

# LOCAL CALL NUMBER PRACTICE WITHIN YRL CATALOGING

## REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

(adopted Fall 1998)

The following are situations in which the URL Cataloging Department's classification or cutting practices currently deviate from national practice. Each situation is discussed separately with an assessment of the impact on user service and cost to the Library of deviating from national practice. Each section concludes with a recommendation to continue or discontinue the practice.

Costs to the Library must be weighed against benefits to the user. In some cases, local processing costs and the time it takes to make materials available to the public increase substantially when UCLA practice deviates from national practice. This is because the Library is able to use a smaller percentage of nationally-available cataloging copy without substantial modification and because extra steps must be taken in the records that UCLA contributes to the national databases in the form of original records to ensure that they meet both local and national standards. In general, following LC classification, cutting practices, and tables allows for more efficient and faster processing of library materials and facilitates the sharing of information about UCLA's unique collections with other libraries.

Because the assignment of classification numbers is dispersed among many individuals at different stages of the process and because no figures are available for the number of titles processed each year in each modified classification area, it is impossible to calculate the dollar savings that would accrue if URL Cataloging were to follow LC classification and cutting practices more faithfully. All that can be said is that it is clear that significant amounts of time could be saved and that more materials could be made available more quickly if we followed the national standards more consistently.

### **1. Specific requests from client units. These appear on the workflow through a note.**

Public service units and/or collection development staff notify Cataloging in this way when they wish to keep the new work together with a previously cataloged edition or translation or with a locally assigned biographical, topical or geographic cutter, or when they wish to suggest other exceptional classification treatment. Such requests are common practice in libraries throughout the country. Keeping different editions of the same work together on the shelves is convenient for users and costs the Library only the staff time involved in recording the request and keying the local number into a bibliographic record. It has little impact on the efficiency of the cataloging process because the information is provided up front with each individual title, requiring neither special checking nor pulling materials out of a particular workflow.

Recommendation: **continue** to follow the special requests from non-cataloging units because it is convenient for users (both public and staff), costs the Library little in staff time, and doesn't decrease the efficiency of the cataloging process in any measurable way.

### **2. Music scores classed in M.**

URL Cataloging currently uses local cutters in selected areas of the M schedule, such as ML50 and ML410 classification areas. There are some other areas where we employ local cutters because the composers' works are so voluminous. Due to the complexity and special nature of music materials, music never seems to fit into the normal workflow of a general

cataloging department. Within URL Cataloging, music scores and parts follow a separate path, bypassing the Rapid Cataloging Section, and going directly to the Music Mini-Team. Special instructions have also been formulated to assist in the binding and special processing needed for music materials. In addition, Music requires extra authority work to deal with all the composers/uniform titles, limiting the ability to process these materials rapidly. Another general factor influencing the way music differs from other subject areas, is the fact that older materials continue to be retained, acquired currently, and utilized heavily. Music tends to be issued and reissued over and over again in a multitude of various editions. Music Reference Librarians from the Music Library indicate that the most heavily browsed portion of their collection is that of the ML 410's (biographies of composers) and the M 1500-1503 (operas).

Recommendation: **continue** to use local cutters in selected areas of the M classification schedule because it is convenient for users, costs the Library no extra staff time, and doesn't decrease the efficiency of the cataloging process in any measurable way.

### **3. LC classification numbers reserved or modified for local use, such as TR 16 or Z 233 M3 (Special Collections), LD 791.8-791.9 (UCLA dissertations), and N 7433.4, Artists' books. See Cataloging Dept. Reserved or Modified Call Numbers (Appendix A) for a complete listing and explanation.**

These call numbers fall into several different categories and the recommendations follow each category.

- Call numbers used in place of sublocations or collection names. These consist primarily of Special Collections materials, such as materials for the Peter Pauper Press Collection which are placed in AC5P4 or the Mexican Pamphlet Collection which are placed in AC971Z5. These collections use numbers that were not being used by the Library of Congress when they were selected and, in most cases, still are not used by LC. Using pseudo-LC numbers allows collocation of the materials in these collections without interfering with true classification numbers assigned for other Library materials. Since Special Collections materials already require special processing, there is little to be gained in terms of more efficient processing by discontinuing this local practice. In fact, the need to assign true, unique classification numbers for the materials in these collections, rather than the pre-assigned collection numbers, would actually slow down the cataloging process. Other methods for collocating these collections could be explored (such as defined sublocation codes in ORION2), but there seems no point in disrupting a practice that adequately serves the special needs of a non-browsing collection. *Recommendation: continue* the pseudo-LC call number practice for Special Collections materials unless requested to stop by the client unit because it is convenient for users and actually speeds up the processing of the materials.
- Artists' books are another category where Cataloging modifies the use of the LC schedules for purposes of collocation of a special group of materials. URL Cataloging has classified artists' books in N7433.4 and has further used a modified cutter arrangement. The Head of the Arts Library prefers to have the artists' books collocated in N7433.4 because of their heavy use but prefers that we follow the LC culling scheme rather than the locally-devised cutters in this area. *Recommendation: Continue* the collocation of artists' books in N7433.4 but use LC cutters within that number.
- Another category of materials that receive pseudo LC classification numbers are UCLA publications, primarily dissertations. These materials are assigned call numbers in another area of the classification schedule not used by the Library of Congress. Many libraries follow a similar practice for their local dissertations for similar reasons, including: 1) The local classification allows collocation of all dissertations by the school or department granting the degree; 2) access to dissertations is needed very quickly and using pre-determined call numbers for the granting department speeds up the cataloging process; and 3) dissertations are often on cutting-edge topics that have not yet been developed by the Library of Congress and true classification numbers often do not yet exist for the subject content of the dissertation. Because dissertations require original cataloging in 99.9% of all cases, there is no rapid workflow that is being disrupted by following a locally-devised classification scheme. *Recommendation: continue* local call numbers for UCLA dissertations because of the convenience to users and because the practice allows faster processing of the materials.

#### **4. Standing requests from individual client units who desire local cuttering so that certain areas of their collections (usually literary or "author-like" sequences) remain in alphabetical order.**

Specific areas that fall under this category are: photographers classed in TR and screenplays classed in PN 1997. Trying to maintain local cutters in the TR's and PN1997 means that many materials with otherwise-acceptable cataloging records are pulled out of an efficient, rapid workflow merely to require a higher-level staff member to assign a local alphabetic cutter based on the Cutter Sanborn table. In most cases, the alphabetic cutter assigned by the Library of Congress would not disrupt the alphabetic arrangement greatly. Using the LC cutter numbers when provided would save significant time and would enable cataloging staff to concentrate, instead, on increasing productivity.

Recommendation: **discontinue** local cuttering for the TR's and PN's because the disruption to users would be minimal and following LC cutters exactly would allow for more efficient processing.

#### **5. Belles lettres in the P-PZ classification for authors who have a single classification or cutter number.**

Currently, URL Cataloging uses the same base classification number for literary authors (belles lettres) as the Library of Congress. However, both the primary author cutters and the secondary cutters are assigned using a local system. Since most other libraries in the country follow the LC system exactly, that means that hundreds of thousands of bibliographic records created by the Library of Congress and by other academic libraries for belles lettres materials cannot be used by UCLA without modification of the call number.

The objection to accepting the Library of Congress cutters for literary authors is that it would inconvenience users who would no longer be able to browse the stacks effectively and find all works by the same literary author physically together on the shelf (loss of physical collocation). There are four points to consider regarding loss of physical collocation: 1) Many titles for literary authors have already been moved to the SRLF. Unless all titles for a given literary author are moved to the SRLF, there is already considerable distance between some works by that author and others, as they are shelved in completely different buildings; 2) Many titles for literary authors are shelved in URL and many others are shelved in College or other locations. Again, as long as titles for the same literary author are not all shelved in the same location, there is already lack of physical browsability; 3) The locally-devised system of cuttering is so cumbersome and internally inconsistent that it is often misapplied. There are already many errors resulting in the placement of belles lettres works outside of the internal alphabetic sequence; 4) Using LC classification and cuttering consistently would move most authors only slightly in the stacks. For instance, the LC classification for the author Gabriel Garcia Marquez is PQ 8180.17 A73, while the local variation is PQ 8180.17 G167. If we were to adopt the Library of Congress cutters, the base number for an author (in this case, PQ 8180.17) would remain the same and users would still be in the same section of the stacks. In this case, the loss of collocation would result in books by the same author being separated by approximately 40 spaces on the shelf. For more prolific authors or where UCLA had a stronger collection from a particular region and time period, the books might be separated perhaps by several shelves, although they would still be in the same range of shelves. For regions and time periods for which UCLA had smaller collections, the books would be separated by even fewer than 40 spaces on the shelf.

The arguments in favor of adopting the Library of Congress cutters for literary authors are that it would speed up the processing of a considerable number of titles and would ultimately save the Library money. Most recent figures for items newly received in URL Cataloging indicate that approximately 35% of all books coming into the department that would ordinarily receive rapid cataloging (done by the lowest level staff at a high rate of production) are pulled out of that process so that a local call number can be assigned because they are belles lettres. The assignment of local call numbers is done by higher-level career staff or by professional librarians. Once the local call number is assigned, the books are routed back to the lower-level staff for completion. Last year, the Department cataloged 47,000 books using the rapid process. This year's production is expected to be even higher for this category of materials. At least 16,450 books that could

otherwise be processed using rapid cataloging procedures will be pulled out of that process only to have local cutters assigned. Pulling a book out of the rapid process, assigning a local call number, rerouting it, then keying in a special call number into the bibliographic record adds a minimum of five minutes to the time it takes to process one of these books. In a year, the extra effort involved in maintaining this particular local call number practice equates to three quarters to one full FTE. In addition, the higher-level staff who must supply the local call number are already fully occupied with their own work. As a result, these books sit for as long as three months waiting for someone to assign the local call number.

Recommendation: **discontinue** the local practice and use the Library of Congress classification schedules, cutters and tables for belles lettres. There would be some inconvenience to some users, due to loss of physical collocation. However, that inconvenience would be offset by the fact that they would have access to the cataloged materials more quickly and that time currently spent assigning local call numbers could instead be spent cataloging additional titles.

## 6. Individual artists and/or their works of art classed in N.

As with belles lettres, URL Cataloging uses the same base classification number for individual artists as the Library of Congress. However, both the primary artist cutters and the secondary cutters are assigned using a local system. Since most other libraries in the country follow the LC system exactly, that means that hundreds of thousands of bibliographic records created by the Library of Congress and by other academic libraries for art exhibition catalogs and books about various artists cannot be used by UCLA without modification of the call number.

As with literary authors (belles lettres), there is concern about loss of physical collocation for an artist if UCLA began to accept the Library of Congress cutters. The same points about collocation need to be considered: 1) Some books by or about an artist are already in the SRLF and the collection is already split; 2) the existing system has been applied inconsistently and artists are already split; 3) loss of collocation is even less than with literary authors because the local system retains the same letter of the alphabet for the artist's cutter as that used by the Library of Congress. For instance, the LC cutter for Michelangelo in the general art area is B9, whereas the UCLA cutter for this area is B8. Materials cataloged under the local system would not be separated by great spaces on the shelf from those cataloged using the Library of Congress system.

4) There is still another point to consider regarding collocation for artists catalogs. The classification schedules already separate artists who produce works in more than one media into different classifications for each medium. For instance, books about the work of Michelangelo Buonarroti covering all his media are classified in N6923; books about his sculpture are classified in NB623; books about his drawing are in NC257; books about his painting are in ND623. There is little collocation already for all the works by or about a particular artist.

Statistics have never been kept for the number of these artists books cataloged each year. However, as with belles lettres, pulling a book out of the rapid process, assigning a local call number, rerouting it, then keying a special call number into the bibliographic record to replace the one that was already there adds a minimum of five minutes to the time it takes to process one of these books. Because assigning local call numbers is dispersed through several levels of staff and many individuals, the savings associated with discontinuing local deviations from LC classification would be realized primarily through increased efficiency of the total process.

Recommendation: **discontinue** the local practice and use the Library of Congress classification schedules for books for individual artists. There would be minor inconvenience to some users. However, that inconvenience would be offset by the fact that they would have access to the cataloged materials more quickly and that time currently spent assigning local call numbers could instead be spent cataloging additional titles.