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The Cataloger’s Future in the 21st-Century Research Library: What Will We Do and How Will We Do It?

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The Cataloger’s Future in the 21st-Century Research Library: What Will We Do and How Will We Do It?
Purpose of Cataloging

Search and Retrieval

• Helps users find items in a library
• Places items of similar subject content together

Inventory

• Helps librarians determine what is owned/accessible
Henriette Avram

MARC format

- Library of Congress
- Initiated in 1968
- Helps computers replicate catalog cards
- Does not encode for discrete bibliographic elements
Technology Years

According to Jen Kramer (Joomla! training guide author), technology years are about the same length as dog years

7 Earth years = 1 technology year

Conclusion:

MARC is the equivalent of 300+ years old!
Roy Tennant declares...

**MARC**

**MUST**

**DIE**

(Strong words)
Future of MARC

- Problem: encodes data from *catalog records*, not from *bibliographic entities directly*

- Legacy format
  - Will have a split file for a long time
  - Someone may create code that will enable its contents to be extended to the Web
The Metadata Universe

And so many more...
Opportunities

- Retrospective cataloging-on-demand (patron-driven cataloging)
- Interface & system development (active role)
- Direct interaction with patrons
- Incorporation of social cataloging morés
- Serve as metadata consultants, multidisciplinary
- Cooperative ventures to build comprehensive collections
Benefits of Automation

- Digital as the default format
- Descriptive cataloging will become more automated
- Catalogers can focus on subject assignment and classification (high added value)
- Catalogers can link to more related content
How to Get There from Here

• Chance to reexamine workflows
• Can merge provider metadata with ours (e.g. ONIX)
• Training: ALCTS Webinars, codeacademy.com, et al.
• Intersect more with academic disciplines (e.g. DarwinCore)
• Pride of purpose (well-informed, embrace change, etc.)
• Goal: “Catalog as place,” like “library as place”
Discussion

What are your thoughts?

Thank you for your time and attention