

It seems to me that it is tremendously important that we accomplish both of these aims. First, our society should understand how seriously it needs libraries and provide the financial support they require, and secondly, the library profession should respond to this by a corresponding broadening and deepening of its own professional capacity.

### A Liberating Institution

Everyone of the great technological developments and social developments in the field of communication during the past few centuries has progressively had the effect of increasing the range and influence of the communicator — of the speaker or the writer. The printing press, the mass circulation magazine and newspaper, radio, television, each of them in turn has enormously multiplied the audiences available to any one speaker, so that one person can now command simultaneously an audience of tens of millions of people. There has been a steady subjection of a larger and larger audience to a smaller and smaller number of speakers.

But where the television network's function is to deliver twenty million listeners to a speaker, the library's function is to deliver a million authors to a reader, if he wants them. It is the one of all of our social instruments that is at the user's, the listener's, the reader's command, rather than the speaker's command. It is the one of all of our media of communication that by and large is on your and my side, the individual's side. In a society that is almost overwhelmed by forces that compress, that unite, that bind, this is the one of our great institutions that individualizes and liberates. God bless it, and I hope our Commission can help it.

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## THE ARGUMENT FOR DEWEY

by

LESLIE R. MORRIS

I hope, during my brief talk, to outline to you why you should fight, not switch. I am against reclassification. I am against switching from Dewey to LC, or LC to Dewey. I will not argue that one is better than the other. My principle point is that if you can not find a better place to spend the enormous amounts of money required to reclassify your collection, yours is a very unusual library or you are a very unusual librarian.

One of the major points in favor of the LCC is that all LC cards have an LCC number that may be used without even being perused by a cataloger. You have the card with a number. The clerk begins to type. Sounds glorious. I am afraid that the system doesn't work quite that easily. In the Fall, 1967 issue of *Library Resources & Technical Services*, there is an article by William Welsh, Associate Director of LC's Processing Dept., who is responsible for both classification systems; consequently he may be presumed to be unbiased:

"There are two aspects to the unquestioning use of the LC call numbers found on LC printed cards, expressed by one writer as 'any title which has an LC card and LC classification number (i.e. "call number"?) could be handled by a clerk.' Apart from any general departures from LC provisions decided on by the adopting library, it is evident from LC's practice in reclassification that as far as the class number proper is concerned

the quoted observation could be accepted *only* for titles *currently* cataloged by the Library and *not for the card stock as a whole*, unless the library in question were prepared to accept the obvious consequence of placing material on the same subject in separate classes or even schedules, e.g., air transport in both T and H. As far as the author and book number parts of the notation are concerned, if the statement means that LC cards can be "dropped in" the shelf list it should be borne in mind that as soon as any titles without LC call numbers are shelf-listed, the possibility exists that the library, even though following the LC book number system, may arrive at a call number that will duplicate one assigned later by the Library of Congress. In a letter to the editor of the *Library Journal*, Phyllis Richmond of the University of Rochester Library, not regarded as anti-LC, commented on this point in the following elliptical but vivid terms: "Think you can take the LC call number right off the card and use it without checking? Ha, ha."

Some people collect coins, others stamps, still others antiques. I collect LC errors. I have an LC card with the hole punched at the top, another with the famous author Mark Twain used as a main entry and spelled C-L-E-M-E-N-T-S. I have many more. I have heard catalogers complain that the quality of the work done by the DDC people is inferior to that work done by the LCC people. The simple fact is that most librarians will recognize errors in the DDC, but are not well trained enough to recognize these same errors in LCC. If you can use the LCC number directly from the card, you can use the DDC number directly from the card. Use the DDC with equal trust.

It is my feeling, without the benefit of a survey, that more libraries use DDC than LCC. It is also my feeling, that more books in this country are cataloged by the DDC than by the LCC. When we are just becoming standardized, why must we go off in another direction? Elementary school and high school libraries have improved immensely in the last 10 years. They will become, with the help of federal money, increasingly better in the next few years. As the new independent research methods are taught in grade schools and high schools, students will arrive at college with a pronounced familiarity with libraries and the DDC.

There aren't many school libraries using LCC. Students will graduate to public libraries largely cataloged by the DDC. Why insist on a 4 year break for LCC? Let's use the familiarity that people have and build on it. Do the patrons really care which system we use?

Sunk costs are the amounts of money already committed to a program. Add up all the money ever spent on classifying in your library, including the salaries of every classifier that ever worked for your library and the rent for the space that they used. When you have this enormous figure, explain to a layman why you are going to throw it out.

There have been complaints recently that both the gross number and the percent of DDC numbers on LC printed cards is falling. In rebuttal to that argument, I would like to read an official LC directive dated Oct. 13, 1967:

#### TITLES TO BE FORWARDED TO DECIMAL CLASSIFICATION OFFICE

I—*All* publications from *all* sources no matter what in English language, Danish language, Dutch language, Flemish language, French language, German language, Italian

language, Norwegian language, Portuguese language, Spanish language, Swedish language except:

1. PZ 1, 3, 4, 7
2. Rare books

II—*All* titles of *any* date in *any* language received through Title 2 except:

1. PZ 1, 3, 4, 7

III—*All* works published in U.S.A. in *any* language except:

1. PZ 1, 3, 4, 7
2. Rare books

This coverage seems quite complete to me, it is 99% of the books that most libraries buy and classify.

The DDC number on the 1967 printed cards is divided into segments. The official explanation of the segmentation by LC. states:

"DC numbers on LC cards are now printed in from one to three segments. This new service will enable those libraries that find some DC notations excessively long for their purposes to cut the numbers meaningfully without assigning professional talent to the task, yet will enable those libraries that find detailed classification useful to pick up from the cards the full numbers provided by the latest unabridged edition of the Decimal Classification. It is one of the virtues of the DC's hierarchically expressive notation that any number of more than three digits can be reduced to any degree desired, with loss of precision but not of correctness. A work on damage to cherry trees by hail can be classed in 634.23914, 634.2391, 634.239, 634.23, 634.2, 634, depending on the degree of closeness in classification required. Each library makes its own decisions as to reduction, but the new service will suggest reasonable places in the notation at which libraries of various sizes may make their cuts."

It will be more reliable to have a clerk copy DDC number than an LCC number. The clerk will be able to cut the number meaningfully.

Although not many titles require original classification, the problem does arise. Many monographic serials are classed together by LC, while your library may scatter them. Books cataloged by cooperating libraries are often without classification. When the classifier gets down to work I feel sure that Dewey is cheaper, easier and therefore clearer to the patron. The lack of an overall index and necessary complications of LC make Dewey a better choice. Neither I nor anyone else, as far as I know, has done a comparative cost study on the relative costs of applying LCC or DC, but I have worked with both and feel that Dewey is easier and cheaper to apply.

### LC CLASSIFIERS

How often I have looked at an LC card and wondered who in the world did this. Who are the classifiers at the Library of Congress? Are the workloads of the DC classifiers similar to the workloads of the LC classifiers? Are the rates of pay equal? The only way I could get an answer to these questions was by writing to LC. Following is part of the answer I received from the DDC office at LC:

"I want to assure you that the workloads of the Decimal classification specialists

on the one hand and of the Library of Congress subject catalogers on the other are approximately equal. I can also assure you that the rates of pay are the same.

If one wants to be precise, some qualifications must be made with respect to training. There are far fewer DC classifiers than LC, although each group must cover the whole field of knowledge; consequently, each LC person is responsible for a much narrower segment, and is, therefore, likely to be somewhat more a subject specialist than are we. On the other hand, because of the need to acquire the subject specialization, the LC classifiers are recruited with less emphasis on graduate training in librarianship, and many of them have no library degrees, whereas the DC people all have graduate library degrees or are well on their way toward finishing the work for them."

Will librarians tend to favor the library school trained Dewey classifiers more than the subject specialist LC classifiers?

As all informed librarians are aware, LC is driving forward into catalog card automation and hopefully, information retrieval. What are the futures of the two classification schemes on the machine readable tapes? LC has promised that neither classification will be neglected in any attempts at automation.

DDC has many faults, and these have been pointed out in library journals with amazing frequency in the last few months. However, LCC also has its flaws. LCC was developed to meet LC's needs for its over 7,500,000 volumes. It was never designed for adoption by other libraries and LC itself does not recommend itself over DDC. LCC has no combined index. With all the complaints about the index for the 17th edition of Dewey, how could classifiers get along without any combined index at all? There is no manual or directions for use of LC. In Leo LaMontagne's *American Library Classification*, Shoe String Press, the most authoritative book on LCC, LaMontagne says:

"The problem of revision and expansion is ever present, accentuated manifold by the bewildering developments which are taking place in this mid-twentieth century. Two of the earliest classes developed, the experimental Z (*Bibliography and Library Science*) and E-F (*American History*), need extensive revision and perhaps even replacement by new schedules which will more adequately reflect today's thinking and the experience gained in a half century of classifying and classification making."

All is not perfection in the LCC garden. Crabgrass does grow there. However desperately LCC needs some general revisions, don't be led to believe that LCC does not make any changes. The changes in LCC are not compiled and suddenly burst upon the catalogers in a new edition. The changes are made day by day. In the three-year period from 1963 to 1966 LCC established 6,254 new numbers and changed 919. Dewey may seem to be a shaky foundation to build a collection on, but LCC has many geological faults of its own.

I wanted to know how other libraries were faring in their reclassification projects. One such published account in the Spring, 1967 *Library Resources and Technical Services* was of the University of Maryland.

"The reclassification of the collection on the College Park campus has been under way for nearly three years. During the past several months, procedures have been sufficiently standardized to permit one to discuss them and be reasonably sure that

they will not have changed by the time he has finished talking. These, however, have been years of experimentation and change."

It took three years to go from first gear to high. After three years the University of Maryland has gotten the cost down to \$5.77 per title or \$1.97 per volume.

It was originally planned to spend three years on reclassification. From the same article:

"At its present rate, the Project has another dozen years to run to completion. Costs will rise, trained staff will leave, and new staff will have to be trained — an expensive undertaking. In the meantime the collection is split, staff and patron must concern themselves with several locations, and the collection continues to grow."

### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, I want to say that if I were starting a new academic library I would use LCC. But I would think long and hard before changing classification schemes. To spend \$2.00 or even 50¢ per volume is a high price to pay to get some *possible* benefits. As long ago as the 16th century Richard Hooker said, "Change is not made without inconvenience, even from worse to better."

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## WE'D RATHER SWITCH THAN FIGHT

by

WILLIAM R. PULLEN

On November 1, 1959, the Georgia State College Library adopted the Library of Congress Classification System for incoming new books and began the reclassification of the existing collection. Today, I should like to discuss why we decided to adopt the LC System and to reclassify, to describe briefly the procedures we used in the reclassification, and to evaluate the effectiveness of the LC System in our institution.

At that time, the College had some 93,500 volumes classified according to the Dewey System, plus approximately 17,000 volumes of unclassified bound periodicals which were arranged alphabetically by title.

The instructional and research programs of the College were expanding both horizontally and vertically at a very rapid rate. It was evident that the book collections would have to be developed rapidly until we had a true research library if we were to serve adequately the needs of the institution. It was in this setting, then, that our decisions were made.

The first consideration was whether or not we would adopt the new system. A number of factors entered into this decision:

1. The LC is a finer and more detailed classification system, and we felt that it would serve a research library better than the Dewey. As an illustration of this point, we took 10 titles in the collection which were classified under the Dewey number 326, interpreted