

To: John Attig, ALA Representative to the JSC

From: Mark Scharff, CC:DA Liaison from the Music Library Association

Re: RDA revision priority list (informal) from members of the Music Library Association

This represents a compilation of comments from MLA members and the Liaison's own thoughts. It is not guaranteed to be comprehensive, but represents most of the concerns that we can identify without actually using the code. Rule numbers are those found in the beta version of RDA, rather than the PDF document. We hope that this is helpful to ALA in choosing what revisions to pursue after the publication of RDA.

Highest priority

Re-examine the workflow underlying chapters 6.14 and 6.27-6.28. The instructions in 6.14 presume that the data elements being recorded are destined for authorized access points; this produces inconsistencies in when certain information is recorded (e.g. key, thematic numbers, medium of performance that would not be present in an authorized access point, but might be needed in a variant access point). It also precludes the possibility of recording data with more specificity that would be needed or desired in an access point (e.g. a totally "as-is" approach to recording terms for large instrumental ensembles vs. the current restrictive practice). The solution is likely a combination of instructions in 6.14 that will provide for consistent recording of the data, with tweaking of 6.27-6.28 to clarify when data will be omitted or manipulated to serve as part of an authorized or variant access point. The process of doing this could be the opportunity to deal with smaller problems, such as:

- The ambiguity about choosing vs. recording a preferred title illustrated by the Präludium und Fuge example in 6.14.2.3; without explicit indication of what the composer's original title was, the example appears to be a pre-emptive application of 6.14.2.4. If that's the intent, the instruction in 6.14.2.3 should point the user to 6.14.2.4.
- the apparent lack of instructions in 6.28 for constructing preferred access points for compilations of musical works by a single person, etc.;
- the grossly-misplaced instruction to add serial numbering to a preferred title in 6.14.2.8.5 though such numbering is not part of a preferred title formulated according to 6.14.2.4, and despite being part of an instruction that explicitly refers to complete collections of works of a single type while clearly being intended to name incomplete compilations.

Clarify the status of containers as preferred sources of information (2.2.1). For sound recordings and videos, are they regarded as part of the resource itself? This is important because many such resources do not bear a collective title on the disc, cartridge, etc., but have a collective title on a publisher-issued container.

Work on 6.28.1.5 (Adaptations) and 6.28.3.2 (Arrangements)

- Devise instructions that provide a less Western bias to the code.

- Give more weight to arrangers and adapters as creators in naming works based on folk or world musics that do not have an established “Ur-form”. Harmonize this with 6.28.3.3 (Added accompaniments, etc.).
- Decide what to do with situations where the composer and the librettist of an opera are the same person and the opera and libretto have the same title. The rules for breaking conflicts would seem to call for adding parenthetical qualifiers to each. That would mean adding (Opera) to a large number of currently-unqualified access points (e.g. Richard Wagner). Qualifying only the libretto access point, however, makes it confusingly close to the variant access point for it on the authority record for the libretto (where the qualification would be expressed as MARC \$k).

High priority

Clarify the situations of music whose medium of performance, form, text, etc., is intended to change with each performance. This has some relationship with the larger question of whether such musics have an “Ur-form” that can be named.

Refine the language about choosing the language for preferred titles in 6.14.2.5 (“record the accepted form of name in the language preferred by the agency creating the data, if there is one.”). The goal is to be clear about the level at which this is applied (all titles? If title-specific, what are the criteria? MLA prefers some application of cognates) so that consistent results are possible without undue inflexibility.

Reconsider the arrangement of instructions in 6.15.

- Look for agreement on whether or how to expand the list of terms for large instrumental ensembles (6.15.1.8).
- Come to a conclusion on how to order elements of medium of performance (particularly within the instrumental realm, where “score order” offer problems (6.15.1.3, c)).

Decide whether or not to keep music-specific instructions for devised titles (2.3.2.11.1); MLA prefers retention to provide more guidance on the data elements needed for an optimal result.

Remove ambiguities about collective titles for works of composers who are also literary authors, and vice versa. Incorporate the concepts in LCRI 25.8, “Composers and writers,” to provide the means to distinguish between editions of the complete musical works of a composer, his/her complete literary works, and comprehensive editions of his/her total works (e.g. Wagner, Berlioz, Bruckner). All would currently have the preferred title “Works.” (6.2.2.10.1, 6.14.2.8.2). Similar situation pertains to literary figures who also write music (e.g. E.t.A. Hoffmann).

Seek a definition for “Distinctive title” that can say what it is, rather than what it isn’t.
(Glossary)

Correct the language in 6.15.1.12 that would seem to limit the rule to compilations in its reference to 6.14.2.9.5 rather than the more general instruction in 6.14.2.4. The need is to offer a clear description of the scope of the preferred titles in play. The caption smacks of the same tautology that brought us “concerto-like works” as a proposed category of work. “The vocals” is an atrocious term, and highly ironic in that it is a pop-music term being used in an instruction from which popular idioms are explicitly excluded.

Resolve the question of whether and when to use “Lyrics” vs. “Texts” as a form qualifier in access points for collections of words for songs.

Other issues

Base material/applied material for sound recordings (3.6 and 3.7)--of interest to the archival sound community

Production method for sound recordings (3.9)—of interest to the archival sound community.

Reconsider the apparent decision to conflate capture and playback encoding data in 3.16.2. The recommended changes to the examples from the March 2009 JSC meeting do not clarify matters.

Initial articles (6.2.1.7)—MLA would support the ALA/CILIP contention that the instruction should convey the intended outcome (filing) rather than a specific means of doing it (lopping off the initial article).

Conventional collective titles—some interest within MLA.

Form of work—not strong interest in a closed list of terms. That sort of consistency should be applied in the service of constructing access points.

Removing alternative terms from 6.15.1.6—not a strong feeling about this.

“Concerto-like works” (language not in RDA; concept at 6.15.1.9)—MLA has repeatedly voiced its dislike of this wording and offered more precise language.

Expanding Date and Place of Capture elements to provide recording of other details (e.g. broadcast, live recording)

Identify the proper term for a score of a work for solo voices, chorus, and orchestral accompaniment where the accompaniment has been omitted. The presence of the music for the soloists would exclude the item from being a chorus score; vocal scores as defined in RDA have to have an accompaniment arranged for keyboard present (Glossary)

Change of name (6.2.3)—MLA’s stake here is the implication the proposal would have for access points naming musical works when the composer has more than one authorized access point. This has

been an issue since LC decided to start treating composers like other authors in AACR2 Chapter 22, but this would likely bring many more instances to the fore.

Name that consists of a phrase/additions to names (9.2.22 et al)—MLA has an interest in this as far as it pertains to names of musicians. Anything that provides more guidance is welcome.