OPAC Record

Control no.	1847920705
Information code	080820s2008 en kW 0001 eng e
Class	302.230973
Author	Herman, Edward S.
Title	Manufacturing consent: the political economy of the mass media; Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky
Edition	Updated ed
Publisher/date	London: Bodley Head, 2008
Physical description	432 p., 24 cm, pbk
Price	12.99
ISBN	9781847920706, m
	1847920705, v
History note	Previous ed.: New York: Pantheon, 1988; London: Vintage, 1994
Annotation	The authors set out to show that an underlying elite consensus largely structures all facets of the news. The result is an account of the propagandist nature of the communications media, and of how they can be read, and their function interpreted, in a new way.
Subject heading	Mass media, Political aspects, United States
Author AE	Chomsky, Noam
Description	We normally think that the press are cantankerous, obstinate, and ubiquitous in its search for truth. In "Manufacturing Consent", Edward Herman and Noam Chomsky show how an underlying elite consensus largely structures all facets of the news. Far from challenging established power, the media work hard to discover and mirror its assumptions. The authors skilfully dissect the way in which the marketplace and the economics of publishing significantly shape the news. They reveal how issues are framed and topics chosen, and contrast the double standards underlying accounts of free elections, a free press, and governmental repression. The authors conclude that the modern mass media can best be understood in terms of a 'propaganda model'. News and entertainment companies dedicate themselves to profit within the established system. Their interests require that they support the governing assumptions of state and private power. The propaganda model provokes outrage from journalists, editors and broadcasters, but twenty years after first publication, "Manufacturing Consent" remains the most

important critique of the mass media.

The above information retrieval record was taken from an OPAC. The record itself is designed to ensure that library users can easily find items that are relevant for their search terms. As a result, the record is a fairly comprehensive representation of the text itself. The record should also satisfy both the demands of the experienced user and the casual browser, particularly as both types of user are likely to refer to the record itself.

In order to meet the demands of a variety of users, the record contains a number of different information elements including fields for ISBN (control number), Class, Author, Title, Edition, Publisher and Date, Physical Description, Price, Subject Heading and Description. These fields are presented clearly and logically to ensure that the overall record is user friendly. The 'description' field particularly provides a great deal of information about the text itself, making it easier for the user to determine its relevance to their needs. In order to retrieve the record, the user can search for terms such as author, subject, title, class and ISBN. Consequently, it is relatively easy for the casual browser to use these fields in order to discover other relevant records.
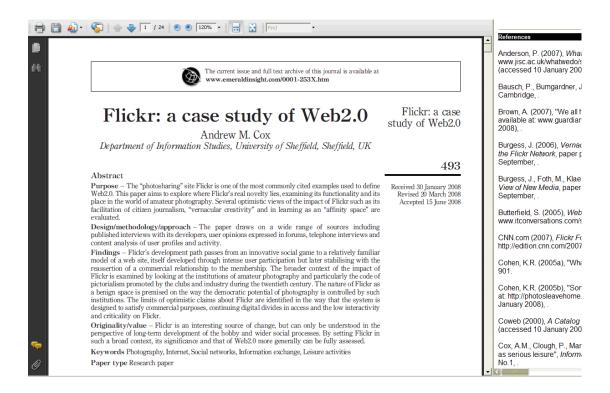
The record would benefit from the addition of user-based tagging that could be applied by library users. This would allow the record to contain terms that are not restricted to the formal subject headings that are provided within the record. This would also mean that the record would hold more relevance for the actual end user as it is in their language (rather than formal cataloguing language) and would also be useful in terms of finding related items that are 'tagged' with the same term.

The record itself draws its description directly from the item's record on Amazon. The description is fairly comprehensive and gives the user a good idea of the subject matter of the resource and its relevance to their search query. It also provides a link to enable the searcher to purchase a copy of the book on Amazon. However, the record does not provide the user with an abstract or any other links to external sources. It may be useful to add a link to the related entry on Google Books to provide more

detailed information about the text. It might also be useful to provide a link to its entry on LibraryThing to enable the user to discover similar items that may be of interest, as well as read reviews related to that record.

Overall, the record provides a useful brief bibliographic surrogate for the original. It contains all the relevant fields that would be required to enable a user to determine the value of the text as well as providing some support in accessing similar texts within the system. However, the introduction of user-based tagging, alongside external links, would enable the user to discover more about the text as well as making it easier to discover similar texts that may be of interest.

Full Text Record

The above record is taken from a full text database of periodical articles on Emerald. The database itself is searchable in a number of different ways. For example, you can search the database by author, title, keywords and by name of the publication. The actual text itself also includes this abstract at the beginning of the article which will clearly identify the relevance of the text to the particular individual. The abstract itself contains a number of elements including Paper type, Purpose and Keywords.

The keywords can then by used to conduct a further search for similar items that are indexed in the same way, allowing the user to discover other texts that may also be relevant. The keywords themselves are normally proposed by the author of the text when the article is submitted to the publisher and are therefore not necessarily appropriate terms for the end user, which may cause some conflict between what the user is expecting and what they are presented with.

   The full text itself is presented in .pdf format which also enables the user to search the text and will highlight those terms throughout the article. This applies for both single word search terms as well as for complete phrases. This is particularly useful as it will aid the intended user to go directly to parts of the texts that are more relevant for them. This saves having to read through the entire text trying to find very specific terms that are used within the text.

   Although the full text generally meets the needs of the end user, there are a number of elements that could improve the way it fulfils the needs of the end user. For example, it may be beneficial for the end user to be able to apply keywords to the text. Although those particular keywords may seem logical from the perspective of the author, they may not represent what the end user interprets as being important aspects of the text. Furthermore, it may be useful if the references for the articles are fully accessible. Due to the nature of the layout of the .pdf file, it is not possible to simply click on a link in the list of references if it runs onto a second line. Instead the links need to be copied and pasted into the browser's search bar to enable the text to be retrieved. This is not particularly practical or user-friendly. Finally, it would also be useful if the text could indicate other articles that may be of interest other than those that are cited. This would enable the intended user to seek out other resources that are closely linked in terms of content.

<u>**Printed Catalogue Record**</u>

Deaver, Jeffery
The Sleeping Doll
Hodder & Stoughton
June, £6.99, 9780340833865
The creator of Lincoln Rhyme
introduces a new investigator,
Kathryn Dance.

The above record is taken from a printed catalogue (*The Bookseller*) and it is intended
to provide a buyer with enough information to decide whether an item is suitable for
purchase. As a buyer needs quick and simple information about the materials that
they are considering to purchase, the entry needs to communicate basic information
about the text in a succinct format. A long detailed entry will not be of much value
for the user as they will not have the time to examine every text. They will simply
require a title, author, cost and a brief description of the contents of the text. This
should then provide enough information for the buyer to know whether the text is
appropriate for their library/retail outlet.

Furthermore, there are certain other implications for an increased bibliographic
record. Not only is it necessary from the purchasers' perspective that the record is
concise, it is also important from the perspective of the publisher of such records. As
the records are quite basic, it enables the publisher to list a large number of items
within the confines of the publication. If the records were to be more comprehensive
it would result in the need to produce a larger publication and, consequently, a marked
increase in costs. Consequently, it is desirable to maintain the format above and keep
bibliographic records succinct.

The record includes author, title, publisher, release date, price, ISBN and a brief
description of the text. The title and the author are represented at the top of the
record, shortly followed by the release date and price. Unlike the OPAC record, price
and release date have greater prominence in the record. This is mainly due to the
needs of the end user. The primary concern for any buyer is the cost itself, as they

will have budgets to work to and will need to monitor expenditure quite closely. Of course, in relation to an OPAC record, this is not a concern for the user as their needs are not impacted by issues related to cost. As the record is designed to satisfy the needs of the end user, it is necessary for this information to be clearly stated within the record.

The records are listed under a variety of categories within *The Bookseller*. For example, there are categories for 'General Fiction' and 'Biography and Memoirs'. Separating books into such categories enables the buyer to quickly and efficiently find items related to specific areas they are interested in developing. For example, if they wished to broaden their range of books on 'Education', they can go straight to the page listing all new items that are related to that category. These items are then listed alphabetically by publisher within their category.

Clearly, these bibliographic records aren't intended to act as surrogates for the texts themselves. They merely provide enough information to allow the user to decide whether the item is appropriate for purchase. There is no requirement to present a large amount of information about each item as this is does not meet the needs of the user. Consequently price and publication date are of as much importance as the actual content of the text itself. To expand on this type of record would be unnecessary as it would raise costs for the producer of the printed catalogue as well as provide superfluous information for the end user. The records need to be quick and simple to access to ensure that quick decisions can be made on purchase.

Part 2 – New Information Retrieval Record

<u>Record Elements</u>

Author

Title

Publisher/date of publication

Edition

Physical description

Price

ISBN

Subject Headings

Tags

Google Books

LibraryThing

Extract

Amazon link

Rating/Review

The above information retrieval record is designed to be applied to a collection of fiction texts. As the record elements will be presented on an OPAC, it is designed to be easy for the user to access and understand. Consequently, it should meet the demands of both the experienced searcher and the casual browser, as both user types are likely to access the record. The record itself contains the standard elements that would be expected in a typical OPAC record: author, title, publisher, ISBN etc. As well as these standard elements, there are a number of other elements to aid the needs of the user.

The record includes user-generated tags that can be applied by other users to indicate genre or subject matter. The initial record would represent the first ten tags and then contain a link to all the tags that have been applied to the item. By clicking on these tags, the user would be presented with a list of other items that have been tagged with the same terms. This would enable the end user to discover other items of interest that they would perhaps not have considered before. This would also make the

catalogue more responsive to its users by allowing them to have input in the representation of the record and adding terms that are more relevant to them.

With regard to conducting a search, the user should be able to search by a number of different terms. For example, they should be able to search by title, author and ISBN amongst others. In addition to these search terms, the application of user-based tags could also be utilised. As a user-based tagging field has been added to the record, a tag cloud could be employed to help the user retrieve relevant records. On the initial search screen, a list of the most common tags could be displayed to enable the user to quickly and easily find items that are tagged with that particular term. This would then present a full list of all the items that have had that particular tag applied to them, which would enable the end user to discover a number of items that may be of interest. For example, clicking on the tag 'media' would present a list of all the items that have been tagged with that term. The tag cloud itself would include the ten most popular tags that have been applied by users, which would enable a user to simply click on one of the more popular tags before being presented with a list of items that have been tagged in that way.

Furthermore, alongside the ability to tag an item, the record will allow users to add their own reviews of the text. This, in combination with the addition of tags to the record, makes the bibliographic record more user-centred and less focused on the formal aspects of the record. Users would also be able to view other items that have been reviewed by a particular user, enabling them to discover texts of interest that they may not have been aware of before. The addition of more user-generated content would ensure that records are more relevant to the individual user and also more useful for the casual browser.

The record also includes links to various external websites, including Google Books, LibraryThing and Amazon. These links enable the user to find out more information about the item that they have selected. For example, Google Books provides links to reviews of the item, references from other web pages as well as references from scholarly works (useful for academic users of the record). Furthermore, LibraryThing provides readers' recommendations of similar texts as well as reviews of the text. These elements would make it a far better browsing experience for the end user, and

provide them with greater information than the actual bibliographic record would allow.

As a result of these proposed record elements, the records should ensure that the user is able to predict the relevance to their information needs. It contains elements that are useful for both the casual browser, as well as the more experienced user. The links to external websites provides the borrower with more information about the text that the record represents. As people who read fiction might be more open to browsing for other items that might be of interest, the addition of user-generated content provides this particular type of user with more tools to aid their search. Furthermore, the addition of tags to the record will enable users to access similar titles quickly and efficiently by simply clicking on a particular tag.

In terms of indexing fiction, there are a number of methods by which such items can be indexed. Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) is one such method of indexing items. This method of indexing has been particularly popular in public libraries in terms of classifying works of non-fiction. By applying a Dewey number to an item, it ensures that the user can find similar works that may be of interest. However, it is not particularly practical when it comes to fiction as it gives little indication of the 'aboutness' of a particular item. For example, all fiction of English origin is classified with the Dewey number 823 followed by the abbreviated form of the author's surname. The lack of indication of 'aboutness' makes it particularly troublesome for categorising fiction as this is the primary concern of the end user.

The application of Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) to index items would, however, aid the discovery of fictional works that may be of interest to the casual browser. Rather than the application of a classification number that merely reflects external aspects of the text, subject headings would allow the user to easily find other texts that may be of interest. For example, *1984* by George Orwell has the following subject headings:

Subjects: Totalitarianism --Fiction.
London (England) --Fiction.
Political fiction.

Science fiction.

Dystopias.

In terms of retrieval of items, the use of subject headings would considerably aid the retrieval of fiction for the end user. Classifying in this way ensures that items can be retrieved based on their content rather than purely by external elements. Ultimately, this is how the majority of library users would search for works of fiction, rather than searching by country of origin. However, LCSH is not without its problems, particularly as it only really defines the subject in very superficial terms and does not really provide a full indication of the actual 'aboutness' of the text.

  In conclusion, traditional methods of classification, such as DDC, are not appropriate for classifying works of fiction, particularly for an OPAC record. As they solely reflect external elements of the text, they do not aid the casual browser wishing to discover new works of fiction. The application of subject headings however, helps the end user to explore other works of fiction that they may not have considered before. By clicking on the subject heading (or searching for a particular heading), the user would then be presented with a list of other items with the same heading. This compares favourably to using Dewey classification as the discovery of new texts would be particularly challenging using this system of indexing as it does not take into account the subject matter of a work of fiction.