Personalia

Interview

Interview: Barbara Tillett

Barbara Tillett

You are renowned for your longstanding work on cataloging. How did you personally get interested in this field, what are milestones in your career?

I guess interest in cataloging is a natural progression from my education as a mathematician. I like to explore universes that follow rules and to see how things can be organized and categorized and to follow all of the various relationships among things in those universes. I am intrigued by languages and the complexities of conveying information in various notations and the challenges that brings to organizing and sharing information.

Milestones apart from the jobs I have held over the past 33 years are

— getting a Ph. D. (a personal intellectual challenge);

— getting what to me is the perfect job at the Library of Congress (a career opportunity that enables me to make great use of my experience as a manager, a researcher, a cataloger, and a leader, and to work with some of the best minds in the business);

— my various work in professional organizations and publishing (a chance to give back to the profession); and

— numerous opportunities to learn about other cultures and people from my work-related travels (a personal pleasure).

What are your present responsibilities as Head of the Library of Congress's Cataloging Policy and Support Office?

I manage the Cataloging Policy and Support Office (CPSO), about 50 people responsible for various authoritative cataloging tools, including *LC Rule Interpretations* (interpretation and guidance related to the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules*), *Library of Congress Classification* schedules, *Library of Congress Subject Headings*, and other cataloging documentation, such as the *Cataloging Service Bulletin*, *Descriptive Cataloging Manual*, *Subject Cataloging Manual*, etc.; and for maintenance of bibliographic, holdings, item, classification, and authority records both in the Library's integrated library system and distributed worldwide. As Chief of CPSO, I am the chief formulator of cataloging policy

within the Library of Congress, as well as the Library of Congress representative on the Joint Steering Committee for Revision of the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules,* and I represent the Library on the American Library Association's Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access. As head of the national office for cataloging policy and authoritative spokesperson for such policy, I provide counsel, instruction, and interpretation of policy and practice to catalogers and librarians anywhere in the United States or in foreign countries. I also co-chair the Library's Metadata Policy Group.

In which way do you think the rise of metadata will influence cataloging practice and cataloging rules in libraries?

I hope it is the other way around! Metadata is appearing from many sources to address specific customized needs and there is very little standardization as different communities experiment, particularly in digital libraries and the Internet environment. Libraries have a rich history of cooperation and have developed structures for what is being called descriptive metadata that bring rules for consistent application and provide the basic order and elements to present (through the International Standards for Bibliographic Description). I think the digital materials themselves have a greater influence on our re-examination of cataloging rules than »metadata.« Digital forms of issuance challenge cataloging rules that were developed with more stable modes of issuance, that had relatively stable chief sources for information (title pages, first issues of serials, etc.) compared to the possibility of ever changing description and content on Web pages.

You hold the Chair of the IFLA Section on Cataloging and are a member of the Joint Steering Committee for the revision of Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules. Which role do metadata play in these functions for you?

The IFLA Cataloguing Section has a Working Group on the Uses of Metadata Schema. Their report is expected this year that examines several major metadata schema in use today and provides crosswalks between them. They find that the schemes tend toward a minimalist approach, providing a minimal set of descriptive elements that enable resource discovery (FRBR's »find« objective), but ignore other user tasks to identify, select, obtain, and relate one work to another. It is important to stay informed about what is developing within metadata users' communities, and it is hoped that those communities can benefit from the rich traditions and consistent practices of cataloging, while we in the cataloging world learn of new technological capabilities.

The Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records confirm the importance of the basic objectives of a library catalog to support the finding and collocation functions and basic user tasks (find, identity, select, and obtain). Recent research by OCLC has shown that more than 80 % of their 45 million record WorldCat database represent a single manifestation for a single work. Less than 20 % then have multiple manifestations for or multiple expressions of a work. This translates into possibly doing less authority work other than to assure names of persons, corporate bodies, and works are uniquely identified, saving more complete authority work for when there are second or third manifestations. FRBR also provides the underlying model of the bibliographic universe that is helpful to some catalogers and to system designers of the future. FRBR provides more precise vocabulary and confirms the importance of indicating bibliographic relationships in order to meet user needs. For all of these reasons the Joint Steering Committee for Revision of the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules intends for AACR 3 to incorporate FRBR terminology and concepts.

FRBR already has influenced applications in other communities, such as the work of rights management and publishing communities in their development of <indecs> and ONIX. Certainly the developers of Dublin Core are aware of FRBR. However, metadata schemas are developing within specific user communities often with a very practical approach to meet local needs and would benefit from implementing cataloging standards (even at a minimal level) for the content of descriptive information (both description and controlled access points) included with digital materials.

How will AACR change and what developments are to be expected according to your assessment? How will metadata and FRBR influence the development of AACR?

There is a strategic plan for AACR 3 that should be available on the Web soon. No dramatic changes to the rules are intended, but rather reorganization of the code for a more logical approach and the incorporation of material that we feel catalogers would find helpful.

We intend to increase background information in the general introduction to identify the principles behind the rules – we always say AACR is based on principles but we never said what the specific principles are, but now we will. We will give more description of FRBR and its concepts, vocabulary, and user tasks. We will also give more guidance on decisions that a cataloger must make before starting to catalog an item. For example, at what level should the cataloging be done – at the collection level: i.e., treat the item as a part of a collection of works; at the level of the item itself; or at the component part level, i.e., to analyze the individual parts of the item? Then decisions on the modes of issuance: monograph, integrating resource, or serial. And also decisions on when to make new records where there are changes in various iterations, editions, expressions, or manifestations of a work. Information on the completeness of a bibliographic record (a brief »first level of description,« a more complete »second level of description,« and the most full »third level of description«) will continue to be provided. We can only hope that metadata provided with future digital objects will give as much information as title pages now do, but consider that title pages have evolved over many centuries and digital descriptive metadata and headers containing such metadata are only barely starting to develop.

Then for Part 1 of AACR that is now Description, we plan to rearrange the chapters and move more of the general rules into chapter 1 for increased consistency across the various classes of material.

Part 2, which is now »Headings, Uniform Titles, and References,« would focus on »Choice of Entry« and hopefully include more about bibliographic relationships.

A new Part 3 would focus on »Authority Control« to cover form of entry and reference structures.

The appendices would remain much as now, but moving the Glossary to the end.

Which differences between cataloging rules in Germany (RAK) and the US or Anglo-American world (AACR 2) are particularly problematic from your point of view?

I do not know specific details of RAK and would leave that to your experts in Germany who are knowledgeable on this topic. I know that many changes have been recommended and made over the past decade that help bring the codes closer together. I am sure AACR 2 could benefit from discussions of specific rules needed for publishing practices and bibliographic conventions used in Germany, and I look forward to such sharing of ideas during the forthcoming IFLA Meeting of Experts on an International Cataloguing Code to be held in Frankfurt at the Deutsche Bibliothek this July.

You were chosen to conceive and successfully implement the Integrated Library System (ILS) for the Library

of Congress. You received the Flemming Award for this achievement in 1996. What were the difficulties you encountered, what are you particularly proud of?
Certainly the magnitude of the implementation was a great challenge. We were not sure any commercial system could »scale up« to handle a library collection as large as ours (the largest library in the world). We had over 3,000 staff to train and had to install thousands of new PCs and a new operating system (Windows on the clients and Oracle on the servers). The traditional

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Zur Person

Barbara B. Tillett

➤ **Education**

1987	Ph.D.	University of California, Los Angeles
1970	M.L.S.	University of Hawaii, Honolulu
1968	B.A. (Mathematics)	Old Dominion College, Norfolk, Va.

➤ **Professional Employment**

Mar. 1994–	Chief, Cataloging Policy and Support Office	Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Aug. 25, 1997– Aug. 5, 2001	Director, ILS Program (Integrated Library System)	Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
Feb. 2000– Feb. 2001	Interim Director for Electronic Resources	Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.
1987–Feb. 1994	Head, Catalog Dept., Central University Library	University of California, San Diego
May 1993	Consultant on Cataloging Process and Organization	University Libraries, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa
1993	Consultant on Designing a Courseware Database and Record Format	University of the World San Diego, California
1997–1997	Co-Consultant on IFLA FRBR	IFLA Standing Committee for the Section on Cataloguing, Study Group on FRBR
1992	Consultant on Authority Control System Specifications	Colorado Alliance of Research Libraries Denver, Colorado
Spring 1990 and 1991	Adjunct Professor, »LT 2 and LT 110, Library Technical Processes«	Palomar Community College San Marcos, California
May 16,1989	Instructor, »Basic Descriptive Cataloging«	AJ Seminars, San Diego, California
Apr. 13,1989	Instructor, »AACR 2, 1988 Revision« Intensive seminar on changes since 1978	AJ Seminars, San Diego, California
Fall 1987	Visiting Assistant Professor, GSLIS 410 »Descriptive Cataloging«	Graduate School of Library &Information Science UCLA
1977–87	Director of Technical Services	University of California, San Diego Scripps Institution of Oceanography Library
1979	Co-consultant on planning a library for the proposed Lewes Marine Studies Complex	University of Delaware, College of Marine Studies
1976–77	OCLC System Coordinator	University of California, San Diego University Libraries
1973–76	Head, Technical Services	University of California, San Diego Scripps Institution of Oceanography Library
1970–73	Reference Librarian, Science & Technology and Director, Ocean Science Information Center and Head, Serials Editing/Conversion Project	University of Hawaii, Hamilton Graduate Research Library
1969/70	Bibliographic Analyst and Programmer Tsunami Document Retrieval System (IBM)	University of Hawaii, Hawaii Institute of Geophysics, Joint Tsunami Research Effort

approach at the Library of Congress had been very autonomous units working independently, so to bring in an integrated system that everyone was to use took a major paradigm shift. Over 500 staff were directly involved in the implementation, which improved acceptance of the new system. It succeeded because the very top management people in the Library were completely supportive and made it clear this was the Library's top priority during the implementation. I am extremely proud of the implementation team and the fact that we were able to implement the system on time and within budget, which is almost never heard of in the federal government.

How will MARC 21 change in your opinion?
MARC 21 has always been a constantly evolving format and will certainly continue to evolve. There are new ways to package it, such as MARC XML that may make it easier to use in the Internet environment.

Will XML and RDF influence MARC 21? What do you believe to be the advantages or possible problems of markup formats for libraries?
XML and RDF offer new ways to package MARC 21 and an XML DTD for MARC 21 enables search engines on the Internet to include library catalogs and resources in their searches. The infrastructure and software should make this transparent to catalogers and librarians.

In 1989, you published a book on »Authority control in the online environment«. What is your vision of the future of authority files? Will they play a role in a future semantic web?
I have written about authority control since the 1970's and it is indeed a favorite topic of mine. At the recent International Conference on Authority Control in Florence, Italy, I spoke about my vision for the future of authority control, noting that libraries have authority files that we can contribute as building blocks to the future »Semantic Web« infrastructure to help improve precision on online searching on a global scale. We also have the great opportunity with today's technologies to create a »Virtual International Authority File« that would link the authority records for the same entities and provide access to all the records in national or regional authority files. There are many models for how that might be done, and we are experimenting with one such model in a VIAF Project with the Library of Congress, Die Deutsche Bibliothek, and OCLC. The idea is that such a resource would be available for catalogers as they create new bibliographic and authority records and eventually would be available

as a switching mechanism to display to the end user the language and script they prefer for the controlled forms of names.

You mentioned the VIAF project between the Library of Congress, OCLC, and Germany's DDB. What are your hopes for this project? Are there other international partners you could visualize for similar projects and why?
The current VIAF Project is a wonderful opportunity to test the viability of retrospectively linking two large authority files for personal names 1) to see how much machine-matching can be done, 2) to test the OAI (Open Archive Initiative) protocols for harvesting metadata from the respective national authority files for daily maintenance, 3) to test cataloger support with automatic accessing of the VIAF as a by-product of normal cataloging operations, and 4) a future stage providing end user support for switching displays of controlled names. If this proves viable, it is hoped that it would form the basis for a true virtual international authority file that would link all of the major authority files worldwide. There are many machine-readable authority files that would be candidates, including the HKCAN (Hong Kong Chinese Authorities Names), and authority files at ICCU in Italy, and at other national libraries in Europe such as the Bibliothèque nationale de France, the National Library of Portugal, National Library of Spain, and National Library of Belgium, to name a few.

What are the main functional requirements for a VIAF from your point of view?
Before function, the philosophical premise is that authority records enable controlled access through the grouping of authorized and variant forms of names and that users can select their preferred display form or a library can establish a default form for general display to users of their catalog. The VIAF would be a resource for these controlled forms.

The functionality around this resource hopefully would be automatic searching for catalogers as a by-product of their local system's cataloging module that would enable a cataloger to then select authority information from available resources worldwide and incorporate what they wished into the local system.

First there would be a one-time retrospective matching of records to link them when the different authority files contained records for the same entity – to link them for greater precision of searching. A by-product of this step would be an automatic assignment of a control number for the record for a specific entity (»bibliographic identity«) and that control

number could be used in many ways in local or global systems.

Another functional capability would be the automatic maintenance of the links through use of a standard protocol, such as OAI, to harvest essential metadata from the authority records and keep the information shared internationally up-to-date, hopefully in real time as changes were made at each national or regional authority file.

A future functionality would be to enable end-users to set their preferred language/script in order to use the library authority files as one of the infrastructure components on the Semantic Web to display the form they prefer while providing controlled access through the linked authority records and associated bibliographic records.

What is your view on metadata as a means for the preservation of electronic resources? Which measures are being taken at the LOC in this regard?
Preservation of electronic resources is a huge issue that is being funded, at least in the United States, by the United States federal government through the National Digital Information Infrastructure Preservation Program (NDIIPP) managed at the Library of Congress. In a few more years we should have some answers to your question. The preservation metadata requirements are being proposed and tested and the Library of Congress, through our Office of Strategic Initiatives, is the lead agency coordinating this massive program within the United States and with partners worldwide.

Ms. Tillett, thank you for the interview.
The questions were posed by Sabine Baumann.

Regina Peeters

Menschen in Bibliotheken – Menschen für Bibliotheken

Menschen

Am 1. Juni 2003 hat **Dr. Joachim Ott** die Leitung der Abteilung Handschriften und Sondersammlungen an der Thüringer Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Jena übernommen. Der promovierte Historiker arbeitete zuvor mehrere Jahre als Handschriftenbearbeiter der Deutschen Forschungsgemeinschaft an den Handschriftenzentren der Stadt- und Universitätsbibliothek Frankfurt am Main und an der Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preußischer Kulturbesitz für die Universitätsbibliothek Gießen und die Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Düsseldorf.

Joachim Ott

Nach Beschluss der Deutschen Literaturkonferenz wird **Dr. Regina Peeters**, die Leiterin der Spezialbibliothek des Europäischen Übersetzer-Kollegiums in Straelen und stellvertretende Geschäftsführerin, am 24. Oktober dieses Jahres mit der Karl-Preusker-Medaille 2003 ausgezeichnet. Die Deutsche Literaturkonferenz möchte damit das hohe Engagement von Regina Peeters würdigen, mit dem sie die Bibliothek in Straelen zu einer in der Welt wohl einmaligen Spezialbibliothek für literarische Übersetzer ausgebaut und entwickelt hat. Die undotierte Medaille ist dem Andenken an Karl Benjamin Preusker (1786–1871) gewidmet, der am 24. Oktober 1828 im sächsischen Großenhain die 1. Bürgerbibliothek gründete. Ein Interview mit Regina Peeters ist für ZfBB in Heft 1–2004 geplant.

Ihre Meldungen für »Menschen in Bibliotheken – Menschen für Bibliotheken« senden Sie bitte an martina.leibold@gmx.de

Geburtstage