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CIMT 522

Introduction to Cataloguing & Classification

Spring 2009 ～ Patterson

**I. In a brief paragraph discuss any 3 of the following 5. Your discussion should clearly identify the term, concept, or process and then explain its significance to practicing librarians/media specialists and to the library/media profession. Each answer is worth 10 points.**

**1. Users’ groups** “*refers to a group of users of a service or software/hardware product (or brand of products) who meet periodically and keep in contact, usually via e-mail, to enhance their understanding of the product, discuss any problems they experience, and suggest improvements to the vendor. Librarians often participate in the user group for their library’s catalog software” (ODLIS); a benefit of user groups is that, as a paying member of that vendor’s products, when several people are discussing the same issues in regards to problems, it is in the vendor’s best interest to take action on that issue (the idea of strength in numbers); user groups also allow new information to be shared, including any updates to the products; it is a useful networking tool for librarians, who are using the same vendor, to learn from one another*

**2. Orphans** *are* *“books that the author and publisher have essentially abandoned. They are out of print, and while they remain under copyright, the rights holders are unknown or cannot be found” (New York Times); the significance of orphans to the library world has to do with the ‘Google Settlement’ that is currently in the courts; Google wants to scan into its database these orphan titles and then profit buy selling them to digital users (using a Kindle or some other similar device); the critics do not want Google to have this monopoly over digital information in the only “truly comprehensive book database” (New York Times), but Google claims it wants to do this to benefit the public by making these titles available to more people; with the technology explosion, it is even more important now for authors and owners of copyrights to push for fair legislation and laws that will help regulate their works; similar to musicians’ recording and downloading music*

**3. OCLC** *is a company based in Dublin, Ohio; the initials stand for the Online Computer Library Center; it is the “largest bibliographic utility in the world’*

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*providing cataloging and acquisitions services, serials and circulation control, ILL support, and access to online databases;” (ODLIS) OCLC stores millions of MARC records in WorldCat, which can be used to copy catalog; the advantage of being a member of OCLC is that when a new bibliographic record needs to be created in the local library, the cataloguer can go to WorldCat, find the existing MARC*

*record, and copy and paste the information into the local cataloguer’s computer system, with any adjustments that need to be made to satisfy local needs, thus bypassing the need to create the record from scratch*

**II. Submit an essay at least 2 pages in length, double-spaced, and in a standard 12 point font, that addresses fully 1 of the 2 following questions. Use examples to illustrate your main points, when appropriate, and remember the basic writing guidelines outlined in *Write Right*. Be sure to begin your essay by providing the complete text of the question that you select to answer.**

**Here are a few considerations to keep in mind when preparing your essay. First, I know that time is limited and do not expect your paper to look as though you spent several days researching it. Second, there is not a single magic answer hidden someplace within the text or a reserve reading. Rather, I would like for you to draw upon what we have covered in class and your own experiences, to relate your own thoughts and reasoning in your own words.**

1. Visit and test drive the OPACs of the Darien (CT) Public library at:

<http://www.darienlibrary.org/catalog/search/tags/staff+favorites>

the Indianapolis Marion County (IN) Public Library at:

<http://sherloc.imcpl.org/>

the University of Huddersfield (UK) Library at:

<http://wwwcls.hud.ac.uk/cls-bin/cls.pl?c=19>

Try finding recently published works in English in each catalogue on the subject of ***road bicycle racing*** (note that this term describes the topic but is not necessarily phrased as the official LSCH or Sears subject heading for that topic). Submit a

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well-considered critical essay in which you assess the performance of these OPACs.

Keep in mind that here you are not evaluating the collections of these libraries (which has the most resources, the latest books, etc.), but rather you are critiquing the OPACs themselves. Describe their strengths and weaknesses as viable 2009 library tools. Library catalogues have been indexing books by author, title, and subject for well over 150 years. OPACs have been doing this digitally for more than a generation too. Nothing new there, especially for students in the age of iPods, texting, blogs, iPhones, Kindles, MP3 players, iTunes, Twitter, podcasts, and Google.

Do any of these OPACs offer anything really new or interesting? Do they deliver the same ole product any better? Are they different from the OPACs that you are familiar with? Is there any evidence of Web 2.0 or Lib 2.0? What should an OPAC do today that Cutter didn’t envision in his 1876 “objects of the catalog.” Are any of these catalogues likely to interest students in 2009?

I do not live in a bicycle friendly city. There are few, if any, places to ride that are safe within the city limits, yet this has not stopped me from planning to use cycling to get into shape. I have made a personal goal that I will tackle the “World’s Most Dangerous Road” in La Paz in 2010, most likely during Spring Break. In order to face this challenge, I need to set up a training program, find some good cycling roads outside the city limits, and educate myself on bicycle racing. You are thinking, “What on earth does this have to do with a final exam?!” It has

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everything to do with it, as you will soon see. Come join me on my journey into the world of bicycling racing, Bolivian style.

The first library I accessed, Darien Library, CT, was a wealth of information. Theirs is a newer catalog version, full of color and plenty of things to distract me, but I was on a mission. After conducting a keyword subject search of “bicycle racing” I found that the collection had 12 books on my topic, although only 10 showed up on one page, making it necessary to click to the second page to see all of their offerings. Also, the catalog only showed me those records that included the Library of Congress Subject Heading I was looking for; no others were given in my basic search. However, the things I found with those 12 books were more than enough. There were book covers, tags, reader reviews, and even a place to hold the

item I wanted. In further exploring their catalog, I also found areas where I could “fine tune” my search, based on things such as the format I was looking for, the location, or even the staff favorites. Their popular tags cloud was extensive, as was the option to find new, popular and top rated items. In order to stay focused, I remember that I needed a book about cycling…and there it was, The Ultimate Ride: get fit, get fast, and start winning with the world’s top cycling coach by Chris Carmichael. This is the book I need to turn my goal into a reality.

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But is it the only, or the best, book for what I need? It was time to access another catalog, the Indianapolis Public Library in Indiana. The first thing I noticed about their OPAC was its name – SHERLOC. How clever! The Sherlock Holmes character was great at finding things, so maybe this catalog would live up to his reputation. Right away I saw that this library has joined the Web 2.0/Lib 2.0 revolution – they were giving tutorials right on the first page! If I didn’t know how to find an item, all I had to do was click on a question, and it took me to the answer, guiding me to what I needed to do next. I opted to use their standard OPAC, so clicked on that tab and was directed to a familiar page. Again, I used a basic keyword subject search for bicycle racing, except this time, the results page looked much different. Not only did I get a listing of what I was looking for, but I

also got a listing of all the other, LOC related subject heading listings. There were about six results pages, with 15 items per page, and this catalog even told how many titles were under each listing. Impressive, but seemed a bit too much work, since I wanted only one specific thing. Just out of curiosity, I decide to look up my author, Carmichael, to see if my newly found favorite book was listed. Using the author search, I found another really interesting feature, the author list, showing me all the Carmichaels on record, and not just Chris, the one I was searching for.

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My results page came up with seven items, and there it was again, The Ultimate Ride. This OPAC also allowed me to place a hold request, but I couldn’t tag or review my item. Finally, after exploring some more, I found the coolest thing ever! They call it the “discover” and it is a “trail” of words (organized like a web) giving spelling variations, word associations, translations, and thesaurus terms for my keywords “ultimate ride”. I really liked this feature.

But are there any other OPACs out there I could access from here in Bolivia in my search for a bicycle racing title? I checked one more, the University of Huddersfield, in the U.K., just to be sure I wasn’t missing anything. While this catalog did not have The Ultimate Ride, it did have one other title by Carmichael, which I found very easily using a standard author search. Not wanting to be

disappointed, I checked out some other places and found that, while the site itself isn’t very colorful or eye-catching, it did have some current technology on the OPAC. The first page had a tag cloud of popular keywords for the past two days, indicating that the site is updated regularly, which is always positive. User ratings and reviews are easily done, and you can even set up an e-mail alert for the search you are currently conducting, which I think would be great for doing research. It would cut down all the time spent going back and forth and also cross-referencing.

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In addition to the e-mail alert, they have the RSS feed feature for the search, which, by Bolivian standards, is extremely high-tech. But the one feature that I absolutely loved was the Virtual Shelf Browser. Cool! This one feature allows you to see the covers of all the books that are on the same shelf, maybe raising your interest in others that you were not even aware of! What a great feature. This OPAC, as well as the others, had basic, advanced and even expert search capabilities; it was also interactive with the “Ask a Librarian” feature. All in all, these were three very interesting OPACs.

I have found a book I will purchase while in the United States this summer, all thanks to the searching abilities of the OPAC. Is that what Cutter had in mind when he devised his “objects of the catalog”? I am not sure that even Cutter, who was progressive in his own right given the age in which he lived, could have dreamed up all of the “objects” that can be found on today’s new OPACs. There are new and exciting features that make the OPAC a much more user friendly, interactive tool than in the past. Is the product delivery better today? I would say the “Wow” factor is available – colorful, eye-catching, fast moving – for the digital generation. But all the bells and whistles still don’t take away from the fact that you are essentially doing the same thing – looking for an item. For me, the newer versions

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were almost too updated. There were many ways to get easily distracted and lose focus on what you were meaning to do in the first place. Which is why I am content to stay here in Bolivia, living with a slower pace of life, looking for my own places that are “off the beaten path” to take up bicycling racing…with the help of my newly found favorite book, of course.

References

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