

Henriette Avram Speaks At RTSS Meeting

Presently there are three bibliographic utilities that provide a variety of services to their network members namely, OCLC, Inc. (Ohio College Library Center), RLIN (Research Library Information Network) and WLN (Washington Library Network). Henriette Avram, Director of network Development Office of Library of Congress and Speaker at the RTSS Meeting at NCLA, Friday October 19 said she believes that there is a need for a complete bibliographic system to permit resource sharing throughout each utility regardless to which utility one may belong.

When the Library of Congress goes on-line it will not serve individual libraries, like OCLC, RLIN, and WLN. Avram points out,

today all of the utilities that exist provide basically some similar services. The sharing of cataloging data with the input of new records and the adoption of modification in existing records, catalog cards ..., and all have certain capabilities for searching.

There are three factors crucial to this resource sharing development and hence crucial to the future of all libraries. They are: 1) the linking of bibliographic utilities together with the Library of Congress through telecommunications, 2) the development and implementation of strict standards within the system to prevent duplication of effort (as well as creating and maintaining consistent files) and 3) the creation of the national authority file to solve the problem of variant names and also reduce duplication.

Avram also questioned the economic feasibility of a national system. Will the \$5 million given to support BSDP (Bibliographic Service Development Program) be enough to begin? The idea of linking was the basis of a program document written by the Staff of the Council on Library Resources and the Library of Congress of Network Development Office as a proposal and submitted to seven major funding agencies, which resulted in BSDP. This is a big job, its goals being to produce effective bibliographic service to all who need it, to improve bibliographic products and stabilize support for bibliographic operations in individual libraries. The discussion was concluded by a summary of examples of institutions already participating in resource sharing projects with the Library of Congress.



Tommy de Paola, autographing.