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Library Trends

Cooperative and Centralized Cataloging

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AND
ROBERT L. TALMADGE

Issue Editors

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Library Trends

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Library Trends, a quarterly journal of librarianship, provides a medium for evaluative recapitulation of current thought and practice, searching for those ideas and procedures which hold the greatest potentialities for the future.

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Cooperative and Centralized Cataloging

ESTHER J. PIERCY AND ROBERT L. TALMADGE

Issue Editors

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Foreword

ROBERT L. TALMADGE

ESTHER J. PIERCY'S career was marked by service so distinguished as to rank her a statesman among librarians on the national scene. It is appropriate to reproduce here the statement which appeared in the LC Information Bulletin nine days after her untimely death:

Members of the American library profession were deeply shocked and saddened by the death on January 10, following a very brief illness, of Esther J. Piercy, Chief of Processing at the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore.

Miss Piercy was widely known for an extraordinary number of valuable contributions to the practice, technique, and literature of librarianship, perhaps most notably as editor of the quarterly journal Library Resources & Technical Services and its predecessor, Journal of Cataloging and Classification, from 1950 until her death. In 1958 she was recipient of the most coveted award in the technical services field, the Margaret Mann citation, chiefly for her leadership in editing this publication. Miss Piercy was the author of many articles and of the book Commonsense Cataloging (1965), which has already come to be accepted as an authoritative textbook on the subject. Throughout her career, she was a member of numerous boards and committees of the American Library Association, including its Executive Board (1962-66), and of other professional groups. In 1961-67 she was a member of the Decimal Classification Editorial Policy Committee, and in 1959-60 she was director of the consumer reaction survey of the cataloging-in-source experiment conducted by the Library of Congress.

Educated at the Universities of Idaho, Illinois, and Chicago, Miss Piercy served in technical services in libraries of New Mexico, Illinois, and Massachusetts before going to Baltimore. At the Enoch Pratt Library she was responsible for planning and directing a complete recataloging and reclassification project that was underway.

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at the time of her death. In addition to her professional library activities, she was a frequent book reviewer for the Baltimore Sun. Esther Piercy will be remembered by her thousands of friends as friendly, kind, conscientious, imaginative, yet always governed by the quality named in her book title, common sense.

In April, 1964, Miss Piercy accepted an invitation by the Publications Board of the University of Illinois Graduate School of Library Science to be the editor of an issue of Library Trends on “Cooperative and Centralized Cataloging.” During the following year she developed a detailed outline, including a synopsis of each proposed chapter, and a list of suggested authors. (As a matter of fact, with typical imagination and flair she also worked out, in only slightly less detail, an alternative design for the issue, and gave passing consideration to a possible third approach.) In April, 1965, the Publications Board approved her first choice, and assigned July 1967 as the date of the issue. As the ensuing twenty months moved along, Miss Piercy obtained acceptances from her authors, gave them their instructions and set them to work, and in several instances reviewed their outlines or rough drafts—all this amidst an almost incredible variety and weight of other pressures. Final manuscripts were due in December, 1966; about half of them were in Miss Piercy’s hands, but she had not yet begun their detailed review, when she was stricken as she was about to emplane for New Orleans and the midwinter meeting of the American Library Association.

In early February Managing Editor Goldhor inquired of me as to my willingness to read the manuscripts; with a sense of being uncommonly privileged, I gladly agreed to do so. It was disquieting to learn soon thereafter that I was actually expected to assist in preparing the manuscripts for the press, a function I undertook with qualms only deepened by an acute consciousness of the extensive knowledge, keen insight, and skilled editor’s touch Miss Piercy would have brought to this final step. All laurels for what is clearly a solid and valuable contribution to our professional literature must go to her formative work, and to her authors for their accomplished performance under her leadership; when it comes to the finishing touches, I must be held accountable for whatever shortcomings remain. Granted my persistent misgivings, my portion in the enterprise has been an absorbing and rewarding experience.

Beyond emerging with a sense of gratitude to each of the authors, I am indebted to editorial assistant Mrs. Barbara Donagan, who was
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constantly a source of indispensable aid and counsel, and of deft solutions to a succession of dilemmas. There is an obligation above all to Dr. Tauber, for his introductory chapter. From the first, Miss Piercy had hoped and intended to write it, but, also from the very first, she had had Dr. Tauber in mind as her backstop if for any reason she was unable to do so. He consented in the course of our first telephone conversation, and came through not only in his typically consummate fashion but in record time.

Finally it should be recorded that the conjunction of my name with that of Miss Piercy, as editors of this issue, has been done by the Managing Editor and against my own desire and recommendation. It has indeed been a high privilege for me just to be associated with this work of Esther J. Piercy.
Introduction

MAURICE F. TAUBER

This Introduction was to have been written by Esther J. Piercy, who passed from our midst on January 10, 1967. She had planned the issue completely, and, curiously, had apparently thought that she might have me prepare the Introduction. She had listed my name besides hers as a possibility in the outline for the issue.

I regret that circumstances have resulted in my writing it, instead of Miss Piercy. I do not need to dwell at length here on her accomplishments for the library profession. She was a dedicated professional, and her contributions to technical services and librarianship generally have been extensive and effective. As editor, book reviewer, author, consultant, surveyor, administrator, and expert librarian, she was known throughout the country. She also was a wise, warm, and charming personality; she will not be easily forgotten by anyone who met or worked with her.

This issue is one of the many irons she had in the fire. It represents the bringing together of papers on a most important and growing development of an old concept—cooperative and centralized cataloging. The papers group themselves rather logically into the following major categories: (1) evaluation of processing centers, (2) types of centers, including both commercial and non-commercial types serving various kinds of libraries on a national level, (3) processing centers for specific types of libraries, e.g., school, public, and academic libraries, (4) developments abroad, with reference to Great Britain and Russia, and (5) the resurrection of the book catalog. A summary chapter, by Verner W. Clapp, singles out salient developments and points to the future.

The two papers on evaluation, by Kenneth F. Duchac and Sarah K. Vann, have assembled information on the problems of processing
centers, and have directed attention to criteria or factors that should be recognized in evaluation. In Technical Services in Libraries note was made of the growth in the concept of cooperative cataloging, and of the potentials of centralized cataloging. The former refers to the type of cataloging that is done by a group of libraries for the use of all libraries, while the second term describes cataloging at a central source (but may include the use of cooperative cataloging copy). The two are interwoven, and with the interest of Federal and state governments in increasing library support, they are gradually being merged into major projects. Mention of these is made in various papers in the issue.

Duchac has pinpointed with some detail the problems that arise in evaluating centers. When a new center is established, the assumption is that the product will not only be provided promptly and accurately, but also at minimal cost. Theoretically, the time is long past when individual libraries need to continue elaborate processing activities, once commercial or cooperative services have been developed properly. "Elimination of unnecessary duplication of work, released time for librarians, uniformity of catalog data and processed books [and] savings on the cost of books" are purposes stipulated by Duchac. The importance of the best possible utilization of personnel, when there is an enlarging shortage of catalogers, might also be mentioned as a reason for the interest of librarians in participating in centralized cataloging projects.

Wide variations have been found in library practices among members of a center, including such areas as classification, descriptive cataloging, subject cataloging, and preparational activities. Compromise is necessary to eliminate variations, which are costly and interfere with streamlined and efficient operations. Decisions are sometimes made by majority vote of the members. The extent to which standard or uniform operations—regarded as adequate and satisfactory—are used is a basic measure of efficiency, and subsequently, cost. Similarly, the introduction of majority acceptances can lead to a minimal use of professional staff. Adequacy of personnel, as well as adequacy of equipment and its full use, are other measures of success. Proper relations with jobbers, publishers, and other sources of supply are fundamental in prompt processing.

Miss Vann has examined evaluation from the standpoint of the recipient or cooperating library. She has enumerated the various factors that are involved in the relationship of the library to the cen-
ter, and of the problems that arise from emphasis on “local” needs. Does the center serve to eliminate independence and autonomy of the participating library? Any program of cooperation involves the loss of some independence. The important question is whether or not the independence is significant in terms of services to the particular clientele. This is the essence of Miss Vann’s discussion.

The evolution of commercial services, as described by Barbara Westby, reveals that they are not new and go back to the middle of the nineteenth century. She stresses the major stages in the development, including the interest of particular librarians, printers, book sellers, jobbers, and publishers. Libraries, especially the Library of Congress, came into the picture in 1902. It is worth noting that the character of library service, which is not regarded as a profit-making activity, has not had a history of great concern with efficiency and the saving of money. The early leaders of the profession—Melvil Dewey, John Cotton Dana, and others—were cognizant of the need to exercise economy in operations. With the development of the concepts of Carleton B. Joeckel, William M. Randall, and others at the Graduate Library School, University of Chicago, in public administration and library management, the need to control more precisely the funds allotted to libraries came to be emphasized. Ralph R. Shaw and others followed with innovations in instrumentation that were designed to simplify library operations. What has occurred in recent years in this pattern of thinking would take more space than has been allotted. Indeed, much of the success of cooperative and centralized cataloging has come with the enlightened thinking of new librarians who are not willing to perpetuate operations because “this is the way we have done it.”

It might well be a general rule for librarians, as for any professional group, that when commercial services can do a task more efficiently they be encouraged to do it. The important issue, as seen by Miss Westby, is that they fulfill the requirements of promptness, accuracy, and economy. She raises the important matter of competition; in the long run, this will be an asset for librarians. The work of the H. W. Wilson Company is singled out as exceptional in providing a service to supplement or complement the activity of the Library of Congress in this field.

John M. Dawson has reviewed the work of the Library of Congress in cooperative and centralized cataloging. The efforts of Charles C. Jewett which preceded the service of the Library of Congress should
be noted as a significant step in the progress toward centralized cataloging service. Dawson gives a detailed analysis of the work of the Library of Congress in the field and provides, to the individual libraries subscribing to LC printed cards, a basis for estimating costs. Although it has been indicated by K. D. Metcalf that the use of LC cards has been an over-expensive item for American libraries, the pattern of the history that Dawson provides suggests that this has not been so, and the Shared Cataloging Program and the Machine Readable Cataloging Program (MARC) of the Library of Congress represent impressive stages in the total program of cooperative and centralized cataloging. The progress has been slow, but it has become more evident in the last few years. The total work of the Library of Congress in the field has been impressive on a national and international basis. Criticisms remain.

Bella E. Shachtman offers a useful paper on what other Federal libraries are doing for cooperative and centralized cataloging. She has provided substantial evidence of the developments in regard to the publication of book catalogs by Federal libraries. She has also called attention to the limitations and potentials of computerization, standardization in the cataloging of technical reports, uniform or compatible subject analysis, and the need for the Federal government at the highest levels to assist libraries through legislation, funding, and research.

The paper by William S. Dix on centralized cataloging as related to the Higher Education Act is pertinent to the Dawson and Shachtman papers. Dix reviews specifically the developments leading up to the current Library of Congress National Program for Acquisitions and Cataloging, as authorized by Title II, Part C of the Act. The project of the Library of Congress to extend its coverage should mark the exceptional step necessary to provide catalog copy for titles from foreign countries to an extent never previously believed possible. Dix pays tribute to the work of John Cronin, of the Library of Congress, for his efforts to extend the cataloging work of the Library. Cronin's suggestions for using copy from foreign national bibliographies are part of the project. It is hoped that the great expectations that university and other research librarians have for the work will be met. Again, one of the major problems is the shortage of expert personnel to assist in the work.

Two papers complete the review of processing for particular libraries. Richard L. Darling has indicated that school processing on
a centralized basis goes back to 1917. He has summarized the issues that have resulted in the upswing of centralized processing during recent years. These are somewhat more complex in nature than centralized cataloging for other types of libraries, although similarly present are the basic efforts to take advantage of personnel, introduce uniform and consistent procedures, speed up the work, and provide service to school libraries which had either no school librarian or a librarian with little experience or no time for cataloging. The history of centralized school processing clearly shows the practicality and feasibility of the approach, and one may expect this activity to increase in the future. Indeed, it may well be attached to larger centralized undertakings.

The paper by Peter Hiatt is concerned with cooperative processing centers for public libraries. Actually, Hiatt is concerned as much with centralized processing, in the sense that public libraries have long used services of the H. W. Wilson Company and the Library of Congress. He has reviewed the various stages that have occurred in the extension of cooperation and centralization, and notes the increase in existing centers. The problems of centers are indicated, and it is possible that the near future will bring additional studies of the most effective number and distribution of centers for a particular state, or for a region. As one looks at the growth of centers in New York State, for example, it is not surprising that the librarians of the state have been examining—especially since issuance of the Nelson Associates report—the optimal number of centralized operations that are necessary. As Hiatt points out, there are a number of states without even one center.

A special problem which Hiatt raises and that should be noted in any review of cooperative and centralized cataloging, whether for public or other types of libraries, is the interest of many librarians in the use of the Library of Congress Classification in place of the Dewey Decimal Classification. Although university libraries, and many college libraries, have been using LC and have converted in numerous instances, school and public libraries generally have remained with Dewey. This is a basic issue that Hiatt has raised, particularly in relation to the practical uses of products of the various projects of the Library of Congress. It is also related, as indicated above, to the general idea that the different types of libraries are being merged in connection with centralized processing activities.
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Uniformity may not always be desirable, but it may be essential in terms of using limited funds most effectively.

Two papers discuss the question of centralized cataloging in foreign countries. Eleanor Buist has reviewed in considerable detail the developments in Russia. This activity is described as having the "classic" problems of less centralization than one might expect, less effective distribution of cards than librarians would like to have, and delays in service. It is not surprising that such an issue as classification would be "thorny." Miss Buist examines the program for cataloging-in-source, begun in 1959, which is now being evaluated. As in the United States, centralized cataloging in Russia had its beginnings at the end of the nineteenth century, although the most expansive period has come only recently. Miss Buist calls attention to the character of the printed card, "a key element in the Soviet library economy," which is also being "extended in technical fields to extra-library uses," for such purposes as current awareness and personal files.

The idea of centralized cataloging in Great Britain also had an early start. As early as 1876, the British Museum had a number of its staff in Paris working on the preparation of entries for its catalogs. In 1908, the British librarians cooperated with American librarians in the establishment of Anglo-American cataloging rules. There was less of this cooperation by 1949, but in the 1967 Anglo-American Cataloging Rules, the British librarians again worked with the Americans. Inside Great Britain, between 1915 and 1947, the idea of cooperative cataloging within the country gained support. Yet the extent to which the British National Bibliography is used for centralized cataloging service is not clear, and the use of the cards distributed by B.N.B. appears to be small as A. J. Wells points out. The various reasons for this are mentioned by Wells, and they seem to add up to common problems of lack of coverage, quality, relating books to cards, incompatibility, and incomplete service. The reports on several American studies have identified similar conditions, as may be seen in the Duchac, Hiatt, and Vann papers. Wells points out that there will need to be more standardization in classification and subject cataloging if international centralized cataloging, or the use of national cataloging products, are to be used more fully than they are now. Similarly, he indicates that the intrusion of automation and the computer should be considered in relation to the form of the catalog.

This leads to the paper by David C. Weber on book catalog trends.
The place of the book catalog in cooperative and centralized cataloging is fairly well established for certain types of projects, and the book catalogs of the Library of Congress and other libraries have been of great value for libraries generally in their processing operations. Weber opens his paper with a caution about claiming excessive growth, the introduction of computer potential, and the possible elimination of both traditional card and book catalogs by direct computer inquiry. The latter approach has yet to make a firm impression.

Weber's paper is based primarily on data obtained through a questionnaire distributed during 1966. He estimates that in 1966 there were over three dozen libraries with book catalogs, with another dozen being developed. In the period 1964-1966, twenty-nine of the catalogs began. The availability since 1953 of the Listomatic camera (sequential card), and the emergence in 1964 "of the 120 character extended print chain for electronic computers which provided lower case letters for the first time" are singled out as having speeded the thrust towards book catalogs. The excessive requirements for rehabilitating poor and/or deteriorating card catalogs have influenced some librarians to shift to book catalogs, and this reason probably will be a significant one in the future. The demand for multiple copies for old, new, expanding, merging, or changing library systems; the need for wider distribution of information about holdings among a variety of users; and the establishment of new branches or library units, have been other precipitating incidents for the production of book catalogs. Weber describes in some detail the variety of book catalogs, and their relationship to cooperative and centralized cataloging. Of course, the distribution of any catalog of some size will immediately be useful to other libraries for bibliographical information that could be used for cataloging purposes.

Although it is difficult to assess at this time the general effects of book catalogs on library use, since Weber indicates that "almost always" systems have given up card catalogs in branches, it appears from available evidence that users, including librarians, do not find it troublesome to consult book catalogs. Undoubtedly, it would be helpful to librarians here and abroad if intensive studies were made of the use of book catalogs, and of such matters as cost and format, although Weber does include some limited information and the literature contains relevant data.

The final note that may be added about this issue of Library Trends is that it has isolated a library problem which is in a state of flux,
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and which requires the attention of the whole range of librarians who make and use catalogs, as well as of users of libraries of various types. The cataloging service of processing centers demands constant evaluation, not only in terms of cost, which has been indicated as a major reason for the approach, but also in terms of improving library service. The point that the librarian may well remember is that we may not yet have reached a solution to the problem we are trying to solve, and that new methods, as suggested by Weber, may be awaiting our use.

References

Evaluation of the Processing Centers

KENNETH F. DUCHAC

Evaluation of processing centers is simple enough if one chooses to relate the operation of such a center to that of any other processing concern. A standardized product of a predetermined quality delivered to consumers is achieved at a minimum cost with maximum efficiency. This, when "product" is defined as the cataloged and processed library book or other material, is the precise core of a processing operation. Evaluation of quantity and cost is easy to do. The problems in evaluation largely concern quality and management.

Most processing centers, whether under a single administration, as in a large municipal library system, or under cooperative auspices, purchase, invoice and bill, catalog, prepare for circulation, and ship books and sometimes other materials. As centers expand their activities, they frequently use their printing equipment for other purposes, or attempt coordination or initiation of book selection activities. Since these practices vary so widely from center to center, the focus of this paper will be the basic processing operation in cooperative centers.

Processing centers have successfully accomplished the purposes for which they were organized—elimination of unnecessary duplication of work, released time for librarians, uniformity of catalog data and processed books, savings on the cost of books. They have contributed to the implementation of broader library objectives—cooperation in other regional activities and organizations, improved quality of materials purchased, union catalogs of holdings.

It is pertinent to explore the problem areas and questions encountered in processing center operations.

Since centralized processing in large municipal library systems goes back to the early twentieth century, one might assume that, with over fifty years' experience, these libraries had solved many of the prob-

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lems. The centers obtain only limited help from this direction, however. Many of the policies and procedures in force in the large library systems are antiquated. (A strong case can be made in support of the thesis that in recent years the greatest impulse for improvement of cataloging and processing methods has come from the more aggressive of the young processing centers.) The cooperative centers are also on a totally different footing, of course, with respect to the major factor of control in the administrative sense.

Directors of centers have sometimes suspected that it would be simpler to establish uniform international tariff regulations than to obtain agreement upon uniform cataloging and processing rules for a group of public libraries. The existence of the wild and colorful variety of these practices among libraries, especially those with nearly identical functions within limited geographical areas, is more an indictment of the library profession and its niggling ways than an arrow to the heart of the individual "uncooperative" librarian.

It is truly difficult to reconcile the procedures of ten or thirty or fifty independent libraries. A few of the areas of conflicting practice usually encountered are:

Use of different editions of Dewey, and of differing editions for juvenile and adult collections;
Use of Sears subject headings, or those of the Library of Congress, or others, or a combination of two or more;
Extent of analytics used;
Use of full descriptive cataloging or a short form;
Use of Wilson cards or LC cards or a combination of both;
Use of typed cards or LC cards for photocopied masters;
Use of the Dewey 920 class or "B" for biographies;
Classification of short stories in literature or in fiction;
Length of numbers beyond the decimal point.

These variations are only the beginning. Type of pocket, printed or not, or whether the pocket is pasted or not, or pasted in the front or the back of books, or in what position on the page—all of these questions have brought harassing problems in the establishment of centralized processing services. (To be sure, adaptation to new practices also produces sizable work loads for long established libraries with large collections.)

Agreement on cataloging and processing regulations has usually been accomplished through acceptance of compromises. Obviously,
when the compromises have been largely at the expense of uniformity, the efficiency of the centralized operation is lower and production costs are higher. Some variations in the product are more expensive to accomplish than others, depending upon the pattern of work flow and the volume of pieces involved. In this regard, judicious evaluation of cost and fairly autocratic prescriptions by the center director have generally produced workable solutions.

The primary concern of the processing center is to organize the work in ways that utilize personnel at all levels to their full capacity. This requires machinery adequate to the job, procedures which, in proper sequence, produce a steady flow of work, and staffing patterns which can accommodate seasonal peaks and valleys.

Processing center staffs use a very small number and proportion of professional librarians. In centers which process as many as 100,000 volumes annually it is not unusual for only one or two librarians to constitute the total professional staff. The majority of any processing center staff are clerical workers, some with general business and office skills such as accounting and bookkeeping, invoice checking, preparation of bills, typing and operation of other office and printing machines, filing, packing, shipping and record-keeping. In centers which use electronic data processing equipment, staff is needed for key-punching, programming and other associated operations.

Because cooperative processing centers cannot control the rate of receipt of orders and the resulting unpredictable work peaks which occur, a ready supply of part-time clerical employees must be available in order to maintain a uniform speed of service to libraries and to prevent backlogs. In their early years most centers experienced critical backlog situations due largely to insufficient personnel; other causes included inadequate machinery or insufficient use of machinery.

In the most successful centers careful attention has been paid to the definition of professional tasks. Many use in-service trained employees to catalog adult and juvenile fiction and for other tasks usually classified as professional. Others have found experienced office management personnel to be superior “straw bosses” for the assembly line aspects of the operation.

The offset printing press is the sine qua non of processing centers. Machinery which produces offset press masters or catalog cards by photographic means completes the tandem which eliminates the ne-
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cessity for typed or purchased sets of catalog cards. Add competent operators of these devices and the processing organism functions.

Even with data processing equipment, the essential product of the machinery is the package consisting of a set of catalog cards, shelf-list card, pocket and book cards for each volume processed. The catalog cards are most efficiently produced by devices which photograph prepared cards and produce offset masters bearing the images of eight cards per master; these are used to print pre-punched sheets of cards eight-up which must then be cut to size. Library supply firms and other stationery vendors sell punched stock of correct dimensions. The offset press is used also to print pockets and book cards. Most centers print book cards and pockets singly, although double-track use of presses is not unusual.

Quality control of printing output is essential. (Poor printing is a frequent and justified complaint by libraries.) The key to good printing is usually the machine operator because both the photographic and the printing machinery currently available is known to be temperamental and, of course, complex.

Most centers report incidents of unsatisfactory service by manufacturers' representatives. This criticism applies to major printing and photographic equipment and also to small devices, e.g., pasting machines. Many centers initially underestimated the cost of machine repairs and service. Service contracts are essential as machines grow older. Inoperative machinery makes for crises in processing operations. It is almost a truism that maximum use of machinery produces maximum efficiency and lowest unit costs. Paper and other supplies are cheap in comparison with personnel costs. Each additional custom operation, each individually typed unit, adds measurably to costs.

Procurement of books and other library materials raises no problems for processing centers which are not already well-known to most library systems. Because of the large sums centers spend for books, they stand in about as good a position to bargain with jobbers and publishers for maximum discounts as large library systems. Most centers have experimented with splitting orders between two or more jobbers, ordering from a single jobber or selected publishers, jobbers of special materials, and combinations of all of these sources of materials. There is no best, single answer to the question, "Which source or sources give the best discount and the best service?" One center will report excellent service from a jobber or publisher which another has tried and disgustedly abandoned.

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In the past year, with the pressure of new Federal funds expended for library books under Title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, procuring books has been more difficult and delays are frequent. Currently, the best service seems to be supplied either by large established jobbers with large inventories or by certain publishers. There is no doubt that large accounts have had less trouble getting books than have the smaller ones.

Centers can expect to receive discounts of 35 to 39 percent on most trade books, depending upon the volume ordered, the number of returns, the degree of duplication of titles per order, and the center's invoicing, billing and shipping requirements. Negotiations with jobbers and publishers about terms of service and discount are carried on by most centers periodically.

Problems which are perplexing to center management arise from the fact that the center produces, not a catalog for a library, but only the raw materials from which a catalog is made. It remains for someone to make sense from the catalog cards—to provide the cross references, to assure uniformity of entries, etc. Most centers agree that the individual library is responsible for tasks involving the arrangement of books on the shelves as well as the arrangement of the catalog and the content of the cards.

A decision to use a new edition of the Dewey classification also produces complications as new numbers are substituted for old with resulting problems of collection arrangement. The most satisfactory solution seems to be to let attrition play its role and to rely on the catalog as the significant tool for location of materials.

It appears virtually impossible to satisfy all libraries in deciding age level for certain books for children and young people. Similar difficulty pertains to notification of libraries on all individual changes adopted either in classification numbers or subject headings, but centers should try to improve their performance in this respect.

The tendency is increasing to look to the Library of Congress' decisions regarding both class numbers and subject headings, although it is safe to say that not a single center follows LC's practices completely. The use of LC subject headings and the latest edition of Dewey for adult materials is the general rule. Concerning materials for children there is more variation, and Sears headings and abridged editions of Dewey are more widely used.

Most centers photograph or otherwise copy LC proof sheets whenever available, in preparing catalog cards for all books. Because a
large percentage of proof sheets is not received before centers receive their books, most centers have had to make original cards for a larger percentage of titles than they had expected, in order to ship books on hand promptly. All centers attempt to catalog and prepare pocket sets for all books in advance of their receipt. With use of LC proof sheets and other sources of catalog information, the percentage of original cataloging done by a center is estimated to be less than ten percent of all titles handled.

Most cooperative centers accept library orders for materials, new or old, at any time. Requests for twenty copies of a given title may be received at twenty different times and may be procured by the center on as many different orders. This lack of coordination of the ordering process increases the cost of operation and produces problems which single library systems (theoretically) do not face. Estimates must be made before or upon receipt of the first request for a title as to how many copies may eventually be ordered through the center and thus how many sets of catalog and book cards will be needed. This uncertainty has led to the files of extra cards or card sets maintained by processing centers. Some centers have experimented with the printing of over-runs of various quantities, with varying results; others have tried reproduction of sets of cards as needed. The usefulness of files of extra cards hinges on the correctness of the initial print order estimate, on the size of the file, and on continuous weeding.

Accurate files of several types are important to efficient flow and quantity of work. Most centers find the following files useful or even essential:

A single copy of the unit catalog card (or a set of cards) for every title the center catalogs;
LC proof sheets;
Extra cards or card sets;
Outstanding orders;
Cancellations;
Standing orders.

Files are usually arranged by title or by purchase order number. Some centers maintain biographical or geographical authority files. Others use standard reference works in lieu of such files. Some centers maintain union catalogs of holdings of member libraries; alternatively, files of titles previously cataloged may be kept in shelf list order.
Each file requires maintenance and the cost of keeping it current should be weighed against its usefulness. Up-to-date filing and re-filing is essential to prevention of unnecessary duplication of work.

Shipping is generally accomplished either by parcel post or by a center's own delivery service. More problems are encountered with truck freight (usually in receiving shipments from suppliers) than in the shipping of books to libraries. Centers usually make shipments to libraries at least once a week.

Billing procedures vary, but generally libraries receive some type of invoice with each shipment and subsequent monthly statements of the costs of books and processing. Centers bill libraries for the actual costs of books plus a processing charge per volume. The standard product of a center—the book with catalog cards, pocket, book cards, spine label and plastic book jacket—is sold at the cost of the book plus a fee seldom lower than seventy-five cents per volume. Many centers have raised their processing charges in recent years due to increased costs of materials and labor. Processing charges currently range from seventy-five cents to more than $2 per volume.

Statistics kept by centers include:

- Number of volumes processed;
- Number of new titles processed;
- Total titles processed;
- Number of volumes ordered;
- Number of catalog card sets produced.

All centers attempt to measure their costs and efficiency with considerable precision. Since they are non-profit operations, their costs must accurately match actual income. Generally the cost of maintaining statistical records is justified only with regard to the number of volumes processed. All other needed statistics can be gathered by periodic sampling. This practice causes problems for the many surveyors of processing centers, but for both a center and its constituent libraries most other complete sets of statistics have limited usefulness and unnecessarily increase unit costs. Records of expenditures and other fiscal data must satisfy standard accounting and audit requirements.

Processing centers, no less than other businesses, need capital to operate. Some have found their funds inadequate to pay for books which they have received but for which they have not been reim-
Evaluation of the Processing Centers

bursed by the libraries. (Centers which do not act as purchasing agents avoid this problem.) When a backlog occurs and the inventory of books is large, undercapitalization can threaten the financial position of a center.

The most prevalent and justified criticisms of processing centers are that they take too long to deliver books and that the quality of their work is below acceptable standards in one or more particulars. It is indeed rare for centers to deliver books to libraries in less than two weeks after they receive orders. However, many centers' average delivery time is three or four weeks after receipt of an order. Librarians tend to forget how long it usually takes to get delivery from jobbers and also how long it used to take them to catalog all the books they received. The slow delivery criticism applies particularly to titles which are in current demand. Centers attempt to ship all books received as soon as possible. Many books are processed and ready to ship on the day they are received. At worst, the center should be organized to complete processing within two weeks of receipt.

That the quality of work is substandard is perhaps true in some cases. There is no question, however, that in many instances the center's processing is in every way superior to what the individual library was able to do previously. Every center makes mistakes of all kinds and some even admit to them. Changes in personnel can cause quality to vary; experiments can have unsatisfactory results. Generally, the quality of work meets or exceeds the standards of most libraries. The essential handicaps of processing center operations result from lack of control of ordering procedures and from inadequate authority to enforce uniform practices. Centers also cannot catalog and process single copies of titles at a cost lower than that of the individual library unless the request for a given title is repeated.

The accomplishments of the centers are nonetheless impressive, individually and collectively. They have demonstrated the effectiveness of standardized practices and the practicability and economy of cooperative operations; further, they have provided a necessary example for future cooperative arrangements.

The re-emergence of the book catalog as the index to library collections provides an opportunity for processing centers to become even more important in the development of library service. It is not unreasonable to expect that in the near future the centers will broaden the scope of their functions and objectives to include coordination of
selection and ordering of books and the production of book catalogs for individual library systems, or for groups of systems, and for various types of libraries. It is certain that the accomplishment of such a next step would be slower in coming were the processing centers not serving their clients effectively.
Evaluation of Centers: the Views of Members

SARAH K. VANN

The scope of this chapter is limited primarily to the views of autonomous public libraries which have agreed to participate in centralized processing programs. The processing may be (1) performed by a center created by joint agreement and supported wholly or in part by its membership; (2) offered as a service at a fee, usually by an established library, with the aid of Federal and/or state funds; (3) included as one of many services, generally free, within a systems structure as in New York State.

The member library, the raison d'être of centralized processing services as organized in the sixties, functions as the pivotal factor in assessing the worth and the impact of the services received. While it may be assumed that each processing center has information, whether complete or fragmentary, on its constituents' reactions to its services, few studies have focused attention on membership. The main focus has been rather on the centers themselves, as can readily be seen in Mary Hanley's bibliographic essay surveying the literature from 1959 to 1963, "Centralized Processing, Recent Trends and Current Status; A Review and Synthesis of the Literature."

While such emphasis reflected a timely interest in the procedural structuring of services to a constituency of autonomous public libraries, with possible imitation in other locales, individuality of the member library almost inescapably disappeared into the profile of the centralized program.

The very fact that present members accept the services, or are not altogether dissatisfied with their agreements or contractual arrangements, gives evidence to non-members of probable rewards of participation. At least four current manifestations contribute to this view: (1) the rare instances of withdrawal by members; (2) the continuing emergence of new centralized processing programs, such as that of the Fort Worth, Texas, Public Library; (3) such increases in mem-
bership as have occurred recently in the Northern Colorado Processing Center \(^2\) and the Rogue Valley Library Federation in Oregon; \(^3\) and (4) the continuing recommendations for centralization, the more recent urging fewer centers with larger memberships. Among these last have been reports of surveys made for the states of Missouri, \(^4\) New York, \(^5\) and Pennsylvania. \(^6\)

**Views of Members and Potential Members in Missouri, New York, and Pennsylvania**

Before the recommendations were made, there was some study in each of the three states of the attitudes and views of members and of potential members. The findings are briefly summarized below:

**Missouri.** Here, where two centers had been established within a period of three years and were inevitably competitors since neither acknowledged any geographical limitation within the state, attitudes of nonmembers as well as members were perhaps too early explored. Of forty-nine nonmembers who responded to the following question:

> Would you consider centralized processing for your library, provided you could receive the type you wish at a reasonable cost?

only 10 percent were "very interested" and only 14 percent were "interested." The other 76 percent were "not interested," "not sure," or did not respond. \(^7\)

Another questionnaire emphasizing the variables between the two centers and addressed to their member libraries led to a conclusion that "in general members of the Southwest Missouri Library Service expressed a higher degree of satisfaction throughout" \(^8\) than did members of the other center. Continuing inquiry by the State Library produced findings which, though still confidential, presumably confirmed some discontent. The findings further prompted the State Library in 1965 to make "A Survey of Processing Centers in the United States," \(^9\) on which was predicated the recommendation that there be only one center. \(^4\)

**New York.** For the survey on *Centralized Processing for the Public Libraries of New York State*, \(^10\) questionnaires were distributed to the member libraries of five systems. While responses varied among members within each system, the majority evaluated all the various processing elements as "much better" than those same elements before centralized processing. In comparing their expectations with subsequent reality, the libraries' responses were distributed fairly evenly.
Evaluation of Centers: the Views of Members

among the three gradations: “much better than expected,” “better than expected,” and “about as expected.” Further analysis of the responses in relation to the size of each library suggested that the smaller libraries tended to rate centralized processing higher than did the larger libraries.

While the general reaction of nearly all the member libraries can only be viewed as “extremely favorable,” a number of causes for dissatisfaction were noted. By far the most frequently cited (by thirty-nine libraries) was the problem of speed of delivery. Thirteen libraries took an unfavorable view of cataloging information furnished. Other grounds for complaint, each mentioned by from two to six members, were catalog cards; selections included on book lists from the systems headquarters; billing procedures; variations from the library’s previous cataloging; and limited cataloging.

This generally favorable reaction seemingly had little relevance to the surveyors’ recommendation for one statewide center for acquisitions and cataloging. It must be noted, however, that in their “Member Library Questionnaire,” all questions pertained to the single systems now operating, not to a multi-system kind of structure, except for a question on the “union catalog” which asked for opinions on possible alternatives concerning the scope of a “printed union catalog in your library.” The responses to the choices presented indicated a supreme indifference to (or a rejection of) a union catalog encompassing the holdings of all twenty-two systems (excluding the holdings of the Reference Department of the New York Public Library) and a strong preference for a union catalog for each system. It may be assumed, consequently, that the views of the members influenced the recommendations, which apparently amount to a compromise, that there is to be a statewide union book catalog and nine regional book catalogs.

Committees appointed by the State Library, with membership on a systems level, are currently exploring the possible impact of the proposed measures on the systems structure as it is now designed and as it is envisioned for all types of libraries, not public libraries alone. Thus the voices, resonant or muted, of member libraries must be amplified through representation.

Pennsylvania. In Pennsylvania, where a district type of structure similar to the systems program of New York State has been evolving, the Free Library of Philadelphia, as a District Center, explored the advisability of offering centralized processing to its member librar-
An appraisal (in part a profile study) of the member libraries and of the services available through the District Center Library suggested that more services were being offered than had thus far been incorporated into the individual library programs. Moreover, the pattern of duplication of titles among the member libraries, as well as the inclusion of more than 90 percent of the titles in the Catalog of Books of the Free Library of Philadelphia, prompted a proposal to the member libraries for an experiment investigating the usefulness and limitations of the Catalog as an index to each member's collection. In contrast, therefore, to the systems level of planning in New York, the member libraries of one district in Pennsylvania have been urged to participate in a study which might well suggest that member libraries in other districts would find usefulness in a similar catalog.

Views of Members (1965)

From the writer's study of existing centralized processing programs, undertaken as a preliminary to the Southeastern Pennsylvania Processing Center Feasibility Study, certain views of members emerge. For example, in Missouri the members of the Library Services Center appeared to be unwilling or unable to agree to an increase in the 75 cent charge per volume paid to the Center whatever the consequence. In New York the members seemed satisfied with the processing services within their own systems and undisturbed that the movement from a local to a systems level had merely escalated diversification and had not achieved standardization among the systems. The study also found that in certain instances all member libraries had endorsed the standard procedures devised for centralization, but support and acceptance of such procedures were not always forthcoming. In some cases, each member had agreed to route a certain percentage of its book budget through its center, but some were not adhering to the agreement. A reluctance to extend the services of a center to other types of libraries permeated some of the thinking of members, although not necessarily that of the centers.

In the "Participant Satisfaction" section of the study based on the responses from the membership of two centralized programs, the most common criticism related to slowness of service; however, despite some captious observations, it appeared to be the consensus that centers are more satisfactory than unsatisfactory. Among the criticisms of center operations, each of which would seem to call for immediate remedial action, were: (1) too frequent delivery of wrong title; (2)
Evaluation of Centers: the Views of Members

classification numbers different for two editions and sometimes for a copy added later; (3) excessive number of typing errors; and (4) allocation of more time to contract members than to full members, with consequent delays for the latter.\textsuperscript{19}

When to these criticisms is added sustained evidence of changes being made on catalog cards by some member libraries, acceptance of centralization and the views of the members appear to be neither totally acquiescent nor totally euphoric.

Current Views and Attitudes of Members (1967)

Selected from the tentative list of more than sixty processing centers for public libraries identified in Library Resources & Technical Services in 1966,\textsuperscript{20} fifteen centers in ten states were recently invited to distribute questionnaires to their members, and, if appropriate, to a former member.* Each center distributed from five to ten, a total of a hundred and thirty-two questionnaires. Ninety, or 68 percent, were returned; member libraries represented were eighty-seven public, one school, one junior college, and one four-year college. More than half of the respondents may be considered thoroughly knowledgeable in their experiences and judgments, on the basis of their having been members of a center for more than three years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Length of Membership</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than one year</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From one to three years</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From four to six years</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>From seven to ten years</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than ten years</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The responses both of the centers and of the member libraries offer gratifying evidence of their interest in centralized processing and of their willingness to give thoughtful attention to yet another questionnaire which inevitably encroached upon their valuable time. The author gratefully acknowledges their help, and also that of Miss Wilma W. Waite, formerly of the University of California Library, Berkeley, without whose assistance in coding the answers to the questionnaires the study could not have been completed.

Since the respondents from fourteen centers represent a membership using the card catalog format, some of the findings must be viewed in relation to the advantages and disadvantages of that structure. One center and its members, the Black Gold Cooperative Library System, Ventura, California, have adopted the book catalog format. Because of the special interest in its introduction, use, and acceptance within a library system, a supplementary study is to be made on that System's book catalog. It is anticipated that the study will appear in a forthcoming issue of Library Resources & Technical Services.

JULY, 1967
Because the respondents varied in size from small autonomous public libraries to regional systems encompassing a network of libraries, the ranges in the data given below are naturally wide.

*Internal characteristics.* Brief comparisons of members' book budgets, professional and non-professional staff, and the size of their card catalogs suggest the diversities among the centers. Because responses were received from members of five centers in a single state, data relating to that state are sometimes grouped separately.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Book Budgets</th>
<th>Before (Year before joining)</th>
<th>After (1966/67 or 1967)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>Range</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In one state</td>
<td>$500 to $95,658</td>
<td>$700 to $55,832</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In other states</td>
<td>$20 to 116,000</td>
<td>900 to 150,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Volumes added</th>
<th>Before (Year before joining)</th>
<th>After (Most recent data)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>Range</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In one state</td>
<td>261 to 161,575</td>
<td>420 to 133,438</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In other states</td>
<td>327 to 79,181</td>
<td>659 to 181,127</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of public card catalog (Trays)</th>
<th>Before (At time of joining)</th>
<th>After (As of January 1967)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>Range</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In one state</td>
<td>4 to 285</td>
<td>15 to 305</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In other states</td>
<td>2 to 326</td>
<td>8 to 326</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Professional * staff</th>
<th>Full time</th>
<th>Part time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same size</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decrease</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staff other than professional</th>
<th>Full time</th>
<th>Part time</th>
<th>Volunteers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Same size</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decrease</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No record kept</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Though the trend is obviously toward increases, it cannot be assumed that the increases are either simply concomitant with or the result of participation in the centers. Participation, however, may be

* The definitions of "professional" varied from "one who can perform professional duties" to "at least a B.S. with library science specialty" to "master's degree from ALA accredited school."
Evaluation of Centers: the Views of Members

a more likely cause in those situations where funds were dependent on it.

Cataloging and classification. Only twenty-one of the ninety member libraries indicated that before joining the centers they had already written cataloging and classification policies (no policy: 59; no response: 10). Eighty-one respondents identified cataloging and classification as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of member libraries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Head librarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional assistant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As the responsibility of:

- Head librarian and professional assistant: 10
- Head librarian and non-professional assistant: 7
- Head librarian, professional and non-professional assistants: 3
- Head librarian and volunteers: 1
- Professional and non-professional assistants: 3
- No response: 9

The classification used before joining was the Dewey Decimal Classification, although not necessarily the latest edition; after joining, the members indicated the use of:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of member libraries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dewey only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LC only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both Dewey and LC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cutter numbers appear to have been little used before joining, and to be used still less afterwards:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>For biography only</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>No Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before joining</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After joining</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For subject headings the use of Sears (from the fifth to the ninth editions) and of the Library of Congress list (sixth and seventh editions) was noted as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sears only</th>
<th>LC only</th>
<th>Both</th>
<th>No response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before joining</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After joining</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All of the member libraries maintained card catalogs with varying degrees of syndetic structure. After joining, use of the following types of references increased slightly:

July, 1967 [29]
Other kinds identified were those made for general references and "See [or See also] Vertical File."

Frequency of filing cards varied among the libraries from "Daily" to "As time permits" with "Weekly" and "As time permits" being the most frequently cited. Their becoming members of centers apparently did not alter the situation.

The use of printed card services before joining implied a reliance on the catalog data:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources of cards</th>
<th>Number of libraries using</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Library of Congress only</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wilson only</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both LC and Wilson</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other sources only</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other sources, plus LC and/or Wilson</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checked &quot;no,&quot; all categories</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reluctance to accept data without change contributed to, if it did not foreordain, a similar reluctance to accept data without change from centers. The responses were:

- Always accept data: 10
- Sometimes: 56
- Never: 1
- No response: 23

Among the changes made locally were the following:

- From Sears to LC headings or from LC to Sears
- Changes in or shortening of classification numbers to maintain consistency
- Addition or deletion of subject headings
- Corrections of simple errors
- Updating in accordance with newer editions of Dewey
- Changes in entry to pseudonym or title page form
- Elimination of joint author cards (and of similar added entries).

The number of hours spent weekly on cataloging and classification, before and after joining centers, was estimated thus:
Evaluation of Centers: the Views of Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>After</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Range</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In one state</td>
<td>8 to 40</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In other states</td>
<td>3 to 45½</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data furnished on processing costs per volume prior to joining centers were too sparse to be of significance; the few supplied ranged from $.75 to $2.40 per volume.

Factors attracting members to centralized services. Some awareness of, or experience with, commercial processing services may have been a stimulus, even though no reference was made to it directly. The responses to the question, “Did you consider using the services of a commercial processing company?” were:

Yes 22 No 60 No response 8

Ten libraries indicated that they had contracted with commercial companies for periods of time ranging from one month to five years. The reasons given for discontinuance included:

More expensive than processing books ourselves
We tried but unfortunately the major portion came with a little card reading, “Sorry, we cannot supply cards for this title”
We also tried but had to make so many additions or changes that it was not practical
Slow service.

Among specific factors which attracted the autonomous libraries to the centralized processing programs were:

Opportunity for cooperation between libraries
Possible cost savings
Concentration of purchasing power
Low cost of cards
Uniformity of cataloging and book preparation
Opportunity of becoming acquainted with the Center and thereby becoming more professional
Availability of review copies for selection
Increase in time for work with public, to institute programs of service
Inducements of Federal and/or state aid monies.

Typifying the plight of many small libraries was the poignant admission by one member: “We had no cataloger, and I was having to do all the cataloging at night so I was desperately in need of the Center.”

JULY, 1967
Becoming a member. Sixty-two respondents indicated that upon joining they had agreed to accept the centralized services to be offered as defined in agreements, manuals, and the like, prepared by the centers. Only one indicated that no agreement had been made; in twelve cases the libraries had agreed in principle.

Forty-nine members reported that some compromises had been made in their cataloging and classification policies. One held the view that few compromises had been made because the member libraries themselves decided most of the policies, and usually the procedures adopted had been those of the majority. Another noted as a compromise, “the loss of Wilson.”

The compromises adopted in the various systems are diverse. Those most frequently cited relate to:

**Compromises**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main entry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accepting LC as authority; abandoning CBI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accepting or abandoning use of pseudonyms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accepting name on title page as entry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omitting authors' dates</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptive data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accepting more collation; no collation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Omitting place in imprint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abandoning annotations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accepting different edition of Dewey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using longer Dewey numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using different Dewey numbers (B instead of 92)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accepting LC; abandoning Dewey</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cutter numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abandoning Cutter numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using three Cutter figures instead of one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using Cutter for biography only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using full surname of biographee</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject headings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Changing from Sears to LC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accepting subject headings on cards in black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>capitals instead of lower case red letters</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preparation of materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Placement of call numbers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placement of book card, book pocket, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of plastic jackets</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Services available. While all the members receive cataloging and classification services, the following variations were reported:
Evaluation of Centers: the Views of Members

Receiving complete set of cards ready for filing 74
Receiving set of cards on which classification numbers and/or added entries must be typed 11

The availability of certain other services was reported by some, but not all, members of the same center; the implication is that members had a choice. These services are:

Centralized ordering 76
Preparation of each volume for use 77
Delivery of books with cards from centers 71
Delivery of books with shelf list cards only 6
Consultation services concerning cataloging and classification (example: via teletype) 37
Maintenance of card catalog 3

Cataloging by the centers. The responses to the question, “Did you transfer all cataloging responsibilities to the center?” were:

Yes 19  No 69  No response 2

Members of the same center differed as to the types of materials cataloged for them, as the following listings indicate:

Center A  All new trade materials; most replacements
Pamphlets, phonorecords
Everything sent to or delivered to processing center
New titles in adult non-fiction; most of the children’s books
Adult non-fiction primarily but some items in other areas also
All types (recent decision not to send fiction and/or easy juveniles)
Hard cover books

Center B  Anything ordered through center
Sets, continuations, some rush titles

Center C  All current materials; all state materials; books, and pamphlets treated as books, available from source list approved by center
Anything we order

Center D  Books
Books, paperbound
Materials purchased through center
Phonorecords
All except gift books

JULY, 1967
For those libraries which did not transfer all responsibilities, the percentage of annual acquisitions cataloged by the centers ranged as follows:

In one state 46 percent to 99 percent
In other states 33 percent to 99.8 percent

In more detail, the percentages of annual acquisitions cataloged by the centers were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of acquisitions</th>
<th>Number of members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>95-99</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90-94</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85-89</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-84</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75-79</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-74</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65-69</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55-59</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-54</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No response</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One member indicated that 75 percent of its juvenile titles were being cataloged by the center.

Appropriate reference cards (name, see, see also) are furnished by some centers; thirty-five members indicated that they received them. Seemingly the service was not accepted by all members of the same center, however, for the responses varied. To some extent the availability for public consultation of Sears or LC subject heading lists compensated for an absence of references. Twenty-eight members reported that they made Sears available; twenty-six made LC available.

Payment for services. Some member libraries reported receiving the services without payment since the financial obligation had been assumed by the State Library with Federal and/or state monies. One member made an annual payment of $17,000 as a local contribution to a "cooperative project supported by state funds." Payments per volume were cited as:
Evaluation of Centers: the Views of Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Original Payment</th>
<th>Payment as of 1967</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$.30</td>
<td>$1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$.75</td>
<td>$.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$.80</td>
<td>1.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>1.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Payments for sets of cards alone were cited as being $.05 per set or as being included in the "15¢ per capita membership fee." The higher percentages of acquisitions cataloged by the centers correlate readily with minimal payments, except in one program where the local contributions are "based on formula worked out in plan of service." In that program the range of acquisitions cataloged was from 90 to 100 percent.

Members' responses to cataloging from the centers. Only thirty-seven libraries reported that they accepted the data on the catalog cards without change. Changes made by forty-eight members which do not accept the data related more frequently to classification and additions and subtractions than to main entry and to descriptive data. Thirty-four indicated making classification changes "once in a while" or "occasionally," and for books for young adults and juveniles. Additions and subtractions related to:

- Adding subject headings
- Changing from Juv. to Y. A.
- Making subject headings agree with Sears
- Making analytical entries
- Deleting some subject headings
- Adding location symbols
- Correcting and adding for special needs
- Adding copy numbers; coding for easy J books
- Adding series and bibliographical notes
- Adding title cards
- Adding entries for translators and illustrators of fiction titles
- Adding authors' dates and middle names

One member remarked that the most frequent changes involved the "exclusion of obscure catalog headings and fiction subject headings"; another noted "changing our older books to conform to Center."

Reasons for change. The multiplicity of reasons given for the necessity of making changes may be divided into those relating to (1) local adaptations, and (2) criticisms of cataloging by centers:

July, 1967
SARAH K. VANN

(1) Reasons for local adaptations:

Changes made more helpful to patron and staff
Need for uniformity/consistency with existing policies
Numbers using more than four or five decimals not needed
Difference in organization of library’s easy and Juvenile collections
Need for subject headings most likely wanted by our patrons
Need for analytical entries (collections of plays, for example)
Author and title cards for mysteries, westerns, and science fiction not used by public
Student body does not think in LC terms
Requirements of a divided catalog

(2) Criticisms of cataloging by centers:

More detailed cataloging needed
Mistakes (clerical and typing errors); mismarkings on spine
Need to be vaguely consistent. Too frequently has been inconsistent and it is necessary to go back to change number given to copy of same title received last year
Disagreement with cataloger’s interpretation of Dewey 17
No consistent policy followed by
Verification necessary because of many errors; center frequently does not follow LC or Sears or itself in headings, etc.

Perhaps it was total ennui that prompted the decision of one member “to adjust to the new because we found it a losing battle to keep changing [the] new to [the] old system.”

Receiving materials from centers. In thirty-three member libraries, books are made available to the public as soon as they are received from centers. Forty-six have a delay, however, caused by one or more of the following procedures:

Checking order file and/or invoice
Making shelf list cards
Adding symbols
Adding accession numbers (by one member, in five places)
Indicating ownership by use of property stamp (by one member, in three places)
Comparing book with card
Adding Cutter numbers; re-labeling
Changing position of book pocket
Completing the physical processing (members receiving sets of cards only)
Making changes in Dewey numbers (adapting or shortening)
Evaluation of Centers: the Views of Members

Labeling fiction
Adding price on book card
Taping on stickers for various shelving categories
Typing book card
Embossing; opening books properly
Comparing occasionally with a previous edition.

Two causes for delay merit special attention: "Examination, by professional staff, of books for content to increase their knowledge of the collection" and writing "annotations for newspaper."

The filing of cards is delayed by any procedure involving a change on the card itself, such as changing author entry to agree with a form already being used and making additions or subtractions from descriptive data, classification numbers and subject headings.

Filing may be delayed for periods ranging from several hours to several days; however, the actual time spent per title in making changes was estimated to be:

- 1 to 10 minutes: 10 members
- 10 to 15 minutes: 8 members
- 15 to 30 minutes: 2 members

Seventeen members kept no time records; nine did not answer the question.

Reporting changes to centers. Of the members responding, eleven reported that they informed their centers of changes being made locally; forty-four members indicated that they did not do so. Few members noted receipt of suggestions from the centers; however, the somewhat caustic tone in several responses implies a need for more attention to personal relations. Some of the comments were:

We find that they (the center) are not interested. They feel that "errors are to be expected."
The view of the center is "take it or leave it."
We are free to make any changes we like.
None of the changes are of such a nature to allow help from the ________.

Mistakes must be corrected locally because they are not caught until books are distributed to________member libraries.
We report no change unless it might affect other libraries.
If a set of cards is incorrect we return them.

Cataloging within member libraries. It is evident that many of the member libraries retain some cataloging responsibilities. The time al-
located weekly for such responsibilities, among those reporting, ranged as follows:

- 1\(\frac{1}{2}\) hours to 40 hours for professional staff
- 1\(\frac{1}{4}\) hours to 90 hours for staff other than professional

The time was allocated not only for the local variations and changes noted earlier but also to process certain types of materials outside the scope of the centers’ services or which member libraries preferred to catalog. Comprehensive references to these types of materials included:

- All materials purchased directly or through a jobber
- All materials purchased with local funds
- Uncataloged materials acquired before 1960
- Anything ordered from a source not on the center’s list
- All materials except those on “coordinated orders” or when not ordered by specified dates.

The materials may be further identified as being:

- Annuals
- Art prints
- Continuations
- Documents
- Encyclopedias
- Ephemeral materials
- Fiction (light)
- Films; filmstrips
- Gift books; memorial books
- Microfilms
- Out-of-print titles
- Pamphlets
- Paperbacks
- Periodicals
- Phonorecords
- Replacement copies
- Rush items
- Reference books (sometimes)
- Subscription/standing orders.

As the centers differed with regard to the scope of their cataloging services, the member libraries assumed the cataloging of some of the types listed, but not necessarily of all of them.

Fifty-three libraries reported using the cataloging policies adopted
Evaluation of Centers: the Views of Members

by the center. Of the fifteen who indicated that they did not, the variations included:

- Continuation of former policies
- Use of less descriptive information
- Use of more descriptive information and subject headings
- Full cataloging as opposed to abbreviated cataloging from center
- Adjustments made in some areas to go with past policies.

One member stated: "We do not use the 17th ed. of Dewey. Much of our cataloging and changes [from the Center policy] involve consistency."

Personal views of members. Despite the medley of variations already delineated as to scope of services, division of cataloging responsibilities, and acceptance or rejection of center policies, 80 out of 85 member libraries responding believed that their library services had been improved as a result of the cataloging and classification services received from a center. The reasons offered by the five who felt that there had been no improvement were:

We have always tried to give excellent service to our patrons.
It takes as much time to check and to correct as to do it ourselves.
More time is expended than formerly in checking invoices when books are received. Only saving is that some books are O.K., but we are paying for it in $.
Improvement not due to this service but having [it] means staff has not had to be increased for technical service but could be increased for direct service to the public.
Books with same title but different editions are not in same place and this goes double when our original policy differed from that used.
Consistency is vital to efficient operation. . . . We must check each set of cards and then make the necessary changes.

Fifty-seven of seventy-eight members felt that the card catalog itself had been improved by the centralized services. Among the reasons offered by those not acknowledging an improvement were:

We think annotated cards are almost indispensable. Changing from Sears to LC is confusing. Number of subject headings inadequate.
The cataloging is basically the same. In some cases where changes have been made the cards are less neat.
We are a bookmobile library solely and scarcely monkey with the card catalog. Not applicable, I suppose.
Type-face and stock used on new cards produced through automation are sub-standard. Change from Sears to LC makes catalog more confusing during transition period.

We have—perhaps without justification—been satisfied with our catalog.

We maintained a very good catalog prior to joining... and our membership has done little or nothing to improve it.

Our standards were just as high before; now we receive fewer subject headings and occasionally they are inconsistent with existing headings.

The responses varied considerably regarding the use of time formerly allocated to cataloging and classification. Among the activities which had expanded were:

Spending more time evaluating orders and building up weak spots in collection
Absorbing greater volume of reference questions; becoming a larger operation
Operating with a larger book budget but with no additional staff
Participating in more workshops with co-workers outside the library
Devoting more time to professional reading, public relations, more systematic weeding and evaluation of collection
Making school visits; supervising pages better
Planning service programs; preparing talks
Planning and developing resources
Working with individuals and groups; planning and promoting new services; furnishing newspaper publicity; preparing exhibits
Supervising and training staff; in-service training; working with trustees
Planning building expansion program
Routinizing procedures; adhering to routine administrative duties; revising old cataloging
Assisting and advising library patrons; developing reader services.

Few references were made to catalogers even though it was noted earlier that in the small libraries, prior to joining a center, one or more professional staff members had included cataloging as one of their many duties. The fate of some catalogers, however, was revealed as:

One cataloger was made regional coordinator of branches, one interlibrary loan librarian, one [was] left in library.
Our cataloger is no longer with us. She is administrator of the Center.
Evaluation of Centers: the Views of Members

One library position converted to public service but 10 to 12 hours of public service now used for cataloging.

One member library dolefully admitted:

No more time. We could use less time but our cataloger insists on detailed checking. We are also currently adding more books than we did before we joined.

Personal views of former members. At least two centers gamely forwarded the questionnaire to three of their former members. These, like the continuing members, had been attracted to centralized services by various inducements. The center's potential as a "time-saver"; "our own lack of space and of an experienced cataloger"; and "the possibility of joint purchasing of supplies (which never materialized) in addition to releasing our employees to other responsibilities. (This never materialized either.)"

Two participated as members for two years, and another for nine months, before withdrawing. The factors which contributed to their decisions to withdraw illustrate the difficulties which can beset a new program which instantly changes the old but cannot with equal instancy implement its goals. The following factors were cited:

Time involved in changes; delay in shipment; discrepancies in classification
Time lag was more than a year after some books were ordered
Cost was too much for service performed
Necessity of handling the books to make adjustments
Errors in cataloging; carelessness in processing (torn jackets, etc.)
We could not accept the decisions of the new director of—— as to the cataloging and classifications and processing of books.
Books were late in arriving and cards contained numerous errors.

In response to a question concerning advising other similar libraries to accept the services which were received (the services, not the quality) one said "Yes, with reservations"; one expressed no opinion; and one replied negatively because of the feeling "that it is a waste of money for small libraries [while] there are too many errors in cataloging for medium-size library." One of the three offered the following suggestions for the improvement of a center: cutting down on the time lag; avoiding errors in classification; and making some variations for individual libraries.

Views on centralization from former and continuing members. Appraisals on centralization itself were made by both former and con-
tinuing members. Two former members expressed themselves as follows:

Libraries can do their own ordering and cataloging more accurately and for less cost than the processing center.
We are not opposed to centralized processing; it is only unfortunate that our own pioneered in this area and got off to a bad start. One of the problems in being a member . . . is that certain sacrifices must be made by the member. Also, unfortunately, cataloging has been very inadequate for our needs.

Because these views are in striking contrast to those of a continuing member of the same center, the latter's views are also presented:

Librarians who feel that they cannot accept standard authorities (LC, Dewey without major modifications) are usually creating a confusing situation which their successors will find very costly to unravel. Centralized cataloging, by catalogers of high professional qualifications, is invariably superior to local cataloging. Librarians who think they can catalog their own books more cheaply simply haven't taken all cost factors into consideration. Library users in small communities do not have small minds (necessarily). They do not need or benefit from abridgements of Dewey numbers, use of Sears rather than LC subject headings, or the maze of other "local modifications" so often made for them.

Views, straightforward and thoughtful, have thus been expressed. In them, both continuing members and centers may find semblances of themselves. From a continuing member in another center the following sage and experienced counsel is offered:

The initial years of any processing center are filled with delays, snags, mistakes. If the membership does not recognize this and "ride out the storm," it precludes the possibility of developing a successful operation.

Toward the Future

The following responses to three key questions relating to compromises made, to advising others to participate, and to the possibility of withdrawal should costs be increased, are perhaps more indicative of the perspicacity of member libraries than are many other views expressed.
Evaluation of Centers: the Views of Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>No response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) In retrospect, do you feel that you made compromises which you now</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>regret?*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Would you advise a library similar to yours to accept the services</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>which you receive? (Or did receive?)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) If the costs of your cataloging and classification services were to</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>be increased, would you be inclined to withdraw and resume a full</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cataloging program within your library?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even though some of the responses were qualified, the thrust toward acceptance of centralized cataloging and classification has survived deterrent and deflective criticisms, some thoroughly merited, some less consequential. Its total impact, however, is yet to be grasped; perhaps its potential could be more smoothly achieved if central agencies would weigh some of the following suggestions for improvement, paraphrased from the many offered by the members:

Recognize that centralization should provide a *superior*, not just an adequate, quality of cataloging services.

Catalog and classify *all* materials whatever the format, whatever the source.

Review policies and procedures continuously to obtain maximum efficiency and accuracy. Pursue speedier processing and delivery with stress on quality control.

Review and improve concepts of individualized and coordinated ordering (if such responsibility has been assumed). Broaden acquisitional scope by acquiring the unusual as well as the current and the popular. Function as a bibliographical resource center.

Lessen the acceptability gap between members and center through excellence of policies and consistency in implementation.

Initiate and encourage dialogue with member libraries through recognition of joint involvement in the continuing and ever-expanding scope of centralized cataloging and classification programs.

*The responses are somewhat inconsistent with action, however, since forty-eight libraries indicated also that they did not accept the center’s data on catalog cards without change *see above*.
SARAH K. VANN

Keep abreast of developments in technology, especially mechanized equipment, with a willingness to accept or reject with discernment.

Prefer guidance of a professional cataloger rather than of a business manager. Employ qualified personnel throughout a center. Re-evaluate responsibility for the catalog structures of member libraries; explore the book catalog format as a possible solution to complexities of integrating the new with the old and as an incentive for escape from the thralldom to local policies.

The suggestions, however vital, are not for the centers alone. The responsibility for the full achievement of centralization, and the standardization which it implies, is equally that of members. From one continuing member to all members, current and potential, the following practical message is offered as an enduring precept: “Whenever a change is made, time and money must be spent to ‘re-tool’ your old procedures for the on-going process.”

References


4. Peterson, Orcena Mahoney. “Report to Missouri State Library, 12-10-65.” (Mimeographed.)


9. The text of the questionnaire is included in “Appendix B” of the forthcoming “Southeastern Pennsylvania Processing Center Feasibility Study Final Report.” (See footnote 6.)


Evaluation of Centers: the Views of Members

15. Ibid., p. 82.
16. Ibid., pp. 3, 82.
17. Ibid., p. 94.
18. Ibid., pp. 94-99.
19. Ibid., pp. 183-186.
Commercial Services

BARBARA M. WESTBY

Commercial cataloging is centralized cataloging performed and sold by a non-library agency operating for profit. Despite its rapid growth since 1958 commercial cataloging is not a new idea on the American library scene. During the half-century from 1850, when Charles C. Jewett proposed a central bureau for the preservation of stereotype plates and their use in updating library catalogs, to 1901, when the Library of Congress began to sell its catalog cards, there was much interest, discussion, and pressure for centralized and cooperative cataloging. Very early in American librarianship there was recognition of the wasteful duplication of effort among libraries cataloging the same book at the same time. Early proposals toward centralization included the possibility of commercial ventures.

In 1872 in London, Henry Stevens published an idea, which he had circulated by private printing as early as 1868, that there was a need for precise descriptions of all books in libraries and for a “central bibliographical bureau, public or private, where librarians, collectors, and amateurs may buy these authorized descriptive titles of books as they buy postage stamps, money orders and telegrams. . . . Such a bureau, under government protection, it is believed, might. . . . be made self-supporting or even remunerative.” In the first volume of the Library Journal, Melvil Dewey wrote that cooperative cataloging was the greatest need of the profession and that, after agreement on cataloging rules, would come the question: “Who shall prepare the titles of new books as published? The Library of Congress or its copyright department? The publishers themselves? A cataloging bureau, established and maintained by the libraries of the country? An individual or firm, as a commercial venture?”

From its beginnings in 1872 Publishers’ Weekly had listed titles of

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new books in sufficient detail for some libraries to subscribe to several copies in order to cut out the title descriptions and paste them on catalog cards. In the same magazine there subsequently appeared references to publishers supplying slips that gave descriptions and synopses of their books. C. A. Nelson suggested in a letter to the *Library Journal* that, if the publishers were willing, these slips could be prepared in such a way that they could be pasted on cards. Among those commenting on the plan was R. R. Bowker, who pointed out that publishing was a business, not a philanthropy, and that the approach to publishers should stress the commercial advantages of the idea. He suggested sheets or circulars with three parts: description of title and summary of contents; other books on the same subject or by the same author; and advertising. After study by the Co-operation Committee (founded at the first ALA Conference in 1876) and the Title-Slips Committee (organized in 1877) the project became a reality. In October 1878 the *Title Slip Registry*, printed on one side, was issued as a supplement to the *Library Journal*, free to subscribers with extra copies available at $1 a year. Publishers paid $1 a year per title for this advertising service. At the end of 1879 it had become a monthly *Book Registry* at twenty-five cents an issue and finally, in February 1880, it ceased publication for lack of subscriptions and financial support. After the demise of the *Book Registry* the weekly record of books continued in *Publishers' Weekly* which, in 1887 in cooperation with ALA, issued catalog cards, but not on a sufficiently large scale or with sufficient promptness to give a fair commercial test of possible financial support.

In 1878, *Psyche*, organ of the Cambridge Entomological Club, had issued title slips for books listed in its issues, thus becoming the first to offer such a subscription, and in 1880 had changed its bibliographical record to conform to the *Title Slip Registry*. In addition it printed on catalog cards a bibliography of John Le Conte's writings.

Two new commercial plans were proposed in 1893. That of the Rudolph Indexer Company, to issue cards for use with its cabinets, came to naught, but the Library Bureau printed cards for current books until 1897 when ALA assumed the work. This service continued for various types of materials until 1901, when the Library of Congress announced its ability and willingness to sell copies of its cards. This library-based commercial venture brought to reality a half-century of planning for a centralized cataloging agency.

Another pioneer in the field of library publications, the H. W. J.uly, 1967
Wilson Company, has long been selling professional services. Cataloging aid was a serendipitous by-product of the many book selection and reference tools initiated by Halsey William Wilson. Originally conceived as a current catalog of new books for the use of booksellers, the *Cumulative Book Index*, founded in 1898, has become an invaluable aid in acquisitions and cataloging. As early as 1899 Wilson decided that each book entry should include the full name of the author, the exact title as found on the title page, and other useful information.

Another source of cataloging information is the *Book Review Digest*, a book selection aid first published in 1905. The Standard Catalog Series provide complete cataloging service. These include the *Fiction Catalog* (1908); *Children's Catalog* (1909); the *Standard Catalog for Public Libraries* (begun in 1918 as subject sections, later combined into one catalog in 1934); the *Standard Catalog for High School Libraries* (1926); and the latest in the series, the *Junior High School Library Catalog* (1966). The *Essay and General Literature Index* (1931) analyzes books of essays in all fields and other composite reference books. As such it has served as a supplement to card catalogs in many libraries and spared them the time and expense of analytics. The *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature* (1901) and the other specialized periodical indexes that followed it have long provided not only an index to magazine articles but also a guide to subject headings, especially in new subject fields.13

The Wilson Printed Catalog Card Service was begun in 1938. In 1965 approximately 33,000 libraries purchased over 11,000,000 sets of cards, or almost 57,000,000 cards.14 In fiscal 1965 the Library of Congress sold 61.5 million cards to 17,000 subscribers; more than 4,000 publishers now list LC card numbers in their books.15 Continuing its history of cataloging service, *Publishers' Weekly* is again cooperating by providing Library of Congress with review copies of books for cataloging and supplying LC card information in its “Weekly Record” of books. This record is cumulated monthly and annually as the *American Book Publishers Record*.

Of the many other reference books of value to the cataloger only a few can be cited here. Included among these are *3000 Books for Secondary School Libraries*, *Basic Book Collection for Elementary Grades*, *Basic Book Collection for Junior High Schools*, *Basic Book Collection for High Schools* and the *Booklist*. Several national bibliographies are of considerable cataloging worth, notably the *British
Commercial Services

National Bibliography which gives complete catalog information and also sells cards, and the Scandinavian bibliographies which provide entry and classification but no subject headings.

This survey shows that commercial cataloging had many ancestors in the last century and that some form of commercial cataloging has been available for many years. However, its modern development and rapid increase began in 1958. From a dozen firms in 1964 the industry in the United States and Canada has expanded today to about thirty companies advertising some form of cataloging and/or processing. Many factors have contributed to this remarkable growth: a tremendous increase in book production; more library funds provided by state and Federal legislation; expanded book budgets to match the population explosion; new branch libraries and elementary and secondary schools. Concurrent with this was a critical shortage of librarians, especially catalogers, to service and process the additional books. The acquisitions by libraries generated by these conditions exceeded their capacity to organize these materials for immediate use. Smaller school, college, and public libraries were especially caught in the processing squeeze and desperate administrators contracted for services with outside agencies, among them book wholesalers. Seeing a need for professional services and the prospect of expansion, profit, and fine public relations, the companies offered technical services at specified prices. The response was immediate. One publisher stated in 1961 that he had to sell cards in order to sell books. The library profession has nurtured an industry, estimated by this writer in 1964 to be worth five million dollars, which now conservatively stated must exceed twenty million dollars annually.

The card services of the Library of Congress and the H. W. Wilson Company are the foundation of commercial cataloging since these are used for all titles for which they are available. Commercial cataloging and processing services range all the way from free catalog cards and processing kits to the installation of a complete library. Between these two extremes can be found a varied bill of fare. Many publishers and jobbers participate in the "Cards with Books" program whereby a set of Library of Congress cards is sent with each book. A firm which offers a complimentary kit upon request also sends with its books a free cataloging information slip from which a library can produce its own cards if it so desires. It must be assumed that the cost of this "free" service is included in the price of the book.

All of the services offer both standard and custom cataloging.
Standard cataloging is cataloging according to a prescribed formula established individually by the firms and is usually offered for a list of books selected from approved sources. It normally consists of a set of LC or Wilson cards or, if these are not available, of annotated cards produced by the company itself, one feature of which is the omission of place of publication in the imprint. Classification and subject cataloging are based on the latest editions of the abridged Dewey Classification and Sears List of Subject Headings, with a Cutter device most often consisting of the initial of the author's surname. Standard processing provides the book with an imprinted book pocket, book card and spine label, and a plastic jacket. Minor variations from this pattern are sometimes allowed for fiction and biography at no extra charge, but other differences entail an additional fee. LC classification and subject headings and unabridged Dewey Classification may also be ordered.

Major variations from the firm's standard form require custom cataloging, and this is tailored to the library's exact specifications. Some libraries submit their own classification and/or subject headings at the time they place an order, thus insuring a desired consistency in their catalogs. Several companies limit their cataloging services to custom work for college, university, technical and research libraries.

Also on the market are processing kits consisting of eight cards (five with headings and three without), a pocket, book card and peel-proof spine label each imprinted with the necessary information, but excluding a plastic cover. These were introduced in 1965 and quickly adopted by most firms. As stated by the originator they were meant to aid those libraries for which Wilson and LC cards respectively were too little or too much. With so many libraries converting from Dewey to LC classification, a reclassification kit is also available so that libraries can make the necessary changes with a minimum of effort.

The commercial services usually provide either a limited number of cross references for name and subject entries or none at all. One firm did offer to sell the Sears List of Subject Headings (eighth edition) on cards at one price for the set. In following the cataloging as provided on LC or Wilson cards the firms also fall into the inconsistencies in entry, classification, and subject headings which result from changes of rules or from new editions. Each library must therefore provide such references as are needed, from old to new forms,
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in order to avoid chaos in its catalogs. Thus it is false to assume that all catalog work and local costs are eliminated with the purchase of a service.

Other technical services offered include computer-produced catalog cards, book catalogs printed by computer or by photographic reproduction of cards, serial subscription controls, automation and system design, book and periodical binding, library planning, modernization, and consultant services.

Reproduction of a library’s own prepared copy or catalog cards is available from both large national firms and small home-based operations. At the other extreme is the installation of complete libraries fully equipped with a basic collection of cataloged and processed books, shelving, charging system and furniture. This indicates the wide range of services available—from aid for do-it-yourself cataloging/processing to “instant libraries.”

In using these services a library must remember that it is not purchasing book selection, and availability of processing should not influence this library activity. This is still a local professional responsibility to be exercised in the light of the needs and interests of patrons and community. Some jobbers offer processing for any book from any publisher, while others offer only their own publications or those of a limited number of publishers. Vendors’ catalogs often carry Dewey number, age and grade classification, and NDEA and other recommendation labels, and some catalogs are based on standard library lists of recommended books.

The costs of these services have an equally wide range—from free cards and processing kits to the incalculable amounts needed to finance an automated system. The charge for standard cataloging is from 60 cents to $1.90 per volume. Within this price may be allowed such variations as special classification for fiction and biography and placement of pocket, while an ownership stamp, full Cutter number, accession stamp, or red subject headings would carry extra price tags varying from 3 to 45 cents each. Prices for custom cataloging depend wholly upon the specifications requested by the individual library. Original cataloging for a book in the English language may cost from $2 to $3 and one in a foreign language from $3 to $4, plus an additional fee for processing. The price of a processing kit is set at 29 cents by the firm which originated the service, but others offer the same or a similar kit with or without plastic jacket in a price range of 15 to 80 cents. If the pocket and spine label are applied to the
book by the firm, the processing cost plus the cards is 60 to 95 cents. Book catalogs involve so many different procedures and library requirements that there can be no generalizing on prices. They are considerably more costly than card catalogs and can hardly be considered by a single library but only by library systems with a number of outlets.  

Services can be purchased in several ways—by single order, by price per volume for custom cataloging, by yearly bid, or by contractual agreement. On the basis of single order or individual price it is possible to buy as many or as few titles as desired. Yearly bids, on the other hand, can involve problems for a library or school district. Bids can vary from year to year and this could mean changes of vendors and hence of cataloging practices. Even worse, an inexperienced and even unqualified firm could underbid and then prove unable to deliver a usable product. A contract with carefully written specifications that can be negotiated will produce the best results.  

While many libraries have contracted for cataloging on a long-term basis, others have found the services particularly useful for such short-term projects as the cataloging of basic collections for new branch, school and college libraries. For a library using commercial processing help there may be savings in staff time, space, equipment, and supplies, and a simplification of business records, but wise selection of a service takes several criteria into account. There must be evaluation of services based on comparison of costs, quality, coverage, and speed. Information on prices can be obtained by submitting specifications to various companies for estimates, or by comparing the costs and services offered by the various standard plans. Definition of terms and precision of facts are important. Cataloging may consist merely of a set of LC or Wilson cards and processing may only be the application of another firm's processing kit. Competition is keen and advertising can be misleading. Quality involves among other things the type of cataloging and classification and its adequacy for local needs. Can a firm supply all titles or is its coverage limited to certain titles or categories of books or to certain publishers? If several jobbers must be patronized to obtain full coverage, their cataloging practices may vary.  

Speed of delivery is important but it should be assessed relative to the library's own performance in terms of time between its ordering of a book and its placement of the book on the shelf ready for lend-
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ing. Delay in delivery is the main complaint against commercial cataloging and the main reason for cancellation by some libraries. One firm advertises 120 to 150 days for completion of an order. Several factors affect speed. Some firms appear to have over-extended themselves by accepting more orders than they can fulfill or by attempting too much custom cataloging. A total of 40,000 volumes annually is considered the minimum for a successful centralized operation, but perhaps there is also a maximum beyond which speed and efficiency cannot be maintained. It is reasonable to assume that such a limit exists for custom work. A librarian's demand for custom processing or cataloging may be the fundamental reason for delay in the arrival of his books. The need to perform original cataloging for many juvenile and young adult titles is likely to cause a backlog for a commercial service just as it does in any catalog department. Each customer should realize that the problems arising in his own catalog department are multiplied in the larger operations of the commercial cataloger; they do not disappear just because he personally no longer encounters them. Prompt service may be affected by the jobber's difficulty in obtaining books from publishers. A title may be out of stock or out of print. The dealer himself may not maintain an adequate inventory or he may underestimate the popularity of a book. Libraries report frequent difficulty as to receipt of association and foreign publications and other special items.

What has been consumer reaction generally? This is difficult to ascertain but a few individual cases can be cited. One university starting off with a collection of fifty thousand volumes found commercial cataloging of great assistance in getting the library established. Although it must now allow three months for delivery of books, it still finds the quality of the work satisfactory. A junior college waited eight to ten weeks for its first books and five to six months for many others, but it is still satisfied and could not do without commercial service. Such lack of speed, however, was the reason for a state library agency's cancellation of an otherwise satisfactory service; for the state's small libraries, it was essential that new books be on the shelves quickly. One state college was displeased with the cataloging given a collection of five hundred children's books to be used in a course in children's literature. Ordered in July, the first books did not arrive until November. Class numbers had been omitted on some of the cards, pockets were missing, and despite the firm's claim to have an authority file there were inconsistencies in
form of entry for the same author, and in classification numbers for books on a given subject. An eastern college conducted a pilot study of three orders, a small lot sent directly to publishers and the other groups to two different commercial services. Delay and cancellations were the big factors with regard to the latter orders. On one of them 81 percent of the order was filled after 175 days, but on the other only 67 percent had arrived after 163 days. Of 949 volumes ordered in the latter case 313 were cancelled, half by the firm because of out-of-stock or out-of-print reports and the remainder by the library. Costs of first volume/first copy cataloging/processing were $1.95 and $2.10. By comparison, the publishers had been more prompt on deliveries, and local cataloging costs had averaged 40 cents higher.

Local catalogers checking a commercial delivery must be alert for errors, such as incorrect call numbers on spine labels, editions confused with imprints, and incorrect LC cards. Comments received by this writer reveal satisfaction and dissatisfaction with commercial services to be about evenly divided among libraries employing them.

Most commercial processors have automated their own ordering and invoicing procedures as well as those of their customers. They have or should have facilities for the warehousing and handling of large quantities of books. Depending on size they operate a manual or automated assembly line. When an order for standard cataloging is received, the books are matched with cards and transported via conveyor to stations for pocketing, labeling, jacketing, packing with invoice, and shipping. If a library requests any variations in processing, the books must detour to another station or line for individual handling. This disruption of flow of materials reduces speed and efficiency; resulting increases in costs are passed on to the library. Commercial catalogers have found custom cataloging to be an annoyance and a great expense and feel that it should and could be eliminated. Some librarians, on the other hand, are delighted to be able to order exact specifications and thus eliminate special operations for themselves. While many librarians adhere to unnecessary preferences or traditions, commercial agencies may not recognize and appreciate the necessity for certain cataloging details. This is why it is so important that supervisors in the commercial firms be catalogers both with experience in technical services and also possessed of imagination and administrative skill in order to clarify differences between customer demand and dealer capability. The catalogers should be active participants in ALA activities and discuss.
mutual problems with their colleagues in large library catalog departments. Most of the firms have expressed a desire for a standard for cataloging that all can accept and their willingness to cooperate with an ALA committee on this matter. Librarians should also be willing to compromise or forego individual preferences since this might reduce the price tag on a commercially prepared book. Perhaps the twain shall meet. Although many problems are involved it seems logical that a basic plan could be devised that would represent both standard cataloging and a cataloging standard. One company has decided that it can no longer afford any degree of custom service and will offer only one standard from which there can be no deviations.

At present commercial firms definitely fill a need and librarians have fostered the industry. Both sides benefit and both have a responsibility to uphold professional standards. Neither profits by allowing sub-standard work or by the presence of unqualified companies in this highly competitive arena. The scent of high financial return may lure into the field inexperienced and incompetent businessmen. Young men with no library or publishing experience have inquired at ALA headquarters seeking information about cataloging in order to set up commercial cataloging firms. Many customers are likewise inexperienced in cataloging matters—trustees and school superintendents who contract for these services but who do not always understand the subtleties and implications of cataloging.

What of the future? Many predictable as well as unforeseeable changes are ahead in the next few years. There will be an expansion of the types of services offered. Commercial firms now provide management and consultant services and management companies are entering the field offering to conduct library surveys. Experimentation with the cataloging of audio-visual materials is also under way. Over a year ago a New York record firm proposed a cataloging service for phonograph records providing LC or similar cards and processed recordings ready to shelve. However, it has not been able to elicit sufficient interest from potential customers to warrant the substantial investment involved.

Automation will bring many changes in card and book catalogs and the MARC project at the Library of Congress has implications for the commercial field also. The main problems with book catalogs at present are their high cost and lack of currency, but improvements of procedures and advances in technology will change the picture.
There is the possibility that firms could specialize in either book or card catalogs. Another practical idea would be for each firm to concentrate on one standard cataloging/processing plan so that it could more efficiently organize its operations, enabling each library to select the firm offering the degree of custom work desired. In the future, on-line computer systems may completely change the character of both library and commercial cataloging operations. Information retrieval may be available from data banks with companies specializing in different subject areas such as technology, social sciences, and so on.

The commercial services will be affected by the new Anglo-American Cataloging Rules. They will no doubt follow the lead of the Library of Congress in adopting the new code and query their customers as to their preferences. Less original cataloging may be performed by the commercial catalogers as LC provides more foreign-language cataloging under Title II C of the Higher Education Act, and also in the event that LC and Wilson increase their coverage of American books in the juvenile and young adult field. It is to be hoped that the consequent saving will be passed on to the customers.

Competition will increase. On the basis of recent growth it is predictable that more firms will enter the field. The commercial firms have discovered that cataloging is expensive and its profits uncertain. The costs involved in maintaining large catalog departments are high and jobbers will need ample financial resources or they will find it increasingly difficult to remain competitive. They may be forced to quit or to seek mergers. The big companies will probably get bigger and the small jobbers disappear. This trend is already evident. Large corporations, with or without connections with the book world, are seeking book-oriented outlets. This is leading to communication dynasties embracing both the spoken and the written word.

Since the aim of this review has been to present a general survey of the industry, no firms or services have been specifically identified. A directory of commercial catalogers is available.21

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Commercial Services

Stevens, 1872. (See Chapter on “Photobibliography; A Word on Catalogues and How to Make Them.” pp. 1-14).


17. Information on services and prices was obtained from letters and advertising literature issued by the several companies.


19. Information obtained from confidential letters received from libraries.


ADDITIONAL REFERENCE


JULY, 1967 [57]
School Library Processing Centers

RICHARD L. DARLING

The development of centralized cataloging for school libraries is a relatively new development, although at least one school system centralized its cataloging as early as 1917. Though school systems with many schools might logically have been expected to seize upon this effective service as a valuable aid in establishing school libraries, the fact is that few of them did. There are many elements which make centralized cataloging a more logical development for school libraries than for most other types of libraries, while certain of their weaknesses, such as chronic understaffing, make centralized technical processing highly desirable.

Bernice Wiese and Catherine Whitehorn identified ten problems related to individual school cataloging which influenced Baltimore City's decision to centralize cataloging and processing. These included: (1) delays in preparing books for use so that they were accessible to teachers and students, (2) the need to provide clerical service for cataloging in the most economical way, (3) the difficulty of providing effective catalogs for schools which had no librarian, (4) the need for simpler classification in elementary schools, (5) the requirement of the school curriculum for special school-oriented subject cataloging not available on commercially printed cards, (6) the need for continuity, uniformity, and consistency in cataloging, (7) the problem of keeping cataloging up to date, (8) the long delay in preparing new school collections for use, (9) the large number of school librarians with little or no cataloging experience, and (10) the desirability that all schools served have catalogs of a uniformly high quality. Gladys Lively identified several additional reasons to justify centralized cataloging and processing. She listed such advantages as saving money, having more of the routine work actually performed by clerks, eliminating wasteful duplication of work, and

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freeing librarians for professional service to students and teachers. Mary Egan felt that the provision of centralized processing was an asset in recruiting librarians for school library positions. An unexpected fringe benefit may be an enhanced respect and status for school librarians because of the increased guidance and planning they are able to provide, partially as a result of centralized processing. Most writers agree that a most important justification for centralized processing is that librarians are permitted thereby to concentrate greater effort on direct services to the school’s instructional program.

Each of the reasons given appears to have considerable validity. So many school libraries have been and still are staffed with only one librarian, or a part-time librarian unsupported by a clerical staff, that they can expect a well cataloged collection only through centralized cataloging or else at the expense of almost all services to the students and teachers. In some school systems, where school libraries are staffed with volunteers, central processing offers truly the only opportunity for organizing the collection effectively. Aceto, in a study of central processing in New York State, found insufficient staff the most frequently reported reason school systems initiated centralized processing.

Though most comments on staff emphasize the absence of librarians or their inexperience, and lack of clerical assistance, another sound reason for centralized cataloging is the deficient library education of many persons assigned to school librarian positions. Low state certification requirements and the chronic shortage of school librarians force schools to employ as librarians teachers who have only a few, if any, courses in library education. Central processing enables such personnel to provide elements of school library service which they could not were they required to organize the collection.

Still another justification for centralized cataloging for school libraries relates to staff. While in larger libraries each librarian is assigned a specialized task—as a cataloger, a reference librarian—in most school libraries the librarians must fill all the professional library positions, an assignment that forces the librarian to perform all tasks, whether or not they fit his skills and personality. Centralized cataloging and processing limits, at least in one area, those library skills in which he must be a specialist.

Yet another reason for central cataloging for school libraries is the large amount of duplication in collections from school to school.
While school librarians do select materials to fit local school needs and a unique student body, they also select to support a common curriculum taught in all the schools of a system. This duplication of collections increases the possibility of economical central processing for schools.

Many school systems have found it difficult to initiate central processing, especially in systems with well-established school libraries. School librarians fear loss of authority, or wish to classify books differently and provide varying subject headings. Milbrey Jones believes the standardization of subject headings to be "one of the more valid reasons for establishing centralized processing," an opinion with which many would concur. Though few writers report it, the opposition of school librarians has often hampered the early operation of centralized cataloging and processing services.

Along with the advantages, Wiese and Whitehorn listed four possible disadvantages in centralized cataloging: (1) that librarians might fail to examine new books, (2) that some librarians might desire different numbers and headings, (3) that some librarians claim central processing might take more time, and (4) that card catalogs might be less useful because cross references were not included promptly. However, in a speech to the Bucks County School Librarians Association, Doylestown, Pennsylvania, in November 1965, Miss Wiese reported that she now sees no disadvantages. Darling has reported that the Processing Center of the Montgomery County Public Schools, Rockville, Maryland, prints and distributes subject cross reference cards.

One of the problems of centralized cataloging which appears to present an obstacle to many school librarians is book selection. Indeed many processing centers have assumed rigidity in selection by using fixed order dates and required lists. However, even those school systems which use buying lists in connection with their centralized ordering usually provide a method to accommodate special needs. Madison, Wisconsin, for example, in addition to preparing buying lists based on reviews submitted by all school librarians, permits "fringe" orders for individual libraries.

Many processing centers which once limited order dates, in order to assure a steady work flow and a favorable ratio of volumes to titles in the early stages of central technical services, have later been able to modify their schedules for greater flexibility. Montgomery County, Maryland, began in 1961 with four order lists and order
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dates per year, but in 1964 abolished both lists and dates, so that librarians could order at any time.\textsuperscript{11} Use of direct copy equipment has made it almost as economical to process one or a few copies of a title as to do large numbers, especially if the title has been cataloged previously.

Basically, limitations on selection of materials are not directly related to the availability of central cataloging. Larger school systems tend to have an organized program for the review and evaluation of materials, and to limit selection to approved lists whether or not they have centralized processing. Where ordering, cataloging, and processing are centralized, approved lists may facilitate orderly procedures, but are not usually planned for that purpose.

In school libraries, which are increasingly administered as comprehensive instructional materials centers, non-print materials present special problems in organization and cataloging. Librarians who are reasonably skillful in cataloging books find non-book materials more demanding. Though most school systems reportedly have central cataloging only of books, Greensboro, North Carolina,\textsuperscript{12} and Montgomery County, Maryland,\textsuperscript{13} catalog both books and non-print materials. Fulton County Public Schools, in Georgia, catalogs only non-print materials, relying on the Georgia State Catalog Card Service for most of the cataloging for books.\textsuperscript{14} Enough other school systems are studying the methods of those processing centers which process non-print materials to indicate a rising interest and the beginning of a trend to process all types of materials. The Montgomery County Public Schools Processing Center, for example, receives several visitors each month from school systems planning to initiate or expand processing services.

Another problem frequently discussed is the special relationship of the school library collection to the school curriculum, a relationship which school librarians say generates a need for special subject headings. The available evidence indicates that most central processing centers actually use headings from Sears, often accepting those printed on Wilson cards. Madison uses Sears' \textit{List of Subject Headings} except when additional headings are needed.\textsuperscript{15} Jones, in a literature survey of school library technical services, questioned the necessity of major adjustments in either classification or subject headings for school libraries.\textsuperscript{7}

Most of the information available concerning centralized cataloging and processing centers serving school libraries comes from articles...
describing individual school system processing centers. Only a limited number of studies have attempted to explore school system central processing on a larger scale.

Whitehorn and Wiese, in April, 1956, conducted a survey of processing centers in school systems which they thought likely to have central processing. Of 52 questionnaires mailed, they received 36 replies, 23 from school systems with central cataloging. Of the 23 systems, 20 had complete processing of books, but only 14 had central ordering. The number of schools served by the respective centers ranged from 3 to 120. Nine of the centers began by cataloging books for elementary schools only, 5 for secondary schools only, and 7 for all schools in the system. They reported staffs that ranged from no professionals to 4, and from one-fourth of a clerk to four and one-half clerks. All of the centers used the Dewey Decimal System. A study of school libraries in the Pacific Northwest reported 28 school systems in that region with centralized technical services in 1960.

The most extensive body of data on the number of school systems with centralized cataloging and processing services was issued as a part of the 1960-61 school library statistics from the U.S. Office of Education. It was reported that 467 school systems provided central processing of library materials for elementary schools and 239 for secondary schools. This represented 3 percent of the nation's school systems for elementary, and 2 percent for secondary. The largest percentage of systems with central processing was to be found in the category with 25,000 or more students. The largest block in actual numbers, however, was in the group enrolling 3,000 to 11,999 students. An insignificant percentage of smaller systems had central processing. The study indicated the Far West as the region with the largest number of school systems with centralized processing, followed by the Great Lakes region. The nation's school system processing centers were served by 370 librarians and 707 clerical positions. The study provided information also on the types of materials processed and on the salaries of librarians serving processing centers.

In Aceto's study of processing centers in school districts of New York State, based on twenty replies from the twenty-four school systems known to have centralized processing, he discovered that 75 percent of the centers had existed ten years or less. The centers served from two to seventeen schools, all small school systems with budgets for 1960-61 ranging from $1,700 to $62,300. His report was highly critical of their procedures, noting that the centers followed
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outmoded practices, such as accessioning, that they failed to promote the instructional materials concept, and that they served school systems probably too small for economical service. The appearance of Aceto’s article in Library Journal brought three replies, two from librarians directing processing centers for Boards of Cooperative Educational Services in New York State, centers omitted from his study. Mary Ann Connor pointed out that the Monroe County Center processed books and non-book materials for forty libraries, representing a combined enrollment of 30,979. The previous year they had processed 32,285 books and additional non-book materials. Further, she protested that her center had eliminated the outmoded records of which Aceto complained, and had introduced a high degree of mechanization. At the same time, she gave support to Aceto’s basic criticisms and stated that 10,000 books per year was the minimum load necessary to make a center feasible and 20,000 books per year to make it economical. (Other authors have estimated the required figure even higher.)

Jean H. Porter provided little new evidence in her reply to Aceto’s article, but reported that the Niagara-Orleans Center was mechanized. This center, however, was actually smaller than some of the single school district processing centers included in Aceto’s survey since it processed only “6000 books . . . for eight libraries in three school districts with a pupil population of 5910.”

There can be little quarrel with the bulk of Aceto’s criticism. Most of the centers, if not all, appear to be too small to provide effective and reasonably economical central processing with staff, equipment, and facilities adequate for the job. An unfortunate recommendation in the American Association of School Librarians’ 1960 Standards for School Library Programs may have encouraged many school systems to initiate centralized processing unwisely. The standards, in a footnote, suggested that “when school systems have three or more schools, centralized processing should be introduced.” The school library standards of six states, including New York, recommend centralized processing. However, only Minnesota, which recommends centralized processing for school systems with two or more schools serving the same grade levels, uses the number of schools as a basis for determining when this service should be initiated. Florida, in school library standards most recently prepared, recommends centralized processing at the county or regional level.

Regional school library processing centers appear to represent a
new trend in many areas. The University of Wisconsin's workshop, *Planning Technical Services for School Libraries*, in 1965, was devoted to encouraging the development of cooperative processing centers in the new Co-operative Educational Service Agencies emerging in that state. Similar services have been recommended in Michigan's new Intermediate Districts. As reported above, some of New York's Boards of Cooperative Educational Services provide centralized processing for several independent school districts. Buck's County Board of Education, Doylestown, Pennsylvania, has recently received a large grant under Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, to develop central educational services for all the school districts in the county. These services will include centralized cataloging and processing. It is probable that the revised *Standards for School Library Programs*, scheduled for publication in 1968, will recommend that initiation of centralized cataloging be based on the number of volumes to be handled, and that smaller school systems band together to develop regional co-operative processing centers. Independent centers in small school systems can be neither economical nor effective.

Another trend in school system central cataloging is the use of data processing equipment and computers. Two systems, Port Huron, Michigan, and Albuquerque, New Mexico, have issued reports on their use of data processing for cataloging. Both reports emphasize the actual procedures followed. Mary Ann Swanson has described the use of data processing in technical services at Evanston Township High School in Illinois. Other school systems exhibit a mounting interest in using computer techniques for centralized cataloging.

Most school systems, large and small, which have developed centralized cataloging appear pleased with what they have. Only one school system reports partially abandoning its cataloging service. Los Angeles City Schools district, which began centralized cataloging in 1927, has partially shifted to commercialized cataloging and processing, largely because it was no longer possible to keep up with the volume of work. Since other school systems have absorbed equally large rates of growth, Mildred Frary's explanation of Los Angeles' decision to turn to a commercial firm fails to explain why a school system, which need not return a profit, cannot catalog as economically and efficiently as a commercial firm.

Far more needs to be known about centralized cataloging and processing for school libraries. Other centers ought to prepare the
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same kind of careful self-analysis and cost analysis as that prepared for Baltimore City.30 The Office of Education should gather regular, recurring statistics on processing centers of school systems and intermediate educational service agencies, using the categories proposed in the American Library Association's Library Statistics: A Handbook of Concepts, Definitions and Terminology.31 In addition, a comprehensive and detailed study of practices and procedures in processing centers is in order. Perhaps the most needed publication is a manual and guide on centralized cataloging and processing for school libraries which will outline desirable procedures and provide guidelines which will help school systems determine whether they should establish such a service.

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JULY, 1967
Cooperative Processing Centers for Public Libraries

PETER HIATT

Cooperative processing centers are increasingly considered an important solution to many problems facing the library profession today. Public library leadership in the United States is striving to reach adequate standards of service. Geographically, some areas remain unserved by any level of library service. Using the Public Library Service standards as a measure, the National Inventory of Library Needs told us that to meet minimum standards in 1963, public libraries needed an additional 6,378 professional librarians, expenditures of $438.9 million above 1962 operating expenditures, and $472 million for books. At the same time, public libraries are being called upon to meet new and special demands. Changes in educational philosophy are creating greater and more diversified student use of public libraries, while the continuing rise in the educational level of adults is increasing both the amount and the sophistication of their library use. The pressure for rapid dissemination of information is challenging the profession at one end of the spectrum, while service to the culturally disadvantaged and the physically handicapped tests professional ingenuity, imagination and flexibility at the other.

The personnel shortage long faced by the library profession shows no signs of abatement. That our leadership is concerned with the possible misuse of currently employed librarians is emphasized by the 1967 ALA Conference's central theme of "Manpower Utilization." Many suspect that trained, often highly trained, technical services personnel are not properly utilized. Book production has grown from 15,000 new titles and editions in 1960 to 28,500 in 1964. The current dollar estimate for processing the materials needed to bridge the gap

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between present holdings and minimum standards is $343.7 million. The need to avoid duplication of public library processing activities has most recently been given substance in the *Minimum Standards for Public Library Systems*, 1966: "Supportive services for the system should be organized for the greatest economy and efficiency, and should include . . . access to centralized cataloging and preparation of materials."  

This chapter attempts to survey United States public library attitudes and activities in cooperative technical services. One of the sources of confusion in surveying and discussing this area has been the lack of an accepted definition of shared cataloging activities.

**Definition.** The public library is fairly unusual in not being part of a parent institution. This fact makes the problem of defining cooperative processing at once more complex and more necessary. What is a processing center? Despite Pierce Butler's pleas, our profession is still pragmatically rather than theoretically oriented. It follows that we librarians will find ways to share the processing of materials whenever we feel it necessary, and will find labels and definitions later. Meanwhile, however, we are talking among ourselves about the subject and trying to convince those outside the library profession.

In discussion, we are less apt to erect unnecessary barriers if we start with common accurate vocabulary. When, for example, is cataloging not centralized? Is the Library of Congress' distribution of catalog cards centralized cataloging? To what extent must the preparation of the physical books be handled, in order for a center to qualify as a processing center? What about the terms "cooperative" and "centralized" technical services? Is "centralized" not redundant when "cooperative" is used? Is the problem one simply of definition and not of concept? Centralized processing has prospered, usually happily, under several different names. These names use potentially hackle-raising words such as "cooperative," "regional," "state," and "central." Some of the more commonly used terms and their definitions need to be examined. One definition states:

Centralized processing may be considered to be those steps whereby library materials for several independent libraries, either by contract or informal agreement, are ordered, cataloged, and physically prepared for use by library patrons, these operations being performed in one location with billing, packing and distribution to these same libraries.

This definition is inadequate for two reasons. It excludes library sys-
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tems such as the large public library which centralizes the processing procedures for its departments and branches. Secondly, it requires that all operations be handled centrally for the definition to be applied. Probably the very term "centralized processing" is too generally applicable to be appropriate to the situations which we wish to identify.

In 1966 ALA’s Regional Processing Committee (Resources and Technical Services Division) struggled with a title for its “Guidelines” which are designed for use by cooperative processing centers. They decided on “Guidelines for Centralized Technical Services.” The “Guidelines” define a technical services center as “an agency ordering, receiving, cataloging, and preparing materials, for two or more libraries.” This definition, in being more specific, seems closer to an adequate working definition.

Library Statistics: A Handbook of Concepts, Definitions, and Terminology offers the following pertinent terms and definitions:

Centralized processing—“The ordering of books, preparation of catalog records, and physical preparation of books in one library or a central agency for all libraries of a system (or area).”

Cooperative system—“A group of independent and autonomous libraries banded together by informal or formal agreements or contracts which stipulate the common services to be planned and coordinated by the directors of the cooperative system.”

Cooperative services—“The common services planned and coordinated by a cooperative system.”

These current definitions seem to combine all the essential elements.

The guess is that most of the definitions put forth in ALA’s Library Statistics will find increasing acceptance, and, at least for the immediate future, will be increasingly reflected in current practice. Working with these definitions, the next step would be to examine the range of activities found in cooperative processing centers in the 1960’s.

A processing center can offer the following technical services: it can supply catalog cards only; select books for member libraries; order books; and process books, i.e., fully prepare the book with cards and markings. It is apparent that the potential range of activities in a cooperative processing center is great, but in most centers today, it ordinarily includes ordering, cataloging and classification, and the physical preparation of the items.

With these activities in mind, then, the term which seems best to
delimit and yet include these essential elements of current practice is “cooperative processing centers.” It is possible to find this redundant, yet the term includes the necessary elements of “independent and autonomous libraries banded together” informally or formally for “the ordering of books, preparation of catalog records, and physical preparation of books. . . .” It is worth noting that in 1953 Lucile Morsch apparently found the words “cooperative” and “centralized” non-redundant for her chapter, “Cooperation and Centralization,” in Library Trends.

History. The urgency of concern for cooperative processing is recent; many suggestions for coping with the problems of personnel shortage and extension of service have long been with us. In fact, the ill-fated Cataloging-in-Source experiment of the late 1950’s seemingly was more than a gleam in Melvil Dewey’s eye even in 1885, for he said then:

... many an eloquent essay has been written of the enormous saving that will be effected, when the book will be cataloged once for all as a part of its publication, no more leaving each of the 1,000 libraries that buy it to go through all the processes, than leaving each to make his copy of the work itself as the monks copied their Bibles before the invention of printing.

Cooperative or centralized processing in one form or another is not a new idea. The idea can be dated back to at least 1850 when Charles Jewett suggested that his Smithsonian Institution Library act as a center for library cooperative activities including cooperative cataloging. A search through Library Literature and Cannon’s Bibliography of Library Economy indicates that some interest in public library cooperative, centralized or shared technical services has been continuously evident for a long time, but the greatest emphasis has been in the period beginning with 1950 with over two-thirds of the citations appearing since that time.

Librarians have long talked and written about cooperative and centralized processing. The literature is abundant. Prior to 1956, however, word seems to have been translated into deed only occasionally. As early as 1893 the idea of printed card distribution appeared in the literature: “Central card cataloging—i.e., the issue of satisfactory printed catalog cards to libraries from a central office—has long been recognized as one of the greatest needs of latter-day library work.” The Library of Congress has produced catalog cards for libraries of all types since 1901. The H. W. Wilson Company has been supplying

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commercial catalog card service since 1938. Libraries serving single political units have usually centralized their technical services. Centralized processing in probably more common among public library systems than among other types of libraries. In the 1960's, however, it is still possible to find examples of large public libraries which have not entirely centralized their processing.

Examples of independent libraries working together at some aspect of centralized processing are far more recent. Georgia, in 1944, became the first state to have centralized catalog card distribution. The Georgia Library Association formally requested the service, and the State Cataloging Service of the Georgia State Department of Education started the production and distribution of catalog cards for titles purchased with state funds. The service is paid for by state aid funds to public libraries. In 1948, the Watertown (New York) Regional Library Service Center was set up under the auspices of the New York State Library; centralized processing for member libraries was included in its activities. The Sheboygan (Wisconsin) Public Library has been selling processing services to several of the small surrounding public libraries since the late 1940's. A few other examples of large public library centers processing by contract (with their beginning dates) are: Rochester (New York) Public Library, 1953; the Clinton-Essex-Franklin (New York) Public Library, 1954; Salinas and Monterey County (California) Libraries, 1954; and Wayne County (Michigan) Library System, 1956. In 1950 Erie County, New York began cooperative processing. In 1953 Monroe County, New York (since joined with Rochester Public Library's processing system) undertook the same step; and in 1954 the Fort Loudon (Texas) Regional Library System began its service to several county libraries.

Since the early 1950's the South Carolina State Library has been processing books for libraries lacking professional personnel. The Arkansas Library Commission has offered catalog cards, book pockets and cards at cost since 1954 to all public libraries requesting them. Kentucky's Department of Libraries inaugurated centralized processing in 1954. In 1956 the Missouri State Library implemented an earlier recommendation of the Missouri Libraries Planning Committee by offering catalog cards at cost to Missouri public libraries.

The compilation of a complete census of cooperative public library processing centers has been attempted at least three times. James Hunt's initial list in 1961 was the best available for several years. More recently the Regional Processing Committee of ALA's Resources July, 1967
and Technical Services Division and Sarah K. Vann have published similar lists. Both requested advice concerning corrections and additions, but even though no response was received it should not be assumed that their lists are complete. The question of definition, again, is part of the problem. Several libraries responding to the Regional Processing Committee's questionnaire thought they did not qualify as regional processing centers (the term used in the committee's questionnaire); the committee agreed, however, that two of them should indeed be so recorded. The listings cited here identified more than sixty public library cooperative processing centers in operation in 1966.

The basic concept of the 1956 Public Library Service standards is that quality public library service requires large library systems. Even though librarians had long maintained this view, it was not until the Library Services Act of 1956 that funds were made available on a grand enough scale to permit massive action. Public Library Service clearly stated the systems concept; L. S. A. gave Federal recognition and funds to develop systems. Among the early L. S. A. projects were cooperative efforts in technical services.

In 1956 one of the currently existing cooperative processing centers came into being; in 1957 and 1958, eight were established; and in 1959-1960, eighteen. More public library regional processing centers have been established since 1958 than in the previous seventy-five years. The twelve years from 1955 to the present have seen the dream of cooperative processing become a reality.

The Current Scene: Survey of Practices in the 1960's. It is not possible to put together a detailed, clear description of the status of cooperative processing centers. Perhaps this fact is significant in itself. Sarah K. Vann's survey in 1966, conducted as part of her study for the Free Library of Philadelphia, and the survey by ALA's Regional Processing Committee, offer the most reliable information. While neither source is complete, together they offer a picture, if a somewhat imperfect one.

In 1965-66, sixty-three cooperative processing centers were identified. The following nineteen states, however, are without at least one center: Alabama, Alaska, Connecticut, Delaware, Idaho, Kansas, Louisiana, Maine, Mississippi, Nebraska, New Jersey, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia, and Washington. (Delaware, it should be noted, participates in the Eastern Shore Book Processing Center in Maryland.) Californ-
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nia, Hawaii, Nevada, New Mexico, North Carolina, Texas and Wyoming each offer state-wide service from the state library agency, and Georgia, Michigan, and New Hampshire offer card service.

While most public libraries do not yet avail themselves of such opportunities, many do. The spring 1966 survey of ALA's Regional Processing Committee makes this clear. Approximately 2,000 independent public libraries belong to regional processing centers. (This is a minimum figure. Some centers reported that a system of libraries, e.g., a county library system, counts as "one.") Including state library processing, the typical regional processing center serves thirty-six libraries. The median number of member libraries served by a regional processing center is thirty.

Annual budgets for operating expenses range from $4,000 to $450,000. The mean is $142,200 per year. The average cost per volume processed (at best a misleading figure and in this survey only a rough estimate) is $1.41, and the average number of volumes processed per year is 56,900 (approximately 9,000 titles). Most of the centers, as of 1965–66, processed only for public libraries, but nine included school libraries and six centers process for colleges. Most employ card catalogs, but two issue book catalogs. All but ten offer a full range of processing, from the simple ordering of books to the delivery of books ready for shelving. The various means of funding cooperative processing include contract, Federal subsidy, per-book charge, and ratio of individual library income to center operation cost.

The equipment used in these centers ranges from a Univac 1004 (one center), to the minimal tools needed to purchase LC and Wilson cards (three centers). Multilith is used by thirty, photoduplication equipment by twenty-three, and Addressograph equipment by eleven. Although seven centers were using Flexowriters in 1965, eleven employed typewriters, and eleven made use of mimeograph equipment. Other mechanical aids such as conveyor belts were in use, but the questionnaire was not sufficiently detailed to elicit full information.

*The Cooperative Processing Center: A Profile.* The difficulty of adequately delineating a typical cooperative processing center is made clear by the information presented by Miss Vann elsewhere in this issue. However, several classic descriptions ought to be cited; all are now dated, and a visitor to each center would notice changes. The Southwest Missouri Library Service in Bolivar, Missouri, has provided the operational pattern for many centers established later. Organized in the fall of 1957 with ten member libraries—the number
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had grown to fourteen by 1966—the center is supported by fees paid by the members based on a ratio between their respective budgets and the center’s total budget. The operating budget in the first year of operation was $10,000; the 1966-67 operating budget is $38,000. It operates on a nonprofit basis. The original members were two city libraries (serving populations of 38,700 and 66,700), three regional libraries (37,000; 45,700; and 33,800), and five county libraries (18,000; 12,400; 38,100; 23,800 and 8,800).

From the start, Southwest Missouri has used an Elliott Addressing Machine for printing cards. Its other equipment includes electric and manual typewriters, stencil and card storage cabinets, an adding machine, book trucks, book pocket bins, a numbering machine, a pasting machine, filing cabinets, and a mimeograph. The processing procedure equates with that of a relatively efficient public library system’s technical services department. Each library in the Southwest Missouri Library Service system places its order with the jobber or publisher, using identical forms. A copy of the order form is sent to the center, which either prepares a new catalog card stencil or attaches the order slip to a stencil made previously. Original cataloging is kept to a minimum and LC proof sheets are used for preparing catalog entries. Non-book items are not processed, but catalog cards are prepared for such materials as films and recordings.

When the books arrive at the center and orders have been verified, book pockets are glued in and title pages are stamped to show ownership. Catalog cards are put with the books, which are then placed on each library’s delivery shelf. Unlike the practice of some centers, lettering and plastic covers are handled at the recipient library. In 1966, the Missouri State Library took over the operation of another cooperative processing center, the Missouri Library Services Center, and a recommendation has been made to incorporate the Southwest Missouri Center into a state-wide processing service.

Current Trends and Problems. Several important trends in the 1960’s are affecting cooperative processing centers. In a very recent survey of automation in American libraries, Harrison Bryan observes that “the dominant impression is not of the automation that there was, but of the great number of places where it was not. . . . I think that there are rather more librarians in America with very little intention of hastening at all [the automation of libraries] than one might expect from the literature.” Although Bryan’s investigation was limited to university library practices, his observations probably reflect the
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public libraries' attitudes toward automation as well. Several public libraries have been investigating the feasibility of automation for cooperative processing centers. The Library of Congress' Project MARC (Machine Readable Catalog) is being tested on a trial basis in sixteen libraries across the nation; one school system and one public library system are included among them.

The Nassau County (New York) Public Library has accepted MARC tapes and indicated willingness to expand their use when appropriate; it processes a quarter of a million volumes each year for fifty member libraries. Since this center deals with approximately 20,000 titles a year, almost all of them English language, it is likely to find Project MARC especially suitable. Of course, it is difficult to predict with confidence whether or not LC magnetic-tape catalog data, taking into account their costs and their present limitations of scope (no non-English titles, no serials, etc.), will prove sufficiently advantageous to replace the less expensive and nearly as prompt proof sheets. In the mid-sixties Project MARC has many implications, basic among which is the potential of machine-produced, automated, Federal cataloging for the nation's libraries.

Meanwhile, public library cooperative processing centers have themselves been concerned with the mechanization of current operations. Most of them turn out an acceptable product at reasonable cost with a minimum of equipment. Several public library systems (e.g., King County, Washington, and Los Angeles County, California) have gone further than most in mechanizing processing procedures, perhaps pointing the way for other cooperative centers. Thus far, the cooperative centers, less tightly structured administratively, have done less in the way of mechanization. However, Xerox, Thermofax copiers, Flexowriters, multilith, ditto and Addressograph are all widely represented in existing centers.15

The administration of Library Services and Construction Act funds by state library agencies has furthered another important development: state and Federal professional leadership. It is entirely possible that this leadership will do more in the long run to change attitudes toward cooperation among independent units than have the so-far disappointing demonstration projects and direct infusion of funds.

Another trend, which as yet does not seem to have affected independent libraries involved in processing centers, is the shift some libraries are making from Dewey Decimal Classification to Library
of Congress Classification. No center has reported such a shift, and the Nassau County (New York) Public Library Processing Center has registered an intent to remain with Dewey Classification even though its participation in Project MARC presents an opportunity to change.

Several other trends have immediate implications for public library cooperative processing centers. Many book jobbers and publishers have begun to offer cards with books, and at least one publisher is currently investigating Cataloging-in-Source. Such partial cataloging should be acceptable to processing centers, but at present there seems no likelihood that such service will become available on a large enough scale to offer the independent public library better service than it can now receive from membership in a processing center.

Commercial processing centers seem to this author a reasonable alternative to cooperative processing, and a panel of practicing experts at the 1966 New York ALA Convention stated that they considered the choice only a practical one of cost, speed, and quality.

Economic pressure from without, as well as the long-held philosophy within the profession, has increasingly encouraged cross-type library cooperation. Several of the public library cooperative processing centers offer their services to school libraries. At least two process materials for junior college libraries.

Nelson Associates' 1966 report to the New York State Library is titled *Feasibility of School and College Library Processing Through Public Library Systems in New York State.* The state libraries of Hawaii, Georgia, and Ohio (to name a few) already process for school as well as for public libraries. The Crawfordsville (Indiana) Processing Center, the Library Services Center of Eastern Ohio, and the Weld County (Colorado) Library provide service to many schools. The Monterey County (California) Center is processing for a junior college in addition to its public library members. So long as the requirements for cataloging and classification are at a somewhat similar level there is no reason to believe that public library cooperative processing centers cannot also serve schools and junior colleges. The Lansing City (Michigan) Public Library has been successfully processing books for a junior college and for the city's school system for some years. Processing materials for more than one type of library can hardly be identified as a trend, but its feasibility has already been demonstrated.

Finally, the most significant question is whether or not there is truly a trend toward cooperative centralized processing among public li-
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Evidence of something similar to an explosion in this area since the mid-1950's has been presented, but such an explosion does not necessarily constitute a trend. Too many opposing factors present themselves (e.g., commercial and Federal processing) to permit a firm conclusion that cooperative processing is indeed a trend at present.

Federal funds have contributed significantly to the realization of the "cooperative" philosophy in technical services, but many problems still provide barriers to the development of cooperative processing. More than five dozen centers existed in 1966. Impressive as is this figure historically, it is not too impressive when balanced against the many small public libraries not included in any processing network, and against the eighteen states with no cooperative processing available. There has been and there remains a hesitation both within the profession and among lay leaders to understand the need for centralized processing. After all, the complexity of library interrelationships does make cooperation difficult. Local, state and Federal laws have been changed in many areas to allow for forms of cooperative library enterprise, but the new laws are often cumbersome and in political terms may be difficult to exploit. Tax bases are increasingly uneven and often inadequate. The spirit of local autonomy all too often takes precedence over professional philosophy and public need. Many areas still jealously guard their total independence as being more important than the benefits of a full range of library resources and services.

On another level, librarians face problems within the profession. There continues to be considerable disagreement over methods and approaches to the centralization of processing. Should the classification for one community be so tailored to that individual community that it cannot reasonably be handled at a distant center? Can the output of a center be accepted by a local library unit without substantial change? Is there any evidence that giving up local modifications for the sake of general economy is the better choice?

What happens when cataloging is so thoroughly handled at the center that the local library no longer is involved in the processing of books? Is there any real loss to the community when no one locally is directly concerned with the classification of materials? Practically, the answer in the long run may have to be no. Presently there seems to be no alternative. But the barrier of questioning and doubt still remains. A basic problem is how to make cooperative processing more effective.
centers truly effective. Cost, speed and customizing of cataloging and classification are aspects of this problem which have received a great deal of attention.

The few studies that we have do not support the assumption that cooperative cataloging is necessarily cheaper. In a recent report, Hendricks points out that "Although centralized processing proved to be more expensive . . . no members would advocate a return to each library processing its own books. . . . But if the cost of centralized processing can be kept to a reasonable figure, its definite advantages should justify the program. . . ." The early Carhart study of Southwest Missouri Library Service, Inc. did not prove that centralized processing is cheaper. In fact, several libraries not previously supporting quality cataloging found their costs substantially higher.

The time gap between the ordering and the receipt of materials is another continuing problem and, therefore, another argument against centralized processing. Obviously no processing center can process a book and speed it to the individual library faster than that library might accomplish the task alone. But this is a captious argument. The individual library might well do faster processing in "emergency" cases, but when joined to a processing center it can benefit in other ways from staff time saved and from improved processing. Shared personnel can create special problems, but often an individual library is sharing personnel when it previously had no one.

The arguments for cooperative and centralized processing are well-established. Increased efficiency is possible in a larger unit possessed of proper equipment, well-planned physical layout, and professional supervisory personnel. While centralized processing may cost more, other important values enter the picture. The cooperative unit is more likely to achieve less expensively the same standard of processing as that of the independent units. (Of course, this may not appear true if the center's personnel are paid at nationally competitive rates compared to the almost "volunteer" wages of many small libraries.) Professional assistance becomes available to libraries unable to obtain it on an independent basis. Another argument is that staff time freed through centralized processing will enable some member libraries to offer more reader services.

On a national scale, the observer can see diminished duplication of cataloging as cooperative processing increases. The shortage of personnel makes it impossible for every public library to hire competent
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technical services librarians; at the same time, many libraries now do very little cataloging or none at all. Some would argue that uniformity of library catalogs is of potential service to the mobile public. Surely, however, none would argue that the quality of cataloging is not better served by practiced, specialized personnel.

While all of the public library cooperative processing centers are processing books, apparently none is dealing to any extent with the vast range of nonbook materials. The public library should, after all, be concerned with recorded ideas, not books alone. However, the current state of development of processing centers does not yet reflect this philosophy. The problems of processing recordings, for example, are slight. The problems of processing 8 mm. films, slides, or similar non-book materials are admittedly more complex. This author has not been able to identify a single public library cooperative processing center which processes all materials and fosters the integrated catalog long called for by the profession.

In the past a lot of effort has gone into pragmatic demonstrations that processing centers can process; much missionary spirit has been expended and a great deal of hortatory material has been published. Library philosophy has slowly evolved to embrace the system concept. We are now at the stage where we must have facts. At present it is not really possible to find an honest, accurate comparison of center costs and efficiency. Each survey and study in its turn notes the need for comparative data. Reports indicate the number of titles handled but not the level of cataloging and classification involved. What are the actual duties of seemingly comparable positions? What about comparative overhead costs? In many cases, we do not know the full range of equipment used by a center. Even general statements on costs per volume processed are suspect, since seldom have cost accounting techniques been uniformly applied. We need objective cost analysis and management study of operations.

The library field still faces professional disagreement on methods, and only too often we find professionally-originated delay in the implementation of the ideas of cooperative processing centers. More studies and research presenting concrete evidence should help to break down professional and political resistance.

Research Needed. Trends in cooperative public library processing have been noted. Are these healthy trends? Given a choice, what direction of development should processing centers select? For example, Project MARC was initiated to demonstrate the practicality
and to explore the problems of computer-produced cataloging information. The field of technical services in general has taken cognizance of the need for further investigation of the application of automation. Cooperating independent libraries can also purchase or rent machine time, and research is needed now to determine where and when the automation of cooperative processing might be practical.

To what extent can different kinds of libraries pool their processing needs? Several libraries have turned deliberately to commercial rather than cooperative processing. Other libraries need information on which to base a similar decision. At what point does the advantage, financially and in terms of good cataloging standards, necessitate the choice of one type of processing over another? What about costs? When does catalog card reproduction by a center, or the purchase of commercially-prepared cards, become more economical, or offer better quality, than production by individual libraries? When is it reasonable to set up a center?

What kind of training and education is needed by staff in a cooperative processing center? Are the tasks and assignments of cooperative processing personnel any different from those of personnel operating in a large library system? Technical services needs personnel research. We do not really know exactly what the professional and clerical tasks are. Since we do not know, library education may very well be teaching the wrong, or at least somewhat inappropriate, ideas. With cooperative processing centers assuming the tasks of member libraries, there is often little contact between the processing center personnel and the member libraries. With no one on the local staff immediately involved, the traditional questions, such as who is to interpret the catalog to the public, who is to make realistic suggestions for changes in subject headings, in classification, or in cross references, become more urgent. Does the processing center need to institute in-service training for member libraries? Does the lack of direct, public contact have any important influence on the processing procedure? We have guesses and emotional reactions. We need factual information.

The library profession is pragmatically oriented. The call for research has been long and steady, if not sufficiently loud. The area delineated by technical services lends itself to measurable research more easily than do public services, yet even here we find little substantial research. Librarians have devoted a lot of energy to the de-
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dvelopment of processing center operations, but have devoted less
effort to evaluating and comparing centers, or to considering the
values of alternate means of processing. In addition to basic research
in technical services in general, as well as in cataloging and classifica-
tion, processing centers would benefit from studies concerning the
most effective methods of handling non-book materials. Much of the
present knowledge of processing audio-visual materials, for example,
comes from the practical experience of school librarians, and much
of this experience is know-how neither analyzed nor evaluated. (The
current move back to color-coded catalog cards is but one frightening
example.) Each of the problems facing cooperative processing cen-
ters needs research for adequate solution.

Finally, centralized processing needs continual appraisal both on
the management level and on the theoretical level. Basically, how
can the cooperative processing center be more effective? Research,
both political and sociological, is needed. Some authorities in political
science have suggested that the state government will become an in-
creasingly strong source of governmental leadership in the years
ahead. If this is true, the implications for library systems, and par-
ticularly for cooperative networks, are obvious. We need further re-
search to determine if this is true, and if so, just what the implications
for libraries may be.

No one seems to have asked the question as to whether or not the
concept of “cooperative” processing is a healthy one. In our rush to
process cooperatively, are we actually establishing barriers to the
future development of full, integrated library systems? Will this situ-
ation parallel Carnegie’s sponsorship of many public library buildings
in communities which then as a consequence never had to face up
to the full responsibility of library support? Just as a community has
often first awakened to the full responsibilities of library support when
it has replaced its old Carnegie building, so librarians some years
from now may be faced with the difficulty of selling administrative
centralization on a large, even national, scale, to leaders used to the
comparative laissez faire of cooperative ventures. If public libraries
are to increase the effectiveness of their role in shaping the future,
their leadership must fully investigate every aspect of making re-
corded information available. Such an investigation of cooperative
processing centers could reveal that they are a temporary expedient
only.

JULY, 1967
PETER HIATT

Bibliographical Note

This chapter has attempted to summarize the major aspects of cooperative processing for independent public libraries. Although information about these centers is still difficult to obtain, several authors have made important contributions which may be considered milestones in the literature of cooperative processing. Further information of some importance is available in these key materials.

In “Regional Processing for Public Libraries, A Survey,” Dorothy Bendix characterizes and describes existing processing centers and notes the beginning of practical interest in the concept. Frances Dukes Carhart’s *Southwest Missouri Library Service, Inc.* presents a detailed picture of one of the early, influential processing centers. An extensive bibliography by Mary Hanley, *Centralized Processing, Recent Trends and Current Status; A Review and Synthesis of the Literature,* organizes the major material on centralized as well as cooperative processing by states and includes both a bibliographic essay and a general bibliography.

Mary Lee Bundy’s *Public Library Processing Centers: A Report of a Nationwide Survey* describes the “explosion period” in the development of processing centers. Much of this material is available nowhere else.

James R. Hunt’s “The Historical Development of Processing Centers in the United States” is still the basic history, and it offers the first attempt at listing regional processing centers.

“Guidelines for Centralized Technical Services” is a practical guide for the administrator, trustee, or technical services director considering or planning a cooperative processing center. Nelson Associates’ *Centralized Processing for the Public Libraries of New York State* is a lengthy survey with recommendations. The findings and recommendations should serve as general guidelines for any large area considering the feasibility of centralized processing for a large number of public libraries of all sizes. In *Comparative Costs of Book Processing in a Processing Center and in Five Individual Libraries* Donald D. Hendricks has made the most successful analysis to date of the quality and costs of cooperative processing centers. R. T. S. D.’s Regional Processing Committee has probably made the most complete listing of processing centers in its 1966 survey (available in mimeograph form from ALA). A corrected version with interpretation is planned for publication in 1967.

What appears to be the most thorough study of characteristics,
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operations, programs, and attitudes was summarized in Sarah K. Vann's "Southeastern Pennsylvania Processing Center Feasibility Study: A Summary." 13

The current literature concerning cooperative processing centers, the areas of current research, and the growth in size and number of cooperative processing centers emphasize the importance of cooperative processing to the field today.

References

2. Ibid., p. 17.
7. Ibid., p. 132.


22. Bundy, Mary Lee, op. cit.


The Library of Congress: Its Role in Cooperative and Centralized Cataloging

JOHN M. DAWSON

The movement, if such it can be called, toward centralized cataloging in the United States is a venerable one with a documented history of one hundred and twenty years, and it is more than likely that unknown librarians had conceived of it still earlier in a conceivably happier age when librarians were not conditioned to break into print with every wave of thought. The history is long and faltering; it is studded with the names of men who were giants of librarianship; it is replete with vast dreams and crushing disappointments. But now, in this second half of the twentieth century, the old hopes for a comprehensive plan of centralized cataloging from the Library of Congress appear to be on the threshold of realization.

Centralized and cooperative cataloging first reached print with the oft-told story of Charles Coffin Jewett’s proposal that the Smithsonian Institution accumulate stereotype blocks of its cataloging and that of other libraries for the mutual benefit of all. Either because of technical difficulties or because of the administrative conflict between Jewett and Joseph Henry, the Secretary of the Institution, the plan came to naught. Had Jewett’s view prevailed, the Smithsonian library might have become the national library of the United States and centralized cataloging a reality almost half a century before the Library of Congress assumed the task. Jewett’s plan was significant, not alone because of his plan for stereotyped entries, but equally because of his recognition of the need for uniform cataloging.

The year 1876 saw the founding of the American Library Association, and from that day to this it has been goading and encouraging the Library of Congress, first to embark upon and later to expand its programs of cooperative and centralized cataloging. At the Philadelphia convention at which the ALA was founded, Melvil Dewey raised
the question of cooperative cataloging and later, as editor of the Library Journal, urged centralized cataloging. Dewey asked, “Shall we try to establish a central cataloguing bureau supported by the Association? Can the publishers be induced to prepare suitable titles and furnish them with books? Is it practical for the Library of Congress to catalogue for the whole country?” While the Association and commercial enterprises did indeed attempt to provide both cooperative and centralized cataloging, Dewey continued to point to the Library of Congress as the logical agency to undertake the burden.

In 1900 the Cooperation Committee of the ALA announced its plans for the Publishing Board to print cards from cooperating libraries and arrangements were made for the Library of Congress to sell these cards for the Publishing Board. Dewey, who had been frustrated by the multiplicity of committees and the concomitant lack of action, applauded the scheme, but suggested that a better solution was for the Library of Congress, as part of its function as the library center of the country, to print and distribute its own catalog cards.

In September, 1901 the new Librarian of Congress, Herbert Putnam, announced that the Library of Congress was prepared to distribute copies of its own printed cards directly to libraries that wanted them, and in October of that year he issued a circular describing the Library’s plan for selling cards—at two cents for the first copy and one-half cent for each additional copy. At last the Library of Congress had accepted at least part of its responsibility for centralized cataloging by distributing its cards at cost plus ten percent. In addition to selling its cards, it distributed to a select list of libraries (twenty-one in the first year) one free copy of each card printed. This was the beginning of the depository catalog program which was and, in one form or another, continues to be an invaluable service to scholarship. That a need existed and that the Library of Congress could fulfill it was quickly demonstrated: in its first nine months the card service sold cards to 212 libraries, made cash sales of $3,785.19 and received deposit accounts in the amount of $6,451.53.

When other government libraries agreed to furnish copy for printing and distribution, the card service became more useful. The Library of the Department of Agriculture was first, followed by the Geological Survey, and eventually eighteen government agencies contributed copy. The Washington, D.C. Public Library began to contribute copy in 1905 and other non-governmental libraries soon followed suit. The stock of cards grew rapidly: at the end of 1902 cards were available
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for some 90,000 titles; six years later they were available for over 347,000 titles, and the number has grown steadily and rapidly ever since. In 1910 the Library of Congress developed another source for copy by asking those libraries which had been designated to receive depository catalogs, plus some half-dozen others, to supply copy for printing for titles which the Library of Congress did not anticipate acquiring; about one-third did begin to participate in this cooperative venture. As more libraries adopted LC cards for their own catalogs, the number of libraries supplying copy for printing increased and approximately ten percent of the copy for cards printed between 1910 and 1932 was supplied by other libraries.

In spite of the successful card distribution program and the growing stock of cards, the needs of the research libraries of the country still had not been met. In 1923 the American Library Association appointed a Committee on Bibliography under the chairmanship of Ernest Cushing Richardson, Librarian of Princeton University. Richardson and his committee had great visions but produced little; the profession saw no solutions to its problems emerging. A symposium on cooperative cataloging in 1927 under the auspices of the Association’s Catalog Section produced another committee which later reported “college and university libraries are reporting that from twenty to seventy-five per cent of their annual accessions are not covered by Library of Congress printed cards,” and urged that the Association support an investigation of cooperative cataloging. This Special Committee in 1931 asked that a permanent committee be appointed to investigate and nurture cooperative cataloging. This was done, with Keyes Metcalf as chairman, and a grant of $13,500 was secured from the General Education Board to finance the investigation.

Metcalf’s committee studied the duplication of original cataloging in forty-nine libraries, the coverage by LC cards of foreign publications acquired by those libraries, and the savings that libraries could have made had LC cards been available. They estimated the costs of soliciting, revising, printing and distributing cards from copy contributed by cooperating libraries, and evolved a plan to establish an office at the Library of Congress to solicit and revise copy. The cards were to be printed and distributed by the Library of Congress at a price of ten cents per title above the price of regular LC cards. The General Education Board provided a grant of $45,000 to finance the project for its first three years, after which, it was hoped, the income
from the sale of cards would enable the office to be self-sustaining.\textsuperscript{12}

In 1932 the office began operations. In its first fifteen months thirty-three libraries had contributed copy for 6,181 titles, 2,326 of them foreign, and for 4,492 monographs in series. In June, 1934 the office was reorganized as a division of the Library of Congress—the Cooperative Cataloging and Classification Service—including in its work the assignment of Dewey Decimal Classification numbers and (beginning in 1936) the revision of copy supplied under earlier agreements. This service operated under the joint auspices of the Cooperative Cataloging Committee and the Library of Congress—subsidized by the latter—until 1940. On July 1 of that year as a part of the general reorganization of the Processing Department, the service was reconstituted as the Cooperative Cataloging Section of the Descriptive Cataloging Division and severed its relationship with the Cooperative Cataloging Committee. Cooperative cataloging increased in the post-war years when the libraries included in the Cooperative Acquisitions Program agreed to furnish copy for titles received in the fields in which they had priority of acquisition. Similar agreements later provided cooperative copy from libraries participating in the Farmington Plan for the acquisition of foreign titles.

Cooperative cataloging had, through June of 1965, provided copy for about 518,000 titles. The high-water mark was reached in 1959 when over 16,000 titles were cataloged with cooperative copy; the flow declined sharply in 1962 when university libraries were no longer asked to provide copy for their own dissertations (the Library of Congress having worked out an arrangement with University Microfilms for Dissertation Abstracts). At the same time the Farmington Plan libraries began reporting their acquisitions directly to the National Union Catalog instead of submitting cooperative copy.\textsuperscript{13} In 1965 only 6,415 titles were cataloged with cooperative copy. Cooperative cataloging had never been envisioned as an adequate substitute for centralized cataloging. It had, however, contributed significantly to the Card Division’s stock and added another increment to the card service. Recent developments within the Library of Congress indicate that cooperative cataloging may soon disappear as a factor of any significance.

In 1942 appeared the first volumes of the Library of Congress Catalog of Printed Cards; publication was completed in 1946 in a total of 167 volumes. This great enterprise, sponsored by the Association of Research Libraries with the cooperation of the Library of Congress,
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introduced a new era in American bibliography. Many depository libraries abandoned their depository catalogs which were space-consum- ing and expensive to maintain. (Indeed, many libraries were hopelessly in arrears in filing.) Other libraries which had no depository catalogs were able to buy the book catalog, and the entire cataloging copy of the Library of Congress was thus available to them. Supplements were published through 1952; after that cards from other libraries sent to the National Union Catalog were included and the title was changed to The National Union Catalog, still published currently. At the time of writing (December, 1966) the Library of Congress and the American Library Association have signed an agreement which will result in publication of the entries received by the National Union Catalog before 1952. Since book catalogs are dealt with elsewhere in this issue, their use and importance will not be discussed here.

After years of slow but steady progress, the card distribution pro- gram received a setback when, in 1948, in response to the ill-advised dictate of the House Committee on Appropriations, the average price per card was increased from three to four cents so that a portion of the costs of cataloging within the Library of Congress could be re- captured. This action resulted in higher income but a decline in the number of cards sold. After hearing testimony from the library profession and the Librarian of Congress, the Committee wisely reversed itself in 1949, expressing the opinion "that this activity, which has approximately 8,300 customers, should not be singled out for separate and distinct treatment . . . and, accordingly, suggests that when the price structure is revised for the fiscal year 1950, the cataloging cost element be excluded."14 Since then, except for the increase required when Public Law 286 (1954) required all government agencies to pay their own costs of postage, increases in the price of cards have been due solely to rising costs.

In 1948 Ralph Ellsworth proposed that the Library of Congress become the centralized cataloging agency for the entire country; his plan called for it to undertake the cataloging of all new books added to the libraries of the United States. The costs of this program were to be borne by assessing each library for its share of the cataloging.15 Ellsworth's proposal was far-reaching in its implications, but it seems to have stunned the librarians of the country rather than have caught their imaginations. Even the Librarian of Congress remarked on how little response there was to the proposal. Perhaps it was impractical—
the writer does not think so—but certainly it was imaginative and challenging and deserved the support of the profession. Obviously it was ahead of its time. It died from sheer inertia.

A continuing problem in the use of LC cards has always been to find the LC card number easily so as to order at the lowest price. In 1947 Publishers' Weekly and the Library of Congress arranged to provide LC card numbers with the listings of new books in the "Weekly Record" section. In 1951 some publishers agreed to print the LC card number in their books, and by 1952 over one hundred publishers were doing so; the number has grown steadily over the years.

In 1953 the Library of Congress inaugurated its "All-the-Books" program, by which publishers sent copies of their books to the Library in advance of the publication date so that printed cards could be made available to libraries promptly. Developed in conjunction with the publication of the United States Quarterly Book Review, the program was later expanded by securing on loan from Publishers' Weekly and Library Journal copies of books they received for listing which had not already been acquired by the Library.

The cataloging of oriental works was added to the card stock when, in 1950, the cataloging of the Orientalia Division and of six other libraries with major oriental collections was made available by photolithographic reproduction. In 1958 printed cards for Chinese, Japanese, and Korean works became available following acquisition of the required typesetting equipment, and, again, other libraries were invited to contribute their copy for printing.

Many librarians have long considered that having the text of catalog cards printed in the book itself was the ideal means for achieving centralized cataloging, for then the cataloger would have in hand, without the need for some extraneous "tool," both the book and the cataloging information. This, in tandem with a camera on every cataloger's desk, would, it was thought, produce instant cataloging at the lowest possible cost. In the 1890's there were several attempts to provide such "cataloging-in-source," none of which had any widespread or lasting success. Yet the dream had survived. In 1958 the Council on Library Resources made a grant to the Library of Congress for an exploration of "cataloging-in-source," and Andrew Osborn's preliminary report recommended that a pilot project be undertaken to test the feasibility of the concept. The Council on Library Resources thereupon made another grant, this one for $55,000, to the
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Library of Congress for a one-year experiment to test the problems involved in cataloging from page proof furnished by publishers and including the text of the cataloging somewhere in the book. The utilization of cataloging-in-source was also to be looked into. During the experimental period some 1,200 publications were cataloged from page proof and the cataloging copy printed in the books as they were published, and two hundred libraries were visited by members of a "consumers' reaction" panel. At the termination of the experiment the panel concluded that, "The only conclusion to be drawn from the Consumer Reaction Survey is that Cataloging-in-Source is indeed wanted, would be used, and is needed." The Librarian of Congress, on the other hand, was sure that a permanent full-scale program could not be justified in terms of financing, technical considerations, or utility. He was "compelled to the conclusion that . . . the Library of Congress should not seek funds for a further experiment along these lines." So died Cataloging-in-Source.

The early and unexpected demise of Cataloging-in-Source was a shock to a large segment of the library profession and caused some bitter reaction. Paul Dunkin called the report "an unexpected abdication of leadership by what we had come to look to as the National Library." In truth, Cataloging-in-Source had been a source of much difficulty for the library of Congress and for the publishers; while it was asserted that Cataloging-in-Source was highly useful even without the chimerical "cataloger's camera" ("a new kind of copying machine, inexpensive, dry-process, which can reproduce positive copy directly on to catalog cards and capable of reducing or enlarging copy"), most librarians had expected that the two would go together. (This camera, incidentally, is yet to be developed.) The brief duration of the experiment produced only some 1,200 entries and made no impact on cataloging; the brevity of the experiment is questionable. Equally questionable was the consumer reaction method of determining its usefulness. No matter . . . Cataloging-in-Source died. The nearest thing it has had to a resurrection is the program, initiated in 1961 by the Library of Congress, to induce book jobbers to insert sets of LC cards in books distributed to libraries.

In spite of the growth and improvement of the card service, the research libraries of the country continued to feel that their needs were but imperfectly met and, indeed, a study of the cataloging of nine large university libraries in 1952 had found Library of Congress cards and copy used for only 52 percent of the books acquired by

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those libraries. The Shared Cataloging Committee of the Association of Research Libraries, wishing to demonstrate to the Library of Congress and to the appropriate committees of Congress that there had been little change and that the scope of the Library of Congress' cataloging should be enlarged, repeated a portion of the 1952 study in 1965, using the cataloging of the same nine libraries. Again it was found that these libraries were cataloging only 52 percent of their acquisitions with cards or copy available from the Library of Congress.

This astonishing correlation of results from two samples thirteen years apart continues: in 1952 LC cards were available but not used for 8 percent of the sample; in 1965, for 9 percent. In 1952, cooperative copy (as distinguished from LC copy) was available but not used for 9 percent of the sample; in 1965, copy other than LC copy was available but not used for 8 percent of the sample. In short, in both studies, either Library of Congress cards or copy or other copy obtainable through the Library of Congress was available but not used for some 17 percent of the samples.

The Association of Research Libraries had been urging expansion of the Library of Congress' cataloging before making its study and it continued to do so. The success of its efforts may be judged by the wording of Title II C of the Higher Education Act of 1965 which charged the Library of Congress with "(1) acquiring so far as possible, all library materials currently published throughout the world which are of value to scholarship; and (2) providing catalog information for these materials promptly after receipt. . . ." The implications of this simple statement have not yet been fully realized by the library profession at large, but they mean, in essence, that at long last the Library of Congress has a mandate from Congress to serve as the central cataloging agency for the nation.

The Library of Congress has accepted this charge with remarkable vigor and alacrity. Through an arrangement with the British National Bibliography, catalog cards for British books published in 1966 and thereafter became available in the regular Library of Congress card series on April 15, 1966. The BNB descriptive cataloging is used without change, and the entry is changed only when necessary to accord with Library of Congress practice; subject cataloging and classification numbers are added by the Library of Congress. The Library of Congress has found it feasible to accept for its cards the standard descriptions used in the national bibliographies of a number of other countries, again with modifications of entry when necessary. Where
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arrangements to receive copy from national bibliographies cannot be worked out, or where such bibliographies do not exist, attempts are being made to secure serviceable copy from national libraries. On July 1, 1966 the Shared Cataloging Division was organized in the Processing Department of the Library of Congress to handle this immense flow of cataloging. At this writing (December, 1966) copy is being received from the United Kingdom, East and West Germany, Austria, Norway, France, and Canada. Plans are under way to obtain copy from Denmark, Sweden, Finland, South Africa, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, and the U.S.S.R., and it is hoped that the shared cataloging program can, in 1967, be extended to Argentina, Australia, Belgium, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain and Portugal. Israel and India are covered under Public Law 480 arrangements, and acquisitions centers in Nairobi and Rio de Janeiro are bringing in greatly increased quantities of material from East Africa and Latin America for prompt cataloging.

Depository sets of cards from Shared Cataloging are going to selected large research libraries that have agreed to check their foreign orders against these files; should they find a title not included, a copy of their order slip is sent to the Shared Cataloging Division so that the Library of Congress can secure a copy of the publication for its collections and for cataloging. Thus materials which somehow escape the Library of Congress dragnet abroad should be caught by this back-up system. (It should be obvious, too, that this program will not only make available a vast supply of cataloging copy, it will also bring to the Library of Congress great numbers of foreign titles to strengthen and enrich its collections.)

The first tapes from the MARC Project have already been distributed to participating libraries. The project, to experiment with a "machine-readable catalog record" (whence the acronym), funded jointly by the Council on Library Resources and the Library of Congress, is the first step toward computerized centralized cataloging (CCC?). Based on the hypothesis that "it is feasible to produce a standardized machine-readable catalog record that can be manipulated and reformatted in local institutions to serve local practices and needs," Project MARC began in 1965 with the development of a proposed format for this record. During the experimental period MARC tapes will be prepared for all English language materials (with a few exceptions) cataloged at the Library of Congress—about 125 titles a
day—and sent weekly to sixteen libraries which will use these tapes not only in catalog preparation but for a number of other operations as well. These libraries will provide the necessary consumer feedback to the MARC office. Since a limit has been placed on duration of the project, a report on it should be forthcoming within a reasonable time.

After a slow and reluctant beginning and a long period of relatively minor improvements and expansion, the Library of Congress is about to become what Dewey in 1876 said it should be: the central cataloging agency for the nation. When Putnam in 1901 announced that the Library of Congress would distribute its catalog cards, it seemed that centralized cataloging had arrived. It soon became apparent that this estimate had been overly optimistic. For years librarians, committees and associations pointed to the deficiencies of the system, urged the Library of Congress to expand its efforts, and sought ways of adding their own efforts to provide the necessary coverage. The Library of Congress often seemed sluggish, even reluctant; Congress itself, through its committees, was disinclined to support centralized cataloging, and the library profession, with little political know-how and even less “muscle,” seemed unable to convince the legislators of the need. The increasing emphasis on education and research has increased the Congress’ awareness of library problems and the library profession has belatedly achieved some degree of political sophistication, so that the climate for centralized cataloging is more favorable than at any other time in history.

It is not difficult to accuse the Library of Congress of inaction, of shirking its responsibilities, of sluggishness. And at times it has been guilty of all these sins. Yet it has created a system which in fiscal 1966 sold 63,214,294 catalog cards to some 19,000 libraries; it has developed a technique of reproduction so that now no LC card is out of print; and it has undertaken with enthusiasm and dispatch a program of expanding acquisitions and cataloging such as the world has not before seen.

It would seem then, that at long last the dreams of Jewett and Dewey are about to become reality. Flaws there will be, and librarians to point them out—all as it should be. But perhaps now it is time for libraries using the product of centralized cataloging to examine critically and with an open mind their own practice of “adapting” Library of Congress cards to fit idiosyncratic local practice.
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References


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Centralized Cataloging and University Libraries – Title II, Part C, of the Higher Education Act of 1965

WILLIAM S. DIX

In this century the Library of Congress has inevitably been deeply involved in almost all plans for cooperation and centralization in cataloging among university and research libraries. There have at various times been a few bilateral and multilateral arrangements for sharing cataloging in specific areas, but the fact that the national library was already making available more cataloging copy than any other library has tended to draw to it other proposals for improving the coverage. John Dawson has summarized much of this history in his article in this issue of Library Trends.

It seems reasonable, therefore, to limit this article to the developments leading up to the current Library of Congress National Program for Acquisitions and Cataloging, the shared cataloging program authorized by Title II, Part C of the Higher Education Act of 1965, which has been called the most important program ever undertaken by the Library of Congress and which has from the beginning deeply involved the interest and activity of university and research libraries, although it is of potential benefit to almost all types of libraries.

For a long time there had been no doubt about the desirability, both for economy and bibliographic uniformity, of having the cataloging of each title acquired by libraries done once and only once, then distributed to other libraries as required through some central agency. The first large scale demonstration of the utility of such a scheme commenced when the Library of Congress in 1901 began making available to other libraries copies of the catalog cards prepared for its own use. Although most large libraries began using LC cards or copy in some form with a consequent saving in costs and

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an increased standardization of cataloging practices, a substantial problem remained. The Library of Congress, in spite of the large scope of its canons of acquisitions, was not acquiring and cataloging on an average from forty to fifty percent of the books currently being acquired by each of the other large university and research libraries.

There followed many years of attempting to broaden the pool of cataloging copy available from the Library of Congress through a cooperative program in which copy requested but not available was supplied by one of a number of cooperating libraries. There were experiments with the operation of a supplementary centralized cataloging agency under the auspices of the American Library Association, and there were proposals for turning the whole matter over to some commercial concern. That none of these developments or plans succeeded in meeting the full demand testifies to the formidable nature of the problem, for it occupied the attention of some of the ablest members of the profession.

Perhaps the first event to have a direct connection with the present development was the publication in 1948 of an informal and personal set of proposals by Ralph E. Ellsworth, then Director of Libraries at the State University of Iowa, following a one month stay at the Library of Congress as Visiting Chief of the Union Catalog Division. Ellsworth stated boldly and flatly, "I have come to the conclusion that L.C. can and should inaugurate a program of Centralized Cataloging that will accomplish most of the objectives of a complete program of Centralized Cataloging as defined in this report, and that it can do so without undue hardship to its internal affairs and its financial resources"; he then went on to detail his proposals.

Nothing happened immediately, but discussion continued, and at the Forty-eighth Meeting of the Association of Research Libraries on January 28, 1957, Louis Kaplan presented a proposal signed by himself and Ellsworth calling for a thorough study of cooperative cataloging by a new ARL committee. Jens Nyholm objected to limiting the inquiry to cooperative cataloging and submitted a document advocating a study of centralized cataloging as well, with particular reference to current foreign imprints received through the Farmington Plan. The members voted that a committee should be established, to consider both cooperative and centralized cataloging, and then went on to discuss financial arrangements for the proposed study.

About the same time John M. Dawson published in the January, 1957, issue of The Library Quarterly "The Acquisitions and Catalog-
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ing of Research Libraries: a Study of the Possibilities for Centralized Processing,” a careful examination of the procedures and experience of nine sample university libraries in using LC cards. This important article helped keep interest in the issue alive, yet the ARL committee found itself unable to obtain the funds required for the thorough analysis of the problem which it proposed.

The urge to attack the problem once again was felt by Richard M. Logsdon, Director of Libraries at Columbia University. As Chairman of the ARL he wrote to Ellsworth on October 23, 1963, “What are you doing on the cooperative cataloging business? I could make good use of an immediate answer. . . .” and again on October 29, “Since writing to you a few days ago I have pretty much come to the conclusion that ARL could do nothing more important in the next year or two than to improve the situation with respect to coordinated and centralized cataloging.” Ellsworth replied characteristically on November 7, “Well, at least someone else realizes that the centralized cataloging problem has got to be solved! Hurrah! I!”

Ellsworth had independently renewed his own attack on the problem in a forceful editorial written in the summer of 1963 for the fall issue of a new journal, The Colorado Academic Library, published by the College and University Section of the Colorado Library Association. He suggested that the Association of Research Libraries might establish in Washington, outside the Library of Congress, a National Cataloging Center to begin by doing contract cataloging for books from countries with the less common languages, with each participating library billed for services rendered on a unit cost basis. On December 16, 1963, he sent a copy of this editorial to the director of each ARL library with a covering letter, saying:

I take it that editorials are usually written for the purpose of stimulating thought or action or both. I will admit that my argument for establishing a National Cataloging Foundation outside the Library of Congress was advanced with malice of forethought. If L.C. can control the factors that are essential to a sensible national economy of cataloging, my argument is unnecessary. But if L.C. cannot do this, and it has not done so in the past, then my argument is valid.

The real question is whether L.C., financed and controlled as it is by Congress, can meet the present needs of large libraries. I hope the editorial puts the question in a way that will lead to its solution.
Logsdon in November began making plans with James E. Skipper, Executive Secretary of the ARL, collecting data and drafting a resolution to be presented to the Board of Directors. It is worth noting that since the last attack on the problem the ARL, having enlarged its membership and increased its dues, had appointed its first full-time Executive Secretary and opened an office in Washington. It is clear that having an able and imaginative executive officer in Washington with at least a modest budget is high among the reasons why solutions began to be found to what had in the past seemed insuperable obstacles.

At the Sixty-third Meeting of the ARL on January 26, 1964, the following resolution was unanimously approved by the members, upon recommendation of the Board of Directors:

Resolved that in view of:

(1) The substantial costs of cataloging in research libraries (approximately 16% of total library operating expenditures),

(2) The rising percentage of original cataloging that is now necessary (forty-seven libraries report an average of 46% original cataloging required in 1963),

(3) Increasing arrearages of uncataloged materials (the same reporting libraries indicate that their arrearage has increased an average of 160% during the past ten years),

That the Association of Research Libraries should give the highest priority during the next few years to developing a program for decreasing the amount of original cataloging, working in conjunction with representatives of the Library of Congress and other library groups. Specifically, this will include a study of the Library of Congress proposal of January 7, 1964, which is a result of the thinking of its staff in response to a request from the ALA Committee on Resources, Subcommittee on the National Union Catalog;

That the Board shall report to the members at the St. Louis Meeting concerning these efforts. This resolution recognizes the significance of the issue and the complexity of the problems involved.11

The Library of Congress draft proposal, not discussed at the meeting, but referred to the new committee by the resolution, was printed as an appendix to the minutes of the meeting.12 It offered two alternative plans for achieving an improvement in the amount of avail-
available Library of Congress cataloging copy. One plan involved the provision locally by cooperating libraries of National Union Catalog copy for all post-1956 non-U.S. titles acquired by them and the distribution of this copy by the Library of Congress to other libraries requiring it. The other tentative plan involved the production and distribution centrally by the Library of Congress of standardized entries for post-1956 non-U.S. titles, borrowing from other libraries for cataloging purposes volumes not acquired by the Library of Congress.

It is obvious that the thought and discussion which went into the preparation of this memorandum under the direction of John Cronin helped prepare the way for the evolution of the plan which was to emerge and for its commendably rapid implementation by the Library of Congress. It should be noted, however, that there are significant differences: it was not intended that the Library of Congress increase its acquisitions of foreign books substantially for cataloging purposes; no mechanism was provided, other than the printed National Union Catalog and proof sheets, for prompt determination of availability and need; and the question of funding the operation was left unresolved: “It is quite certain that Congress would not appropriate the funds required to catalog titles not held by the Library of Congress and it would be necessary for the research libraries to supply the needed money.”

Soon after the meeting the following accepted appointment by the Chairman of the ARL to the committee called for in the resolution:

Ralph E. Ellsworth, University of Colorado
Richard H. Logsdon, Columbia University
Stephen A. McCarthy, Cornell University
James E. Skipper, Executive Secretary, ARL
William S. Dix, Princeton University, Chairman.

Somewhat later Edmon Low, Oklahoma State University, accepted appointment. At its first meeting it decided to identify itself as the ARL Shared Cataloging Committee, thus avoiding the premature decision between cooperative and centralized cataloging.

Without attempting to recapitulate the discussions and conclusions of each of the many meetings which followed or the reports made at each of the semi-annual meetings of the ARL, it can be seen in retrospect that the discussions and activities of the Committee, of the Librarian of Congress and his staff, and of others who became involved were marked by a series of identifiable decisions.
By the end of the Committee's first year of activity (January, 1965) it had been decided, on the basis of earlier studies and new samplings, that the first attack should be made on the problem of current West European monographs, perhaps through centralizing Farmington Plan receipts and monographs from this area. It had been recognized that considerably more concrete data were needed, and plans were completed for a study by James Skipper, with John Dawson as a consultant, of the characteristics of original cataloging being done in university libraries, an updating of the earlier Dawson study, to be financed by the Council on Library Resources. (Skipper's report on the findings of the study have been published in the Minutes of the Sixty-eighth Meeting of the ARL.)

But it had been recognized from the beginning that the Committee's mandate had not been merely to make studies but to reduce the amount of necessary original cataloging. Therefore the Committee had not waited for analysis but had proceeded on the basis of the preliminary information to draw up a set of specifications. It had concluded that the best solution lay in centralized rather than cooperative cataloging, in the extension of present LC cataloging and copy distribution with such improvements as advancing technology might permit. The Librarian of Congress had approved the plan in principle, and John Cronin, Chief of Processing, believed that the Library of Congress could provide, within twenty-one days after the receipt of the book, catalog cards of standard quality for all monographs of reasonable research interest in certain fields—if it could receive the books and if it could add to its staff the necessary number of qualified catalogers. The Librarian of Congress had stated, however, that he could not at present initiate budget proposals to meet these conditions without legislation specifically directing the Library of Congress to extend its program accordingly.

Although it was clear from the beginning that the new technology would eventually have a major impact on centralized cataloging, the Committee decided that it would concentrate on the intellectual work of cataloging, an essential prerequisite of any automated system. If the problem of doing this work centrally, for all libraries, could be solved, distribution of the product by more advanced methods could be studied by the ARL Committee on Automation, with which the ARL Committee on Shared Cataloging worked closely.

This was the burden of the Committee's report to the ARL at the Sixty-fifth Meeting in Washington on January 24, 1965. It recognized
that Federal funding might be impossible and that some cost-sharing arrangement among libraries might have to be studied, but it expressed its determination to seek the necessary legislation. It was the consensus of the ARL membership that this was the correct posture.

At about this time the concept of shared cataloging was overtaken by events, and for the next year the Committee and the Library of Congress were concerned primarily with legislative matters. On January 12, 1965, the President had delivered to the Congress his Educational Message, including among other matters proposals for assistance to higher education. One of these was: "I recommend enactment of legislation for purchase of books and library materials to strengthen college teaching and research." The Higher Education Bill of 1965 was introduced in January, 1965, as H.R. 9567 and S. 673. The concept of direct grants to colleges and universities for the purchase of books and other library materials was incorporated in Title II, Part A. This form of assistance had been advocated for some time by the ACRL and the ALA and promoted effectively by Germaine Krettek of the ALA Washington Office and Edmon Low of Oklahoma State University.

It was foreseen by Julian Levi of the University of Chicago and became immediately apparent to the Shared Cataloging Committee that this legislation might offer an admirable vehicle for support of centralized cataloging at the Library of Congress. A logical argument could obviously be developed that the assistance in the form of books for college and university libraries could be made much more effective if there could be cataloging assistance as well. Admirable advance preparation was made by James Skipper, by Miss Krettek (the ALA having officially adopted the proposal), by the Library of Congress, and by Julian Levi, who had been actively involved in various Washington legislative matters of interest to universities.

On March 10 the Chairman of the Shared Cataloging Committee, William S. Dix, together with Edward G. Freehafer, James E. Skipper, and Julian Levi, presented testimony in support of the Higher Education Bill before the House Special Subcommittee on Education of the Committee on Education and Labor. He concluded his formal testimony:

We respectfully suggest, therefore, that in order to make the provisions of Title II more effective in developing library collections, the Office of Education should be authorized sufficient funds for transfer to the Library of Congress or another appropriate nonprofit
library or library association, which should be authorized and directed to:

1. Acquire on the most comprehensive basis currently published library materials of scholarly value;
2. Provide catalog copy for these accessions promptly after receipt, generally within 3 to 4 weeks;
3. Process and forward to other designated libraries, by exchange or other methods, books which are not within the collecting scope of the central facility.

We estimate that first-year appropriations should not exceed $5 million.

In our opinion, the cost involved is small when compared with the benefits to be derived. This program will go far toward solving one of the most pressing problems faced by the Nation's libraries for the past 50 years.16

The proposal was accepted warmly by Congresswoman Green and her committee, as it was by Senator Morse and his Subcommittee on Education of the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare when essentially the same testimony was presented on May 19.17 Substantial support continued to be manifested by many libraries, university presidents, and others, for the proposal passed through the various stages of the legislative process as Title II, Part C, becoming law on November 8, 1965.

The final text of Title II, Part C, of Public Law 89-329 is as follows:

Sec. 231. There are hereby authorized to be appropriated $5,000,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1966, $6,315,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1967, and $7,700,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1968, to enable the Commissioner to transfer funds to the Librarian of Congress for the purpose of—

(1) acquiring, so far as possible, all library materials currently published throughout the world which are of value to scholarship; and
(2) providing catalog information for these materials promptly after receipt, and distributing bibliographic information by printing catalog cards and by other means, and enabling the Library of Congress to use for exchange and other purposes such of these materials as are not needed for its own collections.

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 1969, and the succeeding fiscal year, there may be appropriated, to enable the Commissioner to
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transfer funds to the Librarian of Congress for such purpose, only such sums as the Congress may hereafter authorize by law.18

The struggle for appropriations went less smoothly, for reasons apparently not connected with the library portions of the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for the remainder of fiscal year 1966 only $300,000 was provided in the Supplemental Appropriations Act, signed on May 13, 1966 (Public Law 89-426). This was, nevertheless, a notable date, for centralized cataloging became a reality, the Federal government having for the first time undertaken the responsibility of cataloging books for non-Federal libraries. For fiscal year 1967 $3,000,000 of the authorized $6,315,000 was appropriated.

In the meantime, Cronin and his associates at the Library of Congress had moved ahead with commendable speed in their planning in anticipation of appropriations. By early October, 1965, they had drafted a comprehensive set of policy guidelines for implementing the legislation along the lines proposed by the ARL Committee.19 After further discussion between the Library of Congress and the Committee, this document became the basis of a concrete program proposed to the ARL membership on January 23, 1966, and after full discussion unanimously approved.20

Two sections of this “Program” are quoted in full, for they summarize the fundamental direction and the procedures:

Recommendations

The ARL Shared Cataloging Committee and the Library of Congress recommend that:

(1) The program should have the dual purpose of building up the collections of the Library of Congress, as the national library, and thereby benefiting libraries as a whole, and of providing catalog information to meet the needs of other libraries. The two purposes are inseparable.

(2) The program should be centralized at the Library of Congress but the Library of Congress should work out arrangements, as proves feasible, for sharing the cataloging workload with the National Agricultural Library and the National Library of Medicine.

(3) Initially, catalog copy should be provided in the form of catalog cards but provision should be made for conversion at a later date to machine-readable copy when this becomes feasible.

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Implementation

A. Acquisitions—Selection—Considerations
The present acquisition policies of the 74 ARL libraries (including the Library of Congress, the National Agricultural Library and the National Library of Medicine) are necessarily selective though comprehensive in scope. Materials in various subject fields are selected in order to meet the general as well as the special research interest requirements of their individual institutions. Considering the time element involved in the selection and ordering of different titles by each library, it is necessary to institute coordinated acquisition controls between the Library of Congress and all cooperating libraries in the new shared cataloging program if the centralized cataloging objectives are to be achieved.

Although the Library of Congress could acquire all items currently published throughout the world, it would not be able to supply promptly catalog cards for the titles acquired by other libraries to meet their service requirements if it did not know specifically what material was being currently collected by them. Priorities in a centralized cataloging operation are a necessary requirement to successful operation in meeting the current cataloging needs of cooperating libraries.

B. Acceleration of LC Processing Operations
1. As soon as funds are available LC will use air communication facilities for its current foreign acquisition operations. It is important to note that the prompt acquisitions of all current foreign material needed for the program is of primary importance in making the program effective for overall control purposes both at LC and cooperating libraries.

2. For purposes of the earliest possible selection of titles currently published throughout the world LC will establish close working arrangements with the authorities in each country who are responsible for publication of national bibliographies. LC will attempt to secure in advance of publication in national bibliographies all entries that are to be listed. LC will also endeavor to improve its present arrangements for acquiring domestic material.

3. LC policy for its recommending officers will be to continue to select and recommend as at present on a selective comprehensive but representative basis within the limits of LC appropriations for the purchase of books.

4. Where cooperating libraries have established broad blanket order arrangements with foreign book dealers, the Library of Congress will place similar orders with these dealers to assure complete coverage for cataloging purposes.

[106]
5. LC will make arrangements to receive a second copy of all titles supplied by Farmington Plan Dealers.

6. LC will place orders for all series now under standing continuation order or ordered in the future by cooperating libraries. Arrangements for the purpose will be made with cooperating libraries. It is also planned to prepare a list of all series for checking and control purposes.

7. LC will accelerate and expand its purchasing arrangements in such areas as Latin America, Africa, Southeast Asia, etc., where the book trade is not well organized, and where there are no national bibliographies.

8. Cooperating libraries will be expected to send copies of all their orders for both current domestic and foreign acquisitions for which no catalog card is found in their depository control file of LC cards or the published National Union Catalog. This applies also to all items received on an automatic basis unless already provided for as a result of coordination of blanket order arrangements.

9. LC will provide a copy of each card printed for current imprints (1956—to date) to each cooperating library for their cataloging control purposes. This file will serve the following purposes:

   (a) Provide full bibliographical information about the title to be ordered;

   (b) Provide catalog copy which can be used for card reproduction needs of the cooperating library or for ordering LC cards by number.

   These cards might be sent on a weekly basis and will be in filing order.

10. LC will request the Government Printing Office to accelerate and improve all card printing operations. To this end, the Government Printing [Office] has already established a second shift in its Library Branch Printing Office.

   The Government Printing Office will also be requested to provide a faster schedule for the printing of issues of the National Union Catalog (monthly, quarterlies, and annuals).

11. LC will institute, as soon as funds are available, a special recruiting program for catalogers. The lack of qualified cataloging staff is the most serious problem facing LC in implementing the new program. The efficient implementation of the new program is dependent on LC's ability to recruit and train sufficient staff for the purpose. Accordingly, it can be expected that full performance cannot be realized until staffing has been accomplished. LC expects that it will take about three years to fully meet the objectives envisioned.

12. As noted in (2) above, LC will make arrangements with
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foreign national libraries or other national authorities responsible for publication of national bibliographies to accelerate their acquisition and cataloging operations. It will also make arrangements to use the cataloging information in these bibliographies for its own cataloging purposes. LC and ARL recommend acceptance of the description of the publication (i.e., title transcription, imprint, collation and notes) given in the national bibliography as "standard" for the purposes of the new program. Choice and form of main entry as well as corresponding secondary entries will be adjusted according to ALA-LC Cataloging Rules for author and title entries. It is to be noted that the title description used in national bibliographies is equivalent to or fuller than the present LC standard as established in the LC Rules for Descriptive Cataloging. Adoption of this proposal will result in a most important step toward international cooperation in cataloging.

13. Where LC is unsuccessful in acquiring through its own acquisition channels material for which cataloging copy is known to be needed by a cooperating library, LC will borrow this material from the cooperating library and catalog it.

14. LC will arrange regional meetings with technical processing staffs of ARL and other academic libraries to explain the new program plans and to ensure coordination between LC and cooperating libraries.

This is essentially the program which the Library of Congress, working with the cooperating libraries, began energetically to implement as soon as funds were available.

At the January 23 meeting Mr. Mumford described briefly a meeting held earlier in London with representatives of England, France, Germany, and Norway to consider international cooperative possibilities, such as the utilization of descriptive cataloging copy from foreign national bibliographies. The development of these arrangements, with consequent economies in scarce U.S. cataloging manpower; attempts to recruit the necessary staff additions; and working out the rough spots in a continuing program were the principal activities in 1966.

The utilization of copy from foreign national bibliographies may have been proposed first by John Cronin. He made careful comparisons of descriptive catalog information from a number of these national bibliographies and found the product at least as good as that produced by the Library of Congress. This evidence was presented to the Committee and then to the membership of the ARL, which agreed to accept this element as it appeared, without rearrangement.
With this evidence of acceptability to the consumer, the Library of Congress could seek procedures for obtaining this copy promptly enough for it to be of service. This pragmatic approach began the impressive international bibliographic program which the Library of Congress has developed.

By the end of 1966 arrangements had been made with bibliographic authorities and dealers for the prompt supply of descriptive cataloging copy and the books themselves by air from England, East and West Germany, Austria, Norway, France, and Switzerland (German language books). Offices for this purpose had been opened in London, Wiesbaden, Vienna, Oslo, and Paris, and new procurement offices in Nairobi and Rio de Janeiro. Plans were nearing completion for covering publications from Sweden, Denmark, Argentina, South Africa, Australia, and Canada, and discussions were contemplated in 1967 with Italy, Spain, Portugal, Belgium, and the Netherlands. In December the Librarian of Congress and several staff members held discussions with officials in Poland and the U.S.S.R.\(^{22}\)

As this article is being written at the beginning of 1967 it is much too early to appraise all of the effects of what has happened since the ARL resolution almost exactly three years ago. James E. Skipper briefly discussed some of the implications in a program meeting at the ALA Conference in July, 1966.\(^{23}\) It is perhaps appropriate to leave the expression of the dream of a world bibliographic order to Sir Frank Francis, Director of the British Museum, who said in his presidential address at the 32nd Annual Meeting of the International Federation of Library Associations at The Hague on September 12, 1966:

> The acceptance and the implementation of this proposal for shared cataloguing on an international scale would result in speedier bibliographical control of the materials flowing ever faster into our libraries, would reduce cataloguing costs and would release the energies of our cataloguing forces, which are at present engaged in duplicating each other's efforts a countless number of times in different libraries not only in all parts of the world, but in almost every country under the sun.

> I hope that over the next three to five years it will be possible to get this collaboration fully worked out and made into a going concern. It is not only desirable that this should be done, it is necessary; otherwise the great libraries will cease to play their proper part in the intellectual life of their countries because of the sheer
impossibility of meeting all the demands which are made upon them.

It will . . . mean that practicality is taking a hand in our affairs at last and that the dream of collaboration which has foundered so often in the past on the rocks of formalism can at last become a reality.24

References

2. Ibid., Appendix, [pp. 1-2].
4. Ibid., pp. 8-9 and Appendix 6, pp. 39-43.
12. Ibid., Appendix E, pp. 47-52.
13. Ibid., p. 51.
Centralized Cataloging and University Libraries—Title II

Cataloging Project for the Benefit of Research Libraries under the Higher Education Act, Title II,” October 8, 1965. (Mimeographed memorandum.)


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BELLA E. SHACHTMAN

Cooperative and centralized cataloging is a goal still to be reached by the Federal library community. However, in addition to what is going on at the Library of Congress, other Federal agencies are making efforts to reach this goal. This paper is devoted to projects and activities which do or may affect cooperative and centralized cataloging.

The major Federal libraries are seeking ways to make their catalogs available to others in order to make their resources known to all who have need of them. Since they are highly specialized libraries, their resources are often unique and their cataloging, particularly from a subject viewpoint, is more specific than that of the Library of Congress. In effect, these catalogs, which in many cases include complete cataloging information, can act as a source for centralized cataloging data.

The National Agricultural Library and the National Library of Medicine took steps early in 1966, by publishing their current catalogs in book form, to supply to biological, agricultural, medical, and other scientific libraries more specialized catalogs than those provided by the Library of Congress.

The National Agricultural Library Catalog,¹ issued monthly beginning with the January 1966 issue, displays newly cataloged titles under broad subject categories as a current awareness tool for scientists, and also displays them arranged alphabetically to provide fast location of a particular item. Complete cataloging information is included in both sections to aid the scientist who maintains a personal catalog and to help librarians add titles more quickly to their collections. The third section of the catalog is an alphabetically arranged list of translated articles added to the collection during the previous

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month. Each quarter the alphabetized entries in the second section are cumulated.

This catalog is designed to keep up to date the Dictionary Catalog of the National Agricultural Library, 1862-1965,\textsuperscript{2} scheduled for publication in 1967. It includes the contents of the Library's retrospective card catalog, over 1,500,000 cards, and is the first comprehensive catalog of the National Agricultural Library to be published. Major cumulations of the National Agricultural Library Catalog are planned as permanent supplements to the Dictionary Catalog.

The National Library of Medicine Current Catalog\textsuperscript{3} began publication on a bi-weekly basis with the January 14, 1966, issue to provide "a useful acquisitions tool"\textsuperscript{4} and to make available "timely and authoritative cataloging information for those librarians who use the NLM cataloging system."\textsuperscript{4} This catalog is arranged alphabetically by entry, including added entries. Each issue includes a directory of all publishers represented in the issue and a list of volumes which have been added to previously cataloged monographic sets. Price information is included in each citation when readily available. The bi-weekly issues include only titles published in the last three years. They are cumulated quarterly from the beginning of the year and the cumulations include all newly cataloged titles regardless of date of publication. Thus, the last quarterly of each year is an annual volume. Subject approach was available only through the quarterlies during 1966, but beginning with the 1967 issues, subject approach is given in each bi-weekly issue.

The NLM Current Catalog continues the National Library of Medicine Catalog\textsuperscript{5} which had been initiated in 1948 as a supplement to the Library of Congress Catalog. The National Library of Medicine Catalog was closed in December, 1965, and the final cumulation, covering 1960-65,\textsuperscript{6} was published early in 1967.

The Subject Catalog\textsuperscript{7} of the Department of Health, Education and Welfare Library was issued in 1966, and its Author/Title Catalog\textsuperscript{8} is in the process of publication. Scheduled to appear in 1968 is the Dictionary Catalog\textsuperscript{9} of the Department of the Interior Library; supplements approximately every two years are planned. The Bureau of the Census is presently considering how to have its catalog published. The catalog of the Geological Survey Library appeared in 1966.\textsuperscript{10}

The three national libraries, as well as other Federal libraries, have been interested for many years in automated information storage and retrieval systems. The National Library of Medicine took the lead
among Federal libraries in systems design and implementation for this purpose. The Atomic Energy Commission, the Department of Defense, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration have been putting cataloging information about technical reports into their automated systems for several years, but their methods have not been suitable for use in typical library situations.

At the National Library of Medicine an Interim Catalog Module, which became operational in January 1966, was developed by MEDLARS, the Medical Literature Analysis and Retrieval System. Computer programs of the MEDLARS input module were modified to include cataloging data. Outputs produced by the Interim Catalog Module are prepared by GRACE, the Photon-900 computer phototypesetter, for reproduction in multiple copies by other means. The Interim Catalog Module produces the Library's catalog cards and camera copy for the Current Catalog. Weiss and Wiggins have described the operations in their article, "Computer-Aided Centralized Cataloging at the National Library of Medicine."11 As a result of a library automation workshop held at the National Library of Medicine in November 1966, study is being given to a possible experiment to send machine readable tapes of the Current Catalog data to selected medical libraries capable of incorporating this information into their own machine systems for production of book or card catalogs.

The Library of Congress, of course, has been concentrating on its MARC (Machine Readable Catalog) experiment. Its tapes and programs are being studied carefully; these, as well as the programs of the National Library of Medicine, will no doubt influence the development of automated systems for other libraries.

It is the desire of the three national libraries that their total systems be compatible, or at least convertible. The Auerbach Corporation is making a new study of automation activities of the National Library of Medicine. The National Agricultural Library was studied during 1962 and 1963; a report12 was issued which was only partially implemented, and now a new study is to be undertaken. In November, 1966, a Request for Proposal was issued for analysis and design of an overall system for the National Agricultural Library's activities. One of the basic elements in the first phase concerns "capturing" of cataloging information for the preparation of catalog cards and book catalogs. Following publication of the King report,13 the Information Systems Office of the Library of Congress was established and began working on programs for that Library. Each of these libraries has
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responsibility for supplying information, including cataloging data, to
other libraries. Compatibility or convertibility among the systems is
imperative in order to evolve a meaningful national document han-
dling system for information storage and retrieval purposes.

One of the major forces for compatibility in the Federal establish-
ment is the Committee on Scientific and Technical Information
(COSATI) of the Federal Council for Science and Technology. Little
has appeared in the open literature about this committee, established
in 1962. The continuing functions of COSATI are to: “identify prob-
lems and requirements; review adequacy and scope of present pro-
grams; devise new programs; recommend standards, methodology,
and systems; identify and recommend agency assignments; review
and make recommendations concerning resources; recommend man-
agement policies; and generally facilitate interagency coordination at
management levels of the executive agencies concerned with scien-
tific and technical information.”

COSATI includes representatives from the major departments and
observers from other Federal agencies including the Bureau of the
Budget. Liaison with the Library of Congress is maintained. As neces-
sary, the Committee is assisted by task groups and panels of personnel
selected from the Federal government and from the private sector.
The Executive Secretary of the COSATI Panel on Information Sci-
ences Technology has reported that: “Most COSATI members are
directors of scientific and technical information in their parent agen-
cies or are directors of national libraries dealing in scientific or tech-
nical information. Most panel members are middle management ex-
erts in the various information system specialties. Further work is
done by ad hoc subpanels at the operational agency level.”

From the viewpoint of cooperative and centralized cataloging, the
work of the COSATI Panel on Operational Techniques and Systems
is of major interest, since it includes subpanels working on Classifica-
tion and Indexing and on Standardization of Descriptive Cataloging.
The Panel is also concerned with such projects as development of a
 corporate author list, conventions for thesaurus construction, and
alphabetization rules for machine sorting.

Resulting from the work of the Panel on Operational Techniques
and Systems and its subpanel on Standardization of Descriptive Cata-
logging, the revised Standard for Descriptive Cataloging of Gov-
ernment Scientific and Technical Reports was published in October,
1966. In commenting on this publication, Eleanor Aronson wrote:
This represents a major agreement among the four agencies (AEC [the Atomic Energy Commission], CFSTI [the Clearinghouse for Federal Scientific and Technical Information], DDC [the Defense Documentation Center], and NASA [the National Aeronautics and Space Administration]) cataloging technical reports. From now on, the cataloging record of one agency will duplicate or at least approximate the record of another agency for the same report . . . ; we are now using each other's intellectual and professional work with only minor changes, and may soon reach the point where no revisions will be necessary. . . . Although the revised Standard differs from ALA practice in some instances, it comes closer than any such previous attempts, and we believe that many parts of it will prove helpful even to librarians who do not wish to adopt it entirely.17

Use of the revised standard "will facilitate the exchange of bibliographic information between agencies, and simplify communications between elements of national networks in the future."18 The Panel on Operational Techniques and Systems is maintaining close liaison with the Library of Congress MARC project to determine which cataloging elements of technical reports are needed for magnetic tape storage.

Applications of the revised Standard for Descriptive Cataloging of Government Scientific and Technical Reports and the results of cooperative cataloging of technical reports can be seen in the latest issues of such publications as Scientific and Technical Aerospace Reports issued by NASA, Nuclear Science Abstracts published by the AEC, and U.S. Government Research & Development Reports and Government-Wide Index to Federal Research and Development Reports published by the CFSTI.

Since corporate author entries present a problem in cataloging technical reports, just as they do in cataloging the open literature, "plans for producing and publishing a combined Corporate Author List [revised and updated by the rules in the revised Standard for Descriptive Cataloging of Government Scientific and Technical Reports] are being worked out. If these plans are approved . . . it will take at least a year to convert the present list to conform to the new Standard, and to edit and publish the List."18 It is hoped that the list "would be prepared from a computer record that would permit constant updating and provide flexibility for preparation of other types of information."17 Should such a list prove feasible, it might well lead the way toward development of a world-wide corporate entry list
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which would give libraries the means to convert entries established under the American Library Association rules to the form of entry as called for in the new Anglo-American rules, and vice versa. With such a capability, both cooperative and centralized cataloging and communication between systems could become more effective.

Another area of major concern to COSATI's Panel on Operational Techniques and Systems is that of vocabulary development. In December 1964, the first edition of the COSATI Subject Category List\(^\text{19}\) was published in order to provide a uniform subject arrangement for announcing and distributing scientific and technical reports issued or sponsored by executive agencies of the Federal government, and for management reporting purposes. The Foreword to that list states: "The Task Group will now devote its efforts to the establishment of rules or guidelines for the development of vocabulary terms, and to develop a common vocabulary or thesaurus for indexing."\(^\text{20}\) The Subpanel on Classification and Indexing of the Panel on Operational Techniques and Systems developed guidelines for thesaurus construction which were approved by the Panel. If these guidelines are approved by COSATI, they will be published. The subpanel plans to rework the COSATI Subject Category List to improve its index, to make it more inclusive, and to clarify its scope notes. Attention will be given in revising the list to major continuing efforts to develop specialized vocabularies, both inside and outside the Federal government.\(^\text{21}\) Efforts toward building a universal vocabulary have been discontinued.

Individual documents announced in Technical Abstracts Bulletin, issued by the Defense Documentation Center, are identified by the fields and groups of the COSATI list, and classified documents in DDC's collection have been converted to the same fields and groups. Sherrod reported that "In order to interface with the national information system being developed under the aegis of COSATI, the [Atomic Energy] Commission has designed its cataloging to be compatible with the COSATI standard for descriptive cataloging. . . . In addition, subject categories in conformity with the COSATI Subject Category List are assigned. A standardized tape format in which this data can be stored and distributed has been developed and is at present being tested."\(^\text{22}\) Other heavy users of the COSATI Subject Category List include CFSTI and NASA.

Further activities of the COSATI panels and subpanels of interest to librarians concerned with cooperative and centralized cataloging
include a study of the efficiency of various file structuring systems and query languages, and an experiment to determine the effectiveness and utility of abstract versus whole document dissemination. These studies are being undertaken by two subpanels of the COSATI Panel on Information Sciences Technology. Finally, in respect to COSATI, the work of the Task Group on National Systems for Scientific and Technical Information should be watched carefully by catalog librarians, for its recommendations to the Chairman of the Federal Council for Science and Technology included the following:

The Office of Science and Technology, in collaboration with the Bureau of the Budget, Federal departments, agencies, and other organizations involved in science and technology, should undertake the following [task] at once:

. . . To develop a comprehensive, coordinated program for ensuring the acquiring, cataloging, and announcing of the significant worldwide scientific and technical literature.23

The evidence of interest, at such a high Federal level, in coordination of cataloging, even though at present only in the fields of science and technology, speaks well for the likelihood of such coordination in the future.

Many agencies of the Federal government are working to develop vocabularies in specialized subject fields. Since late 1964, the National Agricultural Library has been developing an authoritative Agricultural/Biological vocabulary "to provide subject approaches for both published literature and unpublished research reports, by manual or machine methods."24 The vocabulary will be in two parts with the terms arranged alphabetically in one part, and within subject groups under major subject categories in the other part. The category and group structure is patterned after the COSATI Subject Category List.19 The conventions being followed in building the vocabulary are similar to those developed by the Engineers Joint Council and Project LEX (see below). The first edition of this vocabulary should be available in published form during the summer of 1967. In a later phase, specialized directories such as one for taxonomic names will be developed. The total work will replace the Preliminary Edition of the library’s Subject Heading List, which was published in 1963. The terms in the vocabulary will be used throughout the Department of Agriculture for all information storage and retrieval systems, as well as by the Library for cataloging and indexing. In the beginning stage, librarians from four of the land-grant university libraries assisted in
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combining the basic terms from the *Subject Heading List* and from the last five years' subject indices to the *Bibliography of Agriculture*. Later, Department scientists reviewed the terms within the subject categories of their specialties to insure that the terminology would be suitable for their use.

Late in 1965, work began in the Office of Naval Research on a special project, named Project LEX, to prepare an authoritative, standard technical thesaurus for the Department of Defense. Project LEX and the Engineers Joint Council agreed on common rules for thesaurus building. In reporting on progress, the Director of Project LEX stated: "Some 350 separate vocabularies, thesauri, glossaries, dictionaries, and word lists were accumulated . . . and merged by computer into a common data bank. . . . When duplications were eliminated, 125,000 separate terms remained. These terms, along with all usage data, such as frequency, generic relationships, scope notes, and cross indexes, provide the raw data. . . ." Over three hundred experts representing various subject disciplines and skills participated in seventeen working sessions held from April through October, 1966, to help develop a controlled technical terminology. Following review and editing by the project staff, the work will be published and should be available in the summer of 1967.

*Medical Subject Headings (MeSH)*, issued by the National Library of Medicine, has been used for several years as the authoritative subject heading list by the biomedical community. In late 1965, even though revised several times, it was still not wholly satisfactory to that community, and outside assistance in developing the terminology was requested. Individuals, as well as professional and scientific societies, made helpful suggestions. It is now planned to provide an expanded MeSH as part of the plan for developing an improved computer system for MEDLARS. There will be a greatly enlarged entry vocabulary, with more freedom of concept identification. The syndetic structure will be improved for more efficient retrieval of relevant material, if possible, within the next three years. The National Agricultural Library is cooperating with the National Library of Medicine in the field of Veterinary Medicine to insure compatibility, if not complete uniformity, for the terminology in this field. A joint committee of government and non-government veterinarians is working with the staff members of both libraries to produce the desired end product.

Many other government-prepared specialized vocabularies are un-
der way or have recently been completed. For the field of education the Educational Research Information Center (ERIC) of the Office of Education is working on a vocabulary which is being built on the Engineers Joint Council style of display and the Project LEX manual. The Department of the Interior is developing the *Thesaurus of Outdoor Recreation Terms*, which is similarly structured. This thesaurus will be used by the Department and the Canadian Department of National Resources and Northern Affairs to prepare an index of outdoor recreation literature to which both Departments will contribute. From this joint venture a standard terminology should evolve. A *Thesaurus of Sport Fish and Wildlife Descriptors* is also under way as a cooperative project of the Department of the Interior Library and the Denver Public Library's Conservation Library Center. Its format is similar to that developed by the Engineers Joint Council, and it is planned for electronic data processing.

The Atomic Energy Commission has developed a standard vocabulary for nuclear information. Since it must interface with an international nuclear information system, for which decentralized cataloging input for foreign materials is anticipated, a common indexing vocabulary developed by the European Atomic Energy Community is being used also. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration is hard at work developing a technical thesaurus.

The trend toward vocabulary development in specialized subject fields is gaining momentum daily. It is much too early to say what influence the newly developed specialized vocabularies will have on the Library of Congress subject headings or on libraries and documentation centers in general. However, it is not too early to hope that some means can be devised by the Library of Congress to show on its printed catalog cards the specialized subject headings from authoritative vocabularies for the use of specialized libraries, in addition to its own subject headings for the use of general libraries.

It would be difficult to overstate the increasingly important role played by Federal legislation in the development of libraries. One has only to refer to the February, 1966, issue of the *ALA Bulletin* on "Federal Library Legislation, Programs, and Services," to gain insight into the myriad of opportunities for Federal financial aid to improve libraries and their services. Brief mention should be made of some of the areas of most interest to catalog librarians.

The potential impact of the Higher Education Act of 1965, Title II, Part C, under which the Library of Congress was given authority
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for "providing cataloging information . . . promptly . . . and distributing bibliographic information by printing catalog cards and by other means,"31 will become more and more apparent as the Library of Congress succeeds in developing its shared cataloging and acquisitions programs. Its implications for the technical services of libraries have been described by Helen Welch.32 In addition to the ways in which university libraries cooperate with the Library of Congress in this program, the National Library of Medicine and the National Agricultural Library are cooperating in a unique way. Each of these libraries has national responsibility to acquire all substantive materials published in its research fields. Both supply to the Library of Congress a card for each title cataloged, and the Library of Congress borrows those titles needed for its Title II cataloging program. Under this procedure, major duplication of resources is avoided and cataloging under the Title II program is speeded up for the libraries of the nation.

Guidelines for implementation of the Higher Education Act of 1965, had not been issued by the Office of Education at the time this article was written. However, it was the opinion of specialists in the USOE Library Services Branch that catalog tools in any form from conventional cards to machine-readable tapes, including books of cataloging rules as well as other tools for catalogers, could be purchased under Title II, Part A of the Act, and also under the new Title III of the Library Services and Construction Act.33

Title II, Part B of the Higher Education Act of 1965, provides for library training and research for institutions of higher education. Research, in the meaning of the Act, includes "the development of new techniques, systems, and equipment for processing, storing, and distributing information."31

Further impetus has been given to cooperative and centralized cataloging by the new Title III, "Interlibrary Cooperation," of the Library Services and Construction Act, which authorizes funds to make "payments to States which have submitted and had approved by the Commissioner [of Education] State plans for establishing and maintaining local, regional, State, or interstate cooperative networks of libraries,"34 Titles II and III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, are providing funds for cataloging, processing, book catalogs and mechanization of library processes for school libraries. Centralized cataloging for rural and public libraries has been receiving aid
for many years as a result of earlier versions of the Library Services and Construction Act.

The National Science Foundation, through its Office of Science Information Service (OSIS) is another source of funds for improvement of information activities. A member of the OSIS staff has pointed out; "By awarding grants and contracts to qualified organizations, OSIS supports science research and development projects relating to two goals: (1) major improvement of local science libraries to meet local science information needs, and (2) design of optimal library system components within the framework of national programs in science information." Grants have been made to such projects as Swanson's requirements study for future catalogs; the Rutgers University seminars on systems for the organization of information; the University of Chicago's development of an integrated, computer-based bibliographical data system for a large university library; and the design, development, and evaluation of an unconventional library catalog by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Grants and awards are reported annually and currently in publications of the National Science Foundation. Project reports are published in various journals or are available from the Clearinghouse for Federal Scientific and Technical Information after announcement in its U.S. Government Research & Development Reports.

It will be inexcusable if with such encouragement and financial aid from the Federal government, libraries do not take advantage of the opportunities to develop cooperative and centralized cataloging, and to conduct fundamental research into methods and machinery to catalog materials efficiently and in whatever depth is necessary.

A newer organization, not Federally financed, although its membership is composed of Federal librarians, is the Federal Library Committee. Established in 1965, with the blessing of the Bureau of the Budget, and funded for three years by a grant to the Library of Congress from the Council on Library Resources, Inc., this committee may have a strong influence on cataloging in Federal libraries and eventually on centralized cataloging.

It has six task forces engaged in investigations, as it is charged with considering policies and problems relating to Federal library programs and resources, determining priorities among library issues requiring attention, examining the organization and policies for acquiring, preserving, and making information available, studying the need for and potential of technological innovation in library practices,
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and studying library budgeting and staffing problems. Westrate, of the Bureau of the Budget, stated: “The Committee will seek to develop recommendations for solving the problems it identifies. The Bureau of the Budget intends to express its interest whenever necessary to provide added support for these recommendations. Also, when it appears desirable, the work of the committee will be brought to the attention of the Executive Officers’ Group, composed of Federal officials at the subcabinet level.”

The committee's executive secretary, in response to a query about potential influence on cooperative and centralized cataloging, wrote:

Cataloging is certainly one of the operations of concern to the Federal Library Committee. Its concern, however, is more with cataloging policy than with cataloging technology. It should be interested in seeing that there is more widespread use of cooperative and centralized cataloging, that the centralized cataloging is adaptable to varied needs and is available when needed, that cataloging practices throughout the Government are compatible and really reflect holdings. The Committee's greatest impact on Federal library cataloging practice will probably result from its function as a channel of communication.

The FLC Newsletter serves as the communication channel from the Federal Library Committee to Federal libraries and to all other libraries which wish to receive it.

The newest arrivals on the national scene are the National Advisory Commission on Libraries and the National Library Committee, established by President Johnson's Executive Order No. 11301, signed September 2, 1966. One of the purposes of these groups, as stated in the Order, is to “Develop recommendations for action by Government or private institutions and organizations designed to ensure an effective and efficient library system for the Nation.” No one can foretell how the recommendations of these groups will affect cooperative and centralized cataloging, but it is probably safe to predict that there will be an effect, and it should be a beneficial one.

As has been shown above, there are definite trends, fostered by the Federal community, toward centralized and cooperative cataloging. These may be summarized briefly as follows:

1. Publication of book catalogs by Federal libraries to make known their unique resources and to provide cataloging information of a more specialized nature than that of the Library of Congress.
2. More realistic recognition of both the limitations and the potential of systems development and computer technology for capturing and retrieving cataloging information; and first steps toward using this technology effectively and on a national basis.

3. Advances toward compatibility and standardization of descriptive cataloging of technical reports, in the interest of effective cooperative cataloging.

4. Greater awareness of the need for compatible specialized subject approaches, and major attempts to achieve them with the help of the scientific community rather than through the efforts of librarians alone.

5. Concern at the highest Federal levels with the need to solve library problems, including those of cataloging, and action through legislation, funding and research by the Federal government aimed at solutions to the problems, ranging from the local to the national levels, in cooperation with those outside of government.

Such trends augur well for the development of national information systems through which the requirements of the scholarly, scientific and technical world will be met. Without doubt it will take both cooperative and centralized cataloging to meet these goals.

References

Other Federal Activities

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Soviet Centralized Cataloging: A View From Abroad*

ELEANOR BUIST

If solutions to key library problems are to be sought increasingly at the national and international level there is need for a maximum of comparative data. The experience of the Soviet Union should be instructive as an example of a country with several decades of experience with forms of centralized cataloging, and one which is engaged in new experimentation with cataloging-in-source. Have any of the "classic" problems been solved?

A survey of the literature today soon runs into the thorny issues of classification. This problem does indeed remain. Other matters are less obvious. There is the challenge of evaluating the cataloging-in-source trials initiated in 1959. At the same time there is evidence that the printed cards issued by central agencies are far from abandoned. Of fresh interest is the fact that the distribution of the All Union Book Chamber cards has been refined for 1967. In the scientific and technical information network there appears to be increased emphasis on the standard card—a development that may be less traditional than it seems at first glance, in that the cards for journal articles as well as books are intended to be used by individuals for current awareness and personal files which would link with catalogs in specialized institutions. At the same time the potential of wider service to libraries is gained.

In Soviet sources the origins of ideas and practices relevant to centralized cataloging in Russia are traced to the nineteenth century, in particular to Kvaskov's pamphlet of 1893, The Reform of Library Affairs: Library Cards in Newly Published Books; with a Supplement of Library Cards.1 Kvaskov attributed the idea to "friends across the

* Book titles in the text are given in English, periodical titles in the original with translation when first cited.

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Judging from his list of nine references to other notices in journals and newspapers in Russian in 1892 and 1893, cataloging-in-source, as we now call it, was a lively topic of discussion in bibliographic circles at that time. Several publishers issued books accompanied by cards. The opinion was expressed that the matter could not be left to private agreement but would have to be made binding upon the publishers by law, and that stiff paper and uniformity of card size would be essential. In 1911 Unde-Popov proposed at the first All Russian Congress on Library Affairs that classification numbers be printed on title pages, in addition to having publishers required by law to provide cards.

According to Firsov, the author of a candidate dissertation in 1940 on centralized cataloging and of several subsequent articles, other early proponents of similar ideas were E. I. Arkad’ev, N. F. Fedorov and V. A. Krandyievskii. Klenov, in his 1963 textbook on cataloging, indicated that none of the early proposals was implemented on a large scale and that the history of centralized cataloging in the Soviet period had been largely a history of the issuing of printed cards by central agencies until 1959.

For the years after 1917 three bibliographies of library literature have provided a substantial list of works in Russian on the subject of centralized cataloging. Mez’er listed some three dozen references which testified to the active discussion that took place in the 1920’s. Few of Mez’er’s references were repeated in the bibliography by Masanov, although it dealt with the period 1917-1958, and provided annotations for many of its 105 references. Subsequent articles have been listed regularly in the quarterly index to library literature.

Masanov’s main divisions of the topic are still relevant: (1) printed cards for large research libraries and (2) annotated cards for mass public libraries. Each main division had a subdivision for articles reporting on the experiences of libraries receiving the cards, indicating that practical effect was not ignored by central purveyors. Discussions of printed cards for journal articles appeared in the 1930’s, according to Masanov.

Sokurova states that a part of the edition of the national bibliography Knizhnaia letopis’ (Book Chronicle) was printed on one side of the page as early as 1907 and continued until 1938, with the exception of the years 1921–1925. The All Union Book Chamber issued its first cards for books in 1927. Commencing with the Bureau of Centralized Cataloging in 1925, a succession of different agencies pre-
pared the annotated cards, a selection amounting to about twenty percent of the book production.\textsuperscript{13} In recent years annotations have been prepared at the Lenin Library by a special staff with responsibilities for leadership of the public library system.

Descriptions in English of the system of printed card services as it existed in the late 1950's were given by Horecky,\textsuperscript{14} and by Ruggles and Mostecky,\textsuperscript{15} the latter with samples of printed cards. Observations made by the delegation of United States librarians visiting the Soviet Union in 1961 were reported by Ruggles and Swank.\textsuperscript{16} The general system outlined in those works continued into the 1960's. A somewhat later description in Russian was the chapter on centralized cataloging in Klenov's textbook, with illustrations of cards and explanations of their components.\textsuperscript{17}

Essentially the system provides for the issuing by the All Union Book Chamber of cards for books published in the Russian language. Titles for which cards are not issued are identified in each issue of *Knizhnaia letopis* and are primarily books in non-Russian languages of the union republics. Cards for these books or a selection thereof are the responsibility of the republic book chambers. Thus, in spite of the existence of a highly effective legal deposit system and national bibliography, with its counterpart in the union republics, there is actually no over-all card service from one source, even for the domestic production. While the reasons might appear to be mainly political there are also compelling technical considerations of a linguistic nature. In a large, multilingual nation some decentralization of catalog card production, as distinct from comprehensive bibliographic listing in translation, may be almost mandatory. It might be argued that the practice resembles trends to “country of origin” production now being utilized partially by the Library of Congress for descriptive elements of catalog cards.

A characteristic of card services in the Soviet Union has been the method of distribution: by “complete” sets comprising all subjects and by subject sets, or by type of library in the case of the annotated cards. The change in distribution in 1967, referred to at the beginning of this article, was not a change in method, but one which greatly increased the number of subject sets.\textsuperscript{18}

In 1966 subject sets were available in thirty-seven series, but for 1967, the number was almost doubled, to seventy.\textsuperscript{19} The announcement was published in *Knizhnaia letopis* with prices indicative of the relative quantities. A full set of cards for the large universal li-
braries was offered at a price of 145 rubles for books, 400 rubles for journal articles and reviews, 32 rubles for newspaper articles, and 60 rubles for printed summaries of dissertations. An abridged set of cards for public library subscriptions was priced at 42 rubles for books and 35 rubles for journal articles and reviews.

With the breakdown into seventy subject sets, parallel series were offered, one for books and the other for periodical articles and reviews. The selection of articles would be from among those included in the periodical index, *Letopis' zhurnal'nykh statei* (Chronicle of Journal Articles) which specifies in each issue the items not covered by printed cards.

Undoubtedly the main purpose of the large increase in the number of subject sets was to give libraries an opportunity to select card series more closely fitted to their acquisitions and to avoid large numbers of cards that would not be used. This had been suggested as early as 1959 by Rabin in an article expressing doubt that a completely different approach to centralized cataloging, advocated by Tomakhin, was necessary. The 1966 decision was part of the evidence that cataloging-in-source would continue to be supplemented by the Book Chamber cards and improvements in their method of distribution.

If the problem of quantity had become acute for cards representing books, the threefold number of cards for articles suggested further quantitative problems, at least for general libraries, and a need for rigorously selective policies in acquiring them. But flexibility and currency of indexing presented in close association with the centralized cataloging of books, were clearly a goal. In this there appeared to be an increasing resemblance to procedures for cataloging foreign publications.

Cataloging-in-source, a possible alternative for the domestic production, will be discussed before turning to centralized cataloging of foreign publications.

It is significant that cataloging-in-source was considered worth a large scale trial in a country with a long-established national bibliography and its associated card service, and with similar services in all the union republics for their publications. Obviously the classic problems prevailed. Too many books were reaching libraries sooner than the cards, too many cards were received but not used, and too many books were acquired for which cards were never received.

The order by the Ministry of Culture was dated October 10, 1959.
The first instructions for carrying it out specified that all priced books published after January 1, 1961 in editions of 8,000 or more should be provided by all publishing houses with a classification number, author symbol, bibliographic description, and printed annotation. The instructions specified the rules and tables to be used. Books issued by central publishing houses in Moscow and Leningrad were to be classified and described by employees specially assigned for this purpose, with assistance in method provided by the Lenin Library in Moscow and by the Saltykov-Shchedrin Library in Leningrad. Books issued in the union republics and by other regional presses were to be classified and described by the respective Book Chambers or by the central libraries.

Understandably, the implementation of the order has been gradual and published comment relatively infrequent. The Ukrainian Soviet Republic, where the experiment met with the most success, was among the first to report on its methods and problems. The article by the Director and two chief bibliographers of the Book Chamber of the Ukrainian S.S.R. was exceptionally clear as to what steps had been taken, and provided illustrations of some unsatisfactory results. Their experiments included having some publishers print a library card together with the publication, in addition to printing the cataloging and classification information in the book. Implementation involved much cooperative work on the part of trained catalogers and representatives of the publishers.

In 1963 a brief report on the situation in the Tadzhik S.S.R. pointed to the difficulties imposed by the absence of a uniform system of classification. A description of the Lithuanian S.S.R.'s centralized cataloging, published in 1964, did not refer to cataloging-in-source but noted that cards began to reach libraries before the books after a 1960 law required publishers to send rush copies of each printed book to the Book Chamber. A member of the Interlibrary Cataloging Commission reported in 1965 that the Book Chambers of the union republics, with the exception of some of the Baltic republics, lacked some of the basic instructions and tools for correct cataloging procedures in their own work, and that the quality of work done in cooperation with publishing houses left much to be desired.

A more optimistic note was sounded by Ivanova and Chizhikova in 1966, describing the cataloging-in-source experiment in relation to the public libraries. To illustrate conditions which led to the experiments and which still prevailed they referred to a 1964 ques-
tionnaire circulated by the Lenin Library to city and regional libraries. Replies indicated that for the sample of 2,286 books, 45 percent of the cards arrived before the books but that about half the books acquired by the libraries were those for which no annotated cards were ever issued, such as local publications, books in small editions, textbooks, and the like. In most cases the needs of the local economic and cultural interests were not being met by a selection designed for the country as a whole. Even in one Moscow library a test showed an average of only 15 or 20 annotated cards for every 100 cards in its catalog.

The two authors reported that by 1966 "124 publishing houses published books with the author symbol on the back of the title page, 27 also provided bibliographic description and full classification, and 25 included with their publications annotated printed cards." In Moscow, cataloging and classification of newly published books was carried on by 24 publishing houses. Of these only "Kniga" supplied an annotated, printed card. Eight others provided the author symbol, full classification, and bibliographic description, and fifteen only the author symbol. But in spite of commendable efforts, errors and deficiencies persisted and the essential need of libraries was still, in their opinion, to have cards delivered with the books. Differing from Nemchenko’s opinion, they believed that the quality of the cards produced in the Ukrainian S.S.R., for example, was still much higher than could be produced by the average library staff worker in a public library.

Another positive development was the experience with distributing cards through the Book Collectors, the distributing centers for libraries. They proposed that the 148 Book Collectors of the country be provided with photographic equipment for reproducing cards. But until such time as distribution and other problems could be solved, they recommended that the traditional methods of providing sets of annotated cards for public libraries be continued.

Additional facts and comments on the progress of the cataloging-in-source experiments were provided in a series of articles in Bibliotekar' (The Librarian). The general impression was not one of enthusiasm on the part of librarians for the present state of accomplishment but one of continued interest and debate, together with a growing appreciation of the issues involved, and the expectation that benefits would accrue to the public libraries.

Trends in the centralized cataloging of foreign publications are
difficult to discern because the work is performed by a relatively large number of institutions, and usually for a specific clientele. An active bibliographic and processing center for many branch libraries of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R. has been maintained for some years by the Sector of the Chain of Special Libraries. Since 1960 the Fundamental Library of the Social Sciences has performed centralized cataloging for libraries and institutes of the Academy in the field of the social sciences and humanities by photocopying catalog cards. Other major institutions with active centralized cataloging functions are the Lenin Library, the Library of Foreign Literature, the State Public Scientific and Technical Library, the All Union Institute of Scientific and Technical Information (VINITI), and the complex of centers for medicine, agriculture, patents and standards.

The interests of VINITI have brought about what appears to be a blend of centralized cataloging with the current awareness function. Since 1960 VINITI has issued printed catalog cards jointly with the All Union State Library of Foreign Literature for articles in foreign journals and collections to inform “institutions, organizations and individuals” rapidly of new literature.

One series advertised for 1967 subscription from the Foreign Literature Library included publications on library science, bibliography and book arts. Annotated cards were offered at a subscription price of 2 rubles 80 kopeks for books and 14 rubles for articles selected from approximately one hundred specialized library journals.

In fields served by VINITI two types of bibliographic cards were advertised for 1966 subscription. Nine sections of the Referativnyi zhurnal (Journal of Abstracts) for electronics and related subjects were to be produced on standard cards as well as in the abstract journal. There was to be no reduction in the length of the abstract because both sides of the card and continuation cards would be used where necessary. According to the announcement, the purpose of the card edition was to permit readers to set up personal card files in specialized problems in science and technology.

Another notice described bibliographic cards for a series for the use of information centers and scientific and technical libraries. In contrast with previous years the cards would correspond exactly with the bibliographic description given in the Referativnyi zhurnal, and each card (without abstract) would contain the number of the abstract in the abstract journal. Estimates of the number of cards per
year in each of the twenty-one series ranged from 2,100 to 14,400. They would be shipped monthly.

Recently one abstract journal (not issued under VINITI auspices) has been eliminated and replaced by cards. This was deplored in an article by a specialist who maintained that the elimination of the abstract journal for construction and architecture at the end of 1964 had seriously lowered the effectiveness of specialists in the field. He recommended that the journal be produced along with the cards. In this case a subject index to the abstract cards of 1965 was published, but as an item not in the book trade.

Further evidence of the importance of the bibliographic card to VINITI and related organizations may be found in a diagram which appeared in the book *Fundamentals of Scientific Information*. In that diagram, illustrating the ascending and descending flow of information in the U.S.S.R., the three central bibliographic publications are shown as the *Referativnyi zhurnal*, the *Ekspres-informatsii* (spot report) series, and cards.

Future objectives in matters of rules for entry and descriptive cataloging, and exclusive of classification, were reported at the 1965 Scientific Conference on Cataloging. Among its primary recommendations were (1) that unity of principles of description for all types of libraries should be sought and that future developments should tend toward simplification that would make it possible for one set of rules to serve both large and small libraries; (2) that the goal of maximum similarity of method for catalogs and for bibliographic publications should be sought, referring in particular to the comparison of the *Uniform Rules* with the *Rules for Bibliographic Description of Publications* and (3) that the standardization of publishing practices be furthered by the approval and publication of guide lines prepared by the All Union Book Chamber.

The first two recommendations involve decisions familiar in principle to experts in cataloging. The third recommendation is indicative of the increasing attention being given to amelioration of cataloging problems at the publication source. The approval of the Book Chamber's standardization proposals by the State Committee for the Press of the U.S.S.R. Council of Ministers would be a matter of great importance to libraries.

In general, it may be said that the rules for entry and for descriptive cataloging have reached a high level of development in the Soviet Union, within the context of the traditional catalog. Firsov's
opinion, expressed at the conference, was that the next edition of the Uniform Rules would be accepted as the government standard.43

The present state of classification, on the other hand, is difficult to describe, let alone assess. That classification has become the most important issue for centralized cataloging was stressed by Sukiasian in a leading article in the journal Sovetskaia bibliografiia (Soviet Bibliography) in 1966.44 The same issue of the journal carried an announcement of a decision taken by the Collegium of the Ministry of Culture in a decree of November 12, 1965.45 The decree outlined the steps to be taken with regard to the use of the first edition of the Library-Bibliographic Classification.46 Publication of “the new Soviet classification” in some thirty parts had commenced in 1961 and completion of the main set was scheduled for 1966 and 1967.

Like most major classification systems the Library-Bibliographic Classification has had a long history of change and development.47 Its drafting has been subject to the shifting currents of Marxist-Leninist theory. At the same time many important scientists, scholars, and specialists in classification have participated in its preparation. The institutions primarily charged with the work have been the Lenin Library, the Saltykov-Shchedrin Library, the Library of the Academy of Sciences of the U.S.S.R., and the All Union Book Chamber. Thus many of its schedules reflect the realities of large collections, as does the classification system of the Library of Congress. According to Kondakov, practical testing of the classification was begun by the Lenin Library in 1962 when it began to classify all current acquisitions by the new schedules, and more than sixty scientific and special libraries in the Soviet Union were making use of at least some parts of the classification.48

Since the official adoption of the Universal Decimal Classification in 1921 it had undergone many reworkings in an attempt to fit it to the realities of the books actually being produced in the Soviet Union, to the needs of different sized libraries, and always to the ideological norms of a given period. During much of this time the benefits that might have accrued by cooperation with the most recent work done in Europe, at least for the science and technology sections, could not be fully utilized. There was also the expectation that a “new Soviet classification” would provide solutions.

A classification system used in the arrangement of the weekly printed bibliographies of the All Union Book Chamber, a “state registration classification system,” had been published in several edi-

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tions, but the far more elaborate schedules for the U.D.C. numbers also assigned to the entries and used on the cards on the lower right hand corner (the state registration classification also appears on the left) were not available outside the Book Chamber in published form. The closest version was the publication in Russian in 1962 of an edition based primarily on the U.D.C.'s trilingual abridged edition of 1958, but this did not reflect some of the actual practices of the Book Chamber when classifying by U.D.C.

By this time many libraries had reworked earlier versions of U.D.C. to fit their needs, and since 1959–61 had been able to apply the Tables for Public Libraries, a simplified form of U.D.C., in many situations. The Tables for Public Libraries were a unifying element but were inadequate for large or specialized collections.

Meanwhile the Committee on Science and Technology of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. (formerly the State Committee on the Coordination of Scientific Research) decreed in 1962 that, commencing in 1963, the U.D.C. was to be applied for all information items in natural sciences and technology. Approximately 21,000 libraries in technology, agriculture and medicine were involved, but not the numerous large and small libraries within the system of the Ministry of Culture.

In an article published in English in 1965 Fomin provided a succinct description of the plans for utilizing the U.D.C., the urgent priority given to the updating of the 0, 5, 6 and parts of 7 of the schedules, and the application of the system to “books, journals, patents, conference transactions, symposia by academic or research institutions, etc.” and to “unpublished information sources (drawings, progress and development records).” Many detailed schedules were published, and a Russian edition of Extensions and Corrections to the U.D.C. was begun.

That the Collegium of the Ministry of Culture recognized that the first edition of the Library-Bibliographic Classification was not yet ready in a technical sense for full adoption could be seen from the wording of the order, which recommended but did not require its adoption. The order recommended that the classification be introduced into the practical work of large research libraries within the system of the Ministry of Culture, and that manuals, abbreviated tables, and provisions for additions and changes be undertaken. It also recommended that the Committee of the Press of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. request the All Union Book Chamber to
prepare for the introduction of the new tables in its centralized classification work. The Collegium also established a Council on Classification to coordinate the work on the creation of abbreviated tables and the introduction of the classification.

Sukiasian appeared to be well qualified to discuss the issues. His bibliography of the literature on classification appeared in 1966,55 For the journal Nauchno-tekhnikheskaia informatsiia (Scientific and Technical Information) he had compiled similar lists about the U.D.C.,56 and his analysis of the characteristics and problems of the U.D.C. classification, addressed to the scientific community, appeared in that journal.57 His review of the general and geographical type divisions of the Library-Bibliographic Classification was published in 1965 in Biblioteki SSSR (Libraries of the USSR).58

Sukiasian's lead article in Sovetskaia bibliographiia, mentioned above44 was entitled, "Conditions and Perspectives for Development of Centralized Classification in the U.S.S.R." In it he made clear that what exists today is essentially a decentralized system with classification carried on by many organizations. What had existed in the past was centralized cataloging in a limited sense, and the professional literature reflected that fact. The most successful work was in the system for public libraries by reason of the fact that the tables published in 1959-61 were issued in a sufficient quantity for use in the 120,000 libraries and were translated with relatively few adaptations and changes into the other languages of the U.S.S.R. With regard to the cataloging-in-source experiments the same benefit accrued to the public library materials, and the work has been more successful there than elsewhere. His article provided many additional details on the cataloging-in-source projects and indicated that the basic technical difficulty of providing an authoritative, printed card had not yet been solved.

The difficulties which surrounded the implementation of the 1962 decree on the use of the U.D.C. for science and technology were not minimized by Sukiasian, and were attributed to the lack of up-to-date schedules and to insufficient quantities of those that had to be used. In addition to the sections that have since been published it was essential, he stated, that both full and abridged editions be issued at the earliest possible date.

In the concluding section Sukiasian commented on the work which lies ahead before the Library-Bibliographic Classification could be adopted widely as a centralized classification system. It would mean...
reclassification for the great majority of libraries in the country so that all details would have to be worked out with great care. It would require the training of a corps of specialists, prior to which guides on methodology would have to be prepared. Thought would have to be given to the notation in the interests of multilingual applicability. The notation as it stands contains Russian letters of upper and lower case, Arabic and Roman numerals, and additional signs and symbols.

One can appreciate the position of the large libraries, particularly the Lenin Library, whose specialists have been laboring over many years on the Library-Bibliographic Classification and whose actual practices are reflected in the schedules. To an outside observer it would seem nevertheless that the public libraries’ Tables, the variant of U.D.C. in use by the Book Chamber, and the very refined special sections of U.D.C. recently reworked by specialists, all have more in common with each other than with the Library-Bibliographic Classification. There are indeed problems in adapting social science sections of U.D.C. to twentieth century realities. But if the Soviet authorities find it possible to use modernized versions of the U.D.C. agreed upon internationally it could be a great step forward, enabling them to benefit from the research and development on rapid updating. It is of course not impossible for two major classification systems to co-exist in one country, but under today’s conditions of urgent need to standardize the costly and complex operations of cataloging and classification wherever possible, one can only speculate that a choice will have to be made. If the intensive research on classification under way in many centers results in the millennium of a universal, internationally applicable system superior to U.D.C., the matter of convertibility from U.D.C. would receive early attention. Soviet authorities are fully cognizant of the issues.

However, the simple fact that a printed card, carefully produced, can be of great utility even when classification is omitted or is not identical with the practice of a given library suggests that card services will continue to perform an important function in the U.S.S.R. as elsewhere. A major contribution to retrospective cataloging was performed by the Saltykov-Shchedrin Library in Leningrad in providing printed cards for Russian books of the period 1726-1926. Those cards, without printed classification, formed the basis of the important union catalog in the Lenin Library and of the volumes now in progress.

The immediate relevance of the new Soviet book trade classifica-
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tion to the topic of centralized cataloging is questionable. However, any organized scheme for the distribution of large quantities of books could conceivably be aligned with card distribution. During 1965 a classification system to be used by the book trade was announced and published as an appendix to a textbook by Al'tshul and in a book on basic accounting and planning in the book trade by Reznikov. It is possible that the complexities of library classification introduced into publishing by the cataloging in source experiments were of some influence in inducing the book trade authorities to establish a simpler classification. It is more likely that internal considerations of cost accounting and the use of data processing equipment, as well as physical arrangement in stores, were the determining factors. In any case, the number now printed on the back of the title page in the lower left hand corner is distinct from the library classification in the upper left hand corner. In the nine basic divisions of the book trade classification there is no apparent correlation with the 0-9 of decimal systems familiar to librarians and to many others.

Even after the Soviet Union's several decades of experience with forms of centralized cataloging, within a climate of government more favorable to centralization than in the West, one is struck by the number of problems that still exist and by the fact that there is less centralization than at first might be supposed. There is no single institution which performs a role similar to that of the Library of Congress in its provision to any subscriber of catalog cards selected by the subscriber from an almost universal range of subjects and languages. Nevertheless, the printed card continues as a key element in the Soviet library economy. Its traditional function is being extended in technical fields to extra-library uses, at least temporarily pending further active research on the theory of information and applications of new technology. Current attempts to solve the problem of distribution of centrally produced cards take the form of greater refinement of their supply according to subject groups, but elsewhere attention is being paid to supplying cards with books through book distributing centers for libraries. Meanwhile, the general magnitude of the cataloging problem has warranted continuing efforts to alleviate matters at the publishing source.

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35. Ibid., 1965, No. 8, 13.

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54. See note 45, supra.


ADDITIONAL REFERENCES


Centralized Cataloging in Great Britain

A. J. WELLS

The idea of centralized cataloging in Great Britain has perhaps been more talked about than practiced. It is a curious fact that the public libraries which were most active during the pre-war years in promoting the notion of centralized cataloging are turning away from it while the academic libraries which were least interested in such a prospect then are now turning toward it.

A centralized printed card service was begun in Great Britain in 1949 by the London firm of Harrods through its Library Supply Department. This service offered a standard 12.5 \times 7.5 \text{ cm.} catalog card with an entry typographically similar to the Library of Congress card and with similar tracings and other cataloging information. The service survived little more than a year.

In 1949, the Council of the British National Bibliography Ltd. was formed as a non-profit-making company limited by guarantee. It had a capital of fifteen shillings and little else, besides a conviction that a national bibliography for Great Britain was needed and would ultimately prove self-supporting.

In 1950, the British National Bibliography began publication as a weekly list of current British books. In the first year, the entries followed closely the typographical style of the Library of Congress card. They were cataloged according to the Anglo-American Catalog Rules: Author and Title Entries, 1908, with additional rules taken from the ALA Cataloging Rules for Author and Title Entries, 1949.

The entries appeared in list form and they did not contain tracings or subject headings; the class number for each entry was based on the Dewey Decimal Classification, 14th edition, with some extensions and modifications to suit the requirements of a large classified subject catalog.

In an attempt to offer a compromise centralized cataloging service, the entries in the weekly lists were printed on only one side of a
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page and spaced out so that they could be cut and mounted onto catalog cards. In a vain effort to induce librarians to adopt this scissors and paste technique, additional copies of the British National Bibliography were offered at half rate. Needless to say, few libraries even attempted this backward-looking method of catalog production, but the ruinous effect of selling additional copies of the Bibliography at half-price crippled the finances of the organization for years. Those few libraries that made the attempt abandoned it after a short while. The British Museum itself strove for several years to make the method workable but it too finally gave up. The practice of printing on one side only of the page was discontinued after a few months for the main bulk of the print order, but a few copies so printed were provided up to the introduction of the Printed Card Service in 1956.

Pressure from public libraries for a printed card service persuaded the Council to seek a method for reproducing the information contained in the main entry, which appeared in the Weekly Lists, onto a standard catalog card, and a technique was developed by the staff of the British National Bibliography in 1956. This involved the use of a photographically produced silk-screen-type stencil. The stencils, one for each entry appearing in the Weekly Lists, were trimmed to a size 4.5 × 3.0 inches and mounted on a cardboard frame measuring 4.5 × 4.0 inches. The frame had an aperture of 3.75 × 2.25 inches and the amount of information that could be printed on a catalog card was determined by the limits of this aperture.

The frames were capable of being passed through what was essentially an addressing machine and thus enabled the British National Bibliography to offer a service of unit catalog cards printed against each individual order. The method avoided the problem of pre-printing and storing quantities of cards and the associated problem of reprinting by conventional methods when pre-printed stocks ran out.

Unhappily, the reproduction lacked the crispness of conventional print, and, in fact, if operators were not carefully controlled, the standard of reproduction fell to miserable depths. In addition, the severe limits on space made it impossible to give tracings or subject headings.

Nevertheless, the service, at its best, provided the raw material for a card catalog. A cataloger, working with the Weekly Lists of the British National Bibliography beside him, could add headings for added entries and construct subject headings—or select them from a
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standard list—from the subject information provided in the Weekly Lists.\(^3\)

To date there is no other centralized cataloging service in Great Britain. Some 250 libraries regularly use the service and between them they buy approximately 3,000,000 cards a year. This represents about one-third of all those libraries included in the national inter-lending scheme (i.e. those which are members of a Regional Library Bureau). Compared with the total number of libraries in Great Britain, however, the number is not very significant. Only one or two libraries outside Great Britain use the service and, on the whole, these are libraries in the less developed countries which are setting up library services with a minimum of qualified staff.

The cards are sold at a unit price of 2d. each and are usually supplied within a week of ordering. Those libraries that use the service claim that it is efficient and economical, but those who do not maintain that its deficiencies outweigh its advantages. Its defects are said to be:

1. The service, being limited to British publishing over the preceding ten years, covers only part of the cataloging needs of a library. This argument is most often put forward by the academic libraries which tend to buy a higher proportion of older books and foreign publications than do public libraries.

2. The method of ordering, which involves searching the British National Bibliography for the card order number (cards can only be ordered by number, not by author and title), is time-consuming and involves a matching procedure which cancels out the time otherwise saved.

Of course, it is possible to base the major part of one's book selection on the Weekly Lists of the British National Bibliography when the card order number is readily obtainable and cards can be ordered at the same time as the book order is placed with the library supplier.\(^4\) In this way, the cards arrive more or less with the books or in advance of them and cataloging can often be completed by the time the books are checked in. For various reasons, however, most libraries prefer to obtain their information about current books from other sources, e.g. publishers' announcements and reviews, and so bring about the matching problem which takes away the benefits of a centrally produced catalog card.

It is probable that, if a card order number were to be printed in the books themselves and the problem of searching the Weekly Lists of the British National Bibliography thus overcome, more li-
Librarians would consider using the service. There is a plan to introduce in the British book trade a Standard Book Number. The plan is due to go into full operation in 1968 when it is expected that publishers will include a unique Standard Number in every new book. It would be the intention of the British National Bibliography to adopt the Standard Book Number; it remains to be seen what effect, if any, this will have on the sale of printed cards.

3. The quality of reproduction is less attractive than that of conventional printing and sometimes is quite poor. This is admitted by the British National Bibliography but so far we have not been able to find a technique which combines the flexibility of the present method with a better quality of reproduction. Experiments are now proceeding with other methods, particularly computer-assisted techniques, but it is obviously too early to judge what effect these may have on a conventionally printed card service. Some librarians have even given as their reason for not using a printed card service a dislike for mixing printed cards with typewritten cards already in the catalog.

4. The cataloging information is incomplete and leaves much of the professional work to be done by the library cataloger. This is true in so far as the B.N.B. card gives neither tracings for added entries and references nor subject headings. Its class numbers, those based on the Dewey Decimal Classification, are modified and extended to a degree not required by most libraries. All this is true; some attention is now being given to ways of providing the additional information desired.

5. Because the B.N.B. card service came into existence so late (i.e. 1956), most libraries have already-established cataloging rules which produce entries different from those used in the British National Bibliography. Their use of the Dewey Decimal Classification and of subject headings is similarly established and is often in conflict with B.N.B. practice. There is a natural reluctance to embark on large scale changes under any circumstances and this is heightened by the feeling that the cataloging of the British National Bibliography is not in accordance with an accepted national standard; in fact, there is none.

With the publication of the revised edition of the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, the British National Bibliography has been instrumental in setting up an ad hoc committee together with the British Museum, the Libraries of the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, the National Library of Scotland and the National Library of Wales, to agree on
a standard cataloging practice. It is hoped that this standard will
be generally acceptable and that libraries will be induced to make
changes in their local practices in order to conform to a national
standard. (The British National Bibliography is also in touch with
the Library of Congress through the Shared Cataloging Project
and it is hoped that agreement on cataloging practice will be
reached between our two countries. The benefits of this to both
countries, considered in the light of the Shared Cataloging Project,6
would be enormous.)

All these reasons for the ineffectiveness of the B.N.B. centralized
cataloging service are admitted. Nevertheless, the growing size of the
task of cataloging, the shortage of adequate labor, and the realization
by our academic libraries that they are not providing adequate cata-
logs of their stocks, are re-developing a climate of opinion in favor
of a more effective system of centralized cataloging. A great stimulus
has been given to the whole concept of centralized cataloging by the
United States' scheme for Shared Cataloging. In Great Britain we see
in the very near future a mutual exchange of cataloging data, with
B.N.B. offering entries for British books to the Library of Congress
and the Library of Congress offering entries for American books to
B.N.B.; there is also the very real prospect of similar reciprocal ar-
rangements with other countries.

Already Great Britain has a Government-supported program,
directed jointly by the B.N.B. and the Bodleian Library, for investi-
gating the feasibility of adapting the U.S. MARC Project for machine-
readable cataloging data to British needs. Great Britain has deliber-
ately chosen to work in association with the United States to ensure
maximum compatibility. It seems to us that to work alone in a strictly
national context when the Shared Cataloging Project has already
dramatically demonstrated the basic similarities in the cataloging
needs of every country, would be the greatest mistake of this genera-
tion.

Centralized cataloging has been written and talked about at con-
siderable length in Great Britain, but the B.N.B. centralized catalog-
ing services are at present meeting only a small fraction of the coun-
try's needs. We look forward to a re-assessment of the whole problem
of centralized cataloging in the light of new techniques, and this
time we hope that centralized cataloging will disregard national
frontiers.
References

It would be unwise to write of a strong trend toward book catalogs when the libraries using them number less than fifty out of over ten thousand. The impact of computers in library applications during the next decade will increase the number of libraries producing book catalogs. At the same time, some pioneering libraries will turn toward direct computer inquiry in a real-time mode of operation, thus dispensing with any visible catalog—either in card or book form.

This paper will review recent developments in the production of book catalogs with some emphasis on the cooperative and centralized aspects. It will deal with continuing catalogs, rather than with one-time publications. It concentrates on comprehensive catalogs, not such limited lists as those for currently received serials. It excludes national libraries, some of which are discussed in other articles.

The published catalogs of the Bibliothèque Nationale, British Museum, and the Library of Congress are classics. They are the most striking examples of shared cataloging. They are the immediate ancestors of the book catalogs issued today by over three dozen American libraries, with another dozen being now in gestation. In 1951 there was one. Another began in 1954, one in 1959, two in 1962, three in 1963, seven in 1964, nine in 1965, thirteen in 1966. The reasons these libraries adopted the book form are complex.1 Certainly two significant events that opened the door to book catalogs were the availability in 1953 of the first high-speed sequential card camera (the Listomatic developed by Eastman Kodak) and availability in 1964 of the 120 character set extended print chain for electronic computers which provided lower case letters for the first time.

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* Because of the relative dearth of current published information, this article is based in large measure on the many answers to a questionnaire used in the summer of 1966. The author expresses his sincere gratitude for the assistance of those completing the questionnaire.
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On a local level, adoption of the book catalog resulted from various conditions in addition to the technological. Somewhat typical is the comment by the Enoch Pratt Free Library which indicated: "Failure to keep up with cataloging work; cataloging becoming inadequate (particularly subjects) and inaccurate in branches; desire to widen services; reclassification found necessary." Others would agree with the Chester, Pennsylvania, County Library (whose catalog covers the main library, two branches, and six associated public libraries) that "card catalogs in our county were abysmal. Partial local cataloging added to the chaos. Two new branches and a two-year-old central library made the book catalog seem not impossible, and even feasible."

Other libraries have emphasized the need for multiple copies of the catalog, the clerical waste in filing in a number of card catalogs, and a space problem with the card catalog. The New York Public Library Reference Department indicates it is planning further utilization of book catalogs primarily because of "the extensive and rapid deterioration of the present card catalogs." Finally, it is likely that a few libraries were persuaded because of the local political advantages of dramatizing the library and of appearing to be in the forefront of new library methods. Though the example is not strictly a "book" form, this reasoning is exemplified by Lockheed Missiles and Space Company Technical Information Center which in June 1966 began its microfilm-form catalog to save costs and to enhance the "visibility of Company capability in information storage and retrieval."

The evidence is abundant that distribution of catalog information to branches is facilitated through use of book catalogs, thereby strengthening coordinated library systems. Two good examples of this type of coordination are the King County Library System based in Seattle and the Los Angeles County Public Library. The catalog of the latter includes 43 libraries in independent cities, 48 community libraries, 16 institutional libraries, and 9 bookmobiles. Somewhat similarly, the nine campuses of the University of California are aiming for 1968 publication of a union book catalog for all materials acquired since the appearance of the Berkeley and Los Angeles catalogs in 1962–63. Almost the same condition and solution exists at the Edwardsville and Carbondale campuses of Southern Illinois University, and thought is being given to having the new university libraries at Pensacola and Orlando join the Florida Atlantic University Library book catalog system and share in its operation. Many examples exist

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to demonstrate certain attractive features of the book catalog in a single library system—whether it is a school, college, or public library system.

Have cooperative processing centers or new joint library systems served to make book catalogs desirable? Evidence is slight. In California, a large number of the libraries in Contra Costa and Alameda Counties formed the East Bay Cooperative Library System, and the libraries of three counties near Santa Barbara formed the Black Gold Cooperative Library System upon the adoption of the 1963 California Public Library Development Act to motivate cooperation. The funds for these new systems support book catalogs, yet funds for Black Gold might not have been forthcoming if the centralized processing had not been combined with the catalog. After the book catalog was in existence, the Black Gold libraries found that, with use of the closed circuit teletype, "the real value" of the catalog became apparent "in offering material to the patron and in immediate access." Common uses of the book catalog of neighboring libraries are to locate a citation for borrowing or photocopying or to find a copy of a book that would be seldom-used so that the seeking library may refrain from an unnecessary purchase.

In Washington State, the North Central Regional Library and the Timberland Library Demonstration (formed by the South Puget Sound Regional Library and three neighboring counties) joined in 1966 with King County Library on a book catalog experiment which they believe may be the first step toward improving service by means of a book catalog which would combine several regional libraries, or would possibly be state-wide. The Washington State Library has reported that its participation in the L. C. Machine-Readable Catalog Copy Pilot Project was due to its desire to help the three regional public libraries with "testing . . . the regional center concept."

The concept of a state-wide public library book catalog and from four to seven area catalogs is now being studied in North Carolina, based on an existing State Library centralized processing center with which fifty-three public and school library systems have contracted for service. The University of Toronto served as a processing center with creation of two new suburban colleges and three new universities, and it has found a book catalog an attractive way to maintain five sets of catalogs. The New England Board of Higher Education has contracted for the design, for the New England state
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university libraries, of computer-assisted regional cataloging and a regional processing center which would produce book-form catalogs for these libraries.

In New York State, two significant surveys of centralized processing and catalog production were issued last year, one for public libraries of the state and one for the public libraries of New York City. The former has recommended a single acquisition and cataloging center for public library systems of the entire state and three physical processing centers for upstate needs only. To provide catalogs for these systems, the proposals were:

1. For the six or seven largest public libraries to have a union catalog in book form, marked to show the holdings of these largest libraries and designed to supplant their card catalogs.

2. For approximately 180 of the next largest libraries to have nine regional catalogs in book form, each marked to show the holdings of the twenty largest libraries in the region and designed to supplant their card catalogs.2, *

These are apparently the only existing multi-library arrangements based on use of a book catalog. The evidence is, thus far, slight that book catalogs have encouraged centralized processing. Yet the book catalog published by a county or state may influence a small library to enter a cataloging center or cooperative plan so it can use the book catalog with its own collections. This would also encourage uniform cataloging, classification, and subject headings. All present evidence lends support to the belief that book catalogs and cooperative processing centers lend a hand one to the other. State or Federal money seems to be the major support in each instance.

Procedural changes necessarily accompany the adoption of a book-form catalog. Several such aspects will be briefly treated.

Concerning the sharing of systems, programs, and machine-readable data, there is considerable anticipation but little that has actually transpired. This is primarily because one institution may have dif-

* The survey also concluded that it was not economic to produce for each of the systems a union book catalog showing members' holdings. Furthermore, it reported that there "appears to be a curvilinear relationship between the number of items processed in a centralized processing operation and the cost per item of doing the processing. The most uneconomic volume appears to be about 100,000 items annually. As the volume decreases from that figure or increases from it, at least up to 400,000 items annually, the cost per item tends to decrease." 

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different equipment from another.† It is particularly the case with the computer-produced catalog, as one library wishing to borrow programs from another would have to redesign or reprogram if it lacked access to a 12K 1401 with 4 tape drives for which the first library programmed, or if it used an assembly language differing from Autocoder. A notable exception to this dearth of sharing is the Montgomery County (Maryland) Department of Public Libraries which has "given subject headings on magnetic tape to Tulsa City-County Library," and has "reproduced subject headings on punched cards as well as total children's entries for Prince George's County Library."

The most significant sharing is in concepts and style. In instance after instance the librarian refers to reading about or seeing examples. Two libraries—the Los Angeles County Public Library and Florida Atlantic University Library—have been the notable precursors. A substantial contribution was made also by the various publications and conference programs deriving from activities during 1958-63 of the ALA Interdivisional Book Catalogs Committee.

Preparation of input data is now only slightly less cumbersome than it was earlier in this decade. Computer coding sheets no longer need look like a double-crostic. Punched cards and punched tape are still the almost universal file conversion means. Newer possibilities are steno-typing, optical character readers, the keypunch bypass to tape, and on-line computer terminals. Production of the finished book catalog generally takes three to six weeks. The photo-reduction of computer printout (typically to 68 percent of original size) can be a temperamental process, duplication is slow, and production of perfect or oversewn bindings is slow although supplements are immediately available if put in post binders.

It is often asked whether card files are retained even when this information exists in the book catalog. Except in such cases as the G. K. Hall publications, libraries almost always dispense with the public card catalogs but retain the card shelf lists. The Free Library

† Of continuing catalogs now in print, at least fifteen use the high speed electronic computer and have developed their own programs, and all but one have used a computer available within the institution; ten use the high-speed sequential card camera and all but one contract the production outside (all are public or state library systems); seven (all public library systems) use unit record equipment; and five use variations of the Library of Congress shingling-photograph technique. Both the high speed computer and sequential card camera techniques have been recently selected for use by large knowledgeable libraries.
of Philadelphia has removed all card catalogs from branches. The Los Angeles County Public Library maintains a card file at the central building to serve only as an authority file.

Although Yale University has temporarily postponed plans for a book catalog, its design has called for a family of five book catalogs: Author (name), Title, Subject, Official, and Shelf List; the system will be capable of producing catalog cards from the same input since they could be used "as a substitute or supplement for some of the bookform catalogues and will be required for filing in University Library catalogues and the National Union Catalog." The shelf list would be produced in two formats, one with close spacing between entries for public use and the other with wide spacing so staff can pencil in new acquisitions (as in the official staff copy of the Harvard University Widener Library shelf list series).

This dual use of input, for automated systems and for continuing needs in traditional format, will be a common requirement in the foreseeable future. Thus, the U.S. Naval Ordnance Test Station Technical Library at China Lake, California, uses an IBM 7094 to prepare tape to print catalog cards and also prepares special subject bibliographies from the same data.

Location symbols are frequently not indicated in catalogs of public libraries; their shelf lists provide information as to holdings. Yet there is no agreement on this approach. In plans for the 1968 computer-produced union catalog for the University of California, it is hoped that not only will all locations be indicated but that all call numbers will also be included.

In record changing for withdrawals, losses, and transfers, the frequently reissued catalogs leave the interim problem to the shelf list. Apparently the Contra Costa County Library, California, is alone in sending a memorandum to branches upon the discarding of the last copy of any title. The master copy of a catalog issued infrequently sometimes is annotated.

Turning to developments in the catalog display, there is considerable variation in entry form and length among libraries using tabulating equipment. In those which use Fotolist and Listomatic sequential card cameras, entry form and length are relatively consistent from library to library. The Compos-O-Line products also show a distinct family relationship due to the freedoms and constraints of the equipment.

Computers are used with widely varying styles of entry form. This
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is true for spacing of column width, column length, central margin(s), indentions, capitalization, length of entry, and arrangement of the components. Variations in entry style can be seen in the following rather typical examples. (Note the University of Toronto method and the Annapolis and Anne Arundel County method for indicating which branches have the title. Anne Arundel uses the sequential camera; the others use computer.)

Three Columns Per Page

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA CRUZ: (entry 42 characters wide)

PEARE, Catherine Owens
John Woolman: child of light; the story
of John Woolman and the Friends. **
New York, Vanguard Press
illus
Includes bibliography
BX7795.W7P4
1954

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO: ONTARIO NEW UNIVERSITIES LIBRARY
PROJECT: (entry 42 characters wide)

Peare, Catherine Owens
John Woolman, child of light; the
story of John Woolman and the Friends.
254p. illus.
Includes bibliography.
1. Friends, Society of 2. Woolman,
John, 1720-1772.

BROC ERIN GLPH SCAR TREN

FLORIDA ATLANTIC UNIVERSITY: (entry 44 characters wide)

*PEARE, CATHERINE OWENS, 1900-
JOHN WOOLMAN, CHILD OF LIGHT; THE STORY
OF JOHN WOOLMAN AND THE FRIENDS.
NEW YORK, VANGUARD (1954) 254p.
BX7795.W7P4

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Filing the entries is still a manual job in sequential card systems unless tabulating cards are punched for machine sorting. In computer-based systems, perfect accuracy of coding is needed and it has proved troublesome to program fully adequate rules for filing. Compromises with standard library practice are commonly made in order to work within the machine limitations and to keep the costs of programming within bounds. Abbreviations will file exactly as written unless a program instructs the computer to file as “Great Britain” but print as “Gt. Brit.”; the computer requires instruction if it is to ignore introductory articles, or to file collected editions and selections before individual works. In book catalogs the ease of scanning dozens of
entries—generally 60 to 110 per double page spread—may compensate for some ordinarily unacceptable filing peculiarities.*

The packaging and frequency of book catalogs also vary markedly. Some catalogs are reissued each four months, or in annual and biennial sets, or in sections on a three-year rotation schedule. (Record changing for withdrawals, losses, and transfers is made at this time, with the shelf list an interim explanation.) There exist examples of weekly, monthly, bimonthly, and quarterly supplements. Several libraries issue adult supplements twice as often as they do the children’s. Some catalogs are in buckram oversewn, others perfect bound, some wire sewn, others spiral bound, and some in loose leaf or post binders. It seems evident that experience is too recent for common patterns to have evolved. Change in packaging and frequency is easy; it is limited only by fiscal feasibility.

Financial factors are second only to service factors as the basis for decisions affecting book catalogs. Very careful analyses are made in library after library. The Albany (Georgia) Public Library, the Austin (Texas) Public Library, the Boeing Company Aerospace Technical Library, the Burlington County (New Jersey) Library, and the East Bay Cooperative Library System are among those which have performed careful financial studies. The preliminary estimates and final actual costs are generally substantially different. The Oregon State Library has undertaken conversion of its Master Catalog and has found that additional funds were needed beyond the original $235,000 contract. Prince George's County (Maryland) terms the catalog “expensive but worth it.” St. Louis Junior College District Library says costs are “high, but worth it.” Nevertheless, the Fairfax County (Virginia) Public Library found the expenses to be less than anticipated.

An interesting case is the Los Angeles County Public Library, the pioneering library which moved from a 407 tabulator method to the sequential card camera process in 1962. In 1966, it found the cost of the method “moderate to high, compared to card catalog or unit record or computerized catalog.” It consequently adopted plans to begin conversion to a new computerized format in fiscal 1966-67.

Specific cost data are seldom available and are easily subject to misinterpretation. One needs to know precisely the number of titles, the production technique, and so forth, to understand what is behind such a statement as that by Florida Atlantic University, that it budgeted $20,000 for 1966–67 for a third edition of the complete computer-based catalog in 150 copies and for bimonthly cumulative supplements.
throughout the year. An example of careful cost data is provided by the Montgomery County (Maryland) Department of Public Libraries, for a unit card process. In 1962, its costs were 80 cents per item processed by manual methods. In 1963, the cost for multiple sets of the catalog was 79 cents per item by machine methods. In 1965–66, the full technical processes cost was 93 cents for each of 103,011 items newly acquired, while the Department was withdrawing 46,902 items, sending 12,520 books to a contract binder, and also serving three more branches than in 1963.

Expenses for creating a computer-based book catalog in 1966 for 25,000 titles (for all processes after cataloging had been completed) were divided as shown in the following table for the Stanford University J. Henry Meyer Memorial Library:

**Approximate Costs for File Establishment, Programming, Test Catalogs, and First Annual Catalog***

(This excludes system design costs, administrative and general overhead expenses, minor supplies, etc.)

1. Input (25,000 titles: $10,011.98, or 40c per title)
   (Note: Input estimates include provision for all extra records needed for added volumes and copies and cross references.)
   a. Coding: 50 titles per hour @ $2.20 per hour: $1,100.00
   b. Keypunching: 12 titles per hour @ $2.20 per hour: 4,583.33
   c. Proofing: 72 titles per hour @ $7.40 per hour: 2,569.43
   d. Equipment: 029 Keypunch rental ($926.02); IBM cards ($312.34); and special coding sheets ($520.86): 1,759.22 $10,011.98

2. Programming of eight separate programs: 5,945.00

3. Computer charges: a. weekly edit lists 3,000.00
   b. first annual catalog 2,500.00 5,500.00**

4. Reproduction charges for paper, plate creation and printing (Itek Platemaster and offset): 4,409.09

5. Binding:
   a. 350 volumes @ average cost of $3.65 (30 sets over- sewn in buckram and 20 sets perfect bound in paper) 1,277.50
   b. 28 binders for shelf list @ $2.49 each 69.72 1,347.22

*Total Approximate Cost: $27,213.29**

* This cannot be compared with figures in Library Resources & Technical Services, 10:90, Winter 1966, since those estimates excluded nonproductive personnel charges, edit lists, and test catalogs, while they included the cumulative monthly supplements.

** Two full test catalogs were run to check programming and a third was run and partially printed. All this cost about $4,000 additional.
Financial projections for several years ahead are particularly difficult to make, yet administrative decisions should not be based on one or two year estimates. In such circumstances, Yale University Library calculated accession rate, collection size, desired output, and computer time. For a book catalog of a large research library, Yale's conclusion, as reported by David L. Weisbrod, was that "the cost figures on just the computer time were high enough that we temporarily decided to put off a book catalog and go to card production as our first effort." Some other libraries have reached different conclusions based on evidence that the cost of computer use is coming down rapidly and that real-time direct access will soon eliminate the reproduction costs.

All in all, many librarians are finding it economically feasible to adopt the new form of catalog. As Margaret C. Brown has said: "The suggestion that some catalogs might be produced better in book form than housed in a catalog cabinet is not made in the interests of economy. . . . Better service, measured in terms of improved catalogs and easier access to library collections through these catalogs, is the consideration." It would be wrong to imply that conversion to a book form catalog goes smoothly. Complications are many, and financial surprises are only part of the story. As instances, one can cite Florida Atlantic University's need to give up the extended print chain; the delay of over twenty months in delivery of the book catalog to the University of California, Santa Cruz; Baltimore County's first experience that in slightly less than 90 percent of cases could the catalog lead one to the book; Yale's experience that, although their computer programs had been operating for a year and a half, they still harbored two major bugs, each of which performed its trouble-making about once or twice during a week; the New York State Library's termination of its widely admired book catalog; the dropping of plans by the University of Illinois at Chicago, after its careful preliminary studies; and the withdrawal in 1966 by Harvard University's Countway Library of Medicine from the computerization project begun with the Columbia and Yale medical libraries in 1961. Other examples abound. Minor troubles, as with the notorious error correction procedures for paper tape input systems, are manifold.

One particularly knowledgeable county library in the West, using a sequential card process on outside contract, has noted the reasons for its dissatisfaction:
1. High rate of error in the product not only results in public service staff lack of confidence in their use, but results in a cost factor not anticipated in technical services need for revision and ensuing correspondence and conferences and other nonproductive time.

2. Error in contractor's premise relating to cost estimates resulted in library budget deficiency before the end of the budget year.

3. Contractor's promise to seek state permission to eliminate sales tax was not kept, resulting in more than $2,000 worth of difference. (It was subsequently ascertained that the sales tax need not be paid.)

4. Inability of contractor to offer a valid projection of costs for five years, due to anticipation of changes in machinery and methods.

5. Turnover of officers and loss of personnel from the project make long-distance communication difficult.

The Baltimore County Librarian has said:

We have learned. How we have learned! Absolutely convinced at times that we were victims of our own mindless, reckless adventurism, we, nevertheless, have survived. . . . We would recommend that others entering such a project consider carefully every item that should or should not go into the catalog: what is absolutely essential; what is merely desirable; what is on the cards because it always has been on the cards; what is dispensable, etc. Then confer long and soul-searchingly with the programmer to make sure that there is a genuine meeting of minds and that everyone concerned is agreed on every single item involved and the way in which it is to appear in the book catalog.

What is said of a computer-based process is only slightly less applicable in the unit card, sequential camera, and shingling processes. It may be noted that three libraries with an expertise to match anyone else's—the Library of Congress, University of Missouri, and University of Chicago—have spent more effort on mechanization than nearly anyone and yet have been cautious concerning the new book catalog processes.

Despite the complications, there are glowing implications in present trends of book catalogs. As each library newly adopts the book form, there are more enthusiastic proponents. The difficulties can largely be averted or resolved. It is not difficult to learn about the processes despite the specialized jargon. The equipment is slowly improving. Actual costs can sometimes be determined from libraries.
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which have pioneered. Yet it is still rather soon to announce that a clear pattern of applicability exists. Only highly tentative judgments can be offered.

Book catalogs are obviously useful where one collection serves many branches or campuses. The East Bay Cooperative Library System mentions ten agencies as a minimum. Baltimore County indicates that book catalog applications are not for any "small" library to invest in independently, and that multi-county or state-wide catalogs may be a desirable pattern. At the other end of the spectrum is the Los Angeles County Library which believes its sequential camera techniques may be applied most effectively to catalogs of smaller collections, or of collections which do not require periodic reprinting of cumulated master volumes. A similar conclusion was reached by Ritvars Bregzis of the University of Toronto. He believes that the book form is not a suitable medium for displaying large bibliographic files requiring frequent updating; he has also indicated that full cataloging for 50,000 titles may be the upper limit of economic feasibility. Some libraries would increase that level to at least 100,000 titles for simplified cataloging or go even further for severely abbreviated listing. Florida Atlantic University is highly satisfied with the book catalog for its total collection.

Those librarians who can foresee themselves soon encountering problems deriving from size must admire the courage required to convert the National Union Catalog, or the courage of Harvard which is putting its 2,225,000 volume Widener Library catalog in machine-readable form and issuing indexed shelf lists in book form. Most librarians who have taken the plunge are convinced that increased work loads, the need for improved service, building space requirements, and certain financial considerations will force all research and large public libraries to adopt automation. The larger the library's collections, moreover, the harder it is to implement an automated system.

As to techniques, opinion seems clear that the photographing of shingled or arrayed cards is suitable for replacement of a card file; it is a good one-shot application, not reasonable for issuance of cumulative supplements. Southern Illinois University Library sees the process as an interim step before computerization. The Harvard Law School Library finds it admirable for printing a card file when the cards are subsequently to be destroyed.

The unit card process using tabulating equipment is economical.

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Format can be reasonably attractive, as shown by the Washington State Library (which has used the IBM 407 and reduced the printout by Kodak Ektalith for offset). It is sometimes the first method used before "moving up" to the sequential card camera or high speed computer.

The sequential card technique is used exclusively by large public library systems. It unquestionably results in a most handsome catalog when used with Varityper composition. (Computer fonts can hardly be termed aesthetic and the face available on the extended print chain is poor.) The Los Angeles County Public Library is converting from sequential camera to computer due to time and cost factors. The Enoch Pratt Free Library also plans to convert to achieve system flexibility, better speed in issuance, saving of the catalog card space, and improved economy of the system. The Free Library of Philadelphia concludes that "most libraries beginning publication of a book catalog today would probably feel that they should utilize a computer. If they cannot use a computer immediately they would probably want to punch tape in the hope that some computer someday somewhere could use it."

One must not extrapolate from trends in this decade. Nevertheless, it is apparent that computers will be widely adopted by libraries in the last third of this century. The image of the future library catalog described in MIT's Project Intrex is a clear one.10

Although one cannot gainsay the General Electric information specialist who termed the card catalog "a delayed message center," each of the book catalogs mentioned above is far less current than is a card catalog; each is an off-line technique. Several libraries are already designing for on-line, real-time, terminal inquiry of catalog data held in computer storage areas. The computer input is the same as that for a book catalog, but time-sharing will now permit the library user to have direct access to the computer information. No delays result from photographic schedules, reproduction time, and the binding process. Real-time inquiry will be a common sight during the 1970's.

Sir Frank Francis, in closing the June, 1966, Anglo-American Conference on the Mechanization of Libraries, felt optimistic that the time was appropriate for the large libraries to move forward into mechanization.11 He felt equally certain that there are grave dangers of oversimplification. Libraries have large amounts of information urgently needed by society. Yet the methods of extracting information are old-fashioned by present standards, and the methods of access
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are ridiculously inadequate. He foresaw that through automation, the service provided by large libraries will be transformed.

The next few years will see improved equipment and lower unit costs for computer time. They should also see modular computer programs for economical local structuring, a bibliographically suitable programming language, and vastly improved input-output devices designed to meet human engineering standards. The years ahead will be bountiful in terms of library cooperation—the sharing of cataloging input data and of access via new catalog forms to resources now largely latent.

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3. Ibid., p. 245.


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Amanda C. Weber


Retrospect and Prospect

VERNER W. CLAPP

The remark (variously traced to Victor Hugo and to Ralph Waldo Emerson¹) that there is no stopping an idea whose time has come might well have been prompted by the subject of this issue of Library Trends. For the day of centralized/cooperative processing seems to be here at last, and there is no stopping it.

Yet its time might have come so often before! So many and so valiant have been the efforts that might have assisted it into being! Most of these efforts proved resounding failures; a few, great successes; but never before now (if even now) have all the needed elements been assembled in a measure adequate for success. Indeed, what most impresses the observer as he looks back over the long history of centralized/cooperative processing, is not the emergence of the idea—this has inflamed many imaginations over nearly two centuries—but the slow and arduous process by which the enabling conditions have been gradually recognized and gradually achieved. One is led to wonder whether even now we are capable of recognizing the important elements for the future development of these services, so as to enable us to seek the conditions that will assure their presence. If the survey presented in this issue of Library Trends should assist toward such a diagnosis and such a search, it will have justified itself.

Accordingly, let us look at the various attempts at centralized/cooperative processing with a view to seeing why some of them failed and why others succeeded.

The story of the first great attempt at cooperative cataloging in modern times, that of the French revolutionary government, still moves us both for its idealism and its naïveté.² By decrees of the Constituent Assembly in December 1790 and May 1791 measures were prescribed for the custody and preservation of books and other literary

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treasures which had been nationalized as a result of the Revolution and which were being held in local depots throughout the country. The local authorities were required to catalog—on playing cards, no less—the books in their custody, to arrange the cards alphabetically, and to forward them to Paris where they were to be merged to form the basis for a 150-volume *Bibliographie générale et raisonnée de la France* (portentous foreshadowing of the 610-volume pre-1956 National Union Catalog now commencing). By 1794, according to a report made to the National Convention by Henri Grégoire, constitutional bishop of Blois, 1.2 million cards had been assembled in Paris representing 3 million volumes in the depots; but unfortunately most of the depots had reported in notebooks rather than on cards as instructed, and it being impossible to make a single file from notebooks, the project collapsed. We can be sure that it would have collapsed in any event, for quite apart from the political and military situation which was confronting France at the time, the project was bibliographically and bibliothecally premature.

The next great effort was that of the Smithsonian Institution, described by Miss Westby and John M. Dawson as the plan of the Institution’s first and great librarian, Charles C. Jewett. (Ironic, that a great librarian should be principally remembered for a failure. But it was a magnificent failure!) This, even by today’s standards, was a very sophisticated plan, taking into account the needs and practices both of individual libraries and of the library world as a whole. At its heart, just as at the heart of the French project, was technological innovation. Like the French project it stood or fell with the success or failure of the new technique. In the Smithsonian’s case, the innovation was an improved stereotype which, though its initial cost was higher than type, was expected to be capable of serving, as a bibliographic unit, for an indefinite number of printings. Unfortunately, the Smithsonian was betrayed by inadequate engineering; the stereos warped, the investment and the project were lost, and centralized cataloging was delayed for another half century.

But not for want of trying! A principal preoccupation of the American Library Association from its founding in 1876 was, as Dawson reminds us, the search for central sources of bibliographic information, for both books and journals. Many were the attempts made during the period to establish a source for book-cataloging information, but for one reason or another none was successful. In the field of periodical indexing greater success was initially obtained by co-
operative efforts, but (as Frederick William Poole put it) as the knights left the line they were replaced by retainers and camp followers and the accomplishment that was economically feasible through unpaid cooperation became an impossibility when the services had to be bought.⁶

Miss Westby has also described the important contributions to the work of libraries made by H. W. Wilson and the company which continues his name and his bibliographic empire—invaluable contributions involving both book cataloging and periodical indexing.⁷ An important element in Wilson’s success was again a technical innovation—the use of the Linotype slug as a bibliographic unit. As many slugs as needed could be made from a single keyboarding of the text, and they could be sorted at will into whatever arrangement might be required. In spite of the technological revolutions that have shaken the printing industry since this innovation was introduced, it continues to serve nearly seventy years later. So far as is known to the present writer, it has never been successfully employed elsewhere. Its basic principle is that of printing itself, namely of making one typesetting or keyboarding serve multiple printings of the same text. This has now of course become a commonplace, and the effect can be achieved by photolithography as well as by tape-driven typewriters and by computers. All of these are currently used in bibliographic publication. But the H. W. Wilson Company has earned our gratitude by adhering to letterpress and to the Linotype slug.

The next great landmark noted by our chroniclers is the commencement of the Library of Congress catalog card distribution service in November 1901. Why did this effort succeed where its predecessors had failed? It is worth noting a number of the elements that favored it, while emphasizing in doing so that they were indeed a number and not just one.

The principal of these elements were: (a) the Library of Congress was acquiring for its own collections a large proportion of the books which were of interest to American libraries generally and for which they would need cataloging data; (b) it was cataloging these books for its own collections and was prepared to bear the full cost of this cataloging; (c) it was cataloging them in accordance with rules which it was at that very moment coordinating with those of the American Library Association; (d) it had adopted the recently standardized 75 × 125 mm. unit card as the building block for its own catalogs; (e) in order to expedite the printing of cards the Librarian of Con-
gress (Herbert Putnam) had arranged for the establishment of a branch of the Government Printing Office in the Library; (f) he was securing enactment of a law authorizing the Library to sell its catalog cards at a price based on the printing of the overrun only; and (g) in charge of the work he had placed Charles Harris Hastings, a man "of remarkable vigor, initiative and intelligence in a work without precedent, full of perplexity, and requiring the utmost patience, labor and ingenuity." 8

It is probable that there was little margin for error and that every one of these elements was essential for success. Sixty-five years later, when the card sales of the Library of Congress have climbed to fantastic millions per annum (63 millions in 1966), it is almost incredible that the service should ever have been in jeopardy. The fact is nevertheless that more than once its fate hung by hardly more than a thread in a series of cliff-hangers which still await and deserve the telling.

When the LC catalog card distribution service was announced in 1901, it seemed, as Dawson notes above, that centralized cataloging had arrived. 9 Who could forget Melvil Dewey's ringing words at the Waukesha conference?

You remember that when the Pacific railroad was built, and the ends came together to make the connection, a great celebration was held throughout the country, a thrill that the work was at last done; and I feel today, now that we hear in this able report that printed catalog cards are really to be undertaken at the National Library, that what we have waited for over 20 years and what we have been dreaming about has at last come to pass. 10

But the success of the effort depended ultimately upon whether other libraries found the service sufficiently valuable to be willing to pay for it. They did. Although Metcalf believes that the LC card distribution system "probably cost the libraries of the United States more money than any other single event in library history," 11 libraries generally appear to have concluded that it saved them money. William S. Dix says that it did. 12 It must be remembered that an LC card is two things: it is a source of bibliographic information which can be used quite independently of the card, and it is a piece of stationery which is useful, among other things, for maintaining a card catalog. This double usefulness has undoubtedly enhanced its money-saving capability. In any case, in spite of grumblings, the libraries paid increasingly for the service.

From the beginning LC encouraged and participated in evaluations
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of the effectiveness of the system. The first of these was made during the very first year of operation;\textsuperscript{13} from then through the Richardson, Ladenson, Dawson and Skipper inquiries\textsuperscript{14} the same principal defects were identified. These were (a) delays in service and (b) inadequacy of coverage. Both have been due to circumstances largely outside LC's control, and LC has made continuous and strenuous efforts to correct them.

It may be noted, however, that the importance attached to promptness and wide coverage has tended to absorb attention which might otherwise have been given to other aspects such as quality of cataloging, availability of analytics, etc.\textsuperscript{15} Unfortunately, this reversed the proper scale of values, for while the effects of delay and inadequate coverage are limited and temporary, the effects of inferior quality are more likely to be both permanent and pervasive. Accordingly, it is to be hoped that the present great forward surge in the Shared Cataloging Program and the National Acquisitions and Cataloging Program may finally succeed in correcting the defects of delay and coverage, and make it possible to give deserved priority to other matters of even greater importance in the long run.

Accordingly, without exploring the other consequences—no matter how important—of the LC catalog card distribution system, such as the National Union Catalog in both card and book form, we come to the centralized processing centers of the present day. It is easy to see how they, in their turn, have been made possible by a conjunction of technical, bibliographic, legal and fiscal elements, and of a matching of supply with demand.

All central processing rests on the principle that it is less expensive to do a job once for a number of consumers than separately for each of them. This principle is so obvious and so persuasive that one fully expects it to work in practice, and is somewhat amazed when it fails to do so. But fail it does in the absence of conditions requisite for success. When, for example, a job can be done for individual consumers by volunteer typists using aged typewriters in an ancient rent-free building, it is hardly to be expected that it can be done more cheaply by offset lithography requiring a full-time trained operator using expensive equipment in modern rented office space.

Nevertheless, by the 1950's there were a sufficient number of operations which offered savings through being done once rather than separately to encourage the establishment of numerous centers. Duchac has identified the most important of these operations when
he salutes the offset press as the raison d'être of processing centers.\textsuperscript{18} (Actually, the offset press shares the honors with other reproduction equipment, but the principle obtains nevertheless.\textsuperscript{27}) There are, however, other sources of savings, e.g., in consolidation of book orders, in the larger dealers' discounts resulting therefrom, in better use of cataloging information from the central sources, and in activities such as maintaining files of LC proof slips.

If central processing does indeed rest on the reduced-cost principle, we should expect to learn something about the extent of the savings from a survey such as the present. In fact we learn nothing of the kind.

Duchac, it is true, tells us that processing centers have successfully accomplished the purposes for which they were organized, one of which was to effect savings on the cost of books, and he affirms, besides, that they have demonstrated the "economy" of cooperative operations, but he does not particularize.\textsuperscript{18} From Miss Vann we get inconclusive evidence. We learn that cost-saving was one of the inducements to membership in a processing center but also that for those who joined and continued their membership the previous cost data is too sparse to be significant, while those who joined but dropped out give the higher cost of the center as one of the reasons for dropping.\textsuperscript{19}

Darling, meanwhile, reports that most school library centers appear to be too small to provide "economical central processing."\textsuperscript{20} But Hiatt, citing the Southwest Missouri example, states summarily that "the few studies that we have do not support the assumption that cooperative cataloging is necessarily cheaper"\textsuperscript{21} and adduces an instance in which it was actually dearer. He adds the seeming paradox that while centralized cataloging may cost more it is likely to accomplish less expensively the same level of processing as the independent units.

If the existence of the processing centers is not justified by reduced costs to their users, how then is it justified? Our authors provide suggestions for an answer to this question. Duchac mentions (a) elimination of unnecessary duplication of work, (b) the release of staff from processing time for other activities, and (c) uniformity of cataloging and processing.\textsuperscript{22} Miss Vann mentions (a) centralized ordering, (b) the availability of consultative services in cataloging and classification, (c) maintenance of the card catalog, (d) improvement of the catalog, (e) improvement of library services generally, and (f) release
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of staff time from cataloging to other activities. Miss Westby states simply that the commercial processing centers fill a need, but reports the users of commercial services to be evenly divided between the satisfied and the dissatisfied.

Darling marshals an imposing list of advantages (in addition to the now doubtful item of cost-saving) derived by school libraries from processing centers. These can be summarized as (a) greater promptness and up-to-dateness in the cataloging; (b) improved cataloging, better adapted to local teaching needs; (c) better use of personnel, including release of staff time to reader service and more efficient performance of clerical operations; (d) assurance of good cataloging no matter how small (or even non-existent) the staff and cataloging experience of the library; and finally (e) enhancement of the status of school librarians.

Hiatt lists similar advantages to public libraries from cooperative processing centers (again apart from reduction of costs): (a) the better use of (processing) personnel in short supply; (b) availability of professional (processing) services to libraries not able to afford them independently; (c) release of staff time for reader service; (d) reduced duplication of effort; (e) promotion of desirable uniformity.

There is undoubtedly still another advantage, not included specifically in any of the lists. That is the advantage to the library administrator of being able to get rid of the supervision of a demanding technical activity which is only a means but not an end in itself. It may be conjectured that to obtain this advantage librarians are willing to pay more to have their processing done by others than it would cost if done by themselves, given comparable promptness and quality of cataloging. In fact, 90 percent of those responding told Miss Vann that they would advise others to accept the services which they themselves were receiving, and 60 percent indicated that they would not resume their own cataloging even if the centers' prices were to rise.

Furthermore, although the principal criticisms of central processing are reported to be on the very point of promptness and quality of cataloging, the evidence suggests that more often than not both promptness and quality are superior to what the individual library provided for itself.

Now, into the midst of the processing center, emerges the book-form catalog, brought back to life after having been killed by the high cost and slowness of typesetting. As Weber remarks, the sequen-
tial camera and chain printer have been significant factors in the development of the book catalog, assisting it to become typographically and bibliographically adequate and acceptable, freed from the crippling limitations of an exclusively upper-case alphabet. But they were able to do this only because of a previous development—the successful marriage, perfected and demonstrated during the second quarter of this century, of two century-old arts, lithography and photography. Without the successful union of these arts in photolithography it would be uneconomic to print catalogs from shingled cards, by sequential camera, or by chain printers, and the British Museum Catalog would doubtless still be in the century-long process of being printed in letterpress. Here again, however, the enabling conditions fell into place, responding magically to the needs of libraries. For the moment that a book catalog can be used simultaneously as the finding list for more than one library outlet, whether part of the same system or not, at that moment it becomes an instrument of centralized processing.

Now, too, comes library automation based on computers. This has hardly as yet penetrated libraries, let alone processing centers. However, the New England Board of Higher Education has commissioned work on the development of a computer-based regional processing center intended to serve in the first place the libraries of the six state-supported universities of New England. Will conditions prove favorable for such a center? Will the techniques prove feasible? At this stage no one knows. In order to find out, an experiment must be made. The experiment may identify currently insuperable obstacles of technology or economics. In subsequent efforts it may or may not be possible to surmount the obstacles. The fact is that we are today almost as much subject to step-at-a-time progress as were Bishop Grégoire and Charles C. Jewett. Almost, but not quite, for second chances come sooner to us than to them.

Charles C. Jewett could not foresee that what he was trying to do with stereotypes in the 1850's (namely, to publish the catalogs of individual libraries making use of cataloging information from a national store) would be performed in the 1960's with the aid of a technique combining photography, lithography and catalog cards, even though all of these were within his experience. By the same token, it is not impossible that library problems of today will be solved by techniques with which we are quite familiar, but in configurations as yet unrealized and undisclosed. It is this situation
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among others which makes it quite bootless to attempt to read the future.

In the light of what we have learned about the progress of the centralized/cooperative processing idea up to now it is hard to doubt its ultimate triumph. The principle upon which it rests is the identical principle which Johann Gutenberg employed in the invention with which he ushered in the age of mass-production. If in its initial application to processing centers the principle fails or seems to fail to work in the sense that no clear cost-savings appear, there may be setbacks, as reported by Miss Vann.31 (It may, nevertheless, be suspected that present doubts regarding cost-saving stem at least in part from lack of precise knowledge of the cost of processing when performed by institutions separately.) However, it may be expected, on the basis of all experience hitherto, that further attempts will be made, making use of more effective techniques and of more favorable conditions of demand, until success is achieved. Indeed, as previously noted, there is already evidence that the success of the centers does not depend upon proof of cost-saving, but rather, that if their costs can be held to a reasonable figure, even though somewhat higher than the do-it-separately level, other advantages already justify their existence.32 Meanwhile it is interesting to note that in the salutary recommendations for improvement which Miss Vann has assembled, the quality of cataloging takes first place.33

Nor is it necessary to look far for new techniques and changed conditions for the processing centers to test. Certainly, in the bookform catalog they are offered, as Duchac shows, an extraordinary opportunity for extending their services—an opportunity which Weber reports has already been grasped by a number.34 It may be expected that they will similarly attempt to make use of the techniques of automation, either by using cataloging information in machine-readable form (such as MARC tapes) in their processing (as is contemplated by the New England Board of Higher Education project previously referred to), or by the plans for central processing for public libraries in New York State35 or in other ways.

Beyond this point it is hardly profitable to look, for there are too many unknowns. Will the processing centers, having acquired experience in automation, tend to become regional centers for purposes of reference as well as of processing? There are many possibilities and alternatives.

A final word. One lesson has been consistently taught by the experi-
ence of the last two centuries, namely, that uniformity of practice—a common standard—is basic. (In fact, if the processing centers have suffered from one handicap more than another it appears to have consisted in lack of uniformity of practice among their members.) In her study of centralized cataloging in the Soviet Union Miss Buist has given us an instructive account of the accomplishment that has been achieved with the aid of widespread uniformity of practice, which is proposed to be extended still further. Specifically, Miss Buist notes the goal of “maximum similarity” of methods for generating catalogs and bibliographic publications and for serving both large and small libraries.

In this connection it is important to learn that a body in the United States which Miss Shachtman describes as “one of the major forces for compatibility in the Federal establishment”—the Committee on Scientific and Technical Information—is gradually bringing the cataloging practice of the great technical-report-producing agencies closer to that of the country at large. It will indeed, as Miss Shachtman says, be inexcusable if libraries fail to take advantage of the encouragement and support of the Federal government. We are at a moment when it is at last becoming genuinely possible to take a major stride toward the realization of the one world/one library ideal, when the length of the stride will be utterly dependent upon the degree to which compatibility of records will have been achieved. At such a moment one of the greatest sources of encouragement and support which the Federal government could give would be the early completion of the process by which its bibliographical records can be brought into harmony with those of the country—perhaps of the world—at large.

References

3. Westby, supra, p. 46.
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27. Vann, *supra*, p. 43.
32. Hiatt, *supra*, p. 78.
33. Vann, *supra*, p. 43.
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