

the references cited, followed by a list of suggested readings. All this culminates in a select bibliography (pp 597-600) of 50 items - some of the major influential writing in the field. Happily all these bibliographical references are systematically updated except of Harrod's Glossary⁴ rather than the current 6th ed. (1987). An appendix on aids for (practical) cataloguing and classification further enhances the value of the book. A useful reference chapter consists of a glossary of terms (mostly based on AACR2) combined with the lists of abbreviations.

The language is simple and straightforward and thus makes for easy reading; on this account it may also prove helpful to Asian and African students.

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SATIJA, Mohinder Partap; COMAROMI, John P.: **Introduction to the Practice of the Dewey Decimal Classification**. London: Oriental University Press 1987. XIII, 152p., ISBN 0-7465-0065-3

Of making many books on the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) there is no end, and much study of them is a weariness of the flesh. (My apologies to Ecclesiastes.) Mr.Satija, evidently the principal author of the book, to judge by style and choice of examples, has written the most recent of the "many books" expounding the DDC, with the laudable aim to lessen somewhat the "weariness of the flesh" besetting beginning students trying to unravel the mysteries of classification. The work consists largely of graded exercises in "number building", supported by concise explanations of the (sometimes tortuous) way in which Dewey class marks have now to be constructed. Satija claims that no other book on the DDC has yet presented the scheme in this way, but this claim is somewhat dubious, and he himself cites the similar though now outdated book by Bloomberg and Weber¹ (the latter being presented as "Webber" - one of the numerous misprints in the book). Be that as it may, there are some good, some debatable and some outright bad features, the two latter categories, sad to say, outweighing by far the first one. Still, as usual, first the good news.

Though a textbook for beginners is generally not the place to voice criticism of the topic dealt with so as not to confuse the novice, Satija makes some valid points on the shortcomings and complexities of the DDC. (Perhaps this is where the otherwise invisible hand of his co-author Dr. Comaromi shows itself?) He deplores the "vertiginous variety of notes" that try to explain the scope of certain class marks but succeed only in perplexing the user (p.16); the "illegal and irregular" use of Standard Subdivisions is justly criticized (p.57); and in a section on the "Enigma of zeroes" he comes to the conclusion that in their application "abnormality is the rule now" (p.61). Most if not all users of the DDC will agree. A small but particularly important section is the one on "Dots and spaces" (p.20) which makes it clear that the point inserted after three digits is not at all a "decimal point" (as the editors of the Forst Press

stubbornly continue to call it in defiance of the rules of mathematics) but just "a pause ... that has no purpose except to psychologically break the monotony of numerals", while the real decimal point is actually invisible, being put, as it were, before the first digit of a DDC number. From my own experience I know that this simple yet important fact is difficult to convey to (largely non-numerate) students who think that the teacher must be wrong since section 5.11 of the introduction to the DDC itself speaks of the "decimal point" when referring to the "pause that refreshes" (apologies, again, this time to Coca Cola). The examples for the notoriously difficult literature facet in Table 3 are on the whole well chosen and explained, though they, as all other examples are artificially constructed.

Which brings me to the debatable features. The examples chosen for the construction of DDC numbers are without exception fictitious so as to exhibit certain features that can or should be expressed by certain elements (mostly facets taken from the Tables or from subdivisions in the Schedules) to "build up" a class mark. From my own experience in compiling a programmed instruction course for the DDC-related Universal Decimal Classification I know how difficult it is to find actual book titles of even title-like descriptions of topics for which the student is to construct a class mark; I too have indulged in making up artificially contrived topics in order to demonstrate a particular feature and its proper use. Nevertheless, "Costumes of librarians" and "Costumes of historians" are a bit far-fetched as examples for the Persons facet of Table 7, and so is "Book keeping in non-profit (sic) hospitals" or "Air conditioning in law libraries". (Had the last example been "Air conditioning in rare book libraries" it would have made sense, because those libraries do indeed need special cooling and air filtering systems.)

The really bad part of the book is what is not in it at all, namely a chapter on the Relative Index and how to use it in order to find the class mark for a particular topic. The only reference to the index is that it is "studied in ... a separate companion volume" (p.22). The wording of this sentence does not make it clear whether the reference is to the third part of the DDC (the index volume) or to another book yet to be written by Mr. Satija. On p.25 there is a cryptic reference to a "chapter on *Relative Index*", but neither the Table of Contents nor the book's own (rather skimpy) index show any traces of such a chapter. Perhaps while writing chapter 2, Mr. Satija intended to write another chapter on how to use the index but he either never got around to do this or decided for some reason not to include it after all. How anyone, least of all a novice, can find a Dewey class mark without the Relative Index and a thorough knowledge of its intricacies and shortcomings is incomprehensible, and the lack of a thorough discussion of the index, its proper use, and lots of exercises makes this book almost useless as an introductory text. Mr.Satija seems instead to rely on some sort of intuitive knowledge of the DDC, and where in its 10 main "classes" a subject is to be found - a knowledge that he as an experienced DDC user may have, but which he can hardly expect from students. It is well known that some topics in DDC are woefully misplaced, sometimes mirroring the picture of the world as it was at the end of

the 19th century (Psychology classed as part of Philosophy, Electrical engineering as a subdivision of Mechanical engineering, History far removed from Sociology, the smoking habit classed as "abnormal behavior", and so on). Are beginning classifiers to hit upon these subjects purely by intuition? I believe that not even Satija's patron, saint Ranganathan, (who once recommended meditation as a last resort in finding an appropriate class mark) would quite agree, not to mention the fact that Melvil Dewey himself considered the Relative Index to be the most important part of his scheme.

As usual in a book written by an Indian author, the language used is florid, and peppered with unusual idioms (possibly literal translations from Hindi?). Thus, by implication we learn that the DDC seems to be flourishing in Antarctica, since Satija claims that it is being used "across the seven continents" (p.VII) in a "puck-like girdle" (the allusion to *A Midsummernight's Dream* remains unexplained).

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1 Bloomberg, Marty; Weber, Hans: An introduction to classification and number building in Dewey. Littleton, CO: Libraries Unlimited 1976.

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HARROD, Leonard Montague: Harrod's Librarians' Glossary of Terms Used in Librarianship, Documentation and the Book Crafts and Reference Book. 6th ed. Comp. by Ray Prytherch. Aldershot, Hants.: Brookfield, Vermont: Gower 1987. X, 855p., ISBN 0-566-03538-3

Only three years have elapsed since the fifth edition and a new edition of Harrod's Glossary has been published. M.P. Satija appreciated the story of the striking success of this classical reference book in his review of the fifth edition (Int. Classif. 12 (1985) No. 3, p. 164). Whereas L.M. Harrod, the originator of the work, still acted as an advisory editor of the fifth edition, Ray Prytherch alone prepared the sixth edition, Mr. Harrod having died in 1984.

In the preface to the fifth edition, Mr. Prytherch noted his belief "that in the middle to late 1980s a fundamental re-appraisal of the Glossary will take place" as an "inevitable result of advancing technology and professional development". The author, however, dropped his consideration of a radical re-structuring of the Glossary, for example by removing the book craft and printing terms. He now sees the advantage of a reference book presenting "in one volume historical and current information, the older but still relevant terms, with the newest".

Why then a new edition after no more than three years? Mr. Prytherch justifies it with the rapid developments in many of the fields relevant to modern library and information work, causing him, as he says, to include a variety of terms from peripheral, non-traditional fields. Over 600 new entries have been added, and over 400 terms from the fifth edition have been revised or removed, so are the statistics in the preface. The extent of the volume, however, has practically

remained the same (861 pages in the fifth edition, 855 in the sixth edition).

Does the author keep his promise of taking into account the many terms from the new fields having become important for librarianship and documentation? He does it only to a very limited extent.

In his preface to the sixth edition, Mr. Prytherch refers to a paper of the Library and Information Services Council on the wide range of skills now appropriate to library and information work. Of the terms that Mr. Prytherch quotes from the paper mentioned, only about a half has been included into the Glossary. I missed authorship, primary publishing, collection management, system design and management, management of resources (resource sharing is lacking, too), information analysis and repackaging (information analysis centre is included), question and answer services, marketing, signposting, consultancy (library consultant is included).

Of the terminology in connection with information technology and pertinent to librarianship and documentation only some fragments have been included. I admit that the big problem here is to keep boundaries. But I think that terms having found their way into the professional vocabulary of a librarian or a documentalist should be included. In this respect I missed bibliographic utility, computer-assisted instruction (CAI), compatibility, compiler, data flowchart, data acquisition, communication format (with its synonyms), data carrier (data medium), data compression, data conversion, data element, interface, inverted file, line mode, page mode, printer (as a computer-output device), impact printer, non-impact printer, daisy wheel printer, ink-jet printer (laser printer and matrix printer are included), record label, record length, record number, record status, serial access, direct access, subfield, and numerous others.

Many of the terms from the fields of information technology contained in the sixth edition were to be met already in the fifth edition. When comparing a number of corresponding pages in the fifth and the sixth edition I found out that only a relatively small quantity of terms from information technology has been added in the sixth edition. A good deal of the additions I met consisted of abbreviations of corporate names and of new corporate names.

I think the big and difficult work of updating the Glossary by including all the important terms from modern information technology and from other fields of new relevance to librarianship and documentation has still to be done. And the principal question again arises: Can it be done without driving out the historical terms? I think it could be done, even with the risk of getting a two-volume Glossary in the near future. But then a pocket dictionary, a short version of the Glossary, containing the current terms of modern librarianship should be created, available at a reasonable price, within the means of a student and a small library.

What about the terminology of classification, being of special interest to the readers of this journal? I checked 66 of the more fundamental terms in this field and found out that only 5 of them were lacking. This result confirmed the reviewer's opinion that in the more traditional fields pertinent to librarianship, Harrod's Glossary is a rich source of information. I have very often and intensively used it and my experience is that it only seldom fails.