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ATTEMPTS TO DEAL WITH THE "CRISIS IN CATALOGING" AT THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS IN THE 1940S[1]

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This article provides a review of the ten-year period at the Library of Congress (LC) during which attempts to deal with the "crisis in cataloging" set the stage for the profound changes in Anglo-American cataloging theory and rules that occurred during the 1950s and 1960s. The review centers around the previously unpublished report of the Librarian's Committee, which recommended reorganization, simplified cataloging, cooperative cataloging, changes in personnel policies, and changes in methods of cost analysis. Each of these recommendations is examined in detail, and the results of implementation are traced through the decade that followed.

Introduction

In 1967, Andrew Osborn identified three "great turning points in the field of cataloguing and classification" in this century. The first was at the turn of the century when "the dictionary catalogue took firm hold, open access was promoted, subject classification became standard practice,

and . . . the Library of Congress [card] service" came into existence. The third was the age of automation which was just at its beginning when Osborn wrote:

The second turning point is by no means as well known or recognized. It came about because it was apparent to the Library of Congress in 1940 that it must devise ways of getting its processing work done without falling deeper and deeper into arrears. It was under the caption 'The Crisis in Cataloging' that Professor Joeckel, who was chairman of the 1940 survey committee, wanted word of the second turning point to reach the library world. To this day the survey report itself is a confidential document of the Library of Congress. This is quite sad in one important respect, because it contains some of Joeckel's finest writing. The LC Processing Department was one result of the survey; another was the eventual appointment of Seymour Lubetzky to carry out necessary basic research; and the program was rounded out by the simplifications which were issued on the basis of Lubetzky's investigations in 1949. [1, p. 98]

The present study is an investigation of the "crisis in cataloging" at the Library of Congress in the 1940s and the measures that were taken to combat it. It is hoped that this study will help to make Osborn's "second turning point" better known and recognized and will thus be a contribution to the history of Anglo-American cataloging. In addition, since we still face many of the same problems faced by the Library of Congress in the 1940s, albeit sometimes in a different guise, it is hoped that this study will suggest possible solutions to our present-day crises in cataloging or perhaps, conversely, identify some blind alleys needing no further exploration.

The "survey report" to which Osborn refers was the report of the Librarian's Committee, which Archibald MacLeish, who commissioned it, referred to as "one of the most important documents in the history of the Library of Congress" [2, p. 284]. It was finally declassified in 1971, due to the efforts of Michael Carpenter, who also quotes from it extensively [3, pp. 22–25]. In addition, quotes from it appear in the 1941 *Annual Report of the Librarian of Congress* [4, pp. 11–12], and the same report lists "certain of the more important recommendations, together with the action taken thus far, or the action proposed to be taken on them" [pp. 25–30]. The entire 303-page committee report has never been published, however.[3] It will be quoted from here somewhat more extensively than would be necessary if it had been published.

History

When Archibald MacLeish took office as Librarian of Congress on October 1, 1939, his first item of business was to assess the condition of

3. Michael Carpenter was kind enough to let me read his copy and take notes from it.

the library: its collections, its technical operations, its personnel, and its equipment. He had apparently received complaints from various parts of the country that "the output per cataloger was down by one-half since the beginning of the century, charges that filing into the public catalog was months in arrears, criticisms that the catalogers were untrained, etc." [2, p. 281]. Thus he was particularly concerned about the processing operations. Accordingly, he convened two committees of experts to investigate the situation.

In order to examine the processing operations of the library, he created the Coordinating Committee of the Processing Divisions, which consisted of the chiefs of the divisions concerned, assisted by experts from outside the library, including Keyes D. Metcalf, director of libraries, Harvard University; Margaret Mann, professor emeritus of library science, University of Michigan; Harriet D. MacPherson, School of Library Service, Columbia University; Rudolph H. Gjelsness, Department of Library Science, University of Michigan; Arnold H. Trotier, catalog librarian, University of Illinois; and Wyllis E. Wright, chief cataloger, New York Public Library. This committee reported on December 9, 1939, that there was an unprocessed arrearage (or backlog) of 1,670,161 volumes out of a total estimated collection of 5,800,000 volumes. Furthermore, this backlog was increasing at a rate of thirty thousand volumes a year [2, p. 281; 5, p. 11].

In order to examine the processing operations in more detail, as well as the qualifications of the library staff and whether its size was adequate, he convened the Librarian's Committee, an expert group chaired by Carleton B. Joeckel of the Graduate Library School, University of Chicago. Also on the committee were Paul North Rice, chief of the reference department, New York Public Library, and Andrew D. Osborn, chief of the serial division, Harvard College Library. The committee was assisted by Keyes D. Metcalf, L. Quincy Mumford, Preparation Division, New York Public Library, and Francis R. St. John, of the Enoch Pratt Library in Baltimore [5, pp. 1–3].

The Librarian's Committee reported to MacLeish in June 1940. The presence of a large and growing backlog, noted by the Coordinating Committee of the Processing Divisions, was confirmed by the committee. In addition, it found that "output per assistant in the Catalog Division in 1938–39 was only 400 titles per year or one and a half per working day, and costs of processing were correspondingly high. The Library itself had kept no statistical records which would enable it 'to ascertain the amount of operating costs in terms of units processed'; but it was the opinion of the Librarian's Committee that such figures as were available indicated operating costs considerably above comparable figures for comparable libraries" [5, p. 12]. The committee attributed these problems to the following general causes: "A virtual break-down in adminis-

tration, a huge expansion in accessions, a steady branching out in the scope of the Library's collections and static appropriations for personnel" [5, p. 11]. More specifically, "The enormous increase in the flood of print pouring into the Library has come close to overwhelming the technicians. The very perfection of method developed by the distinguished organizers of the cataloging and classification techniques of the Library has set qualitative standards of performance which it has been impossible to maintain in the face of an eight-fold increase in accessions" [5, p. 12].

The Librarian's Committee made a number of recommendations for dealing with the problems it had found. Among them were reorganization, simplified cataloging, cooperative cataloging, changes in personnel policies, and changes in methods of cost analysis. Each of the following sections examines one of these recommendations in more detail and traces the results of implementation of the recommendation through the decade that followed.

Reorganization

The Librarian's Committee, in examining the departmentation of the Library in general, found what was "in all probability the largest and most diffused span of control to be found in any American library . . . 35 organization units report to the Librarian" [6, p. 16]. Since 1900, no thorough reconsideration of organization had taken place, and since that time a total of fourteen divisions had been created, many of them in response to demands from outside the library—for example, receipt of gifts, congressional legislation, or pressure from the American Library Association. The general findings with regard to organization of the entire library were: (1) lack of clearly formulated objectives; (2) excessive span of control; (3) deficiencies in administrative personnel; and (4) incomplete subject departmentation. Interestingly, in discussing the third finding, the committee observed "the lack of administrative, general or research assistants . . . to whom may be entrusted minor administrative details, studies of library routines and technical problems, and the preparation of plans for the consideration of the chief administrative officers" [6, p. 18]. Seymour Lubetzky was later hired into such a position.

The committee's recommendations were that "the objectives of the Library should be formulated in concrete and specific form" [6, p. 25] and that:

. . . the departmental organization of the Library of Congress should be thoroughly reconstructed in accordance with the following principles:

a) The span of control should be limited, both with respect to the major organization units and to sections within divisions.
b) While unity of management should be retained in the hands of the Librarian, there should be a considerable amount of decentralization of administrative authority and responsibility through the creation of major organization units in charge of associate or assistant librarians.
c) Logical and well-defined groupings of activities should be made the basis for departmentation, but the same basis need not be used in all units. In many cases, departmentation will be based on function; in others on subject or form of material. [6, pp. 26–27]

The committee made more specific recommendations concerning the processing department based on the following two findings. First, at the time the committee began to study the library, two divisions, both reporting directly to the librarian, were responsible for cataloging: a cataloger in the cataloging division was responsible for both descriptive cataloging and assignment of subject headings; an assistant cataloger in the classification division was responsible for assigning a classification number. A second finding of the committee was that "the processing divisions do not do all of the processing. Many of the service divisions maintain catalogs, shelflists, and indexes of various sorts which are largely independent of the functions performed by the Cataloging and Classification Divisions. There are at least 204 important records of this sort. In many cases, these records represent the efforts of the divisions concerned to record materials to which the regular processing divisions are unable to give full technical treatment. Moreover, this great galaxy of divisional records is not centrally supervised and controlled" [6, pp. 24–25].

Based on these findings, the committee recommended that the cataloging division and the classification division, together with the union catalog division, be merged into the processing division. It was recommended that within the processing division, descriptive cataloging be assigned to one section and that subject heading work be combined with classification to form the subject heading and classification section. With regard to this latter change, the committee wrote:

Most drastic of these suggestions for the Library of Congress is the proposal to combine subject heading assignment and classification. The debate on the similarity or dissimilarity of these two processes is a never-ending one. In classification, it is said, the effort is made to show how different one book is from others by assigning it to a single class; in assignment of subject headings, the cataloger attempts to bring together titles classified in different places. But when all is said on both sides of the question, the solid fact remains that both the classifier and the assigner of subject headings must examine the contents of a book sufficiently to learn what it is about. An important amount of duplication of effort seems inevitable. Whatever the amount of that duplication may be represents time (and money) that can be saved by combining the two functions. [6, pp. 50–51]

It was further recommended that the subject heading and classification section be subdivided by subject and the descriptive cataloging section by language and by form [6, p. 165].

Finally, the committee recommended that what it termed "clerical and subprofessional activities" (including shelflisting, adding copies and later volumes to holdings, filing, searching, and temporary cataloging) be combined in a processing section.

In 1941, MacLeish reported that he had substantially put into effect the recommendations of the Librarian's Committee with regard to reorganization of processing. A newly created processing department consisted of the following divisions: card, accessions, descriptive cataloging, subject cataloging, and catalog preparation and maintenance [4, pp. 197–242]. The objectives of the processing department were defined as follows:

1) The Processing Department, through its Accessions Division, will act as the purchasing and receiving agency for books, continuations, pamphlets and other materials acquired by the Library. It will receive gifts, arrange and make exchanges, approve invoices and vouchers for payments and keep financial records of book expenditures and encumbrances. In the performance of these functions it will carry out the plan and will of the Reference Department as defined in the Canons of Selection.

2) The Processing Department will undertake to catalog and classify by methods adequate for the Library of Congress all materials (with the exception of certain classes, such as Orientalia, maps, sheet music, prints, manuscripts) which are considered important enough for entries by author or subject, or both, in the Library catalogs. The responsibility for determining the importance of types of material and the method of treatment will be shared jointly by the Reference Department and the Processing Department. Cataloging and classification here include the making of entries for the catalogs, the filing of cards, and the proper marking of the books for the shelves.

3) The Processing Department will endeavor to supply to other libraries as promptly as possible printed catalog cards for material cataloged at the Library of Congress, and lists of subjects and classification schedules. It will also undertake to answer inquiries regarding the interpretation of information on the cards in so far as such inquiries are essential to the proper use of the cards and do not interfere seriously with the regular work of the department.

4) The Processing Department will undertake to cooperate to the fullest extent with other libraries throughout the country in developing faster and more economical methods of cataloging, for the mutual benefit of all. [4, pp. 226–28]

In 1943 the accessions division was moved out to form a new department, the acquisitions department [7, p. 15], and around the same time, the binding division and the union catalog division were moved to the processing department [2, pp. 278, 290]. In 1947, the acquisitions department was again merged with the processing department [8, pp. 75,

100]. In its overall dimensions, the reorganization remains in place to this day, although some restructuring of the processing department took place in 1968, and some new divisions have been added over the years [9].

"Simplified Cataloging"

The report of the Librarian's Committee had implied that "the perfection of method" aimed at by LC catalogers was partially to blame for the backlogs and high cost of cataloging. Its recommendations regarding what is called "short cataloging" and regarding general cataloging policy are included in Appendix A. The committee's three basic recommendations were: (1) that the cataloging rules be made less "detailed"; (2) that the rules be designed to standardize three levels of cataloging treatment: "standard," "simplified," and "detailed," and that these levels be tied to three corresponding categories of material of varying bibliographic interest, also to be defined in the code; and (3) that rules concerning entries particularly difficult to establish, such as corporate names and series, be reexamined.

In order to publicize some of the findings contained in the confidential report, Joeckel asked Andrew Osborn to write an article for publication [10, p. 236]. Osborn produced both an article, and, in following Joeckel's suggestion for titling the article, a name for the problem: "The Crisis in Cataloging" [1, p. 98; 11]. Fifteen years later, Dunkin was to assess the significance of Osborn's article as follows: "The paper's title was dramatic, the style was popular, and in its sweeping generalizations the simmering frustrations of a generation of librarians came to a boil. Perhaps most important of all, the paper had wide circulation both as an article in the *Library Quarterly* and as a pamphlet freely distributed by the American Library Institute. Everybody read it, every cataloger talked or wrote about it, and it gave a name and an atmosphere to a whole era of thinking about cataloging" [12, p. 286]. Osborn's article publicized many of the recommendations of the Librarian's Committee regarding the simplification of cataloging, just as Joeckel had hoped it would do. However, it was not simply the work of the committee presented under the name of one of its members. Osborn had begun in his article to explore several more concrete approaches to the somewhat vague concept of "simplification," and some of his suggestions were to form a springboard for Seymour Lubetzky's later work.

Let us now examine the history of each of the three major recommendations of the committee.

Simplification of Cataloging Rules

With regard to the committee's first recommendation, less "detailed" apparently meant merely that there should be fewer rules. Specifically, for standard cataloging, the committee recommended that nearly all of the accretions to the 1908 rules that made up the added bulk of the 1941 rules simply be dropped. (See Appendix A.)

In his article, Osborn dubbed the current approach to cataloging at the Library of Congress the "legalistic approach"—that is, the attempt to formulate "rules and definitions to govern every point that arises" [11, p. 227]. In this, he was merely naming an approach already described in the committee's report in nearly the same terms. He recommended what he termed "pragmatic cataloging." According to the pragmatic approach, rules for cataloging should be "relatively few and simple." So far, he was relaying a recommendation of the committee regarding simplification of the cataloging rules. However, where the committee's report tended to describe what was *not* needed in the code, Osborn described what *was* needed. Since there will be fewer rules, catalogers should be trained to "use their judgment, not to expect a rule or a precedent to guide them at all turns." To aid in judgment, cataloging codes should make clear the reasons for prescribed practices. The quality of work should be "high for anything regarded as essential" [11, pp. 234–35], and by implication, codes should indicate the essentials. Note that the assumption here is that simplified, less costly cataloging requires professional cataloging staff capable of good judgment based on knowledge of cataloging principles.

On June 24, 1941, Lucile Morsch, chief of the descriptive cataloging division at the Library of Congress, read a paper entitled "Simplified Cataloging" before the ALA's division of cataloging and classification in Boston. In it she echoed Osborn, saying, "The only way we can hope to cut costs by simplifying cataloging is to return to cataloging as an art, which requires that the best judgment be exercised for its accomplishment" [13, p. 30]. In an attempt to identify "the essentials," she wrote, "If we are to make the best use of cooperative cataloging we must have as high a degree of uniformity of entry as possible. . . . Beyond the entry, however, such uniformity is not worth what it costs. . . . With judgment an intelligible description can be made without assurance that another cataloger in another library would write it exactly the same" [13, p. 29].

Early in 1942, discussions and studies of descriptive cataloging rules began at the Library of Congress "following a generally unfavorable reception of the preliminary American second edition of the *A.L.A. Catalog Rules* and a general insistence on simplification of cataloging rules and practice" [14, p. 1]. In 1943, Herman Henkle, the director of

processing, hired Seymour Lubetzky as his technical assistant [3, p. 24].[4]
C. Sumner Spalding was to write in 1967:

Seymour Lubetzky was engaged by the Library of Congress to study the rules for description and to formulate the objectives and principles upon which a revision should be based. In Seymour Lubetzky the "crisis in cataloging" found the man and the mind that would be its master. The task required clear vision to distinguish the truly meaningful and valuable from the empty and misguided elements in the overgrown complex of cataloguing rules. It required orderliness of mind to refine and reorganize the rules into a system based on sound fundamental principles. It required great patience, pertinacity, and persuasive powers to win over minds accustomed to the uncritical acceptance of long established practices. Mr. Lubetzky was equal to the task. Without him it is hard to imagine what the course of cataloguing developments in the last twenty-five years might have been. [17, pp. 3–4]

Following the general course prescribed by Osborn, Lubetzky set to work to discover the reasons behind the rules so as to identify the essentials. Using the marvelous collections at the library, he read everything he could find written by the writers of previous codes about *why* they had written particular rules. Based on this study, he identified two "general functions of descriptive cataloging": "(1) To describe the significant features of the book which will serve (*a*) to distinguish it from other books and other editions of this book, and (*b*) characterize its contents, scope, and bibliographical relations; (2) To present the data in an entry which will (*a*) fit well with the entries of other books and other editions of this book in the catalog, and (*b*) respond best to the interests of the majority of readers" [14, p. 25]. He then subjected the current rules for description to a rigorous examination in the light of these functions, asking over and over, "Is this rule necessary?" Based on this examination, he recommended a new approach to description that relied less on elaborate title-page transcription than had previous rules and that aimed at brevity and clarity.

The next step was to conduct research to determine whether Lubetzky's new approach carried out the functions he had identified. Elizabeth G. Pierce examined a sample of 2,504 cards representing editions and issues of 198 works that had appeared in two or more editions or issues. This research verified that "fullness of transcription of the title page is not necessary for identification of editions or issues. They are adequately distinguished when the cataloging recommended by Mr. Lubetzky is observed" [14, p. 37].

4. See the *Annual Report* for 1944, which dates his hiring a year later [15, p. 25], apparently erroneously, since *Studies in Descriptive Cataloging* describes work he did at the library in 1943. See also [16].

This, by the way, is a noteworthy instance of research conducted within a working library and brought to bear on methods of cost containment, which was of value to the entire library community (see Appendix C). The recommendations for simplification of descriptive cataloging practice based on the research were incorporated in the "principles of descriptive cataloging" that were submitted to the library community for discussion in late 1945 and early 1946. As noted in the introduction to *Rules for Descriptive Cataloging in the Library of Congress*, which was published in 1947 (preliminary edition), drafted by Lucile Morsch, and based on those principles, "The almost unanimous opinion voiced in numerous discussions, conferences, and replies to questionnaires was that less bibliographical detail than the Library of Congress had been including in its catalog entries would satisfy the needs of most of the American libraries, and that most of them would welcome almost any simplifications that the Library of Congress could afford to make" [18, pp. 4–5].

Lubetzky, then, following a suggestion by Osborn, transformed the Librarian's Committee's recommendation of a rather mechanical reduction in the number of rules into a new approach to cataloging in which many contradictory and overlapping rules were reduced to a few general principles that could be appealed to whenever a specific rule did not cover a particular case. This approach, when applied in the 1950s and 1960s to the rules for entry, was to have a profound impact on Anglo-American cataloging history.

Levels of Description
The Librarian's Committee recommended that three levels of cataloging be codified in the rules: "standard," "simplified," and "detailed." In a section of the report recommending the establishment of a subsection to be responsible for short cataloging distributed as LC cards, the committee described in some detail "tentative rules for short cataloging." Some of these rules concerned the descriptive part of the entry, recommending that long titles be curtailed, that typographical errors not be transcribed, that an author main entry not be repeated in the title field, that the collation be abbreviated, and that few notes be made. (Some of these suggestions seem to have influenced Lubetzky's later work on the descriptive part of the entry.) However, some of these "tentative rules" concerned the entries themselves. It was suggested that research to establish names be limited to fifteen minutes (whether per name or per record was not made clear!); that series entries be omitted; and that the number of subject and added entries be limited. The committee recommended, however, that these rules be applied only to materials of minor importance, such as pamphlets, or textbooks below the college level.

In his article, Osborn was to modify the committee's recommendations. Where the committee recommended that the majority of materials be given standard cataloging according to rules that would "require little expansion beyond the details found in the 1908 code" [6, p. 230], Osborn recommended that "standard cataloging . . . be less detailed in many respects than the 1908 code or the Library of Congress formerly required" [11, p. 234].

In June 1945, Luther Evans succeeded Archibald MacLeish as Librarian of Congress, and in April 1946, he submitted a budget request to Congress for an increase in appropriation from $5.1 million in fiscal 1946 to $9.8 million for fiscal 1947. A portion of this increase had been earmarked to deal with the continuing cataloging backlogs. The House Committee on Appropriations recommended an increase of only $755,332 above fiscal 1946, asking for clarification from legislative committees charged with responsibility for the library as to whether it was desired to "build and maintain the largest library in the world" or rather to "maintain a library primarily for the service of Congress" [19, p. 124]. This financial setback may well have had something to do with the developments about to be described.

In July 1943, MacLeish had appointed a processing committee to develop processing policies [15, p. 25; 20, pp. 49–50]. Under Luther Evans, the processing committee continued to function, and a good part of 1946 was "devoted to an effort to formulate a basic statement of cataloging policy which would regulate the cataloging treatment of the Library's collections in accordance with their relative interest and value" [21, p. 279]. By 1947, the same year the *Rules* appeared in their preliminary edition, the library had decided to define levels of cataloging. However, contrary to the committee's advice, they did not codify the levels of cataloging but, rather, issued them in the form of internal administrative directives; and they applied rules very like the short cataloging rules defined by the committee to a much broader range of materials than was recommended by the committee. On October 23, 1947, Luther Evans issued general order number 1340 on cataloging categories. This memo directed the selection officer to

designate materials in descending order of relative importance and assign them to the following categories:

1 (a) Material of primary importance to be cataloged individually and fully;
1 (b) Material of secondary importance to be cataloged individually but briefly, as defined by Processing Department Memorandum No. 53, issued October 23, 1947;
2 (a) Groups of material which are primarily of significance as groups to be cataloged by individual entries describing the particular collections; and
2 (b) Minor materials by a given author (personal or corporate) or on a given subject to be cataloged collectively by form cards. [22, p. 11]

"Individually but briefly" (level 1b) was defined by a separate processing department memo (no. 53, issued October 23, 1947, and later superseded by no. 70, issued April 5, 1951, revised April 1952) and consisted of limitations of detail in collation, limitations on the number of notes, and limitation of added entries to "the second of two joint authors and to titles." Catalogers were instructed that "cataloging data included in the entry shall normally be limited to the information which can readily be found without reading the text and prefatory matter of the book." This memo also specified the materials to which this "brief" or "limited" cataloging was meant to be applied: any trade or other publication that was not a basic reference tool, scholarly work, or rare book [22, pp. 16–19].

In 1949, another processing department memo was issued (no. 60, later revised and combined with no. 61 on May 1, 1951), which in effect defined "individually and fully" (or level 1a cataloging). First of all, this memo introduced the famous "no conflict" rule that "a personal name shall be established in the form given in the work being cataloged without further search, provided that, as given in the work being cataloged, the name conforms to the A.L.A. rules for entry, and is not so similar to another name previously established as to give a good basis to the suspicion that both names refer to the same person" [22, p. 12]. Second, cataloging research was severely curtailed: "No search shall be made by the cataloger beyond the work being cataloged to supply bibliographical information concerning the relationship of the book being cataloged to other works by the author" [22, p. 13]. And third, a number of policies were set to limit the number of added entries.

When the 1947 preliminary edition of the *Rules for Descriptive Cataloging in the Library of Congress* were issued for commentary by the library community, one of the main criticisms was that it did not codify (and thereby standardize) "limited" cataloging, as the Librarian's Committee had urged [23, p. 3]. When the revision of the preliminary edition was issued in 1949, rules for "limited" cataloging still had not been included. Lucile Morsch defended the omission in her foreword as follows: "Administrative directives have been and may be issued to permit the catalogers to ignore some of the rules in cataloging some material depending upon its value and the pressure of the work-load. The practices established by these directives are still in an experimental stage but it is agreed that they need not be codified, or be followed uniformly from library to library, so long as they are not in conflict with the rules for standard cataloging" [24, p. v]. The pertinent Library of Congress memos were later published in the 1949–51 supplement to the *Rules*, but still in the form of LC memos. (It was not until AACR2 that an attempt was made

to codify levels of cataloging as the committee had recommended; the AACR2 levels, of course, pertain only to the descriptive part of the entry.)

Reexamination of Rules for Entry

The committee took note of the fact that, in a time when latest entry cataloging was practiced, much of the work of serials cataloging was involved with recataloging due to corporate name changes and that maintenance of monographic series added entries entailed much complex authority work. Thus, two of their "six points" regarding cataloging policy were recommendations to study these cataloging areas to determine more economical ways to deal with them. The 1940s were to be spent dealing mainly with rules for descriptive cataloging and with levels of cataloging, but these recommendations surely planted seeds that sprouted in the early 1950s when work on the rules for entry began, and the library asked Lubetzky to study the "corporate complex."

Summary

It should be clear from the foregoing that "simplification" meant many things to many people. Lubetzky's approach was to attempt analysis of descriptive cataloging practice to determine the essential functions of description, to ensure that the cataloger spent his or her time on the essentials and dispensed with the inessential, and to ensure that the user was served by means of the resulting brevity and clarity. With characteristic incisiveness, he wrote, "In the cataloging of modern books the aim of the cataloger should be not to point out the differences of the title-pages but the identity of the books under them so that when a reader has reference to a given issue which may not be available he could safely be served by any other issue of the same edition" [14, p. 45]. To him, the essential purpose to be achieved by simplification was to demonstrate relationships among the items represented by cataloging records. "Simplified cataloging" as represented by the "administrative directives" of the library in the 1949–51 supplement to the *Rules,* however, began to mean dispensing with some of Lubetzky's essentials. For example, limiting description to information readily available in the item being cataloged can sometimes preclude the demonstration of a relationship between one item and another, which may become apparent only after bibliographic research. The curtailment of access points and of authority work also represented erosion of user service. There are limits beyond which cost cutting inevitably begins to result in cutbacks in service.

Cooperative Cataloging

Soon after the library began printing and distributing its catalog cards in 1901, it initiated various programs to allow other libraries (at first, only other federal libraries) to supply catalog card copy for books not in LC and for analyzed serial monographs not analyzed at LC. From that time forward, the library was involved to some degree with cooperative rather than centralized cataloging. An investigation carried out in 1931 by the Cooperative Cataloging Committee of ALA showed that Library of Congress cards were available for 72 percent of books in English acquired by large research libraries and for only 54 percent of books in foreign languages [25, pp. 33–34]. A cooperative cataloging project was initiated by the committee in order to share among participating libraries the cataloging of newly published foreign books and the analyzing of serial monographs published by learned societies and institutions. The Library of Congress housed the committee from 1932 to 1940, when the original funding from the General Education Board had been nearly depleted. It had been hoped that the sale of cards produced cooperatively would cover administrative expenses of the committee; twenty cents was charged per entry supplied for the contributing library, and one dollar per entry printed and distributed for LC. However, the cost of maintaining the project proved greater than anticipated, partly because purchases of foreign books by libraries declined sharply during the depression, and partly because revision of cooperatively produced cataloging was more costly than anticipated. David Haykin, chief of the cooperative cataloging and classification service at LC, attributed the high cost of revision to several factors. (1) He felt that neither LC nor the cooperating libraries had assigned very well-trained staff to the project. (2) Not all the cooperating libraries had reference collections comparable to those available to LC catalogers. (3) Not all the catalogers creating cooperative copy "were sufficiently familiar with the cataloging practices of the Library of Congress, which was the standard adopted for the work" [5, p. 277].

Since the original funding had just run out, the Librarian's Committee deliberated over the future disposition of the cooperative cataloging and classification service set up at the Library of Congress in 1934, and found:

There remains the question of the future policy of the Library of Congress with respect to cooperative cataloging. In the suggested organization of the new Cataloging and Classification Division, cooperative cataloging becomes a subsection in the Descriptive Cataloging Section. This inclusion indicates, of course, that the Committee recommends the continuation of this function, although on a somewhat different basis than at present.

The cooperative cataloging work as carried on in recent years at the Library of Congress has been unsatisfactory in many particulars. The cooperating libraries have been dissatisfied because of the delays in the handling of copy; the work in the Library of Congress has been carried on inefficiently and with a considerable deficit. On the other hand, there seems to be little question that the work is of real value to the libraries of the country, including the Library of Congress, and that, properly reorganized and maintained, it could be continued and even expanded with advantage to all concerned. It performs a service primarily useful to the scholarly libraries of the country which in a sense matches the service rendered to the public and school libraries by the printing of Decimal Classification numbers on Library of Congress cards.

The problem of cooperative cataloging may be viewed in two contrasting ways. In the first place, it may be considered strictly as a business matter, and profit and loss accounts may be kept as accurately as possible. Careful estimates of the work, based on the production of 5,000 AC cards annually, indicate that the annual deficit to the Library of Congress would amount to approximately $2,500 if it were carried on as a separate unit. However, the situation would be materially changed if cooperative cataloging became a subsection in the Cataloging and Classification Division and took charge of all outside copy. The cost of revision of the Agr-War Series, for example, is $1.26 per title, as compared with $2.35 per title for the AC Series and $4.47 per title for the A Series. It is estimated that the consolidation of revision of all outside copy in a single subsection, as suggested in Chapter vi, would result in a cost reduction of 50 per cent.

Moreover, the Library of Congress receives a certain *quid pro quo* in connection with the cooperative cataloging process. For instance, it 'adapts' annually about 900 cards printed by other libraries, and it uses, or might use, many analytics for cooperative series. Actually and potentially, then, the cooperative movement can make appreciable savings for the Library of Congress, as it already has to other libraries.

But it may well be that such a dollars-and-cents view of the problem is unduly restricted. The cooperative cataloging project is almost the only well-organized joint attack on the high cost of cataloging which has been made by the libraries of the United States. It would be a great misfortune to abandon a plan so inherently promising simply because certain administrative difficulties have developed in connection with it and because the balance has thus far been on the wrong side of the ledger. The Library of Congress and the scholarly libraries of the country should continue to explore jointly methods of reducing cataloging costs. Obviously, cooperative cataloging is one of the most important of these.

On the part of the Library of Congress, the concept of cooperative cataloging has been almost surprisingly one-sided. The Library will print copy supplied by cooperating libraries, provided it does not have the books itself. The moment it is known that the Library of Congress is to buy a book, cooperative copy is killed. Just why the Library insists on doing all its own cataloging is somewhat difficult to understand. The question may properly be raised: why should not the Library of Congress be willing to use card copy supplied by other libraries for some of the books it acquires? Other libraries with equally high standards of cataloging performance seem ready to accept the cataloging of their peers; why not the Library of Congress?

The Committee therefore recommends that cooperative card copy be used more extensively at the Library of Congress and that possibilities for the extension of the system be thoroughly explored. Various possibilities of this sort are considered in Chapter vi.

Specifically, this Committee suggests that the work of the Cooperative Cataloging Subsection be enlarged to include editing of "outside" copy from all sources, including the copy supplied by other Federal libraries, the group of cooperating libraries, and the libraries contributing to the A Series. This consolidation of work, plus the adoption of a less critical editorial policy on nonessential points in connection with outside copy, should result in greater economy in the cooperative project and perhaps in the considerable expansion of this important service. [6, pp. 61–64][5]

In 1941, per the committee's recommendation, the cooperative cataloging section was created within the descriptive cataloging division, and "an attempt was made to bring the cooperative cataloging more in harmony with the Library of Congress work and to make more use of the cards produced in the cataloging of the Library's own books." More specifically, the following changes were made:

First, the appointment of one of the division's best revisers to the position of head of the Cooperative Cataloging Section; second, the concentration in this section of all work on books accessioned for the Library for which cooperative copy has ever been requested (heretofore, when such books were received, they were distributed throughout the division according to subject or form); third, the requesting of cooperative copy for many titles which the Library of Congress had ordered; fourth and possibly most important of all, the development of a new attitude toward cooperative copy among the catalogers handling it. So rigid have been many of the rules of cataloging at the Library of Congress that most of the catalogers had the idea that any variations from those rules were errors. An attempt has been made this year to distinguish between matters of fact and matters of form and to edit copy sent in by contributing libraries so that the entries will fit in with those produced by the Library of Congress as far as possible, but without insisting that its practices in matters of less vital detail be followed slavishly. The salutary effect which this new policy is having on relations with other libraries is certain to be an important item in the success of cooperative cataloging. [4, p. 204]

The library began using cataloging prepared elsewhere for English books on order abroad, Harvard University Press publications, and American doctoral dissertations. The funds remaining from the General Education Board grant were used to fund a series of fellowships for catalogers in libraries supplying cooperative copy. These catalogers were brought to the Library of Congress for an extensive period of training in LC practice. The first fellowship was for three months [4, p. 205]. In

5. Cards in the AC Series represented copy supplied to the ALA Cooperative Cataloging Committee and forwarded by them to the Library of Congress for printing. Cards in the A Series represented copy supplied directly to the Library of Congress for printing [6, p. 365]. Cards in the Agr-War Series represented copy supplied to the library by the other federal libraries in Washington, D.C. Appendix B contains another excerpt concerning cooperative cataloging from the *Report*.

1942, six fellows came to the Library of Congress for six months of training [26, p. 56].

The program suffered a decline in the early 1940s, partly due to the decline in foreign acquisitions during the war [7, pp. 46–47; 15, pp. 78–79; 20, pp. 42–43; 26, p. 56]. After the war, beginning in July 1945, the Cooperative Acquisitions Program, or Farmington Plan [19, pp. 114, 126], was begun, designed to obtain "multiple copies of European publications for the war period" for distribution to American research libraries [21, pp. 264–67]. This was tied to a cooperative cataloging program in which libraries receiving books through the program were asked to supply cataloging copy to the Library of Congress for revision and printing. The program continued until July 1948 [27, p. 122] and was a precursor of the National Program for Acquisitions and Cataloging of the 1960s.

The separate cooperative cataloging section was abolished in October of 1946 [21, p. 284], but cooperative cataloging continued as part of the work of the processing department. In 1947 the library undertook to print catalog copy supplied by the Army Medical Library (later the National Library of Medicine) [28, pp. 72–73], but, "compelled by the pressure of its cataloging arrearage and the consequent need to confine its work to simpler entries," the library discontinued this program in April 1948 [8, pp. 92–93]. By 1949 and 1950, the library was again reporting declines in the number of titles for which copy was supplied by other libraries even though "it has been determined that approximately half of the usual cataloging time for the titles thus treated is saved at the Library of Congress by these arrangements" [27, p. 122; 29, pp. 120–21].

In 1944, the descriptive cataloging division published the *Cooperative Cataloging Manual for the Use of Contributing Libraries*, which describes the complicated process of determining whether copy requested by another library at the time of ordering a book would be supplied by the Library of Congress or cooperatively produced by the requesting library [30, pp. 12–15]. The negotiations regarding analysis, forms of entry, revision of cards already printed, and so forth between the Library of Congress and a library supplying cooperative copy could also become quite elaborate [30, pp. 16–26, 41–45, 47–48]. One cannot but wonder whether the decline in copy received was not due in part to the complications and delays inherent in the administration of such a complex program. It was not until the rise of the bibliographic utilities, which bypassed the quality control supplied by the Library of Congress and to a large extent dispensed with quality control altogether, that use of copy prepared by libraries other than LC was to become more widespread, although LC still uses very little cataloging done elsewhere.

One cannot leave the topic of cooperative cataloging without taking some note of the roots of the *National Union Catalog* at the Library of Congress. Throughout the 1940s the union catalog division, made a part of the processing department during the recent reorganization at the recommendation of the Librarian's Committee, continued to file cards from research libraries all over the country for materials not found in the Library of Congress, as well as filing all cards printed by the LC card division. The union catalog division answered interlibrary loan inquiries. In addition, the card division would photostat an entry from the union catalog and supply it to one of its subscribers when it did not have an LC card for a particular title requested. (See, for example, [5, pp. 224–28].)

Since the beginning of the distribution of printed catalog cards, the Library of Congress had deposited one copy of each printed card in certain research libraries all over the country. The resulting sets of cards were known as "depository sets." By 1940, there were seventy-six of these depository sets [5, p. 263]. In 1946, as the result of the work of a committee of the Association of Research Libraries, the equivalent of a July 1942 depository set was published as *A Catalog of Books Represented by Library of Congress Printed Cards Issued to July 31, 1942* [31]. The successful sale of this work led the library itself to begin publishing first its own catalogs and later the *National Union Catalog* [32, pp. 80–81], and thus launched four decades of publication of book catalogs of international importance [33].

Personnel

The Librarian's Committee cast a highly critical eye on the education and qualifications of the staff in the processing divisions at the Library of Congress, and its findings were illuminating. One-third of the staff lacked a baccalaureate [5, p. 13], less than one-fourth of the professional staff had master's degrees, and only three of the professional staff had doctorates [6, p. 108]. With regard to library education, less than one-fourth of the professional staff had a bachelor's degree in library science, and only 6 percent had more advanced degrees in library science [6, p. 111]: "In recent years a large proportion of the library school work has been done at schools not accredited by the A.L.A. . . . The Library has failed in general to recruit its staff from the library schools" [6, p. 118]. With regard to experience, the committee found that 60 percent of the staff had had no experience at all outside the Library of Congress [6, pp. 111–13]. Regarding lack of education, the committee commented, "This is a statistical indication of the practice of promoting from grade to grade because of years of service without insistence on advancement in

education and professional training" [6, p. 108]. In general, the committee commented, "The highly parochial character of the professional staff in the technical divisions of the Library of Congress stands out as the most important fact in any appraisal of the staff" [6, p. 115].

The committee recommended that the library improve its recruiting policies, commenting that "there may have been too great a tendency to consider applications already on file rather than to search systematically for the best possible people to fill vacancies" [6, p. 116]. Second, it recommended that: "In general, a more definite distinction should be made between the professional and nonprofessional staff. It must be granted that 'one of the most perplexing problems in library personnel administration is that of distinguishing accurately between professional and clerical duties' [34, p. 171]. In any reorganization, an attempt should be made to analyze the tasks of each person, if possible through job analysis, and the amount of clerical work assigned to the professional staff should be reduced to the minimum" [6, p. 119].

One can only speculate whether the lack of professionally trained staff in the processing divisions had anything to do with the development of what Osborn described as "legalistic" cataloging. Morsch attributed the legalistic approach to an "increase in the size of cataloging departments," which she claimed "has changed cataloging from an art to a science. In order that we may all achieve exactly the same result in our cataloging we have bent over backwards in trying to follow our rules to the letter instead of by the spirit and have thus eliminated most of the opportunity for judgment except in the interpretation of the rules" [13, p. 28]. When we realize that the large cataloging department Morsch administered employed many catalogers without professional training, it seems at least possible that some of the legalistic approach might have been an attempt to turn cataloging into a set of procedures that could be followed by low-level or untrained staff without professional judgment.

Statistics and Cost Analysis

The Librarian's Committee, on investigation, found that "in general, statistics have been little used in the Library of Congress as tools in administration" [6, p. 72]. Two major problems were analyzed in detail: the lack of statistics on annual additions of titles to the collection; and the inadequate compilation of work records for individual staff members and failure to use such records to monitor unit costs. With regard to the first problem, they found that "apparently there is no reliable statistical basis for the determination of the number of *titles* [as opposed to the number of *volumes*] added annually to the Library" [6, p. 73] and that

"no deductions for missing volumes have been made from the compiled statistics of library holdings" [6, p. 74].

With regard to the second problem, it was found that, although in some instances work records were being kept, "little administrative use has been made of these records as a basis for determining unit costs or for controlling the output of work. . . . What does it cost to put a book on the shelves of the Library of Congress—to order, catalog and classify it? Rather surprisingly, the Library itself has no accurate or even approximate answer to this question" [5, pp. 74–75].

The committee then set out to try to calculate current unit costs using two different methods. The first was to divide the total salaries of the divisions or sections concerned by the total number of titles processed in a given time period. The result was the shocking finding of an average "gross cost" of $6.58 per title, at a time when the average cost of a trade publication was $4.27 [6, pp. 77–78].

The report of the cataloging division in the 1940 *Annual Report of the Librarian of Congress,* attempted to explain why this method might have produced such a high cost figure. It was pointed out that the staff of the cataloging division had many other duties besides cataloging per se, many of them connected with cooperative cataloging and other services to U.S. libraries. Among these duties were answering queries about LC cataloging practice; special assignments, such as translating for members of Congress; providing professional assistance and training to other libraries; creating publications such as *Library of Congress Subject Headings* (LCSH), and revising the cataloging code: "It is not always possible to measure these activities in terms of hours or units of work. In some instances all that can be done is to describe the work or merely to indicate its essential character. Altogether these activities account for a large part of the work of the Division" [5, pp. 268–70].

In its second method, the committee tried to take these factors into account. What it termed the "net cost of cataloging" omitted time not spent directly on cataloging; the average net cost worked out to $3.20 per title. (Net costs per title were much higher, however, for periodicals [$10.06] and society publications [$8.67].) Such findings were to lead eventually to Seymour Lubetzky's attempts to simplify the "corporate complex" [6, pp. 80–81]. The committee calculated the average output per cataloging assistant at four hundred titles per year, or 1.5 titles per day [6, p. 83].

The committee compared the LC gross cost of $6.58 per title to the New York Public Library (NYPL) figure gross cost (omitting ordering) of $3.41, pointing out that the NYPL figure was for books cataloged without the use of LC cards. (However, the time spent by NYPL catalogers on cooperative activities, catalog code revision, and so forth was not

mentioned [6, pp. 79–80].) The committee also compared the LC net cost of $3.20 per title to the University of Iowa's net cost of $1.18 per title cataloged and classified but pointed out that the university's cataloging was subsidized by the use of LC cards [6, p. 83].

For many reasons, determination of unit costs in a library is not an easy matter; comparison of unit costs between libraries is even more problematic. In the 1944 *Annual Report*, some of the problems involved in comparing figures were cited: "Valid comparison between costs in different libraries requires that the libraries be similar in size and scope, that the same operations be included in the costs of cataloging in each of the libraries, that the units measured be given in titles or in both titles and volumes, that the standards of cataloging maintained in the libraries be similar, and that the costs be expressed in units of time as well as in units of money" [15, p. 80]. Thus, the committee's comparative figures were not published outside its confidential report. However, the message was clear that the cost of cataloging was high, and these figures, flawed though they may have been, spurred LC administrators to try to contain the cataloging costs in the ways already described.

The committee recommended that the statistics used in library reporting be revised and standardized, and that cost studies for the various processing operations be continued [6, pp. 100–101]. In 1944, the library reported that its new acquisitions department was ensuring that "the Library now has, for the first time in its history, precise and meaningful statistics of its acquisitions" [15, p. 16]. Also in 1944, it was reported that "unit costs of cataloging are now ascertainable from a cost accounting system inaugurated during the past year with the aid of Charles F. Taylor of the General Accounting Office." The "approximate direct labor cost per title" for preliminary cataloging, descriptive cataloging, subject cataloging and classification, and shelflisting was reported to total $2.78 (for two and one-half hours' time) [15, p. 80].

Conclusion

Many of the problems faced by the Library of Congress in the 1940s are still with us. The advent of automation perhaps has been a mixed blessing. Cataloging costs are still high and may be even higher with automation, since the coding of machine-readable records adds to the number of rules that must be followed, the discriminations that must be made. In addition, automation has provided a new impetus to the "legalists" who desire absolute uniformity in every detail, without regard for which details are essential. Now it is said that the computer demands absolute uniformity. On the other hand, cooperative cataloging in the

automated environment can be done with more universal access to the MARC database and the LC authority file. The Library of Congress is still exploring means of sharing the costs of cataloging with other libraries, now by means of the Linked Systems Project, the Name Authorities Cooperative project (NACO), and projects to explore the possibility of the use of descriptive and subject cataloging prepared elsewhere.

The development of international standards in the 1950s and 1960s was based on the hope of international cooperative cataloging. However, the ISBDs, it could be argued, have caused us to lose ground in simplifying our cataloging codes. AACR2, based on the ISBDs, is "bigger" than ever (if we use the Librarian's Committee's criterion of complexity), and, for the most part, has dropped Lubetzky's approach to simplifying cataloging—that is, beginning with a definition of the function of cataloging and a few general principles that can be applied to the complexities of any given case, as well as producing brief and concise entries that contain only the essentials.

Paradoxically, cooperative cataloging can have the effect of increasing the complexity of the cataloging process. The Librarian's Committee wrote, "There is little doubt that the difficulties in using and maintaining the catalog increase in more than direct proportion to its size" [6, p. 295]. A catalog record must be fitted into the catalog like a piece of a jigsaw puzzle. The larger the puzzle, the more complicated, the more time-consuming, and the more expensive is the act of fitting another piece into it (and the harder it is to find that piece again when it is needed). In cooperative cataloging, one's "catalog" is no longer the catalog in a single institution; it is a catalog made up of all the cataloging records in the nation, or even in the world. Fitting another piece into a puzzle of that size is a complicated process indeed.

Minimal level cataloging is still a current topic and still not "standardized." Perhaps, though, the problem might more accurately be described as one of having too many standards.

The professional education of most catalogers still leaves much to be desired, not to mention the cataloging education of administrators and reference librarians. Most schools devote very little time to cataloging in required courses, probably the only cataloging training reference librarians and administrators ever receive. (Recently Janet Swan Hill has become a spokesman for technical services administrators concerned over the inadequate education being received by applicants for entry-level cataloging positions [35].) Osborn aimed "The Crisis in Cataloging" at administrators. "The administrator," he wrote, "will be forced to pay more attention to cataloging because it has become a major problem field. Neither the administrator alone nor the cataloger alone can solve the many problems. Collaboration is essential, and to this end adminis-

trators must know more of cataloging and catalogers must know more of administration" [11, p. 225].

Have things changed so much since the 1940s? Perhaps it is time for another Osborn to cry "crisis in cataloging" and a new Lubetzky to begin asking again, "Is this rule necessary?"

Appendix A[6]

The Librarian's Committee on Cataloging

Short cataloging subsection.—This unit is conceived as another group of rapid workers. It should take over the work of the Pamphlet Section and of the other catalogers who are now preparing copy for mimeographing (except such material as will go to the Editions Subsection). It is recommended that the making of mimeographed cards be discontinued and that printed cards be used exclusively.

It is suggested that the following classes of material should generally be cataloged under short-cataloging rules:
1. Mimeographed and much other near-print material
2. Textbooks below the college level
3. Juvenile literature and picture books, except where literary or bibliographical reasons call for full treatment
4. Books and especially pamphlets of slight interest and importance; e.g.
   a. pseudo-scientific works
   b. occult literature (astrology, fortune telling, palmistry, etc.)
   c. devotional literature, especially such as lacks literary merit
   d. less valuable light literature, especially poetry and drama obviously lacking literary merit
   e. minor works of purely local interest not possessing historical or topographical value (publications of fairs, exhibitions, pageants, lodges, trade unions, etc.)

In addition to these classes, many other books of distinctly minor value should be cataloged by short-cataloging rules. It is understood that the large majority of books treated by this subsection will be dated from 1850 on, since earlier publications are likely to have bibliographical or historical importance.

As tentative rules for short cataloging, the following are suggested:
1. Research undertaken to establish authors' names should be limited to 15 minutes; qualifying phrases may be substituted for full names or dates when necessary to distinguish between authors of identical names.
2. Judgment may be exercised in curtailing some very extensive

6. The material in Appendix A is taken from [6, pp. 213–16, 227–32].

titles, though in general there is little to gain by shortening the title.

3. Collation should be abbreviated to essential items only. Pagination should be indicated only for the last figures; a detailed statement should not be attempted. Portraits and maps should be identified as such, but all other plates, illustrations, charts, diagrams, etc. should be included under the general heading of "illustrations." The size should be given, since it is a matter of only a few seconds to measure a book.

4. Typographical errors on title pages should be corrected without record, and typographical peculiarities need not be followed closely.

5. Added titles and title pages should generally be disregarded.

6. The number of subjects and added entries should be strictly limited. So far as possible, one subject heading only should be given. General subject headings can be avoided and preference given to specific headings. Added entries for editors, translators, etc. may be freely omitted.

7. Very few bibliographical notes should be used.

8. Series entries, but not series notes, may be omitted.

9. Contents may be omitted.

10. The author statement need not be repeated in the title.

Short cataloging is a field in which the Library of Congress can assume leadership. Some libraries are already using short cataloging methods. Others would undoubtedly do so if the Library of Congress would point the way. The goal should be more rapid and more economical treatment of certain items, both in the Library of Congress and in other libraries. Speed in cataloging and simplicity of entry are the essential points. The author heading should be made carefully, but the rest of the entry should be greatly simplified.

From 1905 to 1936, when they were given up in favor of mimeographed cards, the Library published a series of cards known as the CA series which had some of the characteristics suggested above. However, a more distinctive term should be adopted for designating the cards prepared by the Short Cataloging Subsection. Card subscribers should be informed that short cataloging is henceforth an approved practice at the Library of Congress. [6, pp. 213–16]

General cataloging policy.—The cataloging policy of the Library needs to be defined as closely as possible for administrative reasons so that catalogers and classifiers will not be performing functions and recording details that are not of value to the Library in general. It is easy for people engaged in the exacting work of cataloging and classification, with all the technicalities involved, to fall into the habit of doing things for formal reasons or for the sake of perfection. Only through an alert administrative policy can these dangers be avoided.

The Committee feels very strongly that the Library should catalog its books according to its own needs. Since it is a large, scholarly reference

library, it will need to maintain good standards. What is good enough for the Library of Congress is good enough for other libraries throughout the country, excepting a few like the Folger Library which require more detailed work.

In the *Report of the Librarian of Congress* for 1935, a questionable definition of cataloging was made. According to that definition catalog entries are made with all library and bibliographical purposes in mind. Only a very elaborate and expensive system of cataloging could live up to such a definition.

The new A.L.A. cataloging code.—The new A.L.A. cataloging code which has been in the course of preparation for the past few years is a matter of vital concern in the administrative cataloging policy of the Library of Congress. In its tentative form this code is much more detailed than the code under which the Catalog Division has been operating for the past 30 or 40 years. [Footnote: The code was published in 1908 but in effect it was in operation at the Library of Congress for some years before that date.] Since the Library of Congress has accumulated cataloging arrears of upwards of 2,000,000 volumes under the old code and is falling behind at the annual rate of about 30,000 volumes a year, it would not seem either proper or possible to commit the Library of Congress to more detailed cataloging. Instead, it seems inevitable that some simplification must be made. Such simplifications would benefit other libraries as well because of the general concern over the present cost of cataloging. Both for the Library of Congress and for other libraries in the country there is a great need for a re-examination of cataloging practice and a redirection of cataloging policy. In the light of such considerations the following six points are made:

1. Detailed cataloging is expensive cataloging. Some librarians believe that if every point could be defined and a rule formulated for every question, then cataloging would be less expensive because there would be less debate concerning details. It is doubtful whether such a statement would bear critical examination. It is scarcely possible for capable catalogers to keep all points of the existing code in mind. Catalogers would spend much time trying to find the pertinent rule. They would spend time interpreting rules to see if the particular case in point was really covered by a given definition of rule; and they would spend still more time if they could find no rule that fitted their case exactly. They would still debate the matters which the code leaves to choice. They would continue to debate matters of taste and matters of opinion. To have forty-seven rules for capitalization does not mean that there will be no more debating whether words should be capitalized or not. A further difficulty is that detailed work would be carried over into related fields, such as subject headings. With subject headings there is frequently so much room for the expression of personal opinion that the desire to change another person's headings must be constantly combatted.

2. It would seem as if the time has come to codify the rules in three different ways. *First,* the great body of rules should be concerned with

what might be called standard cataloging. This code should embody the rules for author entries and for the form of name to be used. These rules require little expansion beyond the details found in the 1908 code. *Second,* there should be a brief statement of simplified cataloging, specifying the kinds of material that might be treated in this way and specifying also the ways in which the cataloging might be simplified. It is highly desirable to have the rules for simplified cataloging in print and to give them the dignity of approved rules. The Library of Congress has been doing what it calls "sub-standard cataloging" for many years, as have other libraries. It seems desirable to put such cataloging on a respectable basis. *Third,* there should be included a section specifying the kinds of materials which might be treated in a more detailed way and a brief statement describing in what ways that more detailed treatment might be made.

3. The situation as regards document cataloging should be investigated very carefully indeed. . . .

4. Rules for changes of names should be carefully studied to see if there are not more economical ways of handling the material than recataloging each time a change of name occurs. This is not a difficult matter as regards personal names, but considerable thought should be given to the problem of change of corporate names. If a library is 30,000 changes of name behind in its serial cataloging, of what value is a rule calling for complete up-to-dateness?

5. The usefulness of certain existing forms of entry, such as the series entry and the inverted title entry, should be questioned. In the case of monograph series, would not a reference book setting forth the contents of series be more valuable than the series records now contained in many dictionary catalogs?

6. The code should specify certain classes of material that need not be cataloged at all, or which need only be represented in the catalog by a form entry at most. Such items are telephone books, city directories, booksellers' catalogs, broadsides, college catalogs and similar publications.

The Library of Congress is in a strategic position at this time in cataloging history to influence the whole course of cataloging development for the country. With this responsibility in mind the necessity for enlightened leadership is obvious. [6, pp. 227–32]

Appendix B[7]

The Librarian's Committee on Cooperative Cataloging

Cooperative cataloging subsection.—From 1909 through 1934, cooperative cataloging had a very happy history at the Library of Congress. This led

7. The material in Appendix B is taken from [6, pp. 201–8].

in 1934 to the establishment of a separate division, the Cooperative Cataloging and Classification Service. With the creation of the division, however, the picture changed, and the subsequent history of cooperative cataloging has been stormy and unfortunate. Up to the end of 1939 the Library of Congress printed 228,410 cards for outside libraries. Of these, 138,480 were for Federal libraries in the District of Columbia. Another group of 84,940 cards were printed from copy supplied by libraries elsewhere in the country. Since 1932 the copy from libraries outside the District of Columbia has steadily increased while that for District of Columbia libraries has declined. . . .

The average number of all outside entries for this period [1932–1939] was 8,709 a year. The total number of A and AC cards for the period was 46,148, as compared with 23,525 for the District of Columbia libraries. It is noteworthy that the amount of work dropped sharply in 1935 with the establishment of the Cooperative Cataloging Service. That Service began to decrease the A series very noticeably. Three revisers handle the A copy, which means an average of one entry per reviser per working day. They are a full year behind in handling their copy. . . .

The three large contributing libraries in the District of Columbia are:
The Department of Agriculture, 57,795 titles, 1902–39
Office of Education, 33,884 titles, 1908–39
Geological Survey, 21,299 titles, 1904–39
Up to 1934 all cooperative cataloging was in the hands of the Card Division. Since then the Card Division has handled the copy from the District of Columbia libraries, while the A and AC series were turned over to the Cooperative Cataloging Service.

It has taken a staff of less than two (two people working four days a week) to revise and prepare the District of Columbia libraries' copy, which has averaged 2,941 titles a year. . . .

The average time required to revise District of Columbia libraries' copy is 24 minutes per title, or omitting original Library of Congress classification done on this copy, 16 minutes per title. The average time spent on revising A and AC copy (involving no classification except for established series) is 29.5 minutes per title. But—and here is the important difference—to this time for revision of AC copy must be added the time and expense of the revising done by other revisers, including the Chief of the Division.

Organization of a new cooperative cataloging subsection.—The new subsection proposed will include the cooperative work that is now being done in the Card Division for the District of Columbia libraries and in the Cooperative Cataloging and Classification Service for other libraries in the U.S. It will be separated from the Decimal Classification Subsection, which will be transferred to the Subject Heading and Classification Section. A reviser and two catalogers will be needed for the work, and they should have the assistance of a typist for whatever typing they need.

It is important to emphasize that the three people in this subsection should all be trained catalogers.

The work of the subsection would comprise, first, handling all outside copy contributed, both from the District of Columbia and from the other libraries in the U.S. Second, the subsection would catalog books acquired at the Library of Congress subsequent to the printing of a cooperative card. This new feature is proposed for three reasons:

1) Because the subsection would be able to test the quality of the work that various cooperating libraries are doing
2) Because the cooperative cards would be used without question at the Library of Congress
3) Because cooperative copy would not be cancelled, as it is now, on word that the Library of Congress will acquire a book. . . .

Above all the staff of the subsection should avoid expressing mere personal opinion in making any changes either in the copy supplied by contributing libraries or in adapting printed cards with which to catalog Library of Congress books. Likewise, at any stage of the work time ought not to be spent debating nonessential matters, such as the intricacies of capitalization.

Copy supplied from outside libraries should be divided into two groups, one for libraries with depository catalogs, and the other for those without. Those libraries that have depository catalogs should be expected to maintain a satisfactory standard and to indicate details that need further investigation. Revision of their copy should be reduced to a matter of checking for Library of Congress form. For those libraries which do not have depository catalogs, contributed copy should be subjected to somewhat more careful investigation; in particular, more work should be done in establishing and verifying author entries. In general, the revisers of outside copy should do much less "authority work" than they have done in the past. . . .

With respect to subject headings, the revisers should check only when the contributing library indicates the need for so doing. New subject headings should be established in such a way that they can later be used by the Library of Congress upon acquisition of similar material. [6, pp. 201–8]

Appendix C[8]

The Librarian's Committee on Catalog Use Studies

Use of the public catalog.—The public catalog of a library is made for users, not for catalogers. Therefore, exact knowledge as to who uses the catalog and why is of fundamental significance in the development of

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8. The material in Appendix C is taken from [6, pp. 294–96].

the catalog as a bibliographical tool. Unless use approaches a certain volume, serious question may be raised as to the advisability of continuing certain portions of the record. There is doubtless much support for the continuance of the American type of dictionary catalog in its present form in the general experience of libraries through years of use. But, so far as this Committee is aware, no major library has ever made a thorough and detailed analysis of the actual use of its public catalog by the different types of readers.

The dictionary card catalog stands today as the greatest technical achievement of American librarianship. But there are certain disturbing facts about the catalog and its use. There is little doubt that the difficulties in using and maintaining the catalog increase in more than direct proportion to its size. When Charles A. Cutter published his rules for a dictionary catalog in 1876, there were only nine libraries in the United States with more than 100,000 volumes. The largest number of annual accessions reported for any of these libraries was 18,000, an almost insignificant number today. When J. C. M. Hanson became Chief of the Catalog Division in the Library of Congress in 1897, the Library's collection was but one-sixth of its present size. Moreover, great foreign libraries like the British Museum and the Bibliotheque Nationale have never found it necessary to develop a dictionary catalog of their holdings but have relied upon other types of catalogs.

A factual study of this great instrument, probably the world's largest dictionary catalog, would reveal facts of great significance to catalogers generally. It is therefore suggested that a close analysis be made of the use of the catalog for one or more test periods. The investigation would be aimed at securing two kinds of information: 1) the types of readers who use the catalog and, 2) the kinds of use made of the various entries. The readers using the catalog might be classified as advanced research workers (faculty members and visiting scholars), graduate students, undergraduate students, high school students, federal employees, general readers, the staff of the service divisions, and the staff of the processing divisions. Examination of the type of use would seek to discover the extent to which the different kinds of entries in the catalog are actually consulted. Headings for study in these categories would include: author cards, added author entries, title cards, subject cards for major subjects (i.e. municipal government) and for minor subjects (i.e. commission government in Des Moines), United States documents and corporate entries. It is believed that this investigation might be carried out by means of a simple questionnaire providing for the checking of the foregoing information for all readers using the catalog during the test periods. In addition to this general test, the research workers who use the catalog should be questioned in more detail regarding their use of the catalog. The information obtained would be extremely valuable in determining the actual use of the catalog and would provide a definite factual basis for decisions concerning changes and improvements which ought to be made in the catalog as a working tool. [6, pp. 294–96]

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