

MUSIC LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
RDA Best Practices for Music: A Conversation Program Report
San Jose, California – Thursday, Feb. 28, 2013

This program was presented by a panel of speakers, including: Casey Mullin, Stanford University, moderator (CM); Kathy Glennan, University of Maryland (KG); Nancy Lorimer, Stanford University (NL); Daniel Paradis, Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (DP); and Kevin Kishimoto, University of Chicago (KK).

This session featured questions related to the document describing best practices for music cataloging. The draft of the document “Best Practices for Music Cataloging, Using RDA and MARC 21” may be found here: http://bcc.musiclibraryassoc.org/BCC-Historical/BCC2013/RDA_Best_Practices_for_Music_Cataloging.pdf

The reasons the best practices were deemed necessary include: 1) Many rule interpretations for music were brought into RDA from AACR2, but many were not; 2) Changes are ongoing in the RDA text; 3) Changes are ongoing in the MARC format; 4) Training materials for cataloging music with RDA are being developed; and 5) To assist the NACO-Music Project, which is tied to the PCC timeline. The Best Practices is a living document and will continue to be updated. One idea related to RDA is that specialist communities will be writing their own guidelines to supplement RDA rules as they relate to unique types of resources (like music).

What follows is a summary of the questions and answers which occurred during this program.

Question

- When should we put the performer in the 100 field? Are jazz and popular musicians creators, performers, or both? (See RDA rules 6.28.1.5.1 and 19.2.1.1.1)

Answers

- It comes down to a very clear distinction that RDA makes between contributors and creators. It's very difficult to find a situation where someone who has the performer's role has creative responsibility sufficient to make that the way that you want to identify the work. (KG)
- Rule 6.28.5.1.1 is about adaptations; the next segment of the rule says that if you're going to construct that access point, you need to make the performer the creator of the work. This can be problematic when we consider jazz performers and adaptations. An example of this would be the many recordings of “My Funny Valentine,” vs. “Variations on My Funny Valentine” (the latter would be considered an adaptation). (NL)
- Amy Winehouse, Coldplay, Red Hot Chili Peppers examples: all have writing credits on their albums but are not considered as creators for cataloging purposes. (KK)
- RDA doesn't care where you shelve something, but don't let the new cataloging rules influence how you provide services locally (this in light of AACR2's concept of “performer main entry” and how that would affect description and shelving). (KG)
- A performance is generally considered an expression under RDA, and there is the possibility of creating an expression record. (NL)

Question

- What is the definition of a cover, and how is it distinguished from a title page when all of the pages are of the same paper stock (as in sheet music)?

Answers

- RDA does not address it. (NL)
- The operational definition of “cover” may have come from Cataloging Music / Richard Smiraglia,¹ or from Sheet Music Processing and Cataloging.² (CM)
- Use cataloger’s judgment. If it’s not in the instructions, the LC-PCC-PS’s or Best Practices, it’s up to you, the cataloger. (KG)
- Definition of cover doesn’t matter so much in RDA, since the order of preference of taking information from the caption, cover and title page are different from AACR2. (DP)

Question

- How do we distinguish between titles of parts, sections and supplements (2.3.1.7) and a designation of edition (2.5.2), when voice range is involved?

Answers

- The rules for the edition statement actually do mention the voice range. If the resource states “soprano voice” then that information would be stated in the edition statement. (KK)
- If all the music is the same in the various published versions, then it’s an expression (so it’s an edition statement). For example, art songs for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass. Conversely, if the music isn’t the same, then the compilations are different works, hence part title. (CM)

Question

- Why is it advisable to routinely record a copyright date, especially when it is the same as the publication date which it is used to infer?

Answers

- The RDA requirement is to provide a date of publication and the copyright date is a core element if you have no idea about the publication date and distribution date. But generally speaking, you don’t want to go down the “cascading vortex of horror,” so generally you’ll want to supply this information to avoid having multiple statements of manufacture and distribution. For music, copyright is often used in the case of both scores and sound recordings when the date of publication is not present. If you just bracket the date in a publication statement, nobody really knows where you got that date – you could have gotten it from the web, you could have pulled it out of your head, or you could have gotten it from the copyright date. If you actually record the copyright date, then people know where you got it. The materials we catalog tend to have only the copyright information. In the realm of best practices, it seemed best to continue the practice of what we’ve always done, and record what we see. (KG)
- Scores and sound recordings often don’t include a date of publication, and copyright dates actually tell us more. (NL)

¹ Smiraglia, Richard P. Cataloging music: a manual for use with AACR2. Lake Crystal, Minn.: Soldier Creek Press, 1986.

² Shaw, Sarah J. Sheet music cataloging and processing: a manual. Music Library Association, 1984.

- The absence of metadata is not the same as metadata; even if copyright and publication dates are the same, we need to record them because the information is in separate fields. If we don't record the date it doesn't exist and no one knows what it is. (KK)
- Filling in all fields in an RDA record, even if the information is redundant, assists with machine-readability. AACR2 records were largely about context, which is not what RDA records are intended to be. (Jenn Riley, Mark Scharff from the audience)
- MARC instructions for recording separate dates when they are the same should be updated with the next update to OCLC Bibliographic Formats and Standards. The most recent technical bulletin carries the most recent changes, updates and redefinitions of things, including the 2011 and 2012 MARC updates. (Jay Weitz, OCLC)

Question

- Isn't it redundant to give the medium of performance in a 382 field when it is also a component of an access point? Aren't terms like "strings" as a component of a standard combination of instruments meaningless by themselves in the 382?

Answers

- Remember that data in different fields serves different purposes (for search and retrieval) (KG)
- An attribute is different from an access point, and it may be searched separately. An LC thesaurus of medium of performance is being created and it will not be the same as medium of performance in access points. (NL)
- There are problems with the vocabulary for the standard combinations of instruments, which is a concept carried over from AACR2. For this reason some have questioned whether we should continue using these terms, or get rid of that rule and apply the rule of listing all the instruments, even in the case of a standard combination of instruments. (DP)
- RDA rule 6.28.1.9 instructs us not to provide the medium of performance when the medium is implied by the type of composition. One of the types listed is "Masses." Since the access point doesn't include a medium of performance, the 382 field would help in this case (KK)
- DCM 7.1 requires us to use vocabulary from 6.15 (NL)
- RDA is international; for instance, French and German versions are being prepared, so practices need to remain uniform (DP)

Question

- What should be done when a person doesn't fit into any of the definitions of the relationship designators (for example, the librettist of a ballet)?

Answers

- Don't use a relationship designator in that case; it's better not to misrepresent. New relationship designators can be proposed to the JSC. (KK)
- In the case of "librettist" the definition actually says that it's an author of a libretto of an opera "or other stage work" or an oratorio. My understanding is that it would apply to a ballet. (DP)

Question

- What's the deal with these new 34x fields, and can I still use the 300 \$b to record audio recording attributes such as "stereo," "digital," etc.?

Answers

- PCC has not yet created guidelines for this. The bottom line is: if you're going to use these new fields in your local system, make sure they work. If it's important that they display, make sure they display. Are they indexed? Do they validate? Are they searchable? Pay attention to how your data are displayed to your users in your OPAC (KG)
- If we separate out all the data elements (into the 34x fields), then they are machine readable and searchable (and searchable in other ways than simply by keyword). This adds a layer of functionality that we don't have right now, and is more powerful than keyword searching. (KK)
- The Best Practices document recommends NOT using the 300 \$b; but rather to place the relevant information in the 34x fields. (KK)

Question

- Is "primary language content in RDA" the same as "sung or spoken text" in AACR2 for printed music that includes commentary, librettos, etc.? I see the 546 field being used for the latter category just often enough that I've wondered. Should language content other than sung or spoken text be recorded in a regular 500 note instead?

Answers

- I think so. (DP)
- RDA rule 7.12 gives instructions for the "language used to express the content of a resource." There are separate instructions for the language of expressions and programming language (for system requirements note). I do not envision a change in my personal practice from AACR2. (KG)
- The panel thinks that the practice should remain the same as it was in AACR2; in other words the 546 field is for the language of the work (sung or spoken text), and the 500 field is used for other language statements.