

LC vs. Local Cutters Policy

Memo from Carol Hixson

Dec. 15, 1998

You'll recall that starting with Fall quarter, we decided to follow LC classification and cuttering practices for all but some explicitly-exempted materials classified in the M's, some Special Collections materials, and UCLA theses and dissertations.

Several people have since approached me wondering what to do in specific circumstances. What do we do when the LC cutter for a belles lettres author, or an artist, or a person who is the subject of a biographical work has already been used locally for another author or artist? Do we use what we know to be the LC cutter for the person and ignore the conflicts? Do we modify the cutter on the book we're cataloging so that it follows the LC style but avoids a local conflict? Do we reclassify the titles already in the local database?

Using Claire Bellanti's motto of "the future is longer than the past", our policy will be to use the LC cutter whenever we know what it is for anything that we're cataloging new (with the exceptions listed above). We will not attempt to reconcile conflicts, nor will we go back and attempt to reclassify previously-cataloged titles. If we are already recataloging a title *for another reason*, we may reclassify it to use the LC cutter at that time.

Currently, about 49% of what we catalog new has DLC copy. Those titles are going into the local catalog without the call number being reviewed. Also, a growing percentage of our original and member copy cataloging is being done at the PCC level and we are using LC cutters for those materials. The future will soon outstrip the past.

Anyone who has used the online or paper shelf list locally knows that there are already many conflicts where the same cutter has been used for more than one person. This happened at a time when we were supposedly checking all local cutters. If we could live with it before, we can live with it now. There will be times when the same cutter may have been used to represent three or four people in our local catalog. C'est la vie. We don't have time to go back and fix all the mistakes of the past nor to reconcile all the changes in policy over the years.

How far do we have to look to find the LC cutter when doing non-DLC copy or original cataloging? Look at 050's on bib records in our database. Look at 050's on bib records in OCLC. Look at 053 fields on authority records for belles lettres authors. If you have made a reasonable search of the person in the local and the national database and can find no evidence of an LC cutter, use one that will not conflict with anything that we have locally.

If there are other specific questions about this policy, please ask me and we'll refine it as needed.

Carol