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Letter to SEAALL members regarding an indexing project, October 18, 1965

Mary Oliver

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To the Members of the Southeastern Chapter:

At the meeting in Chapel Hill last year, a committee was appointed to work out the details of a plan for indexing some of the legal materials which are not now indexed, primarily essays published in individual volumes or as parts of series. In coverage the project might be compared to an Essay and General Literature Index for law.

At the University of North Carolina we have been carrying on a project somewhat similar which might be of use to us in determining the procedure for indexing. In an effort to locate periodical articles in other sources and to take some of the heavy use from our periodicals, we have been indexing reprints of articles in selected readings. Our procedure has been reasonably automatic. We have made a copy of the table of contents of the material which we are indexing. If the table of contents does not give us the information we need we then go through the volume adding the source information. This is then given to the secretary who types out slips (using carbonized sheets of different colors in four copies). This slip gives the author, title, original source and present source. We are filing one copy by author, one by original source and the other two are available for the assignment of subject headings. We will use the subject headings in the Index to Legal periodicals.

So far this has given us a usable index with a minimum of work. I believe that this procedure could be adapted to the project at hand with xeroxed copies being made available at a nominal fee to those interested in acquiring them.

At the Annual Meeting of the A.A.L.L. in New York, the Committee presented a preliminary plan to the Chapter which was adopted. In accordance with this plan we are asking each member of the Chapter to do two things: 1) Suggest those specific titles which he would like to see indexed and 2) Indicate those titles which he is willing to index.

The Committee will then go over the proposed list, establish standards for inclusion, a form to be used, and a method of coordination of the work.

We will appreciate your cooperation in this project. If each of us finds it possible to do just one or two titles, we can have an index of approximately one hundred titles.

Please send your suggestions to Mary W. Oliver, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

Sincerely,
Committee on Index

Harriet French
Betty Taylor
Kate Wallach
Mary Oliver, Chairman