This study is a content analysis presenting and summarizing the existing online documentation concerning the topic of genrefication. Genrefication is the organization of public and or school libraries’ collections by subject heading rather than according to the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC). This is a heated controversial trend dating back to the 1890s. However, little has been added to the professional conversation since 2013. This paper seeks to lay a foundation for an informed discussion on the topic by culminating the existing information up to 2017 in a single location for introduction and further research and or discussion. It highlights the contributing factors enabling genrefication’s continued existence and success despite the lack of additional professional publications on the topic.

Headings:

Classification of Books – Arranging by subject heading

Genre Headings – Shelving

Genre Heading – Genrefication spectrum

Genrefication – History

Public and school libraries – U.S.
GENREFICATION: INTRODUCING AND EXPLAINING THE EXPONENTIAL TREND IN PUBLIC AND SCHOOL LIBRARIES

by
“Allie” Rachel K. Oouthouse

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Approved by:

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Dr. Brian Sturm
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Introduction

For the past eight years, a trend called genrefication has been rocking the public and school library worlds by replacing or modifying the Dewey Decimal System (DDC) in the U.S. (Beezley 2013; Buchter 2013; Sannwald 2014). Despite the trend, according to Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) [a global library information sharing cooperation that promotes the latest DDC materials], DDC was the most used library cataloging system in the world with 200,000 member libraries in more than 135 countries back in 2009 (Dewey Decimal Classification 2017).

Today many school and public libraries are striving to regain and maintain relevance in serving children and the general community populaces through the organization of their various collections (Introducing Anythink 2009). As library systems have transitioned from manual card catalog and subject indexes to digital catalogs online, individuals’ search patterns for information have changed over the past 141 years (Coyle 2016; Fister 2009). Humans internationally have made numerous, irreversible, life-changing discoveries from typewriters to personal computers, printing capabilities, the Internet, phones, travel – communication, as a whole, has changed (Coyle 2016).
Because of the discoveries since Melvil Dewey created DDC in 1876, topics that Dewey could never have imagined being related, have been proven to be interconnected (Cox 2011; Fister 2009; Plemmons 2016; Whitehead 2013). Modern United States individuals (specifically children) learn and are instructed upon different topics, facts and with methods that were not relevant when Dewey designed the current world-wide accepted cataloging system (Lynch and Mulero 2007).

For instance, Dewey could not have known that through the invention of a mechanical engine and the study of birds in a quarter century, man would come to fly, not only to the clouds but after an additional 56 years to the moon. Therefore, in Dewey’s system the single topic of flight is divided across four different DDC topics: science of birds, history of individuals who flew (local and not), the mechanics of machines, legends of flight. Though Dewey did provide three revisions to include such inventions and OCLC continues to make revisions even today, access to those revisions is not only costly but entirely predicated on the call number classification rather than shifting the information according to subject similarity (Dewey 1876 Decimal Classification 2017; OCLC).

Another example is the concept of American government in DDC. This large topic is divided into multiple subdivisions in the 300s and the 900s. To learn about Colonial America one must look in the 320s for feminine perspective, 330s for the contrast of the current government system, 920s for overviews of various Colonial contributors and 970s forward to learn about exact events, documents and individuals. Because of DDC’s silos all of this famous information could be sorted separately and misleadingly according to political perspectives. And yet, despite all these various
resources spread throughout DDC, a researcher would still not easily find details of colonial medicine, food, art or clothing in a single location.

One way libraries are contending with the modern, technology-driven process of information seeking is by contemplating the possibility of reorganizing their collections in the DDC stacks.

The function of storage stacks within the organization system of libraries remains the same as always but navigation of those shelves has become increasingly difficult due to altered subject knowledge and educational methods (Buchter 2014; Coyle 2016; Lynch and Mulero 2007). To put it simply, because people today know more or different information than people 141 years ago, this generation thinks about organization in a different way than earlier generations did or could.

Genrefication is a broad term used for an entire spectrum of processes used to organize the stacks of public and school library collections (Sannwald 2014). However, there is no other official or informal terminology for the existing variety along the spectrum. In general, any form of grouping individual physical materials according to subject content qualifies as genrefication. This single term has been used to describe everything from revitalizing directional signage (Fialkoff 2009) to nontraditional shelving (Cox 2011) to ditching Dewey (Whitehead 2012) and revolutionizing the purpose of a library (Introducing Anythink 2009).

In a broad sense, even DDC can be considered genrefication (Collazo 2015). This causes great consternation because genrefication is typically considered by all participants of the conversation to be specifically a move away from DDC in either fiction, nonfiction or both. According to all the sources of this paper, the purpose of all
genrefication is to enhance patrons’ ability to successfully browse a library collection without staff or technological assistance.

The goal of this paper is to synthesize the breadth of the vast, readily-available online information concerning the topic of genrefication. The intent of this document is to lay a foundation for diving into further research on the various facets of this trending spectrum.

A major premise for exploring genrefication is to achieve a fresh perspective of how libraries classify materials and collections (Beezley 2013). By synthesizing the available information academically, the results may produce either overwhelming support for or dissent from DDC in public and school libraries, highlighting the purpose and relevance of both DDC and the genrefication spectrum (Beezley 2013).

This document will examine the history of DDC and genrefication thus far. This includes providing an overview of the original DDC theoretical framework and methodology of subject indexing to lay a foundational groundwork for a deeper methodological study in the future.

Within the history of DDC and the emergence of genrefication, articles from 1890s forward are presented to demonstrate librarians’ reactions and alterations to DDC. The provided research will cover incidents occurring up to 2017, where libraries are moving from the numerical subject basis of DDC to the literary cataloging of genrefication, first in fiction and then into nonfiction.

Abbreviated case studies will examine why some libraries chose to be pioneers of genrefication in public and school library settings. The study will investigate the processes libraries pursue.
A strong controversy does exist among library professionals concerning this trend, with passionate extremes on both ends of the debate - especially among children’s service departments in public and school libraries. This paper declares a bias in favor of the concept of genrefication by either modifying or removing Dewey.

Many aspects of this research verify or debunk assumptions made by librarians across the field while discussing this trend. This document creates a bibliography of facts concerning attempts, successes and failures of genrefication in school and public libraries. Research will briefly mention the arguments of genrefication critics.

This document hopes to fill a niche of explaining facts around a very vague and controversial topic lacking detailed terminology. A variety of facts about genrefication exists online, but they are easily overlooked due to where they are listed. This research intends to enable an updated informed discussion on genrefication. By gathering reports of genrefication from initiation to years of operations, facts – rather than assumptions – will be held for inspection of genrefications’ success or failure in the specific fields of public and school libraries’ children departments.

Please note that little to nothing has been professionally or substantially added to the conversation of genrefication for the past four years though the controversy is still a heated discussion among library professionals and students. However, library students are conducting master’s papers and personal websites on the topic.

Within the results portion of this research paper, the author will reveal where these various libraries stand on the issue of genrefication today. This document will also highlight the public’s initial reaction to these various altered libraries.
Methodology

Exposure to Genrefication Conversation

The researcher was initially exposed to the conversation of modifying or replacing DDC during a 2016 summer field experience while pursuing a Masters of Science of Library Science with an emphasis on children and youth services in public libraries.

The researcher casually observed that many patrons under the age of 12 experienced extreme difficulty comprehending, navigating and exploiting DDC nonfiction. Young patrons silently expressed an interest in reading information for leisure by attempting to independently locate browsable areas of nonfiction using the catalog and familiarity with how DDC works. However, most were ultimately unsuccessful requiring not only guardian assistance, but also professional staff involvement. Patrons who approached librarians left with a book in hand and questions about DDC. Children who did not seek or accept librarian intervention focused more on computer and fiction interaction. Curious as to the cause of this difficulty, this researcher chose to investigate DDC alternatives to meet graduate research requirements for graduation.

Noting the seemingly illogical organization of correlating aspects of multiple topics, the researcher began a personal investigation into nonfiction cataloging alternatives. There is no single, dual or limiting number of locations that synthesized closely-related topics.
For example government structure, current social issues, history and relevant figures in the construction of the governing systems were in four different aisles across three different classes (300’s – in 320s, 330s and 340s-, 900’s – 910s, 930s, and 970s- and Biographies). The more narrow the topic, the farther the subject aspects appeared to spread from their relevant relations. Sport instruction, sport statistics and records, sport origins, famous sport figures and scientific principles behind how sports operate were spread across five different aisles and multiple classifications with no spatial correlation outside of the physical layout of DDC’s sequenced numeric system. The researcher began by discussing the concept of rearranging nonfiction within the local staff. Then she began observing eight libraries across five North Carolina counties to view stacks organization in general. Finally, she examined the available social and academic literature online.

**Gathering Data**

Therefore, the perspective was of an uninformed researcher aware of a possible issue for children in public libraries with no terminology. A strategy was created for conducting academic research into public library stack organization investigating if alternatives to DDC existed or were functionally operational for children.

Resources were predominantly located through extensive citation chasing. The initial search terms included combinations of “children”, “nonfiction”, “catalog(ing)”, “classification” and “Dewey alternatives” to discover the sources. The author entered these key words into Google Scholar, UNC Libraries’ Summons and Yahoo search engines. Each search came back with 8000 results for every combination with very few appearing relevant to the topic of stack organization or book arrangement for children.

Advisor Dr. Sturm, sharing an interest in the topic, recommended an additional search term to narrow the results: “genrefication”. Dr. Sturm’s term was entered into
UNC’s archive of masters papers resulting in five applicable and relevant master’s papers with resources. Seeing the success in one area, “genrefication” was reentered into Google Scholar, Google, Yahoo and UNC Library Summons.

This resulted in a number of national, informal writings by school librarians (blogs), students’ M.S.L.S. projects and major contributors with outdated peer-reviewed articles. Many of the blogs and articles recorded the experience of librarians as they investigated, pursued and ultimately shifted to genrefication. The content includes hypothetical contemplation of the concept scenarios, rationalized weighing of the decision to change – including analyses of the process’ potential risks and rewards – the transformation and then a chronicle of the step by step implementation of a new classification system within their institutions, though not necessarily in chronological, step-by-step order.

Because these informal records were created by active library professionals with master’s degrees in the field of library science, they frequently referenced other relevant data and authoritative resources. However, much of the student work gathered information without synthesizing it or synthesized a few of the older sources without gathering updated information.

Additional terms were found in these websites and articles such as “stacks organization”, “bookstore arrangement”, “BISAC”, “Metris”, “Spartan”, “Deweyless” and “Ditching Dewey”. At this point, vigorous citation chasing began to predictably recur. The researcher did not individually search each of the available UNC databases with the two rounds of terms because UNC Summary resulted in few but repeated titles, citations and individuals with these terms.

Although unable to access some peer review articles on genrefication schemas
through UNC libraries due to technical difficulties and copyright, Google and Yahoo resulted in a number of articles concerning public and school libraries across the U.S. Relevance was determined by the amount and quality of the information provided on the definition and employment of “genrefication”.

**Strategy for Research**

The bulk of this document was formed by fact checking the information most repeated on sources freely available online to UNC students and professionals living daily in the field with smaller collections.

The content provides a historical review of children’s nonfiction cataloging by touching on DDC’s origins, faults and the various advantages and disadvantages of the past eight years’ solutions. It will identify the lack of consistency in these systems and will segue into a study of school libraries that have altered or rejected DDC.

Once all of the relevant or accessible information links were gathered, the data was then read word for word and a citation added to the bibliography. After reading each culmination of data, the themes of every instance were noted, teasing out main ideas and the most fascinating statements. The most memorable, notable and cited sources were re-read and summarized. These summaries and factoids were then organized into chronological order of occurrence – not necessarily by publication date. However, the information will be presented along the linear spectrum of genrefication.

These summaries highlighted repeated processes. Although exact coding was not conducted, the phrases that were repeated across the conversation have been cited and highlighted through the presentation of information. Nevertheless, the wealth of knowledge exceeds the requirements of master’s graduation – providing a narrowing of
the topic to the more basic elements of genrefication such as history, terminology, procedures and general reception from populace. These revelations will be expounded upon in the results portion of this document as well as reviewed in the conclusion.

This paper is a qualitative content analysis of the professional and informal online publications concerning the topic of recent DDC alternatives for children. The research results rely most heavily on 12 abbreviated case studies of the most prominent and relevant school and public libraries. There are eight school libraries out of the dozens of blogs found online and four public libraries from journal articles, press releases and genrefication infosites. Specifically the research provides an overview of the current facts surrounding “genrefication”. It also seeks to provide a comprehensive bibliography on foundational components of the genrefication discussion.
History of Genrefication

DDC’s Formation & Operation

On September 1, 1876, Harvard College Library published Melvil Dewey’s gift of a cataloging guide (Sannwald 2014; Dewey 1876). Dewey’s classification was initially developed in 1873, after which he successfully tested, modified and implemented it in U.S. libraries (Sannwald 2014; Dewey 1876).

Dewey wrote in his catalog guide, “The system was devised for cataloguing and indexing purposes, but it was found on trial to be equally valuable for numbering and arranging books and pamphlets on the shelves” (Dewey 1876).

Therefore, Dewey never intended his system for shelving, but because it was “more economical than any other method which he has been able to find” (Dewey 1876); he allowed it to be used for shelving. Dewey was convinced implementing his system – despite the time and effort – was immeasurably useful to a library’s ability to function (Dewey 1876). And he was right, as DDC continues to be the most internationally used cataloging system in the world and in the U.S. (Beezley 2013; Dewey Decimal Classification 2017; Fister 2009).
Before diving into the concept of genrefication, there is value in briefly explaining DDC’s operation. Dewey divided library collections into nine separate special libraries based on the differences of subject content and assigned a number in the hundreds place (Dewey 1876):

- 100 Philosophy
- 200 Theology
- 300 Sociology
- 400 Philology
- 500 Natural Science
- 600 Useful Arts
- 700 Fine Arts
- 800 Literature
- 900 History

These classifications have been simplified to more comprehensible names as evident through a simple Google search or the directional signage visible in DDC library stacks –especially juvenile stacks (Dewey Decimal Classification 2017; OCLC). However, the organization of these subjects has not changed. Today, OCLC’s 23rd revision of DDC has ten main classes (OCLC):

- 000 Computer science, information & general works
- 100 Philosophy & psychology
- 200 Religion
- 300 Social sciences
- 400 Language
- 500 Science
- 600 Technology
- 700 Arts & recreation
- 800 Literature
- 900 History & geography

It is important to note that rather than basing the subjects or call numbers off of subject content, Dewey divides the classes of information by their differences, unable to comprehend the importance of the similarity context (Dewey 1876). Each digit from one to nine in the tens, ones, tenths place and so on of the DDC call number represents a narrower category within the previously identified subject (Adamich 2014; Dewey 1876; OCLC). The hundreds place the main category libraries, i.e., Natural Science (Adamich
201; Dewey 1876; OCLC). The tens places are one of nine independent primary divisions, i.e., Math (Adamich 2014; Dewey 1876; OCLC). The ones place defines a specific topic, i.e., Geometry (Adamich 2014; Dewey 1876; OCLC). The decimal then presents any further necessary division (Adamich 2014; Dewey 1876; OCLC). Because the class libraries are separate when inventions show information is intertwined, items with long call numbers can appear almost random in some locations within their numeric subject designations (Plemmons 2016; Whitehead 2012).

Arabic numerals were chosen for call numbers over Roman numerals, words or symbols in Dewey’s day due to the capability of creating legible hand written labels and records (Coyle 2016; Dewey 1876). As Karen Coyle wrote, “Libraries have always been driven by the technology of the times (2016).” In Dewey’s day, a professional type set printing press was required to make labels and cataloging cards, even those with hand written information (Coyle 2016). The prototypes for type writers were still being developed in the 1870s and the concept of having any kind of catalog – a record of what books are in a library collection - was less than 10 years old (Coyle 2016; Polt 2012). The decimal portion of DDC was specifically designed to meet any possible need of detailed minutia according to the existing collection and material - not to function as atypical decimal numbers (Dewey 1876; OCLC).

Under DDC, the call number is the exact location of the individual book regardless of shelf arrangement or library architectural design. If an individual understands decimals, the book is findable but the aisles are not required to be browsable, despite Dewey’s advocacy for ordering books by the “true content or subject” of books not the format or title wording of the book (Dewey 1876).
For the day, this was a radical concept. Previously library materials were recorded in a physical, unalterable book referred to as a catalog. The book’s record relied on shelf location – title Such-And-Such on aisle six, shelf two, third book from the left would have call number 6:2:3 (Coyle 2016; Dewey 1876). When books were added, shelves were shifted and call numbers required changing or lost meaning. Logically Dewey suggested finding the exact book not the exact shelf at a time where shelves were not organized in any uniform manner across the profession (Dewey 1876). Consider when Dewey discussed uniformity he meant at the time that no academic or archival library had any form of similar categorization, curriculum based or otherwise (Coyle 2016; Dewey 1897).

All forms of libraries adopted DDC with great ardor as the card catalog and school libraries themselves began to emerge (Adamich 2014; Beezley 2014; Buchter 2013; Coyle 2016). DDC works especially well in research, archives, academic and school libraries because it aligns with standards of higher learning curriculum (Adamich 2014).

Dewey explained, "Practical usefulness has been esteemed the most important thing. The effort has been to put each book under the subject to the student of which it would be most useful” (Dewey 1876; Sannwald 2014).

For the next 30 years, all librarians were content with Dewey’s system, with a single exception: fiction (Baker 1899; Sannwald 2014). Therefore, DDC is the foundation of genrefication’s development and the zero indicator on the genrefication spectrum (Collazo 2011; Cox 2011).
Pioneers of Genrefication

Withdrawing Fiction.

In the first decade of the 1900s, multiple librarians began to raise a fuss about the complications of cataloging fiction using Dewey’s single overarching subject method (Baker & Shepherd 1987; Borden 1909; Rathbone 1901; 1902; Sannwald 2014).

DDC shelves ALL of fiction alphabetized in the 800s with literature (Dewey 1897; OCLC; Collazo 2011; Cox 2011; Whitehead 2011). Today, fiction makes up most of public and school library collections (Borden 1909; Collazo 2011; Cox 2011; Dewey 1897; OCLC; Kaplan 2012; Whitehead 2011). According to DDC, fiction literature ought to be placed in the 800s section dividing today’s history and geography from all other curriculum topics (Baker 1899; Collazo 2011; Cox 2011; Sannwald 2014; Whitehead 2012, April 4).

In the 1870s, the majority of all books were nonfiction due to the difficulty of not only writing but publishing print materials (Baker 1899; Coyle 2016; Sannwald 2014). While fiction did exist, it was nowhere near as vast, as varied, as consumable or as acceptable for library standards of quality collection. Fiction would not trend for another 30 years after DDC, when inventions and troubled times led to a huge influx in the style of writing (Baker & Shepherd, 1987; Borden 1909; Coyle 2016; Rathbone 1902; Rathbone 1901; Sannwald 2014).

The inconvenience led to the ultimate withdrawal of fiction from DDC in most public and school libraries (Collazo 2011; Whitehead 2012, April 4). Today it is not uncommon to find public and school libraries that have pulled fiction predominantly out of DDC into its own separate area to enhance leisurely reading (Cox 2011). The
noticeable and baffling exceptions to fiction withdrawal are folktales, mythology (390s) and poetry (810s) (Collazo 2011; Cox 2011; Whitehead 2011). This is observable at all eight libraries visited across five counties of North Carolina.

For those who ascribe to the concept of genrefication, this is the first official gauge indicating an interest in genrefication (Collazo 2011; Cox 2011; Kaplan et. al 2012; Kaplan et. al 2013; Whitehead 2013, Nov 29; Whitehead 2011, Jan 15). To DDC loyalists, this is the first step towards what many fear is a giant dive off of the organizational cliff (Snipes 2015). While withdrawing fiction is not generally considered genrefication, it is the first step toward pursuing a genrefied collection (Sannwald 2014). For this reason, the researcher refers to withdrawing fiction from DDC as conservative genrefication because it is a deviation from the standard cataloging system. Following DDC as the fundamental zero marker causes pulling out fiction to be the most widely accepted form of genrefication in public and school libraries.

Classifying Fiction.

In 1909, William Borden published findings that "classifying fiction" within a public library resulted in a significant increase in circulation (Borden 1909; Sannwald 2014). Borden argued that nine out of ten typical patrons select books based on type or genre (Borden 1909). His description was of patrons longing to spend their time browsing with purpose and leaving at a reasonable time with a book or two (Borden 1909; Ranganathan 2006). Borden stated that an information literate person – the final individual of a group of ten, a grab-and-go patron –, who is burdened with a large vocabulary yet intuitive enough to navigate the library system to find a particular author,
should not be catered to at the expense of the majority (Borden 1909). The other nine patrons who do not have a similar comprehension of the library organization or a desire to read specific titles of particular authors on every visit should not be forced to founder because one of ten individuals uses the library for an alternative purpose (Borden 1909). Basically if the tenth person is determined enough to figure out one classification system, it is easier for him to learn a new system than for the nine others to struggle with DDC. Borden was advocating that at least fiction ought to be browsable rather than findable.

However, measures were not undertaken to research and improve the classification of fiction for nearly 80 years after Borden. Nevertheless, throughout the 1980’s, many libraries began to focus on the collections’ organization of fiction (Baker & Shepherd 1987; Pejtersen and Austin 1983; Harrell 1985; Sannwald 2014; Spiller 1980; Totterdell's 1982).

In 1973, school librarian Betty Briggs agreed with Bordon, adding to his argument that 88 percent of her middle school students found classified fiction "easier to use than the previous arrangement of fiction in one alphabetically arranged section" as DDC does in the large 800 section (Baker & Shepherd 1987; Sannwald 2014).

Borden began dividing books by little known authors into genres when patrons repeatedly asked “What kind of book is this (Baker & Shepherd 1987; Borden 1909)?” Briggs found Borden’s suggestion of genre areas consistently exposed overlooked fiction authors to children because having a genre narrows the reader’s choices, a benefit for untried decision makers (Baker & Shepherd 1987; Cox 2012; Collazo 2011; Kaplan et. al 2012; Plemmons 2016; Whitehead 2011). Overlooked fiction authors experienced a 57 percent increase in circulation (Baker & Shepherd 1987).
After 14 years of investigation and experimentation, Sharon Baker began publishing articles in the 1980s detailing how fiction classification theoretically assisted users to find books in school libraries (Baker & Shepherd 1987; Baker 1988; Sannwald 2014). So classification of fiction beyond DDC might not only be browsable but also findable according to patron logic and desires.

Despite this research, school libraries did not publically continue experimenting further with fiction genrefication for another quarter century. Nevertheless, organizing fiction withdrawn from DDC is the third distinctive mark on the genrefication spectrum. Implementing a more detailed classification other than author alphabetization for fiction is somewhat debated, though it is observable in most children’s departments of public libraries including the eight libraries observed in five North Carolina counties.

There are degrees of alteration for fiction within moderate genrefication, a name indicating this method’s flexible span. Four types of fiction classifications were proposed even before the 1980s and have lasted in multiple combinations until today (Baker & Shepherd 1987; Collazo 2011; Plemmons 2016; Sannwald 2014; Whitehead 2013) including but not limited to:

1) format of work (short stories, picture books, board books, juvenile fiction and young adult novels – which in many libraries is assumed and divided for children under the rationalization of age-appropriate child development)

2) literary quality (serious contemporary fiction – librarians influencing quality control)

3) genre area (type of story like “Mysteries”)

4) broad subject headings (book store signage and organization such as “World War II stories”)

Various combinations of these organization concepts exist across the modern genrefication spectrum, employed as seems best for each library.
With increasing frequency, public libraries divide works according to age-appropriate child development information and binding formats (Basan 2012; Cox 2012; Collazo 2015; Lambert 2016; Oder 2007, 2010; Whitehead 2013). They also assess literary quality by pulling out displays for classic works and awards long before they ever considered genre or subject headings in fiction (Basan 2012; Cox 2012; Collazo 2015; Lambert 2016; Oder 2007, 2010; Whitehead 2013).

Having a format-divided fiction collection withdrawn from DDC nonfiction typically uses only one of the suggested genrefication procedures above and therefore can be considered conservative genrefication within the third mark on the spectrum. This means many libraries that withdraw fiction and classify the collection further according to age-appropriate formats (such as board books, easy readers, picture books, juvenile fiction, young adult fiction and adult fiction) are unknowingly participating in an acceptable form of genrefication. No instances of conservative genrefication are provided because they are likely written under a discussion surrounding an undiscovered term or the discussion was not held online.

School libraries are less hesitant than public libraries: they employ all of these degrees to fiction (Sannwald 2014). Not only are books divided by developmentally-appropriate formats, they are sorted into genres and arranged around the library space according to subject headings (Baker & Shepherd 1987; Collazo 2011; Plemmons 2016; Sannwald 2014; Whitehead 2013). Meanwhile the digital catalog indicates the “quality” or required reading skills for each title in the MARC records, indicating educational standards like Accelerated Reading levels.

Further genrefying a fiction collection by adding layers of increased organization
(such as broad subject or genre labels to book spines and or rearranging the shelves based on those stickers) should be considered moderate genrefication (Collazo 2011). This is because the hybrid fiction classification is more consistent with DDC nonfiction by building upon subjects through flexible adaptations within a library (Collazo 2011; Snipes 2015). Using more than one of these schemas to categorize fiction will be considered moderate genrefication.

School library media specialists who support keeping Dewey for nonfiction recommend genrefying fiction as a hybrid model of DDC for any library serving children (Collazo 2011; Hembree 2013; Pendergrass 2013; Snipes 2015; Weisburg 2013).

In January of 2011, Tiffany Whitehead became the school librarian at Central Middle School in Louisiana. In her blog “Mighty Little Librarian” she kept a detailed but informal account of her professional exploits. Eighteen of those posts are tagged for genrefication, not including a 2016 article on how to genrefy or her first blog expressing interest in moderate genrefication. Within her first week, she decided to genrefy the fiction collection by color coding call numbers with tinted label covers according to story style (Whitehead 2011, Jan 15; 2013, Dec 1). She then shelved fiction by color and created a new call number indicating genre, author and fiction status for the digital catalog (Whitehead 2011, Jan 15; 2013, Dec 1).

Because Whitehead did not close the library, she was a pioneer with no one to follow and because she is a very enthusiastic individual with a tendency to use chaos to find order, fiction genrefication took her four months to consider and conduct (Whitehead 2011 Jan 15; 2012 April 4; 2013 Nov 29). The results were so successful that she began speaking about the experience at Follett’s New Leaf in Learning Conference in 2012 as
an acknowledged Mover and Shaker innovator for her mentor mindset. In 2016 she was
hired by Episcopal School to work her magic there, while in 2017 the Mighty Little
Librarian was publishing an instructional article for Demco – her preferred product
supplier.

Although not as widely known for innovation with genrefication, the progressive
Mrs. Reader Pants is known for her depth of information in defining the genres
themselves. This is a similar personal professional blog hosted by Leigh Collazo with a
different approach to the same end goal. Collazo has twenty-eight entries concerning her
moderate genrefication method, results and aspect clarification going back to September
10, 2011 – nine months after Whitehead. Five of those blogs are specifically designed to
combat the arguments against moderate genrefication, specifically. Three other blogs
discuss the method and results of converting to genrefication. Although she does not
indicate which institutions she works for, Mrs. Reader Pants has implemented this change
in both Texas and China over the past nine years. Collazo is an advocate for hybrid
libraries and a staunch supporter of DDC. This mindset alone provides a different
perspective foundation from the Mighty Little Librarian.

One last moderate example that is extremely current is from the Transform Your
School Library (TYSL) website. TYSL is one of many library-collective, blog-driven
movements to help school librarians maintain relevancy among their young audiences by
sharing ideas, testimonies and tools about experiments in the profession (Lambert 2016).
TYSL is designed specifically for local members of the Mackin County community in
Texas but its materials are accessible to any who register for them (Lambert 2016).

TYSL currently maintains 36 prominent and national advocates who discuss why
certain experiments are or are not worth the risk of implementation on limited budgets and schedules (Lambert 2016). As of April 2016, due to the chatter at TCEA16 surrounding genrefication specifically of fiction, TYSL’s Reedy High School’ Nancy Jo Lambert became an advocate promoting genrefication with a phenomenally simple instructional blog post (Lambert 2016).

Although no results are provided in this single post due to its recent implementation, the weight of this action is that moderate genrefication is not only a growing trend over the past six years but one that is verified to be successful and encouraged to all school libraries for children.

**Re-Classifying Nonfiction.**

The first U.S. attempt to alter DDC’s nonfiction came in January of 2009, Connecticut’s Darien Library reorganized its nonfiction collection using a Dewey-hybrid classification system they call Glades (Bateman 2013; Buchter 2013; Sannwald 2014). The ten DDC classes were reorganized into eight glades, where similar concepts are grouped into broad categories (Basan 2012; Beezley 2014; Fister 2009). Within each glade the books are organized by typical DDC call numbers (Basan 2012; Beezley 2014; Fister 2009). The Glades used BISAC headings for signage and navigation along with DDC in the catalog and collection (Basan 2012 2012; Beezley 2014; Fister 2009). Fister reported, “Unfortunately, this scattered outliers everywhere and were numerous exceptions” (Fister 2009). Darien Library took six weeks to correct and implement a “mashup” of DDC and BISAC style labels but it resulted in an immediate 30 per-cent increase in the children’s collection circulation (Fister 2009). Color coded stickers on the
children’s materials made their first appearance by indicating reading level (Fister 2009).

In July of 2007, The Perry Branch of Maricopa County Library District (MCLD) opened a similar Dewey-hybrid library (Bateman, 2013; Sannwald 2014). Not much is known about the enacted hybrid because two years later in 2009, MCLD completely discarded DDC with a system of its own design called Shelf Logic. This made Maricopa the first U.S. public library pioneer to venture down this path of total nonfiction re-classification (Basan 2012; Bateman, 2013; Beezley 2013; Fister 2009; Leveen 2011; Sannwald 2014). Utilizing logical, plain-word language, patrons in Maricopa search for materials in a scheme similar to searching for materials in a book store - by subject and genre (Buchter 2013; Charles 2012; Sannwald 2014). Actually shifting books from DDC to ShelfLogic took 1,000 hours of staff time – that would be 42 full 24 hour days at a minimum or a more realistic three months of 8 hour days up to as much as a year and a half of two hours days working on this project (Fister 2009).

Shelf Logic, like Darien’s Glades, was based off of Book Industry Standards and Communication (BISAC) subject codes for inventory sales (Beezley 2013; Fister 2009; Sannwald 2014). These marketing and inventory codes are designed with a business perspective of generating profits from the Book Industry Study Group (BISG), a book publishing industry association for bookstores (Beezley 2013; Fister 2009; Sannwald 2014). This is the original concept of directly implementing bookstore arrangement into libraries of any kind to help bookstores organize both physical and digital content (Beezley 2013; Fister 2009; Sannwald 2014).

While some public libraries directly implement BISAC codes, most school and public libraries are hesitant to convert due to the broad number of minute categories
When a book is difficult to shelve, bookstores simply buy multiple copies to shelve in various locations. Many library budget systems do not allow for such excess, particularly school libraries. Rather, the interested libraries refer to BISAC codes as base system ontology before crafting a more localized concept.

Within six years the entire MCLD was using the Shelf Logic BISAC-based system (Bateman 2013; Sannwald 2014). The successful experiment in book store arrangement and library design received an Innovation in Reading prize from National Book Foundation (Leveen 2011). Unfortunately for MCLD, this idea of modeling a library after a bookstore in organization and design was claim jumped, stealing the title of the first Deweyless library district.

In December of 2009, Colorado’s Rangeview Library District used genrefication to shift not only its collection but its institutional goals, becoming its own revolutionary concept of an interactive community engagement resembling a think tank rather than a traditional concept of a library (Buchter 2014; Charles, 2012; Sannwald 2014). Rangeview was rebranded as Anythink Libraries: A Revolution of Rangeview Libraries, the first in North America to use a word-based system district-wide (Buchter 2013; Charles 2012; Sannwald 2014).

Shelf Logic and BISAC headings were modified into a new system known as WordThink (Charles 2012; Sannwald 2014). Fister reported, ‘WordThink’ is a shelving system organizing books using words—labeling the spine of a book with a broad category such as Art and a narrower term such as Drawing. Within those subsections, books are shelved alphabetically by title” (Fister 2009).
In the fall of 2011, Red Hawk Elementary School - in St. Vrain Valley School District Colorado - librarian Holli Buchter partnered with Mackin Educational Resources to develop the first copyrighted word-based classification system in a school library in April of 2012 (Buchter 2013; Sannwald 2014; Wegrzyn 2012). It took six weeks to convert the 20,000-volume collection into the Buchter Classification System, where BCS combines ShelfLogic and WordThink grids with suggestions from the local elementary students to directly match the school’s curriculum needs (Buchter 2013; Sannwald 2014; Wegrzyn 2012). Shortly after Red Hawk swept the title of first school library classification, nonfiction reclassification broke out like a plague in school libraries.

In November of 2011, four librarians at the Ethical Culture Fieldston School in New York City developed the copyrighted Metis Classification System (Copeland 2013; Kaplan et.al. 2012; Sannwald 2014; ). The new classification system is based on “whole-word labeling, child-friendly categories and visually compelling signs” (Sannwald 2014). Named after the clever, crafty mother of the Greek goddess Athena, Metis puts subjects together in a way that encourages kids to move easily from one idea to another (Kaplan et.al. 2012).

This led to the copyrighting of organization schemas that discard DDC. Thus, more details concerning BISAC codes, Shelf Logic and WordThink are not freely accessible to interested librarians due to the subsequent copyrighting involved. This copyrighting of classification schemas is a huge disadvantage to the field of librarianship as well as information organization, though it does provide individual libraries with an edge for attracting patrons in certain areas. However, some libraries are generously providing detailed descriptions for their copyrighted genrefication schemas through blogs.
and School Library Journal articles.

As a professional protecting the privacy of her workplace and students, Tamara Cox is known only as the E-Literate Librarian. In April 2011, she announced an interest in radically genrefying her nonfiction which was fully conducted by June the same year.

Having met and presented with Cox, Whitehead was then convinced to move her moderate genrefication through radical and onto revolutionary genrefication (a prime example of the feared slippery slope from fiction classification to nonfiction reclassification to library redesign). Cox also spread from nonfiction to fiction classification, although she did not discuss mixing the two.

Oakmont Regional High School (ORHS) in Ashburnham, Massachusetts created a new classification scheme called the Spartan system in David A. Nims Library (Aubuchon 2014) Spartan sought to mirror curriculum along with educational practices, goals and values at ORHS (Aubuchon 2014). Spartan’s goal is to emphasize what is learned in the classroom with what is available in the library, thereby stressing conceptual relationships to creating a different informational library ecosystem for students (Aubuchon 2014). In doing so, Spartan allows ORHS flexibility in handling sensitive topics, such as the Holocaust and health-related issues, at the direction of teachers and librarians whom Aubuchon considered the subject experts (2014).

In August of 2016, Andy Plemmons of David C. Barrow Media Center in Georgia added his name to this list as the latest, thorough blogger on the most recent radical genrefication in school libraries. Following Whitehead, Cox and others he presented a detailed account of his 15 day transformation after a two-month contemplation (Plemmons 2016, May 25, Aug 12, 18, 25).
And this was just the beginning. By 2015, when librarian Naomi Bates surveyed 661 librarians nationally across LM_NET, Texas Association of School Libraries and YALSA, 51.7 percent responded that they had genrefied their library and 48.3 percent responded that they were about to genrefy (Bates 2015). No additional broad overview of data has been published on genrefication in any capacity since this instance (Cox 2011; Sannwald 2014). Out of the 116 citations provided for this document, only 23 have been created after 2013.

Many school and public libraries in the past decade have followed suit with increasing popularity (Beezley 2013; Collazo 2011; Lavallee 2007; Oder 2010a; Rice 2009; Snipes 2015; Whitehead 2011, 2016). UNC MSLS graduate Shay Beezley revealed that each sequential public library converting to genrefication - as well as school libraries – tends to personalize genrefication rather than relying solely on BISAC or a previously existing system (Cox 2011; Whitehead 2014).

While hundreds of other libraries have pursued variations of genrefication through similar or adapted arrangements, the libraries mentioned above have garnered the most attention in this steady movement towards implementing bookstore arrangement in public and school collections (Fister 2009; Lavallee 2007; Lynch and Mulero, 2007; Oder, 2010a; Rice, 2009; Beezley 2011).

Using new classification schemas to reorganize nonfiction instead of or along with fiction like Maricopa, Cox and Plemmons will be considered radical or extreme genrefication. Taking genrefication beyond book organization to alter stack arrangement by integrating fiction and nonfiction or to remodeling a library’s design or community goals will be considered revolutionary genrefication. This category includes Mighty
One final public library to be aware of in the genrefication discussion is the Nyack Library of New York State. While it is not a widely known occurrence – referenced only once throughout the more than 90 various gathered sources for this document – it is an important example (Sannwald 2014). Nyack Library is the sole instance of radical genrefication failure throughout eight years of a successful trend (Dery 2011; Gray 2012; Mahoney 2012; Nyack Library 2012). At some point prior to July 2011 Nyack Library opened an expanded facility with a radical genrefication DDC hybrid known only as “Marketplace design” (Dery 2011; Mahoney 2012; Sannwald 2014). Little is known about this genrefication save what was published in the four online journal articles of Nyack News and Views.

In July of 2011, author and university professor Mark Derby wrote a scathing letter directed at the Nyack Library in the local newspaper saying Nyack’s 2011 Dewey hybrid classification was “ill-advised and inexpertly implemented” (Dery 2011). Telling the library it failed at the logic of Barnes & Noble and the non-commercial peace of a library calling the hybrid unsatisfying for either market space (Dery 2011). Dery considered the directional signage too general for research with poorly placed subject arrangement (2011). He compared the new library layout to a hedge maze that invalidated the remaining DDC call numbers (Dery 2011). He was further infuriated at what he considered a lack of transparency when hunting down the Board of Trustees meeting and director’s email (2011).

His ‘inner Marxism’ was scarred by Nyack’s decision to exchange traditional librarian terminology for retail service labels saying such actions contradicted the very
values of a free and public library (Dery 2011). He argued, “Is there any data showing [Barnes & Noble categories] is any more likely to lead to accidental discoveries than the old Dewey Decimal set-up?” (Dery 2011).

Nearly a year later in June of 2012, John Gray, local author, professional bibliographer, and loyal patron wrote, “I’ve grown increasingly mystified as to the way in which its adult collections are currently organized.” Gray too was confused by the remaining DDC call numbers existing within the new bookstore arrangement and broad labeling saying his interdependence had been stolen (Gray 2012).

Director of the Nyack Library James Mahoney responded to both of these individuals that DDC was still in use as designed despite the expanded building layout complementing organizational alteration (Mahoney 2012). Due to the new layout a learning curve was unavoidable so Nyack decided to experiment in revolutionary genrefication while it was still fairly new (Mahoney 2012). The patrons did not appreciate this response and in 2013 the Nyack library reverted from a hybrid back to standard DDC. Nothing is known about the fate of the fiction.

For an information-literate community, radical genrefication was not a positive experience as the local society disagreed with the librarians’ views for the collection (Gray 2012; Dery 2011). This highlights the genrefication spectrum, like DDC, it is not perfect or universally beneficial. Genrefication of any kind is dependent upon community communication. Regardless of how information literate a community is, a library must be easily navigable to its unique population or patrons will go elsewhere (Gray 2012).

Great controversy surrounds the reclassification of nonfiction (Collazo 2015; Cox 2011; Fialkoff 2009; Fister 2009; Sannwald 2014; Snipe 2015; Whitehead 2011).
Many libraries leave DDC call numbers in the catalog or on the book spines, should
genrefication be unveiled as a failure (Collazo 2012, 2015; Cox 2011, 2012; Plemmons
2016 August 24). Thus far, it has not.

**Controversy Overview.**

Following the genrefication implementation trend in 2009 through 2011, there
was a new librarian controversy. Surprisingly this argument did not arise after
implementation among involved librarians. Instead this controversy arose from outrage
and fear outside of the radical pioneers’ fields of children’s librarianship.

At the American Association of School Librarian's Affiliate Assembly meeting at
the American Library Association's Annual conference in June 2012, the Kansas
Association of School Librarians presented a Statement of Concern regarding
genrefication (Habley 2013; Sannwald 2014; Snipes 2015; Weisburg 2013). Even the
AASL 2013 National Conference recognized this professional controversy concerning
DDC’s efficiency among public and school librarians, reporting school library media
specialists were adamant both for and against genrefication. And yet more than 600
libraries responded to surveys stating that they had pursued various forms of
genrefication (Sannwald 2014; Snipes 2015).

Of the 50 articles collected centering solely on the debate for and against
genrefication, 29 are decidedly enthusiastic for various genrefications. The objections are
against specifically radical and revolutionary genrefication saying that removing DDC
creates chaos (Dewey 1864; Snipes 2015). First, it disables quick retrieval of a single
resource for a researcher (Snipes 2015). Secondly, standardization across the profession
is destroyed, the very purpose for which DDC was created (Dewey 1864; Snipes 2015).
Those promoting radical or revolutionary genrefication – some who have converted and those in the process of transferring – agree those are the two largest issues. However, the vigor of the emerging, nonfiction reclassifications generation of librarians counterbalances the limited amount of time and energy to make the changes digitally and physically within the stacks, despite its aforementioned weaknesses (Habley 2013). This is due to the astoundingly visible increase in circulation, library attendance and positive general patron feedback (Buchter 2013; Collazo 2011, September 10; 2012 Dec 26; Cox 2011; Kaplan et. al 2012; Whitehead 2011, Jan 15; 2012, April 9; 2016, January 23; 2017, January 11).

In 2011, most librarians Cox spoke with were uninterested in radical genrefication; however, by 2015 this had changed due to conferences, blogs and professional articles (Bates 2015; Cox 2011; Whitehead 2011).

The observable advantages of trial-based genrefication and the countering of DDC’s drawbacks have led to an increasing popularity of youth service library departments departing from the Dewey Decimal Cataloging (DDC) in favor of broader genre based organization schemes. The argument is not that Dewey is a complete failure but that it can be improved as new information seeking behaviors take hold of younger generations (Habley 2013).

This reclassification project may have drawbacks. First, it represents a great deal of work for a system that is similar to Dewey (Aubuchon 2014). Second, idiosyncrasies will also creep into radical genrefication, but the yet unknown hope is for a flexible system that allows for easy changes in classification and placement (Aubuchon 2014).

Generally the idea of genrefication in fiction is acceptable for labels if not
reorganization by all involved but the rearranging of nonfiction causes much angst on both sides (Habley 2013). Because librarians who promote genrefying fiction are in disagreement over reclassifying nonfiction – Mighty Little Librarian vs Ms. Reading Pants – those outside of the affected profession opposing ditching Dewey demand caution and recommend extremely halting hesitation (Sniper 2015). The primary argument is uniformity of resource location across the profession versus increase of patron use and circulation (Habley 2013).

Those opposed to nonfiction genrefication do not deny the many observable benefits or goals of the change (Collazo 2011; Snipes 2015). Rather they fear a descent into chaos resulting in the future due to the change (Snipe2015). They fear exchanging the benefits of DDC for the benefits of nonfiction genrefication will result in a return to a lack of order in the libraries (Snipe 2015). They would rather cling to the faults of DDC – which they know and have learned to counteract for specific populations – than embrace the faults of a new system they do not know and fear being able to solve. In a sense, they are afraid changing the classification system makes their job harder. So maybe it’s not just DDC that needs to change, but librarians view of how and why they do their jobs of helping the public find reading material both informational and relaxing.
Results

DDC Five Faults.

Just to clarify why public and school libraries are interested in genrefying their collections, here are the top five faults found with DDC repeated throughout the literature.

The first DDC fault is unavoidable: nothing is perfect. School Librarian Tamera Cox said it best: “I believe Dewey is one of our sacred cows, which is why this topic causes such a stir” (Cox 2011, March 31). In other words, some librarians are fearful of changing something that traditionally works. ORHS agreed saying, “Any classification scheme has idiosyncrasies” (Aubuchon 2014). Dewey noted, “Due to limited space and philosophical theory, perfectly accurate organization is impossible to obtain in a way that satisfies everyone; sacrifices must be made” (Dewey 1876).

Just because the DDC has functioned well enough for 141 years, does not mean it is infallible or suitable to modern non-academic or research-driven populaces such as children or the general populace on any given day. However, genrefying librarians understand and accept that a new classification system will not be infallible either. They are simply willing to say that DDC is not perfect.

There are still areas within the issue of replacing DDC with bookstore arrangement in public libraries that need research but those issues cannot be addressed until they are identified (Beezley 2011).
Likewise, these areas have not been identified thus far because carefully contemplated and implemented genrefication has revealed no lasting drawbacks save a very minor learning curve to information literate individuals (Beezley 2011; Cox 2011; Whitehead 2012; Plemmons 2016).

DDC’s second fault is that it prioritizes findability over browsability (Baker & Shepherd, 1987; Baker, 1988; Basan 2012; Beezley 2013; Buchter 2013; Cox 2011; Fialkoff 2009; Leven 2011; Plemmons 2016 May 25; Ranganathan 2006; Sannwald 2014; Whitehead 2011, 2012 April 4, 2014 January 17). This is an inherent design flaw within the DDC system that developed over time as human knowledge expanded. Findability is the locating of a single text or subject (Fister 2009). As Dewey stated previously in the history, findability was his intent for DDC (Dewey 1876). Browsability is the leisurely investigation leading to self-motivated, independent learning and reading (Basan 2012; Buchter 2013; Fister 2009). The Buchter Classification System defined “browsable” as ordering the sections and subsections clearly to not only librarians, but also to students, faculty, and parents allowing patrons to be as independent as possible (Buchter 2013).

These two features of libraries’ operations are somewhat at odds. What helps browsability may decrease findability (i.e., putting picture books in book bins rather than on shelves). However, librarians in favor of genrefication argue that the precise findability of an outdated DDC drastically hinders patron browsability (Baker & Shepherd, 1987; Baker, 1988; Basan 2012; Beezley 2013; Buchter 2013; Cox 2011; Fialkoff 2009; Leven 2011; Plemmons 2016 May 25; Ranganathan 2006; Sannwald 2014; Whitehead 2011, 2012 April 4, 2014 January 17). Proponents of extreme genrefication repeatedly call this driving factor “user-experience” (Baker & Shepherd,
Rather than simply locating a specific text in an antiquated searching schema, public libraries should consider rearranging the organization of the stacks specifically because findability and browsability are two different goals (Baker & Shepherd, 1987; Baker, 1988; Basan 2012; Beezley 2013; Buchter 2013; Cox 2011; Fialkoff 2009; Leven 2011; Plemmons 2016 May 25; Ranganathan 2006; Sannwald 2014; Whitehead 2011, 2012 April 4, 2014 January 17). Leisure reading is the primary purpose of public libraries; for an ordinary individual this is a browsing experience not a research experience (Basan 2012; Beezley 2014; Casey and Stephen 2009; Fister 2009).

Likewise, when libraries increase browsability they can increase their effectiveness in encouraging learning in the community (Baker & Shepherd, 1987; Baker, 1988; Basan 2012; Beezley 2013; Buchter 2013; Cox 2011; Fialkoff 2009; Leven 2011; Plemmons 2016 May 25; Ranganathan 2006; Sannwald 2014; Whitehead 2011, 2012 April 4, 2014 January 17). Librarians are trained to track down information and make it accessible. Therefore, it stands to reason that when DDC continues to befuddle professional information seekers and patrons alike, libraries would adopt policies to enhance their circulation.

This is DDC’s most glaring fault as it affects system navigation and comprehension among the information-seeking illiterates (Borden 1909; Whitehead; Plemmons; Cox 2011; Snipes 2015). Not to say these individuals are unintelligent or uninformed but for various reasons they are not capable of internalizing the functional operation of DDC (Aubuchon 2014; Baker and Shepherd 1987; Borden 1909; Buchter
The third fault of DDC is the unrelated order of its subject categories.

Take another glance at OCLC’s current 23rd revision of DDC:

- 000 Computer science, information & general works
- 100 Philosophy & psychology
- 200 Religion
- 300 Social sciences
- 400 Language
- 500 Science
- 600 Technology
- 700 Arts & recreation
- 800 Literature
- 900 History & geography

This evolution of terminology alone highlights the need to revise or replace DDC for today’s patrons, especially for children who do not recognize the definition of most of these terms prior to fourth grade education (Aubuchon 2014; Baker and Shepherd 1987; Borden 1909; Buchter 2013; Cox 2011; Fister 2009; Leveen 2011; Plemmons 2016; Whitehead).

But ignoring the taxonomy’s wording, why are similar subjects not closer together? What do arts and recreation have in common other than being time-consuming hobbies of personal interest? Why is religion separate from philosophy when they discuss common questions of life? Shouldn’t geography be closer to science than literature? How can one separate computer science from technology in the current digital age? Similarly shouldn’t language and literature be closer together? These are the thoughts of librarians who genrefy.

Having read the history of DDC formation and operation, the reader should understand why Dewey designed the system the way he did. And it was a perfectly understandable and manageable system 141 years ago. But DDC’s organization is not a browsable system for today’s general populace or children because it was designed for librarians and researchers. Using what Dewey knew of information in 1876, DDC’s nine
– and now ten - classes were based off differences. Radical genrefication relies on subject similarities, particularly those discovered during the past 141 years.

This is evidence that DDC deviates from current educational goals. ORHS found that, “Dewey is a 19th-century system trying to fit into 21st-century learning” (Aubuchon 2014). Due to federal and local educational policies, school libraries have two curriculums to consider: traditional SVVSD and the Core Knowledge (Aubuchon 2014; Buchter 2013; Kaplan et.al. 2012; Whitehead 2013, Nov 29).

School and public librarians repeatedly report not only their own discontent with DDC’s topical arrangement but also their patrons’ bafflement as teachers, students and family members (Aubuchon 2014; Baker and Shepherd 1987; Borden 1909; Buchter 2013; Cox 2011; Fister 2009; Kaplan et. al. 2012; Leveen 2011; Plemmons 2016; Whitehead 2012, April 4; Whitehead 2013, Dec 1).

The argument is made that by genrefying a nonfiction collection, an information literate patron can no longer find an exact title (Sannwald 2014; Snipes 2015). However, under Dewey even those trained with DDC – librarians with masters degrees – do not recognize or comprehend where titles should be – relying on the digital catalog to reveal a specific title (Aubuchon 2014; Buchter 2013; Kaplan et.al. 2012; Sannwald 2014; Whitehead 2013 Nov 29). DDC is not inherent to the current generation’s understanding as Dewey predicted it would eventually be (Dewey 1876).

Cox and Whitehead pointed out that since DDC is already a subject based system – despite being disjointed – it is a relatively simple feat to correlate similar topics
Similarly, Collazo uses this same argument to counter altering DDC (Collazo 2015).

DDC’s fourth fault is the reliance on numeric decimals for call numbers (Aubuchon 2014; Beezley 2013; Coyle 2016; Dewey 1876; Fister 2009; Plemmons 2016, May 25).

Increased circulation shows a possible correlation between the lack of confusing call numbers and patrons' enjoyment of browsing nonfiction as evidenced by the surveys of the communities that saw fit to discard DDC (Beezley 2013). From the history of DDC, readers know that Arabic numerals were chosen for legibility and precise findings (Dewey 1876).

Dewey genuinely thought people would eventually recognize the call numbers and not need an additional cataloging system (1876). As technology increased, reliance on memory decreased and study of subjects revealed correlations through modern discoveries – the numbers and selected classes no longer maintained extensive relevancy due to their similarity (Coyle 2016; Plemmons 2016; Whitehead 2013).

In genrefication, the call number is a clue as to where to find browsable material – not an exact title location (Cox 2011; Plemmons 2016; Whitehead 2011, 2013). While this goes against DDC’s concept of uniformity, it encompasses modern forms of communication and education. Genrefication is designed to be intrinsic to a community’s search patterns - alphabetical by title or author within a logical subject correlation on minimal hierarchical schemes. It a classification method that strongly ascribes Marcia
Bates’ information seeking patterns of human information berry picking with various tactics and sub goals in mind.

DDC was clearly logical for every library before type writers, label makers, computers, printers and the mass production of books on even a personal publishing level (Coyle 2016). Today not only are books relatively easily-made and sold, bestsellers are printed with few to no words at all – consider wordless picture books or March 2017 Amazon Best Seller satire *Reasons to Vote For Democrats* by Michael J. Knowles.

When digital library catalogs overtook manual card catalogs, the way people searched for materials in libraries changed (Coyle 2016). Dewey’s mandatory subject index was no longer employed because search browsers could now find correlated items based on digital subject tags (Coyle 2016; Dewey 1876).

Today, individuals can buy affordable label makers at local craft stores (Michaels or Walmart depending on quality) or business suppliers (Staples or Demco), not to mention online resources through Amazon.com. With the dawn of the digital age, even the need for physical labels on physical materials is decreasing as materials and their catalogs are made available online. Nevertheless, for libraries that are still collecting and organizing physical materials for the public and for children, this factor of label creation and display plays a huge role in the conversation of genrefication (Collazo 2011; Cox 2011; Plemmons 2016; Whitehead 2013).

The fifth fault of DDC is that it often inhibits children’s ability to search non-fiction (Buchter 2013; Snipes 2015; Stauffer 2008). According to Colorado Academic
Standards, decimals are not taught until the second half of fourth grade. The Dewey Decimal Classification system requires background knowledge in number sense and decimals. Students without a mastery of these mathematical concepts become easily frustrated, which leads to a degree of library anxiety and a sense of failure (Buchter 2013).

Because children under the age of 5 have difficulty understanding more than concrete concepts, simple, direct access to a book is best for early grade students (Snipes 2015). Before third grade, children are not taught decimals, which DDC operates off of. Even if children ages 8 to 10 do recognize decimals - through familiarity with handling money - on small amounts, they are not familiar with numeric place setting beyond the hundreds on the left of a decimal or to the right of tenth place after the decimal (Buchter 2013; Sannwald 2013). That is a lesson introduced and explored in fourth grade around age 11. However, genrefying a collection uses sight words (introduced in Pre-K and Kindergarten), pictures (introduced at infancy) and broad subject categories (the only intrinsic organizing system children below fourth grade (elementary school) have ever used.

According to Piaget’s middle childhood mastery of operations, children between the ages of seven and ten comprehend hierarchical classification (Snipes 2015). This is the increasing ability to simultaneously comprehend and sort things into general and more specific groups using different types of comparisons (Snipes 2015). Kulthau and Gross argue that fifth grade is the optimal time to teach students the hierarchical
organization of the DDC (Snipes 2015). The elementary school library experience should leave the student with a love of books and reading, not feelings of frustration and anxiety (Buchter 2013).

**Defining Genrefication.**

The exact etymology of the term “genrefication” is not traceable due to its relatively recent addition to the U.S. English language, predominantly used in spoken conversation. The earliest reference to this term was found through UNC Summons of a print work from 1995 by Duane Wilkins in an article entitled “Shelving wars, or the politics of “genrefication”.” As a print record, it fell just outside the scope of this research.

The term “genrefication” was not used to discuss fiction withdrawal or any kind of classification until 2011. Urban Dictionary added “genrefication” on February 26, 2008, defining it as “The process or idea of classifying music, film, literature, or other such mediums into specific genres or categories.”

The term began to appear online with frequency in librarian blogs concerning the topics of classifying fiction and ditching Dewey around 2011. Both Tiffany Whitehead’s Mighty Little Librarian and Leigh Collazo’s Mrs. Reader Pants blogs employed the spelling “genre-fication” and “genrefication” to mean “the process of placing books into genres.” The term was converted into a verb format at the same time in those blogs with “genre-fy” and “genrefy” (Collazo 2011; Whitehead 2011).
Prior to the terms of “genrefy” and “genrefication”, the conversation surrounding this topic batted around the expressions “nontraditional shelving”, “book store arrangement”, “fiction classification”, “Dewey hybrids” or “Dewey mashups” and the ever controversial “Deweyless” or “ditching Dewey.” Yet, with the acceptance of the term “genrefication” these distinct notions of additional or alternative classification are frequently mistaken.

So genrefication just means organizing books, either fiction or nonfiction, by subject in a schema other than DDC (Collazo 2011; Whitehead 2011). Under a broad definition, even DDC can be defined as genrefication because genres are simply broad subject headings and categories when it comes to information and stories (Collazo 2011). This ambiguous definition and lack of terminology for distinctions of DDC’s alternative classifications in public and school libraries is the crux of many controversies surrounding “genrefication.”

A brief recap is that genrefication is a broad term used for every instance on the spectrum of processes used to reorganize the stacks of a library collection by grouping individual physical materials according to modern subject headings. This single term has been defined as anything from revitalizing directional signage (Fialkoff 2009) to classifying fiction (Collazo 2011) to nontraditional shelving of either fiction or nonfiction (Cox 2011) to ditching Dewey (Whitehead 2011) and eventually revolutionizing the purpose of a library (Oder 2010). The purpose of this spectrum is to enhance patrons’ ability to browse a library collection without staff or technological assistance.
Now that the reader is familiar with where genrefication in general started in school and public libraries, the research will begin to dive into deeper content and controversy of the trend itself by focusing in on extreme and revolutionary genrefication.

**How Libraries Transition**

Of the eight school libraries examined, all eight recorded aspects of a standard cognitive and emotional process that occurs among the librarians while implementing any kind of genrefication (Aubuchon 2014; Buchter 2013; Cox 2011; Collazo; 2012; Kaplan et. al 2012; Lambert 2016; Plemmons 2016; Whitehead 2012). These results coincided with the few records available concerning the successful public libraries, such as Maricopa and Anythink (Leveen 2011; Oder 2010).

First, librarians notice the faults of DDC within their local library community (Cox 2011; Fialkoff 2009; Kaplan et. al. 2012; Plemmons 2016; Snipes 2015; Whitehead 2011). Typically it is the inability of patrons, particularly children, to navigate or comprehend the collection organization. Rather than noticing the problem of patron disorientation and disengagement themselves, some librarians relate to recognition of the issue in professional conferences where genrefication is discussed.

Second, the librarians begin to ask why the community is struggling to maximize use of the library resources (Cox 2011; Fialkoff 2009; Kaplan et. al. 2012; 2013; Plemmons 2016; Snipes 2015; Whitehead 2011). As professionals and paraprofessionals with higher education degrees trained to identify and located reliable information, they question this problem from every conceivable angle. Is the root problem with the digital
catalog, the shelving, the architecture, the collection content, the staff’s assistance or knowledge base, the library atmosphere or design? Some libraries go so far as to question their institutional goals from a patron perspective, from the collection, and other library angles. Librarians truly interested in providing the most service to counteract patron disinterest are right to question everything to identify possible and affordable areas to improve, including the goals and purpose of every aspect of the library.

Third, librarians begin to investigate what others have said and done in light of the unsatisfactory static or decreasing library engagement (Buchter 2013; Leveen 2011; Plemmons 2016; Whitehead 2012). These two steps are repeated until a conclusion is reached.

In doing so, libraries come into contact with portions of information concerning the transformation of a collection and circulation of genrefication. Often information is found through citation chasing heavily resourced articles and blogs from extreme supporters or extreme naysayers. Very few moderates on the topic (professionals ambivalent and or unconvinced of genrefication’s successful legitimacy) post anything at all; one exception might be the Elementary Librarian. Regardless, depending on their determination and curiosity, investigative librarians may encounter any or all the materials cited within this document (Baker 1988; Borden 1909; Baker & Shepherd 1987; Kaplan et.al. 2012; Plemmons 2016; Rangeview 2009; Spiller 1980; Whitehead 2013).

Once this concept of user experience-driven approach is introduced many librarians seek out assistance and advice from personal blogs from fellow professionals,
making very clear trails of citation chasing possible through embedded links to sources (Buchter 2013; Cox 2011; Plemmons 2016, May 25; Whitehead 2012, April 4). For instance, Plemmons’ 2016 genrefication relied heavily on Follett’s leading lady in genrefication, Tiffany Whitehead. In turn, Whitehead initially collaborated with Tamara Cox, who gathered informative assistance from older publications and discussions. While each professional locates their own personal resources of preference, those materials are discovered through material available online and conversations at networking conferences (Buchter 2013; Cox 2011; Plemmons 2016, May 25; Whitehead 2012, April 4).

Depending on how much information from which side of the genrefication controversy they research, the researching librarians begin to form an opinion either for or against genrefication. Those who like the concept have a growing excitement over the possibility of making a giant change with the possibility and even the high probability of mind blowing results if their community fits previous descriptions. They carefully evaluate the risks of failure by engaging with their local community (Buchter 2013; Cox 2011; Whitehead 2011). Seeking the opinion of the community is vital. If the community is not interested in a word-based classification of either fiction or nonfiction, there is no purpose in pursuing genrefication further, as Nyack discovered.

Once librarians are confident genrefication would assist and be accepted by the local community they are committed to the implementation of genrefication through personal experimentation (Cox 2011; Kaplan et.al. 2012; Plemmons 2016, May 25;
Whitehead 2011). They throw all caution to the wind in a furious effort to design and categorize their pet peeves in the current system, calling the initiation a “jump”, a “dive” and a “plunge” (Cox 2011; Kaplan et.al. 2012; Plemmons 2016, May 25; Whitehead 2011).

After the librarians finish working with their favorite titles and subjects, they begin to dip their toes into subjects they are not as familiar with or fond of, and the doubt comes (Cox 2011; Kaplan et.al. 2012; Plemmons 2016, May 25; Whitehead 2011). The great chasm of “what if” spans before their eyes and they begin to worry that all of their hard work thus far was in vain. Anxiety plagues them over subject headings, signage, labeling and the actual physical labor aspects involved. At this point it is too late to go back due to the expense and time invested (Collazo 2011; Plemmons 2016, May 25, August 12; Whitehead 2011).

With great trepidation yet hopeful anticipation, the library doors are opened and patrons are introduced to the new system (Cox 2011; Fialkoff 2009; Kaplan et. al. 2012; 2013; Plemmons 2016; Whitehead 2012). Then comes the euphoric state of constant praise and increased circulation, amidst the brief confusion of the information-literate students’ initial shock of readjustment (Cox 2011; Fialkoff 2009; Kaplan et. al. 2012; 2013; Plemmons 2016; Whitehead 2012). Not a single report exists of genrefication failing on the first day or week. Even Nyack took three years to fail (Dery 2011; Grey 2012; Nyack 2013).

What occurs within the libraries after this initial opening is not succinctly
expounded upon online. That is where further research needs to be done to end the angry retaliation of controversial hypothetical arguments. What little could be found was included in this research document.

**Genrefication Findings**

Genrefied libraries of every kind appear to continue to operate with apparent satisfaction up to six years later in school libraries and up to eight years for the original public libraries, though little is provided in the way of statistics. With the oddball exception of Nyack library, the three public libraries mentioned above appear to be continually successful according to their websites along with several of the other public libraries not mentioned within the text. An interesting note is that much of the leadership at these pioneer public libraries has changed, with many of the individuals who made major contributions either leaving the field entirely or becoming field conference speakers. Statistical information on these public libraries was not addressed, although Anythink has a number of books based off it.

Therefore, the researcher thoroughly investigated eight school libraries out of the dozens of blogs found online due to the more readily available information that librarians might find. Two school libraries conducted moderate genrefication of fiction (Lambert 2016; Collazo 2011). Five school libraries pursued radical genrefication of nonfiction and/or fiction (Aubuchon 2013; Buchter 2013; Kaplan 2012; Plemmons 2016). Two
school libraries were revolutionary, strongly affecting each other as leaders in the field through their rearrangement of stacks and library goals (Cox 2011; Whitehead 2011).

Each of the eight implementers of genrefication in school libraries on average write seven to 15 pages of information on their individual experiences with genrefication. This information was placed across multiple informal publications such as personal blogs or consolidated into no more than two professional articles or press releases. This number was calculated by conducting word counts on each entry presented by participating individuals. The writings are never less than seven pages. If results are provided, the amount of information does not exceed 15 pages. This holds true regardless of how many libraries an individual has genrefied: whether it is two like Whitehead and Collazo or an entire district like Kaplan and friends.

These experiences, while unique to each community in regards to what exactly is implemented, have nearly identical content discussion though preferences and results do vary slightly. This implies that the entire spectrum of moderate to revolutionary genrefication is a worthwhile pursuit depending on some of the factors pulled out below into the “When to Genrefy” results content.

School librarians typically begin writing on the topic either during the process or within a year after it is fully completed (Cox 2011; Whitehead 2011; Collazo 2011; Lambert 2016; Plemmons 2016). Consistent bloggers will often write a single follow-up entry discussing circulation and benefits within two years of conducting genrefication.
(Collazo 2012; Dec 6; Whitehead 2013; Nov 29). Some bloggers do not publish the name of their exact institution online – likely for patron security (Collazo 2012; Cox 2011). In turn, others are not able to publish exact circulation records due to the recent change but find other ways to include helpful information within their presentation (Lambert 2016; Plemmons 2016).

This means most of genrefication results are general statements of unquantifiable observations. If they do publish quantifiable data on circulation and use of the new classification system, the data is only presented vaguely in one instance. Most of the information provided follows the exact course of the initial 7 pages used to discuss how to ease the transition for future librarians or the satisfying benefits.

Four of the eight school libraries published numeric results from the genrefication experimentation (Buchter 2013; Collazo 2011 Sep 10; Kaplan 2012; 2013; Whitehead 2014, Jan 23). These results were posted blog posts and individual news articles. However, within academic circles these posts are considered minor, informal and easily-overlooked publications. As such these massive results rarely circulate to academic heights worthy of librarian student or instructor notice. The few single instances of success that are heard of are met with skepticism and the idea that genrefication in this single instance was an unusual fluke. However, the massive number of success stories, particularly in the school libraries and among children across libraries, indicate
otherwise. Dozens of libraries were found during this research, however due to time constraints only five were thoroughly examined.

Just as in the 1980s although many librarians will report imitating a classification experiment, few ever divulge evaluative results to the detriment of the professional field (Baker & Shepherd 1987; Beezley 2013; Cox 2011). Many librarians entered genrefication simply to determine if there was any success to be found in a new or altered classification system (Cox 2011; Sapiie 1995; Sannwald 2014).

Four of the school librarians reported a marked increase in circulation when genrefying fiction (Collazo 2011, Sep 10; 2012, Dec 26; Cox 2011; Kaplan et. al 2012; Whitehead 2011, Jan 15; 2012 April 9, 2014). Like many public and school libraries, they noticed that when special sections of related materials were distinguished in location and arrangement – such as reading level or subject matter or fact from fiction - there was an increase in interest and circulation across the entire collection – a preferred result mirrored by many in the field especially with juvenile fiction such as picture books or easy readers. Cox explained this synthesizing of materials created a user -friendly atmosphere to which all involved (administration and patrons) are amenable due to simplified browsing (Cox 2011; Whitehead 2014). Reluctant readers and those requiring special education showed the most interest and benefit (Cox 2011; Whitehead 2014).

Within the first six weeks at Red Hawk Elementary, it became evident that the new system was making an impact on the Red Hawk community. A three-year study on a
group of students graduating through the school 4th to 6th grade compared Red Hawk Elementary’s results with two local district schools (Buchter 2013).

Red Hawk Elementary’s Holli Buchter said:

“After the first six weeks, analysis of the data showed that 100 percent of the students Checked out a book in a category different than they had as fourth-graders. Those students who previously checked out a book fewer than five times during the previous year were checking out a different book every week. Students who previously would read only J. K. Rowling's Harry Potter books were now checking out titles written by other fantasy authors. Students were making connections between fantasy and mythology, science fiction and science events, historical fiction and history. All of these connections were occurring without prompting from adults. Students as young as kindergarteners were able to navigate the library independently. Observations showed that students helped each other. No adult was needed. This independence helped alleviate library anxiety and created a love of the library and a love of books that did not exist previously.” (2013).

Ethical Culture Fieldston School reported:

“Has Metis made a difference? Absolutely. During the past year, in our middle-grade library (for kids in grades three to five), we’ve seen dramatic increases in circulation—including around 100 percent or more in our “Sports,” “Countries,” “Humor,” and “Mystery” sections, and a spike of 240 percent in “Machines” (which includes the military and transportation). And in those always under-used sections like “Languages” and what we now call “Community” (sections of the 300s in Dewey), we’ve seen a jump of more than 300 percent. The early grades library, for preK through second-grade kids, has seen similar gains in areas such as “Humor” (87 percent), “Scary” (148 percent), and “Adventure” (110 percent)” (Kaplan et.al. 2012).

Over the holiday break of 2013-2014, Whitehead conducted a survey of student’s view of the CMS library (2014 Sep 23). Results were spectacularly – and unsurprisingly - in favor of genrefication. Between the 2010-2011 year and the 2011-2012 year, annual circulation at CMS increased 2,828 – while the mighty librarian genrefied all of her
fiction. From 2011 to 2015, annual circulation rose exponentially by 14,357 following total collection genrefication. This does not include the year prior to Whitehead’s genrefication where her presence increased annual circulation by 2,070 (Whitehead 2014, Sep 23).

Overall, 78 percent of students between sixth and eighth grade said they find what they are looking for: including 201 sixth graders (78 percent), 173 seventh graders (77 percent) and 187 eighth graders (83 percent) (Whitehead 2014 January 23). Use of the online catalog decreases as students’ age: overall 33 percent rarely use it (243), 31 percent never use the catalog (228), 25 percent sometimes (184) and 11 percent often (80) (Whitehead 2014 January 23). This is a fairly common and immediate occurrence within genrefication (Buchter 2013, Kaplan 2012; 2013; Plemmons 2016, Aug24).

On a four point Richter scale of “I love it and I think it’s amazing” to “I don’t like the way our library is arranged”, 302 students (41 percent) liked CMS better than other libraries, 209 students (40 percent) loved genrefication, 121 students (17 percent) thought the genrefication was ok and 15 students (2 percent) did not like CMS’ genrefication. Dislike of genrefication increased with age from 0 in sixth grade, 5 in seventh grade (2 percent) and six in eighth grade (2 percent). Ambiguity toward genrefication never exceeded 22 percent in any grade although love decreased to like with age by up to six percent. However, nearly 600 children reported positively of genrefication as opposed to 136 ambiguous and negative results. (Whitehead 2014
January 23). Due to the success of circulation, the cost-benefit analysis and the graphic numeric data, showed positive results for genrefication and laid the foundation to increase Whitehead’s budget (Whitehead 2014, Sep 23).

The consistently repeated results of 50 percent to double or triple circulation increase in fiction, nonfiction or overall are rare research that is frequently implied. Even sparser are research surveys of the public’s reaction published, so the few that presented are mind-blowing and appear unrealistically successful. Despite the sparse amount of data available, these results are consistently to the genrefication spectrum’s benefit, though only four result providers are included in this research.

Five of the eight school libraries examined highlighted the positive local community involvement in pursuing genrefication (Aubuchon 2014; Buchter 2013; Collazo 2011, Sept 10; 2012, Dec 26; Cox 2011 March 31; Plemmons 2016, August 8, 12, 18; Whitehead 2011, January 12; 2012, April 9; 2016, January 23; 2017, January 11). This includes student, teacher, and family reception (Aubuchon 2014; Collazo 2012; Plemmons 2016, August 24).

From every observation patrons enthusiastically embrace genrefication with the exception of the Nyack library (Aubuchon 2014; Buchter 2013; Collazo 2011, Sept 10; 2012, Dec 26; Cox 2011 March 31; Plemmons 2016, August 8, 12, 18; Whitehead 2011, January 12; 2012, April 9; 2016, January 23; 2017, January 11). Real estate agents actually considered Red Hawk’s library as a selling point for houses in the area along
with parents, teachers, students and faculty (Buchter 2013). Four of the five schools discussing results mention the community’s “love” of genrefication (Kaplan 2012; Cox 2012 June 4; Whitehead 2012 April 4), and three others discuss patron’s excitement (Collazo 2012; Kaplan 2013; Plemmons 2016). Both Plemmons (August 18 and 24) and Whitehead (2014 January 17) included videos and written praise from their patrons reacting to the new library organization on their websites.

Extreme genrefication radically revolutionizes libraries in purpose and design (Buchter 2013; Cox 2011, Sep 10; 2012, March 31; Leveen 2011; Plemmons 2016, August 12; Snipes 2015; Whitehead 2012 April 9; 2013 Dec 8). Cox noted revolutionary genrefication is not for everyone, but because the spectrum exists, a librarian can experiment with it because it adapts to the community’s needs (Cox 2011, March 31).

Sixteen different blogs from seven of the eight libraries discussed labels in great detail (Aubuchon 2014; Buchter 2013; Collazo 2011, Sep 10; 2012, Sep 22; 2015, June 11, 15; Cox 2011, April 13, June 23, July 8; Kaplan 2012; 2013; Plemmons 2016, May 25, Aug 12, 18, 24; Whitehead 2011, Jan 15, 2013, Nov 29, Dec 1, 8; 2017, Jan 15). The one library that did not place heavy emphasis on label discussion still touched on the central topic (Lambert 2016). This emphasizes that genrefication is enabled by modern technology: affordable label printers. Now librarians are able to create customized, orderly, consistent labels for local communities. And because of today’s technological communication – phones, email, blogs, Pinterest and other applicable apps – DDC’s
inspiring uniformity content can spread quickly while still maintaining a local-community connection through style or even flexible adjustment as needed. These repeated discussions about affordable, legible, literate labels show that without affordable labels, genrefication would not be possible.

Ten posts focused on just the call number’s content and placement on the spine (Aubuchon 2014; Collazo 2011 Sep 10; 2012, Sep 22; 2015, June 11, 15; Cox 2011, June 23; Plemmons 2016 May 25, Aug 12; Whitehead 2011, Dec 1, 8). The discussion of labels encompasses preference and practicality as this affects findability, browsability and the aesthetics of the library collection. Label conversation centered on the importance of an efficient yet affordable label. Size, style and content are relevant concerns as well as the adhesiveness and cost of this time consuming aspect. The label must be comprehensible to the unique community. Disputed aspects include which word-based lettering to employ, how to pick the strongly advised optional color coding and how to customize indicating images, if desired. Also, labels are just the out-facing information for patrons; librarians are able to maintain DDC information for each material within the catalogs.

By touching each item in the collection, the librarian becomes familiar with collection content. Additionally, genrefication highlights the collections strengths and weaknesses for further development (Collazo 2012; Cox 2011; Plemmons 2016, May 25; Whitehead 2011; 2014, Sep 23).
One might ask why professional research on this occurrence has not been documented. There are three probable causes evident from the research. First, genrefication librarians are too busy to publish. They are leaders of cutting edge science in the field. Not only are they making these time-consuming changes, they are maintaining and regularly refining their individual community oriented systems. In addition to their full time positions, they are actively studying their progress, serving their communities and teaching their communities. In some cases, in their spare time, these pioneers are going to conferences presenting their experience based findings and networking (Whitehead 2012; 2016; Cox 2012).

Second, it is possible that as experimenters in smaller areas they do not have the capability to quantify or evaluate their success by academic or professional writing standards.

Third, these librarians are networking with each other. But as they don’t have time to write or professionally publish their research (easily a two year process), how can they be expected to gather, research and publish other’s similar but unique successes? This is the job of a full time researcher, not necessarily a full time librarian. Because of this, new research concerning these current trends and changes may not emerge until these librarians consider retiring in the next twenty to forty years or prioritizing publication over immediate experimentation. However, if each of these pioneers halted
their progress for two to three years it would take even longer to see just how far these changes can revolutionize and revitalize libraries.

Again, only one library out of the more than 12 school and public libraries reviewed in detailed during research considered genrefication a failure and reverted back to DDC in the past eight years since this trend began in 2009 (Sannwald 2014). Also, this lone failure was very difficult to locate. And the cause for this single failure is abundantly clear.

**When to Genrefy.**

All of this research reveals four factors to consider in the decision to genrefy. Libraries should be genrefied based off of community stakeholder’s preferences. What is best for the library community and what is affordable in available resources like time, money, resources? Multiple stakeholders exist within libraries and are affected by this radical concept of genrefication. A staff must be able to review a collection easily for maintenance. A judge and local government must be able to view, weigh and support a collection’s concepts. And the community must be able to browse or search as needed. A definite key note concerning genrefication is that a library must know its community (Collazo 2011, Beezley 2011). A library has to ask questions of the community and act on the community’s responses if it wants to engage the population and increase circulation on a local level (Beezley). While most instances of genrefication in both
fiction and nonfiction are reportedly successful, that success depends on how the system is tailored to the community (Kaplan et. al. 2012). Who makes up the library’s patrons (teachers, students in a certain grades, a community that doesn’t value or stock higher education) makes an impact not only on the collection but on how to maximize the collection.

The school libraries are highlighting the smaller the collection, the easier it is to genrefy. The larger the library collection the longer it will take to convert and the higher risk of unexpected outliers. However, having a plan in place for the collection beforehand makes any genrefication project not only possible but enjoyable. Another keynote to take from Beezley’s, Leveen’s Mitchell’s view is that sometimes reducing the size of a collection to better market it to the community is the right answer for smaller collection libraries (Fister 2009). The collection and organization system should seek to mirror instructional practices (Aubuchon 2014). Perhaps genrefication is only plausible for smaller collections but that doesn’t discredit its enormous value to those growing communities (Basan 2012).

Genrefy based off of library goals. If the library has a collection development policy for adding and weeding, those policies next to the overall library goals will determine how rational genrefication actually is. The goal results for genrefication should be observable and measurable.

Genrefication of any kind is not for everyone. Most researchers and information literate academics or archives should not consider reclassifying or altering nonfiction
DDC because the effort would not increase their findability needs as revealed through Nyack. And due to the relatively small fiction collections in these organizations, perhaps even the most conservative genrefication of fiction withdrawal, let alone reclassification, isn’t logical for the primary patrons.

It’s good to remember what one bookstore-turned-librarian said in response to Fister’s 2009 article: “I…think I can see the strong and weak points of each system [of organization]” (Fialkoff 2009).

**Findings vs Expectations**

Prior to investigating this topic, the researcher had a number of assumptions. Observing DDC’s failures and having heard of genrefication, the researcher assumed the process would be time consuming but effective. This held true despite the unexpected variety of complex approaches to genrefication. However, the amount of time required to transform a collection on average was far less than expected taking from a minimum of two months and two days in an organized school library to nine months in a pioneering public library.

Since it has been eight years since the controversy broke out, the researcher expected the success or failure of genrefication to be widely publicized, if it existed. Although genrefication has demonstrated a clear victory for children and DDC for researchers, neither result is widely conveyed in academic circles. The reason for this was unclear. Likely the individuals experiencing the results are too busy to publish formally
or extensively on the results. The researcher thought observable, repeated success of
genrefication would end the controversy among librarians. Because the information is not
widely published, librarians affected by this topic are generally incapable of holding an
informed discussion on the matter due to the wide dispersal of the conversation. And so
the controversy while quieter, though no less passionate, rages on.

Even more amazing is the lack of accessible material since 2013. Few opinions –
either negative or positive – have been published since 2013 when the topic was
relatively exciting due to the audacity of Maricopa’s, Rangeview’s and school libraries’
conversion between 2009 and 2013.

Another issue branching from the lack of publication is the lack of consistent
terminology for the variations of genrefication. The researcher was quite astounded by
the generality of the few applicable terms. This necessitates further research for
individuals to begin crafting the clarifying language for this discussion. Although
Sannwald indicated the terms “bookstore model, subject-based cataloging, or
nontraditional shelving” those terms rarely resulted in relevant article concerning
genrefication as she previously described (Sannwald 2014).

Beezley pointed out that under Casey and Stephen’s finding, perhaps librarians
have unintentionally made call numbers an obstacle to the leisurely enjoyment of
browsing. Likewise, DDC call numbers can be the final straw pushing patrons over the
ledge of information overload that discourages library use. According to Beezley’s
research provided in the literature review, perhaps patrons want a less highbrow
organization than librarians. Have librarians, with their high education of masters’
degrees, become so snobbish and stuffy that they forcefully draw distinguishing lines in
terminology and organizational style so that patrons no longer enjoy using the library for
its traditional operations? This appears to be less a matter of community education or
values and more a matter of librarian’s view of patron service.
Conclusion

During this scavenger hunt of citation chasing, some definite themes about genrefication as a growing trend emerged: such as the general consensus of the causes for supporting or leaving or mixing with DDC. While many are in agreement on these various causes, there are a greater variety of plausible solutions for investigations all using the unspecified term “genrefication.” Nonetheless, there is a general sense that most genrefication is more operational within fiction. Most controversies come from librarians who have fear reorganizing nonfiction apart from DDC.

When people begin discussing this idea of genrefication, there is a tendency to assume that all genrefication is equally incompatible with and deficient to DDC. This simply isn’t the case. In fact, the opposite is true. Genrefication comes in all shapes and sizes (Collazo 2011; Cox 2011; Whitehead 2011). If anything, there is at this time no one size of genrefication that could fit all due to the goals of local community user experience genrefication (Aubuchon 2013; Kaplan et.al. 2012). Further research could be conducted to see if, as the researcher suspects, there is an objective genrefication process and order that can emerge based on a shared educational goal.

Most genrefication labeling is unique to a single community branch or system. There is great variety in the styles from an increase of directional and explanation signage to Dewey hybrids and mash ups to Deweyless systems.

The research examined in depth, twelve different incidents of genrefications.

Three cases are public libraries and nine others are school libraries.
Genrefication only occurs in these types of library because they interact with a less information literate portion of society. They are the individuals of society who are not regularly using library resources for primarily research or archival work. All other library audiences have not only been exposed to DDC but have pursued and engaged it for professional or educational reasons. The average patron – unless they are an avid reader of nonfiction in physical materials that are not biographies – does not regularly pursue DDC.

The spectrum of genrefication ranges across school and public library genre areas, from conservative to revolutionary within literary quality, format driven, subject headings and library designs.

Despite the difficulty in gathering the data, considering the results presented in online blogs where involved librarian professionals engage, it’s no surprise public and school libraries are increasingly incorporating genrefication schemas. Much of the literature indicates that DDC is no longer the best shelf organizing method for today’s children. Because of genrefication and DDC’s fundamentally different goals which were designed in different times and for different audiences, both have a very prominent place is opposing places.
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