

Hanne Albrechtsen and Elin Jacob, in "The Dynamics of Classification Systems as Boundary Objects for Cooperation in the Electronic Library", explore the notion that "[i]n an information ecology, a classification system should function as a boundary object, supporting coherence and a common identity across the different actors involved" (p. 300) and that schemes can function as public domains for communication. As libraries shift from manual, paper-based services to digital multimedia, they cease to be closed systems, and the role of the library classification also shifts, changing from collection management to the "facilitation of communication, maintenance of coherence, and establishment of a shared conceptual context" (p. 310). To illustrate their thesis, the authors look at two collaborative projects in which users, librarians, researchers and technicians have negotiated structures suited to their needs – where the classification schemes become boundary objects, allowing discussion among users and librarians.

In "Psychiatrists make Diagnoses, but not in Circumstances of Their Own Choosing : Agency and Structure in the *DSM*", Mark Spasser analyses the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* in light of Giddens' theory of structuration and suggests that modification of the theory is necessary in order for it to explicate fully the concept of agency. Spasser notes that while the theory is useful for analysing library classification because of its "discursive penetration into the sociocultural conditions of the multiple perspectives that organize the context within which historically situated practitioners act" (p. 331), its inability to "theorize intentional transformative action has an unfortunate and particularly paralyzing relevance to the ongoing revision of a living, yet institutionalized, text such as the manual" (p. 332). Despite the somewhat obscure language of this article, the role of the classification in framing a particular set of social values and constructs (the biomedical model of mental health) is made very clear. Spasser also discusses the developments within *DSM* that have excluded the bodies of literature concerning the relevance of historical life events and of human development to psychiatric problems, which highlights the ways in which classifications articulate world views.

Jennifer Tobias compares traditional cataloguing and web-based descriptions of documents in "Seeking the Subject," looking for ways of making subject visible even when it does not align with the categorizations provided in *LCSH*. Tobias comes up with a number of suggestions, such as the importance of developing subject along with keyword systems, because both are useful. Most of her recommendations apply more to making items generally accessible, but they do have implications for making subject searching easier. This short article is interesting, but it is the weakest in the collection. It lacks theoretical discussion, and at the same time the practical dis-

cussion is not fully developed. It also seems to suffer from an editorial glitch (the green card example is not very clear, partly because it appears that the illustration showing the LC cataloguing is missing, but also perhaps because some knowledge of American immigration procedures would make it more understandable – a different example would have been more appropriate for an international audience).

As a whole, this is a useful collection for those interested in how knowledge is structured and in the ways in which social norms are imprinted in such structures. It might have been helpful to have had the articles presented in different order with those that focus on the more general such as Star's and Albrechtsen and Jacob's at the beginning. That quibble aside, this volume presents philosophical food for thought and some practical directions to pursue. As information dissemination and information seeking become globalized processes, the rifts that separate dominant views from the marginalized ones become more visible. It is only by consciously addressing these rifts that classification can move forward. This collection moves us further towards a consciousness of what is needed, offering some methodological suggestions for the process of moving forward.

Christine Jacobs

Christine Jacobs, Chair, Information and Library Technologies Department, John Abbott College, P.O. Box 2000, Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue, Québec, H9X 3L9, Canada, e-mail: cmjacobs@johnabbott.qc.ca

CHAN, Lois Mai. *A Guide to the Library of Congress Classification*. 5th ed. Englewood, Colorado : Libraries Unlimited, 1999. xviii, 551 p. ISBN 1-56308-500-3 (pbk.)

Immoth's Guide to the Library of Congress Classification has been a reliable friend and companion for over thirty years. In the recently published fifth edition, Lois Mai Chan, doing what she does best, presents complex technical information in clear and lucid prose. The new edition expands and updates an already indispensable text.

The purpose of the book as enunciated in the preface is „to continue to provide an exposition of the Library of Congress Classification and a tool for studying and for staff training in the use of the scheme.“

The fifth edition follows the basic organization of the previous one. The introductory chapter provides historical background and context for the classification. There are notes at the end of each chapter, in addition to the general bibliography. The appendices, A: General Tables and B: Models for sub-arrangement within disciplines, as

well as the numerous examples provide excellent aids to see the classification in action. This remains a guide, however, and is best used with the classification schedules and interpretations, which are amply cited.

Chapter 2 delineates the principles and structure of the classification, while Chapter 3 demystifies the notation. It is disappointing that the term 'reserved Cutter numbers' does not appear in the index as it did in the previous edition. The current term '„A“ and „Z“ Cutter numbers' is not as user-friendly for beginners. There also is no entry for 'Biscoe date letters' or 'date letters' although both topics are discussed in the text. Chapter 4 clarifies the use of tables of general application and those of limited application.

Chapter 5, „Assigning Class Numbers“, is new to this edition. It gives a much needed overview and integration of the general principles of the classification, which serve as a foundation for the explication of the individual classes in Chapter 6. Chapter 7 continues to provide a useful discussion of the classification of special types of library materials.

The *Guide* remains a useful textbook for students of the Library of Congress Classification in formal programmes. It is also an effective self-study guide for practitioners and researchers. Although no guide can provide the knowledge that can only be gained by hands-on use of a classification, *A Guide to the Library of Congress Classification* clearly illustrates the classification in use with pertinent examples which effectively lead the learner to practical understanding of the underlying principles. Lois Mai Chan has also provided an excellent tool for updating one's knowledge of current developments and changes in Library of Congress practices.

John E. Leide

Prof. John E. Leide, Graduate School of Library and Information Studies, McGill University, 3459 McTavish Street, Montreal, QC H3A 1Y1, CANADA, email: innl@musicb.mcgill.ca

COCHRANE, Pauline Atherton, and JOHNSON, Eric H., eds. **Visualizing subject access for 21st century information resources : papers presented at the 1997 Clinic on Library Applications of Data Processing, March 2-4, 1997.** Champaign, IL : Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 1998. 176 p. ISBN 0-87845-103-X.

This collection consists of 15 papers presented at the 1997 Clinic on Library Applications of Data Processing. The Webster dictionary defines the term *Clinic* as a group meeting devoted to the analysis and solution of

concrete problems. The concrete problems on which the authors focus their attention here relate to subject access, to the various modes of storing information and accessing information repositories, and to modes of browsing and navigating into and among those repositories.

In "Hypostatizing data collections, especially bibliographic" Roland Hjerpe argues that presentation of data must explore all of our senses, and not only the visual one. Hypostatization led to meta-information reification, impeding the visualization of this meta-information in all its dynamic in terms of space and time. According to the author, information collections must be seen as a whole, not as gatherings of data with some resemblance.

"Simultaneous searching of distributed information and subject repositories on the WWW", by Tamás E. Doszokocs, offers a historical perspective (from 1977 to date) on the development of subject repositories. The abstract only is available in the book under review. The full text of this presentation is available at <http://sis.nlm.nih.gov/~doszokocs/dpc/sld001.htm>.

In "The role of subject access in information filtering", Raya Fidel and Michael Crandall report the results of studies conducted at the Boeing Company on users' perceptions of a filtering system. Having recognized that the implementation of filtering profiles based on users' topics of interest only was not enough for filtering relevant information, the authors led their users to identify some qualitative criteria not directly related to the subject domain but related to information quality. These qualitative criteria are: style of writing, and form and nature of documents. Some of these attributes of subject matter are subjective and some objective. Objective criteria can be applied to different domains and to filter information from different repositories.

"Thesauri in a full-text world", by Jessica L. Milstead, provides a brief history of thesauri, reminding readers that, although they appeared prior to the introduction of computers in information systems, their use spread with the growth of online bibliographic databases. Originally designed to assist in subject analysis and representation, thesauri are becoming useful tools to guide users across information repositories. Milstead demonstrates that thesauri remain useful even in full-text environments. Thesauri will not disappear, but they will change to adapt to the demands arising from the new repositories and from the new modes of accessing them.

In "Dimensions and discriminability : the role of controlled vocabulary in visualizing document associations", David Dubin remarks that traditional interfaces simply list titles of documents retrieved, not revealing similarities among documents. In order to improve search results display, proposals are made for interfaces in which search outputs could be improved through visualization of associations among sets of documents retrieved. The author points out that an informative picture of docu-