

To: RDA Steering Committee
From: Dave Reser, LC Representative
Subject: Proposal on Sources of Information (RDA 2.2.2)

General comment

Thanks to the European community for describing an interesting situation that occurs with the sources of titles for some moving image resources.

The RDA instructions for identifying the preferred source of information are intended, in part, to allow for any cataloger describing the same manifestation to reach the same conclusions. As sometimes happens, the title proper selected according to priority order of sources may not always seem to be the “best” title in a particular context. RDA also allows for a number of techniques to record *all* titles associated with the manifestation that may be meaningful to users (variant title, parallel title proper, etc.) as well as the preferred title for the work and variant title for the work.

The priority instructions for choosing the preferred source of information for resources consisting of moving images (2.2.2.3) were also designed with the concept of “permanence” of the source in mind. The priority order moves from a title frame or screen (both internal sources), to permanent external labels, to containers. The further down the priority order of sources you get, the more likely it is to be unavailable over time. For example, in many libraries the container issued with a resource is discarded, either for easier storage or in favor of a container meeting preservation standards. While the title frame/screen and labels may remain, the container may not.

We recognize that internal sources like title screens may not be available to catalogers that lack the resources to access them. However, this proposal is not entirely about what sources are available in a resource, but whether the information found in one of the sources, even external sources, should be favored by an agency or community based on some other factor (e.g., based on language, based on country of distribution). While we suggest the current order be followed whenever possible, we recognize that agencies may see the need to document specific categories of resources that may require a different approach in order to ensure some level of consistency.¹

Section 1: 2.2.2.3 Resources Consisting of Moving Images

As noted in the proposal, the alternative rule at 2.2.2.3 “works quite well” in many cases, although there are more uncommon categories for which a different approach may be

¹ Our moving image cataloging specialists have local decisions providing different priority sources that vary by method of production and distribution (e.g., factory-produced stamped discs and videocassettes in containers produced for mass market distribution, burned discs, analog video, motion picture distribution prints). In some cases they prefer containers, such as the case of conventional “billing blocks” that are often a matter of detailed contracts.

desired by a cataloging agency. We think a simpler re-working of the existing alternative at 2.2.2.3 is a cleaner approach; and allows the agency to create policy decisions that would a) identify the specific category, and b) indicate the agency's choice of sources for that category.

2.2.2.3 Resources Consisting of Moving Images

[1st paragraph omitted]

Alternative

Tangible resources. Use one of the sources specified at 2.2.2.3.1 as the preferred source of information.

Online resources. Use one of the sources specified at 2.2.2.3.2 as the preferred source of information.

~~Use a label with a title that is permanently printed on or affixed to the resource in preference to the title frame or frames, or title screen or screens. This alternative does not apply to labels on accompanying textual material or a container.~~

If the resource does not contain a title frame or title screen, apply the following guidelines for tangible or online resources to choose the preferred source of information.

Section 1: Glossary

While we can understand the ambiguity of identifying the “insert” for a jewel case (is it a part of the container, accompanying material, or both), from the perspective of the 2.2.2.3 instruction where the ‘container’ and ‘accompanying’ material are at an equal level, we’re not convinced that the distinction is worth making. Since the ALA/CCC group that has been reviewing accompanying material in RDA (see RSC/ALA-CCC/Discussion/1) is continuing to work in this area and is questioning the use of the term “accompanying material,” we suggest this glossary change be deferred until we receive recommendations from that group.

Section 2: 2.2.2.4.1 Tangible Resources

We do not agree that the priority order of sources should be changed. This category (Other resources) applies to a fairly wide variety of carriers, and the efficacy of changing the order may not apply equally to all carriers. Again, we would recommend an Alternative for 2.2.2.4.1 so that an agency may more easily record an alternative to the current instruction.

Section 3: Other information presented together with digital documents

We agree that landing pages, jump-off pages, and other metadata descriptions may form a valuable source for describing a resource²; but, we would not generally consider such sources to be “within the resource.” We feel they are more similar to category b) of 2.2.4 (other published descriptions of the resource). In most cases of digitization projects, the information is provided by a different agency than the publisher, etc., of the original resource, and may be subject to change as branding, presentation technologies, etc., on those landing pages evolve. Thus, treating them as “accompanying material” seems problematic. If the concern is limited to whether “square brackets” must be used when transcribing elements not available in the digitized resource and provided from the landing page, an agency could decide to liberally apply the Exception at 2.2.4, or provide an agency decision that applies to this situation. The ALA/CCC task group looking at accompanying material may also be asked to review this issue.

² We do have LC-PCC Policy statements for preferring aggregated presentation pages for online serials when the online versions have been reformatted to remove earlier titles and other information (LC-PCC PS for 2.1.2.3, 2.3.7.3, and 2.17.2.4).