



Discography: Scientific, Analytical, Historical and Systematic

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THE TERM DISCOGRAPHY is used here to define a wide range of related activities, problems, and products involved in the analysis, description, enumeration, and bibliographical control of the artifacts of recorded sound and the sounds preserved on and transmitted by those artifacts. The discussion of these matters will mainly relate to commercially produced and distributed sound recordings, but will touch briefly on noncommercial products. The artifacts take various physical forms (disc, tape, cylinder, etc.), and the sounds they contain are probably as diverse as the myriad of sounds produced by nature and man. The use of the term discography in this wide-ranging context is conjectural, and, though sanctioned by popular usage and current lexicography, should be considered tentative.

The beginnings of discography antedate by at least three decades the invention of the term itself. Apparently, it first appeared in print in 1936 in the title of a book published in France, Charles Delaunay's *Hot Discography*.¹ This was a selective listing of references to commercially produced 78 rpm disc recordings of jazz; it was a classified enumerative "bibliography" of material for which the term *bibliion* was clearly inapplicable. Even before the first American edition of Delaunay's book in 1943,² the term had been taken up by some record collectors in the United States, principally collectors of jazz records. The wider adoption of the term, however, was slow and not without opposition from some students of the disciplines involved.

Sounds have been preserved on many devices which are not discs. Tape now rivals the disc in the marketplace and in the scholar's workshop, and someday a new physical form will surely arise to displace both disc and tape. There are, then, inherent contradictions in the term

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discography when it is used to encompass all types of sound-bearing artifacts. However disturbing these contradictions may be, the objections are at least partially obviated by a real and pressing need for a standard term which can serve recorded sound the way the print media are served by the word bibliography and the range of activities and products loosely brought together under that general rubric.

Two recent events may be cited to justify the present use of the term to extend beyond the mere listing of references to disc recordings. These events not only give its use a legitimacy with the academic community which it previously enjoyed only with nonacademic scholars and popular writers, but also indicate the growing recognition of discography: (1) The most recent meeting of the Association for Recorded Sound Collections (New York, Nov. 17-19, 1971) included a panel discussion entitled "Discographic Techniques."³ This discussion was notable for a number of reasons, not the least of which was the absence of arguments over the name of the subject under discussion. (2) During the same month, the Institute of Jazz Studies of Rutgers University published the proceedings of the first and second annual conferences on discographical research.⁴ These annual conferences were devoted primarily to the discography of jazz, but are quite important to the state and progress of discography generally, and they will be referred to again.

As further evidence of the rise of discography, one may note that the *Journal of Popular Culture*⁵ numbers among its panel of advisory editors a specialist in discography; that the California Folklore Society's journal, *Western Folklore*,⁶ includes a regular feature identified as Folk Music Discography; and that *Rilm*⁷ (the international music literature abstracting service) has a subject class for discographies. Recently the term has begun to find its way into the vocabulary of librarians. For example, in his book, *Bibliographies, Subject and National*,⁸ Robert Collison uses the index term "discographies," but lists the same items under the index term "gramophone records." On the other hand, Edward Colby identifies enumerative discographies by the term "audiographies,"⁹ a term proposed by Walter Welch. Time, usage, and better communications among collectors, discographers, archivists, and librarians will solve the many terminological difficulties. In the meantime, whether the subject is called "discography," "audiography," or "the bibliography of recorded sound" (as Donald Robbins does¹⁰) is certainly less important than the definition of the nature and purpose of the activities involved.

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HISTORY OF DISCOGRAPHY

The history of the activities identified as discography has not been written. As a means of collecting, storing, and disseminating information about recorded sound, discography has historical connections with popular culture, elite culture, and the communications media in both their commercial and social aspects. The history of discography could be written from many points of view, but the most fascinating would be an approach oriented to social and cultural history. What has been done to date has been based on the assumption that it is the purpose of the history of discography to chronicle the production of systematic discographies. The emphasis has been on the nature of lists as lists, largely independent of social implications. Certain key works have been identified. For example, the work of Delaunay¹ was not the first, but it may have been the first seminal product of a lineage which subsequently mined one of the most productive areas of retrospective systematic and analytical discography. About the same time that Delaunay's work was published, the Gramophone Shop of New York published its major discographical effort (which was identified as an "encyclopedia").¹¹ This marked the beginning of another chapter in the history of applied systematic discography.

In 1948, in the preface to the American printing of the revised second edition of his book, Delaunay wrote: "Since 1936, discographical study has become a veritable science to which numbers of specialists throughout the world have devoted themselves."¹² Indeed there were a number of specialists. By 1942 a periodical called *Discography*¹³ was being published in England, and during the next three decades there are an astonishing number of relatively small, low-circulation, discographical periodicals which pulled together the interests of students all over the world. Throughout these decades when its fundamentals were being shaped, discography lacked an institutional or general organizational base which would have given a strong central focus, and of course its connections with the academic world were negligible. To this day, discography is largely in the hands of private scholars and collectors.

The history of discography cannot be written without writing at the same time at least a partial history of the collecting of sound recordings. Discography has developed largely as a by-product of the activities of collectors, and its structure reflects their interests and needs. Collectors are motivated by diverse interests, but the most pervasive drive surely comes from an interest in some specific category of sounds. Whatever

the need for sound may be, this need leads to the collecting of the artifacts, and the collecting requires systematic lists. Discography develops as these lists are circulated, reworked, and refined.

Another central aspect of the history of discography is defined by the needs of commerce. The necessity to draw up lists of references to and descriptions of sound recordings has existed since the beginning of the first commercially produced and distributed sound recordings late in the nineteenth century. These products may be categorized in various ways (e.g., catalogs of the individual manufacturers, general trade catalogs). It is likely that relatively few libraries have made attempts to systematically build retrospective files of these commercial catalogs. In any case, they constitute a rich source for the history of discography. There is an accumulation of historical sources spanning approximately seventy years of applied discography. Discography is waiting for a Theodore Besterman, a Louise Noël Malclès, and a Georg Schneider to begin to put it into some order.

BIBLIOGRAPHY AND DISCOGRAPHY

In surveying the progress of discography and in considering its present and future problems, the author found that definite patterns and relationships only emerged after he began to use some of the basic perspectives of bibliography. In the end, discography will be a discipline in its own right; it will be as complex, as rigorous, and as indispensable as bibliography. Even now it is a highly developed art and does not necessarily have to turn to bibliography for its techniques or to find a justification for its existence. On the other hand, at its present stage of development, if there is one thing discography needs, it is a semblance of order; and this it can find if it borrows some fundamental concepts and approaches from bibliography. It also needs some solid theoretical underpinnings, and models for these may be found in bibliography. These are the assumptions underlying the present survey of trends in discography. As many connections as possible will be made between the two fields, borrowing from bibliography anything that might prove useful.

The variety of approaches to and uses of discography are at least as diverse as the approaches to and uses of bibliography. Discography may be thought of as a discipline closely related to historical bibliography, analytical (or critical) bibliography, and descriptive bibliography. Turning to the vast field of systematic or enumerative bibliography for a guide, one can clearly define such discographical enumera-

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tions as national discography, trade discography, current discography and retrospective discography. Other qualifiers such as "subject" and "special" suggest different ways of thinking about current and potential discographical developments. Even bio-bibliography has its counterpart in bio-discography; and one could make a fair case for the idea that some techniques used in the analysis and description of sound recordings should be properly identified as textual discography.

There is no need to search for one over-riding rationale for the existence of discography, for it serves many different purposes. In general terms, it is a series of loosely connected subsystems of information transfer. Its function is to provide information or references to information. Most of its immediate functions appear to be quite evident. Trade discography, for example, serves the producers and consumers of recorded sound by supplying information about what is produced and available in the trade. National discography organizes and records the total output of recorded sound at the national level. Historical and analytical discography are not so easily defined since these are emerging disciplines. In the discussion which follows, ways of organizing the fields of discography will be suggested, but the lines between these fields of research are in some cases very fuzzy and it is not always clear where the work of one type of discography ends and another begins.

BROAD DEFINITIONS

The two broad areas of bibliography provide general concepts which are applicable to discography. Richard Shoemaker wrote: "Two major divisions are the study of books as physical objects (analytical bibliography) and the study of books as ideas (enumerative or systematic bibliography)."¹⁴ Discography, then, may study sound recordings as physical objects, which will be called pure or scientific discography (subdivided into historical, analytical, and descriptive discography); or it may study sound recordings as ideas, which will be called systematic or enumerative discography.

SCIENTIFIC DISCOGRAPHY

A framework for the delineation of the various fields of scientific discography may also be drawn by paraphrasing definitions from bibliography. The following definitions by Derek Williamson provide this framework if one substitutes the word "discography" for the word "bibliography" and the words "recorded sound" for the word "book":

Historical bibliography studies the historical development of books, the materials of which they were made, how these materials were manipulated and combined, and how the resultant physical objects were distributed. The study is a necessary prerequisite for the analytical (or critical) bibliographer, whose business is to reconstruct the story of a piece of book production, or a series of such pieces, working from an extant book or series of books. . . . Descriptive bibliography is the discipline which codifies the results of analytical bibliography.¹⁵

Turning to the works of Walter Greg and Fredson Bowers, one finds a number of ideas which may help clarify the field of discography. Greg's succinct statement that bibliography is "essentially the science of the transmission of literary documents"¹⁵ suggests functions quite similar to those served by the types of research conducted by Walter Welch.¹⁶ Welch's purpose is to insure truth in the transmission of recorded sound. One could paraphrase Greg and say that "discography is essentially the science of the authentic transmission of recorded aural documents."

The functions of descriptive bibliography as summarized by Fredson Bowers also lend themselves to discography without undue strain.

The methods of descriptive bibliography seem to have evolved from a triple purpose: (1) to furnish a detailed, analytical record of the physical characteristics of a book which would simultaneously serve as a trustworthy source of identification and as a medium to bring an absent book before a reader's eyes; (2) to provide an analytical investigation and an ordered arrangement of these physical facts which would serve as the prerequisite for textual criticism of the book described; (3) to approach both literary and printing or publishing history through the investigation and recording of appropriate details in a related series of books.¹⁷

But the sound recording is not a book, and it is in the nature of these sound-storing artifacts that the types of information which they store and transfer define not only their potentials and limitations as agents of social communication but also the sorts of analytical, descriptive, and classificatory techniques which are needed to insure that they can be controlled. This is to say that in taking a bibliographical perspective, general principles and concepts are needed. Concerning questions of techniques of analysis and description some caution is needed. Private scholars and collectors have expressed dissatisfaction with the quality of controls provided by some sound archives and libraries.³ These problems may emerge from a misunderstanding of the difference between a discography and a catalog, but they may also indicate that certain descriptive elements, essential for the identification of sound re-

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cordings, are not included in the discographical style typically used by librarians. These criticisms need to be attended to, but if librarians have erred it is not because they have borrowed from bibliography, it is because they have borrowed the wrong things.

One of the functions of bibliography is to "serve as a trustworthy source of identification and a medium to bring an absent book before a reader's eyes," and this is one of the fundamental differences between the functions of bibliography and those of discography. Discography aims to bring an aural document, event, or message to a listener. This raises the question: What is to be described in a discographical description? What is the "document"? Is it the artifact as a physical object which occupies space, or is it the stored contents of the artifact? The sound recording has two physical dimensions, the static physical form of shellac or plastic, disc or tape, and the dynamic physical form which constitutes the intellectual content of the artifact. The latter exists only in time and consists of a series of disturbances in the air (i.e., sound waves which exist only upon being heard). What is stored is an event in time. The problem of descriptive discography, then, has a most unusual dimension quite unknown to descriptive bibliography. The bibliographer, in constructing his description, extracts material from documents; in constructing his collation he uses printed words and visual symbols to describe printed words and visual symbols. The discographer can only extract words and symbols from labels, album jackets, and the like (i.e., from the packages or containers); in the case of non-verbal communications, the real message cannot be extracted in this way. When the sound recording contains a verbal communication, if it is to be extracted for the purposes of description and identification, it must be transferred from one frame of sensory perception to another. This cannot be done without some loss of information.

The paradox is that the discographer, in communicating the results of his analysis of the aural-time dimensions of the document, has no recourse but to construct his description in a visual-spatial framework. The two dimensions of any sound recording (the static and the dynamic) pervade all discographical identification, description, and analysis. Any of the artifacts can be analyzed, identified, and described by one dimension or the other, or by both. A sound recording is an aural event-in-time packaged as a fixed artifact. A thorough exploration of the implications of this is necessary before discography can be placed on a firm scientific base.

Until it has been shown to be misleading, or unproductive, one

should work on the assumption that scientific discography has a unity unfragmented by categorizations based on specific subject content (i.e., the type of material recorded). This assumes that the theoretical foundations of discography would not permit the recognition of any really fundamental difference between, say, a recording of Gustav Mahler's *First Symphony* by Eugene Ormandy and the Philadelphia Orchestra and a recording of *West End Blues* by Louis Armstrong and his Hot Five, or, for that matter, between either of these and a recording of *Don't Sit Under The Apple Tree* by Guy Lombardo and his Royal Canadians. In this sense, discography, like bibliography, is indifferent to subject. It is not, however, indifferent to content since the "text" presented on the sound recording has to be related to other versions, both printed and recorded, and perhaps even to the original "live" event.

It is necessary to categorize all sound recordings into two broad types: those which are produced in quantity, usually for commercial distribution, and those which are produced in single copies (i.e., instantaneous recordings), usually without the intention of eventual mass production in the form of a pressing (i.e., an edition or "printing"). The instantaneous recordings have infinite possibilities; there are air checks (recordings made from radio or television broadcasts), recorded interviews of the sort used in oral history, documentary recordings of the sounds of live events, recordings made in the process of documenting and studying the various musics and cultures of the world. When an instantaneous recording is subsequently re-processed, manufactured, and distributed there is no question that it then becomes a problem for the discographer. This is not what happens to most instantaneous recordings, and for this reason they occupy a special place in discographical studies. They would seem to be relatively unimportant in the study of sound recordings as physical objects, but quite important in the study of sound recordings as ideas. One is tempted to say that the instantaneous recording is to the commercial product as the manuscript is to the book, and there are some parallels, but a detailed comparison of the two media would seem to be of limited usefulness.

The meaning of the term discography as it emerged during the panel on discographic techniques at the 1971 meeting of the Association for Recorded Sound Collections³ is not in serious conflict with the bibliographical-discographical parallels proposed. In any case, the unity of discography—or its potential unity—was evident in the rapport among discographers working in such diverse fields as jazz, opera, country and

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western music, and American theater music. Discography was defined, if one may construct a composite definition from a rather long discussion, as "the documentation of all types of reproduced sound preserved on all types of artifacts (e.g., commercial, non-commercial, disc, tape, piano rolls, wire recordings, movie sound tracks, air checks from radio and television—literally any type of recorded sound)." It remains to define the exact nature of this "documentation," but it was clear that discographers and sound archivists want a multiple-access system designed for a computerized inter-archival network.

HISTORICAL DISCOGRAPHY

Historical discography seems to fall into several divisions: (1) studies of the physical aspects of the manufacture of recordings, including studies of recording and reproducing equipment; (2) studies in the history of the trade, which examine both individual manufacturers and overall patterns of development; and (3) studies in the relationship between the medium and society.

A number of aspects of historical bibliography lend themselves to historical discography. Just as historical bibliography studies the materials of which books were manufactured, so historical discography studies the materials used in the manufacture of sound recordings and the possibilities and limitations of different materials. Where were recording companies located? Where were the discs actually recorded and manufactured, and what affect (if any) did these geographical aspects have on the final products? What written records are available from the files of the early recording companies? Historical discography studies the circumstances surrounding the manufacture of recordings (e.g., the acoustical conditions and the types of equipment used). To what extent have the original metal masters (i.e., the "metal parts") survived, and where are they located? Although much has been done to answer these questions, a large array of inventories, directories and guides is needed. It is clear that historical discography has only begun to provide these sources.

Like the book and the printed word, the artifacts of recorded sound are mirrors of past decades, products of specific times, places, cultures, and sub-cultures. They are historical sources, but they have their own history, for they are part of the history of the very society which they document. Society was changed at least to some degree by its interaction with this new media. The same can be said of the music recorded, for in its being recorded and disseminated mechanically the very na-

ture of the art of music was somehow changed. Just as a study of the history of the book and the printing industry is central to an understanding of Western culture, so a study of the history of the manufacture and dissemination of sound recordings must be undertaken for whatever it can reveal about the nature of communications in the twentieth century. How were records produced, why, and for whom? What functions did the industry serve? What ramifications did it have on the lives of the people that were touched by this typically twentieth-century phenomenon? To ask these questions suggests that the history of recorded sound needs to be studied not only for the intrinsic value of the contents of aural documents from the past, but also for what this study can reveal about the nature of the interrelationship between technology and the arts of man.

Some parallels with the origins and dissemination of print are useful, but they have some limitations as models, for recorded sound is a modern phenomenon, produced at the height of the industrial revolution in a society which was moving towards urbanization at an increasingly rapid pace. The artifacts were not handmade; almost from the very beginning they were mass-produced and distributed on a nationwide scale. Yet the characteristics of the traffic in recorded sound are not unlike those of print. Especially appropriate in this connection is Dan Lacy's discussion of the dissemination of print. Lacy points out five economic and technological characteristics that distinguish book publishing from other communications industries. These may be summarized as follows: (1) the publishing of books does not require ownership of an expensive plant; (2) every book must be advertised and sold on its own; (3) there is a considerable correspondence between the total cost of publishing a book and the number of copies produced; (4) books are not supported by their advertising content; they are published to satisfy the needs or demands of their purchasers, not to serve as the means for assembling a potential market for a product; and (5) books are produced in a physical form that permits them to be used by individual readers at times and places of their choice.¹⁸ With some qualifications and minor exceptions, these five characteristics of the book industry apply to the recorded sound industry.

The point is that the sound recording industry, like the book publishing industry, was and is "able to be more responsible than any other communications medium to a wide range of diverse demands from audiences large and small."¹⁸ The historical significance of this intriguing aspect of recorded sound has not been entirely understood. During

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the 1920s a large minority audience (a substantial portion of the millions of Black Americans) had little if any access to the mass media, nor did most of the members of this audience have access to the print media. They had a "literature," but it was transmitted orally. Record manufacturers responded to a communications need (whether the aims of the manufacturers were altruistic or mercenary is beside the point), and the result was the production of at least ten thousand disc recordings which, when manufactured and distributed, numbered in the millions of copies. They were produced for Black Americans living largely in rural parts of the United States. The recovery of this material—that is, the regaining of bibliographical control—is providing a new concept of the structure of the psyche of Black Americans and the profound poetic expressions which emerged from their culture. The discographical documentation of this source may be found in *Blues & Gospel Records: 1902-1942*, by John Godrich and Robert Dixon.¹⁹ In the course of preparing this enumerative discography, these authors made a substantial contribution to historical discography by gathering information on the commercial aspects of the production and distribution of these recordings. This research was subsequently published as *Recording the Blues*.²⁰ Finally—to show the interrelationship of different types of discography—a larger public benefited from this (and similar) research with the publication in 1969 of Eric Sackheim's *The Blues Line*.²¹ In this work, Sackheim transcribed more than 400 blues texts and printed them as an anthology of poetry. Working from the primary sources (the 78 rpm disc recordings), Sackheim produced the single largest published collection from this rich and almost completely unknown source of American art and cultural history.

The potential uses of certain types of historical discography have been emphasized to the exclusion of others because information is more readily available in the areas of classical and popular music; see, for example, Edward Colby's article in this issue of *Library Trends*.²² There are a number of periodicals devoted to historical aspects of discography; see, for example, *Talking Machine Review*.²³ *Recorded Sound*,²⁴ the journal of the British Institute of Recorded Sound, not only publishes research in historical and other types of discography, but regularly provides authoritative reviews of new monographs.

ANALYTICAL DISCOGRAPHY

There are at least two broad aspects to analysis, and these are based on the static and dynamic dimensions of sound recordings—the artifacts

and their contents. The two aspects are, of course, interrelated. Conditions governing the physical structure of the recording affect the quality of the sound recording. The scientific bases of analytical discography seem to be centered in the sort of work being done by Walter Welch at the Thomas Alva Edison Foundation Re-Recording Laboratory and related work at the laboratory of the Recorded Sound Section of the Music Division of the Library of Congress. The interrelationship of form and content may be illustrated by the problem of recording speeds. Many early disc recordings were described by their manufacturers as 78 rpm records, but in fact were recorded at speeds other than 78 rpm. Colby has noted that the catalog of Victor recordings now being prepared by W. R. Moran will include information on recording speeds.²⁵

The analysis of the dynamic dimensions of sound recordings may take many forms. In the case of classical music, the discographer must decide to what extent he will relate his recorded text to printed and manuscript versions of the text. It would be a mistake to assume that such analyses are only important when dealing with the pre-Romantic repertory. But the implication of this is a problem for the musicologist. Textual analyses are certainly necessary when dealing with early music. There have been, for example, at least five recordings of the *Mass* of Guillaume de Machaut, and there have been at least four published versions (i.e., printed notes, the score). Besides these various textual sources, there are unauthorized and non-commercial instantaneous recordings of this work. There are also manuscript sources (the primary sources) of Guillaume's music at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris. Finally, there are modern editions or transcriptions of this work which have not been printed. Is it the job of the discographer to identify the source of the performance material used in the performance in hand, and should the performance be analyzed in terms of the printed or manuscript source? Should the discographer relate his recording to other recordings and printed editions? In analysis, should the details of performance practice be taken into account (e.g., the use of *musica ficta* and the layout of the text)? In some cases is it necessary to identify not only the performers, but also the instruments used (i.e., the names of the manufacturers or physical descriptions of early instruments, tunings, etc.)? Should tempi be analyzed and recorded in the description? Finally, is this technical analysis discography or is it applied musicology? It would seem that discography of this sort is a technique of musicology. At some point in a discographical analysis, one

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begins to leave discography and become involved in music research.

Increased use of recorded sound as reference and research material will require more detailed techniques of analysis and description, and one wonders if discographers will not need to devise ways of "indexing" the contents of sound recordings in detail.

Textual analysis of music involving the human voice is producing its most fruitful research in the area of American blues. That there has already been much work done in this area is evident not only from the work of Sackheim,²¹ but also from the published research of Paul Oliver²⁶ and Samuel Charters,²⁷ to mention only a few of the best known researchers in this field. Yet the field is still waiting for someone of the stature of Francis James Child to do for the texts of the blues what Child did for the texts of the English and Scottish ballads, and someone to do for the music of the blues what Bertrand H. Bronson is doing for the music of the ballads. That such work will have to be based on discography is self-evident.

Various forms of popular music and jazz seem to require still other analytical techniques. Here, the place and date of the actual recording is considered extremely important. It is necessary to identify all performers (not just those listed on the record labels). The analysis of the music requires different techniques, and here again one begins to leave discography for research in music.

The close relationship between techniques of analysis and description and the research needs of disciplines dependent on discography may be illustrated by examining the discographical analyses provided with the series of recordings issued by the International Library of African Music. These recordings are 33 $\frac{1}{3}$ rpm long-playing discs (issued by and available from the Library's offices in Roodepoort, Transvaal, South Africa). They are based on material recorded in the field (i.e., instantaneous recordings). A sample copy of the cataloging, classification, and indexing system issued with the records may be examined in *"The Sound of Africa," Series of Long Playing Records, a Catalog.*²⁸ The contents of the discs are classified by a system using a decimal notation, the instruments are identified to the extent of providing descriptions and information on tunings, and melodies, texts, languages, and other details are analyzed and classified. Ethnomusicological material of this type is not issued in the trade to any great extent, but there are some exceptions (e.g., in the United States, the material issued on the Folkways label; in France, the material issued on the Ocoro label). In one area, at least, commercially produced sources are being brought

under discographical control. In *African Music on LP, An Annotated Discography*,²⁹ Alan Merriam has included detailed analyses and descriptions of approximately 400 discs. Access to contents is provided by eighteen indexes. An examination of these indexes indicates the types of analyses which are needed if researchers are to be given access to basic sources. Some of Merriam's indexes are devoted to exterior physical features of the discs and albums and to circumstances surrounding the making of the recordings. On the other hand, extensive analyses of contents were involved in indexing stylistic aspects of the music (e.g., the use of melisma, hocketing, multiple meter, and other stylistic and structural features). Merriam believes that among the resources for the study of African music "discography is certainly among the more valuable and, at the same time, the most neglected of resources."³⁰ The same could probably be said of other areas of research in non-Western music.

DESCRIPTIVE DISCOGRAPHY

Within scientific discography, descriptive discography serves as the means of recording the results of analysis. Thus, a clarification of the science of description is dependent on the ground rules which are established for analysis. Describing the physical nature of the artifact is one thing; recording the analysis of the content of the recording is another. It would seem that rules for physical description could be standardized without too much trouble.

Progress has been made in establishing a vocabulary for descriptive discography. The terms have developed almost by accident and no attempt has been made to relate terminologies to bibliography. Such terms as these are used by discographers: air check, master, matrix number, dash number, dub, metal parts, label, pressing, take, test pressing, and acetate. It can be expected that some sort of glossary of discographical terms will shortly be forthcoming from either the Association for Recorded Sound Collections or the International Association of Sound Archives. The standardization and definition of terms now in use (not to mention the need for a more extensive descriptive vocabulary), is basic for future progress in discography.

Description operates at different levels which are governed by the function of the description. Systematic discography generally requires descriptions with much less detail than those required to record discographical analyses. But regardless of the level of description, there are three aspects to description: the physical object must be described (to

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the extent that it can be at least identified), the labeling of the artifact must be recorded (and corrected or amplified if necessary), and the material recorded must be identified if this does not emerge from the labeling.

Even in the most minimal description (i.e., a description intended only to identify or locate copies), unexpected problems often emerge. Problems in this area are not restricted to older material. In fact, they have been aggravated by LP reissues of older 78 rpm material and by pseudo-stereo reissues of material first recorded and issued in monophonic form. For a discussion of the extent of false labeling, see David Hall's "Record-Industry Notes."³¹

It is generally assumed in discographical description that a "perfect copy" is being described. That is, one description serves to identify an entire pressing (which may range from a few hundred to hundreds of thousands of copies). The only exceptions to this are the descriptions used in auction and sales catalogs. The physical state of the individual copy is, however, much more important in discography than it is in bibliography, but for different reasons. The book is obviously not damaged in its being read, but the sound recording begins to deteriorate with its very first playing and this deterioration (though often minimal) continues with each subsequent playing. Since most discographies do not locate copies, the state of the individual copy does not seem to be important except in local controls. But researchers are increasingly insisting that documentation must include the location of copies. It may be that some generally accepted code is needed to describe the physical condition of individual copies.

SYSTEMATIC DISCOGRAPHY

Richard Shoemaker wrote that it is the function of systematic (or enumerative) bibliography "to bring order out of chaos."³⁴ By and large, discography as it is known today is the result of efforts in this direction. To paraphrase from a speech by A. W. Pollard, the job of the discographer is "primarily and essentially the enumeration of sound recordings. His is the lowly task of finding out what sound recordings exist, and thereby helping to secure their preservation, and furnishing the specialist with information as to the extent of the subject-matter with which he has to deal."³²

The structure of order and the dimensions of chaos require some comment. The order or system needed to serve one type of researcher or user may become chaos when it attempts to serve the needs of an-

other type of researcher. Whether or not discography can develop as a science that transcends the parochial interests of the specialist (e.g., the jazz historian or the student of twentieth-century performance practice) while at the same time serving the needs of all specialists and non-specialists will depend on the extent to which generally valid principles of description and systematization can be established.

The dimensions of chaos have increased exponentially since the introduction of the tape recorder and the proliferation of instantaneous recordings. The assumption has been, at least until recently, that systematic discography should be confined to material which has been commercially produced and distributed. An examination of applied systematic discography indicates that by and large this has been the case. However, the definition of systematic discography precludes the exclusion of material because of its status as commercial or non-commercial; both types of material contain "ideas" and if either is excluded the discography is surely incomplete—except, of course, in national and trade discography.

The problem of instantaneous recordings was discussed by D. Russell Connor at the first annual conference on discographical research, in his paper "What is Discography: Its Goal and Methods?" Connor mentioned the "record ban" (the period between July 1942 and September 1944 when members of the American Federation of Musicians did not record). The documentation of much of the popular instrumental music and jazz of this period exists only in instantaneous recordings made by amateur collectors; but this was an unusual case. As to the general approach to instantaneous recordings, Connor wrote that "the discographer should strive for totality, completeness, definitiveness" and "include electrical transcriptions, air checks, movie soundtracks, unissued material, privately-recorded concerts, and other performances. In short . . . the discographer should attempt to put on paper the whole range of 'recorded' work, whether done in or out of commercial studios, whether preserved by professionals or amateurs."³³

Connor asked for this completeness within a framework of selectivity established by the discographer. Universal discography has been and will remain beyond reach, and systematic discography for a long time to come must be content with a relatively small part of the whole. Theoretically and technically, universal discography is possible; it only requires that the various subsystems be compatible, that they be computerized, and that they be linked. This is not exactly news, and as William Weinberg wrote: "Our most pressing need is the development

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of a computerized cataloguing system which will incorporate the existing collection and new acquisitions, and eventually permit the development of an inter-institutional information system with cooperating collections throughout the nation."³⁴ Weinberg was referring to the collection of the Institute of Jazz Studies, but his statement applies to the field of systematic discography as a whole. Until these computerized networks are established, one will have to deal with more-or-less traditional approaches to discography.

DISCOGRAPHICAL ELEMENTS

Before turning to the arrangement of systematic discographies, one needs to briefly consider the problem of description. The nature and extent of a discographical description found in a systematic discography varies from the almost skeletal sort of entry found in trade lists (such as those published by the Schwann Company) to the relatively detailed type of entry found in *The World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music*.³⁵ These variations are obviously due to the various functions systematic discography serves. It will be difficult to establish a standard discographical style which can serve the needs of the trade and at the same time serve the needs of historical research. Nevertheless, standards are needed. The panel on discographic techniques at the meeting of the Association for Recorded Sound Collections addressed itself to some of the problems of standardization. Miles Kreuger said that we need "totally objective and totally uniform methodologies."³ In the area of jazz, Walter Allen suggested the elements which should be included in a discographical description: (1) names of performing artists; (2) date and location of recording (i.e., actual place of recording process, not location of "publisher" as identified in imprint); (3) lists of complete personnel; (4) matrix number; (5) identification of takes, if more than one, and identification of those issued; (6) titles of compositions performed; (7) names of arrangers; (8) playing time; and (9) when dealing with reissues, comparisons should be made with the original recordings.³

Discographers in other specialized areas would undoubtedly have additions and changes to make in Allen's list; discographers of classical music, for example, use composers' names as a basic organizing principle. What is needed is a complete list of all potentially useful discographical elements. B. C. Vickery, in *Techniques of Information Retrieval*,³⁶ dealt with a similar problem as it relates to the print media when he drew up a list of bibliographical elements. A list of disco-

graphical elements would probably include most of what Vickery listed for print materials along with other elements peculiar to sound recordings. For example, the field of physical form would need to provide for the identification of all forms of sound artifacts and would probably require as many as thirty or more subfields. This is not the place to begin to draw up such a list, but an inventory of all potential elements is necessary before standards for description in systematic discography can be established.

THE ARRANGEMENT OF DISCOGRAPHIES

An examination of the systems currently used to organize discographies shows that there is no single system which can serve all students and users of recorded sound. What has developed is a series of approaches, each designed to serve the needs of the users of a specific list; the needs of users are quite diverse. A complete list of the potential methods of organizing discographies would be essentially the same as a list of discographical elements (assuming that this list included elements from both the static and the dynamic dimensions of sound recordings).

The following systems have been used to organize discographies: (1) alphabetical based on composers' names; (2) alphabetical based on titles of works recorded (or, in the case of collections, titles of collections); (3) by country or place of origin (i.e., the physical location of the manufacturer of the recording); (4) by country of origin (i.e., in terms of content, such as French music, German music, etc.); (5) numerical based on matrix numbers; (6) numerical or alpha-numeric based on manufacturers' catalog numbers; (7) chronological by date of publication (i.e., date of actual issue); (8) chronological by date material was recorded (i.e., date of recording session); (9) chronological by date of composition of material recorded (e.g., classical music arranged by period); (10) arrangement based on some qualitative standard comparable to the "best books" type of bibliography; (11) alphabetical based on names of performers or performing groups; (12) physical form (disc, tape, etc.); (13) subject in the case of non-music recordings, by form in the case of music (e.g., a discography of the symphony); (14) names descriptive of the performing media (e.g., discography of recordings of flute music); (15) status in the trade (e.g., out-of-print recordings); and (16) arrangement based on authors of texts (e.g., a discography of recordings of settings of Goethe's poems).

Miles Kreuger has noted that there are, in fact, only three broad

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types of discographies: (1) numerical discographies (e.g., matrix numbers); (2) artist discographies (individuals or groups); and (3) thematic discographies (i.e., all available recordings on a single and specific theme, such as the American musical theater).⁸ Arrangement by names of composers is a subsystem within the thematic category. The various types identified may be found individually and in various combinations. Within a selected theme, the records may be first grouped by names of performing artists; within the artists' sub-groups, the materials may then be arranged by matrix numbers; indexes by titles and composers may then be included.

NATIONAL AND TRADE DISCOGRAPHY

In this issue of *Library Trends*, Donald Robbins surveys the current state of national and trade discography, with special emphasis on the United States. Suffice it to say that national discographical controls have developed quite arbitrarily and that the best sources seem to be the trade sources. The immediate future of national discography in the United States is bright, since there is now an interim copyright law that requires depository copies. When there is access to published catalogs of copyrighted sound recordings there will, for the first time, begin to be near-complete controls over commercial products. The inner structure of this copyright discography is obviously of great importance to all discographers.

The limited number of current national discographies and general trade lists (and their limited information content) means that for reference, research, acquisitions, and future documentation it is necessary for institutions to collect current manufacturers' catalogs. Quarterly listings of these and the national discographies may be found in *Notes*, the journal of the Music Library Association.⁹⁷

The demands of the record industry have generated special types of trade listings which seem to have an importance quite different from any type of listing known to the book publishing industry. To serve radio stations and record shops, several periodicals list the "top ten," "top forty," and "top one hundred" in record sales. These lists are regular features of such trade periodicals as *Billboard* and *Cash Box*. Recently a new international version of this approach has been made available. Charts Limited, of London, publishes a weekly compilation of world-wide record sales in a publication called, quite appropriately, *The Charts*.⁹⁸ To the sociologist—it seems there is not yet a discipline which could be identified as the sociology of music—and the historian

such lists are invaluable sources. Back files of these discographical sources will need to be collected if future historians are to be given a reasonably complete picture of our musical culture. Apparently there is already some historical interest in this material, for in 1971 *Billboard* carried an advertisement for *The Miles Chart Display*,³⁹ a massive collection of "charts" for nearly 10,000 popular recordings issued between 1955 and 1970. These are, literally, charts or graphs.

THE OUT-OF-PRINT MARKET

The traffic in out-of-print recordings has not been studied in any detail; indeed, if it has been studied at all, the results have not been published. At the 1971 meeting of the Association for Recorded Sound Collections, Steven Smolian read a paper on "The Art of Phonograph Record Appraisal," and touched on this subject as it relates to the problem of appraising the value of sound recording collections for the purpose of Federal tax deductions (i.e., in the case of donations to libraries and other non-profit organizations).⁴⁰ The appraisal of out-of-print recordings is based on current market values. There is no single, major source for such information; nothing comparable, for example, to *American Book-Prices Current* and the like. The materials change hands largely through auction lists and dealers' catalogs, and there is a world-wide traffic in these rare and out-of-print materials. For the most part, the field is fragmented by areas of collecting interest, each of which has its own channels of information. In the field of classical music, one begins by examining the pages of *High Fidelity*, *The Gramophone*, *Records and Recording*, and other periodicals for announcements of dealers' catalogs. One of the best such catalogs in the area of classical music (with the main emphasis on vocal recordings) is said to be the one produced by "Discor," a record dealer in Buenos Aires.⁴¹ There are numerous sources for the areas of jazz and country and western music. The *Disc Collector*, which is devoted exclusively to the discography of country and western music, occasionally includes an auction list, and frequently supplies information on sources for current auction and sales lists.⁴² Sources for jazz and related areas can be traced through the pages of the numerous specialized periodicals devoted to jazz discography, including *Record Research* (New York)⁴³ and *R.S.V.P.* (London).⁴⁴ Each issue of *Notes* includes a brief listing of catalogs of dealers in both new and out-of-print recordings.³⁷

At present little can be said about this out-of-print market other than that it lacks discographical controls and that its connection with the

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world of libraries is quite remote. It seems that most libraries and archives in the United States depend largely on donations (at least when it comes to building historical collections). An enterprising discographer would perform a service by compiling an extensive annotated and classified bibliography of sources for rare and out-of-print recordings.

SYSTEMATIC DISCOGRAPHY BY GENRE

Lacking a better term, one may refer to the various types of music as identified by audience interest as genre. By this is meant the categorization of sound recordings by such terms as popular, classical, jazz, and the various forms of folk music. All of these categorizations (and many other classes and sub-classes) create problems and are surely suspect in any scientific classification. On the other hand, the field has divided itself into these areas and each seems to define a specific channel of discographical communications. Three such major areas will be discussed: classical music, country and western music, and jazz.

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Surveys of the systematic discography of classical music are available in Vincent Duckles' "Music Literature, Music, and Sound Recordings,"⁴⁵ and Edward Colby's "Sound Scholarship: Scope, Purpose, Function, and Potential of Phonorecord Archives."⁹ Here, only a few representative projects which indicate general trends in the control of this material will be mentioned.

Two types of lists seem to dominate this field: discographies of works by specific composers and discographies of the output of specific performers. The trend has been toward increasing refinements in discographical detail and thoroughness in coverage. The major outlets for the publication of these discographies are the journals devoted to classical recordings. Some of the finest complete retrospective discographies may be found in *Recorded Sound*, the journal of the British Institute of Recorded Sound. The discographical style used in *Recorded Sound* is exemplary; see, for example, Harry Anderson's "Josef Lhévinne Discography"⁴⁶ and Jerrold Moore's "An Elgar Discography."⁴⁷ A new and most valuable service of *Recorded Sound* is the publication of a series of discographies of works of living composers. These are being prepared in cooperation with the composers, and probably come close to being definitive. They include both commercial and instantaneous recordings, and recordings in the composers' collections and in the archives of the institute.

Among the discographies in recently published monographs, Steven Smolian's discography of the works of Gabriel Fauré is generally considered one of the finest products of the genre.⁴⁸ J. F. Weber, of Utica, New York, is producing and publishing a remarkably fine series of discographical monographs which seem to be the most definitive discographies available in the various areas they cover.⁴⁹ The numbers in the series (of which ten have been published to date) aim at completeness; they update and expand listings in the *World's Encyclopaedia of Recorded Music*. The series includes complete discographies of Loewe, Franz, Mahler, and Bruckner; other discographies in the series are devoted to compositions in specific forms or performing media (e.g., Schubert's *Lieder*, Mendelssohn's vocal music).

A recent issue of *Phonographic Bulletin*, the journal of the International Association of Sound Archives, carried news of some important discographical work Gerald Gibson has underway at the Sibley Music Library. Access to contents of collections has been a serious problem, especially since the introduction of the LP disc recording. Gibson's project is "An Annotated, Indexed Discography of Anthologies of Western Art Music in Series on Record, Released Between 1900 and 1970, Excluding Those with Performer Orientation."⁵⁰ The scope of the project is evident in Gibson's list of approximately 100 series he intends to analyze. Gibson wrote:

The purpose of this thesis is to make accessible the contents of recordings of western art music in scholarly series, released between 1900 and 1970. The reason for this inaccessibility is, in large measure, due to the general acceptance of cataloging rules that specifically rule out the making of numerous composer-title analytics. I shall furnish access to the contents of these recordings in the following ways: title of series, title of album, composer, title of composition, performer, fixed instrument location (i.e., pipe organ, electronic music studio, etc.), source of music used for recorded performance, and annotator of program notes. In addition, information on reviews and basic content and length of the liner notes will be included with each main entry.⁵⁰

In the field of classical music discography, one wonders if there will be a time when thematic indexes and catalogs of composers' works will include discographies as a matter of course. It could be argued that the recordings of works of pre-twentieth century composers are so voluminous that separate indexes are needed for sound recordings. However, when dealing with works of composers active after 1900, one would think that an essential feature of any competent thematic index or catalog would be the inclusion of references to at least those recordings with

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which the composer was somehow involved (as performer, conductor, etc.); furthermore, these references should not be limited to commercially produced material. In at least one case, the compiler of a thematic index of the works of a pre-twentieth century composer provided discographical references. Yves Gérard's *Thematic, Bibliographical and Critical Catalogue of the Works of Luigi Boccherini* includes a selective, critical discography.⁵¹ This appears to open up a large, potentially useful area of systematic discography. Why not, for example, include in the Beethoven thematic index not only manuscripts and printed editions, but also references to recorded performances which are particularly noteworthy for some reason; it is not unlikely that certain key performances have had much more of an impact on performance practice than have printed versions of the works.

COUNTRY AND WESTERN MUSIC

The commercially produced folk music of the United States has, until recently, received comparatively little attention from the academic community. Even today it has only a modest place in academic research, and almost no place at all in libraries. Lacking other satisfactory terms, scholars working in this area of rural, white, commercial music have adopted the vernacular and identify the genre by such terms as "country and western music" and "hillbilly music." The history of this type of recorded sound is closely related to the rise of radio broadcasting in the 1920s, and, at the same time, the manufacture and distribution of sound recordings for special local and regional markets (i.e., the material frequently identified as "race records"). It is a vast area with rich potential for research. As yet, students of this music have not produced any major discographical efforts comparable to those which have attempted to document jazz and classical music on a large scale. As a field of discographical research, country and western music—using the term to identify the whole range of rural, white, sacred and secular music—is quite new.

A fine summary of the state of country and western discography and a discussion of some of the mechanics of discographical research may be found in Norman Cohen's "Computerized Hillbilly Discography: The Gennett Project."⁵² Archie Green has identified three publications as "benchmarks in hillbilly discography."⁵³ The first, published in 1931 and of only historical interest today, is a list prepared by Lamar Stringfield for distribution to music club study groups in North Carolina. The second, which started publication in 1951, is the *Disc Collector*,⁴² a

small mimeographed periodical described as the official organ of the National Hillbilly Record Collectors' Exchange. The third, and probably the most important of the three publications, is the *Newsletter* of the John Edwards Memorial Foundation, which began publication in 1965. There are doubtlessly more collectors' newsletters and fan magazines, but apparently few libraries have collected them and they are quite fugitive. One outstanding example from this genre may be mentioned. In the mid-1960s, Doug Jydstrup issued at least thirteen numbers of his *Blue Yodeler*,⁵⁴ a periodical designed to "serve the collector of classic country music." Jydstrup also planned a series of "special editions," of which at least one was published: Graham Wickham's bi-discography of Tom Darby and Jimmie Tarlton.⁵⁵ In 1968 some of the fugitive sources of country and western discography were brought together by the editor of the *JEMF Newsletter* when he published a bibliography of approximately fifty "numerical discographies" (i.e., discographies arranged by matrix numbers) which had been published over an eighteen-year period in various collectors' and fan magazines.⁵⁶

If one may judge by recent publications, outlets for folklore research are including an increasing number of studies involving the discography of country and western music. See, for example, Judith McCulloh's "Hillbilly Records and Tune Transcriptions" in *Western Folklore*;⁵⁷ Norman Cohen's "Railroad Folksongs on Record—A Survey" in the *New York Folklore Quarterly*;⁵⁸ and Archie Green's "Hear These Beautiful Sacred Selections" (a study of sacred hillbilly music as recorded on the OK label during the period 1924-25) in the *1970 Yearbook of the International Folk Music Council*.⁵⁹ That the Association for Recorded Sound Collections does not intend to ignore this area is evidenced by the appearance, in its *Journal* of Walter Darrell's "Vernon Dalhart: His Rural Roots and the Beginnings of Commercial Country Music."⁶⁰

When the John Edwards Memorial Foundation's newsletter expanded to become the *JEMF Quarterly*, country and western music found its major outlet for discographical research. In addition to the discographical studies published in the *Quarterly*, the foundation has an extensive program for collecting and disseminating discographical research. The JEMF Special Series includes discographies and bio-discographies of Ernest V. Stoneman, Uncle Dave Macon, and Johnny Cash.⁶¹ An indispensable source of information on current country and western music discography is "Bibliographic Notes of Interest," published in each issue of the *JEMF Quarterly*. The foundation is currently

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involved in a major project to produce a computerized discography of material issued on the Gennett label.⁵²

The important role of the John Edwards Memorial Foundation will probably not diminish the modest but persistent increase in the number of smaller, independent discographical periodicals and series. As recently as 1971, the first number of *Old Time Music* was published in London. Edited by Tony Russell, it promises to maintain high discographical standards. Among other materials, the first number contains "the beginnings of listings of the OK 45000 hillbilly series and the white performers recorded by the Library of Congress."⁵²

As to current discographical controls, country and western music is better served by the W. Schwann Company than are other areas of nonclassical music. This is not saying much, but at least there is the Schwann catalog of *Country and Western Tapes & Records*, which lists (but does not index) the contents of in-print LP collections. On the other hand, the idea that there is anything even close to complete discographical control is shattered when one compares listings in an issue of *Disc Collector* with commercial trade lists. The *Disc Collector* is now largely devoted to current discography and reviews of new recordings (45 and 33 $\frac{1}{2}$ rpm discs). If one compares the January-February 1972 issue of *Disc Collector* with Schwann monthly catalogs from the same period, he finds that *Disc Collector* included listings for fifty-four new country and western recordings, representing a large number of manufacturers.⁵³ Of the manufacturers whose discs were listed in *Disc Collector*, seventeen were not included in the Schwann listings. Admittedly, these are relatively small independent companies producing material for what seems to be a small rural audience, but they are documenting some important aspects of music in the United States. I am not suggesting that it is the Schwann Company's responsibility to list all sound recordings produced in the United States, since its responsibilities are to the dealers it serves, and it must structure its discographical services within an economic framework.

JAZZ DISCOGRAPHY

The origins and state of the discography of jazz have been discussed by Paul Sheatsley in "A Quarter Century of Jazz Discography,"⁵⁴ by Donald Kennington in *The Literature of Jazz*,⁵⁵ and by Derek Langridge in *Your Jazz Collection*.⁵⁶ A very complete picture of the state of the art may be found in the published proceedings of the first and second annual conferences on discographical research.⁴

Jazz and its subsidiary forms have been well served by its discographers, and to see the full potential of discography one must examine in some detail the products of this massive effort to document jazz on a world-wide scale. The main task has been the compilation of retrospective lists of various types. There are many methods used to organize jazz discographies, but the two basic types can be simply defined as the general and the specific. General discographies attempt comprehensive coverage of all material produced within a given period of time. This involves gathering information on thousands of discs manufactured by hundreds of companies and representing the work of thousands of musicians. The special discographies limit themselves to documenting the recorded output of one performer or one orchestra. It is obvious that problems emerge in the definition of jazz. Some discographers maintain rigid limits in order to exclude all popular music, others are inclined to accept certain styles (e.g., the music of the "big band" era of the late 1930s and early 1940s) which are rejected by the purists.

The function of the general comprehensive discographies is best understood by comparing them to the classic bibliographies of United States printed materials, such as those of Charles Evans and Orville A. Roorbach. By and large, they are noncritical and attempt to identify all recordings issued within whatever framework is established to define jazz and its subsidiary forms.

The general format of the large, classic retrospective discographies is an alphabetical arrangement by names of performers; recordings are arranged by manufacturers' names and matrix numbers under each performer's entry. Little information is provided on the music (more often than not, only titles are given); but attempts are always made to identify the place and date of the actual recordings, the number of takes, and the names of all performers involved. The indexing varies; in many cases no indexes are provided, in others titles are indexed.

The general discographies deal for the most part with material recorded in the United States; but there are discographies which try to cover the complete output of other countries (e.g., Germany, Italy, Austria). Among the general discographies, Derek Langridge has suggested fifteen as being the "Principle Discographies."⁸⁷ Eight of these can be identified as the most basic sources of the discography of jazz and related fields of blues and gospel music: Hilton R. Schleman's *Rhythm on Records*, the work of Charles Delaunay, Orin Blackstone's *Index to Jazz*, Jorgen Grunnet Jepsen's *Jazz Records: 1942-1965*, Dave Carey and Albert McCarthy's *The Directory of Recorded Jazz and*

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Swing Music, Brian Rust's *Jazz Records A-Z: 1897-1942*, John Godrich and Robert M. W. Dixon's *Blues and Gospel Records: 1902-1942*, and Mike Leadbitter and Neal Slaven's *Blues Records: 1943-1966*. The bibliographical history of some of these works is quite complex, and for details the reader should consult Kennington,⁶⁵ who also discusses their inner structure.

There are a number of other approaches to jazz discography which have made considerable progress in the past few decades. One approach is to list all products of a specific recording company (frequently within some limited time period) or products issued in a specific publisher's series. Two of the classic discographies of this type are Dan Mahony's *The Columbia 13/14000-D Series*⁶⁸ and Carl Kendziora's "Perfect Dance and Race Catalog (1922-1930)."⁶⁹ The recordings are arranged numerically by matrix numbers. It remained for the indefatigable Brian Rust to compile the monumental *The Victor Master Book, Vol. 2 (1925-1936)*.⁷⁰ This numerical discography is not limited to jazz, but includes listings of all material issued on Victor Black-Label and Victor Bluebird discs from the beginning of the production of electric ("Orthophonic") recordings until the beginning of a new system of matrix numbers—excluded, however, are "sides made specially for nationals in America speaking other than the English language." Volume one of the series, as yet unpublished, will be devoted to the material issued before 1925.

Despite the impressive accomplishments of jazz discography, there is much work to be done. An important point is the source of the listings. Discographers have not always made it clear where they acquired their information. There is no doubt that many of the more comprehensive discographies are based on secondary sources (i.e., manufacturers' catalogs, files, advertisements, and the like). A definitive discography cannot depend on the accuracy of these sources and must collate them with the primary sources, the recordings themselves.

The publication of special discographies devoted to the works of one performer or group is extensive. They are, however, quite difficult to trace through ordinary bibliographical channels, since they are frequently published outside of the book trade, and advertised and distributed through special channels of jazz communication. The most recent bibliography of the literature about jazz, Carl Gregor Herzog zu Mecklenburg's *International Jazz Bibliography*,⁷¹ identifies approximately 250 discographical monographs published between 1919 and 1968 and nearly 300 discographies published as appendices to histori-

cal, critical and biographical studies. Mecklenburg does not include discographies published in the periodical literature. It has been reported that the British Institute of Jazz Studies has in preparation a bibliography of discographies published since 1960.⁷² Just how difficult the bibliographical control of discographies can be is illustrated by an examination of the published works of the prolific Danish discographer, Jorgen Grunnet Jepsen. The *International Jazz Bibliography* lists forty-two of Jepsen's discographies, but only ten of these could be traced in the published catalogs of the National Union Catalog.

A continuing source of strength in the development of jazz discography has been its periodical literature. Kennington estimates that there have been from 200 to 300 of these little magazines (i.e., including those which have ceased publication.)⁷³ This may be a conservative estimate, for their production is a world-wide phenomenon. Some of these periodicals are, or were, devoted exclusively to jazz discography; even those which are not oriented to discography occasionally produce some material related to discographical research. By and large, this literature lacks any bibliographical controls. If any library in the United States has attempted to build reasonably complete retrospective files of these sources, it has managed to keep its activities a secret.

The systematic control of current jazz recordings in the United States is not much better than the control found in country and western music; some of the best current discographies are European. The *Jazz Catalogue*,⁷⁴ published by the periodical *Jazz Journal*, attempts to list all material manufactured and issued in Great Britain; but since much of the material on major United States labels is also issued in Great Britain, the *Jazz Catalogue*, which has appeared annually since 1961, is to a certain extent an international directory. Its discographical style is quite detailed when compared to other current discographies. In the case of reissues, the original sources are identified, a practice unknown to current United States jazz discographies.

LOCAL CONTROL

Sometime in the future when the term "local control" is meaningless, an ideal access system which links archives and libraries from New York to California will have been achieved. Until that time local control is a central problem facing all reference and archival collections. There appear to be relatively few major collections in the United States which have complete control over their holdings. The hope offered by centralized cataloging and cooperative cataloging projects in compu-

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terized systems is somewhat dimmed by the problems of establishing a format to serve the many needs of users of recorded sound.

Some of these problems may be traced in the discussions of the draft of the MARC II format for sound recordings as reported in the pages of the Music Library Association's *Music Cataloging Bulletin*.⁷⁵ Walter Gerboth believes that the highest priority should be placed on those parts of the system which permit retrieval by subject content. He also believes that parts of the draft format "overstepped the bounds of cataloging and entered the field of discography."⁷⁶ If the MARC II format follows current Library of Congress cataloging practice it will incorporate many features of the *Anglo-American Cataloging Rules* which are clearly unacceptable to many discographers and many music librarians. James Coover was disturbed to learn that manipulative programs will not be available to MARC II users, and said "we face the prospect that, in writing our own programs for our own special uses, we will end up with a proliferation of incompatible programs, mired in the kind of mess in which the sciences now find themselves."⁷⁷ Coover suggested that basic programs developed by Barry Brook in conjunction with *Rilm*⁷ offer "our only real hope."

Considering the widespread dissatisfaction with the style of the Library of Congress cataloging for sound recordings, one would think that it is time to find out exactly what the problems are and how they can be solved. It is clear that the most general complaint is directed to the treatment of collections which are not analyzed. This is a matter of great importance not only to reference collections but to all library collections of sound recordings which include long-playing records. One solution to this problem is being offered by a new commercial card service, Cards for Records (310 West 86th Street, New York 10024). As described by Steven Smolian in "A New Development in Printed Catalog Cards for Records,"⁷⁸ the service will supply considerably more information than Library of Congress printed cards along with cards for complete analytics.

Other than the *Anglo-American Cataloging Rules*, there is no general code to deal with material at the level needed by researchers and serious students. The numerous guides and handbooks which deal with sound recordings and other audiovisual materials are largely limited to whatever approaches seem adequate for small public libraries and high school libraries. Therefore, the forthcoming *Codes de Catalogages des Enregistrements Sonores*, the fifth volume of the International Association of Music Libraries' *Code International de Catalogage de la Mu-*

sique, is anticipated with much interest.⁷⁹ Even though it is printed in three languages (including English), the first three volumes of this work have been ignored by librarians in the United States; perhaps the code for cataloging sound recordings will have a happier fate.

No surveys have been made of the cataloging practices of the larger archives in the United States. Some insight into the nature of some of the highly specialized systems can be found in a few published reports. Besides the system worked out by Hugh Tracey for the published recordings of the International Library of African Music,⁸⁰ there is information on systems used at the John Edwards Memorial Foundation and at the Archives of Traditional Music at Indiana University. The latter archives uses a system incorporating the classification scheme developed for the Yale University *Human Relations Area Files* to supply some of the access points needed in an ethnomusicological collection.⁸¹ The procedures manual used in organizing the country and western materials of John Edwards Memorial Foundation has been issued;⁸¹ these procedures are said to be broad enough in scope that they can be adapted to other collections.

Although their catalogs have not been published, two institutions which have produced unusually high quality local controls should be mentioned. James Coover wrote of the card catalog of the 5,000-disc collection of the Music Department of Vassar College: "The quality of that cataloging is exceptional. For almost every recording, cataloging was done by actual audition with score in hand, and the call number of that score was put customarily on the record catalogue card. In the case of works whose scores were difficult to locate, for those appearing in *Denkmäler* or in appendices to literary studies, for example, even the precise page number was added to the call number on the record card. In many instances, variants among several performances of the same work, and their corresponding scores, were noted."⁸² Another catalog, said to be of unusually high quality, is the catalog of the Historical Sound Recordings Program of Yale University, which includes matrix numbers, analytics, and other material not provided for in the typical "library style" cataloging.

Of the various types of discography, systematic discography has made the most progress. It is also the division of discography which most urgently needs further development. For the immediate future, the development of general access tools and the cataloging and indexing of local collections will remain the most important problem with

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which sound archivists must deal. The computer, which seems to offer the answer to so many problems, is only now being used to provide access to sound recordings, and progress is slow. There are, however, a number of traditional approaches to access which are waiting only for discographers and institutions with the resources to get started and keep going.

An urgent desideratum is a bibliography of discographies. This should include both discographies published as monographs and those published in the periodical literature. It should be a general bibliography, not limited by the type of material recorded or the physical form in which it is issued. Related to this is the need for a directory which lists in considerable detail the contents of all public archives. Such a resource guide will surely be an item of top priority with the International Association of Sound Archives and the Association for Recorded Sound Collections. These same organizations also seem to be the best hope for national and international standardization.

It is obvious that a system of identification based on (or similar to) the system of International Standard Book Numbers would be of great value in both national and international discographical controls. This problem was discussed at both the Leipzig (1970) and the St. Gall (1971) meetings of the International Association of Sound Archives, and apparently some progress is being made towards the establishment of such a system. It would be fortunate if it were started soon so that International Standard Sound Recording Numbers could be included in the early issues of the catalogs of copyrighted sound recordings.

Another suggestion that needs to be investigated is the commercial feasibility of publishing catalogs of selected archives which, for some reason, are especially noteworthy (e.g., because of their holdings or because, like the Vassar College collection and the Yale collection, they have been cataloged with unusual care and thoroughness). The logical method of producing such catalogs would be the methods used by the G. K. Hall Company.

Anyone wishing to learn the fundamentals of discography must turn to a large number of sources, most of which are quite complicated—even unintelligible—to the beginner. As a start, one could use a manual of practical discography which covers in detail the fundamentals of systematic discography. Perhaps in time some adventurous library school will even offer a course in the fundamentals of discography. Parenthetically it can be noted that discography has managed to develop with little help from librarians and even less from library schools. For

almost forty years, the field has attracted men and women of remarkable industry, imagination, and even genius. "We find here," as Georg Schneider wrote when discussing bibliographers, "a gallery of various, sometimes fascinating personalities, including scholars and wits, dreamers and men of action, idealists and practical people, as well as the hermit and the worldling."⁸³ A tremendous debt is owed discographers for the work they have done and continue to do; but it is now time for the library profession to begin to support their work and contribute in a substantial way to the furthering of major discographical projects which are beyond the ability of the lone discographer.

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