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**From the Selected Works of Karen S Calhoun**

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# Report on Stack Collocation Loss

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# REPORT ON STACK COLLOCATION LOSS

## PREPARED BY KAREN CALHOUN (AUGUST 1997)



### MEMORANDUM

*To:* Christian Boissonnas  
*From:* Karen Calhoun  
*Date:* August 12, 1997  
*Subject:* **Examples of Lost Collocation**



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In preparation for your presentation to CUL unit heads later this month, I've attached some examples of *worst-case* library stack disarrangement that can be predicted to occur following the implementation of the proposed changes in CTS. (1) My investigation picked up where Jim LeBlanc's 1995 copy cataloging study (2) left off, and wherever possible I gathered examples from his data set.

Right now CTS excludes items with call numbers for music, Olin reference, fine arts, literature, science/technology conferences, and several other categories from fastcatting. If the CTS proposal for eliminating the backlog is approved, books in these categories will no longer be excluded from fastcat. Jim's 1995 study provides us with just what we need at this point--an analysis of potential call number drift, should the current fastcat exclusions be eliminated.

If the fastcat exclusions had been abandoned this fiscal year, Jim's study suggests that some 5,000 of the 76,000 titles cataloged by CTS in FY96-97 would have ended up 10 or more spaces away from their ideal shelf location in CUL. Many of the 5,000 titles would likely be for the literature, fine arts and music collections.

### Science and Technology Conferences

Jim's findings suggest that using fastcat to process science/technology conferences will have a relatively minor negative impact on collocation in the engineering, science and math libraries. His sample of over 2000 worksheets included 369 records for sci/tech conferences. In this group, accepting the call number "as is" from member records would have made absolutely no difference in the choice of classification 84% of the time. Items would have ended up in the stacks in exactly the same spot 45% of the time, and within 10 spaces of the ideal shelf location 77% of the time.

### Literature, Fine Arts, Music

Literature is another story. The sample included 477 records for literature. In this group, CTS copy catalogers chose the same classification number as the member library only 19% of the time. (3) Had member call numbers been accepted as is, items would have ended up in the stacks in the same spot 25% of the time, and within 10 spaces of the ideal location 62% of the time.

The findings for fine arts and music (736 sample records) are better but a cause for concern. The table below provides the results for various subsets and for the data set as a whole (2035 records).

Category	Same Classification	Exact Same Spot	Within 10 Spaces of Ideal
Conferences	84%	45%	77%
Literature	19%	25%	62%
Fine Arts	41%	40%	67%
Music	24%	45%	72%
All Categories	47%	40%	70%

## Worst Cases

I looked in detail at a small sample of records for literature, fine arts and music to learn more about the characteristics of member library call numbers that would have placed an item *10 or more* spaces away from the ideal shelf location in the CUL stacks. Thus, I looked in greater depth at the worst cases of collocation loss--those 38%, 33%, and 28% of new acquisitions likely to be severely dislocated on the literature, fine arts, and music collection shelves. I've provided some examples that illustrate the patterns of disarrangement and the reasons for them (see [Appendix](#)).

## Summary and Conclusions

Eliminating the fastcat exclusions will compromise collocation in the CUL stacks, especially for literature, fine arts and music. However, about *two-thirds* of the items received for the literature, fine arts, and music collections will be shelved in the *exact same spot to within 10 spaces* of the ideal location that would have been chosen by a CTS cataloger. About *one-third* of literature, fine arts, and music receipts currently excluded from fastcat are likely to be shelved *more than 10 spaces* away from the ideal shelf location.

The items predicted to be shelved more than 10 spaces away will be shelved there due to:

1. errors in member library cataloging records that will no longer be caught
2. local decisions made in the past by Cornell catalogers that will no longer be carried forward
3. diminished ability to keep books by the same author together (because each member library call number is no longer checked against the CUL shelflist)
4. the presence of a dense and lengthy shelf run for a prolific author in the CUL stacks

When librarians think about loss of collocation, they are generally thinking about categories 1 and 3 above. In the case of category 1 (member library errors), a recent article in the literature indicates that about 6% of the LC call numbers in cataloging copy from OCLC contain errors. [\(4\)](#)

As for category 2 (local decisions), CUL's long-standing policy to use the Cutter-Sanborn table for building classification/call numbers (rather than the more widely used LC tables) is behind the troubles here. If the proposed changes in CTS practices are approved, the effect will be an automatic rescinding of this policy in favor of standard LC author numbers. To ameliorate the disorder that will result from changing to a new cutting system, it may be worthwhile to consider the feasibility of some kind of detection/correction cycle for the most egregious losses of collocation for individual authors, artists and composers.

In conclusion, my investigation of worst cases for literature, fine arts and music suggests that eliminating the fastcat exclusions:

- will result in some problems that fall into categories 1 and 3
- will result--in some cases, over time--in a *better* fit of CUL call numbers with standard LC classification numbers for individual authors assigned by LC and accepted by most ARL libraries
- will have a moderate to severe effect on the ability to browse the shelves of works by or about a prolific literary author, composer or artist, depending on the specifics of each case

Please let me know if you have questions or need additional information.



## Appendix: Examples of Worst-Case Shelf Dislocation

[Example Set 1: Member Library Error](#)

[Example Set 2: Cornell Local Decision or Error](#)

[Example Set 3: Long Shelf Run, Different Spot \(Prolific Author\)](#)

[Example Set 4: Richness of Cornell Collection](#)



### Example Set 1: Member Library Error

#### 1a.

TITLE: Something about women / P. H. Newby.

PUBLISHED: London : Deutsch, 1995.

NOTIS #	ANG3477
Dislocation (# of Spaces)	32
CUL Call No.	PR6027.E94 S65 1995
Remarks	Shelved in CUL stacks with other novels by Newby in English authors, 1900-1960.
Member Call No.	PR6027.E38 S65x 1995
Remarks	Places work in CUL stacks with English authors, 1900-1960, between Neilson, Francis, and Neuburg, Victor; LC class schedule specifies that .E78 = Nevins, so member

library cutter (.E38) is out of line with instructions in LC class schedule.
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**1b.**

TITLE: El jardin / Diana Bellessi.

PUBLISHED: Rosario-Buenos Aires : Bajo la luna nueva, c1992.


NOTIS #	ALL0008
Dislocation (# of Spaces)	lots
CUL Call No.	PQ8220.12.E44 J3
Remarks	Shelved (incorrectly?) with another work by Bellessi with individual authors from Ecuador; Bellessi was born in Argentina and her LC author number is PQ7798.12.E3943; one CUL work is shelved there; see also n85-197799.
Member Call No.	PQ8820.12.E39 J368 1992
Remarks	Places work with authors of the Philippine Islands (member cataloger appears to have transcribed class # incorrectly).

**1c.**

TITLE: Fantasy and fantasia : a theory of the musical picturesque / Annette Richards.

PUBLISHED: 1995.

NOTIS #	APW7120
Dislocation (# of Spaces)	lots
CUL Call No.	ML410.B118 R51 1995a
Remarks	Shelved with other works about CPE Bach.
Member Call No.	ML29.4.R514
Remarks	Member library local decision; a made-up number that Stanford University uses to shelve music dissertations; if accepted, would have placed work with literature on music published by music societies.

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## Example Set 2: Cornell Local Decision or Error

### 2a. Error?

TITLE: Light years / James Salter.

PUBLISHED: New York : Vintage Books, 1995.

NOTIS #	ANH6595
Dislocation (# of Spaces)	20,705
CUL Call No.	PS3537.A46 L7 1995
Remarks	Shelved with American authors, 1900-1960 and with 3 other Salter titles; we've maintained consistency with initial Cornell decision to class with authors who flourished 1900-1960, even though Salter has flourished since the mid-70s.
Member Call No.	PS3569.A4622 L54 1995
Remarks	Places work (correctly, some would say) with American authors, 1961- and in agreement with LC classification decision; see n78-94026.

### 2b. Local decision

TITLE: Republic 5 / Plato ; with an introduction, translation and commentary by S. Halliwell.

AUTHOR/NAME: Plato.

PUBLISHED: Warminster, England : Aris & Phillips, c1993.

NOTIS #	ALU7221
Dislocation (# of Spaces)	different floors
CUL Call No.	JC71.P35 1993b
Remarks	Shelved in political science with 11 to 15 other editions of the <i>Republic</i> .
Member Call No.	PA4279.R5513 1993
	Places work in classical Greek literature with particular

Remarks	editions of books from the Republic; CUL has 4 other editions here.
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**2c. Local decision**

TITLE: Picasso : in his words / edited by Hiro Clark.

PUBLISHED: San Francisco : Collins Publishers, 1993.


NOTIS #	ALG6282
Dislocation (# of Spaces)	more than 100
CUL Call No.	ND813.P58 A2 1993
Remarks	Shelved with Spanish painting, individual artists, with about 180 other works by or about Picasso.
Member Call No.	ND553.P5 A2 1993
Remarks	Places work with French painting, individual artists, with 5 other works by or about Picasso; Picasso is classified by LC and many other research libraries with French painters.

**2d. Cataloger judgment**

TITLE: Hs u Shuo-fang chi. (Works of Hsu, Shuo-fang)

PUBLISHED: Hang-chou : Che-chiang ku chi ch u pan she, 1993.

NOTIS #	ANN1509
Dislocation (# of Spaces)	73
CUL Call No.	PL2358.H45 1993
Remarks	Shelved with works about Chinese drama; case of cataloger judgment.
Member Call No.	PL2862.U249 1993
Remarks	Places work alphabetically with individual Chinese authors, 1949- and in agreement with LC classification decision; see 95-468371.

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**Example 3: Long Shelf Run, Different Spot (Prolific Author)**

TITLE: &lt;Poems. Selections. 1990&gt;

Stikhotvoreniia / Boris Pasternak.

PUBLISHED: Moskva : "Molodaia gvardiia", 1990.

NOTIS #	AJE2374
Dislocation (# of Spaces)	38
CUL Call No.	PG3476.P29 A6 1990b
Remarks	Shelved with 124 other works by and about Pasternak.
Member Call No.	PG3476.P27 A17 1990s
Remarks	Places work in run of 4 other works on Pasternak; member number agrees with LC standard; see n79-18438.

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**Example Set 4: Richness of Cornell Collection****4a.**

TITLE: Eternal sections / Tom Raworth.

PUBLISHED: Los Angeles : Sun &amp; Moon Press, 1993.

NOTIS #	ALF2753
Dislocation (# of Spaces)	17
CUL Call No.	PR6068.A96 E8 1993
Remarks	Shelved with other works by Raworth, a contemporary English poet.
Member Call No.	PR6068.A93 E7 1993
	Places work alphabetically after Raven, David S. in run of



Remarks	works by contemporary English authors.
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**4b.**

TITLE: Gedenkschrift : 50 Jahre Internationale Bach-Gesellschaft Schaffhausen /  
herausgegeben von der Internationalen Bach-Gesellschaft Schaffhausen.

PUBLISHED: Stuttgart : Carus-Verlag, c1996.

NOTIS #	ANX4780
Dislocation (# of Spaces)	217
CUL Call No.	ML410.B1183 I503 1996
Remarks	Shelved with numerous other works about JS Bach Member.
Member Call No.	ML410.B1 I52 1996
Remarks	Places work alphabetically before Babaev and other Bachs (CPE Bach, Johann Christian Bach, etc.; LC appears to use M410.B13 for JS Bach.

**4c.**

TITLE: A piece of my heart = Pedacito de mi corazon : the art of Carmen Lomas Garza /  
Carmen Lomas Garza ; with an introduction by Amalia Mesa-Bains.

PUBLISHED: New York : New Press in association with the Laguna Gloria Art Museum,  
Austin, Texas : Distributed by W.W. Norton, [c1994?]

NOTIS #	ALV4054
Dislocation (# of Spaces)	16
CUL Call No.	ND237.L83 A4 1994
Remarks	Shelved next to exhibition catalog for same show.
Member Call No.	ND237.L6987 A4 1994
Remarks	Places work alphabetically with works about painting of the SW United States among artists whose names begin with the letter "L".

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1/ As described in the report "Changes in Central Technical Services: Backlog Elimination--Meeting the Challenge," August 6, 1997. [↑](#)

2/ LeBlanc, Jim. "Report on the 1995 member copy cataloging study: CTS Copy Cataloging Unit." Internal CTS study. [↑](#)

3/ This percentage is low because of CUL's long-standing local policy to use the Cutter-Sanborn tables for building author classification numbers, rather than the more widely accepted LC cutter tables. [↑](#)

4/ Massey, Susan A. and S. Michael Malinconico. "Cutting cataloging costs: accepting LC classification call numbers from OCLC cataloging copy." LRTS 41:1 (January 97): 29-38. [↑](#)

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