Testimony Submitted to the Library of Congress
Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control

Part II

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THE FUTURE OF BIBLIOGRAPHIC CONTROL AND ITS IMPACT ON A MEDIUM-SIZED ACADEMIC LIBRARY

by Judy Anderson, Catalog Librarian, James Madison University

NOTE: These comments and questions are based on a review of papers and summaries of presentations given at the LC Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control (WGFBC) open meetings on March 8, May 8, and July 9, 2007, as well as a review of various AUTOCAT messages and general observations about factors impacting a local library environment. The author is affiliated at a medium-sized academic institution in Virginia.

For too long now, our local library has taken for granted the wonderful cataloging provided by the Program for Cooperative Cataloging and one of its major contributors, the Library of Congress. These bibliographic resource organizations, along with other major stakeholders such as the bibliographic utility OCLC and other vendor outsource suppliers have contributed greatly to the creation of our local OPAC.   Although we directly-–or indirectly--have paid for the metadata that they have created, perhaps we have not seriously considered the ramifications and costs of "doing without" some of it.   The recent disclosure concerning LC's need to cut back cataloging costs – along with various other major factors stemming from the web-based environment in which we live and work, have resulted in quite a bit of discussion here on the local level.

Amidst these major changes, some of which already appear to be occurring (see below), our Cataloging staff of one professional and five paraprofessionals (two part-time) continues to deal with the usual goings-on of a small Cataloging Department. What we (and our Acquisitions Dept.) have accomplished and 'created' over many years is based on a commonly held, grounded philosophy of service to our public. **Although our OPAC is based on the cataloging of many — it attempts to provide access to resources based on the needs of a local constituency.**   Our overriding philosophy is to try to always keep the user needs in mind, whether student, faculty, general or library staff and the general community, to a lesser extent.   Our concept of bibliographic access has expanded into various experiments with [Dublin Core: the JMU Image Database](#), [EAD: the Virginia Heritage Project](#), and indirect, limited involvement in helping to develop a [local database](#) to try to gather together all our resource databases, etc.   Other examples include incorporating e-books, e-scores, [streaming videos](#) and streaming audios into the OPAC.   More recently, one of us has had limited involvement in reviewing a commercially available federated product that promises to provide cohesive, more simplified access to our resources.   In these respects we are not unlike many other academic libraries attempting to deal with a plethora of complicated issues (see "Emerging issues in academic library cataloging & technical services," by Elaine Sanchez (Primary Research Group, Inc., 2007.)

What I would like to briefly illustrate below, using local examples, is a theme that has been emphasized by such authors as Bade and Yee.   One of their points centers on the value of the role of the cataloger (or metadata specialist – or whatever we are called) - as an interpreter and conduit of access to published – and unpublished information.   It is my opinion that we cannot, yet, dismiss the value of this contribution – and the creation of a local OPAC in the rush to answer all of our bibliographic access related problems. There is too much out there, in too many forms, being accessed in too many different ways - and at the same time there is too much locally crafted' data that is available on local OPACs that could possibly be lost in the process if certain changes continue.

 Although we download a large percentage of our catalog records basically untouched into our OPAC, we also view these records as a part of a larger, cohesive holistic database – and as a part of an even larger, bibliographic access 'whole.'   In addition, we engage in selective, enhanced projects that we feel add to the value of the local OPAC, according to recommendations made by faculty, staff and students. (The examples below **exclude** such mundane editing work as revising call numbers so that different editions of books stand together on the shelves – an issue, which locally has been valued).   Some of the more extensive projects we have/are working on include:

 1. Merging disparate MARC records describing different format iterations (often in electronic form) of the same intellectual content onto one unit record, a primitive FRBRizing attempt to consolidate and simplify user choices.   (We have a set of criteria that we use to determine if this is feasible or wise – and only do so if we can "undo" what we have done.)   We have done this for over ten years with our federal government documents records and more recently in the last several years with different electronic collections and individual different-iteration titles.   In this respect we have utilized the OPAC as a simplified form of a federated search product.   (See the records for the Documenting the American South collection, as just one example.)

 2. Editing records to provide enhanced access to titles on differing granularity levels.   For example, at the bequest of the Music Librarian we reviewed, edited, revised and added content to the notes fields on MARC records to various song anthology collections. This information is not necessarily available on WorldCat - or the data is not organized in a way that we want to use it.   (See the Song Indexing Project.)

 3. Providing limited local cross references to LC subject headings using local subject expertise (i.e., utilizing a form of social tagging.)   We have, like some others, been frustrated with the paucity of currently-used vocabulary needed to describe new publications and unpublished documents such as dissertations - especially in certain disciplines.   (This occurs not only with LCSH but other controlled vocabularies used by journal article databases).   To partially remedy this situation we have been providing limited cross-references from terms used by subject-specific professionals to preferred LCSH headings: Based on JMU theses as a starting point, we are working with faculty in one allied professional field (Communication Sciences and Disorders) to thoroughly review all applicable LC subject headings with this intent and, if resources continue, we will attempt to do so in other areas as well.

Another example: We are providing enhanced title access to commonly-known classical music compositions by adding cross references to authority records based on information found in Berkowitz's "Popular titles and subtitles of musical composition" and Weidow's "The best of MOUG."   (See Altered Music Authority Record as an example.)

In addition, we will be eager to see how various FAST and other related projects develop.   It is our hope that LC will not minimize the subject analysis of new trade publications; at the same time we look forward to their efforts to simplify LCSH construction.

Perhaps we have done too much to try to provide enhanced access to our collections via the local OPAC. We have not waited for standards to change but have adapted, without (we hope) undermining over-arching basic cataloging principles.

What will happen to local cataloging efforts and projects such as those above if the general quality of access to the majority of our collections such as common commercially available trade publications, deteriorates?   Will we have to cease our efforts to enhance records such as those shown above to instead spend more time on "doing that which we thought we did not need to do?"   Consider the record below which was created for a book co-authored by the husband of one of our librarians here at JMU:

>010   2007017393
>040   DLC $c DLC $d BAKER $d BTCTA $d UKM $d JED
>015   GBA749580 $2 bnb
>016 7 013778983 $2 Uk
>020   9781426201196 (hardcover : alk. paper)
>020   1426201192 (hardcover : alk. paper)
>043   n-us--- $a e-ur---
>050 00 TL788.5 $b .H37 2007
>082 00 629.409/046 $2 22
>090 $b
>049   VMCM
>100 1 Hardesty, Von, $d 1939-
>245 10 Epic rivalry : $b the inside story of the Soviet and American space race / $c
          by Von Hardesty and Gene Eisman ; foreword by Sergei Khruschev.
>260   Washington, D.C. : $b National Geographic, $c 2007.
>263   0709
>300   p. cm.
>504   Includes bibliographical references and index.
>650 0 Space race.
>650 0 Astronautics $z United States $x History $y 20th century.
>650 0 Astronautics $z Soviet Union $x History $y 20th century.
>700 1 Eisman, Gene.
>700 1 Khrushchev, Sergeĭ.
>856 41 $3 Table of contents only $u
http://www.loc.gov/catdir/toc/ecip0716/2007017393.html
>938   Baker & Taylor $b BKTY $c 28.00 $d 21.00 $i 1426201192 $n 0007127111
>938   Baker and Taylor $b BTCP $n 2007017393

What happens when basic bibliographic data misrepresents or prevents access to a title that it is describing?

According to the author, this record *first* appeared with the erroneous sub-division

|v Juvenile literature following the main topical headings.   (See the [Table of contents link](#) which still shows this misinformation.)   Also, the spelling on the record for 'Khrushchev' in the 245 field - as it appears in the book - is (still) misspelled.   When the author contacted the publisher about this misleading data, the publisher at first was not sure that the metadata needed to be changed(!) (Eventually the |v was removed from all headings, but the spelling in the statement of responsibility area of the 245 is still incorrect.)   If this misleading data had not been caught by the author would his book be selling as well as it is today?   Would libraries be acquiring this title erroneously –thinking it was a juvenile book?   **This data could have misinformed every 'user' - from publisher vendors to library selectors to ultimately, the public.**

 This one example could well bring up a number of points: The value of the data created by a human being, a 'cataloger' and the value – or lack of value placed on the type of subject analysis data - being created, for starters.   The point is not so much perhaps that these errors occurred (we all make mistakes), the worrisome point concerns possibly/potential changes in workflow at LC/CIP that is already impacting the local library and its users. Is this an example of an anomaly or a pattern with CIP as regards to the type and extent of subject analysis being done? Is this an example of the kind of cut-back that we can expect as LC struggles to determine new workflow patterns in light of budgetary constraints? Among other questions that could be asked, are: **Who does what – and when in the evolution of metadata creation for a title? Who is <u>responsible</u> for providing what piece of accurate data - and when?   For which piece of the metadata 'pie' will a particular group be held accountable?**

The many wonderful ideas about enhanced, shared cataloging mentioned by various presenters and commentators at the WGFBC open meetings will mean little if we can not provide accurate basic data for a title.

It appears that LC, OCLC and others are already relying more on supplied vendor data, as evidenced by OCLC's Level 3 records. What will be the result of this proliferation of incomplete data? Will vendor suppliers have the resources needed to provide adequate bibliographic access? Also: What is meant by the statement that "traditional cataloging requirements might be relaxed somewhat" – as voiced by Bob Nardini, representing the book vendor industry (3d open meeting session, July 9)?   We need not point fingers to declining quality in data as we all need to take shared responsibility, but: Are we all – at all points in the chain of providing metadata –going to have to be more observant of the basic metadata that is created for a title?   What are the ramifications for local libraries relying on 'quality' DLC-DLC cataloging? What are the ramifications for libraries with shelf-ready book

contracts?   What are the ramifications for libraries on time spent at the local level correcting basic errors?   Will local library administrators decide that review - <u>which in many cases has already ceased</u> - is not necessary because of dwindling resources on their level?   What costs will have to be considered if local libraries attempt to review and correct basic errors?   (see Elaine Sanchez's AUTOCAT message about her comment to the WGFBC, posted on Fri., Aug. 3.) Or, will we all have to decide that basic accuracy does not matter?

Hopefully, these issues will resolve themselves soon as we collectively consider the consequences of some of these actions.   I wish the Working Group much luck as they deliberate the many issues facing this far-reaching topic.

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Please note that this staff has gradually increased from a cut-back 'low' of one professional and ½ paraprofessional in 1996 following attrition of two other professional positions and reassignment of other paraprofessionals.

Disclaimer: These thoughts are my own and do not reflect those of my employer.

More and more libraries, particularly school and public libraries, rely on vendor cataloging and processing to receive shelf-ready materials. At the same time, many of these libraries seem to regard the vendor cataloging as something that should be included for free or almost so--they are unwilling to pay much for good, quality cataloging records. Part of this may be due to low expectations for the quality of records some vendors provide.

One major source of high-quality cataloging, until recently, has been records from the Library of Congress. Vendors often would pass along "best available" records, often CIP-level or minimal-level records, contributing to the image of "filthy vendor" cataloging. For vendor catalogers, like my employer, Quality Books Inc. (QBI), who actually take cataloging seriously and strive to produce a full-level record, following AACR2 and LCRIs, to produce records as close to LC-full-level quality as possible, it has become increasingly difficult to maintain such high standards. Often we hear the justification that if LC is not doing it, then why should we--we are in this to make a profit, so if the libraries don't complain about the lower quality of records, why bother?

If we lowered our standards, one reason for the lack of complaints from customers (assuming there were no complaints) could be that so many libraries do not have someone on staff who is knowledgeable enough about cataloging to know whether what they are receiving is of sufficient quality to allow their users to find the materials the libraries have acquired. Another reason might be that, if they have received the records for free, they aren't expecting much, so lesser quality records are just accepted. Perhaps some of them have someone on staff who cleans up the records after the books have been received, or after a user complains about a failed search for something known to be in the catalog. Of course, another explanation could be that they really don't need high-quality records from their vendors, and therefore they will accept just anything. One sign of this could be the increase in the use of PromptCat or other OCLC cataloging partner programs where libraries demand only OCLC records, and don't care what those records look like.

As the quality of LC's cataloging declines, it increases the amount of time catalogers, including vendor catalogers, must spend in cleaning up records to meet the standards developed to facilitate sharing of records. Elaine Sanchez, in her comments to the Working Group (as posted to AUTOCAT, Friday, August 03, 2007 3:50 PM) makes this point very well.

A project we are working on for one of our library customers, involves finding a record that is an exact match for the item we are selling, either in the library's consortial catalog or in OCLC. Finding an exact match, particularly for small and independent press

materials, is not a simple task. Publishers are notorious for reusing ISBNs, for publishing new editions that have only minor differences, etc. As a result, determining whether the record in the library's database or OCLC represents an exact match vs. a different edition can be a relatively time consuming process. Attempting to find a match for a video recording, especially a DVD, is even more complicated, partly due to the lack of adequate rules and training for video cataloging. LC's lack of leadership in video cataloging leaves it to other organizations, such as PCC and OLAC to develop best practices. Contributing to the problems of video cataloging is the necessity on the part of some to catalog from the container, rather than from the program screens, either due to lack of equipment or time required to view the screens. This leads to several records for the same thing in shared databases like OCLC, each with a different title, perhaps with different dates, or other information, yet the exact same content on the disc itself. Things become even more complicated when the content is licensed to another publisher (or rereleased by the same publisher) who republishes the material with minor modifications--changing the credits screens, DVD menu, packaging, or simply updating one of the dates and adding their own publishing information.

Deanna Marcum has stated that the Library of Congress has no budget line for cataloging--it has been a service they have provided without a specific budget for doing it. Why is this the case? Why not add it as one, or ask Congress for support for doing so? Instead of diminishing the quality of LC cataloging by cutting staff, doing away with series authority control, and reducing the amount of verification of copy cataloged or CIP upgrade items, among other things, LC should demand more support for hiring professional and paraprofessional catalogers to replace those who are or will be retiring.

At the same time, I agree that more cooperation is needed between libraries, vendors, and others (such as OCLC). I would agree with many of the suggestions presented by Allen Mullen in his comments to the Working Group (as posted to AUTOCAT, August 03, 2007 11:40 AM). Some elements currently added to cataloging records, such as table of contents notes (505), might better be added as post-cataloging enhancements, rather than as part of the initial record, particularly at the CIP stage. In my experience, publishers are often prone to change the TOC titles between the time they submit information for CIP and the final publication. As a result, those doing the CIP upgrade must spend a good deal of time reviewing and editing the 505, or delete it if it differs significantly enough. While having the 505 may facilitate keyword access to the record, in a well-designed OPAC, the TOC content could be made available and accessible in a more readable format outside the record.

During the 3rd meeting of the Working Group, Rick Lugg (R2 Consulting) discussed duplicative costs, such as reviewing "perfectly good LC records," where libraries spend time making sure 100s, 245s, 260s, 490s, and other fields are right. While I would agree that much duplication may occur, and we need a solution to reduce the need for excessive double-checking, currently this is necessary for several reasons. For one, we have seen a growing decline in the quality of these LC records. If the headings or 245 are inaccurate, then how can someone find the record (and as a result the resource), and how can one expect to easily match the record against the item the cataloger has in hand, particularly by automated means? Also, since LC's series decision, libraries wishing to

provide uniform access to all items in a particular series must verify the 490 (or even 440/830) since LC is no longer doing this, and at times not even transcribing properly from the finished piece (or not updating from CIP during verification). As he continued speaking, Mr. Lugg also brought up video cataloging and seemed to question the need for viewing videos in order to catalog them. Perhaps cataloging from the container is sufficient for mass-market popular feature films, but, as discussed above, this is certainly not the case for the kinds of materials (independently produced, mainly nonfiction, or lesser known fictional feature films) my employer carries.

While electronic resources have become increasingly important, and will continue to do so, significant numbers of print resources will be acquired by libraries for the foreseeable future. These analog materials require digital surrogates in the form of high-quality cataloging records to faciliate access to library users. By contrast, while electronic resources also benefit from similar treatment through the addition of controlled vocabulary, this does not seem as essential when full text is available and access can be provided through alternative means. While LC does need to continue to be a leader in digital projects including digitization, these should not come at the expense of the funding and support devoted to traditional cataloging.

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LC FoBC WG – Economics and Organization of Bibliographic Data
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1) In the second public meeting of the WG, cataloging was characterized as a "public good," implying that it should be supported as a public service regardless of cost. However, libraries and other stakeholders do operate within budgets which constrain the services that they can offer and maintain. Considering this reality, just what are the economic challenges facing different stakeholders in regard to the creation, maintenance, and/or sharing of bibliographic data and related structures and standards? What trade-offs are being made between quality and economic constraints? How can the allocation of human, technological, and monetary resources, at both the collective and individual levels, be optimized to meet consumer and management needs, as described in the WG's first public meeting?

➢ I think that improvement, economically, in bibliographic control costs requires transparent communication and cooperation among those within the larger "bibliographic control supply chain." Who are the exemplars in certain areas and what can we (library community) learn from them? E.g. see my notes on Q4 relative to HarperCollins (doing well in marketing).

➢ As Karen Coyle noted on her blog, I also very much agree that I wish we could quantify what parts of the bibliographic record that we control provide us with the greatest benefits. We (librarians) often think it is everything, but it is not, and I presume it would really differ if we could look at bibliographic control among works with varying containers, e.g. if an ebook record, the user probably really wants to know the file type of the book since this piece of metadata may tell the user whether he/she already possesses the means to access the work. Therefore we should spend more time ensuring that "critical" data elements are consistently supplied and well-formed. However, I understand "critical elements" for various items would highly differ and defining even those would be difficult.

2) The WG would like to clarify the commonalities, as well as differences, in cataloging practices among the various types of stakeholders involved in bibliographic control. How do different stakeholders function within the larger cataloging community? What challenges face the varied stakeholders in terms of cataloging practice? What relationships and/or collaborations currently exist or need to exist to help meet those challenges? What additional challenges do stakeholders foresee in the coming years?

➢ It seems to me that different stakeholders have either a "metadata" or "cataloging" approach. The libraries, for the foreseeable future, must at least have the cataloging approach, i.e. describing an item on a one-up basis, which is very costly. The vendors have a metadata approach, i.e. view of their particular bibliographic sphere in aggregate wherein they do not (typically) engage in item in hand cataloging or description. The vendors use the data, which has at some point in time, been created or improved by those who are engaged in the cataloging approach. If you have strong metadata, this seems unavoidable. Over time, if the cataloging approach becomes very weak, all of our institutions using the data (libraries, vendors, etc.) will suffer. This is a great burden on those who take the "cataloging" approach.

➢ I think we need more open communication with publishing community to become more of an ally rather than an adversary. Sometimes we get caught up in the nuances (i.e. x publisher doesn't know what they're talking about) of publisher "bibliographic behavior" (myself included) and that doesn't do us too much of a service. We all make mistakes and live in ignorance in some capacity. For instance, I think of this example from O'Reilly http://radar.oreilly.com/archives/2006/10/the_persistence_of_bad_data.html . If the wide bibliographic community received CIP/early publishing data (ONIX), we could use that data to start early description of that item. But how can we trust the data? Isn't trust what every data conversation is about? One thing

that could help us get some trust in this regard is to communicate and understand the publisher's data flow. What systems do the publishers use? How many different systems handle the data, at one point or another, which would eventually fall into an ONIX feed? That's why I like reading publisher blogs like O'Reilly – you learn about their data operations.

3) Various national and international organizations are responsible for developing, maintaining, and supporting structures and standards for bibliographic control. Do these organizational arrangements support current needs? How could they be improved?

➢ I'm sure this comment must have been made before, but I think they could be improved in terms of efficiency. For instance, I knew that last summer ISSN International had a long delay with updating their database (ISSN Portal) with changes and updates received from various international ISSN centres.

➢ I think NISO has some great goals, in regards to attempts to decrease the amount of time it takes to create relevant standard.

➢ In the last year, CCC has become a member of BISG. When I worked in a library, I probably wouldn't have thought of BISG as an organization involved with bibliographic control, yet they are aiding in this effort. (I hope that I may be a participant on one of their committees in the near future.) The library community needs to work more broadly with related organizations to improve bibliographic control. This may also lower costs if these other organizations (in publishing, for instance) have more financial means than library-only/primarily library-only standards orgs.

4) A recurrent theme of the previous meetings was more fully integrating bibliographic data (such as MARC records, terminologies, authority files, et al.), which currently exist as "data silos," into the fabric of the World Wide Web. In particular, terminologies and authorities were seen as important resources that could be used in a variety of ways. From a design perspective, how do we move from "data silos" to "data services," that increase the potential value of bibliographic data by treating them as interconnected resource collections, addressable via URIs and accessible over Web protocols? Organizationally, how might this goal be accomplished, supported, and maintained? Economically, what factors need to be considered?

➢ Just as we have SaaS model, think DaaS, i.e. Data as a Service. We desperately need to build our own (library) influence on the web and integrate/partner with others on the web (non-library) who already have distinct clout, not necessarily due to their bibliographic control practices, but nevertheless, they use some bibliographic control to a certain extent to achieve their means. E.g. I admit it, I look up a book in Amazon before I go to any OPAC. Why? It is easy and I like the features that Amazon provides me. But since my funds are not unlimited, I then go to the OPAC and place and reserve on that book in my local public library system. I wish I could place a reserve on a local copy of a book directly from Amazon. Of course, there are competition issues of sorts to be hashed out, but I think there is a place for partnerships wherein the cooperating parties have very different goals. It simply may take more time and thought to figure out the nuances and the "how" of the partnership to ensure that all parties receive desired benefits.

➢ Another example of a partnership would be directly with publishers, like HarperCollins, who creates widgets for books. These widgets are placed on author blogs (or anywhere I suppose) and through that widget link on a blog you can sample the full-text from HarperCollins digital repository. Why not integrate so the widget could include a link for me to place a reserve against that book in my local library system? Or how about the other way around (link to your available "local holdings" from HarperCollins). Right, HarperCollins wants sales and profits. But there can be mutual benefit. I place a reserve from the widget and read the book from my library. I like the book and I tell my family/friends/colleagues about it via word of mouth and a link with the widget. The widget delivers options to my family/friends/colleagues, some of whom make a purchase (redirect to Amazon, I don't think HarperCollins sells directly) or borrow from the library. I think there will always be people who want to buy the book because they a.) don't like waiting to get it from another library b.) want to

mangle it, mark it up, etc. c.) have on hand for local reference and people who want to borrow from the library because a.) they don't want to spend money on the book when they could get it for "free," b.) want to take advantage of the library as a public service and c.) the library contains other materials that the user wishes to access as well. This partnership brings all kinds of users initially to the same place and lets the user choose how he/she wants to access the material, if desired. This is powerful.

➢ Case in point: I am a patron who a.) uses the public library quite a lot, I go there several times a week for reading materials and b.) also buys a ton of books (from Amazon) because there are some books that I want to own, mark-up, give as gifts, and simply re-read without having time-limit to return. Still, there are many times where I first read a book from a library, then purchase my own copy because I want it for any number of reasons. If the content is good, the publisher won't lose a sale.

➢ We can't wait "forever" to partner with other influential parties (as I believe Credence Clearwater Revival sang, "Someday never comes") to let the world know that the records and metadata in our library catalogs is valuable in 2007 and beyond.

5) Library of Congress cataloging and its support for terminologies and authorities are central to the apparatus of bibliographic control in the U.S. and beyond. What should the role of the Library of Congress be in this developing environment?

➢ LC should not be afraid to partner with others who are working on development in strategically important areas (e.g. OCLC, with Worldcat Identities) to increase its value and share costs. But I suspect OCLC may not want to partner?

➢ To agree with Martha Yee, we do need to continue this important work. Without authority files, even the easiest shared-characteristic search (a basic requirement, in my mind, of a decent catalog), in many catalogs, would be so far from complete. I haven't given this much thought, but are there other organizations (besides LC) to which some authority functions could be continued and maintained? i.e. Cost distribution through multiple organizations?

➢ I thought I heard (somewhere?) that LC was considering simplification of subject headings (shorter pre-coordination, perhaps?). This might not be such a bad idea, given the first meeting about users who in most cases don't require the kitchen sink (the complete MARC record that we analyze to death), but need more like "good enough" (the ONIX record, from a vendor, mapped to MARC and inserted with little or no augmentation). LC should continue to support subjects, but perhaps in some kind of tiered structure because we don't need to create long pre-coordinated subjects for every item a user would like to access.

Dear Dr. Griffiths,

Thank you for accepting comments on your group's work. I have several different comments to make, they are numbered and listed below. Overall I am very uneasy about what I see as the dishonesty in claiming that we no longer need something (like bibliographic control) as opposed to admitting we still need it, but maybe can't always afford it or need to do it in a different way. This always seems to happen when a new technology arises. There can always be some categories of materials where a library decides, this isn't important enough for full bibliographic control, given economic realities. *But we need to be very clear about what we are giving up in those cases.*

1. The Future of Bibliographic Control--for the Library of Congress or for all of us?

I am concerned that conditions unique to the Library of Congress could be driving this process. When your report and recommendations come out, they will possibly be very influential throughout the library community. And I see your charge is much broader than just making recommendations to LC.

The Library of Congress is in many ways behind the rest of us when it comes to efficient workflows and productivity. I won't go into the reasons, in fact, I don't know all the reasons, it's just the way it is. For example, "whole book cataloging" is new concept for them that still hasn't made its way completely through their organization. I have read reports before from other institutions that characterize all cataloging based on their own situations. I read these reports and think, "My God, we haven't done it that way in years! We could never afford that."

The LC series decision is a good example of the fallout of one library's problems affecting all the rest of us in a very negative way. Another example is Wright State University's decision to disband their cataloging department and outsource everything. This decision was based on severe internal management problems, but was actively promoted as a progressive and daring move into the "future" of cataloging that all libraries should follow.

You need to keep this very much in mind when you draft your final documents. No library likes to have their dirty laundry made public, but glossing over the real problems can have disastrous effects for all of us.

2. Quality control (based on Clifford Lynch's questions at May 9 meeting)

I think it is very hard to balance the costs and benefits of quality control in cataloging. It is not the same as making cars or doing surgery. No one dies if our quality is not up to snuff. What happens is people will not be able to find resources. And we have seen over and over again that our users don't miss what they can't find, unless they have some

reason for knowing ahead of time that it should be there. And most of our users don't know what should be there and what is missing. This makes it very difficult to come up with objective measures of the benefits of quality control for our end users. The costs of doing quality control are more obvious.

There are of course costs associated with bad data. Garbage in, garbage out. It is less costly to do it right the first time than to try to correct large amounts of legacy data after the fact. The problem is in determining how good is good enough.

And we just don't catalog for the people today, we catalog for people a hundred years from now. There are stewardship issues here that need to be recognized. That's why Clifford's comment that "systems can limit the data that users see, and therefore the data that are usable" disturbs me so much. He should know, *systems change.* Creating data based closely on today's system limitations is a bad idea. We now see OCLC trying to implement a less than perfect FRBR algorithm. Wouldn't it be easier if there were better data, more uniform titles? Maybe no one could have foreseen the need to catalog for FRBR, but in fact better quality control on the existing rules we had at the time would now be providing better data for this new need.

3. Working with other communities on standards

I think there are practical limits to how many different communities we can work with. It is easier if these communities share similar goals to the library community. So for instance, museums and archives seem to be natural partners for us in the creation of standards. There will be times when there are good reasons for library standards to be different, if we have important goals or needs that apply just to us. We shouldn't get too caught up in trying to please other people.

On the other hand, there is no point in being different just to be different. The original draft of RDA had very different descriptive rules for unpublished manuscripts than the archives community has. And there was no point in that. (Luckily, RDA has changed those rules now thanks to archival catalogers in libraries.) It's a balancing act.

4. Text strings, labels, identifiers

Clifford asks about creating such things as "author identifiers for name disambiguation" in our vocabularies. In fact, we already have OCLC authority record numbers and LC control numbers for each name that could be made use of right now. Aren't those numeric identifiers? I am not sure what Clifford thinks is missing.

I fear that we may make numbers a fetish in some way, the magic bullet that solves all problems. People seem to be turning this into an either/or thing. At some point someone will need to associate one or more text strings with these so-called identifiers. (And I admit all the terminology surrounding this is really confusing. Identifier vs. label vs. attribute, etc.) End users want to see something they can read.

Author: 49584903

Title: 548395834054839

I can't imagine that's what is intended, but often the people who speak in favor of such identifiers then also claim that we don't need to worry about primary access points anymore, we don't need to have an established textual heading, we don't need rules for citations, etc.

But there will still be a need to create citations, that's how the scholarly community works. That's how even non-scholars refer to resources. In fact it is very difficult to create citations on the fly based on elements in a bib record. (OCLC recently had to turn off their "cite this" function for non-book/article records in Worldcat.org, because the citations created were so bad.) Even if future systems can do a better job of that, at some point the connections between the identifiers and the real data need to be made. And that will be cataloging.

5. Describe a resource or just point to it? (Clifford Lynch's question again from May 9)

This is related to my concern about citations above. People still need a way to refer to resources without having to show the whole thing, even in a digital world. Clifford asks "In a digital world, do we need bibliographic records to describe the full digital object or just to point to it?"

First, not everything is or will become digital. And much digital content is not textual. We can point to an image from our collection for instance, but it may be less then useful if you don't describe what is depicted for the user. A picture of a man and a horse, but no clue as to who that was, when or where the photo was taken, what good is that? *It is a delusion to think that somehow just because things are digital that they will organize and describe themselves, that the need for metadata goes away**

Sure, you can just point to something digital. But don't you at least need to name it somehow, otherwise how will the end user know what they are clicking through to see? What is being pointed to? You at least need that. But if *all* you have is a pointer, you put the entire burden on the end user to take the time to view the resource and figure out what it is. Even if something is textual and digital and keyword searchable, there is still a need for user-friendly extras like an abstract, subject headings, an explicit listing of creators and their roles--all to *save the time of the reader*.

In conclusion, I do have fears that our new motto may become "waste the time of the reader." That is, have the end users do the work, not us. I often think that is part of what is behind the allure of social tagging. (I see social tagging as a supplement, not a replacement for controlled vocabularies.) I look ahead and imagine a future librarian not being able to find something, and a older, fellow librarian explains, "Oh, yes, that's from the early 21st century. Yes, anything created between 2010 and 2030 is almost impossible to find. That was the time when they thought that because lots of resources were digital, you didn't need to do any cataloging. So the metadata is really bad. We just can't afford to go back and fix it all though."

Don't let that happen.

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 RE: Written testimony

TO: Library of Congress Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control

FROM: Lloyd Chittenden

          Visiting Technical Services Librarian

          Fort Lewis College

          John F. Reed Library

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          Durango, CO 81301

I see two ways the library community can efficiently maintain control of our bibliographic universe. We can either centralize, or cooperate, or some combination of both. This is the same as it has always been. The new technologies are great, but I do not see that they have changed anything on a fundamental level. Things look very different, but researchers still need to find material. They need to be sure that they find every relevant item on a topic. The library profession has spent the last hundred years developing and maintaining the current system that makes that possible. There are more casual researchers, such as teenagers and undergraduate students, who are happy with Googling and such. That is fine, but they are not the people for whom research libraries exist. In his presentation at the second public meeting of this working group, David Bade pointed out that libraries should have a system that meets the needs of their most demanding users such as researchers, scholars and scientists. I agree. Why is it worth the extra money and effort to meet those demands? It is because those users make use of our materials as a basis for the creation of new knowledge. By doing our best to serve them, we are doing our best to serve society. Research libraries such as The Library of Congress (LOC)

would be making a fatal error to develop bibliographic control systems based on the needs, interests and abilities of teenagers and undergraduate students rather than researchers, scholars and scientists.

So, we can either centralize the work or cooperate to get it done. This has not changed. Centralizing would be LOC doing everything. Cooperating would be everyone contributing a little bit following agreed upon rules and working together to develop those rules. What LOC did with its decision to stop creating series authority records (SARs) was to reject both. They said they would no longer create complete records and they would not discuss it in a cooperative manner. This working group seems to be a belated attempt to have that discussion.

LOC cannot be grouped with other libraries. It is very different from any other library. If all the other Association of Research Libraries (ARL) libraries are doing something, that does not mean that LOC should or will do that. LOC is different because everyone else depends on them, and they do not have anyone else upon which to depend. The ARL libraries have been cutting technical services staff; we have done the same at my library. The primary means the rest of us use to maintain a modicum of quality are systems and services, such as OCLC PromptCat, that allow us to get quality Library of Congress records in a quick and efficient manner. Such services are only worthwhile if there are quality records to be provided. If I can be confident that those are going to be quality records, then I can have a student worker or even volunteer download them into our system. The lack of SARs and the reductions in cataloging staff at LOC have led me to conclude that I cannot rely on LOC records. If I cannot rely on those records, then I have to have a more qualified, more highly trained, and more expensive worker check

them and fix them. Repeat that in thousands of libraries around the country and you see that this

is an inefficient and costly system. It is best if things are done correctly the first time, and when

it comes to cataloging, they are generally done the first time by LOC. Therefore, it is important

to have LOC doing them right.

I suppose a third option is to lower our standards. Few libraries can long afford to keep up

standards higher than those of LOC because it means changing many records locally, again

requiring expensive workers. When justifying the SAR decision, LOC claimed that keyword

searching could replace the controlled vocabulary of those authority records. The result is a

severe deterioration of standards that I find unacceptable.

Keyword searching alone is simply not adequate and I do not see how it ever will be. Yes, users

can now search for terms within content, and that serves as a wonderful complement to our

system of controlled vocabulary, but it is not an adequate replacement. In the case of series

titles, far too many different series have very similar names, or even the exact name. If you

search a large library catalog on the series title "Bulletin," you will see many titles that are only

"Bulletin." Currently, we are using SARs to keep track of which one is which. Also, series titles

change from time to time. SARs are what we use to link them together despite such title

changes. Keywords would completely fail to pull together all issues of a series when the series

title changes. I see no replacement for SARs that will solve these problems for library users. I

have no doubt that it is true that library users do not actually search on those series titles, but they

do still read books in series. Whether it is A Series of Unfortunate Events or Lectures in

Mathematics, people read books in series, and they look for books in series. While most may not

use the catalog directly for that, they often ask the librarian for the next book in a series, the librarian then uses the catalog. The catalog needs to be able to perform the function of finding books in series.

Maybe there is a way. Maybe there is some new technology or system that will solve the problem of bibliographic control faster and cheaper, but I have not seen it, and it certainly has not been tested and proven. It is very foolish to abandon a system that works, when there is no proven system in place to take over. User tagging is one replacement that has been suggested. User tagging is certainly cheap, but I do not think cheapness should be the primary criteria for something this important. The ability of future generations to access the record of our culture is at stake. The ability of researchers and scientists to find the relevant inquires that came before them is at stake. If a system like user tagging were used for several years in a research environment, studied thoroughly and proven as effective as the current system for researchers, then I might consider it reasonable for research libraries to use it to replace the current system, but none of that has happened.

What about vendor records? The fact is that vendors could supply high quality records. The question would be whether that would undermine our system of collaborative cataloging. Would it be cheaper for the entire library community or just LOC? If LOC buys a record from a vendor, will they then be able to share that record with others or will the vendor insist on the ability to sell that record to other libraries to maximize the profit gained by creating the record? At the most recent American Library Association (ALA) meeting in Washington, I attended a very small meeting with LOC music catalogers. At that meeting, I learned that LOC was working on

an agreement with allmusic.com to get metadata. However, allmusic.com did not want LOC to share that data with other libraries.

I do not think it matters whether LOC creates records themselves, or pays private vendors to do it, as long as their records are high quality. However, those private vendors will want a significantly higher price to allow LOC to share the records. Essentially LOC would be paying the vendor to allow all libraries to use the records. This is a case where the interest of LOC diverges from the general library community. What would be in it for LOC to pay that extra cost?

What can the library community do to make it worthwhile for LOC to continue to provide us with quality cataloging services? At the third meeting of this working group, Dianne McCutcheon made an excellent suggestion that OCLC pay contributors per use of the records they create. That would be a great help. However, I think it would also be worthwhile to consider the political situation of LOC.

We should understand what motivates a government agency like LOC. There is a symbiotic relationship between a government agency and the clientele it serves. The agency provides services to the clientele, and the clientele provide political support for the agency with its governing body. If the agency cuts services, the clientele may reduce political support. Also, if the clientele does not provide political support then the agency may be forced to cut services. LOC is such an agency. Like any other agency, it must have political support to survive and grow. In the case of LOC, there are at least three groups of clientele: Congress, other libraries,

and the general public. If forced to make cuts it seems clear that the Library will cut services to that clientele that are the least politically helpful to it, and the library community has not been helpful to it. The library community has taken for granted that there would always be quality cataloging services from LOC and the continuing reductions in cataloging staff and the decision to stop creating SARs are the results. Instead, LOC puts on awards shows and creates nifty web products for the public. I cannot fault them for that. The public is where they see their political support coming from, and like any agency, they need that political support.

If the library community wants to receive better cataloging services from LOC, then they need to give LOC what they need, which is political support. I would like to see the lobbyists of ALA working to persuade Congress to provide LOC the funding they need to maintain our current, proven system of bibliographic control.

Remarks on the Future of Bibliographic Control,
By Ted Gemberling

During the recent Economics of Bibliographic Control program at the Library of Congress. Karen Calhoun made this significant statement:

"In the fifteen years leading up to the year 2000 ... new hires to cataloging positions fell 45%. During that same fifteen years, the hiring of newly-degreed librarians to cataloging positions fell 64% ... The retirement wave for a generation of bibliographic control experts is expected to build to full strength starting in 2010. After the exodus that is coming, it seems to me unlikely that the role of librarians in technical services departments will continue in the same way, considering the competing pressures on the salaries and wages budget and new hiring patterns described previously. I fear that research libraries will be unable to sustain the traditional practices and staffing patterns of bibliographic control, whether they wish to or not."

I think Calhoun may be correct in her projection. The trend she lays out does seem to be a natural extension of what has happened. But the question is: what role do our current decisions play in future trends? This may be somewhat similar to the projection of 60 million people in California by 2050. This increase of about 80% in California's population over the next 43 years is apparently an extension of growth patterns over the last 43. But would a population of 60 million be a desirable or even possible state of affairs? California already uses considerably more water than can be found in the state. I think such a growth of 80% would be an environmental catastrophe, not just for the state's natural environment, but for that entire part of the continent.

There is a notable difference between these projections. Thinking there will be 60 million people in California will not make it happen. There are serious environmental and legal barriers to it. For example, in the 80's, there were proposals for California to take water from the Pacific Northwest, but they were blocked by the Endangered Species Act. Species in the Northwest require a lot of water, and they cannot move to California if the water is moved.

In contrast, Calhoun's projection could easily be a "self-fulfilling prophecy." It already has been to some extent. Investment in cataloging has been reduced at least partly out of belief that technological developments will make cataloging less necessary in the future. This expectation has had its effects over the last several decades, and now the result seems inevitable to Calhoun and others. But does it have to be?

I would argue that the issue is not just the potential of technology. At the same time that cataloging has been reduced, funding for public educational institutions in America has gone down. More and more, the burden of paying for college, for example, has been put on the shoulders of the students themselves and their parents. A time may come when it will be very hard for people from low- or middle-income families to get a college education. We must reverse this deterioration of the public sector in America.

Libraries are a central element in our educational infrastructure, and I think they face a similar danger. In an article recently submitted to American Libraries, Martha Yee gives this anecdote:

"I once went to a talk by a colleague who was working in the business world on an information portal. He indicated that the project had begun as an automatic indexing project with relevance ranking, but that the people paying for the work were so dissatisfied with the results that the project had morphed into a thesaurus development project employing human indexers. Is this a

vision of the future? Information organization only for those who pay for it and Google for the rest, instead of information organization for all as a social good paid for with tax dollars?"

Now, I realize (and I'm sure Yee does as well) that the proposals of Calhoun and others do not amount just to "Google for the rest." But there are some serious questions about the confidence she and others put in technology. Sometimes technology progresses faster than we expect—I'd say that was the case in the 80's for computer technology—and sometimes more slowly. There was an interesting article in *Popular mechanics* a few months ago about NASA. I remember how excited I was in the early 80's by the Space Shuttle. What a technological marvel! But now, after 25 years, NASA has figured out they have no way to make it safe and are returning to the 1960's vehicle for manned space flight, the capsule. They are designing bigger and more powerful capsules than the 60's versions, but capsules nonetheless. Someone is quoted in the article: "It took us 50 years from the Wright brothers to get to the Moon, and it'll take us another 50 to get back to it." Few would have expected that in 1969. Could we experience a "plateau" in the development of computer technology, too, rather than the study upward trend Calhoun and others seem to expect?

It's hard to say. I am not claiming to have much concrete evidence of it. Though it is interesting that e-books have not taken off (in fact have been discontinued by retailers like Barnes and Nobles) and portable e-book readers are still rather clunky. There's no sign that people are losing their interest in print monographs, though print journals really do seem to be giving way to e-journals. Print books in the form of the "codex" are a technology we've been using for about 1400 years. And as long as we have print books, there will be a need for classified library shelving, as Thomas Mann has argued.

There are a lot of user studies showing traditional library searches like subject browsing have lost ground to keyword searching. But I think before we jump to accept the implication of that, there needs to be more research on the search practices of scholarly users. The question cuts one way but not the other: no one is arguing that we should eliminate keyword searching, but a lot of people want to eliminate subject searching. Keyword searching is a real advance achieved by online catalogs and appears to be relatively easy to provide in online systems. But the option to do a controlled subject search may be important for scholarly users. If we give it up, the quality and quantity of scholarly work may decline.

The main things I'm urging are caution about technology and the advocacy of better funding for the public sphere. I realize that it might be hard to expect the Library of Congress's management to push for funding. They are under the authority of Congress and pretty much have to live with the funding they get. But I think as citizens, the rest of us away from LC need to take a stand for the importance of libraries and the whole public sphere. A big part of that needs to be advocating for the importance of cataloging. The worldwide library community depends a great deal on the leadership of LC in this area. Admittedly, that's a burden, but it's a burden worth shouldering. The Library of Congress is truly one of the "pillars of the world," and our culture and quality of life depend on its contributions.

Thanks for considering my comments.

Ted Gemberling
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From: Denise Hanusek <dhanuse@emory.edu>

Date: Jul 31, 2007 6:11 PM

Subject: Personal response to the Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control

To: jmgriff@unc.edu

Dear Dr. Griffiths,

I have been a cataloging librarian for seven years. I also serve as adjunct faculty and teach in the field of World Religions at Candler School of Theology at Emory University. I come to the question of bibliographic control from both a library and a teaching perspective. Because of this, I appreciate particularly the thoughtful and insightful papers written by Thomas Mann of the Library of Congress in response to some of the ideas expressed in recent papers and reports by Deanna Marcum and Karen Calhoun. Several issues arising from this debate are of particular concern to me. First, it has been intimated that catalogers are disturbed about some of the new ideas being expressed by Marcum and Calhoun because they are resistent to change, extremely conservative, etc. Some of these new ideas include the need for nothing more than keyword searching in order to find "something" on a topic, or the call to drop LCSH as being too expensive and beyond the understanding of the ordinary library user. But acceptance of "new ideas" is not the issue for catalogers. (I assure you that we are constantly having to deal with new ideas, new tools, new ways of doing things and manage this quite nicely.) The issue is the striving for excellence in what we do as a profession: the organization of information. Based on more than a century of cold, hard experience, catalogers know that keyword searching will never be adequate to mine the riches of any library's holdings. The most eloquent testimony in proof of this is Thomas Mann's excellent paper entitled "The Peloponnesian War and the Future of Reference, Cataloging, and Scholarship in Research Libraries" with which I am sure you are familiar. A second issue that arises from the writings of both Marcum and Calhoun is: what type of researcher should serve as a target audience for what professional organizers of information do? Should it be high school students or college freshmen who have not yet learned how to do research and are mainly interested in finding "something" to use a source as quickly as possible as with as little effort as possible? Or should it be the experienced researcher, the grad student who is trying to determine what has been written in his or her field before writing the perspectus for a dissertation? I would argue that the expertise of organizing professionals should be brought to bear in order to address the needs of the second group. It will always be easy to find "something" for a five-page paper due the next morning. The resources of the entire library system should not be set up to deal only with this. But again, as Thomas Mann makes so eloquently clear, much more is required for the experienced researcher whose needs will be much more focused than that of a beginner. If the tools to help these people should be permitted to crumble, it will be very difficult to put them back into place once the extent of the disaster becomes clear. There will be no such problem for those who rely only on keyword searches. The decision-makers of the library community need to keep this clearly in mind: one cannot put the toothpaste back into the tube once it has lost its structure. Let us look at the issue from a slightly different perspective. A high school

student or college freshman argues that the textbooks that they are required to read, texts that require rigorous organization of knowledge and thought in order to grasp their message, are too long and boring. They suggest that, instead of reading them, they should be permitted to find material on the subject they are studying by using keyword searching on the internet, and that the final exam consist in editing an article for Wikipedia. What would be the response of their parents if their teacher's answer to this were "Excellent idea! Yes, we have been wrong all these years in trying to organize knowledge and present it to students so that they can learn for themselves how to put it all together." If your child had such a teacher, would your response not be to place your child in another school immediately? And yet this is what librarians are being told to do by supposed "experts" in their own profession. As a librarian and a teacher, I find many of the ideas expressed by Deanna Marcum and Karen Calhoun to be profoundly disturbing, and destructive not only to the profession of librarianship but to the pursuit of knowledge generally. Libraries are not businesses and should not follow a business model. The object of libraries is not to increase market share but to cooperate with the teaching profession to provide oncoming generations with the tools and knowledge they will need, not only to survive in, but to better their world. Let us be very careful to keep this trust for our children and their children.

Denise Marie Hanusek, Th.D. Pitts Theology Library Emory University 505 Kilgo Circle Atlanta, GA 30322 phone: 404-727-1220 e-mail: dhanuse@emory.edu

"The truth will make you free." (John 8:32b) "I beseech you, in the bowels of Christ, think it possible you may be mistaken." (Oliver Cromwell) "Forsan et haec olim meminisse juvabit." (Vergil A. 1,203)

From: W Gerald Heverly <gerald.heverly@nyu.edu>

Date: Jul 31, 2007 11:06 AM

Subject: Testimony for Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control

To: jmgriff@unc.edu

Dear Dr. Griffiths,

The Forum for Classics, Libraries, and Scholarly Communication brings together librarians, publishers' representatives, classics professors, and others interested in the intersection between libraries, scholarly communication, and the study of the ancient Greek and Roman civilizations. The Forum is an affiliated group of the American Philological Association, the principal learned society in the U.S. for classics. On behalf of the Forum's more than 80 members, we, their elected officers, write to express concern about the future of cataloging in this country.

Increasingly statements are made that controlled vocabulary is no longer necessary for locating information and that precoordinated subject headings such as LCHS are thus obsolete. Instead, it is claimed that keyword searching and Google-style interfaces are adequate. We believe that such claims are fundamentally flawed given the current state of search engines' approach to subject retrieval. Keyword searching is certainly a powerful tool, but relying on it exclusively often produces too many hits for library users to comprehend. Moreover, many hits generated by keyword searching turn out to be irrelevant upon inspection. In our experience, LCSH provide an ultimately faster, more reliable approach to determining a library's holdings on a given topic.

Classics is an international discipline, and American classicists routinely consult scholarship in French, German, Italian, Modern Greek, and Spanish. The limitations inherent in keyword searching become especially evident when one attempts to locate information in all these languages on the same topic. Indeed, in the absence of subject headings or cross-language semantic mappings, keyword searching in English usually identifies only material in English. As a result, a keyword search has to be performed in each of the other languages in order to generate a comprehensive list of titles. In addition, one must know what the correct keywords are in each language in order to have any hope of finding all the relevant material on a topic. Precoordinated subject headings, however, make such repetitive searching unnecessary and reliably identify both the English and foreign language material that might be of interest.

In short, LCSH are certainly not obsolete. Consequently, catalogers at the Library of Congress must continue to have relevant subject expertise and foreign language competence. Only such individuals can assign subject headings accurately and devise new ones as the need arises.

Thank you for considering our concerns about the future of cataloging. Please feel welcome to contact the current chair if you have questions about the Forum's position.

Sincerely yours,

W. Gerald Heverly, New York University Chair (gerald.heverly@nyu.edu)

Rebecka Lindau, Princeton University Immediate Past Chair (rlindau@princeton.edu)

David Sullivan, UC Berkeley Secretary (dsulliva@library.berkeley.edu)

To: Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control

From: Corinne Jacox, Catalog/Reference Librarian, Creighton University School of Law Library, Omaha, Nebraska

Date: June 29, 2007

Re: Comments on Economics and Organization of Bibliographic Data

I would like to comment on question 5 from the background paper on the *Economics and Organization of Bibliographic Data*, "What should the role of the Library of Congress be in this developing environment?" To quote from the welcome message of Dr. James H. Billington, Librarian of Congress, "The Library's mission is to make its resources available and useful to the Congress and the American people and to sustain and preserve a universal collection of knowledge and creativity for future generations" (http://www.loc.gov/about/). In addition to its physical and digital resources, the Library's expertise and work product should also be considered a resource.

Of particular value is the Library's subject expertise and its creation and maintenance of the Library of Congress Subject Headings. Many libraries throughout the country rely on LC subject headings and would be greatly affected if they were abandoned or lessened in quality.

The use of a controlled vocabulary is still a valuable research tool in information databases, which include library catalogs. Thomas Mann, Library of Congress reference librarian, makes very credible arguments for the use of a controlled vocabulary, in addition to keyword searching, in his paper, "The Peloponnesian War and the Future of Reference, Cataloging, and Scholarship in Research Libraries" (http://guild2910.org/future.htm). The addition of subject headings through a controlled vocabulary give added value to catalog records that a mere harvesting of data cannot provide. Even commercial databases, such as periodical indexes, provide subject headings through a controlled vocabulary. In the legal environment, West Publishing Company created and maintains a controlled vocabulary through the use of its topic and key number system that makes it possible to systematically retrieve case law by a particular topic. This system has been in use for over a century and is still considered to be an indispensable tool by legal researchers. Without these controlled vocabularies, valuable resources needed by the researcher could be missed and wading through the vast amounts of information would be time consuming.

In conclusion, the Library of Congress needs to continue to be the leader of library cataloging standards in the United States. Its subject headings are invaluable to libraries throughout the country. The lack of this resource would have a negative economic impact on many, many libraries if they had to try to create these resources individually.

From: Miriam Kahn <mbkcons@gmail.com>

Date: Jul 24, 2007 1:26 PM

Subject: Bibliographic Control through Library of Congress - support of the effort

To: jmgriff@unc.edu

Dr. José-Marie Griffiths Dean and Professor School of Information and Library Science University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill CB#3360, 100 Manning Hall Chapel Hill, NC 27599-3360

Dr. Griffiths: I am a librarian and preservation consultant and have worked in the library profession for more than 25 years. Throughout this career I have conducted research for hire using the vast resources of materials cataloged and housed in libraries and archives. Library catalogs and subject headings are the most important resources I consult while conducting this research. Without them, I could not provide the excellent service my clients expect. It has come to my attention, through my colleauge Margaret Mauer, Head of Monographic Cataloging at Kent State University, that the Library of Congress plans to withdraw from their role as cataloger for the nation's collections. I know that they have already ceased to provide authority records for serials, providing a strain on catalogers and much confusion as to where materials are located.

I cannot image how disorganized and compromised libraries would become should LC decide to withdraw from its role coordinating cataloging records for our nation's institutions.

I am lending my voice to your effort to pursuade LC to continue in its role.

--

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Dr. José-Marie Griffiths:

I presented at the Authority Control Interest Group (ACIG) meeting during the recent ALA meeting. It has been suggested to me that the Working Group would find the information that I presented useful. This should be considered my personal testimony, not that of Vanderbilt University Library.

I have spent a lot of time this past year working on a next generation catalog, Primo. We are attempting to combine two types of metadata sources, our MARC catalog and a database--The TV News Archives. The topic of the recent ACIG meeting was Authority control Meets Faceted Browse and I attempted to address the authority control challenges that I face with this project.

I will attach the modified Powerpoint presentation. It should be available soon, if it is not already, at the LITA/ACIG website.

The last slide 'sums up' my comments:

Authority Control Issues

1. Uniform title practices?inconsistency, even for collection management and organization is a problem

2. NACO practices for 'usage' need to be reconsidered

3. Authority control, Maintenance and consistency are important

I hope this information is useful. If it needs to be in another format, I will try to make the changes.

Sincerely,

Mary Charles Lasater

Mary Charles Lasater

Vanderbilt University

Email: mary.c.lasater@Vanderbilt.Edu

LC Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control

Written testimony by:

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When I was an undergrad studying theatre at UCLA back in the early 1980s, by no surprise, conducting research required making use primarily of the university research library and its resources. I knew first to go straight to the reference stacks to identify articles in periodical indexes before consulting the card catalog for the particular journal where the article was located. I then went to retrieve the journal in the stacks. If I was unfamiliar with a particular topic, I might first consult with a reference librarian for a scan of the literature before consulting reference sources and books that were described in the card catalog. If there were serials and monographs the library did not have, I could get what I needed (for the most part) from filling out a request for interlibrary loan.

For finding materials that were about theatre and theatre history, old articles and newspaper reviews of particular productions, and for checking out the text of actual plays, this standard research methodology was appropriate since it was likely that many of the materials that I would need would not be available at the bookstore—and even if they were, it was likely I could not afford to purchase them all. To further my research for a production I was about to direct, I may also consult picture files, art reproductions, photos, and other visual resources to get a better feel for a particular period. I may even venture into the library's special collections department to look through papers of individuals who had once been associated with the original Broadway production where there might be additional photos, press releases, etc. that would aid in contextualization since the text of the play is not sufficient for an overall appreciation and understanding of authorial intent.

In my experience as both a researcher and an academic librarian at UCLA, our research library has not radically changed from this basic research model, even with the proliferation of aggregated databases, formats, online content, and different expectations for accessing content by our end users. The primary means for scholarly research continues to be modeled after the belief that a penchant for lifelong learning is grounded in books and reading, resistant to the fact that we are gaining momentum as a society that is molding a generation that is learning through visual cues, iconography, and orality. Books and reading are a vital tenet of the spectrum (you can't participate in the dialogue

if you can't read and write), but in this emerging Information Age, we are in an age of convergence, remash, recycle, and repurposing, rather than one-way communication and information silos.

No longer are libraries and archives the only places to go to seek out obscure, hard to find facts and materials. It is now possible to view full texts of books and journals through aggregated databases, the Internet Archive, Google Scholar, or through Google's book project; view materials from collectors who have provided quick and dirty scans of their treasures on places like YouTube. Public figures and subject specialists have their own Websites and blogs where it's possible to glean an authoritative voice on a particular topic of interest or even join in the conversation. As Deanna Marcum has stated when discussing the trouble undergraduates have navigating through the various library information silos, "There is an alternative to all this clicking, this navigating … I also have the option, sitting there in my cozy, computer-equipped dorm room, of ignoring your library entirely and going online to a commercial search service such as Google."[1]

Although I do not disagree with Marcum's statement, where I find fault in her overall assessment is in failing to acknowledge that Google has turned Search into a commodity. I do realize that bibliographic control is expensive--and this should not be ignored--but the answer is not simply to look over a few statistical surveys that document what nearly all of us already know—that undergraduates turn to Google first for their research—and then respond by turning Search over to Google because that's what our users want. By doing so ignores the very real contributions that the library profession has made over the last century in mediating resources as a public good to empower users towards a goal of lifelong learning.

I am painfully aware that the information silos that are ingrained and have proliferated will not easily be set free without a complete reassessment of services and training. Having conducted a number of interviews with staff at the UCLA Film & Television Archive relating to core services and digital readiness, the number one concern for moving forward into a more access-oriented environment is the lack of resources available to develop a sustainable and complex networked systems environment. The majority of services we offer are held together by hundreds of separate ad hoc filemaker databases, an outdated Web presence, and a Voyager catalog that is not intuitive for either our researchers or staff. This environment has resulted in the creation of an immense backlog, duplicative effort, and inefficient workflows.

Since the cataloging and metadata challenges are not easily resolved, and few resources are allocated to information organization, we continue to lag behind meeting expectations of the emerging DIY generation of young people perfectly aligned with YouTube. Even some of our preserved titles are beginning to appear on the nascent upstart (without permission) prompting a desire by me to link to them from the corresponding bibliographic record in our Voyager cataloger—if only to provide better contextualization for our own users who may stumble across them. Even so, I void the temptation, since the

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[1] Deanna Marcum, "The Future of Cataloging," *LRTS* 50:1 (January 2006): 6

unauthorized uploads onto YouTube do not adequately convey the resources in terms of aspect ratio, preservation strategy, and quality of presentation.

This inviting environment that is the hallmark of Google/YouTube Search is not without its limitations. As a corporate entity, Google can fall prey to the pitfalls associated with answering to its shareholders—resources can be described incorporating language more amendable to content providers, pulled from circulation due to copyright infringement, or eventually charge for its services. Nowhere in Google's mission "to organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful" is a commitment to open and free public access.

Google also fails in its ability to provide access to authoritative, difficult to locate materials on obscure topics because either they are not online, so unpopular that they are available on screen 999 of 1000, buried in aggregated databases, or only available to schools and libraries for educational and research purposes. If these resources can stand-alone and are available in a library, they will be described utilizing a pre-coordinated subject string that carries equal weight with other works examining the same topic.

This is not to argue that Google is not a useful resource for researchers and libraries. Even in my undergraduate days, the library catalog was not the first place I went for my information needs. But a heavy reliance on Google should not be used as an excuse to hand over our tradition of bibliographic control to a corporate entity. The long-term ramifications of such a decision is doomed to backfire. As we have seen with the merging of vendors of proprietary ILS's, quality, service, and maintenance is not guaranteed, nor is longevity. The impact of Google on Search does mean, however, that the way libraries have traditionally provided core services needs to be rigorously re-examined and re-tooled to better accommodate user expectations.

My belief is that the fault is not in the principles of bibliographic control so much as it is in the tools that we are provided with to carry these principles out. Catalogers are subject to an arcane and insular language that is alienating to other resource description communities, We use outdated standards and structures, expect other communities to adapt to our ways, spend copious amounts of time drafting rules for every exception, and have not effectively incorporated the traditional bibliographic record into the Web environment. Essentially, we have a tendency of not seeing the forest for the trees.

We cringe by the notion of ingesting non-MARC metadata into our systems, preferring instead the duplicative effort of re-keying, the practice of cut-and-paste, and largely redundant corrections and updates. Works with multiple versions require a new record that in turn creates duplicative copy and enhancements and unnecessary challenges for end users who are then forced to distinguish among particular manifestations, rather than from among an array of different expressions of works.

We tend to rely on abstracting methods for noting relationships among bibliographic records, rather than developing a system that recognizes relationships through elements recognized by URIs or other numeric identifiers that can then be incorporated as part of a

larger networked environment for different purposes and different views dependent on user need.

We have failed to realize the rich potential of social networking tools that can be effective in generating dialogue and meaningful contextualization to available resources. If we can develop a networked system that preserves and strengthens the quality of library-based bibliographic control in core records through a central database, rather than through the localized silos that exist currently, we should then be able to develop and incorporate social networking strategies in extended views for our users. Currently the OPAC views we provide our users are not intuitive and needlessly complex. We need to acknowledge that user feedback, reviews, etc. that are implicit in Google, Amazon, YouTube and countless other networked resources already have established the norm. As such, we should not be ignoring this as a trend so much as we should be viewing this as an opportunity that engages our users.

Most importantly, since a hallmark of our profession is distinguished in its capacity to foster an educated citizenry, the larger implications posed by leaving information organization in the hands of commercial interests is conceding that Search is not a public good, but a commodity that adheres to the bottom line. By abandoning human intervention in the organization of information, catalogers are reduced in their role as intermediaries to ensure that people from all walks of life—not just those who can afford it—have access to knowledge as a means to improve and advance their socio-economic status.

From: McCroskey, Marilyn J <MarilynMcCroskey@missouristate.edu >

Date: Aug 5, 2007 5:03 PM

Subject: Written Testimony: Future of Bibliographic Control

To: jmgriff@unc.edu

To the Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control:

Let us not forget about a large group of librarians that don't seem to be represented on the Working Group: the school librarians. I was a school librarian for 5 years, and for nearly 25 years I have taught them in cataloging classes. I also represent them as the AASL liaison on the CIP Advisory Group to the Library of Congress.

School librarians will always need to be able to find good MARC records to download. Most cannot afford membership in OCLC, and many are in one-person libraries with no one to ask cataloging questions. They have little time for "real" cataloging as they try to juggle many responsibilities and serve their students and teachers. They often do not have the cataloging knowledge to spot nonstandard practices or erroneous information on cataloging records they obtain. As I did in my school back in 1976-1981, school librarians still lean heavily on CIP records. Many of them do use the CIP block in the book for cataloging, and often they teach their little patrons to look at the CIP block for a summary and for subject headings ideas. Those who are able also obtain MARC CIP records from vendors or on the LC Web site. In either cataloging format, they trust LC to give them good, reliable cataloging. They are already going to suffer consequences as a result of the LC decision not to control series titles, because there will eventually be scattering of items in the same series in their catalogs. If any other elements of the LC cataloging record go by the wayside, they will only have less and less effective access in their catalogs for their patrons.

The LC CIP Division did a survey of all kinds of libraries in 2006 to determine whether CIP cataloging was really needed in this day of access to huge databases such as OCLC, and what specific elements were of importance to respondents. Even though school librarians were off for the summer at the time, fully 35% of the total respondents to the LC survey were school librarians! I have seen the data from just the school side of the survey, as well as their written comments. Over 90% of them use CIP. They desperately need good subject headings and Dewey numbers, and summaries for all juvenile materials. They also need an easy way to download CIP records from LC (now it is difficult). I did a survey of my own a few months before LC's survey period ended, and my survey showed basically the same heavy dependence on LC for good cataloging, and the same written comments that begged for this cataloging help to continue for them. Anything that LC decides to stop doing, or to stop verifying, will hurt the catalogs of school libraries, and will undoubtedly limit student access to their materials. As a long-time school board member, I see it as a waste of school resources if students can't find library materials in the catalog that were purchased with school money that is always stretched too thin.

I would urge the Working Group to ask the LC CIP Division for the school portion of the data from the 2006 survey (only the data from the total responses is now public). I would also be happy to send the data from my 2006 school librarians' survey if the Working Group would like to see it. The written comments will tell you at least as much as the statistics. I am in the process of writing a journal article using the statistics and

comments from both surveys. If LC cataloging quality goes down, for most non-school libraries this will only mean more work for the catalogers there, and they will all get to reinvent the wheel. But for school libraries, it will mean a real deterioration of catalog access, since they may not know how to reinvent the wheel. For the patron, this is disastrous. As I tell my cataloging students, our patrons will never know they didn't find what they didn't know we had.

Another very important cataloging issue is the lack of training for catalogers in library schools and library science programs. For the future, this means that catalogers out there—especially in schools—will be even less qualified to edit cataloging records they get from LC, OCLC, and other sources. It then becomes even more important for LC to continue to create high quality catalog records for libraries to use. This is especially crucial for school librarians. It is a myth that school librarians really don't need to know how to catalog, because they buy all their MARC records. Their written survey comments indicate that they do make an attempt to doublecheck the MARC records they get, and perhaps enhance them, and they have many library materials for which they cannot find MARC records and must try to create them. So aside from the need to be able to find high-quality catalog records to use with little editing, they also need cataloging workshops provided within easy driving distance.

Let me know if you would like me to send my 2006 school librarians' survey data electronically. It is not long and complicated. And again, if at all possible, I would urge you to look at the school responses to the 2006 LC CIP survey as well.

Thank you for allowing me to share my thoughts.

-- Marilyn McCroskey

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Comments for Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control

I found the information on the sessions useful. I have two suggestions I would like to submit.

I was not sure from the presentations whether LC is eliminating duplicate effort by using the OCLC system to do their cataloging. I thought Beecher Wiggins presentation was very cogent and helpful and LC's plans are reasonable. Concentrating the professional staff on the subject and classification and authority control issues sounds like a good idea. My only suggestion is that they use OCLC and make and maintain records there as an economy. This is a duplication of effort issue. It should be cheaper for LC to just use OCLC instead of doing it locally and we should all benefit from LC's savings in that. I think LC and large libraries need to get over any early concerns about the "master record" in OCLC. Wouldn't it be better for them to work with OCLC to make sure the most efficient method is being used to get things cataloged once with copy used by all? OCLC is already loading Onix records, why should LC figure out how to do that with their own system then output them to load to OCLC or whatever? Isn't it time to say LC and other large libraries should manage the manual part of the cataloging effort but all should let OCLC manage the system/distribution part? OCLC isn't good at doing manual cataloging for you, and LC shouldn't waste effort maintaining systems if they can use OCLC.

Perhaps this committee could advise libraries to use it or fix it when it comes to OCLC. Fix the pricing so that LC can sustain cataloging. This is preferable to depending on publishers to provide metadata and then jack up the price for it. OCLC Users Council needs to look at what the libraries should be reimbursing LC or other libraries for the cataloging data. Lorcan Dempsey made a very good point about the fact that the LC records are used more than others. LC ought to be recompensed. And perhaps other large contributors should be recompensed. I think the libraries need to keep cooperatively providing cataloging for books. Unfortunately if we tried to rely on publishers for this data, it would really become too expensive for too many libraries. For newer materials we should aim at automatic metadata extraction as OCLC is currently showing in Connexion. But books are not going away and libraries need to provide that cataloging, control and maintenance.

Perhaps the committee could remind OCLC it needs to support cataloging. OCLC should not set itself up in competition with Amazon, it's not a book store. It's not an acquisitions system. Libraries are more likely to move Acq from their ILS to their institution's purchasing system, not to buy books through OCLC. OCLC has already been there, done that and then moved the Acq stuff to ACQ350 because such local

information does not belong in the big shared database. It's a waste of time for OCLC to go off in this direction. They should support metadata creation. OCLC needs to provide more tools to make subject cataloging and classification and Name Authority control as efficient as possible.

OCLC should support cataloging so the member libraries can extract and use the records in local catalogs or digital websites or whatever. OCLC SHOULD NOT assume that every library will use their worldcat local or whatever. I'm sorry, I disagree with the assumption that scholars looking for something in the University of Chicago Library are going to be happy to wade through the 80 million OCLC records to find it. Sometimes they may find that a very helpful approach, but not always. All the novels and cookbooks, etc. collected by public libraries are not needed in the type of research done here. There will continue to be a need to pull sets of records to be used in other systems of various kinds. OCLC should make this easier, not design their services on the assumption that everybody has to use worldcat local. I think it would be helpful if the working group encouraged OCLC to work with LC to make it cheaper than $130 to catalog a CIP book.

The Working Group would do us all a favor if they would invent a catchy new name for library catalog records. It confuses things when people discuss "MARC" records. MARC records are a very specific type of record that is sort of awkward to process in some newer systems, although there are plenty of crosswalks to other forms so it's not really a problem. Librarians tend to talk about MARC records when they are really intending to talk about the bibliographic records they create using AACR2, the LC RIs and other library conventions.

Also, these library catalog records have been and remain very helpful to scholars and others. Perhaps the question needs to be asked, however, whether "MARC" records and the rules used to produce library catalog entries for books and serials, really need to be expanded to shoehorn in every other type of material out there. Maybe they should just cover books and serials and for other stuff make sure the most commonly used type of record for that material is acquired, don't insist it gets made a "MARC" record. For instance, the assumption by OCLC that they need separate "MARC" records for every file or type of file into which a printed copy of the work has been scanned is questionable. Maybe you really just need a pointer to the bibliographic record for the printed copy and a record that contains helpful information about the scanned copy. Somebody needs to be asking the question, not proceeding on the assumption that you need a "MARC" record for everything under the sun.

I think if LC and OCLC and other PCC libraries worked together and eliminated duplication of effort that would help to not just continue to provide cataloging but to improve authority control and creation of subject access points and classification, as well as information on where copies of works really reside, print, electronic, or other forms. We need the cataloging we have been getting from LC, however. For new electronic stuff and other media there may be other sources of data. But for books, the libraries need to cooperate and continue to provide library catalog records for these materials.

Printed monographs are not an obsolete media and if LC stops providing copy for a lot of these materials, all the other libraries won't have descriptions of these materials.

For the next generation ILS, perhaps all the libraries need to look at, what if the cataloging was all done on OCLC not in the ILS, how would that work? Then OCLC should make it work. It is a topic that at least could be pursued at the recommendation of the Working Group.

You Need My Metadata:
Demonstrating the Value of Library Cataloging
(A Response to the Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control)

Dr. Shawne D. Miksa
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(Based in part on a presentation given at the Texas Library Association, Annual Conference, April 2006, now
modified with my responses to background papers of the WG)

Introduction

As a LIS educator and researcher, I have pushed for a change in the perception of library cataloging and of catalogers both to ensure the careers of those who currently work as catalogers and those of my beloved students who plan to work as catalogers in the future. From a logical perspective, the idea of a person specifically trained to maintain the quality of the information within the system so that users of the system are happy *returning* customers should be employed in a library. However, based on research I have conducted over the past few years I am certain that we are unwittingly sabotaging the quality of library catalogs by undermining the value of catalogers and the work they can do. I use the term "sabotage" for lack of a better term and perhaps it is too harsh, but if it serves to make administrators aware of the situation then I am confident in using it. In this vein, one of the more important question becomes "How can we effectively demonstrate the value of library cataloging to library administrators?"

The most common response to this idea of "sabotage" is the lack of funding for libraries, especially public and school libraries. In a recent article, Salamon (2005) remarked that "American public libraries are supported by a Byzantine system of federal money, grants, local fundraisers, private donations and state and local tax revenue" and that even with the 1969 Library Systems Act the amount of funding here in Texas is 8% below the national average. (p.3)

This is particularly evident when it comes to library catalog development and maintenance and the time, effort, and funding needed to enable catalogers to do a good job of it. (Miksa, 2006)

Could we make an argument that it is a lack of understanding about the long-term value of cataloging that often puts it at the end of line when it comes to funding? Is it viewed as non-essential when it comes to monetary issues and good access to information?

Setting the Context

In 2005, I conducted a survey of the rural, suburban, and urban public libraries within the Northeast Texas Library Service (NETLS) and the North Texas Regional Library System (NTRLS) order to measure the extent and utilization of cataloging tools and resources by owned and used. Each respondent (n=105) was asked to give the number of full-time equivalents (FTEs) dedicated to cataloging, with one FTE being equivalent to 40 hours a week. The table below shows both the average and range of FTEs from the 94 libraries who responded to the question, cross-referenced with the type of library. (Miksa, 2005)

Table 1: Number of FTE (40 hours) per week devoted to cataloging

Libraries (Total=94)	Rural N=51	Suburban N=36	Urban N=7
Avg. FTEs/wk	.60 (range 0-2)	1.62 (range >0-2)	1.52 (range 0-5)
Avg. hours/wk	24	65	61

Rural libraries accounted for half of the libraries surveyed and most of the librarians working within them described their current position as *director*. In a quick follow-up email to the majority of these it was ascertained that they also functioned as the cataloger. This is on par with the multiple roles that most rural librarians are required to take.

Time and again I am confronted by the unfortunate news of the complete disregard for the skills and service that catalogers can normally provide. At conferences, I've had librarians slip me their business cards and ask me for advice on how to convince a director to keep positions for professional, and not paraprofessional, catalogers. I've had students describe how they are forced to catalog incorrectly by their employers. A woman in tears asked me for advice on how she might save her cataloging job from a supervisor who believed catalogers were no longer needed in a library because they received records from a vendor. Just as disconcerting is to hear of the shuffling around of a entire cataloging unit in a major academic library here in North Texas due to the erroneous belief that outsourcing and copy cataloging *alone*, and the lower costs associated with that practice, will give quality library service to students and faculty.

Example: Lack of Authority Control

The cost of employing a cataloger and effectively using cataloging software modules are high, there is no denying this fact. This high cost naturally affects related decisions such as whether or not to include other facets of the system. For example, an often neglected facet is an authority database. It is especially perplexing to see the lack of attention to authority control in public and school libraries. Any bibliographic database worth using must have a corresponding authority database to ensure successful searching by subject or name headings. Yet, I very often talk with librarians who do not even understand the function of an authority file, much less know the overall process of authority control. A librarian who does not understand this can not explain the necessity of it to their library director or corresponding administrator.

This is a particularly disturbing trend that I have observed and have somewhat measured in the study of North Texas libraries. In the survey, roughly half of the 105 responding libraries performed authority control on name and subject headings, with 81% of the half outsourcing

those records (18-19 respondents skipped these two questions). However, when asked about the amount of time spent actually maintaining the authority database the responses were low. Table 2 gives the breakdown of time spent.

Table 2: Time spent on authority database maintenance (N=105; response n=74)

Time	Libraries (Res. n=74)	Res. n %	N %
Weekly	7	9.5%	7%
Monthly	2	2.7%	2%
Occasionally	22	29.7%	21%
Not Applicable	41	55.4%	39%
Other	2	2.7%	2%
Skipped question	31	--	29%

This illustrates the other side of this trend—the employment of an authority database but very little actual authority control. Even without factoring in the 31 libraries that did not respond to this question there is still a significant percentage who are not investing quality time on this important part of bibliographic control. The survey did not ask for reasons behind time spent, but we can interpret the results in several ways, starting with the fact that many librarians just don't seem to understand authority control on the whole. Alternatively, they may understand its importance but have an implicit belief that outsourced records are good enough and need no maintenance. Or, it may simply be rooted in the more realistic *lack of funding*.

Another interesting possibility is a struggle I have often heard about or witnessed between library departments about who is in charge of the database. For example, I was recently contacted by a public service librarian at a state university who was in the midst of an argument with the head of technical services about the maintenance of subject headings in the catalog

because of a concern about "dead end" searches. The gist of the argument lay in the belief that outsourced records came with very precise headings and that the cost of updating the authority database more regularly was prohibitive.

To the credit of the service librarian, it is an accepted practice for libraries to tailor subject headings and their corresponding authority records for local practice and local users. The argument about prohibitive costs is understandable, but it is disheartening none the less. Records outsourced from respected major vendors do not necessarily ensure accuracy of subject headings, especially when we factor in the needs of users of a particular library collection. Every collection is different, starting with the users, and to make the assumption that headings used for one library will always work for all others is a sign of a potentially debilitating compliancy. Stated another way, it breeds complacency with mediocre bibliographic control.

To clarify, the fact that outsourcing and copy-cataloging are the predominant source for bibliographic records is not at issue. What is at issue is the misperception that these processes alone suffice for quality organization, control, and access to information in our libraries. Whether catalog records are created inside the institution or without, humans still make them and so the records are prone to error. (This is not to say that computer-generated records would be absolutely perfect.) As such, there is a constant need to ensure the quality of records with a firm process of quality control in place. This requires the complete bibliographic control, or cataloging, enterprise—the cycle of organizing, controlling, and providing access to information resources, regardless of format, that begins with acquisition of the resources and revolves around the governing of the access points to ensure retrieval. I use the term "cycle" because there is no final stage; the enterprise is in continuous motion. It is an enterprise that, within our current

stage of bibliographic control, is unable to be fully automated due to the abstract processes such as subject analysis, subject cataloging, and classification.

Assessing and Demonstrating the Value

The scenarios discussed above have long provided me a sturdy soapbox from which to rant, rave, or otherwise heap loads of criticisms on those who would not see what seems so obvious to me. The only problem was that those I had hoped to "convert" were never in the audience. Even the few administrators I have managed to interest in my arguments always counter with "it costs money" or with the all-purpose answer "We have better technology and the Internet." Even those knowledgeable about the cataloging process do not factor in the entire cataloging enterprise. At the American Society for Information Science and Technology 2005 annual conference Michael Leach, the then-incoming ASIST president, remarked that the cataloging process needs to be streamlined in order to catalog more in less time by focusing on the key access and identification points for a given format (personal conversation, 2005). I agree that dismissing unneeded steps from the cataloging process is beneficial, but we need to be very careful on what processes are streamlined or cut altogether because of the potential detrimental effect it can have on users' access to information resources. Removing or downsizing processes, such as authority control, is a bit like trying to run a car with a fuel tank and an engine but no fuel line in between.

My suspicion is that the whole argument concerning the value of cataloging and library catalogers comes down to a disagreement about the definition of a professional cataloger. At the American Library Association Annual Conference in July 2004 the word on the "floor" was that catalogers had better start calling themselves anything other than a "cataloger." But, this message conflicted with another interesting tidbit—that even though the job title may be off-

putting, influential companies, such as Google, know the value of the cataloger's product—*metadata*. We can change our job titles, but being forced to do so points to the larger misconception that a cataloger and a "metadata specialist" are two completely different professions.

In a *Technicalities* article, Bohannan (1998) lauded the skills that are at the heart of what catalogers do—they analyze, classify, do systems design and analysis, and they observe and monitor (p.8). At the same time she admonished catalogers for not "being good at verbalizing the adaptations and transferability of these skills." (p.8) She also pointed out that what should really be sold to administrators is that "catalogers know how to put the 'value' in value-added services" (p.7). Working as a cataloger means to work beyond the application and manipulation of metadata. It is to enumerate the list of items in the collection; to bestow description beyond that of what an information object or resource may be and make the connections between resources for the user and in many cases based on the feedback from the user. I often tell students in my cataloging class that cataloging is out-guessing the user; always anticipating their needs by enriching the catalog records with access points that *may* be used (i.e., a possibility of use, but not an assurance.) This anticipation of use takes skill and if it is not recognized as value-added then we risk the chance of libraries losing value and standing with the people and institutions we serve. All current talk amongst ourselves suggests we are already traveling down that path. This loss of interest by the people, from housewives to national Senators, ultimately results in a loss of funding.

OCLC recently published a study on the perceptions of libraries by information consumers in which they found that 84% of the respondents use search engines to begin an information search and only 1% actually being a search on a library website. (OCLC, 2005).

They also reported that "quality and quantity of information were top determinants of a satisfactory information search" and that "search engines were rated higher than librarians." (OCLC, 2005). On the other hand, they found that a majority of the respondents were aware of the "many library community services and of the role the library plays in the larger community. Most respondents agree the library is a place to learn." (OCLC, 2005) We have to factor in the real issue that a list of hits on Google is enough to those using libraries that do not serve more scholarly or in-depth researchers.

Strategies

If indeed we want to (or need to) compete with Internet search engines and directories, or just operate at the same level, we must increase the investment in our catalog systems and those qualified to maintain the content of the systems, as well as evaluate the contents of countless others. This long term investment will take a broader definition of funding—one that means more than just money. Skills and knowledge of professional librarians have value, but is this type of value regularly included in any standard operating budget beyond that of the level of salary paid to professionals and paraprofessionals that is based solely on the presence or absence of a graduate degree? I am aware that library budgets are complex and laden with operational and political realities, but I would hope we are not so much of a consumerism society that we no longer recognize the idea that a job worth doing is one worth doing well. If we provide a quality product then experience tells us that customers will return for more. The tricky part is that the products are no longer be limited to tangible objects (i.e., we are in the digital age). As one of many 21st century societies, we are very enamored with the non-tangible—perhaps so much so that we tip the balance and neglect the physical library for the virtual. However, we don't seem to extend this obsession into the crafting of library budgets beyond that of providing access to the

Internet and electronic resources. For instance, in a report on public libraries commissioned by the Texas State Library, the consultants write that "in business terms, materials represent a public library's major product line" and that Texas is ranked "45th among the fifty states in the average amount of money available for public library purposes during the 200 Fiscal Year." (A Study of Public Library Development in Texas, 2003, p. 14)   This strikes me as particularly perplexing considering the interaction with non-tangible resources we have in today's information environment. Basing a budget solely on tangible objects, but then expecting the non-tangible as well, is faulty logic. This harkens back to the idea that all a librarian really does is stamp books and shush noisy patrons, instead of the more common and difficulty information "wrangling" that is now a part of her daily work reality and which makes her indispensable.

In his seminal work, *The Wealth of Nations*, Adam Smith wrote the following about the component parts of the price of commodity:

> If the one species of labor should be more severe than the other, some allowance will naturally be made for this superior hardship; and the produce of one hour's labor in the one may frequently exchange for that of two hours labor in the other.
>
> Or, if the one species of labor requires an uncommon degree of dexterity and ingenuity, the esteem which men have for such talents, will naturally give a value to their produce, superior to what would be due to the time employed about it. Such talents can seldom be acquired but in consequence of long application, and the superior value of their produce may frequently be no more than a reasonable compensation for the time and labor which must be spent in acquiring them. In the advanced state of society, allowances of this kind, for superior hardship and superior skill, are commonly made in the wages of labour; and something of the same kind must probably have taken place in its earliest and rudest period. (Smith, 1961, p.48)

The "species of labor" required for quality maintenance and output of an information system should be recognized and acknowledged (i.e., several workers with different skills or one

worker with multiple skills.) Turning the system on, dumping information into it and then asking it to perform correctly will not suffice. The dexterity and ingenuity of a cataloger (or metadata specialist, if you prefer) lends to the superior value of their product—well-constructed metadata and a well-maintained information system. (To be fair, there are many "species" of librarians and each have their own type of dexterity and ingenuity.)

One way to demonstrate this argument is to focus on issues of user access in information systems. All library administrators have been confronted by unhappy patrons in one way or another; problems stemming from unsatisfied access to information with the library's collection are particularly important. For example, using the real situation previously described, let's say a more experience library user has encountered "dead ends" when searching via subject headings at his preferred library. He points out his dissatisfaction to the Reference librarian who, wanting to verify it, does the same search and gets the same results. The patron fills out a user satisfaction card which eventually finds its way to the Director of the library. At the monthly staff meeting the Reference librarian also points out not only this particular patron's dissatisfaction, but many others as well. The Director assesses the situation and identifies the problem as stemming from budget cuts which forced the library to switch from one outsourcing vendor to one of less reputability. The quality of records from the new vendor is low and is coupled with the fact that the library employs only one part-time paraprofessional who works with all the outsourced records. What will the Director do to improve the situation?

One strategy would be to find another vendor with a higher quality records and make another switch. Another to would be to keep the vendor but increase the level of bibliographic control within the library by employing a full-time professional cataloger. Alternatively, they could form a consortium with other libraries and share bibliographic control and catalogers, or

share catalogers across several libraries. Still another would be to do nothing and take the chance of losing patrons. There are other strategies (e.g., assessing the accessibility and ease of use of the entire catalog) but how would the director calculate the value of each?

Bell (1973) writes that "money is a rough and ready measure" but the "value of money diminishes as one's hoard of it increases." (p. 305) He also speaks of *individual goods* and *social goods* and we must naturally ask whose goods are these in this particular scenario? Does the patron and the library make up the *individual goods*? Does the patron and the library make up the *social goods*? Bell, citing Adam Smith, argues that social goods are not divisible, like individual goods are, and the "nature and amount of goods much be set by a single decision, applicable jointly to all persons. Social goods, therefore, are subject to communal, or political, rather than individual demand." (p. 304-305). Using this logic, we could say each decision made by the Director may be applicable, but will necessarily disappoint any or all of those involved. How then would the Director proceed?

In the short run, we may be able to satisfy the library patron by supplementing their search with resources and knowledge of the reference librarian (s). In the long run, we could change vendors based on research about the quality of products (i.e., records) offered, employ a full-time professional cataloger, and develop a plan for economic bibliographic control that ensures quality, usability, returning customers, and money in the coffer. On the whole it is a service issue that revolves around money and good access to information.

This short paper doesn't give a complete strategy that demonstrates the value of library cataloging because there are other causes of bad access in library information systems that are not entirely the result of administrators' lack of understanding of the cataloging enterprise. I previously used the example of lack of authority control in many libraries. It difficult to make

my case when there are many situations in which those who are employed as professional

catalogers lack the necessary cataloging skills and knowledge or don't know how to acquire

them. In the survey of North Texas libraries, I listed over a hundred cataloging tools and

resources and asked respondents if they used them, and if they did, how often. Table 3 below

shows the results when asked about typical cataloging tools, in particular the *Anglo-American*

Cataloguing Rules, 2nd edition, one of the most important tools of a cataloger.

Table 3: Rate of use of AACR2 and other tools (Miksa, 2005)

Cataloging Tool	Rate of Use				
	Daily	**Weekly**	**Occasionally**	**Rarely**	**N/A**
AACR 2nd edition 2002 Revision – with 2004 Update	6	9	13	1	53
AACR 2nd edition 2002 Revision – with 2003 Update	0	0	9	2	68
AACR 2nd edition 2002 Revision	1	2	7	5	66
AACR 2nd edition 1998 Revision	1	2	3	6	69
AACR 2nd edition 1988 Revision	0	1	6	3	71
Concise AACR2 1998	1	0	5	4	68
Concise AACR2 1988	0	1	3	5	67
Use AACR2 via Cataloger's Desktop (CD-ROM)	1	2	2	0	74
Use AACR2 via Cataloger's Desktop (Online)	2	1	1	0	73
Library of Congress Rule Interpretations (LCRI)	7	2	11	8	54
ALA Filing Rules	4	1	7	11	56
Library of Congress Filing Rules	8	5	8	5	56
Total Respondents (N=105)	91				
(skipped this question)	14				

The actual list of tools and resources listed in the survey was much more extensive but the table

above demonstrates what the overall survey discovered about the lack of tools or the low usage

of what tools were used. When respondents were asked if they regularly subscribed or

monitored developments in cataloging and classification (i.e., listservs, publications, etc.) the

majority of respondents did not monitor developments or skipped those questions entirely. For

example, only eight (8) respondents subscribed to relevant cataloging and technical service

listservs when asked to choose from a list of thirty-seven common electronic discussion lists.

The other ninety-seven (97) respondents skipped the question entirely.   When asked what affected the availability of cataloging resources and tools 80% of the respondents (n=105) indicated budget limitations (89.3%) and staff limitations (75%) as the main factors or that they simply did not know enough about the tools and resources available (46%). Other responses included availability of training, or ability to travel to and from training sessions and investment in training part-time personnel.

The most perplexing result of my survey was the feeling by approximately half the respondents that even with these limitations it was not detrimental to their providing users with a reliable catalog system. (Miksa, 2005) How is this not detrimental? As information professionals we know that information on the Web can be incorrect, uninformative, or too deeply buried in a source to make sense of (I do not necessarily agree with the opposite statement made in the WG's February 25th background paper that "Relevant information buried within a text has become more easily accessible), yet users flock to it because of its speed and convenience (although they may inevitably experience finding something, discovering it is wrong, re-searching, etc.) Can we claim to be more reliable when we don't invest in our own systems, as the data from the survey suggests? On the other hand, it may speak volumes about the confidence librarians have in providing reliable service despite the lack of money and resources.

The absence of any real discussion in any of the background papers on the education of catalogers was puzzling, but not surprising. I do not have hard data on the most current state of library cataloging education but I strongly suspect that we are seeing now in our catalogs the result of the disturbing lack of knowledge of many cataloging librarians and library administrators that resulted from relegating traditional courses to the back burner over the past

decade or so. (As well, I believe our cries of woe concerning users abandoning library catalogs for Google or Yahoo! really originate in our feeling guilty about not providing a good enough reason to use the catalogs in the first place.) If MLS students are not pushed (whether by faculty or accreditation standards) to take the courses then we are failing our profession by not producing well-rounded graduates no matter what library position they occupy. Given the coming changes to cataloging that will ride in on the new *Resource Description and Access* (RDA) due to be completed in 2009, we are facing a choice to either be proactive and prepared or suffer the consequences of belated reactions.

_____

Catalogers face a dilemma in that they often have to endure misunderstanding of their jobs from colleagues, patrons, and, most unfortunately, administrators. If the library cataloging practice is to continuing evolving then everyone involved, in particular the administrators, must be aware of the long and short term effects of investing in professional catalogers and cataloging departments. My survey of North Texas public libraries is only a small example of the problems facing many libraries as we try to hold our own with companies such as Google and, more importantly, as we address the fact that outsourcing and copy cataloging alone do not always provide the best products for use in our information systems. It takes both these practices and the skills of a cataloger to ensure those systems function to the best of their abilities.

In another lifetime, librarians were meant to be educators, to help the people in a civilized society to be learned and informed. Bade's emphasis that "what happens in libraries is communication, not transportation" is such an important statement. In my classes, I educate students to be communicators of information, to be translators between the users, the creators,

and the systems—not just in the sense of language, but in helping people to use all these various forms of explicit or implicit structure.

We do not necessarily have to bend and give way to current information behavior phenomenon (i.e., users supplied subject tags, non-controlled vocabulary) simply because it is popular or because users expect "the Search"—characterized by Batelle (2005)—to be easy. By this I do not mean that we can't work to make the process as efficient and effective as possible—but users should realize that in addition to the data doing its work, they must also do their's. It would be detrimental to believe that relevant information to any query will be generated with little effort on the part of the searcher in most types of searches. The comment that "it remains to discern how bibliographic control should evolve to meet these user expectations and needs and to discover what other user needs we have not considered" is disturbing in that it implies an acquiescence to users expectations simply because they are expressed. In addition, accepting "the consumer environment" and instead of a "learning environment" undermines the strength of cataloging and classification traditions.

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From: Heather S Miller <HMiller@uamail.albany.edu>
Date: Jul 19, 2007 4:06 PM
Subject: Future of Bibliographic Control - Comments
To: jmgriff@unc.edu
Cc: Heather S Miller <HMiller@uamail.albany.edu>

Having followed recent developments at the Library of Congress regarding movement toward reduction in some of the cataloging practices traditionally provided by LC to the library community, I would like to share a few thoughts. I attended the full day webcast on July 9 and have been at meetings at ALA where Beacher Wiggins explained some of the proposed policy changes. Unofficially, we have learned of LC's staff reductions, inability to replace retirees, and general budget woes.

1. I do understand that LC may need to become more efficient, but I do not think reducing the quality of cataloging is the way to do so. Having visited LC and working for a bureaucracy that rivals the federal government, I am sure there are other ways to become more efficient. I am also sure that the changes they are talking about (cutting into cataloging services) will have little impact on a backlog of 100 million items.

2. If LC needs to save money, they should say exactly that – "we need to cut services because we need to save money" and not pretend they are responding to user needs by cutting back.

3. Likewise, if LC thinks that PCC will pick up where LC leaves off, they should be up front about it and PCC should be beefed up. With enough publicity, I think the library community will step forward.

4. This is not to say that nothing should change. I agree completely with the July 9 comment from the National Agricultural Library that LC's role should remain central, describing "all materials fully in a set of data that can be disassembled and reassembled" to suit various purposes.

5. In recent years, many catalogers have found the quality of LC records to have diminished in significant ways (e.g. totally incorrect classification.)

6. Some of us found Rick Lugg's comments on July 9 to be condescending and offensive. To answer one of his rhetorical questions, yes, having the wrong or duplicate call number on a book does impede the user's ability to find that item!

7. Focusing on the "user" is a good thing, but there is no one monolithic "user." There are many kinds of users with different needs. We need to understand the kinds of services they all need and they are not all Google-centric!

8. Just accepting records without any perusal means garbage in the catalog and that ultimately hurts the user. I think we would love to have the level of confidence in LC (or any other incoming) records that would allow us to load them without examination. Our own catalog suffers greatly because over the years we have done just that even though we had doubts about the records. Experience has shown that we cannot do this and, contrary to some of the speakers' views, this is not a fixation on perfection. It is a focus on the usefulness of the record.

9. I have long advocated more, not fewer subject headings. (See my article "The Little Locksmith: A Cautionary Tale for the Electronic Age." The Journal of Academic Librarianship 23(2) (March 1997):100-107.) Fiction needs subject headings, yet only in

recent years have any fiction works received them from LC. I hope Beacher Wiggins and LC will stand by his comment that they are committed to controlled vocabulary subject headings. I also hope they will pay greater attention to subject headings for fiction.

10. By reducing the quality and completeness of catalog records, libraries will create a self-fulfilling prophecy by driving users away. We need better records and better catalogs. And we need to keep in mind that even if we offer a single search box in a superficially simple catalog, it will be backed by a very complex database, as noted on July 9. The richer it is, the better it will serve an almost infinitely diverse clientele.

11. Thomas Mann's paper "The Peloponnesian War and the Future of Reference, Cataloging, and Scholarship in Research Libraries," accurately spells out the value of cataloging, specifically subject cataloging. In fact, one researcher that I am aware of, Lee Miller in her book Roanoke, specifically acknowledges Mann and a colleague at LC for their indispensable skill as research librarians – just the sort of service that Mann explains regarding the Peloponnesian War research question.

12. What is valued will be funded. LC and the library community have obviously not convinced Congress that cataloging has value. LC is not the national library in the sense that the British Library is. It is Congress's library. It is no wonder that, under these circumstance, LC has been providing unfunded services! A movement should be started to change its mandate and fund it accordingly.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide some input into this process.

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Submitted testimony to the LC working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control

My testimony is necessarily brief. I have posted fairly prolifically on related matters (if occasionally inadvisably) on various forums including Autocat, NGC4Lib, ALA-headings, and RadCat.   As way of background, I have cataloged diverse analog and digital resources in many types of library settings, managed several cataloging and cataloging-related projects, and utilized knowledge from cataloging experiences to develop large-scale bibliographic information resources over the past 28 years of library services. I draw on these experiences, as well as the ideas of others in the field and use of resources outside of the field, in formulating my input. I was an invited participant to the first LC Working Group on Bibliographic Control in 2001 while employed by the Texas State Library but was unable to participate at that time. I currently work as a copy cataloger after making a career choice to deemphasize professional pursuits in favor of my family. I have great respect for the tradition and methodologies of cataloging, even as I believe that they are out-of-date and inadequate to the present environment. While my input may seem critical, it is because I am addressing the need for change and do not have the time at present to highlight the considerable strengths of historical processes, nor of contemporary developments, except as these may be incidentally included otherwise as part of the my discourse. Also, I don't have the resources to provide research-based input, so this will be, unfortunately as that may be, purely opinion-based. Finally, my input reflects my own views (with unaccredited acknowledgement to the many brilliant librarians whose ideas I draw upon), not those of the institution I work for nor its governing entities.

Summary
Most of the resources devoted to library-based bibliographic control in the U.S. are redundant and inadequate. Much of it is ineffective. A good deal of it does not directly benefit end-users. The methods employed fail to adequately utilize the efficiencies of networked information sharing. They also fail to realize the rich potentials of social networking tools. The universe of resources addressed by such bibliographic control is inadequate to the needs of users and interactivity with other, primarily digital, tools for discovery and access to those resources is normally non-existent and, when it does exist, usually inadequate and difficult to use. The tools (OPAC and cataloging modules) to develop and provide access to this limited universe of resources are themselves often difficult to use and information poor. These deficiencies stand against a backdrop of user expectations for immediate and intuitive access to digital-based resources in a discovery/access environment built on social network tools, intuitive interfaces, and direct access. Libraries, particularly individual institutions, are no longer a required gateway to all but local-based information for researchers, for students, or for public library users. This climate change will continue to broaden and deepen as networked resources incorporate analog data and digital resources supplant analog for ever growing portions of the information and recreational universe traditionally served by libraries.

The following are the briefest of descriptions of issues that should be addressed in future bibliographic control accompanied by some (among many) possible approaches to addressing these issues:

1. Redundant and inadequate bibliographic control
Issue - Copy cataloging processes in the present environment consist largely of redundant corrections and updates. Bibliographical works with multiple versions require duplicate records creating additional redundant copy and original work and unnecessary challenges for end-users seeking the content

Potential solutions
A. Move away from local OPACs and toward unified networked tools as a primary means for bibliographic control, discovery, and access. See Worldcat.org Local as a nascent example of the discovery/access component.

B. Move away from local bibliographic records and toward shared, multi-dimensional bibliographic records. These dimensions could consist of the following:
   i. "bibliographic dimension" consists of "core" record with controlled input/editing, multiple "core-plus" records that add information to reflect types of institutions/languages that contribute input/editing to the core, and "core-local" that provides a means for local institutions to add controlled data to the "core-plus" record that reflects their local needs
   ii. "extended (or networked) dimension" that incorporates links and interactivity with rich resources such as digital copies of the resources themselves when available, digital resources about or from the creators of the resources being described, digital resources that are tied to other bibliographically significant data such as series, institutions, and tools for using the bibliographic resources being described, etc., and commercial outlets for access to resources when appropriate and useful
   iii. "user dimension" that interacts with the core record that incorporates social tagging, linking to resource sharing such as forums/links to related resources/reviews and other social networking tools that users (whether library staff or otherwise)

Individual institutions/gateways would implement mashups of one or more of these three dimensions for local use.

2. Ineffective and does not directly benefit end-users
Issue - OPACS don't utilize much of the work that catalogers input.

Potential solutions
A. Utilize "use it or lose it" as an Occam's razor for core bibliographic records. If a particular bibliographic field or piece of information is only beneficial to a limited user-base, it can be included in "core-plus" or "core-local" records but would not be deemed necessary for core-level
B. Evaluate and enhance bibliographic control systems and processes with non-staff users as the primary audience, non-cataloging staff as the secondary audience, and cataloging/bibliographic control staff as the tertiary (though significant) audience. This is inverse to the present reality.
C. Incorporate user-input as an alternative and parallel means of bibliographic discovery and access (see "user dimension" briefly discussed above)

3. Fails to adequately utilize the efficiencies of networked information sharing and the rich potentials of social networking tools
Issue - Collaborative resource sharing is still modeled on distributing resources to myriad information silos with immense duplication of resources.
Solution - Move from individual library-based information silos to collaboration based on unified and much richer consolidated data sources

4. Fails to realize the rich potentials of social networking tools
Issue - bibliographic control is controlled by library-based catalog/metadata creator staff and does not incorporate or utilize user data nor does it incorporate interactivity with existing or emerging parallel resources that can enhance the user experience
Potential solutions - Preserve and strengthen quality of library-based bibliographic control in core-level and core-plus level, albeit in central database(s), not local individual systems and, at the same time, devote some or much of the remaining local and national bibliographic control staff and resources to developing and incorporating user input and social network tools and resources in extended and user dimensions to bibliographic records

5. Tools (OPAC and cataloger interfaces) are relatively difficult to use and information poor
Issue - In comparison to other Internet-based resources, discovery/access/input are non-intuitive and unnecessarily complex
Potential solutions - utilize user feedback, explicit acknowledgment that Internet resources such as Google, Amazon, Facebook, Yahoo, and countless other networked resources establish the norm for user interaction, and continual enhancement approaches to address this

This constitutes a regrettably brief introduction to a concept of extended bibliographic control that can incorporate the strengths of the standards and processes of the cataloging tradition with a much needed modernization that redirects bibliographic control from redundancy and the weaknesses of library as sole bibliographic control creator and gateway to efficiencies built on extended collaboration and social networking. It is a wholly inadequate sketch, yes, but as such potentially provides a canvas for creativity, for it is innovation by intrepid and thoughtful librarians that can continue to establish the library as a highly relevant and desirable portal to information and recreation resources for all of the various user communities we serve.

Thank you for opening the input process to allow myself and others to participate.

Respectfully,
Allen Mullen

Key Directions to Pursue for the Future of Bibliographic Control

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July 29, 2007

If recent library-community initiatives[1] that exploit existing metadata are any measure, if the popularity among the user-community of such social networking software features as reviewing and "tagging"[2] is any indication, then it seems the future of bibliographic control could indeed be very bright.

Libraries have long contributed value to the information marketplace through creating metadata and leading the development of metadata standards. As a profession, we have long specialized in identifying the relationships among bibliographic entities that users find meaningful and helpful. Dating back at least as far as Cutter's objects for the catalog ("To show what the library has by a given author, on a given subject, in a given kind of literature"), we have prized helping users navigate those relationships. In recent times we have striven to link users from print version records to online equivalents in full text, from works to background information about authors and publishers, across multiple formats in federated searching to show related material by author or subject.

To have the kind of bright future for bibliographic control that we expect and our users deserve, there are a number of measures we need to undertake.

1) There is great wisdom in the willingness to work in shared files. This was the original ethos of Program for Cooperative Cataloging participants collaborating in activity like NACO authority work and CONSER. The mode of working in a shared file needs to become much more widespread across libraries, and it needs to encompass more than the efficiency of using others' records as a resource at the time titles are newly cataloged. If the database of record is shared widely, any heading maintenance, any improvement to or update of a bibliographic record done by one party would automatically be shared by all. The initial efficiency perceived in OCLC's database was that only one library had to perform original cataloging for a given title; all other members merely had to copy catalog the title, using that first library's record. What if there were no more reworking of the first library's record? What if the only editing of records for correctness and completeness allowed were the kind that was contributed back to the communal master record?

The time has come for us to consciously give up the luxury of local variation and duplication of effort inherent in every library creating and maintaining individual, local copies of bibliographic records. We can no longer afford or justify this. So that we can extend quality metadata to a maximum number of resources and turn our energies toward providing new and compelling services based on that metadata, we should be eager to give up customization.

2) We should be seeking to complement the bibliographic control efforts of others. Libraries should not always feel that *they* have to be the ones to provide the metadata. If there is similarity in the uses made of bibliographic descriptions by publishers, vendors, and libraries for their inventories, and if there is significant overlap among needed data elements, then it makes sense to pursue a single metadata creation effort whose results we all can use.

3) We need to prepare for a bibliographic control environment where many more metadata schema will be used, more controlled vocabularies will be used, and more providers of metadata will emerge. The schema will need to be coordinated and crosswalked, the vocabularies will be important to map from one to another, and interchanges with other cultural heritage and commercial sector partners will depend on standards. Metadata creation for a given resource will likely involve more players–the opposite of a trend at Library of Congress toward "whole book" cataloging. There will be a continuous need for training. The resources to accomplish 3) clearly depend on the successful implementation of 1) and 2) above.

4) Universal Bibliographic Control is the dream that every nation will produce the cataloging of its imprints. The fact that some two-thirds of what LC catalogs is foreign language material indicates that UBC is far from reality. Even if every national library were playing its leadership part, we would still face incompatibility in the results.

Given how highly desirable it is to be able to use bibliographic records as is, heavy producers of records like Germany and France ought to be brought into the Joint Steering Committee fold and made stakeholders in the cataloging code we share with Canada, Great Britain, and Australia. The current RDA code writing effort should assure that our ability to use records will not continue to be adversely affected by headings formulated according to different rules and separate authority files.

Of course, RDA should also include guidance for those using non-MARC schema, if for nothing else to improve the odds of interoperability.

5) The ongoing challenge in technical services work is how to leverage ever greater quantities of material, without corresponding increases in personnel resources. The creative, imaginative, and relentless effort to use automation is critical to meeting this challenge. Macros, error-detecting validation, automated suggestor systems based on subject term and classification correlations, batch manipulation capabilities are but some of the many tools that we could benefit from.

All of the above measures and reforms should be exhausted before we reach a conclusion that our metadata standards no longer sufficiently scale, that we need to make general retrenchments to record content.

6) The role of professional catalogers should continue to evolve toward becoming coordinators of metadata activity, consultants, project managers, standards advocates and developers, problem solvers.

7) Libraries should seek ways to incorporate their content and services into the environments where their users are, so that awareness of and usage of the content and services does not depend on the users' coming to the library physically or virtually. Examples of these non-library settings include incorporation into course management systems; exposure to harvesting for web search engines; making it possible for users to annotate the data.

8) Returning to the theme that libraries have always had a key contribution to make in tracking and tracing relationships among bibliographic entities, we should review the full range of these, to make sure we have on our radar the ones that users care about and would benefit from.

In addition to the major relationships covered in the FRBR model, users may also care about relationships such as that between the book and the movie.

A more useful form of relevance ranking takes into account a wide range of factors beyond the prevalence of a keyword in the metadata, such as how widely held a title is in libraries, how often it is used (circulated, purchased), how a title's usage and ownership correlates with that of other titles, etc.

As the editors of Wikipedia articles are connecting from them to useful library resources, similarly we should be looking for new ways to link users from our records to related resources (or even experimentally empowering users do this).

At the 2007 Association of Jewish Libraries meeting, the WorldCat Identities project was demonstrated. One of the most compelling benefits seen in it was the ability to connect users from "Authors, Yiddish --20th century" to examples of individual authors like Isaac Bashevis Singer.[3] This looks an awful lot like the topic-to-name see-also references that used to populate NACO records, until the perceived maintenance burden led to their discontinuation and removal in the 1990s. If they are important to our users and if we are unable to support this work, could our users be authorized to add these?

As Stu Weibel put it recently[4], we should be willing to "Link to all things useful."

---

[1] Consider these examples:
Implementation projects involving the Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR) (http://www.oclc.org/research/projects/frbr/default.htm) that group related material together for easier, meaningful navigation.
New front-end discovery services such as the Endeca implementation at North Carolina State University (http://www.ncsu.edu/news/press_releases/06_01/007.htm) that offer faceted search results in the online catalog (http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/catalog).

WorldCat Identities is a data mining project (http://orlabs.oclc.org/Identities).
FAST as means of extending the benefits of controlled vocabulary to e-resources
(http://www.oclc.org/research/projects/fast/).

[2] "Basic features of the WorldCat Web interface" include user-contributed content. "WorldCat users and non-cataloging librarians can create an account and begin to add content such as factual notes, tables of contents, ratings and critiques under the Details and Reviews tabs for any item." (http://www.oclc.org/worldcat/web/features/default.htm)
University of Pennsylvania users can "tag" records from the library catalog (Franklin) and video catalog (VCaT) (http://tags.library.upenn.edu).

[3] Report of Karen Smith-Yoshimura at RLG Partners meeting, June 22, 2007, at ALA Annual Meeting, Washington, DC.

[4] Stuart Weibel. "Information Trends in Libraries: Get More Value from Data Give More Value to Users Get Users involved." PowerPoint presentation at XXIII CBBD: Congresso Brasileiro de Biblioteconomia, Documentação e Ciência da Informação, July 9, 2007, Brasilia, Brazil. http://www.oclc.org/research/presentations/weibel/20070709-brazil.ppt (slide 16 of 27)

UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY
State University of New York

August 3, 2007

Dr. José-Marie Griffiths
Dean and Professor
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Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control,

Thank you for this opportunity to offer my opinions on the Future of Bibliographic Control. Although I only watched the web cast of the most recent of the meetings held this year, I read the summaries for all three of them. My comments below are based my cataloging *and* reference experience in a medium sized academic library, attention to the professional literature, blogs, and listservs, as well as attendance at numerous conference presentations over the course of 25 years.

My wish during this conversation about the future of bibliographic control is that the following premise is accepted: the community, both research and non-researchers, needs a distinct bibliographic database that effectively offers to the community a record of published or produced primary and secondary informational resources, including the availability of those resources, that traditional catalogers possess knowledge relevant in the development of new storage and retrieval mechanisms, and that catalogers are willing and able to learn new skills necessary to transition to a new cataloging environment.

Here are some of my thoughts for the future:

- o **Standardization in bibliographic records is important for efficient storage, retrieval and manipulation of bibliographic data, and catalogers are essential to maintaining this standardization.** Catalogers hold the professional memory of the meaning and use of this data and its organization. Change in standards is not the issue here, but the disruption in consistency and/or the transfer of responsibility away from catalogers. Either of these circumstances results in a loss of consistency or a loss in understanding the data. The end result is that humans who tell computers how to manipulate that data are working with insufficient knowledge of the data.
- o **User Service librarians have always been and will continue to be unique and crucial users of online catalogs.** -- Reference, ILL, instructors, bibliographers, and special collection librarians use the descriptive information in MARC records and search the online catalog in ways that the average library patron does not. They act as a conduit between researchers and materials. Perhaps by identifying the needs of user services librarians, we can determine a middle of the road solution for the simplicity versus standards argument.
- o **Collaboration between Library of Congress and library and industry leaders for the purpose of establishing, revising, communicating and implementing cataloging standards** -- (1) We "little people" depend upon your collective wisdom; (2) When LC decides independently to discontinue a practice, more decisions fall to the local level. This creates less uniformity in cataloging copy on OCLC and those records provided by vendor/publishers. This drop in quality is not an incentive to outsource cataloging at the local level.
- o **Ability to search and display local records in WorldCat** -- (1) I would like the bibliographic records stored in OCLC's WorldCat to function as our OPAC (I don't like the FirstSearch interface), but we need to be able to link into the local circulation record from that database and have the

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opportunity for indexing of local fields ; (2) In the 1980's and 90's our library used RLIN for cataloging and there is a wonderful advantage to viewing clusters of records.
- o **Commitment to authority systems that function** -- What distinguishes us in the information industry is our understanding of the importance of controlled vocabularies. Now if our ILSs only knew how to use them. This should include the ability to make local modifications that are not lost upon further database clean-up or authority record loads.
- o **Greater use of fixed fields** – OCLC has moved in this direction, with the ability to limit searches in Connexion by format.
- o **Commitment to the descriptive components of the MARC record for electronic resources** -- Even though there appears to be a movement away from the importance of description, the mutable nature of electronic resources makes bibliographic description essential.

The following statements are in response to recent changes in LC and/or national policy or practice:

- ➢ We are continuing to verify and establish authoritative series headings because academic materials issued in monographic series that we purchase need to be accessible. We are most grateful to the PCC for continuing this important work.
- ➢ We continue to justify 7xx fields with 5xx fields so that searchers and catalogers understand why they retrieved a record. A classic example of why the 5xx is important is so searchers know why they retrieved *Library Journal* when they search by American Library Association.
- ➢ Our reference librarians do not want our 78x fields indexed, nor does our ILS provide a clear method for linking records using the 78x fields. This makes implementing the new standard record for serials less of an advantage for us.
- ➢ We need shelflist numbers with our class numbers. I've not heard about this recently, but hope LC will not follow through with curtailing shelflisting.
- ➢ Hurrah for continued support of pre-coordinated subject headings! Hurrah for current plans for simplification!

Thanks for the opportunity to contribute to the discussion,

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Dr. José-Marie Griffiths,

Recently, on the AUTOCAT listserv, Kevin Randall said:

"That is, the cataloging rules don't determine the nature of the situation; the nature of the situation determines the cataloging."

I was hoping that some easy philosophical handle will pop into my mind and help me to get to the bottom of how people are thinking about the future of cataloging. I think this may be it.

In my mind, it seems like more "traditional" people are ready to deal with change - though not to the extent that the more "progressive" people are.

More traditional people don't deny the fact that ideally the "nature of the situation [should] determine the cataloging", but they emphasize the importance and primacy of having a core, well-defined, agreed-upon structure - especially bibliographical and authority control. Persons who create information organizational systems realize the hard intellectual work that need to occur here - attempting to take into account the various facts and situations that have happened or could happen in past efforts. In this paradigm, change happens, but slowly, as new situations force re-evaluations of the current intellectual system - in practice, this means that sometimes "cataloging rules DO determine the nature of the situation" - this is part of living in the real world. The idea is that if there is a lack of correspondence between theoretical definitions and what one actually does in practice, at least the definitions are agreed on! Resolving the ambiguities that one encounters on the job - and sometimes they become quite glaring - has to wait until official representatives can get together and make the needed changes. In this view, this is the price that one pays for structure, for organization, in a way, democracy...

The more progressive people, it seems, are more ready to go on faith. Systems often don't work as they were originally intended to. They get old, stale, and corrupt. Change must necessarily shake the foundations, and things are done "on the fly" and will be made up "as we go" - the "now" is key. Sensing that all things meaningful are happening on the web the progressive librarians encourage all of us to "get our data out into the world" so that we can participate in the great communal mash-up and make a better world. RDA and FRBR are the main new structure to help this occur, although the definitions and ideas found in these systems are incredibly complicated and abstract. In short, the ambiguities that one encounters on the job no longer come primarily from the concrete situations in one's work, but rather in the definitions themselves, which allow a lot of leeway - this fits in well with the hesitancy we feel about being too dogmatic about anything in our uncertain world. This is not to say that there was never any ambiguity in the definitions of ISBD, AACR2, MARC, etc, but with RDA and FRBR, things are taken to new levels. In short, among the progressives where there is still a concern for "authority control" there is a kind of hope that the miracle will occur among the great collective Wiki-wisdom-unconscious that will construct the new universal catalog - which will of course be all things to all people.

How can all of this be resolved? I have no idea. Maybe by spending more time actually trying to listen to and understand what others who seem to be moving in a different direction than you are saying (Karen Calhoun, who I think is pretty well-informed on issues, mentioned this morning on the NGC4LIB list that she had only read one thing from Thomas Mann - I was shocked!). This, however, seems to be difficult, as so much is made up "as we go".

It seems to me that there are dangers on both "sides" of the issue, though I obviously am leaning one way at this time. It seems to me that though radical change is sometimes necessary, it can be taken too far to the point where the old structure can be rendered totally useless, ineffectual, lost... Martha Yee's latest piece which she shared with the AUTOCAT readers seems to me like a mighty prophetic blast. One can only hope that the Library of Congress will heed her warning.

Unlike Martha, I don't think Google and Amazon will take over everything though. I suspect that Google, Amazon, and companies like Reed Elsevier and Thompson-Gale (who at this time has introduced their new "PowerSearch" databases, which in their advertising unashamedly trumpet their role as experts in creating structure and authority control) will.

Maybe if the Library of Congress continually cheapens its own authority control, it will be some of those company's new clients.

How much easier - and better for everyone - it would be if the LC could focus on being the best research library in the world for our public servants - and the others who are fortunate enough to use it in person (and of course, with the web, how much easier it is to share those treasures with everyone)!

With so much certainty surrounding the effectiveness of RDA and FRBR, the LC especially needs to stand strong at this time - standardized cataloging records and the Library of Congress Subject Headings are crucial for our profession to survive and thrive in the future.

Thank you for your time,

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Written Testimony

Submitted by Deirdre A. Routt, Technical Services Manager, Omaha Public Library, 215 South 15 Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68102. Phone: (402) 444-4997. Email: droutt@omahapubliclibrary.org

The Omaha Public Library serves the approximately 450,000 residents of Douglas County, Nebraska with 11 locations. In 2006 we circulated 2.8 million items. That year the library's total holdings were 1.4 million with total FTE staffing of 158.

At the library we are continually examining all of our services and deciding what is important, what is to be kept, reworked, discarded, or introduced. The library catalog is always under close scrutiny. As a technical services manager I consistently strive to demonstrate the value of continuing to customize our bibliographic records and the need to have sufficient personnel to do so.

Our public services include the library catalog and the cataloging behind it. The online catalog may be the way some people first encounter a library. A patron's impression of and experience with a library catalog are very important. The catalog needs to not only be attractive and easy to use but also to contain the necessary data. To achieve that we always have in mind our potential users, the standards we use for cataloging, and the cost of cataloging materials.

Omaha Public Library tries to be very customer responsive. We strongly encourage customers to request materials for purchase. If a request fits our collection development policy we generally will purchase it. On a nearly daily basis, we receive many materials, in all formats and of all types, most of which have been requested by at least one patron. Those materials are given the highest priority in the cataloging and processing queue. As a result, we are purchasing, cataloging and processing materials based on customer demand, thereby enhancing our value to the community by meeting their needs.

As a public library our users includes a wide range people. Our main patron is the general public -- this includes not only children, parents and grandparents, but also businesspeople, students, homeless people, genealogists, job seekers, and workers. We also serve county residents, residents of bordering counties, reciprocal borrowers, and visitors. Our patrons may want to do research, be entertained, and use computers. Many come seeking a place with climate controls and some quiet, something familiar or perhaps something new.

The library provides a plethora of materials. The largest portion of our collection is books, ranging from bestsellers and popular materials to general interest and the obscure. We provide magazines, newspapers, DVDs, CDs, downloadable audiobooks and e-books, government documents, websites, online databases, and other electronic resources. We try to adhere to the established standards and utilize the existing structures, even though at times, these are insufficient for our needs.

As existing structures and standards do not always meet our needs we must modify and work around them. For instance, with DVDs we still use the GMD, [videorecording] – this fails to differentiate them from videocassettes and requires the use of other tools to let patrons know that what is described in the bibliographic record is in fact a DVD. Thus we make use of icons in our OPAC to assist users. It is also difficult for patrons viewing a list of titles to easily determine which DVD title might be a feature film. Therefore, following the example of other libraries, we make use of uniform titles for motion pictures. For example, the DVD of the movie musical Chicago has the uniform title *Chicago (Motion picture : 2002)*, which helps differentiate it from other videos or DVDs that are about the city Chicago.

We also make extensive use of series. Staff and patrons alike use series for adult, juvenile, and young adult fiction and nonfiction titles. Since the Library of Congress ceased creating and maintaining series authority records we have had to rely on other sources to create and maintain the series in our collection. Series are an important access point in public libraries, one that we cannot afford to lose. As the library community has not yet developed a good cooperative means of replacing the Library of Congress's creation and maintenance of series authorities individual libraries shoulder the burden and cost of creation and maintenance. This is a needless repetition of effort. Libraries need to work out a better means of cooperation that is not so reliant on the Library of Congress which faces the same scrutiny of services as other libraries.

The current cooperative cataloging systems are not sufficiently robust to meet libraries' needs. The Program for Cooperative Cataloging (PCC) requires a great deal of commitment from an institution in order to participate – time and money for staff training plus the expenses of the instructor. The institution must recognize and support the need to invest staff time in creating and maintaining authority records. In general the PCC appears rather exclusive and demanding to the outsider, particularly to those in public libraries. Another cooperative cataloging system, OCLC is also expensive to support, however, it is more welcoming and requires less initial training (albeit continual upgrading). The quality of OCLC data has not been particularly high of late, with many duplicates and incomplete records.

Most of the Integrated Library Systems (ILS) we currently have do not meet our needs. The ILS does not take full advantage of existing structures such as MARC. Thus MARC has been deemed a failure; cited as being unable work with contemporary data and filling current needs. However, it could simply be that the ILS do not use the data to the fullest extent and do not do what libraries need. The systems must be flexible enough to allow customization for individual library needs. Vendors continue to offer libraries rigidly defined systems rather than seeking from libraries input on what they need. In addition, some libraries tend to choose an ILS on what best suits their operational needs not their users' needs. Most libraries have a mixture of library users; some are highly computer literate and adapt well to change and some do not. With many users familiar with the Internet and different search engines and websites, the current mantra is that we need to make our make our catalogs resemble Google or Amazon. While we do not need to go to that extreme, we do need to do something different.

DA Routt, Written Testimony to the LC Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control, 12/4/2007

Libraries also must consider whether existing structures are sufficient for their needs. AACR2 and bibliographic control are obviously very book based. Although there have been attempts to modify the structure to embrace digital materials, the basic underlying structure still has aspects that are hard to apply to electronic or digital materials. We need to consider new structures, and take into account how they will apply to current and future materials. The possibilities of structures such as library-developed RDA, Dublin Core and FRBR must be further explored so we can determine if our needs will be sufficiently met. Furthermore, we also need to explore further the usability and adaptability of structures and standards developed by other groups, such as XTML and SKOS.

Aside from the substantial expenses involved with supporting structures and systems, we have the additional expense of personnel. Like most other Technical Services departments across the country, my department has been reduced over the years. The current staff consists of one manager and one FTE librarian (filled by two librarians who have duties elsewhere; all of these staff members have MLS degrees) and one FTE paraprofessional (filled by one specialist) who all catalog and another paraprofessional who works with acquisitions. In contrast, the staff five years ago consisted of one manager and two and half FTE librarians (filled by three librarians, with the half fulfilling reference duties; again all of these staff members had MLS degrees, or were working towards one) who all cataloged and one paraprofessional in acquisitions. Our clerical support staff and pages have also been reduced. We now have four FTE clerks and one and half FTE pages who work on cataloging and processing. Five years ago we had seven FTE clerks and just over two FTE pages who worked on cataloging and processing.

Although our collections budget has decreased in that time we have added new collections (such as e-books and downloadable audio), have begun cataloging materials that have not been previously (such as telephone books and annual reports) and worked on projects (such as reclassifying our music CDs and creating a new biography collection). Essentially our workload has not decreased even though the collection budget has. Five years ago we did not have a backlog; our current backlog dates back to January 2007.

While systems such as the ordering and delivery speed of materials have greatly increased in the past five years the speed at which we can catalog them has not. The majority of our cataloging is copy cataloging, adapting records to our local standards and needs. This may involve adding a uniform title for motion pictures and television programs, series tags, a local author tag, a format tag, a biography tag, inverting geographical subheadings, and adding various genre tags. All of this is done to improve information access and search retrieval for those using our catalog, staff and public alike. We also create and maintain custom lists of new materials and bestsellers, further enhancing our catalog to better serve our patrons.

We need bibliographic control or control of data for information retrieval; we cannot afford to lose control of our data. Without it we just have data that may or may not be retrieved. We face many challenges in determining what form the control should take and how to apply it. Currently, we have a variety of standards and systems; some are well developed while some are out-dated. The library community needs more consistency and to develop better means of cooperating both within the community and with other groups. We must insist on better ILS. We have a number of new tools being developed including RDA and FRBR that currently we know little about or even if they will meet our current and future needs. But we need to continue to develop and maintain structures and systems, considering our users needs in all that we do. We need to further support and develop our library catalogs as an essential part of our services. After all, the catalog is the digital and virtual representation of the library and its holdings – creating a library without walls.

Critical Economic Impact of DLC Authority and Bibliographic Records
At Texas State University-San Marcos and Assuredly Elsewhere
August 1, 2007

Over time, our library has extensively exported/used hundreds of thousands of DLC bibliographic and authority records for our card and online catalogs, and our shelflist. These records now form the majority of the online catalog content, and provide the description of and access to our collection, for all print, non-print, and remote electronic resources.

Historically, our staff have not edited much of the DLC bibliographic record. We have accepted the call numbers as they are, unless there are formatting errors or we have a chosen to classify or treat a series in a different manner than the Library of Congress. The quality of the records was the highest available to us, and we trusted this fact. By using DLC bibliographic records as they were, without much editing, we gained the highest quality records for our university patrons, saved staff time, were able to not have to add additional cataloging staff to handle new materials, and we were able to catalog more new materials, more quickly.

Our staff have also not edited much, if any, of the DLC authority records, historically speaking, as they were correct, of high quality, and were the authoritative source of all authorized headings, cross references, and series classification and tracing decisions. By using DLC authority records as they were, without editing, we gained the highest quality records, saved staff time, were able to not have to add additional cataloging staff, and we were able to catalog more new materials, more quickly.

Our online catalog is composed of the following statistical counts of bibliographic and authority records. I'm not the best at using our Millennium's "create list" reporting mechanism, so I can't vouch that the totals are entirely accurate. But, this is what I found.

Bibliographic Records	Total	Percentage of Bibliographic Record Database
DLC	419,417	65%
Non-DLC	226,284	35%
OVERALL TOTAL	645,701	

Authority Records	Total	Percentage of Authority Record Database
DLC total records	466,986	79%
Non-DLC total records	123,044	21%
DLC Series records	17,521	**Total % of series records: 75%**
Non-DLC Series records	5,922	**Total % of series records: 25%**
OVERALL TOTAL	590,030 total authority records (466,986+123,044)	

When you look at the percentages that the Library of Congress bibliographic and authority records are of our total database of records, you may think, "So what?" Let's put some costs on those numbers.

Bibliographic Cost Scenarios

Scenario I: LAII catalogs DLC records (current practice: LC cataloging quality is still high, except for series control, even though there are rumors of further decline)

Our Library Assistant (LA) II's usually review and edit LC bibliographic records as necessary, and this has been our practice throughout our history. These are high quality records, and only require some series work, and possibly changing a classification number because of a differing series classification treatment or formatting problem

An LA II now makes approximately $7.00 per hour, as a beginning rate.

It takes an LAII approximately 10 minutes to review and edit a DLC title, including review for authority control. In terms of a full hour, 10 minutes is .17 of the 60 minutes.

Our library actually had the LAIIs catalog those 419,417 DLC bibliographic records, at a cost of:

419,417 x $7.00 hourly rate x .17 hr. = $499,106.23

Scenario II: LAIV/Cataloger reviews DLC records because LC has allowed cataloging quality to slip (could happen even more in the future)

LAIV's and catalogers generally perform non-DLC and original cataloging, historically at Texas State University-San Marcos. But, if the quality of LC cataloging were to decline, depending on the situation an LAIV or Cataloger might have to give a quick review of these titles.

Let's say that a beginning LAIV salary currently is around $9.00 per hour, and a beginning Cataloger's salary around $12.00 per hour. Let's average that amount, since both work on non-DLC and original, to be $11.00.

We can estimate that it would take an LAIV or Cataloger approximately, on average, 5 minutes to review and edit a DLC title, including review for authority control. In terms of a full hour, 5 minutes is .8 of the 60 minutes.

If we did not have full, highest quality LC bibliographic records, and they required LAIV/cataloger intervention the cost would have been:

419,417 x $11.00 x.08 = $369,086.96

The other non-DLC cataloging records, all 226,284 of them, would have most likely not been cataloged as the focus would have been on managing the much larger number of those 419,417 DLC titles. Or, we would have had a much smaller number of those 226,284 non-DLC titles cataloged, and our backlog of books awaiting cataloging would be large, and growing daily, through the years.

Scenario III. LAIV/Cataloger has to catalog those 419,417 titles as LC cataloging is non-existent (hope this will never happen)

As in scenario II, a beginning LAIV salary currently is around $9.00 per hour, and a beginning Cataloger's salary around $12.00 per hour. Let's average that amount, since both work on non-DLC and original, to be $11.00.

It might take an LAIV or Cataloger approximately, on average, 40 minutes to review and catalog a title without DLC cataloging, including review for authority control. In terms of a full hour, 40 minutes is .67.

If we no longer had DLC cataloging to rely on, the cost for those 419,417 records, which would have had DLC (but DLC stopped cataloging) would be:

419,417 x $11.00 x .67 = $3,091,103.29

Also, as in scenario III, the other non-DLC cataloging records, all 226,284 of them, would have most likely not been cataloged as the focus would have been on trying managing the much larger number of those 419,417 prior-DLC titles. Or, we would have had a much, much smaller number of those 226,284 non-DLC titles cataloged. Our backlog of books awaiting cataloging would be extremely large, and would include a lot of the 419,417 prior-DLC titles as well as the 226,284 non-DLC titles. Our backlog would be unmanageable and growing daily, through the years.

Bibliographic Record Conclusions
By having full, highest quality LC bibliographic records, reviewed by an LAII, we were able to achieve the following:

- Get more records cataloged, more quickly, as the LA II's focus solely on the DLC, allowing the more complicated non DLC/original cataloging to be performed by the LAIV's/Catalogers
- Retain the highest level quality of cataloging for all cataloging records, no matter whether DLC or not, because the level of staff reviewing them is appropriate to their complexity
- Best utilize the expertise of cataloging staff, providing the best outcome in terms of quality, quantity cataloged, speed of getting materials to our university users, and overall excellence in bibliographic records description and access in our online catalog, for our collection.

- Have basically no or little backlogs, getting materials to users
- Save much money, as indicated in the above figures

If you multiply our experience times the number of academic libraries similar to us, the importance of:

- having reliably high quality DLC records,
- having a high quantity of DLC records for the largest quantity of new materials that are received, and
- the cost savings by relying on DLC cataloging versus having to catalog the materials ourselves or having higher level staff review the poorer quality DLC records

becomes a real economic factor, of major importance to libraries of all kinds very soon, not just academic libraries.

Authority Record Observations

As the tables indicate, our authority database is 79% DLC authority records, and 21% local or non-DLC records. A very large 75% of our series authority records have been created by LC. Only 25% are either locally or other agency created. At the current time, only DLC series authority records are currently declining in quantity. If the decline continues, and is not picked up by other quality, national level cataloging agencies, our time will be increasingly spent on creating our own local series authorities, which, in turn, means:

- We will spend more time on series authority work, and less time cataloging, and doing other authority work.
- Fewer titles will be cataloged, backlogs will grow, and our university users get fewer materials for their use, in a less and less timely manner.
- Multiply this by the number of other libraries that will be forced to work on series, which LC would have done before, and the economic and patron effects are real detrimental factors, not imaginary, growing in severity over time.

Overall Conclusion

We must have Library of Congress high quality cataloging and authority control, now and in the future, in order to maintain bibliographic control, user access, and economic control of our cataloging and authority work. This work that we do creates the window to our collections, records the human record, and provides access for past, present and future library patrons in the entire world, and past, present, and future recorded knowledge of humanity.

Without the Library of Congress work in the bibliographic arena, our costs to do our work, across the entire world will go up, our backlogs will increase, our access to knowledge will continue to decline, and eventually we won't be able to provide

cataloging and access in any quality way, given the increasing quantity of published, nonpublished, print, non-print, and electronic formats.

It's a no-brainer. Library of Congress must be funded adequately to continue full level, high quality cataloging, Library of Congress catalogers must be secure in their future and their ability to continue their excellent work, the Library of Congress administration must be made to understand the importance of these issues, and the U.S. government should support, by way of increased funding for cataloging and authority control, this very critical economic issue.

From: Christine Schwartz <catalogingfutures@gmail.com>
Date: Aug 7, 2007 4:03 PM
Subject: Written Testimony to the LC Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control

To: jmgriff@unc.edu

Dear Dr. Griffiths,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony to the Working Group. I am an experienced cataloger and head of the Cataloging Department at Princeton Theological Seminary Libraries. I have worked for 18 years in cataloging exclusively in theological libraries. My experience includes cataloging in a variety of different formats as well as non-MARC metadata creation. Four months ago, I started a cataloging blog, Cataloging Futures. The focus of the blog is the future of cataloging and metadata in libraries. I have tried to follow the issues and provide resources for other catalogers via this blog. The activities of the Working Group has been a main focus. What I've written here are my own thoughts influenced by the presenters and the presentation notes from the Working Group's public meetings and the conversations on cataloging/metadata discussion lists.

   * The Library of Congress needs to answer several questions about their leadership and future role for cataloging and metadata in order to regain the trust of the library community after their SAR decision from June 2006. They should provide to the national and global library community a detailed mission statement and strategic plan about where LC is going to put their resources and emphases with regard to cataloging and metadata creation for the next five to ten years.

   * The hallmarks of this plan should be honesty and clarity, so that the library community will have a better understanding as to where the Library of Congress is headed in the "Web world". This is the most important contribution LC can make to our future. We as a library community need to know where LC is going, so that we can adjust and change our policies, procedures, and workflows. Each library has a different response to the digital turn depending on a lot of complex factors, most importantly, the users we serve and the ratio of print to digital that has been collected and will continue to be collected. I think David Bade spoke most eloquently about the importance of communicating with and providing resources to local communities and institutions.

   * However, we will all be moving in the direction of providing more library tools and resources on the Web. I would like to see the Library of Congress take a leadership role by addressing how we get on the Web as a library community. Could the Working Group report suggest strategies for change that go beyond LC's individual mission? The Library of Congress, our national library, could initiate and lead in this way.

   * LC's focus of looking to cut corners reveals a real lack of vision with regard to the development of Library of Congress legacy cataloging tools and standards: LCC, LCSH, LCNAF, MARC 21, LCRI. I think we can be much more creative about adapting these tools for the Web following the example Diane Hillmann provides in the work she's facilitated with DCMI and RDA. The speakers from the second meeting spoke to this issue (much better than I could).

* Following the W3C model, LC cataloging tools should be "webified" and open for public use as Clifford Lynch described in his summary of the second meeting. There should be an attempt to make cataloging tools, particularly LCSH and the LC name authority file, attractive to the larger metadata community outside libraries. If after a period of time they are not adopted as global metadata standards then their development could be cut back. To cut back now seems shortsighted. The Library of Congress could continue their collaborations and also look for new partnerships to share the costs of developing, maintaining, and distributing LC web cataloging/metadata tools. If LC wants the library community to step in and contribute more to bibliographic data creation, we still need these tools to do the work. I'd recommend that the Library of Congress focus on getting our bibliographic structures and standards on the Web with open access as their main focus for the future of bibliographic control.

   * With regard to OCLC's role, as Jennifer Bowen mentioned, the bar could be lower for librarian's participation in PCC and OCLC's Enhance program. I would go so far as to suggest completely open the editing capabilities in OCLC WorldCat. A lot of duplication of effort in editing errors in access points (not just fine tuning description) would be eliminated if all libraries participating in OCLC could really contribute to enhancing bibliographic data (not just the library who gets the bibliographic record into WorldCat first). This fits in well with the model discussed at the third meeting of monographic records having a life cycle.

   * Another idea: Could LCSH be developed to be used with both a post-coordination model and a pre-coordination model? Why does it have to be an either/or? As metadata schemes become more diverse, why can't our controlled vocabularies be applied with more variety as well. Also, enriching bibliographic data with user contributed tags is a great idea.

   * The cataloging "traditionalists" vs. "modernist" arguments need to be set aside. The reality is that both camps essentially want the same thing , i.e., good quality metadata, but are approaching it in different ways and with different vocabularies. While its a small group so far, most of us conversing out here in the cataloging blogosphere know that traditional catalogers and metadata specialists aren't really that far apart. Cataloging=Metadata is my working mantra. More importantly, it is also my working reality. For example, I'm on a Metadata Standards Committee that's charged with decision making for both digital and print collections. I suppose this is the current reality and future for many of us--a foot in both worlds.

   * Bringing experienced catalogers along and encourage new librarians coming into the field is another area that the Library of Congress could play a unique role. This is already happening with the LC/ALCTS Cataloging for the 21st Century workshops. I hope it will continue. Both Jane Greenberg and Jennifer Bowen mentioned the importance of articulating a positive vision for the future. This is what we need from the Library of Congress rather than the doomsday approach over the last few years. I don't think all libraries are in competition with Google or Amazon.com and the overly urgent tone about our demise is not conducive to good decision making and moving forward.

   * I would encourage the Library of Congress to consider using Web 2.0 social networking tools to advance catalogers' education. Such tools as webcasts, podcasts, wikis, and blogs could be used for cataloging and metadata education. Also, these tools

could be used an an informal means of communication and input between the Library of Congress and the cataloging and metadata communities.

    * It would be nice if we could drop from the future of cataloging debate the old, worn out cataloger stereotypes. While I'm sure there's some truth to them, we are not a monolithic group of Luddites who "only think in terms of black and white" or "are obsessed with creating the 'perfect record'". These characterizations are insulting. In my experience catalogers are dedicated professionals who are constantly trying to do more with fewer resources. If only we had time to create a "perfect record"!

    * In conclusion, the Library of Congress has been the standard bearer for bibliographic data for the nation's library community. We understand that libraries will have to adjust to the changes happening at the Library of Congress. This is no small thing for our profession. Cataloging on a daily basis involves a lot of decision making. Our most important guiding assumption is the preeminent role of Library of Congress bibliographic records. When searching, we look for these records, we prefer them over others, we make judgments about classification, call numbers, forms of headings, and subject headings in relation to what the Library of Congress has done. If this gold standard is going away, we need to know. The decisions the Library of Congress makes now will have a profound influence on our day-to-day work as catalogers and on the nation's diverse libraries as a whole.

Respectfully submitted,

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From: Jeff Siemon <jsiemon@fuller.edu>
Date: Jun 20, 2007 3:14 PM
Subject: Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control
To: jmgriff@unc.edu

Dear Dr. Griffiths,

Thank you for your service on the Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control.

As a librarian with 16 years experience working in graduate theological seminaries, my experience is that master and doctoral students and faculty daily depend upon pre-coordinated subject strings for precise and comprehensive searching in their fields of research.

Also, I've been deeply concerned about the reduced quality of subject analysis in the field of religion in Library of Congress records in the last 10 years (resulting from several retirements in the mid-1990s.)   Further reductions in subject specialist at LC can only diminish the quality of U.S. research work.   And when U.S. academic research declines, U.S. competitiveness declines.

Sincerely,

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From: Simpson, Sarah <ssimpso@tulsalibrary.org>
Date: Jun 12, 2007 4:17 PM
Subject: Future of Bibliographic Control

To: jmgriff@unc.edu

I hear you're looking for public librarians comments for your working group. I do have a number of concerns about the future of bibliographic control.

First, I do believe there is a real and lasting need for controlled vocabulary. I definitely think we should enable and use tagging, particularly to identify and cross-reference the terms people use to search. However, only a controlled vocabulary is really able to adequately collocate similar materials. I think we need more ways to access material, not fewer ways, and giving up controlled vocabulary to depend on user-created tagging will result in less access to our materials. I do think we need to use our professional librarians and our technology to make sure that like materials end up with the same subject headings. Tags can be helpful in allowing us to accomplish this, but they can't be the only access point.

Second, series are very important to public libraries. Our customers really want to be able to search by series, and we are not often able to create our own series authorities. On top of that, those (usually academic) libraries that are creating series don't often get the books that we get, which are often purely for entertainment purposes. Currently, we're letting our authority control vendor change all of our untraced series to traced series, but that may end up causing conflicts, and it also doesn't allow us to keep previously established untraced series – it's an all or nothing proposition.

Third, we trust LC copy. We have separate guidelines set up for LC copy and it is handled by a paraprofessional cataloger. We don't spend as much time on these records, and we accept the subject headings and suggested Dewey numbers. We are beginning to notice a decline in the quality of these records. Since hiring more staff is rarely a possibility, I'm not sure what we will do if we can't trust these records. Our professional catalogers can't take on that many more titles, but I don't believe we will be able to get the paraprofessional position upgraded. On top of staffing problems, the titles will also take a considerable longer amount of time to catalog, as we will have to spend more time checking their accuracy and their access points and subject analysis.

I know people keep saying that no one uses our library catalogs, but our library catalog use is up over 50% this year, and we are working hard at getting as many materials as possible available through the catalog. In addition, over 85% of our materials budget is spent on physical items – I realize the digital world needs attention, too, but we need to be able to identify and shelve these items in a logical manner.

I am concerned that the drive to create RDA seems to be falling apart. I tend to think it is vital that we work together with the digital catalogers (metadatists, if you prefer) to come up with something that will work for both of us. Our materials ALL need to be accessible through our catalogs, the interfaces need to be easier and more user-friendly, and we need to be able to have metadata for both types of materials that can allow them to be searched through that same interface. Believe me, in the public libraries we definitely understand the value of electronic resources, but we also understand that books aren't going away any time soon. We need to be able to adequately describe all those things. And, I have to say, legacy data is important – no one has the time OR

money to recreate those bibliographic records – we can move away from MARC if we have to, but we need to be able to accommodate MARC data or to be able to convert it without losing that immense value.

While we're talking about giving up controlled access, the Web resources are starting to realize that tagging and keyword searching isn't all it's cracked up to be when you really need to find things in a large pool of information.

The Library of Congress also needs to understand that if it gives up what it does, due to cost, our institutions are not going to pick up where they left off. Instead, that will be used as justification for us to give up the same things. They need to understand that when they make policy decisions, those ramifications do extend to the whole country, and indeed the whole world. They are a de facto national library, and even though that is not what they were created to do, I hope they can understand that and realize that the decisions they make have the same impact as if they are that national library. Whither they go...

Those are my thoughts this Tuesday afternoon. Please note that opinions expressed are my own and may not reflect those of my institution. Please feel free to contact me if you would like more elaboration. Thank you for taking on this task!

Sarah

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Submission to the Library of Congress Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control

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Prologema

1. The purpose of cataloguing is to guide a reader to his book.

2. Any aspect of cataloguing that does not support this task is superfluous.

3. Any aspect of cataloguing that inhibits this task is harmful.

4. A catalogue is a biologically enhanced information retrieval system.

5. Readers are familiar with other information retrieval systems, and will use the tools which, based on past experience, they believe to be most effective for their needs.

6. A library may not injure a reader, or through inaction allow a reader to come to harm.

1 Economics and Organization

1.1 Support open access to bibliographic data

1. Bibliographic data are "mere facts", and thus cannot be copyrighted within the United States.

2. No financial model predicated on ownership of such records is sustainable.

3. Claiming ownership of bibliographic records removes them from the realm of the social.

4. Providing open access to catalog and authority records will encourage their use on the wider Internet.

5. The Library of Congress is required to charge for its cataloging distribution on a cost recovery basis, even though this cost model is not efficient and harmful to the Library's larger mission.

6. Congress should permit the Library to distribute bibliographic records free of charge.

1.2 Open cataloging is social cataloging

1. Under current models of shared cataloging, fees are paid to download copies of individual records.

2. When errors are detected in these downloaded records, they are typically corrected in the local system only.

3. Because a fee has been paid to access these records, there is no social obligation felt to contribute corrections back to the source.

4. Locally changed records are much more expensive to maintain than those which are retained unchanged.

5. Just as the open source model allows ordinary users to fix and enhance the software they use, open cataloging allows changes to be contributed back to the community, improving the quality of records for all.

6. Because open cataloging takes place in a social environment, social conventions can be used to solicit improvements in existing records.

7. As an example, a social catalog can periodically ask a user who is requesting a record, and who has the described item in hand, to cross-check a few select fields.

1.3 Metadata should be created at the most appropriate point in the life of its data

1. Records for books should be created by publishers.

2. Records for journals should be created by the sponsors.

3. Records for articles should be created by authors and their institutions.

4. Name authority records should be created as early in an author's career as possible, for example, on publication of their first article in a peer-reviewed journal.

5. Authors should be able to update their own authority records.

2 Structures and Standards for Bibliographic Data

2.1 Support standards that scale beyond the catalog

1. Move away from library-specific formats.

2. Move towards general standards, such as Dublin Core, CIDOC, RDF, SKOS, and OWL.

3. Design standards to allow ordinary people to create basic records for web sites, articles, etc.

4. Specify standards in a modular fashion, so that intricacies that only apply to specialized formats such as sheet music do not complicate the description of simpler items, such as novels.

2.2 Develop tools to support metadata creation

1. Automate as much of the task of metadata creation as possible, allowing humans to concentrate on tasks that require deeper semantic understanding.

2. Develop tools to assist naive users to create valid records.

3. Develop tools to assist expert users to create better records faster.

4. Develop algorithmic and heuristic validation routines for as all metadata fields.

5. Whenever possible, check data against authority files automatically.

2.3 Support linked and networked bibliographic data

1. Support incremental change records.

2. Maintain references to authorized fields as links rather than strings.

3. Support multi-leveled compound works, and generalized work clusters.

3 The Future of The Subject Headings

3.1 Treat headings as concepts, not strings

1. Treating the authorized form of a heading as just one kind of label for a concept allows for the use of other kinds of labels without requiring any changes to bibliographic records.

2. Translations of the headings into foreign languages allows non-native English speakers to browse more easily.

3. Bermanization of the headings into regular English allows native speakers to do likewise.

3.2 Improve the syndetic structure of the headings

1. Assign broader terms to all non top-level terms.

2. Convert BT references that do not correspond to genuine broader terms to plain RT. Where such a change would leave a term orphaned, and a broader reference to a true parent.

3. Support more types of semantic relationships between terms.

3.3 Establish name-like headings using name-like procedures

1. It is far more expensive to establish entries as Subjects than it is to add entries that are Names.

2. Names can be established without direct LC intervention, whereas subjects require much more centralized evaluation.

3. Examples of name-like headings include

   (a) Fictitious characters.

   (b) Famous animals.

   (c) Models of calculators.

3.4   Establish patterns, rather than instances of patterns

1. Creating explicit patterns in a machine processable form can greatly reduce the number of headings that need to be separately established.

2. Common relationships implied by patterns can be automatically inferred, rather than having to be explicitly enumerated in each case-thus avoiding many inconsistencies in the current headings.

3. As the syndetic structure of the headings is repaired, constraints upon the types of concepts to which patterns can be applied can automatically be enforced, and implicit patterns embedded in currently established headings detected.

3.5   Separate out domain specific vocabularies

1. If domain specific vocabularies are separated from the general headings, their administration can be distributed to other committees or bodies.

2. By delegating these vocabularies to domain experts, the headings can be made more specific and better adapted to the needs of communities of practice.

3. As the syndetic structure is repaired, delegated vocabularies can be anchored to specified broader terms within the general headings, allowing systems that only wish to deal with such general headings to collapse the delegated subtrees to the anchoring term.

3.6   Create a wiki-like system for heading maintenance

1. A social approach to heading maintenance enables a distributed approach to building relationships between terms.

2. By simplifying the creation of new headings, such a system can encourage the use of specific, narrow headings.

3. As long as these proposed headings are linked to established broader terms, they can be treated by systems only wishing to deal with established terms as if they were the broader terms.

4. If subject headings are stored as links, rather than strings, rejected headings can be converted to those which achieve currency.

5. Any social system for headings must track the provenance of proposed headings, and clearly distinguish between established and non-established terms.

Some Brief Notes in Response to the Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control

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Many of my concerns have been expressed eloquently and in detail by David Bade, Martha Yee, and Shawne Miksa among others. I will just add a few thoughts on some assumptions that should be questioned, followed by an observation or two from my perspective as, mostly, a cataloger in public libraries.

The summary of the first meeting uses language that often appears in our professional discussions, referring to a "consumer environment" for bibliographic data. I do not want to overgeneralize or to impute to the presenters motives that were not theirs, but I would suggest that there is a danger in thinking too narrowly of the users of our data and services as consumers. They are that; but they are also citizens and learners, among any number of other roles, as well as individuals--simply human beings. When we use exclusively the language of commerce in speaking of what we do, we obscure the fact that our profession's values are not simply those of commerce--or should not be. The marketplace has its role, but when we start to take the marketplace as the model for everything, we fall into the absurdity expressed in one of my favorite jokes (a cultural artifact from Milton Friedman's time):

How many University of Chicago economists does it take to change a light bulb?

None. If the light bulb needs changing, the market will change it.

Martha Yee has referred more than once in her writings to the anti-intellectualism of our culture. Sadly, I have to agree with that judgment; and in particular, when I think about the staff of the Library of Congress and the rethinking of roles they have been undertaking, I remind myself that these librarians--among the most knowledgeable and dedicated in our profession--have for most of the past six years been accountable to a Congress more deeply anti-intellectual perhaps, and more hostile to the public and nonprofit sectors and to open access to information, than any other in our history. But in such a context, part of our responsibility is to be countercultural--to push back against assumptions and values in the larger society that are not our assumptions and values. Part of that push is learning how to argue persuasively, and out of informed conviction, that the cost of good cataloging is not in itself a reason to sacrifice it, any more than the cost of Shepard's Citations is a reason for a law office to Google citations instead.

One other tendency I would like to see us avoid is the uncritical acceptance of the new and the assumption that the old is necessarily, and only, an impediment to progress. Obviously the future is coming, and coming fast, whether we want it to or not, and obviously we must plan for change. This need not mean discarding existing structures wholesale. An existing system can indeed be in whole or in part an encumbrance; it can also be a valuable resource, the collective result of generations of observation, thought, and experiment. Look at almost

any land vehicle. No matter how advanced the machine, its contact with the surface of the earth is a device whose basic design predates recorded history. So when we evaluate what we are doing and how we can do it more effectively--not simply more economically--let us take care to look at the strengths as well as the shortcomings of our existing resources, and let us be open to thinking first of how they can be adapted, improved, and extended, not abandoned or gutted of structure and content.

I was the audience member in Chicago who raised the issue that institutions other than research libraries, particularly public and school libraries, had been wholly unrepresented at the meeting, and was invited to comment from a public-library perspective. As I remarked at the time, many issues are in fact shared by libraries of all types--economic constraints, for example, and problems of multilingual access.

In fact, the multiple-language issue is increasingly critical in public and school libraries, maybe even more so in some respects than in many academic libraries, both because of the sheer number of languages that may be spoken in a community and because patrons speaking those languages may not have the English-language proficiency, educational attainment, or research skills normally expected in an academic environment--not to mention that our public-library patrons come to us with pretty much the same wide variety of age and interests no matter what their native language.

That variability is another challenge peculiar to public libraries. Here I will raise my one minor disagreement with Shawne Miksa's paper: when she says "that a list of hits on Google is enough to those using libraries that do not serve more scholarly or in-depth researchers," I answer (smiling when I say that, partner), "Show me those libraries!" To be sure, some of our patrons are satisfied with that list of Google hits; others come in looking for the latest Lilian Jackson Braun cat mystery or whatever Junie B. Jones book they haven't read "and that's all" (to quote Junie B.). But others are doing school research, sometimes at a challenging level; some are tracking stocks or looking for information that could affect whether their new business succeeds or fails; still others are pursuing personal interests with scholarly dedication. And, of course, some of them are barely able to reach the second shelf, some are in their nineties, and others are every age in between (we even have our teenagers and young adults, though not as many as we'd like to reach). They all deserve quality of access to our resources. That is a real challenge to catalogers--I've long maintained that subject cataloging for children is harder than for adults--and much as administrators might wish it, it can't be done on the cheap.

It is not only all kinds of patrons, but all kinds of materials, that we deal with. Not to presume, but my impression is that public libraries are considerably in advance of most academic institutions--the phrase "bleeding edge" comes forcefully to mind--not necessarily in electronic resources, but in the percentage

of other non-print materials in our collections. A public-library cataloger quickly learns two hard truths: that descriptive cataloging in the non-print formats, especially materials with a visual component such as DVDs, is much more difficult and detailed, when done right, than that of most printed books; and that the worst cataloging in OCLC is done for those same formats. And when, for example, a feature film can be issued on DVD in widescreen and in full-screen format, with subtitles and dubbed tracks in three languages one year and five the next, followed in a couple of years by a director's cut and a few years later by an anniversary edition complete with outtakes, an interview with the director and producer, and a "making of" short, you simply cannot get by with sketchy or inaccurate cataloging. And that's just the bibliographic description--consider the amount of authority work required for meaningful access to that film, even if you restrict access points to director, producer, screenwriter, and "above-the-title" acting credits. In short, if you want to know whether the least-common-denominator, let-the-vendor-supply-the-cataloging model is working today, ask a non-print cataloger in a public library. And be prepared to listen a while.

What's the answer? I don't pretend to know, except to say that there is almost certainly no one answer. I hope, for one thing, that a FRBRized cataloging code and database structure will streamline cataloging by allowing common intellectual content to be more seamlessly shared across records for different physical manifestations. I anticipate more work toward interfaces that will incorporate both authority-based and user-generated descriptors. And necessity will dictate some changes, at least, in our traditional divisions of labor.

But these and the other strategies that have so much potential to improve access cannot be effective without a solid substrate of accurate and robust cataloging. Indeed, such cataloging will become more important as we attempt to do more with it--especially as the quantity of information and the variety of its containers will be growing all the while. And this will require investment--in preprofessional and postgraduate cataloging education and, yes, in real live professional catalogers in our libraries, provided with the resources they need and decently paid, even.

For many years, when a new issue of *Library Journal* came my way, one of the first pages I turned to was the one carrying Herbert White's "White Papers." I suspect I am not alone in this. One of White's recurring themes was that an organization will manage to find the resources to accomplish what it really wants to do; another, that it is the librarian's responsibility to "convince the boss it is his job and in the organization's best interests to support the librarian." I believe that one of the most important things we can do to shape the future of bibliographic control is to take on that responsibility.

August 7, 2007

From: Strait, Constance <CStrait@gcpl.lib.oh.us>
Date: Aug 3, 2007 1:56 PM
Subject: Response to Summary of the Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control
To: jmgriff@unc.edu
Cc: "Strait, Constance" < CStrait@gcpl.lib.oh.us>

Dear Dr. Griffiths,

I am a cataloger and Head of Technical Services in a medium-sized public library in Ohio. I have been following the Progress of the Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control with great interest and concern. Naturally I feel that we as professionals need to be aware as much as possible of the changes wrought by Google, Amazon and the like. But we need to stand up and be heard when it comes to libraries and bibliographic control. We should not let our expertise in the field be over-shadowed. Quality bibliographic control is of utmost importance for creative librarianship. We all need to support our institutions and not be overrun. MARC and FRBR, or whatever becomes the rule, is important for scholars of the future and the preservation of knowledge.

I realize this contribution of mine is only a small drop in the bucket, but I am happy to send it nonetheless.

Sincerely,

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Dear Dr. Griffiths,

I have been alarmed to hear that the Library of Congress is considering discontinuing the use of LC Subject Headings.

Turning to the Web site of the Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control, it is not obvious to me that such a decision is under consideration. Nevertheless, the various documents gathered on the Website of the Library of Congress Professional Guild (http://www.guild2910.org/future.htm) give me cause to wonder. If nothing else, the fact that neither of these Web sites links to the other suggests a significant rupture of dialogue in a profession that ordinarily prides itself in linking and collocating related information.

I am a subject specialist (in British and American Literature and History) at Columbia University Libraries, where I have worked since 2000. I have been a professional librarian, with reference, instructional, and collection development responsibilities, since 1992. I work closely with students, faculty, and other researchers at a reference desk, in library instruction sessions, and in individualized consultation. In all of these interactions I have found consistently that LCSH play a crucial role in my ability to explain and demonstrate the library catalog to users and in their ability to master the catalog and make it work for them.

While it is true that LCSH posed many difficulties to the uninitiated in the days of printed card catalogs, this is no longer the case in an online environment. Users can begin subject-oriented searching by entering simple keywords. They can scan their retrievals for relevant titles and then select hyperlinked LCSH in those titles, thus opening LCSH browse lists. Those lists, in turn, enable them to visualize various ways in which their subject can be broken down, and to jump to new retrieval sets. This is the process I demonstrate and recommend in library instruction and at the reference desk. When I follow up later with users I find, more often than not, that they have continued to make deliberate use of LCSH in their searching.

It is, of course, the case that many users do not receive instruction or seek reference help. The fact remains that users are assisted by LCSH whether or not they make deliberate use of them. Many unrestricted keyword searches are useful, and end up collocating significant ranges of titles on a subject, largely because they happen to hit on LCSH terms in the records.

As for the likelihood of uninstructed users making deliberate use of LCSH on their own: I would say that most persons who use computers are by now conditioned to scan any brief document, such as a catalog record, for hyperlinks that might be helpful. The spectrum of persons who make direct use of LCSH is thus very likely far wider than one might think: for it includes both the deliberate scholar, on one end, and the novice information seeker (who may initially be motivated to click on LCSH out of simple curiosity), on the other.

I am mystified as to what is envisioned as replacing LCSH by those persons who argue for their discontinuation. Subject keywords, as opposed to the coordinated subject

strings of LCSH, provide no genuine insight into the nature and structure of discourse in a scholarly discipline. Social tagging will never repay the endless efforts that would be required to refine, standardize, and domesticate it for library use. Such efforts, furthermore, would betray the basic freedom that lends social tagging whatever value and interest it possesses in those environments in which it thrives. Subject keywords and social tagging are perfectly fine for helping users find three-minute videos on You Tube. They are not adequate, however, to the task of helping users find three-hundred-page scholarly monographs or group them in meaningful ways. Thomas Mann has cogently demonstrated the distinctive value of LCSH in contrast to various alternatives that have been envisioned (http://www.guild2910.org/Peloponnesian%20War%20 June%2013%202007.pdf). I am in agreement with his basic arguments.

The idea that "Searchers expect instant gratification and positive feedback from the systems they use" (Calhoun, http://www.loc.gov/catdir/calhoun-report-final.pdf , p. 38) may be true of some of our users some of the time. But it does not begin to do justice to the variety of legitimate needs and expectations of library users, either in academic communities or in the world at large. One of the key purposes of higher education is to acclimatize students to the patterns of thinking, writing, and research prevalent in a given academic discipline. Understanding and participating in such disciplines requires patience, along with a willingness to defer gratification and to endure temporary frustration. Every learning curve requires trial and error. I work closely with History faculty and students at Columbia and I am impressed by the earnestness that animates efforts on both sides as they work to impart or to apprehend the values and methods that make historical research worthwhile.

It is not the case that LCSH are a magic key that opens every door. Nevertheless, they open many doors and they remain a core element in the process of getting doors opened. In the complex world of information retrieval, we cannot afford to throw away any key whose value has been substantially demonstrated through long usage. Online catalogs are far more sophisticated and multifunctional today than anyone would have envisioned three decades ago when they were first introduced. We have come this far by building upon past accomplishments, not by discarding them.

Thank you for considering the views expressed in this letter.

Sincerely,

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Question/Comment: In general, folks here (at Cornell) found the questions somewhat dense and difficult to answer outside of the context of a broader, give-and-take live discussion. Nonetheless, a few offered the comments I've shared below.

Thanks.

-Scott Wicks

I don't think we can answer questions such as "How can we make better use of current structures and standards in meeting both consumer and management user needs" (under #1) without first knowing the answers to questions such as: which consumers, and what are their needs? Do we know? And can we differentiate between needs and wants? If we can't satisfy all needs and wants, how do we decide what needs are primary and which are secondary?

Other comments:

I have a few comments to the five questions. I think these questions all overlap quite a bit, but I've tried to associate my responses to individual questions.

#1

I'd like to see citation-management software included in the scope of consumer usage. This would include EndNote, RefWorks, and potentially many other web-based or desktop tools. Any new bibliographic standard should take into account the ability to re-order and re-format various components of a bibliographic citation, in any number of citation styles (APA, MLA, etc.) As an example, better delineation of family names and personal names would be helpful. Currently, name headings exist as strings that are difficult to parse for this information, especially since name order and parsing rules vary across different cultures.

#2

Libraries' authority records and controlled vocabulary terms can offer tremendous value to the semantic web. Simply assigning publicly-available URIs to these resources will give the world an identifier by which to refer unambiguously to a person, or organization, or language. Converting the records into RDF (or some other Semantic-Web-friendly format) would make the data even more attractive for re-use by other applications.

#3

Being able to translate native MARC records into XML has allowed libraries' bibliographic data to be used in other computer applications, but only to a limited degree. Programmers who are not well-versed in the intricacies of MARC, and even those who are, have difficulty acknowledging the nuances that MARC allows. For example, to

determine the language of an item, a script extracts the code given in the 008, but in some cases, it must also process the 041 field.

While these conditional and other special cases are not

insurmountable, they do require a significant amount of custom programming code that quickly adds up to a lot of extra work. No wonder library catalog vendors don't bother trying to make full use of the data buried in our bibliographic records.

#4

[I'll skip this one.]

#5

Libraries should take advantage of other information sources, especially information producers, such as publishers and authors. We need a better way to connect knowledge experts (authors) with metadata experts (catalogers), tempered with an understanding of the searching behaviors of users (who may or may not be experts). And, inevitably, we need to allow library data to be supplemented by user-created data (tagging, reviews, discussions, etc.), either within our library

system, or else from other applications that can freely pull data from the library system.