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## Regina Reynolds, Head, National Serials Data Program, Library of Congress

Editor

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## Profiles Encouraged:

**Regina Romano Reynolds, Head,  
National Serials Data Program,  
Library of Congress (rrey@loc.gov)**

**Early on:** I was born in Norristown, Pa, a northern suburb of Philadelphia, because my hometown, Ambler, was too small for its own hospital.

**Background:** I'm first-generation Italian on both sides.

**Education:** 8 years parochial school; 4 years Catholic girls' high school; 4 years, University of Dayton, Dayton, Ohio (B.A. English, French); 1 year, University of Michigan (A.M.L.S.).

**And then:** First job: (before an intended grad school sojourn to pursue further study in English) technical librarian for a small electronics research & development firm outside Philadelphia. This was in 1969. One of the topics for which I was asked to do a literature search was "modems," a term I'd never heard before and didn't hear again until the 1980's!

**There's more:** I met my husband when he came into the library to do some research, and, one week after our honeymoon we were both laid off when the company was taken over by Magnavox. Eventually I got a job as a "junior cataloger" at Penn State. I put my husband through a B.A. at Penn State, through a year at Villanova law school while I worked as Assistant Archivist for the Insurance Company of North America, and through an M.A. and M.L.S. at the University of Michigan. Finally, all my library work paid off when I was offered a scholarship towards my own M.L.S., which I received in 1976.

**And even more:** Linda Bartley, former head of NSDP, recruited me right out of library school to work at NSDP where I have remained ever since, moving from cataloger, to assistant head, to head in 1992. Obviously, I enjoy working with the publishing and information communities which NSDP serves!

**Family:** A 13-year old daughter, Elizabeth (Liz to her innumerable phone callers) and a keyboard-hopping cat, Pandora.

**Pastimes:** Trying to make the perfect loaf of crusty, Italian bread; writing poetry and dreaming of getting it published; ethnic cooking (my latest undertaking was a dish from *Like Water For Chocolate*); greeting card design, and editing a family history written by my late mother and her sister.

**Pet peeves:** Computer printers (every one I touch seems in urgent need of an exorcism); vacuum cleaners (and the recurring need to use them); TV channel surfing; airports.

**Favorite accomplishments:** A near-perfect loaf of bread made during the first of this winter's blizzards; being characterized as "always right" by my daughter in a 1992 Mother's Day booklet and as 'pretty neat' by some of her friends; being mellow enough to know the two preceding phenomena may never happen again; being told by a publisher whom I convinced to not change a serial title that I could have convinced him to change his own name; getting one of the highest ratings at the 1992 NASIG for a presentation on a dull subject like ANSI/NISO Z39.1.

**Things I like to read:** Victorian novels (Eliot, Hardy); poetry (e.e. cummings, John Donne, Andrew Marvel, Emily Dickenson); nonfiction about science; and, for escape, novels by the likes of Charles McCary, Nelson DeMille, James Carroll, and many others.

**Best piece of advice:** This was passed on to me by my mother: "Don't be afraid to open your mouth." To that I will add, "Love what you do."

## ISSN from page 26

quarterly CD-ROM (ISSN Compact), and on a soon-to-be-discontinued microfiche, the ISSN Register. Detailed information about obtaining the database is available from the ISSN International Centre's home page (discussed below) or by email to [issn.org](mailto:issn.org). The U.S. portion of the database is available via OCLC, and via LC's MARC tape distribution service. ISSN also appear in the records in *New Serial Titles*.

One of the ISSN International Centre's recent efforts has been the establishment of a home page on the World Wide Web: <http://www.issn.org>. This page includes basic information about the ISSN; a list of ISSN centers, their directors and addresses; statistics about the number of ISSN registered from different ISSN centers and in different languages; and information about ISSN products, including ISSN Compact. Also included are links to other ISSN centers on the World Wide Web or having Internet-accessible sites. NSDP is also constructing a page on the World Wide Web which should be available by the time this article appears. The URL is <http://lweb.loc.gov/issn>. NSDP's page includes the text of NSDP's printed "ISSN is For Serials" brochure, a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) list, special instructions about obtaining an ISSN for electronic serials, presentation guidelines for serial publishers, and ISSN application forms. One of the application forms is an interactive form for use with online serials. NSDP's home page also includes links to the ISSN International Centre's home page and to related resources for serial publishers.

NSDP staff are looking forward to publishers' use of the interactive application form because the form is linked to a conversion program which will enable a cataloger to convert the data supplied by the publisher into a preliminary catalog record, ready for editing and the addition of an ISSN and specialized data by the cataloger. Initially, the interactive form will only be used for electronic publications since such publications can most easily accommodate the requirement that the form be accompanied by a representation of the publication or an electronic address.

NSDP assigns between 6,000 and 7,000 new ISSN a year. This number includes between 3,000 and 4,000 prepublication ISSN, assigned before the first issue of a serial appears. Not all new ISSN are assigned to new serials. Some are assigned to older serials and many to changed titles. Since the ISSN is linked to a publications' title (actually a unique title called the key title) when the title changes, a new ISSN must be assigned. New ISSN assignments are also required for serials which begin publishing in a different physical format, such as a print serial which adds an online edition, since separate ISSN are assigned to each physical format in which a serial appears. Thus, a serial issued in print, CD-ROM and online editions will have three separate ISSN. An exception to this practice is made for microform reproductions by a secondary publisher. Such reproductions carry the same ISSN as the original.

Subscription agents, document delivery

services, library check-in systems, and catalogs and databases of serials all make use of the ISSN for unique numerical identification, quick database searching, and differentiating among same or similar titles. Likewise, the U.S. Postal Service uses the ISSN as a control number for certain publications mailed at second-class rates. However, contrary to the belief (or maybe the wish) of some publishers, having an ISSN does not confer any automatic entitlement to a special postal rate. The publication must still meet all normal USPS requirements. Even so, NSDP's collaboration with the U.S. Postal Service, a collaboration which began in 1978, has proved highly instrumental in publicizing the ISSN and in ensuring its printing on a large percentage of U.S. serials.

Another area in which the ISSN has played a prominent role is in barcodes for serial publications. Although NSDP does not issue barcodes per se, the ISSN is the identifying element in several barcodes including the SISAC bar symbol, a code increasingly used by the library and information community. The SISAC bar code symbol is based on NISO standard Z39.56, **Serial Item and Contribution Identifier**, which is currently undergoing revision to enable it to serve an even broader range of needs. The SICI standard encompasses not only issue level identification but article level identification as well, thus making the ISSN a critical component in document delivery.

As noted earlier, the ISSN continues to be a key identifier for serials, even in the electronic environment. The ISSN, along with the ISBN and other standard identifiers, has been proposed as a component of the URN (Uniform Resource Name) in various IETF (**Internet Engineering Task Force**) drafts. And, the ISSN has become an indispensable linking mechanism in online library catalogs by serving as the link between abstracting and indexing citations mounted online and the library's bibliographic and holdings records for the publication cited by the abstracting or indexing service.

Despite its successes, the U.S. ISSN program faces many challenges. Along with other government agencies, the Library of Congress has been experiencing reduced budgets and reduced staff. The National Serials Data Program, which at times has been staffed by nine professional catalogers, now operates with four permanent catalogers and one cataloger on a temporary appointment. It is hoped that increased use of technology and a future reorganization in the Serial Record Division will enable the program to continue to provide a high level of service to the U.S. publishing and information communities. Even as NSDP struggles to cope with budget and staffing challenges, the serials environment in which it has thrived for so many years is changing to the point where it is becoming increasingly difficult to determine whether some publications are serials or not, and thus eligible to receive ISSN. The ISSN Network relies on the library community's definition of "serial" which requires that a publication be issued in successive parts. That definition is being called into question by online "magazines" and "jour-

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