

To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA
From: Dave Reser, LC Representative
Subject: Conventional Collective Titles in RDA: a discussion paper

Thanks to the British Library for analyzing the issues related to the use of conventional collective titles in RDA. As we stated in our response to 6JSC/Chair/15/rev/2 in 2014, the use of conventional collective titles is a complicated issue. Although that paper from the National Library of New Zealand was focused on how to apply the first paragraph of 6.2.2.10 (when a compilation of works can be considered to be ‘commonly known’ by a title), this discussion from the BL is more focused on 6.2.2.10.1-6.2.2.10.3, once a determination is made that there is no commonly known title for a compilation.

We have found that there are common situations where defaulting to the use of conventional collective titles is a practical solution, including:

- When no collective title is found (i.e., the RDA solution for recording the title proper of a manifestation in 2.3.2.9 (Resources without a collective title) is not adequate for identifying the work)
- When a compilation exists only in translation (the ‘original compilation’ does not exist)
- When a compilation of works of a creator is contained within a compilation of works by different creators.
- When there have been many published manifestations of compilations with different titles proper, and no single form is commonly used.

The latter case is particularly problematic for libraries such as ours that have used conventional collective titles for decades and have large legacy files—determining “the” preferred title from dozens (if not hundreds) of manifestations is cost prohibitive.

In the past, we also received feedback from our reference librarians that the use of these conventional collective titles enables quick identification of the complete works of popular authors such as Mark Twain. In our current MARC system, if we did away with conventional collective titles, the only way for reference librarians to identify which title was being used as the one for the complete works would be to look at all the name/title authority records for Mark Twain to find the one with a “form of work” that said “complete works,” then searching that access point. In effect, we have made identification and selection more difficult for them, which seems contrary to the principles of FRBR.

In order to accommodate the model suggested by the BL, it is presumed that the instructions in 6.2.2.4-6.2.2.7 would need to be applied to the types of compilations covered in 6.2.2.10.1-6.2.2.10.3. For the first and second bullets noted above (no

collective title in original language), a title would likely need to be devised using 6.2.2.6.2, and indeed an agency practice could be to devise titles similar to “Works,” “Complete works,” “Early plays,” etc. These decisions would not be difficult in the case of compilations by new authors, but as noted above, the case of many different manifestation titles to choose from in legacy situations could be a complicated challenge (identifying a common form, researching an original language, or lacking that, the original edition, etc.). For retrospective cases, an agency may have no choice but instruct catalogers to “devise” conventional collective titles as a matter of efficiency.

Under AACR2, we had extensive LCRIIs designed to restrict the application of conventional collective titles to certain situations like the ones described above. This created a file in which authors’ works of one type were split up under a number of headings. It also caused much angst with our catalogers who spent a lot of time reading these LCRIIs to determine if a conventional collective title should be applied.

The BL’s examples at 2.4.1 for the complete works left us a little confused because the BL only showed the practice applied to one manifestation. We assume the BL is suggesting that when a subsequent publication containing this compilation is received, it would be assigned an AAP based on the preferred title “The fireside Dickens”? Do these examples show the application of the BL practice:

Title proper of the series: Centenary edition of the works of Charles Dickens

AAP for the series: Dickens, Charles, 1812-1780. The fireside Dickens

Title proper of the monograph: Sobranīe sochinenīi Charl’za Dikkensa

AAP for the expression: Dickens, Charles, 1812-1780. The fireside Dickens. Russian

Although the BL argues that users are not well served by conventional collective titles, it seems that identifying the complete works of Dickens as “The fireside Dickens” as a preferred title related to a description of the manifestation called “The beachside Dickens” invites confusion. We agree that some method should likely be used to assist users to identify that a particular preferred title is for the complete works, either through a “form of work,” variant titles, etc.

We do not agree with the BL’s conclusion (2.5) that the indication of incompleteness using “Selections” is misleading for collective works. Although RDA allows for identifying each of the works in incomplete compilations, we still see the need for identifying the collective work as well, to show relationships between works, to show subject relationships for the collective work, etc. There is an inherent challenge for catalogers when processing the *next* manifestation of an incomplete compilation, to determine whether it is the same set of selected works published previously, or a different

compilation. The use of the conventional collective title with *Selections* is an efficiency in these cases. Using “Frost, Robert, 1874-1963. Poems. Selections” for all incomplete compilations of Frost’s poetry prevents our cataloger from having to retrieve all the books from the stacks and compare the tables of contents to determine if all the same poems are present in the compilation every time they have a book of Frost’s poetry to catalog.

As noted above, the impact on legacy data is a major issue for this discussion.

Note: We will defer, for now, to the JSC Music Working Group for an analysis/reaction to the use of conventional collective titles for music; and note that 6JSC/ALA/37, if approved, would remove the use of “Laws, etc.” as a conventional collective title.

Example A. Resource with no collective title

Title proper of manifestation: Pride and prejudice ; Mansfield Park ; Persuasion

6.2.2.10.3 practice: Austen, Jane, 1775-1817. Pride and prejudice

Austen, Jane, 1775-1817. Mansfield Park

Austen, Jane, 1775-1817. Persuasion

6.2.2.10.3 Alternative practice: Austen, Jane, 1775-1817. Novels. Selections

Proposed BL practice: Austen, Jane, 1775-1817. Pride and prejudice. 2001 (Compilation)

Date of expression and other distinguishing characteristic added to differentiate

Example B. Compilation found only in translation

Title proper of manifestation: Taccuino di un nemico

Manifestation of an Italian translation of a previously unpublished German manuscript

6.2.2.10.3 alternative practice: Otto (Soldier). Diaries. Selections. Italian

Proposed BL practice: Otto (Soldier). Diaries. Selections. Italian

Note: the application of 6.2.2.6.2 results in the same practice, because no title in the original language or the language preferred by the agency was found

Example C. Compilation of works of one creator within a compilation of works of different creators

Title proper of manifestation: Catulli, Tibulli et Propertii opera

Translation: The works of Catullus, Tibullus, and Propertius

Current 6.2.2.10.1 practice (for the portion of the compilation created by Catullus): Catullus, Gaius Valerius. Works

Proposed BL practice (for Catullus): Catullus, Gaius Valerius. Catulli, Tibulli et Propertii opera

Title proper of manifestation: The complete works of Catullus

Current practice: Catullus, Gaius Valerius. Works. English

Proposed BL practice: Catullus, Gaius Valerius. Catulli, Tibulli et Propertii opera. English

Example D. Many manifestations with no single form of title proper used

Title proper: Horatius

Title proper: Q. Horatius Flaccus

Title proper: The complete Horace

Title proper: Q. Horatij Flacci opera

Title proper: Opera

Title proper: The works of Horace

Title proper: Œuvres d'Horace

Title proper: L'opere d'Oratio, poeta lirico

Current 6.2.2.10.1 practice: Horace. Works

Proposed BL practice: there were too many manifestations for us to determine what is the most common form of title or earliest published