

# RECENT REVIEWS

## *Sears List of Subject Headings*

“The 21<sup>st</sup> edition of *Sears List of Subject Headings* has been published with another attractive cover continuing the change to colorful covers started with the 19<sup>th</sup> edition. I applaud this change that brightens a shelf full of the uninteresting covers of other cataloguing tools. This is the first edition to have the assistance of the Sears Advisory Board comprised of public and school librarians, many of whom are presently working and have served on American Library Association committees. This board will continue to meet several times a year both digitally and in person.

There is a four-year gap between *Sears 20* and *Sears 21*. In that time, Sears has added 99 pages to its bulk and more than 250 subject headings. The new headings include an expansion in the growing areas of science, technology, engineering, mathematics, computing, economics, education, and sports. Examples of these additions include “Cloud computing,” “Derivative securities,” “Massive online open courses,” and “Paralympic games.” Some headings have also been changed to reflect up-to-date terminology, such as “Latinos” rather than “Hispanic Americans” and “Internet Forums” rather than “Computer bulletin boards.” A list of 34 cancelled and replaced headings can be found on page xlv. There is a change in some headings to conform to the terminology in *RDA*, for example, “Bible. New Testament” in place of “Bible. N.T.” *Sears 21* has also absorbed the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of *Sears List of Subject Headings: Canadian Companion* last published in 2001.

Rules for filing the entries have changed in the 21<sup>st</sup> edition from those applied in the 20<sup>th</sup> edition. Main headings are filed alphabetically followed by subheadings also filed alphabetically. In addition, “corporate name headings for corporate entities within other entities, such as United States Army, are interfiled with the subdivisions for the main corporate heading” (xii). Sears states that libraries are not required to follow this change in the order of entries used in their libraries.

In *Sears 21*, classification numbers have been taken from the *Abridged WebDewey*, which is the continuously updated online version of the *Abridged Dewey Decimal Classification*.

I have written many times about the excellence of the “Principles of the Sears List of Subject Headings,” (xv-xli), which has been included in the preliminary pages of every edition beginning with the ninth edition. It is one of the reasons why all institutions that teach subject analysis and all libraries with untrained technical services staff should buy *Sears 21*, even if the library assigns Library of Congress subject headings. The Sears explanation of subject headings is written in clear English and is an excellent description of the function and construction of subject headings. Libraries that assign Library of Congress subject headings can easily adapt the “Principles of the Sears List” to refer to the LC subject list because the fundamental principles of subject classification are the same.”

- *Technicalities*

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