

that one (just one, I think) reviewer had not only spotted it but credited me--erroneously, of course--with its coinage.

Well along (p. vii) in my prefatory explanations of the work's nature, I wrote that it carried the arrangement-by-composers principle a "step beyond" to the "presentation of each composer's discography work by work." But it was only Edward Betts, in the British newspaper (?) The Era for December 28, 1936, who picked that up for his review lead: "Not content with being a pioneer, R. D. Darrell has coined a new word to describe his work."

I wish I had! But it's doubtful that any individual can be credited with inventing so obvious a parallel-adaptation of bibliography: it must have occurred spontaneously and near-simultaneously to more than one record commentator. My own extremely vague impression is that I first saw it as discography in some French record journal, probably Disques, evidently sometime before late in 1930 when I received Seltsam's Farrar example.

R. D. Darrell

It's pleasant to find that R.D. Darrell was not only the author of the earliest comprehensive classical discography but may also have been present when the word itself entered the English language. The following lexical comment is added at his suggestion.

The sources and dates Mr. Darrell gives will be news even to those who know the authoritative work on such matters, the Oxford English Dictionary--or, rather, the Supplement to the Oxford English Dictionary, which includes this entry:

discography (disko-grafi). [f. *DISC sb. 2 d + -OGRAPHY. Cf. Fr. discographie.] A catalogue raisonné of gramophone records; a list of the recordings of a single composer or performer; also, the study of recordings. Hence **discograph-ical** a., pertaining or relating to discography; **disco-grapher**, one skilled in discography.

1935 Melody Maker 14 Dec. 8/3 I have seen all kinds of discology, discography, and long lists of records. 1936 R. D. Darrell Gramophone Shop Encycl. Recorded Music p. vii A presentation of each composer's discography work by work, with complete recorded versions of each composition in its original form. 1941 Jazz Information Nov. 22/1 Important as these items are to discographers, they were merely sidelines with James P. 1946 Jazz Mag. III. i. 3/2 Eric S. Tonks' new complete Jazz discography is to be released in sections. Ibid. 12/1 It seems..obvious..without even hearing the records but just glancing through the discographical details, that these records hardly

represent a short 'History of Jazz'. 1946 R. Venables in A. McCarthy PL Yearbk. Jazz 140 Those to whom discography appears a needlessly involved science. 1952 [see *DISCOPHILE]. 1955 R. Blesh Shining Trumpets (ed. 3) xiv.323 The assembling of discographical information and biographical material in America. 1957 Times Lit. Suppl. 20 Nov. 714/3 Its scholarship is the 'discography' (a curious discipline analogous to bibliography). 1966 Guardian 8 Mar. 12/6 Leonard Petts..has spent some time compiling a discography of Sir Winston Churchill for the British Institute of Recorded Sound...[Churchill] must have left his words behind in odd corners not yet found by the discographers.*

Readers will notice the reliance on British sources; though more open to Americanisms than its parent work, and though the compiler (Robert Burchfield) is a New Zealander, the Supplement is still very English. Furthermore, neither definition is quite right. The first is too narrow, excluding for example discographies of record labels and types of recordings. The second is unclear and might better have been adapted from the original OED's definition of bibliography: "The systematic description and history of books, their authorship, printing, publication, editions, etc."

It's likely that Lewis Foreman, in the passage that Mr. Darrell uses as his epigraph, took his information from the then recently-published Supplement. Perhaps neither he nor Mr. Burchfield should be blamed too much for having missed two earlier occurrences of the word in an American record magazine that ceased publication in 1932! But now Mr. Darrell has set things right.

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*from Supplement to the Oxford English Dictionary, vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1972). Reprinted by permission of the publisher.