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including the concepts of aboutness and exhaustivity. Perhaps too much time is spent upon these two concepts, at the expense of the subject analysis of non-textual information: pre-iconology, iconology, and iconography are discussed only very briefly in this chapter.

Chapter 8 introduces the principles of classification and their use in the design of bibliographic classification systems. Some of the assumptions made by Taylor could be a little problematic. Taylor suggests that the principles of Aristotelian categories, family resemblance, and fuzzy set theory constitute the "classical theory of categories," and that they are the foundation upon which were built systems such as DDC and LCC. It is not clear, however, how these three "classical theories" apply, in fact, to DDC and LCC, since both systems preceded both family resemblance and fuzzy set theory. In fact, Taylor herself states that hierarchical systems such as DDC and LCC, creating categories from general to specific, follow the classical theory based essentially upon Aristotelian logic, and not the other two areas of "classical theory." Secondly, Taylor suggests that LCC was "firmly based in hierarchical arrangements," but this might not actually bear close scrutiny, since LCC is primarily an enumerative, rather than a hierarchical system. Thirdly, Taylor fails to discuss principles that are basic to virtually all bibliographic classification systems, such as homogeneity and mutual exclusivity. The chapter gives a fair bit of space to such issues as broad vs. specific classification systems, and closed vs. open stacks; these issues are valid, but they detract from the more important discussion of the principles of classification.

Chapter 9 looks at the ways in which surrogate records are arranged and displayed in libraries, archives, and the digital environment. Topics include Cutter numbers, notation, filing order, and the archival concepts of provenance and original order. Chapter 10 discusses how the organization of information relates and contributes to system design. The term "system" is rather broad, and given the orientation of this chapter, perhaps the more specific term "information retrieval system" would provide more context for this topic. This reviewer applauds Professor Taylor for suggesting that the way in which information is organized is crucial to the design and operation of information retrieval systems, because this helps consolidate her position that the principles of bibliographic control are appropriate in a variety of environments. Taylor's position might have been strengthened, perhaps, by establishing a clearer connection between bibliographic control and system design. The chapter provides useful suggestions pertaining to specific system design issues that could be

changed to improve retrieval, such as creating help menus and incorporating Boolean operators. While these suggestions are perfectly valid, they appear to fall more under the purview of human-computer interaction, and their relationship to bibliographic control is not established clearly. The final part of the chapter provides a highly useful discussion of how bibliographic control tools (e.g., MARC fields and browsable classification systems) could be used to improve information retrieval in online systems.

The broad scope of this work is both its strength and its weakness. Taylor succeeds in presenting the principles underlying the organization of information, and in showing how these principles work in a variety of settings. Explaining these principles is no mean feat, but the author succeeds in making this topic accessible to the novice student and, perhaps more importantly, in demonstrating that these principles continue to be valid in the digital world. The weakness of this scope is that on occasion, important concepts are glossed over or are not explained at all (for example that of "uniform titles"). It is important to remember, however, that this text is not meant to stand alone; it provides the proverbial „tip of the iceberg" to a fascinating and complicated subject matter. With the exception of Chapter 8 perhaps, this text is a welcome tool for instructors in LIS schools, and the reviewer lauds its long-awaited arrival.

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WEINBERG, Bella Hass. **Can you recommend a good book on indexing?** Medford, NJ : Information Today, 1998. xiii, 161 p. ISBN 1-57387-041-2 (softcover).

This book is a compilation of twenty book reviews by Professor Bella Hass Weinberg. Here, Weinberg comments on her own reviews, and on the reactions of those who have been concerned with her reviews. With this book, the author claims to serve the profession as an arbiter in deciding what is worthwhile reading material and what is not. Such a claim necessitates contradiction in principle. *Can you recommend a good book on indexing?* is an uncommon book, and correspondingly uncommon will be its review. At the end of this review, a proposal is submitted with the aim of improving the peer review process.

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Most of the twenty reviews in Weinberg's collection deal with documents concerned with book indexing, the field in which she has won most of her merits and recognition. She untiringly develops a realistic picture of the high intellectual level of good book indexing. Weinberg is well known for her justified and well founded scepticism towards attempts made at satisfactorily mechanizing the indexing process (cf., for example, p. 107). Thus, she has contributed to a more realistic view of the limits of the mechanization of indexing, much to the benefit of both the users of knowledge organization and the indexing profession.

But indexing is more than book indexing, and database indexing seems beyond Weinberg's experience. Crucial issues in this field are, to the best knowledge of this reviewer, not dealt with in depth in her works. Examples of crucial issues are: information system survival power, the issue of a well-tuned balance between pre-combination (or pre-coordination) and post-coordination, the lexicalization of paraphrases, ellipses filling, index language syntax (not merely of the heading-subheading type), the problems of the extreme heterogeneity of author terminology in databases throughout the years of a database's operation, etc. Here, the title of the book promises more than the book provides. The book should have been more appropriately titled "My collected reviews on book indexing".

The spectrum of Weinberg's collected reviews spans from careful and detailed ones to markedly superficial and even hostile ones. Examples of the first-mentioned are reviews of books by Mulvany (pp. 41-50) and by the editors Raya Fidel, Trudi Bellardo Hahn, Edie M. Rasmussen, and Philip J. Smith (pp. 111-117). Here, Weinberg depletes her comprehensive knowledge of book indexing rules. Occasionally however, these rules are idiosyncratically selected from the literature, with a lack of tolerance on her part towards variations and novelties.

The book under review claims that it "will help readers make better informed purchasing decisions" (Foreword p. ix), and that one "can often get more information on a topic by reading [Weinberg's] reviews than by reading the actual books" (Foreword p. ix). In view of this ambitious claim, Weinberg's inadequate reviews must tolerate meticulous scrutiny.

The review of the *Proceedings of the 5th International Study Conference on Classification Research, Toronto, June 1991* (pp. 7-8), is one example: twenty-nine of the 40 conference papers are not even mentioned; of the remaining eleven papers, five are merely mentioned through the names of their authors, with the addition of the paper's title in two more cases; what we are told about the remaining four papers is re-

stricted to the fact that a paper lacks figures, that in another one the sequence in which the figures are presented displeases the reviewer, that there is a lack of references in a third case, and that a paper should have been better proofread. Criticism of the lack of references is a favourite topic in Weinberg's reviews (see for example her review of Lancaster 1992, p. 75). No mention is made of the substance of these papers, which should be the basis on which a decision is made to read them.

A most conspicuous review in the group of inadequate reviews in this book is that of Fugmann 1993 (pp. 20-21). In a recent response to the reproach of superficiality and of concentrating on immaterialities in this review (Fugmann 1995), Weinberg frankly admits to having been subjected to limitations of space. In the absence of these limitations, she states that she "would have discussed in detail all of the substantive ideas in the book...." (Weinberg 1995, 329). In other words, the essence of the book was deliberately not taken into consideration in her review. A similar excuse is made for her aforementioned review of the *Proceedings of the Study Conference* (p. 7).

Lack of space should not constitute an excuse for the neglect of the substance of a book. A reviewer should decline making a review if dealing with the essentials of a book is not possible and, consequently, the available space would only be used for a discussion of immaterialities. In this manner, the message of a book is distorted, misinformation is spread in the profession, and progress is impeded. In addition, the postulates of fairness and reliability in the review process as stipulated, for example, by Daniel (1993) are violated.

On the back cover of Weinberg's book, it is stated that she is in great demand as a reviewer of publications. As she frankly confesses in the Preface, her cooperation has also been asked for in order to escape being reviewed in a "scathing" manner. Is this attitude and the "sardonic" tone in her reviews (Weinberg 1995, p. 331) a desirable way to get into high demand for cooperation in the profession?

Peer reviewing has constituted a subject of dispute and of controversy throughout the centuries. The history of the sciences is also a history of the fallacies of authorities in their judgments on the works of contemporaries. It has been common for centuries that almost every novelty and deviation from existing rules and from the state of the art has met with vehement rejection by the scientific establishment. Reviewers have often displayed fallibility, superficiality, lack of perspective and fairness, and reluctance to absorb novelties ("Nothing new, please, we know enough!"). Such an attitude has frequently led to the suppression of pioneer work in research. Some of the

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most important contributions in a field have fallen victim to reviewers. This has traditionally constituted a severe obstacle to progress.

Under the present dominant publishing policy it is hardly possible for a criticized author to publish a rejoinder to a review, even in the case of an evident error on the part of a reviewer. *Library Resources and Technical Services* constitutes a laudable exception here (Fugmann 1995). Hence, much untruth persists in scientific literature.

In the following, three proposals for the improvement of the peer review process are submitted. They are based on the experience of this reviewer, have been practised by him for several years, and might constitute part of a future ethical code for reviewers.

I. Reviewers would not innocently make untrue statements if they had first submitted their review to the author under review. Hence, editors should accept reviews only if the reviewers have submitted their work to the author under review. Such an agreement would prevent errors from becoming almost irrevocably disseminated and an author would automatically be informed of all reviews of his or her book.

II. A reviewer should not be granted the privilege of a safe position in presenting his or her opinion, and an author should not be left without any possibility of defence. A good many unreliable, hostile, complacent, and unfair reviews would be avoided if the reviewer had to take into account a rejoinder by the author under criticism. Hence, a right of appeal should be granted to any author and this author should be granted the last word in the dispute. Such a policy is already practised in some journals.

III. It does not make sense for an individual reviewer to collect his or her own reviews and to repeat their presentation to the public. On such occasion, the attacks on the books of the authors under review may be exacerbated in the same one-sided attitude as is exhibited in the reviews. Through such a publishing policy the harm caused by inadequate reviews is amplified. It would be much more informative and useful to the profession to have a comparative compilation of the reviews of different authors on the same work. This would constitute a more reliable view of the quality of the work. Complacency or superficiality in the peer review process would decrease if reviewers had to take into account a professional comparison of their reviews with those of other reviewers. The comparison by Hudon (1995) could constitute a model example and give incentive to a new type of rewarding activity in the literary field.

For all these reasons this reviewer advises against publishing books like this one.

Epilogue:

In conformity with these proposals, this reviewer has offered Professor Weinberg the opportunity to read his review and to argue to it before going to print. She declined.

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