

an introduction to the
eighteenth edition of
the **dewey** decimal
classification

C D BATTY

A PROGRAMMED TEXT



3028

an introduction to the
eighteenth edition of
the dewey decimal
classification

PROGRAMMED TEXTS IN
LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE
SERIES EDITOR C D BATTY

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by C D Batty

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Learn to use books and libraries
by T W Burrell

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eighteenth edition of
the dewey decimal
classification

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author's note

This book is one of a number of texts used in the research now in progress at the College of Librarianship Wales into the applicability of programmed learning techniques to education for librarianship. The purpose of these texts in the research programme is to test the suitability of the scrambled textbook in different forms for certain kinds of tuition; their purpose in the general educational effort of the college is to acquaint students with the mechanics of classification schemes outside the classroom, thus increasing the class time available for more valuable discussion and evaluation. In addition to this, the strictly practical instruction offered by these books is of direct relevance both to library in-service training and to the training of teacher librarians, neither of which command the time or facilities normally offered by full time professional education.

Few can be more aware than the author of the book's imperfections. In the 'author's note' to the programmed text on the sixteenth edition of the *Dewey decimal classification* a hope was expressed that comment and criticism might improve future editions, and grateful thanks are due to those readers whose interest, sympathy and understanding helped to improve the text in revision. Inevitably, however, these revisions and the changes in DC17 and now in DC18 have necessitated a completely rewritten text, and the ever generous help and advice of colleagues and students alike is here gratefully acknowledged.

Particular thanks are due to Mr Benjamin A Custer, Editor of DC, and Mr Richard B Sealock of Forest Press, for their friendly encouragement and advice, and to them and to Mr A J Wells and Mr Joel Downing of the British National Bibliography for making available the typescript of DC18 before publication.

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C D BATTY

HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT OF INFORMATION RETRIEVAL STUDIES
COLLEGE OF LIBRARIANSHIP WALES

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introduction

This book is intended to teach you the rudiments of practical classification with one classification scheme: Dewey's *Decimal classification*, eighteenth edition. It is not intended for use with any other classification scheme, even though the devices and methods discussed are of general validity.

The *Decimal classification* is a work in two volumes: the main schedules arranged in the order of the classes of the scheme, together with their numerical notation that gives the scheme its name; and the alphabetical subject index, called a 'relative index'. These volumes will be referred to respectively as *the schedules* and *the index*. The scheme will be referred to as DC.

You should have a copy of DC by you as you work through this book, and you should use it not only to solve the problems but also to check the examples and see how the scheme works.

This book is a 'scrambled textbook'; *ie* its pages are not read consecutively and indeed are not numbered as pages at all. Instead the lessons and problems are divided into *frames* and these are numbered **boldly** for easy reference. On the first page (frame 1) you will be given the first step of the course and at the bottom of the page you will find a question on the information you have been given. You will be offered a number of solutions to the question, only one of which is correct. If you choose the correct answer you will be directed to the next step of the course; if you choose the wrong answer you will be directed to an intermediate step where you will be shown your mistake and given more instruction. A further question will offer you the opportunity of proceeding to the next main step of the course. If at any time you wish to look again at a particular part of the programme you may do so by means of the *Concept index* facing this page.

Now turn to frame 1 and begin.

1 The basic operations for finding a class number for any subject are always the same: first consult the index for the required topic; then check the number given there in the schedules. In time you may come to know the schedules so well that you will be able to turn straight to the right area and look through the schedules for the number that you want, but until then, and even then if you are dealing with an unfamiliar subject, you will find the index useful for showing in what classes or disciplines your particular topic may appear so that you can select the right number.

You will find it useful when you use the index to look for the specific term rather than a general one. For instance, if you want to classify STARLINGS you will save yourself time and trouble if you look for that term in the index rather than for a general term like BIRDS, since you would then have to search through the schedules under BIRDS to find a number for STARLINGS. This is important when you are dealing with a phrase, because many people are tempted to turn phrases round unnecessarily. ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING is more specific as an entry than ENGINEERING, ELECTRICAL and saves you the trouble of looking all through the engineering section of the schedules.

We shall not use the index or the schedules yet. Instead, select which of the following terms you would look for in the index as the most specific

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