

<https://doi.org/10.1086/506576>

Eugène François Vidocq. (2020, November 20). In *Wikipedia*.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eugène\\_François\\_Vidocq](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eugène_François_Vidocq)

Fisher, K. E., & Bishop, A. P. (2015). Information communities: Defining the focus of information service. In S. Hirsh (Ed.), *Information Services Today: An Introduction* (pp. 20-26). Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

<http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/sjsu/detail.action?docID=2032756>

Fort Bend County Libraries. (n.d.). Genealogy lock-in at George Memorial Library for Family-History Month. <https://www.fortbend.lib.tx.us/basic-page/genealogy-lock-george-memorial-library-family-history-month>

<https://www.fortbend.lib.tx.us/basic-page/genealogy-lock-george-memorial-library-family-history-month>

- Frampton, J. R., & Fox, J. (2021). Monitoring, creeping, or surveillance? A synthesis of online social information seeking concepts. *Review of Communication Research*, 9. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.12840/ISSN.2255-4165.025>
- GEDmatch. (2020, November 15). In *Wikipedia*. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/GEDmatch>
- Halber, D. (2014). *The skeleton crew: How amateur sleuths are solving America's coldest cases*. Simon & Schuster Paperbacks.
- Hartel, J., Cox, A. M., & Griffin, B. L. (2016). Information activity in serious leisure. *Information Research*, 21(4), paper 728. <http://informationr.net/ir/21-4/paper728.html>
- Hektor, A. (2001). *What's the use? Internet and information behavior in everyday life*. Linköping University. <https://books.google.com/books?id=XVOaCdPXpz4C>
- imstilla.grandma. (2020, November 13). This might be helpful to some: Crime Classification Manual [Comment on the online forum post *Web Sleuthing Tips?*]. Websleuths. <https://www.websleuths.com/forums/threads/web-sleuthing-tips.378064/page-3#post-16466127>
- Jensen, B. (2019). *Chase darkness with me: How one true-crime writer started solving murders*. Sourcebooks.
- Jensen, B. (2020). Citizen detectives and crowdsolving. The Numerous Solutions of Billy Jensen. Retrieved September 8, 2020, from <http://billyjensen.com/citizen-detectives-crowdsolving/>
- Jensen, B. & Holes, P. (Hosts). (2019-present). *Jensen & Holes: The Murder Squad* [Audio podcast]. Exactly Right Media. <http://themurdersquad.com>

- Jensen, B. & Holes, P. (Hosts). (2019a, April 1). The other victims of Bill Bradford (No. 1) [Audio podcast episode]. In *Jensen & Holes: The Murder Squad*. Exactly Right Media. <http://themurdersquad.com/episodes/the-other-victims-of-bill-bradford/>
- Jensen, B. & Holes, P. (Hosts). (2019b, July 1). Who killed Faith Hedgepeth? (No. 14) [Audio podcast episode]. In *Jensen & Holes: The Murder Squad*. Exactly Right Media. <http://themurdersquad.com/episodes/who-killed-faith-hedgepeth/>
- Jensen, B. & Holes, P. (Hosts). (2020, June 15). How defunding the police could help solve more crimes—and contribute to eliminating the systemic racism in law enforcement (No. 54) [Audio podcast episode]. In *Jensen & Holes: The Murder Squad*. Exactly Right Media. <http://themurdersquad.com/episodes/how-defunding-the-police-could-help-solve-more-crimes-and-contribute-to-eliminating-the-systemic-racism-in-law-enforcement/>
- LifeoftheSearchParty. (2018, June 22). *Web Sleuthing Tips?* [Online forum]. Websleuths. <https://www.websleuths.com/forums/threads/web-sleuthing-tips.378064/>
- Mansourian, Y. (2020). How passionate people seek and share various forms of information in their serious leisure. *Journal of Australian Library and Information Association*, 69(1), 17-30. <https://doi.org/10.1080/24750158.2019.1686569>
- Myles, D., Benoit-Barné, C., & Millerand, F. (2020). ‘Not your personal army!’ Investigating the organizing property of retributive vigilantism in a Reddit collective of websleuths. *Information, Communication & Society*, 23(3), 317-336. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2018.1502336>
- North Vancouver City Library. (n.d.). Start a podcast. <https://www.nvcl.ca/using-the-library/creation-stations/audio-production-tutorials/start-a-podcast>

- Radnor Memorial Library. (2020, November 26). *Creeps, episode 2: The Cleveland torso killer* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LQ6ihGrgHt8&feature=youtu.be>
- Reddit Bureau of Investigation. (n.d.). *Reddit*. <https://www.reddit.com/r/RBI/>
- Savolainen, R. (2010). Everyday life information seeking. In M. Bates & M. N. Maack (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Sciences* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed., pp. 1780-1789). Taylor & Francis. <https://doi.org/10.1081/E-ELIS3-120043920>
- Stebbins, R. A. (2009). Leisure and its relationship to library and information science: Bridging the gap. *Library Trends*, 57(4), 618-631. <https://doi.org/10.1353/lib.0.0064>
- Stephens, M. (2020). *Assignment helper – Overview of information seeking behavior theories*. INFO 200 Information Communities: Creating, Sharing & Using Information. <https://infocom.hyperlib.sjsu.edu/assignments/assignment-helper-overview-of-information-seeking-behavior-theories/>
- VanScoy, A., Thomson, L., & Hartel, J. (2020). Applying theory in practice: The serious leisure perspective and public library programming. *Library and Information Science Research*, 42(3), 1-8. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lisr.2020.101034>
- The Vidocq Society. (2020). *History of The Vidocq Society*. <https://www.vidocq.org/history/>
- Yardley, E., Lynes, A. G. T, Wilson, D., & Kelly, E. (2018). What’s the deal with ‘websleuthing’? News media representations of amateur detectives in networked spaces. *Crime Media Culture*, 14(1), 81-109. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1741659016674045>
- Zhang, Y., & Gao, H. (2016). Human flesh search engine and online privacy. *Science and Engineering Ethics*, 22(4), 601-604. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11948-015-9672-y>