

The Suppression Continues—GVRL Four Years Later

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In the [May 2012 issue of CCL-Outlook](#), I wrote [an article describing that some of the E-books that Gale sells in their Gale Virtual Reference Library \(GVRL\) platform are not 100% full-text.](#)

There were 27 series, each having at least 15 instances of significant blocks of text missing.

When found in a search result, the E-book article included the following message: "This text has been suppressed due to author restrictions."

The types of publications identified at the time mainly came from Gale and Gale imprints (such as Greenhaven) and the types of text that were usually "suppressed" were literary criticisms, primary documents, and viewpoint essays. CCL-EAR further wrote a [review update on GVRL in November, 2012](#) where the ratings the reviewers gave which would have otherwise have been highly favorable, were marred with the strong caveat of the "suppressed text" issue. It is why GVRL ended up with a disappointing 2.5 rating where otherwise it would have been deemed somewhere between "recommended" and an "Outstanding offer and opportunity," instead of being "recommended with reservations."

At the time, such E-books could be found in the Gale's online directory to have this disclaimer: "While Gale strives to replicate print content, some content may not be available due to rights restrictions. Call your Sales Rep for details." What was interesting was that in all cases the disclaimer was there because in fact there was "suppressed content." More of an issue was when there was suppressed content and there was no disclaimer in the catalog as there was for the 2nd edition of *Black Literature Criticism* at the time (of which it was missing 36% of essential content).

In my conclusion to my original article, I stated "It is my opinion that Gale needs to be more explicit about which titles do not include 100% full text. It is also my opinion that Gale needs to do a better job securing rights to electronic full text for all of its titles."

To this date, Gale has not given an official response to either my article or the CCL-EAR review. Unofficially, through vendor representatives, clients have been assured that better efforts are being made to get authors' permission and that the incidence of suppressed text would go down, but again I should stress that there has been no official response.

Given that, I looked to see how often this incidence has happened in publications from 2013 to 2015 (three years' worth). I first went to the GVRL directory at:

<http://www.cengage.com/search/showresults.do?N=197+4294904997> and signed into my account. From there, I can search GVRL's online catalog which searches the previews of texts of their entire collection. I put in as my search "This text has been suppressed due to author restrictions" and limited my search from 2013 to the present. I then placed my findings [in a spreadsheet](#) at: <http://tinyurl.com/jyusqv6> .

101 titles had "suppressed text." The most common titles included practically all series from Greenhaven and the For Students series (particularly literary criticism). 21 of the titles had three or more incidences of suppressed text in the individual title. 24 of the 101 titles were published since 2015, suggesting that the incidences of "suppressed text" may be decreasing slightly.

Some of the "Suppressed text" titles were unique, such as essays written about the Challenger Disaster in 1986, the L.A. Riots of 1992, Hurricane Katrina of 2005 (this one with four omitted essays) and literary criticisms and social essays of *A Clockwork Orange* and *Fast Food Nation*. Series that kept popping up included *Novels for Students*, *Poetry for Students*, *Short Stories for Students*, *Perspectives on Modern World History**, *Social Issues in Literature**, *Introducing Issues with Opposing Viewpoints*, *Genocide and Persecution**, *Issues that Concern You*, *Teen Rights and Freedoms**, *Global Viewpoints**, and *Perspectives on Diseases and Disorders**.

Titles listed above that have an asterisk after them also had NO disclaimer listed with titles from those series (in the GVRL ordering catalog), totaling to a disturbing 61% of the 101 books published from 2013-2015.

In general, once again the types of texts that were frequently "suppressed" included literary criticisms, viewpoint essays, and primary documents. With respect to these three types of content being usually the main reason why the librarian would order these titles, I found as much as 36% of these key texts would be suppressed in one individual title.

I would strongly recommend that Gale direct their Greenhaven imprint to make a better effort or that these titles be more transparent about missing text AND be sold at a significant discount. Likewise, for the "For Students" series. Further, the disclaimer MUST appear for all such titles. Gale MUST correct the oversight of all the series with the asterisk above, IMMEDIATELY. I would also recommend that the disclaimer needs to be added to forms emailed out or that vendor customer representatives send to clients (There needs to be more than links to each ISBN or title. The disclaimer should appear on the order form).

For now, when it comes to ordering GVRL books, I would recommend that the librarian may want to preview the title, first, before considering it, so that the librarian can see for him or herself exactly what is "suppressed." After logging into your GVRL ordering account and finding a desired title, be sure to click on "Explore This Title" and look through the eBook thoroughly. If the title is not published yet, I would recommend waiting until the title is available to preview.