

BCC2003/Auth/1**Authorities Subcommittee**
Report from the 2003 Austin Conference

The business meeting of the Authorities Subcommittee was held on Feb. 13, 2003 in Austin, Tex. In addition to the subcommittee members, Mickey Koth gave a brief update on the Types Document. The open meeting was held as part of a joint Authorities/Descriptive Cataloging Subcommittee meeting the next day.

This past year, two terms were modified in the Types of Compositions document maintained by Mickey Koth, *siciliana/sicilianas* and *salterello/salterellos*. Mickey mentioned that the streamlined procedure for discussing terms adopted last year was working well and we agreed to continue it. The subcommittee members responsible for the initial discussion of terms with Mickey are Marlena Frackowski, Ralph Papakhian, Terry Simpkins, and David Sommerfield.

Last year, we provided comments on the *Interim Report of the PCC SCS Task Group on the Function of the Authority File* (available on the Web at <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/pcc/tgauthrpt.html>.) The report advocates expanding the maintenance role of the national authority file, and suggests ways to do this. The chair of that committee, Manon Th  roux, acknowledged our comments and recently sent us a “draft” Final Report, due to the PCC Standing Committee on Standards in April. We have been invited to comment on the draft version of the report before the final version is submitted.

The Subcommittee has contacted Sherry Vellucci, who has agreed to speak at our 2004 open meeting in Washington on some, as yet undetermined, aspect of authority control for non-MARC data.

Future projects: A subcommittee member voiced concern over a recent change to the authority record for NAR no97-081207 (Schubert, Franz, 1797-1828. Liederzyklen). This is a collective title, not the title of a work, and it was felt that such titles should be formulated in English. However, an examination of AACR2 and the LCRI's indicated that there is nothing to prevent such titles from being formulated in languages other than English. It was proposed that this might be the subject of a rule proposal, possibly in consultation with the Descriptive Subcommittee. Action: We discussed the matter with Nancy Lorimer, chair of the Descriptive Subcommittee, and she asked us to wait until she had seen a draft of the upcoming revision to AACR2 Chap. 25, in hopes that the matter might be addressed there.

Mickey Koth proposed the formation of a joint MOUG-Authorities Subcommittee group to investigate whether or not the Types Document could be used to assist automated authority control vendors with developing a suite of standard, automatic flips that would be made regardless of the absence of a specific 4XX field in the authority record (e.g., all headings of the form “Trio-sonatas” might be flipped to “Trio sonatas”). This would hopefully improve the quality of the automated authority services. Action: I asked Mickey to write up a proposal, primarily to make sure we understand the issues thoroughly, and we would begin discussions with MOUG to form such a group.

A subcommittee member proposed investigating, through CPSO, the possibility of allowing NACO contributors to use public notes in name authority records (680 field) to assist patrons. Situations where this would prove especially helpful would include headings for: deceased persons with open dates (“bibliographic undead”), people who were active in more than one field; and people with common names where, for example, the persons role or occupation might be known, but not his or her dates. This proposal was greeted with support in conversations I had following the open meeting. Sue Vita, LC liaison to BCC, expressed her opinion that there might not be active opposition to the idea within LC Special Materials. Action: This seems to be an excellent idea and we will begin work on it.

With regard to subcommittee membership, Jeannette Thompson's term has finished. Many thanks to her for her work on the committee the past four years. I am stepping down as chair of the subcommittee, but am actively working with BCC to find a replacement.

Submitted by Terri Simpkins
Chair, Authorities Subcommittee

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