

August 16, 2001

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While searching the HCL catalog at Edina yesterday afternoon--particularly hoping to extract information from an expected "public note" under the subject heading, FAB AWARD WINNERS--I discovered several access-limiting and often confusing anomalies, mistakes, and oversights that need correction:

1. No "public notes" display in WEBCAT. I not only failed to find a note under FAB AWARD WINNERS, but also under AMERICAS AWARD WINNERS, INFERTILITY, LIVING WAGE LAWS, and PURA BELPRE AWARD WINNERS.
2. No 710 (added corporate name entry) was assigned to Living wage: building a fair economy (1998). "New Press" has been a regularly-traced publisher.
3. B. Ehrenreich's much-quoted and -excerpted Nickel and dimed: on (not) getting by in America (2001):
  - +got no subject tracing for the main topic: WORKING POOR PEOPLE.
  - +got no subject tracing for SERVICE INDUSTRY WORKERS
  - +should have been assigned duplicate headings under all "class" forms, subdivided --PERSONAL NARRATIVES, inasmuch as the author largely recounts her own experience in low-wage, service jobs
  - + merited a 740 (added title entry) for: Not getting by in America
4. N. Baker's widely-discussed Double fold: libraries and the assault on paper (2001) deserved subject tracings for LIBRARY OF CONGRESS--RETENTION POLICY, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS--MICROFILMING POLICY, BRITTLE BOOKS PROGRAMS, and MICROFILMING OF NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS (some, or all. perhaps requiring local creation).
5. Alternative library literature, 1998/1999 (2000):
  - +includes an inaccurate contents note, citing sections like "AV," "Books and reading," and "Just for fun" that do not appear in the volume itself
  - +contains erroneous and misleading subject tracings--e.g., HAWAII PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM--OUTSOURCING and WILSON LIBRARY BULLETIN--CENSORSHIP--for themes not covered in the 98/99 edition

6. DVDs. Having read in the Staff Newsletter about unclassified DVDs being arranged in browsing collections, I examined the bib-records and related cross-referencing for a few of the 146 works, which prompts these observations:

- +failing to classify DVDs like all other library materials, regardless of format, will make future intershelving with similarly-themed items impossible. Further, non-classification--even though many titles deal with nonfiction topics such as health and travel--will make these works unfindable by DDC-searches.
- +since it's extremely likely that longer-lasting, many-faceted DVDs will shortly equal, if not supplant, videos as a popular format, it seems shortsighted to treat them now as though they were something temporary and impermanent, never to be acquired in large numbers. Not classifying DVDs seems to flow from an assumption of impermanence. So does assigning the format heading, DVDs, to each title, ultimately producing (just as applying COMPACT DISCS would) an immense, indigestible entry-file under that descriptor.
- +the subhead, --DRAMA, appears to be uniformly added to topics denoted for DVD fiction films whereas those same--or comparable--works in VHS format have been consistently assigned subject tracings subdivided by --FICTION. As a direct result, some 15 or more entries for print and video versions of 101 Dalmatians can be found under DALMATIAN DOGS--FICTION, but the 2002 DVD, 102 Dalmatians, cannot--because it was assigned DALMATIAN DOGS--DRAMA. Thus, cognate material that should--for the searcher's ease & benefit--be findable together are instead separated and so harder to identify.
- +the heading, CLOSED CAPTIONED VIDEOS, has been applied to many DVDs. However, in every case no information appears in the bibliographic record itself--i.e., descriptive paragraph, collation, or notes--indicating that the disc is, indeed, closed captioned. Also, it would surely prove more precise and user-helpful if the assigned form were CLOSED CAPTIONED DVDS since the equipment requirements are key to actually borrowing and watching these items.
- +while language options are sometimes mentioned in a DVD bib-record, seldom has an access-expanding language heading been assigned. For example, the Alice in Wonderland (2000) record mentions a Spanish track, but no tracing for SPANISH-LANGUAGE FILMS (or even better, SPANISH-LANGUAGE DVDS) was made. Likewise, the entry for Full metal jacket (2001) specifies "Languages: English and French," yet no access point appears for FRENCH-LANGUAGE FILMS (or FRENCH-LANGUAGE DVDS).

+there's a bevy of wholly or partly "blind" cross-references, e.g.

DVDs, Adventure	<u>see</u>	Adventure films
DVDs, Animal	<u>see</u>	Animal films
DVDs, Autobiographical	<u>see</u>	Autobiographical films
DVDs, Batman	<u>see</u>	Batman films

Only 3 titles out of 55 under ADVENTURE FILMS are DVDs, the first-listed appearing 47th in the sequence. Similarly, just 2 of a total 27 items under ANIMAL FILMS are DVDs, these appearing as numbers 26 and 27 in the list. Worse, of seven entries under AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL FILMS and two under BATMAN FILMS, none are in fact DVDs.

+frequently, overly-broad rather than more discrete headings are assigned. For instance, Full metal jacket (2001) got a tracing (access point) for WAR FILMS, but not for VIETNAM WAR FILMS, meaning that it will not appear with Platoon, Boys in Company C, Hearts and minds, and Deer hunter under the latter genre descriptor. (Jacket also importantly lacked a MARINES tracing.)

+Crouching tiger, hidden dragon (2000):

-was assigned CHINESE-LANGUAGE FILMS without any bib-record mention of the soundtrack language, making it wrongly seem that it was really in English

-got no genre heading for MARTIAL ARTS FILMS (preferably: MARTIAL ARTS DVDS)

+Erin Brockovich merited, but didn't get, subject access points for WOMEN PARALEGALS--CALIFORNIA--FICTION and ENVIRONMENTAL LAW--CALIFORNIA--FICTION.

Two tentative conclusions:

+There has been inadequate Authority File maintenance, which should be ongoing and systematic.

+There has been little or no quality control--i.e., checking--to ensure consistency, accuracy, and usefulness.

Hoping for an action-report,

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