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5. Closing

In closing, I want to say that there is little that is truly problematized in this issue of TCS – at least from my perspective. Knowledge Organization does not learn much in the way of problems of classification from this discourse. What is valuable about this work lies in its work at engendering constructs for analysis beyond function; work in which Knowledge Organization has been less interested. In this way we have been functionalists, caring only for particular functionality. However, we can take these constructs and examine the role played by classification in other spheres, like the aesthetic and material lives of people, their identities, and sense of place. Perhaps we can turn this discourse on ourselves and reflect. We can ask whether our work in classification is of a particular aesthetic, for example an aesthetic of functionalism – chosen from a variety of aesthetic options. Perhaps our identities are rooted in a particular notion of material and place – books and the library or documents on the Web. And for various and important reasons we do not create discourse beyond these. This issue of TCS offers us a strange looking glass for reflection. We can see how classification is the same in another discourse, but if we look inward, we see how different our discourse is.

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Joseph T. Tennis, Assistant Professor, School of Library, Archival and Information Studies, The University of British Columbia, Vancouver, British Columbia, V6T 1Z3, Canada.
E-mail: jtennis@interchange.ubc.ca.

New Review of Hypermedia and Multimedia: Knowledge Systems and Services. Vol. 12 (2006) issue 1.

Knowledge Organization Systems and Services (KOSs) are the topic of this special issue of NRHM edited by Marianne Lykke Nielson and Doug Tudhope. The call for papers defined KOSs broadly: classification systems, gazetteers, lexical databases, ontologies, taxonomies and thesauri. Those concerned with the tenor of the discussions that have been swirling around the recent decision of the Library of Congress to eliminate series authority control, and continued signals that even more far-reaching changes may be afoot, will find this issue especially resonant. Underlying each paper is a clearly articulated stance that legacy systems, such as controlled vocabularies, remain worthy scaffolds for powerful KOSs.

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The editors provide an introduction to this collection of five papers, some with roots in the NKOS workshops in recent years, by describing the purpose and scope of this collection of papers as research that is situated in different domains, which also examines new applications and new contexts for the creation of networked information services that serve to provide description and retrieval for information resources on the Internet. Many of the projects described in this issue explore other pressing issues in that they make use of automated approaches, while also covering other broadly appealing topics such as semantic interoperability, mapping and standardization.

Golub's research takes the lead role in this issue with an examination of an automated approach to subject classification of web pages in the engineering domain, using the Ei thesaurus and classification, and working in the same tradition as Project DESIRE. One especially useful feature of this paper is an in-depth analysis of the websites that were incorrectly classified by the automated system. This failure analysis results in several proposed solutions such as manual tuning of the extracted term list used to power the automated classification.

Navarretta, Pederson and Hansen's research continues the linguistic theme with an examination of the use of language technology in knowledge organization systems. This project demonstrates automated approaches to term identification, extraction, and keyword selection, as well as the use of semantic clustering in a Danish language patent and trademark corpus. Several low-cost strategies to enhance indexing quality utilizing indexer-tuning of automated systems are proposed. In some cases these strategies offer high levels of recall and precision. Also grappling with linguistic challenges is the research described by Liang and Sini, which seeks to provide concept mapping of the vocabulary of one multilingual thesaurus to another bilingual thesaurus in the domain of agriculture. Serious issues are posed by the heterogeneity of the vocabulary in these thesauri. Once again, hybrid solutions that draw on both manual and machine approaches are proposed.

Providing fresh re-examination of two "hot topics" are Gnoli and Hong's work with facet analysis, and Trant's research into social tagging and folksonomic approaches to art description in a museum context. Gnoli and Hong's treatment of facet analysis draws heavily on historical research such as the CRG work with integrative levels, and revisits the concept of free, or freely faceted classification as exemplified by Gardin's SYNTOL and Austin's PRECIS. Gnoli and Hong champion the continuing usefulness of expressive notation in digital environments for query processing, browsing and collocation – in sharp contrast to those who feel that this type of notation is an artifact no longer useful in digital environments.

Perhaps the most timely research is the concluding paper, Trant's collaborative exploration of the potential for social tagging and folksonomy to further museum goals of improved access, and increased understanding of the collection at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Tags assigned to artwork by a variety of individuals, trained cataloguers, library staff, museum staff and volunteers not otherwise affiliated with the museum, were assessed by art historians. Tags assigned by participants were positively received by the museum's art historians. Three quarters of the new terms were validated and found to fill gaps in current museum descriptions. Enhanced community engagement and the potential for re-discovery, access and increased museum use as well as the useful insights provided into museum-visitor relations make further examination of folksonomy as an access strategy highly desirable in the future iterations of this continuing project.

The need for balancing user centered approaches with automated approaches is a theme that echoes throughout this issue even as it reiterates the necessity of harmonizing machine-centered and human-powered approaches. Each of the five papers describes work in progress. Several describe quite preliminary explorations, a fact that might prove discouraging to some yet serves to further the goal of the editors to provide an issue of *NRHM* that traces the topography of KOSs work and provides possible future direction for continuing research in this area.

Kathryn La Barre, The Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 501 E. Daniel Street, MC-493, Champaign, IL 61820-6211 USA.
E-mail: klabarre@uiuc.edu