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Media Minder / AV Cataloging

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Media Minder

AV Cataloging

Column Editor: **Linda F. Crismond**
(Vice President for Public Relations,
Professional Media Service Corp.)

Did you ever wonder why that stack of videos which were so hard to buy are still sitting in a corner of the Catalog Department? Is the AV section of the cataloging training manual the longest? Does the absence of cataloging mean less access to and usage of the audio and video collections?

AV cataloging is more complex than book cataloging, and it is not readily available from the Library of Congress. There is no Cataloging in Publication (CIP) on the audio or video boxes. Thus, virtually all AV items must get original cataloging.

While books have eye-readable information, title pages, page numbers, jackets, and frequently annotations or blurbs, AV materials, especially video, require supplementary viewing, listening, and timing equipment. Proper cataloging procedure requires that catalogers spend a minimum of 10-15 minutes with each video. They must remove it from its container, insert it into a VCR or laserdisc player, and project it through a video monitor. They must transcribe required information, fast-forwarding to the end of the program to obtain timing and credits, and view portions of the program to get content information for summaries. All credits must be transcribed to paper before being typed into the computer. For an audio item, the cataloging data can appear in many places, all of which must be checked — labels, containers, booklets, and publishers' catalogs.

An AV record requires the extra MARC computer fields, 007 and 538. These fields describe the physical nature of the AV item and must be coded with fourteen different data elements for each item cataloged. (Data includes whether an item is stereo or mono, color or black and white, 1/2" or 1/4", etc.) These fields also indicate the playing equipment required by the user.

AV catalogers must use the special 008 MARC computer field to describe technique (live action, animated, etc.), musical type of composition (symphony, ballet, rock, etc.) or supplementary ma-

terial (booklets, guides, etc.). Further, they need to transcribe and code the publisher (catalog) numbers and the uniform product code (UPC). These items appear in the MARC 028, 037, and 024 fields and are unique to AV materials.

Many AV materials, especially educational videos, do not have an ISBN. After all, they are not books. And, when the publisher is in the practice of assigning ISBNs, AV can often have more than one. Most children's audio-with-book kits (read alongs) have a minimum of two ISBNs, and frequently more, each of which must be manually transcribed. Supplementary material for both video and audio records may also have ISBNs which must be transcribed.

AV cataloging practices dictate summary notes for all spoken word and all video titles (because a video cannot be browsed), and full contents for all music titles (each song must be listed). Book cataloging rules do not require summaries or full contents notes chapter by chapter. While the Library of Congress does provide summaries for most children's book fiction titles, this is readily available in the CIP information. Again, there is no CIP for AV, so this data must be composed by the cataloger and manually entered into the computer cataloging record.

AV has more access points than books. Books usually have only one or two authors and perhaps an illustrator. And they have only one title. Many audio music recordings include works by multiple composers. Each of these composers requires an added entry, increasing the authority work required of the cataloger. For video records, the cataloging rules require that the cataloger make a note citing: producers, production companies, directors, screenwriters, editors, graphic designers, art direction, editors, cinematographer, music and consultants, as well as a separate note for cast and narrators. All of these persons' names must be checked on the screen and are often found at the end of the video program, requiring fast-forwarding of every title. Many videos are also

based on books, and these original authors and titles must be mentioned in separate notes and traced. Also, many videos contain multiple works, requiring added tracing for the extra authors and titles. Tracings are required for cast, director, narrators, and (distinctly different from the books) the video publisher.

All of these extra tracings require authority work to ensure that the names are consistent with the Library of Congress authorities. Many AV items are issued with varying titles on the containers, title frames, spines, and pamphlets, all of which must be transcribed, computer-coded, and traced. Naturally all those extra titles and tracings make for very long cataloging records and usually result in two-card sets. As an example, the average book record in OCLC contains approximately 750 bytes of data (based on figures from a few years ago). The average record in Professional Media's AV cataloging database is over 1,000 bytes, or 1/3 larger.

Supplementary material is often part of an AV package. This supplementary material must be computer-coded in the MARC 008 and 300 fields and have extra notes added to the bibliographic record. Further, books are single units and require a single machine (MARC) record. Many AV titles are sold as sets and require multiple cataloging records for full description. For example, SVE's holiday set, usually ordered as a single title, has three videos, each on a separate holiday. Each volume must, therefore, be cataloged and processed separately.

All of this detail dramatically illustrates the complexity of AV cataloging. It leaves the library with three choices. They can spend a lot of time training AV catalogers to produce complete MARC records. Or they can do minimal or no cataloging and simply accession the material. The third alternative is to use a commercial source to supply the cataloging record with the material.

In considering the costs, it is safe to say that the cost of an audio or video cataloging record is at least double the amount spent to create a record for a

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Library gopher server and is available to all members of the Woods Hole scientific community.

An acquisitions system is a little like serials; it changes and it continues. There are a number of issues which need to be addressed in coming years. First, the Library is working toward becoming more proactive in its acquisitions rather than reactive. Instead of buying monographs because a scientist specifically requests them, we need to actively solicit recommendations and aggressively search for titles to acquire. Because our subject areas are at once extremely broad and extremely narrow, it is difficult to define approval plans and standing orders, except for a few clearly relevant series. However, active searching of *Books in Print* and publishers' catalogs would be useful, as will our new, departmental liaisons. The Library will also, this year, be picking a few subject areas in which to strengthen the collection by active buying. If this works as we hope it will, it could be extended to additional areas.

It would also be good if, in the future, we can find a way to utilize more fully the capabilities of our DRA acquisitions module. The software has the capability for electronic ordering, either directly to the vendor's computer in BISAC format, or via electronic mail, as well as the ability to print standard purchase orders and claims for items not received. How-

ever, under current institutional procurement procedures, the Library is not free to utilize these capabilities independently of the institutional purchasing departments. WHOI's procurement procedures are currently undergoing modification and are likely to become more decentralized through the use of new software. Perhaps this decentralization will eventually enable the Library to use the DRA acquisitions module directly for purchasing and then transfer the information into the WHOI accounting system. Of course, this all depends a great deal on government audit requirements and the necessity for full accountability for institutional spending.

As we have continued to implement our DRA system, we have been placing more of our peripheral collections into CLAMS. We need to continue this process until all MBL and WHOI library resources are fully searchable in a single database. This implies that all Library acquisitions would enter the system via the acquisitions module at the time of ordering, not just a portion of them as at

present. This also would enhance the utility of the database. In addition to Library resources, it would be a major enhancement to the database if all the desk reference acquisitions information now in the acquisitions librarians' dBase files could somehow be included in the CLAMS database so that staff could be aware of each other's resources as well as those of the Library itself. This will be a difficult situation to work out since these items are considered as references for specific staff, rather than for the institution at large. In addition, we need to be able to keep these non-Library items private from the greater CLAMS community of our non-MBL/WHOI partner libraries. Perhaps implementation of MFHL will show us a way to do it in a fair and equitable manner.

As you can see, our world of interlocking circles and spiders' webs is as interesting as it is complex. It makes for interesting challenges in all aspects of librarianship, but it also makes for a lot of fun. ☞

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book. Further, there is a higher percentage of original cataloging since copy is not available from the Library of Congress or as CIP on the material. Abbreviated cataloging is less effort, but full access to the material is sacrificed. Commercial cataloging becomes the most economical alternative since the cost of the original cataloging is spread across a number of uses. ☞

I am grateful to Linda Hansen, Professional Media's head cataloger and the former Head of Cataloging at the University of Southern California, who provided many of the technical details for this column. — LC

Diana Seymour

Diana Woods Seymour, head of Dartmouth College Library's Acquisitions Department and a Dartmouth librarian for more than 30 years, died Feb. 27 at age 61 after a week-long illness.

Diana Seymour joined Baker Library in 1955 as a librarian in the Catalog Department, after receiving a bachelor's degree from Wheaton College and a master's degree in library science from Simmons College. She left Dartmouth in 1958 to become a reference librarian in the Stamford (Conn.) Public Library, returning to Baker in 1960 as a serials cataloger. During the 1960s Diana led the conversion of Dartmouth's library collection from the Dewey Decimal to the Library of Congress classification system.

In 1976 she was appointed Head of Acquisitions for the Dartmouth College Library system. During her tenure, copy cataloging became part of the Acquisitions Department, monographic approval plans were implemented, and the Acquisitions Department became fully automated. For many years she coordinated the Alumni Memorial Book Program, which provided an important source of support for the Library's collection development program. She was a regular attendee at the Charleston Conference, rarely missing a meeting since the 3rd Annual Conference in 1983.

The Library has established an endowed library acquisitions fund as a memorial to Ms. Seymour. Contributions may be sent to Dartmouth College Library, c/o Claire Packard, 115 Baker Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH 03755.

— **John James** (Dartmouth College Library) ☞