

Library of Congress genre/form headings presentation at the 2008 OLAC-MOUG conference

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Synopsis

In early 2007 the Library of Congress initiated an experiment to develop a system of genre/form headings (MARC 21 tag 155), which describe what a work is, as opposed to what it is about. To date, hundreds of headings in the areas of moving images (film, television programs, and video recordings) and radio programs have been approved. Two Subject Cataloging Manual instruction sheets have also been published in support of the headings: H 1913 for moving image genre/form headings, and H 1969.5 for radio programs. Other projects, including that for music genre/form headings, are in the discussion stages.

In this session, attendees will learn about the history and current status of the genre/form project at the Library of Congress, with emphasis on policies for the use of moving image and radio program genre/form headings.

Definition

Genre/form headings describe what a work *is* rather than what it is *about*.

MARC 21 format

- Authority records: 155, 455, 555 fields
- Bibliographic records: 655 field

Current projects

- Moving images (films, television programs, video recordings)
- Radio programs
- Objectives
 - To assist in retrieval by providing access points for the forms and genres of expressions, in addition to headings describing subject content.
 - To create a system of authority records that:
 - Permits future development and maintenance by LC and eventually by other libraries, patterned after the routines established for *LCSH* as a whole
 - Supports automatic validation of headings assigned to bibliographic records
 - To determine the issues that will arise in the creation and use of such thesauri, in order to determine whether to expand the project beyond moving images, recorded sound, and musical compositions
- Statistics

Policies

- Headings
 - What constitutes a genre?
 - *Subject Cataloging Manual* instruction sheets H 1913 (moving images) and H 1969.5 (radio programs)
 - Definition of terms: film, television program, radio program
 - One heading is used for all manifestations of a work
 - *Exceptions: Video recordings for the hearing impaired and Video recordings for people with visual disabilities*
 - Prefer to use the same heading string for topical and genre/form headings
 - Allows for “one-stop searching”
 - Not always possible, because the topical and genre/form headings sometimes have different meanings
 - Some genre/form headings have no corresponding topical heading
 - Some topical headings have no corresponding genre/form heading
 - Lack of a corresponding genre/form heading is a conscious decision in some cases; if it is, a scope note provides that information
 - Recordings of events v. cinematic works
- References
 - Made according to general principles governing references for *LCSH*
 - “Broadest term” references are provided for hierarchical purposes
- Scope notes
 - Format is different from that on other headings, to allow for clarity in ILS displays
- Language of work
 - Not provided for in the genre/form headings
- Subdivision
 - MARC 21 format allows for subdivisions of genre/form headings, but LC has chosen not to implement them

Distribution of authority records

- Classification Web
- LC’s authorities website, authorities.loc.gov
- MARC Distribution Service
- Special section in the printed editions of *LCSH*

Cooperative efforts

- Input requested from library community
- SACO pilot
- All SACO libraries will eventually be invited to contribute
- SAC’s Genre/Form Implementation Subcommittee

Future directions

- LC catalogers will be trained and begin to apply moving image and radio program genre/form headings
- *MIGFG* & *RADFG* headings on bibliographic records will be replaced with LC genre/form headings
- New projects
 - Law: in cooperation with AALL
 - Music: in cooperation with MLA
 - Literature
 - Cartography
 - CPSO timelines are not yet established; they will be made public when finalized

Application of headings

- Use topical headings to describe the content
- Use genre/form headings to describe what an item is
- Possible to use both types of headings within one record
- Moving image genre/form headings
 - Assign as many headings as necessary, including from multiple levels of the hierarchy if desired
 - Always assign **Short films** or **Feature films**
 - Always assign a fiction or nonfiction heading
 - Assign headings designating content in accordance with general *LCSH* principles, adding **\$v Drama** or **\$v Juvenile works** to the ends of headings for fictional works
- Radio programs
 - Assign as many headings as necessary, including for multiple levels of the hierarchy if desired
 - Assign either **Fiction radio programs** or **Nonfiction radio programs** if desired
 - Assign headings designating content in accordance with general *LCSH* principles
- Subfield \$v
 - Continue to use \$v in subject headings, even if one or more 655s is present
 - Do not assign \$v (or any other subdivision) in 655 fields

For further information consult:

- *Subject Cataloging Manual*
 - H 1913: Moving image genre/form headings
 - H 1969.5: Radio program genre/form headings
- CPSO's web page at <http://www.loc.gov/aba/>
 - Frequently asked questions
 - Announcements
- Email CPSO@loc.gov or jayo@loc.gov