

A Comparative Analysis of the 14th and 16th Editions of the Dewey Decimal Classification Class 130 As an Index to Changes in Social Attitude and Perception

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I propose to examine three levels of difference in class 130 PSYCHOLOGY in *DC14* and *DC16* as indicators of change in the fabric of thought and philosophy in the first half of this century. Only sixteen years separated the two editions, from 1942 to 1958, but these sixteen years saw a series of earthshaking events and innovations: World War II, the computer, the atomic bomb, transatlantic jet travel, the MacDonal hamburger, and the Whammo hula hoop.

But the distance between *DC14* and *DC16* is even greater; the 14th edition was the last of a direct line stretching back to Melvil Dewey himself, whereas the 16th edition was the first of the modern tradition, new in outlook as well as in format. In other words, *DC14* was rooted in the nineteenth century culture; *DC16* was the first to reflect the twentieth century. (*DC15*, like a poor relative, is never discussed in public.) The three levels I shall examine are the terminological, the intellectual, and the metaphysical.

On even the most cursory examination, *DC14* sounds a stern note with terms like MADNESS, LUNACY, INSANITY: an implicit condemnation of mental instability as a lack of moral fiber. *DC16* shows a much kinder objectivity with the term PSYCHONEUROSES.

What the 14th edition calls EFFECTS OF WORRY is renamed EFFECTS OF ANXIETY; that is, the nineteenth century saw WORRY, or at least its EFFECTS, as sheer self indulgence on the part of the worrier, whereas the twentieth century regards it as a blameless reaction to a world state at least phonologically akin to ANGST.

What the 16th edition at 132 calls ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY the 14th edition brands as MENTAL DERANGEMENTS, including INSANITY AND MENTAL ALIENATION at 132.1 with its subdivisions ORGANIC and FUNCTIONAL BRAIN DISEASES and going on to include the nine muses of dysfunction, APHASIA, ALEXIA, AGRAPHIA, APRAXIA and so on, to AMUSIA.

Another subdivision of the same class in *DC14* is NEUROSES DUE TO SPECIAL POISONS: ALCOHOLISM and METALLIC TREMOR, which the 16th edition removes to the more innocuously labeled ANTISOCIAL COMPULSIONS—again, a societal concern rather than something like a deliberately self-inflicted injury.

At this point, notice that we are observing not merely interesting terminological changes from 19th century bluntness to 20th century depersonalization, but instead a fundamental shift from the puritan ethic of self improvement through self awareness, and of individual responsibility for individual success or failure, to the deterministic view of man helplessly molded by the pressures of his environment.

We see this more clearly when we realize that *DC16*'s 132.6 ANTI-SOCIAL COMPULSIONS not only includes 132.72 ALCOHOLISM, but is itself the new working for *DC14*'s DERANGEMENTS LEADING TO CRIME (CRIMINAL MANIAS) and DERANGEMENTS LEADING TO VICE (VICIOUS MANIAS). What *DC14* called PATHOLOGICAL SWINDLERS are now in *DC16* only PATHOLOGIC DEFRAUDERS, and *DC14*'s 132.75 SEXUAL MANIAS AND ABERRATIONS becomes

merely SEXUAL DEVIATIONS, with the immediate, though now predictable distraction of a scope note "FOR SEX DEVIATES IN SOCIETY SEE 301.424" (i.e., in the social sciences).

It is interesting to note *DC14*'s special subdivision (blandly ignored in *DC16*) of 132.754 SEXUAL PERVERSIONS, with its seven numbered subdivisions for EXHIBITIONISM, FETISHISM, MASOCHISM, SADISM, INVERSION and the like, and ending, inevitably, in 132.7549 OTHER PERVERSIONS. Incidentally, a similar list in *DC14*'s 176 SEXUAL ETHICS includes the perversion 176.6 ADULTERY. This is clear evidence of the world reflected in *DC14*, when a lady whose name was mentioned in the mess was barred forever from decent society, and where the sight of a well-turned ankle inspired in strong men fevers of raging and insatiable lust.

Elsewhere we see the same differences. In 137 INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOLOGY, *DC14* names the CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS OF PERSONALITY at 137.3 as: 137.31 PHYSICAL, 137.38 MORAL AND RELIGIOUS (of course), 137.33 MENTAL, etc. *DC16* turns this class into the PSYCHOLOGY OF PERSONALITY, including 137.3 PERSONALITY DETERMINANTS: 137.31 BIOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL, 137.32 ACQUIRED, with never a mention of MORAL or RELIGIOUS.

Another aspect of this contrast occurs in 131, called PHYSIOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY by *DC14*, and omitted in *DC16* by moving most of it to the antiseptic world of 610 MEDICINE. At 131.3 MENTAL HYGIENE, *DC14* outlines a rigorous program of self-help, embodied in that motto of the heartier private schools, *mens sana in corpore sano*—a healthy mind in a healthy body: 131.32 MENTAL HEALTH, with its subdivisions 131.323 INFLUENCES OF PERSONAL HABITS, DIET, ETC. ON MENTAL HEALTH, and 131.324 NEW THOUGHT. *DC16* renames 131.32 as FACTORS PROMOTING MENTAL HEALTH, and emphasizes the blameless desperation of it all in 131.322 THERAPEUTIC COUNSELLING. NEW THOUGHT is quietly but firmly removed to 289.9 RELIGIOUS SECTS NOT OTHERWISE PROVIDED FOR.

The same stern note of 19th century rectitude is echoed on the other side of the coin; not only are *DC16*'s 136.766 MENTALLY RETARDED CHILDREN damned in *DC14* as BACKWARD, but 136.765 GIFTED CHILDREN are equally castigated as PRECOCIOUS.

We may summarize the 20th century philosophy of *DC16*'s view of the mind and human behavior as "You can't help yourself," and the lingering 19th century view

in *DC14* as "You *can* help yourself, and you had damned well better." In other words, says *DC14*:

- (a) It is *your* fault if you fall ill (go mad); and
- (b) Get a hold of yourself and straighten up;

whereas *DC16* says:

- (a) You are under intolerable pressure, you poor soul; and
- (b) You need counselling.

Indeed, *DC14*'s MNEMONIC DERANGEMENTS and MEMORY DEFECTS become AMNESIAS in *DC16*, with a reference to NORMAL FORGETTING.

We should never forget, however, that the nineteenth century mind had stranger depths and passageways than we often realize. Class 130 includes not only PSYCHOLOGY but also what *DC14* calls TRANSCENDENTAL PSYCHOLOGY, translated by *DC16* as OCCULT SCIENCES. The same objectivity and determinism seen in *DC16*'s treatment of psychology operates here to include 133.07 PARAPSYCHOLOGY (the shadow of J.B. Rhine) and to reduce all other detail to simple, unadorned classes without further detail: APPARITIONS, HALLUCINATION, DIVINATION (including CRYSTAL GAZING, DIVINING RODS, and FORTUNE TELLING), GEOMANCY, WITCHCRAFT, CHARLATANRY, TELEPATHY and SPIRITUALISM. What is not reduced to mundane pragmatism is dismissed as parlor trickery.

This is a meager list compared with the sumptuous detail of *DC14*, that reveals the wilful, almost indulgent credulity of our puritan ancestors, anxious for the vicarious excitement of speculating on the unknown. 133 TRANSCENDENTAL PSYCHOLOGY reads like a litany of such a longing: 133.1 APPARITIONS, GHOSTS; 133.2 HALLUCINATIONS, ILLUSIONS; 133.3 DIVINATION; 133.4 WITCHCRAFT, SORCERY, MAGIC, DEMONOLOGY; ETC. The detail within these is considerable:

- .323 Motor automatisms: divining rod (Cumberlandism) dowsing for water and precious metals [a sound 19th century business sense adds *see also* 622.12 PROSPECTING IN MINING]

coscinomancy (divining with a balanst siv), ring divining, ordeal by Bible and key, sand divination, divination by automatic writing, trance speaking, etc. [represented in *DC16* by the single term 133.323 DIVINING RODS]

- .333 Haruspication (inspection of entrails) hepatoscopy (inspection of liver) scapulimancy (divination by shoulder blade) divination by footprints in ashes, geomancy, etc. [represented in *DC16* by the single term 133.333 GEOMANCY]

and the apocalyptic:

- .334 Augury and omens: behavior and cries of birds, meeting ominous animals, signs, auspices, thunder and lightning, falling stars, celestial signs, prodigies, portents, etc. [this section has vanished entirely in *DC16*]

Listen to the relish in 133.42:

Activities and practices: satanism, witches sabbaths, nocturnal revels; incantations, evocations, spells, evil eye; demonic obsession and possession, diakka; lycanthropy, incubi, succubi, vampires, flying through air, riding on broomsticks, etc.

In the post-Heisenberg age of *DC16*, where even uncertainty is certain, we lay bare our psyches so often, lave them in encounter groups, flay them in *est* experiences, that familiarity breeds, if not contempt, at least a reduction of differences to a judgmental monochrome. In *DC14* we glimpse for a moment the turmoil beneath the stern exterior of the hardheaded pragmatists of the nineteenth century who judged men's minds and behavior by external measures of social performance, and saw so little of their interior world that their maps of the mind were colored by imagination, and bore many legends of *terra incognita* and *here be dragons*.