
Book Reviews

HARRIS, Kevin: *The Dickens House Classification*. London: Polytechnic of North London 1986. 98p. ISBN 0-946232-44-X. = School of Librarianship and Information Studies. Research Report 18.

Imagine Mr. Micawber visiting Dickens House and trying to find his way through some 4,000 books (of which 40% are criticism of Dickens' work) and some 5,000 items offprints, photocopies of articles, papers and miscellanea. Would the *Dickens House Classification* (DHC) be of any help to him? Or would he rather have to rely on his infallible optimism of the "something will turn up"-kind?

In a three-year project Kevin Harris designed a scheme to classify the collection of Dickens House, that is to say, the classification is supposed to be serving both library and museum purposes. To call the DHC scheme elaborate would be an understatement. The tables run to almost 58 closely printed A4 pages. The printed display of DHC cannot be exhaustive, however. For DHC is a faceted classification, based on the 2nd edition of *Bliss Bibliographic Classification*, and the schedules allow for a possibly infinite variety of compound classes.

DHC has five major sections, comprising

- (a) common divisions - as to form (00-99), chronology of Dickens' life and writings (b-y), language, time (B), and place (C),
- (b) background to Dickens studies (D-G)
- (c) Dickens' biography (H-L),
- (d) criticism of appreciation of Dickens' writings (M-X)
- (e) writings of Dickens himself (Z).

Each section has numerous sub-sections, all being arranged enumeratively. There are brief introductory remarks to every section, complemented by detailed instructions on the use of most features of individual classes. It remains to be seen whether all this is indeed sufficient to support subsequent adaptation of DHC on other than Dickensian collections. A more generous display of examples would certainly be welcome to users outside Dickens House. The DHC notation is of the ordinal and non-hierarchical type; combinations of upper and lower case letters as well as digits (for form divisions) are being employed, placing, for instance, an investigation into the burlesque in *Pickwick Papers* at classmark Xf Vkf (X = individual work, f = *Pickwick Papers*, Vkf = Burlesque), a copy of *Pickwick Papers* at Zf, and a study of the burlesque in all of Dickens' works, in turn, at Vkf. It is not exactly helpful to have notations without a mnemotechnic device in a subject area dealing prominently with literary works, the titles of which would readily serve as a basis for more "telling" notations than f for *Pickwick Papers*. The f, by the way, results from an alphabetical representation of the chronology of Dickens' works. This may be appropriate for a special library such as Dickens House, but it will hardly be useful in a public library environment. Having said that, it must be acknowledged that Mr. Harris is well aware of the peculiarities of DHC notations which in his opinion need not necessarily be accepted by librarians adapting

DHC (p.13). For "Jewish stereotype characteristics of Fagin", therefore, something more indicative than Xg Sx FAG Ncnqvhj may be found (p.50). Since Dickens studies are, apparently, a thriving industry, hospitality is of paramount importance in DHC; although it seems difficult to think of additional subjects in the "Background to Dickens studies"-section. Something may turn up, though.

Anyone familiar with the unsatisfactory literature sections in universal classifications and the Babel of critical tongues will probably find the section on "study & appreciation of the writings of Charles Dickens" the most challenging feature of DHC. After all, DHC caters for both the general, often appreciative books and the highly specialized scholarly article. Mr. Harris points out that despite its focus on Dickens studies, "it seems likely that this section represents the most detailed classification available in literature studies" (p.8). It certainly is detailed, but a glance at classified glossaries of literary terms (e.g. by Rutkowski) reveals DHC to be biased towards fiction (quite naturally so) and lacking the terms of genre theory required from a comprehensive classification. All the same, DHC, as it now stands, is quite a decisive terminological step ahead of other library minded classifications.

Access to the classified schedules is facilitated by an alphabetical index. Albeit a simplified one, without cross-references and compound classes as well as providing only a limited number of scope notes, this index seems essential to retrieve DHC classified items. As for the use of DHC in its printed version: it is impaired by poor printing quality (introduction) and a somewhat fuzzy layout (classification). The latter does without bold print, italics, varying print sizes or other common word processing features, which would improve the handling of DHC considerably.

To assess the feasibility of DHC seems difficult. A first sight, the present ratio of DHC subsections and the number of items actually classified in Dickens House seems a little odd. But then, DHC was obviously designed to be a model classification applicable to literary authors in general, which would also explain for the very detailed schedule. Given the understandable limitations of DHC (being one concrete example of the classifying structure developed by Mr. Harris), further adaptations are likely to be successful if the present structure of literary terminology is accepted, details superfluous in a decidedly Dickensian approach are added, and a more appealing notational system is adopted.

Heiner Schnelling

Dr. H. Schnelling, Universitätsbibliothek der FU Berlin,
Garystr. 39, D-1000 Berlin 33

CHAN, Lois Mai; RICHMOND, Phyllis A.; SVENONIUS, Elaine (Eds.): *Theory of Subject Analysis. A Source Book*. Littleton, CO: Libraries Unlimited 1985. XV, 419p. ISBN 0-87287-489-3

This multiple-author anthology collects classic, seminal, and trail-blazing writings on classification, indexing, and related areas, written between 1885 and 1982. This is a period during which classification grew from infancy to the maturity of a full discipline and

assimilated many new areas in the process. Now it stands much expanded. Subject analysis includes many subsidiary topics in its folds and remains at once the means and the end in itself. Classification has come of age, as Eric de Grolier is wont to say. The book under review is both a cause and effect, a proof and a result of this growth of our discipline. Professional literature always being central to any profession, such a source book is a milestone in itself. Two decades ago there arose a similar book: R.K.Olding, *Readings in Library Catalogue* (Melbourne: F.W.Sheshire 1966. X,278p.). That work of vision included some stimulating and perennial writings in classification and cataloguing. The book under review furthers that work by extending the line but defining the area of purview more precisely. The present work has been undertaken on a large scale and at a higher professional level. The motive is ulterior, being more than compiling a mere anthology. It holds up a mirror to the development of the subject.

These 30 writings - the editors count it 31 - are by 33 authors. Three discrete writings on the same subject by one author (Julia Pettee) have been counted as one. Of these 30 writings, three cases are of joint authorship - hence 33 authors. And one is a case of corporate authorship. In such areas the fact of collaboration is a significant trend. It shows the objectivity so necessary in science. The range of this collection varies from Dewey's introduction to the second edition of the DDC to indexing through facet analysis and PRECIS. A subject analysis of the contents is as follows:

Topic	Number of Items	%
Indexing	11	36.7
Classification	8	26.7
Subject Headings	5	16.6
Philosophical Studies	4	13.3
Information Retrieval	2	6.7
	30	100.0

This itself speaks of the widened scope, wherein traditional classification occupies only 1/4th (26.7%) of the contents.

The authors, a galaxy of the best brains in the field, are mathematicians, linguists, computer specialists, and library and information scientists:

Academic leanings of the authors	Number of Items	%
Library or Inform.Scientists	23	68.7
Mathematicians/Scientists	4	12.1
Computer Specialists	3	9.1
Philosophers	2	6.1
Linguists	1	3.0
	33	100.0

Correlating a part of subject and the author tables we see that 2 philosophers (6.1% of the contributors) have made 4 (13.3%) of the total contributions. 19 items on Classification and Subject Headings - a forte of traditional librarians - making 63.4% of the contributions, are by 23 (69.7%) of the total authors. This, however, is not to say that librarians and information scientists have only written on classification and subject headings.

As declared by the editors, the selection in this collection is based on a questionnaire. Further criteria for selection, where choice was possible, have been unambiguously described in the preface. These are theoretical emphasis and historical importance. Selection of writings to portray history in action as well as the current state of the art is indeed a difficult task. Every such selection inherently or logically leaves much to be desired. Regretfully, India, a bastion of classification - has been poorly represented with a small piece by S.R.Ranganathan on facet analysis. That is neither adequate nor representative. More seriously, Ranganathan's 'so influential chain indexing, which won him much acclaim, finds no room in this otherwise stately mansion. But this could not obliterate the abiding presence of Ranganathan, the largest single influence in the field. In the name index he has far more entries than any other individual. There is hardly any bibliography without reference to him. He is simply indispensable. Nor is there any trace of POPSI by India's G.Bhattacharyya. I.Dahlberg and her theory of conceptual classification make a visible vacuum. Another most eligible candidate for this anthology could be the Soviet scheme, the BBK.

Agreed that some intended contributions could not be included for want of space or permission to reprint. But the compilers could complete the desired picture by naming such writings. In any case, one readily suspects that had the book come from the U.K. or Germany the picture would have been different. A study of the origin of various writings is as follows:

Country	Number of Items	%
USA	17	56.7
UK	10	33.3
Other European Countries	2	6.6
India	1	3.4
	30	100.0

America outdistances the rest of the countries, with more than half the contributions. It may be as much due to the editor's attempt to widen the scope of the anthology as to their American bias in selection, since Americans have written mostly on indexing and automatic classification. Their lack of interest in the theory of conventional classification is fairly counterbalanced by their copious work in areas of vocabulary control and thesaurus.

One of the *raison d'être* of compiling this anthology is that most of these writings are not easily available, being disparately scattered over time and in different media. The source analysis gives the following picture:

Source	Number of Items	%
Books	12	40.0
Journals	11	36.7
Conferences/Institutes	7	23.3
	30	100.0

(This classification of sources is not very rigid as some of the items are already published twice in different media). A chronological split shows the following distribution:

Period	Number of Items	%
Up to 1949	9	30.0
1950-1959	7	23.3
1960-1969	10	33.3
1970-1979	3	10.0
1980-1982	1	3.4
	30	100.0

The editors' idea of obscurity in respect to time or parent sources of three writings is hardly borne out by these two tables. Nevertheless, this source book has its own numerous advantages. It is highly welcome of its own: its beauty justifies its existence. Instant accessibility and historical value are two other major advantages.

The arrangement of material is chronological. It is both easy and helpful. Subject approach has been provided through a meticulous subject index given at the end along with an equally valuable name index. Chronological arrangement allows the reader "to explore the genesis and development of some of the most significant ideas in the field". In the above chronological split we see that the 1960's decade (10% of the period covered) is alone responsible for one third of the total contributions. This was the decade of the Elsinore Conference (1965) when classification studies per se were in their heydays. The Elsinore Conference and the *Sayers Memorial Volume* (1961) have made two contributions each for this highly select anthology. This speaks of the importance of these two sources as well as of their period. Some of the other writings are papers presented at Conferences such as Dorking (1957), Ottawa (1972), and Augsburg (1982). One wonders if there was no enduring and worthwhile paper at the Bombay Conference (1975)?

Every chapter is prefaced by a succinct and encapsulating note on the life and work of each of the authors presenting very lucidly the essence of the essay that follows. The editors have not exhibited equal familiarity with every author. Nevertheless, it remains a very valuable feature of the book. It is ventured to suggest that these prefatory essays be expanded and published as a separate book on the lives and works of subject analysts. The suggested byproduct work may add another dimension to the literature on subject analysis, as does this present work.

There is no question of reviewing the contents - a cross section of the best in the field. All the authors are big wigs, safe in the citadel of their beliefs. And like Caesar's wife they are above criticism (suspicion). All these writings have had indelible influence on the theory and practice of subject analysis. "These illuminate the past and point towards the future trends." This documentary book portrays the picture of the subject in its various developments, stages, and ramifications. However, the editors have not given their own assessment of the development of the subject. They have not drawn any overview from the book. It seems left to the chroniclers and scholars of the field to draw their own picture and conclusions. The editors, some of the noted U.S. luminaries in the field, have fruitfully joined hands to produce a document of enduring value. It is likely to facilitate and stimulate further research in the field. Speaking from the production angle it seems one of the

best books published anywhere in our discipline. Will anyone from the Western World confirm my limited experience from a Third World Country?

M.P.Satija

Department of Library and Information Science
Guru Nanak Dev University. Amritsar 143005, India

COCHRANE, Pauline A.: *Redesign of Catalogs and Indexes for Improved Online Subject Access: Selected Papers of Pauline A.Cochrane*. Phoenix, AZ: Oryx Press 1985. XII,484p., ISBN 0-89774-158-7

In 1986 Pauline A. Cochrane received for this book and "because of her many contributions to the field of classification throughout the last 25 years" the "Ranganathan Award for Classification Research" from the Committee on Classification Research of the International Federation for Documentation (FID/CR).

The book contains 30 contributions. 13 are journal articles, two are chapters from books, and the remaining are conference papers, parts of reports, and previously unpublished papers, written between 1961 and 1984.

The book is organized in five parts. The first part is on the design of catalogues and indexes. It starts with a contribution (written in 1965) on the question of compatibility of authority files for known-item searches and for subject access, a problem that still is not solved for subject access. The other contributions in this part all deal with the question which characteristics a good online catalogue should have. Cochrane always has stressed the point that subject access is important, not only for information retrieval systems, but for catalogues too. The emphasis in catalogue automation should not be on duplication of the methods used in the good old card catalogue, with its main entries and authority lists of personal and corporate names and subject headings. They are important and should not be abandoned, but for the online catalogue "subject access and retrieval of information" should be a child of "library automation and computerized information retrieval". For Cochrane this means that the structure of library catalogue records has to be redesigned for searching. The best features of the card catalogue and the printed indexes, combined with many new features made possible by the new technologies, will make online catalogues that attract users and satisfy their needs. In 1983 Cochrane wrote the last paragraph of this part: "The challenge for the library profession now is not how to convert card catalogs to online catalogs, but how to convert unifunctional catalogs into multifunctional catalogs where known-item and topical-subject searches can both be successfully completed".

The second part of the book deals with the user. The main theme is: let designers of online catalogues listen to the researchers who have found out how library catalogues are used and who tell us which problems users have. The part starts with 50 pages taken from Cochrane's lectures in India in 1973 on catalogue use studies, followed by two review articles on the same topic. The main finding of the research on online catalogues is, that with an online catalogue (or interactive catalogue, the