



National Bibliography

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THE PURPOSE of this paper is to discuss the concept of a national bibliography within the context of other types of bibliographies. In addition, an overview of existing current national bibliographies is presented in tabular form indicating characteristics. A comparison and evaluation is made in general with special attention given to the United States. The current United States national book bibliography is examined in depth.

Almost everyone who has written on the subject of national bibliographies begins with a number of definitions conceived by his predecessors and then adds his own variation to these. Van Hoesen and Walter turned to the Library of Congress classification schedules for identification of the elements of a national bibliography.¹ These elements are: (1) books printed and published in a country; (2) books written in the language of that country—e.g. the French, German, and Italian literature published in Switzerland; (3) the country as subject—books written about the country. However, Van Hoesen and Walter then proceeded to narrow this definition to something more workable for their discussion of existing bibliographies: (1) the book products of a given country, and (2) books about the country—limited to works too general to be classed with particular subjects.

For his study of *Current Complete National Bibliographies*, Linder begins by discussing the definitions or descriptions of a national bibliography presented by his predecessors and then develops his own definition which more closely approaches an ideal: "For this study, then, current complete national bibliography is a complete or nearly complete listing, in one or more parts, of the records of a nation, about a nation, copyrighted in a nation, or in a single language, issued serially at appropriate intervals as the records appear."² Linder uses the word "nation" in the larger sense in order to include natives of a

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National Bibliography

country as well as the nation as a political or geographical entity. He further defines "appropriate intervals" to be a year or less, with exceptions where warranted.

The use of the terms "nation" and "records" are among Linder's main contributions to the discussion of what constitutes a current national bibliography. By use of these terms, he extends the scope to the point of improbability of achievement. At the same time, he is being more realistic in terms of the ultimate objective of a current national bibliography, which is to present a list of the recorded life of a nation. In addition, his requirement of a serial listing at specified intervals implies currency and continuity which are essential for a national bibliography.

A pragmatic definition adopted by Conover was derived from the recommendations of a Conference on International Cultural, Educational and Scientific Exchanges held at Princeton University in 1946. The Conference recommended the development of national bibliographies with the objective ". . . to make quickly available in published form suitable records of the current output by all countries of publications of research value."³ Conover goes on to indicate her ideal of a current national bibliography which is ". . . a complete listing of all books, documents, pamphlets, serials, and other printed matter published within the bounds of a single country and within the time limits of the previous year or less. . . ."³ Since the purpose of this paper is somewhat comparable to Conover's—indeed, her work was used as a source of information where nothing more current was available—her pragmatic definition is used here as a guide.

As was mentioned earlier, UNESCO co-sponsored a conference in 1946 which urged the compilation of national bibliographies. This early conference ignited a spark in the post-war library world that grew to a steady flame by 1950 and the decade following. In 1950 another conference, sponsored by UNESCO, was held in Paris. Preparations for this conference on the "Improvement of Bibliographical Services" included a contractual arrangement with the Library of Congress for the preparation of a report on the present state of bibliographical services in the world. The report, which surveyed existing services and made suggestions for their improvement, was used as a working paper for the conference.⁴ The objectives of this 1950 conference included encouraging the establishment of a National Commission for Bibliography in each of the participating nations. One of the main products of this conference was the UNESCO/Library of Con-

gress report on existing services and the provision for systematic annual reporting by designated correspondents of each country. In this way there was some assurance of perpetuating some of the enthusiasm and determination this conference generated among the participants.

Not only have correspondents continued to send in current information regarding the status of national bibliographical activity within their respective countries, but UNESCO has provided a systematic printed account of this activity. This information appeared in *UNESCO Bulletin for Libraries*, the *UNESCO Bibliographical Handbooks* (which includes Collison's compilation for the years from 1950-59),⁵ and in the UNESCO quarterly, *Bibliography, Documentation, Terminology*. The success of these activities is demonstrated by the fact that the original Library of Congress survey contained reports from 41 countries and the Collison decennial survey contained information from approximately 100 nations.

Since the above-mentioned surveys by Conover, Collison, and others do exist and are available, another listing of national bibliographies appeared superfluous at this time. Although it is possible to up-date some of the information appearing in these works, very little could be added that would not be more completely covered in the next cumulation of the national correspondent reports to UNESCO. Although Collison does present a tabulation of national bibliographical activities and indicates, among other things, whether various nations have national bibliographies, he does not show any characteristics of these publications.⁶ It seemed reasonable therefore to think of the tabular information presented in this paper as a contribution to the sum total of information available about national bibliographies. By bringing together in one table as much as can be determined about the characteristics of existing national and trade bibliographies, the current global status of the field is more evident.

Table 1 is arranged alphabetically by country as is done by UNESCO in recording information reported by national correspondents. Some countries and territories have been omitted where there was nothing significant to report or their existence as independent nations is so recent that little information is known about a national bibliography. Territories and colonies such as Hong Kong have not been included where their material is recorded in the national bibliography of the governing nation such as the *British National Bibliography*. The letters (N) and (T) stand for national and trade bibliographies respectively. Information about the existence of trade

National Bibliography

TABLE I
CHARACTERISTICS OF CURRENT NATIONAL AND TRADE BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SERVICES

(N) National Bibliographical Services (T) Trade Bibliographical Services	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	SYMBOLS B-W bi-weekly B-M bi-monthly B-E biennial M-A multi-annual Q-Q quinquennial a author t title s subject c classified s-t interfiled in one alphabet
	Frequency	Arrangement	Indexes	Entries Cumulate	Indexes Cumulate	Books and Pamphlets	New Serials	Govt. Publications	Music	Films	Maps	Theses	
Afghanistan	(N) (T)	A											All publications are listed in Official Almanac of Afghanistan.
Albania	(N) (T)	A c a											
Algeria	(N) (T)	Q c a				x x							
Argentina	(N) (T)	S-A c a				x							
Australia	(N) (T)	M B-W c a	t, s a	A B-E	A A	x x	x x	x x	x x	x x	x x	x x	Several trade lists are published. Includes recordings. Biennial is a books-in-print. Items are included in East and West German bibliographies.
Austria	(N) (T)	M A	c a	a, t, s a	A	x x	x x	x x	x x				
Belgium	(N) (T)	M A	c a	a, t, s a	A	x x	x x	x x					Legal deposit accession lists are issued by national library.
Bolivia	(N) (T)					x							
Brazil	(N) (T)	S-A B-M	c a, s c t			x x	x x	x x	x x				Separate annual lists of government publications are also issued.
Bulgaria	(N) (T)	A M	c a	a		x x	x x	x x	x x	x x	x x	x x	Music and records are listed in separate publications. Selected monthly trade list replaces former weekly.

TABLE 1 Continued
CHARACTERISTICS OF CURRENT NATIONAL AND TRADE BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SERVICES

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	SYMBOLS	Comments		
	Frequency	Arrangement	Indexes	Entries Cumulate	Indexes Cumulate	Books and Pamphlets	New Serials	Govt. Publications	Music	Films	Maps	Theses	W weekly M monthly Q quarterly A annual S-A semi-annual	B-W bi-weekly B-M bi-monthly B-E biennial M-A multi-annual Q-Q quinquennial	a author t title s subject c classified a-t interfiled in one alphabet	
(N) National Bibliographical Services	(N)															
(T) Trade Bibliographical Services	(T)															
Burma	(N)							x						Lists all publications printed and published in Burma.		
	(T)															
Cambodia	(N)							x						French publications are listed in <i>Bibliographie de la France</i> .		
	(T)													There is weekly list of government publications.		
Canada	(N)	M	e a, t	A	A	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		Music and films are also listed in separate bibliographies.		
	(T)	S-A & A	t, a t		x									Has a books-in-print.		
Ceylon	(N)	Q	c		x	x	x	x								
	(T)															
Chile	(N)	A			x	x								Contains lists of deposited items.		
	(T)	B-M	c		x											
China (Taiwan)	(N)	M, A			x	x		x			x			A monthly list is published in Chinese and English.		
(Mainland)	(N)	S-A	c		x	x		x						Maps appear in separate publication.		
Colombia	(N)	A	c a, t		x	x		x						Published for 1951.		
	(T)															
Congo	(N)															
	(T)													Materials were listed in <i>Bibliographie de Belgique</i> .		
Costa Rica	(N)	A	a, c s		x	x								A selective list issued by National Library.		
	(T)															
Cuba	(N)	A	a		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x				
	(T)	B-M & Q			x											

National Bibliography

Cyprus	(N)	A		x	x	Compulsory deposit law.
	(T)					Monthly list of official publications.
Czechoslovakia	(N)	W, M, M c		x	x	Three separate bibliographies Includes recordings.
	(T)	M				Lists Czech. publications for export.
Denmark	(N)					National Bibliography is also a trade bibliography.
	(T)	W a, t s, c	A & Q-Q	x	x	Attempted compilation of national bibliography from 1945-48.
Dominican Republic						Participates in compilation of <i>Bibliografía de Centro America y del Caribe</i> .
Ecuador	(N)					No legal deposit.
	(T)					
El Salvador	(N)	S-A	c a	x	x	Is not a national bibliography. No legal deposit.
	(T)					
Ethiopia	(N)					Does not have a current national bibliography.
	(T)					
Finland	(N)		a-t c	x	x	Scope: All Finnish literature.
	(T)	B-W	A			
France	(N)	W c, a	a, t M-A, M Q, S-A	x	x	Part 3 of national bibliography serves as a trade bibliography in addition to <i>Biblio.</i>
	(T)	M a-t-s	A			
East Germany	(N)	W & B-W	c a, t, s A & Q	x	x	Published in two sections: Reihe A and Reihe B which are cumulated together.
	(T)	M c	Q-Q			
West Germany	(N)	W c	a, t, s S-A & M	x	x	Monthly indexes cover Austrian and Swiss national bibliography.
	(T)		Q-Q			Accession list of deposited items in Univ. Library.
Ghana	(N)					Government publications and maps are listed separately.
	(T)					A national bibliography was to be started in 1964.
Greece	(N)					Does not have a national bibliography.
	(T)	A c a		x	x	
Guatemala	(N)	irreg. t		x	x	Lists legal deposits in the national library.
	(T)					

TABLE 1 Continued
CHARACTERISTICS OF CURRENT NATIONAL AND TRADE BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SERVICES

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	SYMBOLS	Comments	
	Frequency	Arrangement	Indexes	Entries Cumulate	Indexes Cumulate	Books and Pamphlets	New Serials	Govt. Publications	Music	Films	Maps	Theses	W weekly M monthly Q quarterly A annual S-A semi-annual	B-W bi-weekly B-M bi-monthly B-E biennial M-A multi-annual Q-Q quinquennial	a author t title s subject c classified a-t interfiled in one alphabet
(N) National Bibliographical Services	(N)													No national bibliography and no legal deposit.	
(T) Trade Bibliographical Services	(T)													No legal deposit nor national bibliography.	
Haiti	(N)													Material is listed in <i>Bibliografía de Centro América y del Caribe</i> .	
Honduras	(N)														
Hungary	(N)	S-M	c a		A	x x	x x	x x	x x	x x	x x	x x		Selective trade list.	
	(T)	M	c	S-A B-E	x										
Iceland	(N)	A	a-s c		x	x								Includes foreign publications about Iceland.	
	(T)														
India	(N)	Q	c a, t, s	A	x x	x x	x x	x x	x x	x x				Uses Roman script. Fourteen languages are included.	
	(T)													Films appear in a separate list.	
Indonesia	(N)	M	a-t		x x	x x	x x	x x						Both list all material published in Indonesia.	
	(T)	M	a-t-s	A	A x									No annual since 1960.	
Iran	(N)	Q	c	A	x x	x x									
	(T)	M												No legal deposit.	
Iraq	(N)														
	(T)														
Ireland	(N)													Irish publications are listed in <i>British Nat. Biblio.</i>	
	(T)													Stationery office in Dublin issues an annual list of gov't. publications including Gaelic music and literature.	
Israel	(N)	Q, A	c, c a-t		A	x x	x x	x x	x x	x x	x x			Much duplication. Gov't. publications and maps listed separately. (1) Univ. library publications based on legal deposit. (2) Gov't. yearbook, multiple lists of trade publications—none satisfactory.	
	(T)	A	a, t, s		x										

National Bibliography

Italy	(N) (I)	M B-W	c c	a, b a	A	x x x x x	x	Copyright office also issues list, but less complete.
Japan	(N) (I)	M 10 days	c c	t t	A A	x x x x x A x x	x	One of the best according to Collison.
Jordan	(N) (I)							Does have legal deposit. UNESCO correspondent has a bibliography of books and pamphlets on cards.
Kenya	(N) (I)							No legal deposit. East Africa Library Assoc. promotes cooperation with Tanganyika and Uganda.
Korea	(N) (I)	M	c	B-E		x x x x	x x	List covering 1963-64 was to appear in 1965.
Laos	(N) (I)							French works are listed in <i>Bibliographie de la France</i> .
Lebanon	(N) (I)							
Liberia	(N) (I)							
Libya	(N) (I)							
Luxembourg	(N) (I)	A	c	a		x x x x x	x x	Also includes recordings.
Malagasy Republic	(N) (I)							Has a legal deposit. Deposited publications are listed in <i>Bibliographie de la France</i> .
Malaya and Singapore	(N) (I)	Q				x x		Based on legal deposit.
Mexico	(N) (I)	M	c			x		Legal deposit. No real national bibliography.
Morocco	(N) (I)	B-E				x x x x	x x	

TABLE I Continued
CHARACTERISTICS OF CURRENT NATIONAL AND TRADE BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SERVICES

	SYMBOLS													Comments															
	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	W		M	Q	A	S-A											
(N) National Bibliographical Services	Frequency	Arrangement	Indexes	Entries Cumulative	Indexes Cumulative	Books and Pamphlets	New Serials	Govt. Publications	Musio	Films	Maps	Theses	weekly	monthly	quarterly	annual	semi-annual	bi-weekly	bi-monthly	biennial	multi-annual	quinquennial	author	title	subject	classified	interfiled in	one alphabet	
Netherlands	(N)	M	a, t	s	Q, A, A & Q-S	x	x	x																					Maps, theses, and govt. publications are in separate annual bibliographies. Comprehensive coverage by trade bibliography.
New Zealand	(T)	S-W	a-t			x																							
Nicaragua	(N)	M	a	A		x	x	x	x	x	x																		No legal deposit.
Nigeria	(T)	Q		A		x	x	x			x																		Included in <i>Bibliografía de Centro America y del Caribe</i> .
Norway	(N)	M	a-t	s	Q, A & Q-Q	x	x	x	x	x	x	x																	No legal deposit—expected soon.
Pakistan	(T)	A				x		x			x	x																Annual lists of government publications.	
Panama	(N)																												Included in <i>Bibliografía de Centro America y del Caribe</i> .
Paraguay	(N)																												No legal deposit.
Peru	(N)	A	c			x	x	x	x	x	x	x																	No legal deposit.
	(T)																												

National Bibliography

Philippines	(N) (T)	a b, t	x x x x	No legal deposit. A national bibliography was begun in 1965.
Poland	(N) (T)	W c a, s M c	A x x x x x x	
Portugal	(N) (T)	A a, t M c a	x x x x x x x	Two years behind.
Rumania	(N) (T)	M c a, t A Q	x x x x x x	
Spain	(N) (T)	M c a, t, s A M c a-t A x	A x x x x x A x	Indexes recordings. An annual books-in-print.
Sudan	(N) (T)			
Sweden	(N) (T)	M a-t, c s Q-Q & Q, S-A	s x x x x x x x	Also separate lists of maps and govt. publications.
Switzerland	(N) (T)	W a-t B-W & B-M	A x M-A & S-A	Provides basis for monthly list.
Thailand	(N) (T)	M	x x x	Part A, multi-annual cumulations by author and keyword subject. Author and subject indexes of Part A are in monthly <i>Deutsche Bibliographie</i> .
Tunisia	(N) (T)		x	Started in 1965.
Turkey	(N) (T)	M	x x x	A list of depository items.
Union of South Africa	(N) (T)	M a	A x x x x	A list of depository items.
USSR	(N) (T)	W c a-t-s	A x x x x x x x	Separate lists are produced by each Republic; a-t-s index is only in annual cumulation.

TABLE I Continued
CHARACTERISTICS OF CURRENT NATIONAL AND TRADE BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SERVICES

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	SYMBOLS	Comments
	Frequency	Arrangement	Indexes	Entries Cumulate	Indexes Cumulate	Books and Pamphlets	New Serials	Govt. Publications	Music	Films	Maps	Theses	W weekly M monthly Q quarterly A annual S-A semi-annual	B-W bi-weekly B-M bi-monthly B-E biennial M-A multi-annual Q-Q quinquennial a author t title s subject c classified a-t interfiled in one alphabet
(N) National Bibliographical Services	A			x	x	x	x	x						Accession list rather than national bibliography.
(T) United Arab Republic														
(N) United Kingdom	W	c	a-t-s	Q, S, A, A, M, A	Q, S, A, A, M, A	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		Two comprehensive trade bibliographic series.
(T) U. S.	W, M	a-t-s	Q, A, M, A			x								Maps, music, films, and theses are recorded in separate publications.
(N) Uruguay														An annual bibliography based on legal deposit was started and stopped with entries for 1951.
(T) Venezuela	B-M	c				x	x							Annual list for years 1955-60 are in preparation. No satisfactory list.
(N) Yugoslavia	B-W	c	a, t, s			x	x	x	x	x	x	x		Separate complete lists are issued by each territory.
(T)														

National Bibliography

bibliographies was included whenever possible because trade bibliographies frequently serve as supplements to or substitutes for national bibliographies. (Although this was more often true in the past, it is becoming less so with respect to smaller and so-called emerging nations.)

Columns I-XII show characteristics and scope whenever this information was available. Column I shows the frequency of publication from weekly to annually. A glossary of symbols used is presented with the table. Bi-weekly (B-W) is used instead of semi-monthly or fortnightly in order to maintain uniformity with bi-monthly (B-M) and biennial (B-E). Upper case characters are used to describe publication intervals and lower case characters are used to describe methods of arrangement and indexes.

Column II shows how entries are arranged. When arrangement is indicated by author (a), title (t), or subject (s), standing alone or separated by commas (e.g., a,t,s) it means that entries appear in separate alphabets arranged by author and title and by subject. Symbols linked with hyphens (a-t-s) mean that these elements are in a dictionary arrangement. A classified (c) arrangement is indicated for entries arranged in some non-alphabetic subject scheme whether using broad or specific headings. Secondary arrangements within broad subject headings are not indicated in this table. Column III provides the same kind of information about indexes. There was some difficulty in showing that not all issues nor cumulations have indicated indexes. Wherever possible these distortions are clarified in the "comment" column.

Columns IV and V show how bibliographies are cumulated. Some publications cumulate both entries and indexes, while others merely cumulate indexes. Still others will cumulate entries to semi-annual periods and indexes to annual periods. It is not possible clearly to distinguish all of these variations for all publications. However, the main objective in providing data on the characteristics described in I-V is to show accessibility.

Accessibility is used here to show how many and what kinds of approaches there are to titles listed in a bibliography. The acquisitions librarian is first of all interested in the approaches a bibliography will provide to the information contained in it. It is not until he actually begins to search for information about a title that he needs to know whether it is arranged by author with subject indexes or in some other way. However, he does need to know whether he will have access to

the titles by author, title, alphabetical subject, and classified subject long before he actually uses the bibliography. That is, he must know accessibility at the point of selection of a bibliography for his reference collection so that he can acquire supplemental tools providing additional avenues of access when necessary and available.

Columns VI-XII indicate scope of coverage. Checkmarks (x) are shown whenever it was certain that a type of publication is included in the scope. In many cases it was not possible to identify exactly whether every type of publication is listed. When reporting to UNESCO, the national correspondent might indicate that "all publications are listed" or "all depository publications are listed." In these cases, this information is given in the "Comments" column without a checkmark under any of the categories. This was considered necessary because some national correspondents obviously had not considered the implications of a broad statement such as "all depository publications." The differences in range of types of deposited publications between countries with highly developed publishing industries and those with embryonic publishing industries are striking. Therefore, it is unreasonable to interpret this phrase uniformly for all countries.

The "Comments" column is designed to provide clarification of data given in preceding columns plus supplemental information. For example, categories of publications are checked to show coverage even though some types are listed in separate publications. (e.g. see Bulgaria) This column is also used to provide information about material listed in regional bibliographies covering several countries. For example, Honduras does not have a national bibliography but some attempt is made to list publications in the regional *Bibliografía de Centro America y del Caribe*. Or in the case of Ireland, material is listed in the *British National Bibliography* except for government publications.

There are 87 countries or territories listed in Table 1. About 24 of these do not have identifiable national bibliographies or comparable trade bibliographies. However, approximately 10 of the 24 do have their material listed (to some extent) in national bibliographies of other countries or in regional bibliographies. The former French colonies of Southeast Asia and the smaller nations of the Caribbean and Central America are among these.

In addition to the 24 countries without national bibliographies, 11 more have little more than accession lists produced by national libraries. Of the 52 remaining countries with national bibliographies of one form or another, less than half (21) have publications which come

National Bibliography

close to the ideal defined by Linder, at least with respect to books and pamphlets. The fact that only 21 of the 87 nations listed have reasonably good national bibliographies would suggest the general conclusion that the bulk of the world's currently published material is not being listed. This, of course, is not valid.

It is reasonable to say that nations with highly developed publishing industries also have good national bibliographies, e.g., Great Britain, France, Japan, the Soviet Union, and Germany. It is also reasonable to say that a nation with little publishing activity is likely to have little in the way of a national bibliography. Therefore, it is possible that between 75-90 percent of the world's published books and pamphlets are being listed in national bibliographies. The sum total of all national bibliographies represents a universal bibliography that is more complete than might be expected from first glance at Table 1. However, this generalization has no validity if extended to include more than books and pamphlets.

Although great advances have been made since World War II in listing government publications, new serials and maps, there are still gaps even in Western countries in listing government publications—West Germany for instance, or the United States in listing state and local government publications. Other forms of material—music, theses, sound recordings, films, and filmstrips still lack adequate coverage in national bibliographies of many developed countries and most of the underdeveloped nations.

A continental and regional overview of the global situation suggests obvious conclusions. North America (excluding Mexico) and Europe (including the Soviet Union) are well served by national and trade bibliographies. The Middle East and Africa have very little in the way of existing national bibliographies. However, there is an encouraging amount of activity and interest in starting this service, especially among the newer nations. In addition, there is a regional Middle Eastern bibliography (*Al Maktiba*) which is a selective Arabic bibliography for Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Syria. It is a semi-annual, classified and annotated list in Arabic with English translations.

Asia is not well served by national bibliographies with the notable exceptions of Japan and India. Little current information is known about the mainland (Communist) Chinese national bibliographical activity. However, if the pattern of other communist bloc nations is followed—and there is some doubt about the validity of this assumption—the mainland Chinese will have a good, reasonably complete

national bibliography. (The effect of Russian example is especially clear in the Middle European communist countries which have patterned their bibliographies after the Soviet Union, e.g., classified arrangement with author-title-subject dictionary index.) In Asia, both Japan and India have made remarkable progress during the past decade in developing their national bibliographies.

Latin America (including Central America, Mexico and Caribbean countries) is in a stage of development with respect to national bibliographies somewhat comparable to the Middle East and Africa. This area is served by several regional bibliographies published by the Pan American Union, Library of Congress, R. R. Bowker Company, and UNESCO. Both Argentina and Brazil have national bibliographies as well as trade bibliographies. As has been mentioned earlier, the *Bibliografía de Centro America y del Caribe* more or less covers the output of many nations in that area.

In the Pacific, both Australia and New Zealand have established good national bibliographies. The Philippines created one in 1965. In general many of the publications of existing and former colonies are being listed in the national bibliographies of the governing nations.

It must be emphasized that the data shown in Table 1 are drawn in large measure from secondary sources that are themselves based to some extent on secondary sources. Therefore, these data will not support generalizations which go beyond the obvious ones stated above. Although UNESCO has accomplished a great deal since 1950 in gathering information about bibliographical activity in each country, much remains to be done.

A study of existing information on national bibliographical services available in the world reveals two areas where more work needs to be done. The first is a continuation and extension of what is already being done. We need more detailed information about specific bibliographies being currently published. We have a plethora of information about the great national and trade bibliographies of Britain, France, the two Germanies and other nations of the West. However, current information about Latin American, Middle Eastern, African, and Southeast Asian national bibliographies is difficult to locate. Even information supplied UNESCO by national correspondents is often sketchy and too general to give an accurate impression of the characteristics of a national bibliography. Collison suggested that one of the problems of national bibliographies is getting them into the hands of the librarians who need them. Often these items are too expensive

National Bibliography

for the libraries that need them most.⁷ However, it is also true that libraries cannot buy publications of this nature unless they can find out enough information about them to determine their value in a reference collection. Therefore, more effort must be devoted to the gathering of detailed information about existing national bibliographical services in the world.

The second area where more attention is needed is in evaluation and critical examination of existing tools. As was mentioned above, we have a considerable amount of descriptive information about the great national bibliographies of the world, but little information about how well they achieve the objectives of a national bibliography. We do not even have much reliable data on how well these bibliographies achieve the objectives they set for themselves in their prefaces.

National bibliographies which are published weekly and monthly are presumed to contain a list of materials published during the period since the last issue, a claim *Publishers' Weekly* used to make but has now abandoned. However, merely because the publisher defines this objective in his preface is no justification for accepting it as fact. The *Cumulative Book Index (CBI)* ". . . aims to be a complete bibliography of works in English for the years covered . . ." with such exceptions as government publications, maps, etc. No one seriously believes it achieves this objective or we would cease buying and searching the national and trade bibliographies of Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United Kingdom. However, it would be useful to know what percentage of current Australian, Canadian, etc., English language publications are included in *CBI*. If known, perhaps the H. W. Wilson Company would find that they are duplicating unnecessarily trade and national bibliographies of these nations and would abandon this objective. This would enable them to concentrate on improving the listing (e.g. reduce the time-lag between the publication of a title and the time when it is listed) of the domestic English language publications.

Two studies of this nature have been done. The first was done by D. K. Weintraub.⁸ Her work consisted of a study of the differences among three British bibliographical services: *Publishers' Circular and Booksellers' Record*, *Bookseller* and the *British National Bibliography*. She examined these services to compare them in terms of continuity, promptness, accuracy, fullness of description and completeness of coverage. The statistical analysis was made for the year 1958 on the basis of a sample.

Weintraub found that there was a high percentage of duplication among these services, especially between the *British National Bibliography* and the *Bookseller*: "it is found that 78.1 percent of the sample titles are listed by both of these bibliographies. The *British National Bibliography* lists 83.5 percent of the sample titles and *Bookseller* lists 94.3 per cent."⁹

The second study was done by the author.¹⁰ This study is summarized here for a twofold purpose: (1) To provide data in depth about the current United States national book bibliography; and (2) to demonstrate the kind of depth studies which are needed on national and trade bibliographies where there is apparent duplication and overlap of information.

Abstract

The purpose of this study was twofold: (1) find out what the state of current U.S. national book bibliography is, and (2) suggest improvements based on objective data.

Ten current general book bibliographies were analyzed to determine which were basic to the current national book bibliography. The following were considered basic components: *Publishers' Weekly* (PW), *American Book Publishing Record* (BPR), *Cumulative Book Index* (CBI), *National Union Catalog* (NUC), and *Library of Congress Catalog—Books: Subjects*. Comparisons of the following characteristics were made: completeness, duplication, promptness, accessibility (i.e. author, title, subject, etc.) of information, and information presented in entries.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BIP	<i>Books in Print</i>
BPR	<i>American Book Publishing Record</i>
CBI	<i>Cumulative Book Index</i>
LC	<i>Library of Congress</i>
NUC	<i>National Union Catalog</i>
PTLA	<i>Publishers' Trade List Annual</i>
PW	<i>Publishers' Weekly</i>

Definitions and Limitations. The term "book" is used in this study to indicate a publication of forty-nine or more pages as defined by UNESCO at the 1950 conference.¹¹

"Current general book bibliographies" is used to indicate bibliogra-

National Bibliography

phies which are published serially for the purpose of listing new books (other forms may be included) without limitations by subject, e.g. all subjects and literary forms are included.

This study is limited to consideration of books appropriate to the current national book bibliography. Other forms of publications—pamphlets, serials, audio-visual materials, etc.—are excluded. Similarly, government publications are outside the scope of this study. Books, regardless of subject and literary form, are included. Likewise, paper-bound books (i.e. paperbacks of over 49 pages), original publications and reprints are considered appropriate for listing in the current national bibliography. Trade books, textbooks, academic and society publications, copyrighted and non-copyrighted books, foreign publications distributed in this country by a single American agent designated by the publisher, are all considered appropriate to the national book bibliography.

The 1950 UNESCO conference concluded by adopting a "Resolution" on national bibliographies, recommending that nations prepare and publish the following as an "immediate minimum": "A General National Bibliography of all books and pamphlets published and on sale in each country, regardless of the language in which they were written, and preferably including published theses and academic publications" ¹²

The conference further recommended that "Every General National Bibliography should enable items to be traced quickly by subject, author, and where desirable by title." ¹³ The resolution included a reference to promptness by noting ". . . the importance of the prompt appearance of Annual Indexes is particularly stressed." ¹³

At present, ten general book bibliographies are published serially in the United States. Each provides information about books published or distributed in this country. Not one of these bibliographies achieves all objectives of a "General National Bibliography" with respect to books as suggested in the "Resolution" quoted above. No single combination properly meets the objectives set forth above—especially with regard to the phrase "all books."

This study was made to determine which of the ten general book bibliographies are basic elements of the current national book bibliography.

Completeness and duplication of information among combinations of some or all components were determined. This included informa-

tion supplied in entries, form of entry, frequency of publication, and accessibility. (Accessibility is used here to mean ways in which information may be approached in a bibliography.)

The cost to a user desiring prompt listings of new books was determined. This included access to information from at least three approaches—author, title, and some form of subject. In addition, access was considered from weekly, monthly, quarterly, annual and quinquennial points of view, and promptness in listing books was determined.

Only material with a 1961 imprint date was selected for sample items to use for this study. The analyses of characteristics were quantitative for the most part. For example, the number of subject headings assigned to a group of books by *CBI* and the *NUC* were compared. However, the appropriateness of subject headings assigned to individual titles was not considered in this study.

Cost studies on the production of various bibliographies are outside the scope of this study but cost data in terms of the subscription prices to users were included.

A Review of Current General Book Bibliographies. The essential characteristics of each of ten current general book bibliographies were studied. In addition, the relationships of these tools to each other and the objectives of a national bibliography were analyzed.

The ten tools discussed here are: *PW*; *BPR*; *NUC*; *LC Catalog-Books: Subjects*; *Catalog of Copyright Entries: Books, Pamphlets and Serials*; *PTLA*; *BIP*; *Subject Guide to Books in Print*; and *Paperbound Books in Print*.

Each source was considered according to the following characteristics: purpose, scope, frequency of publication, arrangement, relationship to other sources, price, and role, if any, as a component of the current national book bibliography. Since this study is limited to publications of 1961, these tools will be discussed according to these characteristics at that time.

Of the ten bibliographies described above, five have purposes and scopes which prevent them from serving as components of a current national book bibliography. Four of these tools are "in print" bibliographies which address themselves only to material available. The *Copyright Catalog* is too restricted in scope and access to provide information which is not provided elsewhere.

National Bibliography

The remaining five bibliographies—*PW*, *BPR*, *CBI*, *NUC* and *Books: Subjects*—were subjected to a more intensive quantitative analysis of their comparable characteristics.

Since *PW* is the source of official U.S. book production statistics, the first step was to determine completeness of *PW-BPR* compared with the *NUC*. *PW* is also the primary source of information about books published within the previous month. A comparison of *promptness* between *PW-BPR* and the *NUC* shows the relationship of these sources in terms of 1961 imprints listed in each. Information given in entries of these bibliographies was compared to show *duplication* and extent of *variation* of information given on the same titles. This is also true of the comparison of accessibility of entries in each bibliography. The sum of the comparisons of these sources provides a partial picture of our current national book bibliography.

Study Design and Choice of Sample Group of Titles. This study is based on a reported universe of 18,060 books. The U.S. government reports this figure as the total number of books published in the U.S. during 1961.¹⁴ Although reported by the government, this count of books published or distributed by American publishers was compiled from the "Weekly Record" of *PW* during the calendar year.¹⁵

To study the amount of duplication, completeness, accessibility, etc. of the primary tools which comprise the current national book bibliography, it was necessary to acquire a sample group of titles published in 1961 and compare their bibliographic treatment in these bibliographies.

The *NUC* was assumed to be the most complete of the bibliographies from which to take a sample of 1961 imprints. It represents the books cataloged by the largest library in the country, the Library of Congress, plus some current acquisitions of 600 reporting libraries in North America. Furthermore, LC is the depository library for copyrighted books.

Criteria used for the selection of items to be included in the random sample was based on the scope defined for *PW-BPR*. In this way, the criteria for the sample would be identical with those used to obtain a count of books published during the year. The characteristics for inclusion and exclusion are as follows:

Characteristics for inclusion

1. 1961 reprints of earlier imprints.

ROGER C. GREER

2. Items entered under title as main entry.
3. Items entered under corporate name as main entry.
4. Items cataloged by cooperating libraries.
5. Textbooks and paperbound books.
6. Translations and importations.
7. All categories of publications including trade, academic, association, etc.

Characteristics for exclusion

1. Unpaged items.
2. Publications of federal, state, and local governing bodies.
3. Imprint dates other than 1961.
4. Added entries.
5. Subscription books; dissertations; second, third, fourth, etc. printings or impressions.
6. Serials and pamphlets under 49 pages.

A random sample of approximately 5 percent of the universe was taken, made up of 939 items which met the above criteria for inclusion.

Summary

Completeness. From the evidence presented in this study, each bibliography is known to be incomplete as a source of information about new publications in 1961. *PW-BPR* were 85 percent complete when compared with listings in the *NUC* which fell within their scope. *PW-BPR* listed about 90 percent of the items within their scope which appeared in the *CBI*. *CBI* contained about 91 percent of the items within their scope which appeared in the *NUC*, and 96 percent of the items appearing in *PW-BPR*. The *NUC* contained 96 percent of the appropriate items appearing in *CBI*, and around 90 to 95 percent of the material in *PW-BPR*. *PW-BPR* items omitted from *NUC* were represented by material rejected or not cataloged by LC, i.e. paperback reprints, juvenile texts, jokebooks, etc.

It must be concluded from an analysis of the data presented here that the *NUC* was the most complete current general book bibliography containing information about 1961 imprints. *CBI* was second, followed closely by *PW-BPR*. The combination of *CBI* and *PW-BPR* contained about 95 percent of the relevant items in the *NUC*. The *CBI-NUC* combination listed more 1961 American imprints than any

National Bibliography

other—about 97 percent. However, *PW-BPR* and the *NUC* combined listed about 96 percent. Therefore, it can be concluded that a combination of all of these bibliographies is necessary for all available information on new publications.

Duplication. Of all the 1961 American imprints listed in these four tools, 82 percent were listed four times. Or, put in another way, the relevant titles listed in common by these four bibliographies represented 82 percent of the total. In terms of actual titles, 17,274 imprints of 1961 could not be obtained without consulting three (considering *PW-BPR* as one) of these bibliographies. The only justification for this much duplication is that points of access are provided by each source which are not currently available in any of the other sources.

Table 2 shows the various approaches to materials provided by the five bibliographies. The approaches are indicated in terms of publication or cumulation intervals. No attempt is made here to distinguish between primary and secondary approaches, i.e. whether through an index or the main arrangement.

TABLE 2
ACCESSIBILITY BY PUBLICATION OR CUMULATION INTERVALS

	<i>Author</i>	<i>Title</i>	<i>Alphabetical Subject</i>	<i>Classified</i>
Weekly	PW			
Monthly	BPR CBI NUC	BPR CBI	CBI	BPR
Quarterly	CBI NUC	CBI	CBI LC Subject	
Semi-Annual	CBI	CBI	CBI	
Annual	BPR NUC	BPR	LC Subject	
Biennial	CBI	CBI	CBI	
Quinquennial	NUC		LC Subject	

There is duplication of author access on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis. Title access does not exist on a weekly nor quinquennial basis. Alphabetical subject access is duplicated on a quarterly and non-existent on a weekly basis. Classified subject access is the weakest point of access. *BPR* is the only source providing access by this

means, and then only on a monthly basis. Furthermore, this classed access is only by class numbers for broad categories. Title access is the next weakest area of access in these tools.

Thus, in addition to duplication of listings, there appears to be unnecessary duplication of access at some points and inadequate access at other points. Each of these bibliographies is unique in its provision of access by a particular means at a particular interval. *PW* is unique in providing author access at the weekly level. It is also unique in that it does nothing else. *BPR* is alone in its provision of access by classified subject at a monthly interval and by title annually. *CBI* is alone eight times in its provision of access at particular intervals. This is six times more than any other source. It is the sole provider of alphabetical subject access on a monthly basis; unique in its provision of title access on a quarterly basis. *CBI* alone provides author, title, and alphabetical subject access at semi-annual and biennial intervals.

The *NUC* duplicates author access on the monthly, quarterly, and annual intervals, but is the sole provider of author access quinquennially. The *LC Catalog—Books: Subjects* duplicates *CBI* at the quarterly interval but stands alone in its provision of subject access annually and quinquennially.

The most complete access to information about new books is provided at a monthly level by author. This also is the point where the most duplication occurs. The least complete information (82 percent) is at the weekly level by author. All other approaches provide access to incomplete listings of material.

These bibliographies provide a unique means of access at a particular interval between the first week after the publication of a book up to the quinquennial cumulations. As long as each of these bibliographies is incomplete in listing new publications, duplication of access at all intervals is desirable, albeit wasteful and expensive. A better solution might be to coordinate these sources to achieve completeness with minimum duplication of access at any interval.

Promptness in Listing New Books. Promptness was examined from two points in this study. First, combinations of sources were compared in terms of promptness in listing new books. These comparisons included data for books which were not listed in some sources but listed in others. Therefore, it was necessary to test promptness of each source in terms of book publication dates. These data showed how long it

National Bibliography

took the various sources to list new materials. The *NUC* was found to be superior to *BPR* and *CBI* in promptness, while equal to *PW*.

Information Presented in Entries. The data support the conclusion that there is considerable uniformity in information presented in the entries of these tools. With the exception of minor variations in collation statements, plus the descriptive annotations and price provided in *PW-BPR* entries in these tools and the *NUC* are almost identical.

Accessibility of Information. A comparison of the main and added author and title entries used in *CBI* and used or traced in the *NUC* was made along with a comparison of subject headings used or traced in the tools. The comparison was made on the basis of the 855 titles of the sample which were located in *CBI*.

There is a high degree of similarity between *CBI* and the *NUC*. Main entries are alike for most of the entries which are listed in common. Both bibliographies provide about the same number of added author entries. While the *NUC* (*LC Catalog: Subjects*) provides more subject headings than *CBI*, 71 percent of those provided by *CBI* are identical with the *NUC*'s. *CBI* is unique in providing access to bibliographic information through title entries—except, of course, where the title is used as the main entry. Although the *NUC* traces the title in its main entry for about 83 percent of the items, it does not provide a title index in any of its volumes.

Costs. Not including the variable subscription price of *CBI*, it cost \$456 (*PW*, *BPR*, *NUC*, and *LC Catalog: Subjects*) to obtain information with as much accessibility as possible about 1961 American imprints.

Recommendations

Based on this study of the characteristics of the U.S. current national book bibliography as presented in five general bibliographies, the following recommendations are proposed in three categories:

- (1) Recommendations to clarify scope, etc. of existing bibliographies;
- (2) Recommendations to improve our current national bibliography;
- (3) Recommendations for further study.

Clarifying Contents of Existing Bibliographies. *PW* prepares its entries from *LC* catalog cards. The entries are not always, at present, identical in content with *LC* cards. In order for libraries using *LC* cards to use the *PW-BPR* entry in lieu of these cards, the contents

of the entries must be exact reproductions of the LC cards—allowing for changes in arrangement of information, plus price and descriptive annotation. Therefore, whenever an entry or any part of an entry is prepared from a source other than an LC card, it is recommended that this information be labeled as such. In addition, it is recommended that title tracings—which are not now consistently included—be reproduced in the *PW-BPR* entry when indicated on the LC card.

It is further recommended that a description of the general categories of materials which are not prepared from LC entries be added to the statement of purpose and scope in *PW* and *BPR*.

CBI's subtitle indicates that it is a "World list of books in the English language." Although completeness is not claimed, it is implied in the subtitle which is the only statement of scope provided. Since *CBI* omits, as a matter of policy, certain categories of materials, it can never be a complete list. Therefore, it is recommended that this limitation of scope be defined somewhere in the introductory materials for each issue.

The *NUC* is also limited in scope as a matter of policy. Categories of materials are rejected by LC and no card is prepared. Therefore, these items do not appear in the *NUC*. Since this limitation is a matter of policy, it is recommended that it be defined in the appropriate section of the "Introduction" to each issue.

Improvement of the Current National Bibliography to Avoid Duplication. The "Weekly Record" of *PW* now serves a dual purpose: the listing of new books first, and providing LC cataloging information for these books through cooperative arrangements with LC. The *NUC* listed almost as many books as fast or faster than *PW*. Therefore it is recommended that *PW* concentrate on listing new books as fast as possible without LC cataloging information if this second purpose reduces the speed of listing new books.

Beyond the publication of a weekly list, a current national book bibliography should be issued monthly, based on the contents of the *NUC* with respect to current American reprints plus the material presently omitted from the *NUC*. The entries in this monthly bibliography should be arranged according to the Dewey Classification number assigned by LC. Indexes to this bibliography should provide access alphabetically by author, title, and subject. Subject headings used in this index should follow those assigned by LC. Only the indexes should be cumulated quarterly, semi-annually, annually, and quinquennially.

National Bibliography

The information provided in the entries of this monthly national bibliography should be identical with that provided by LC catalog cards, including tracings, card numbers, and LC classification numbers.

This national bibliography would provide greater access to information about current American imprints than we get through existing sources published at monthly or longer intervals. This access would be provided with less duplication and, therefore, less expense to the user. In addition, it would require less space to house than is now required.

This monthly bibliography could be produced by one or jointly by two or three of the agencies currently producing general book bibliographies. It could be produced by altering one or more of the existing bibliographies, i.e. *BPR*, *CBI*, and/or the *NUC*.

This monthly listing of material with cumulated indexes is recommended as a minimum possibility in terms of cost. Other possibilities exist which would add to the cost; for example, entries could be cumulated on an annual or other basis.

The existence of this proposed monthly national bibliography would make it possible to eliminate current American imprints from the *NUC*. Since these items are listed in the monthly, it would be duplication to list them again in the *NUC*. Although thus separated from the foreign and retrospective material in the beginning, current American imprints could be included in the quinquennial cumulations of the *NUC* if subscribers so desired.

Recommendations for Further Research. Research is needed on the use of current general book bibliographies. In order to serve the needs of users, more information is needed on how these bibliographies are used; on who the individuals and institutions using them are; and in what ways general book bibliographies are used in conjunction with selected bibliographies for information about books.

Research on bibliographic sources with regard to promptness, duplication, etc. for other forms of publications (i.e. government publications, serials, pamphlets, etc.) are needed to achieve a complete national bibliography of all materials produced, distributed, copyrighted, etc. in the United States.

Research is needed on the feasibility of producing existing bibliographies or the publication recommended here in machine readable form either in whole or in part, e.g. the indexes.

Research is needed to determine the completeness of listings of our

national bibliography in terms of what is published, distributed, etc. in the United States.

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