

CATALOGING PHONOGRAPH RECORDS

A Symposium

IN A COLLEGE LIBRARY:

By VIVIAN MOOSE*

Problem after problem plagues the cataloger after a library makes the decision to establish a record collection. Should you say "Phonograph records," "Recordings," or simply "Discs?" You find many more problems than the correct term to use when you begin cataloging them. In addition, there is the question of classification, the form of card to use, the title, the subject headings and other added entries to make. A code for procedure must therefore be written to settle these questions.

When the record collection was started at Woman's College about seven years ago, the Catalog Department was too understaffed to assume the extra work required for cataloging the records so the Librarian made a check list of the records and used the trade symbols as a shelf arrangement. This system worked very well while the collection was small, but as the collection grew and Long Playing records made their appearance it soon proved unsatisfactory. After about two years, the cataloging of records was taken over by the Catalog Department.

Before a code of cataloging for the records was decided upon, letters were sent to many libraries which had record collections asking for copies of their cataloging code or for suggestions for cataloging. There seemed to be general agreement that since the records should not be shifted on the shelves like books a simple accession arrangement was more satisfactory than an arrangement by composer or Dewey Classification. Since merely looking at a record tells little about it, it was felt that records should be stored in the stacks and located through the card catalog.

After much study it was decided that the form of catalog card should follow as nearly as possible that of the Library of Congress for music scores. Individual works or collections of one composer were entered under the composer as main entry with the conventional title, if known, followed by the transcription of the title appearing on the work. If an arranger was given, this was also included in the main body of the card. The imprint included the producer and the album or disc number. The artist, orchestra, conductor, et cetera, were included in notes.

Few added entries were made, only those denoting musical form, medium, and a few distinct titles. Very few entries have been made for orchestras, conductors, or artists. If a symphony or other form of music had a distinct title which was well known, a cross reference was made from this title to the conventional title. In very few cases has there been a demand for the artist or conductor. This usually occurred when an exhibition was being planned for the library before some well known artist, conductor, or orchestra was to appear on the campus and usually his works could be located by consulting the card catalog under the type of music that he plays. We have found that as time goes on there have been more and more requests from patrons for selections by title, so more title cards are being made.

With the advent of Library of Congress cards for "Phonodiscs," as the Library of Congress calls them, we were happy to discover that our form of card corresponds so closely with the Library of Congress cards that we can interfile the printed cards with our present typed cards without having to do a lot of recataloging. In preparing our code for procedure, we found the following publications on the cataloging of audio-visual materials to be of special help:

Daniels, Will C. Audio-visual materials in the laboratory school library. Baton Rouge, State of Louisiana, Department of Education. Mimeographed.

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- Daughtry, Bessie M. Cataloging and classifying audio-visual materials. Tallahassee, Florida State University, 1950. Mimeographed.
- North Carolina. University. School of Library Science. Tentative code for the descriptive cataloging of recordings. Chapel Hill, 1949. Mimeographed.
- Oregon. University. Audio-Visual Department. Cataloging code for audio-visual materials. Eugene, Oregon. Mimeographed.
- Quinly, William J. and Farrell, Elizabeth J. On record; a manual on starting a record library. Jefferson City, Missouri, Missouri State Library, 1951. Mimeographed.
- Rufsvold, Margaret I. Audio-visual school library service. American Library Association, 1949.
- Rufsvold, Margaret I. Suggestions for processing records and transcriptions. Mimeographed.
- U. S. Library of Congress. Library of Congress catalog; a cumulative list of works represented by Library of Congress printed cards. Music and phonorecords. Washington, D. C.
- U. S. Library of Congress. Descriptive Catalog Division. Rules for descriptive cataloging in the Library of Congress. Phonorecords. Washington, D. C., 1952.

There have been criticisms of the shelving arrangement by faculty and students who have had access to the stacks as they prefer to locate the selection desired directly from the shelves rather than take the trouble to consult the card catalog. Some would have the records shelved by composer while others would prefer a classification by musical form or the Dewey Decimal Classification System.

Since Juniors, Seniors, and faculty members have access to the stacks, so many were going directly to the shelves for the records that it was decided to divide the collection and put the limited editions and other valuable records on closed shelves and the remaining records on open shelves in one of the reading rooms. Whether this system proves successful remains to be seen. However, it has already been found that some records are becoming warped, slipcases or record albums are showing hard wear, and the mending problem is becoming more acute. With the growth of our present collection of approximately two thousand discs, more problems are anticipated, and this cataloger would welcome any comments from other librarians who have solved any of the problems associated with the cataloging, shelving, and circulation of phonograph records.

IN A PUBLIC LIBRARY:

By EVA MARGIE WHITE*

Most music of any importance is now being recorded on the 33-1/3 RPM long-playing disc, as such a wide assortment of items can be brought together on one disc, they are unbreakable and are easily stored. Therefore, most of the records now being purchased for the Greensboro Public Library are long-playing. The same principles of cataloging may be applied to all speed recordings.

The public generally asks how phonograph records are listed in the catalog. If they ask, that is. Many music lovers, preferring the classic in music which consumes the maximum in effort on the part of the cataloger, are amazed to learn that we have a separate and entire catalog for records. Since the Card Catalog is itself regarded as unapproachable by some patrons, the catalog for phonograph records is not thought of at all. The library user simply begins thumbing through the collection at random, hoping to find that which interests him. If the cataloger were to consider only this type of user, it would then seem impractical to spend as much time as is required in cataloging the majority of LP albums or discs, for on one disc there may be several works of one or more composers.

But the demand for the catalog for phonograph records is basically the same as that for the Card Catalog, and we are not wasting time when we provide a comprehensive listing of records in their different forms—music, opera, ballet, the theatre, and

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the spoken word. Records have come to be regarded more and more as an integral part of the library, and as a result the catalog has to meet greater demands. The cataloger, considering this, asks herself what types of entries will be sought for in the catalog. There have been no set rules; she has had to set the policy from the standpoint of the interests registered at the circulation desk in her own community.

The world of music is vast and its approaches are many. What patrons seek in the catalog is a common meeting ground for catalogers in any type of library. In the field of music the composer, and in the nonmusical field the producer or author, is usually the main entry. The title entry is the main entry when no composer (or author or producer) is specified. On discs which list several composers on the label, there must be as many main entries as there are composers. Artists and titles are paraded in bold letters on the albums, but these are taken care of in secondary entries.

There are various catalogs of recorded music from which the names, dates and standard or conventional titles of the composers can be established. We have found an excellent source in thus establishing the names of the composers and the standard titles, in the "Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia of Recorded Music" (3d ed. rev. & enl. Crown, 1948. Reprinted 1951).

In music recordings a form entry is frequently used as a subject entry. Spanish dances is a specific subject, but Brahms' Concerto in D major is entered under the form of the music, "Concertos (violin and orchestra)." The form of music is obviously as important an entry as is the composer. And the form can be combined with the instrument to make up a complete entry. For example: Haydn's string Quartets will be found under "Quartets (string)" and Bach's sonata for cello and piano under "Sonatas (cello and piano)." Or the order of the combination may be reversed (as preferred by the Library of Congress) to appear as "String quartets," and "Piano sonatas."

Distinct subject cards other than those for musical form are the same as in the Card Catalog. One who is looking for the recording "Words for the World," produced by the National Assembly of the Bahais of the United States, might be expected to look for Bahais in the catalog. Distinct title entries are treated as the title of a book would be. Stephen Vincent Benet's "John Brown's Body," or Mendelssohn's "Italian" symphony are examples. However, in the case of the latter a see reference may be preferred, thus: Italian Symphony See Mendelssohn, Felix. Symphony no. 4 in A major ("Italian"). Such title entries as one for Sonata no. 1 in G major are taken care of under the form, "Sonatas."

Entries under the performer (artist, orchestra, conductor, etc.) cannot be minimized in importance. Seeking for and finding entries under the Budapest String Quartet, the patron's interest in several works might emanate from his interest in this quartet. However, one of the foremost problems in cataloging phonograph records, especially long-playing records which include frequently many different performers on a disc, lies in the fact that the demand for lesser known performers may not justify the time consumed in making such entries. We find that we can go a long way regarding this according to the popularity of the performer. We have found that even large university libraries wait until there is a demand for the works of a pianist, orchestra, violinist, etc.

From the above it can be concluded that there are four types of entry for the phonograph record catalog here, and that records are cataloged in a method which is very similar to that for books. The four: Composer entry; Subject or Form entry; Title entry, when not taken care of under musical form; and Performer entry, when the artist is much sought after. In the nonmusical field the author or producer takes the author entry place. An example of this type of record is Edward R. Murrow's "I Can Hear It Now." For those seeking jazz music, entries under big-name bands, pianists and vocalists obtain greatest significance.

The main body of the card would formerly have varied in different libraries, but a code of rules has now been developed by the Library of Congress. L. C. Catalog cards are now available, but thus far not many records have been cataloged. By July of 1953 approximately 300 records had been cataloged and the cards printed for them, according to Walter L. Alpheus, Chief of the Card Division. The only possible way to order the cards they do have at this time is to indicate, on L. C. order forms, titles and composers' names.

Sample cards, however, can be obtained to guide the cataloger. At the Greensboro Public Library the form differs from that of the Library of Congress. The body of our cards gives the composer, standard or conventional title, and the title as it appears on the album or label, and the performers. Other works are listed in the form of a note. In the last note is given the album number, issue, size and number of sides.

The needs of each library determine the principles adopted. The interest here is chiefly in classical music, but other types are provided for other interests, and as the collection expands new problems are presented. As the cataloger's time is divided between books and records, it is to be hoped, especially in the face of such expanding collections as many of us now have to cope with, that we will be able to regard them as being as worthy of our time as are books.

IN A SCHOOL LIBRARY:

By MARY FRANCES KENNON*

The modern school library has come a long way—from a book depository to a materials center supplying many types of materials to meet the varied needs of the school and its patrons. Books are still our basic stock in trade, as a fundamental medium of communication. However, they represent only one of the many media demanded by the broadening curriculum and the modern methods of teaching. The rapid development of audio-visual materials indicates their usefulness in the instructional program. Among these, phonograph recordings make a unique contribution, offering an auditory approach to communication.

Recordings may be divided roughly into two classes: musical and narrative. Musical recordings assume a staple role in public school music and physical education programs, supplying albums of songs, outstanding musical works for listening and appreciation activities, folk dances, rhythms, and singing games. Narrative recordings are available to enrich many areas of learning, ranging from primary experiences in language arts, health, and safety, through high school studies in literature and the social sciences.

In order that recordings may be available at the point of need, purchase of a basic collection by the individual school is indicated. The relative inexpensiveness of phonograph recordings makes their acquisition at the unit level practicable. The library is the logical agency within the school to administer the collection of recordings, due to its preparation in methods of arranging, indexing, and circulating materials, and to its growing recognition as the source for all types of instructional materials.

Plans for the administration of the collection by the school library must take into account the characteristics of recordings and of their use. For example, the record collection of a typical elementary school will include many single discs, containing one or several individual works. Many albums will be included also, consisting of two or more discs. The total number of individual works contained within an album is typically large, ranging up to thirty or more. The patterns of use are varied, sharing only the characteristic of frequent use for brief periods of time. Recordings are requested for many purposes, such as "moods," for listening; subjects, for the enrichment of topics of study; specific titles, for use in singing and folk dancing.

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From the approach of use, the needs of the system for administering phonograph recordings can be determined. Circulation of recordings to classrooms for brief periods of time entails a continuous flow of recordings to and from the library during the school day. Obviously the collection must be "self-servicing" to the greatest possible extent, so that the duties of locating, charging, and discharging recordings may be assumed by students. Only when this is possible can the collection be functional.

The need, therefore, is for a system which is simple, logical, and apparent to the user. Cataloging is imperative, since no system of arrangement is self-indexing. As indicated, recordings are requested by title, subject, and form, as well as by composer and, occasionally, the medium of performance. No system of arrangement can supply these needs. Secondly, classification of school owned phonograph recordings is unsatisfactory. A single classification number must be assigned to the disc or to the album. Since this classification seldom fits all the works included, it cannot replace cataloging. Furthermore, the classification schedule for musical recordings requires "close" classification, with the use of Dewey decimal numbers too complicated for rapid distinction.

A simpler system of arrangement is based on the use of accession numbers: one for each separate disc. The accession number, prefixed by a symbol for recordings, such as "R" or "Rec", forms the call number of the disc. Recordings are labeled with their call numbers and are shelved in numerical order. Arranged in this manner, they can be located easily by use of the card catalog. To students trained in the use of the card catalog for books, cataloging of recordings is the logical approach.

The cataloging of phonograph recordings presents certain special requirements resulting from the special characteristics of the medium. But the approach is basically similar to that for cataloging books, and the aim is for consistency with existing methods to the greatest extent appropriate to the nature of recordings. Simplicity is also important. Otherwise, the desire for thorough description may result in a catalog weighted with added entries not justified by use.

The basic items of content on the main entry card include: call number, composer, title, producer, serial number, and physical description, which consists of the number of sides occupied by the work, the size of the disc(s), and the speed, or revolutions per minute. Notes may be added to supply (1) performers and medium; (2) other works contained on the disc; or, the contents of the album.

A separate main entry card is made for each individual work contained on a single disc. Added entries are made by title and by subject. Only one main entry card is made for an album, with title analytics for the individual works within the album. Composer and subject analytics are prepared as appropriate.

Short cuts which lessen the work of cataloging include use of the brief form for all added entries and analytics, and entry of works by title unless the composer is a significant one.

In our school, student helpers in each class obtain desired recordings for their class, using the card catalog for location. They sign for them on a daily sign sheet, by call number, teacher, and time. They return recordings after use, correct the sign sheet accordingly, and return the recordings to the shelves. The shelf list, arranged by accession numbers, permits ready identification of recordings borrowed. This system has proved its value in use. Circulation has increased greatly both in volume and in variety. Losses have been eliminated. The time spent in preparation of the catalog has been more than repaid by the consequent time-saving to librarian and teachers in the location and circulation of recordings.