**May 1, 2016**

**To:** Chris Oliver

Chair, FRBR-LRM Review Group

**From:** Matthew Haugen

ALA/ACRL/RBMS Bibliographic Standards Committee Liaison to ALA/ALCTS/CAMMS/Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access

**Re:** FRBR-LRM Review Comments

We thank the FRBR-LRM committee for its hard work on the FRBR-LRM model. In response to the invitation to review the draft document, members of the RBMS Bibliographic Standards Committee were solicited for comments, with emphasis on examining where the model may have implications on the cataloging of rare materials. Comments ranged well beyond the scope of rare materials, however. Also, comments received are individual in nature and may not be representative of the entire committee’s opinion.

**4.1 Entities:**

**Manifestations:**

In LRM-E4, the notes seem to imply that artisanal productions should be considered unique, and thus a different manifestation of the same expression, and “changes that occur deliberately or inadvertently during the production process that affect the items result, strictly speaking, in a new manifestation of the same expression. A manifestation resulting from such a change may be identified as a particular “state” or “issue” of the publication.”

Does this mean that all variants are manifestations? Even two copies we (I) would consider the same manifestion? I’m not sure how to interpret these scope notes for rare materials (unique bindings, annotated books, etc.).

I am glad the model accounts for these variations and distinguishes them from subsequent changes to an *item.* However, I wonder how “strictly” this is to be interpreted, as it may not always be desirable or possible to treat each variant state as a new manifestation in a shared cataloging environment.

**Fictitious and non-human entities:**

I know this is a controversial topic, and others have made extensive philosophical, religious, legal, and scientific arguments about whether animals, computers, robots, spirits, divine beings, etc. exist and have the potential for actual intelligence, creativity, and agency, and likewise to inquire about the limits of human agency and creative capacity, or the legal artifice of corporate personhood.

Much of the discussion has focused on the capacity of these entities to be the creative and intellectual agent of a work; but one could consider potentially fictitious and contributions at expression, manifestation, or item level, as in false imprints, forgeries, piracies, etc. And non-human contributors could exist at these levels, such as an automated translation software, print-on-demand publishing, or modification of an item by a machine, animal, or other nonhuman process or entity, etc.

Insofar as pseudonymous, fictitious, legendary, and nonhuman entities cannot be agents in FRBR-LRM, they are nonetheless frequently the subjects of works, so they still must “exist” in the model as Res entities, at the least. Similarly, many real persons are the subjects of works but never serve as a bibliographic "agent" in their lives, or may be named as the agent erroneously or with an attempt to deceive.

So, I agree with some other commenters that "agency" may better be expressed as a relationship rather than a definition of the entity participating in that relationship. Further, I agree with the suggestion that fictitiousness may be an attribute of an entity, but it may also be an attribute of relationships, separately from whether or not the entities participating in the relationship are fictitious. Time-spans and places are also often named fictitiously in pirated or forged imprints. These can be stated in the manifestation statement element, but we also consider that this is not a question of "agency" but of a fictitious *relationship* to presumably real places and times. If a resource published in London says “Published in Paris” we have a transcribed manifestation statement “Published in Paris” and a relationship between the manifestation and London. I would not want to see “Paris” become a nomen for London, and would rather be able to extend the model by recording a different relationship to Paris Manifestation-has false place of publication-Paris.

**4.2 Attributes:**

**Category attribute:**

I find the implementation of the category attributes inconsistent. In other cases, an attribute applicable to a superclass entity applies also to subclass entities without needing to be redefined for each subclass. But it appears that Category attributes depart from this. Category is defined for "Res" and it is redefined for certain applicable subclass entities. Can't the attribute "Category" at the Res level simply be generalized to all subclass entities, even those which don't currently have their own category attribute (items, agents, and timespans), as it is with "Note"? I don't see any reason why those three entities logically cannot also have categories. It's possible to think of categories for items in rare materials contexts based on condition, association, and ownership, etc. (library copies, signed copies, imperfect copies).

Alternatively, if the category attribute needs to be particular to the entity (beyond simply a placeholder for examples of categories for that attribute), shouldn't the attributes then be formally constrained to the entity in some way, e.g. "Category of work," "Category of place" etc.? "Category of carrier" would seem to illustrate this type of constraint, but since there may be other ways to categorize manifestations (genre, function, etc.) not related to carrier, I still think it makes more sense to generalize "Category" as a Res attribute alone.

Furthermore, I understand the examples are not prescriptive, but looking at the examples given under the Res category attribute, I think I understand the potential reason for categorizing a Res as concept, object, event, etc., rather than retaining these as entity types in FRBR-LRM. But why would one declare an entity to be a Res with category attribute which repeats existing subclass entities? That is, why would one declare an entity to be a Res with the category attribute "work" or "person" instead of declaring it to be a Work entity or a Person entity, so that it could have the attributes and relationships which pertain to work and person entities?

**Extent:**

I appreciate the distinction between extent of expression and extent of manifestation as this accommodates more precise description of rare books, cartographic and graphic resources.

**"Representative" Expression:**

I agree that there is a common tendency to conflate "original" expression attributes (like language, content type) with the work, but it would seem the "representativity" attribute only complicates rather than solves this issue. Though it will be up to implementations to handle this in a way that is consistent and understandable to users.

Should the example on page 64 assign a language to the representative expression rather than to the work?

I also agree with the point that a "representative" or canonical expression may not be the first or original expression. So, I think that the scope notes for the Work-Agent and Expression-agent relationships LRM-R5 and LRM-R6 should be revisited to be more consistent with this conception of "representative" rather than "original" expressions. In many cases an agent may be unnamed or misnamed on original and early manifestations, and correct attributions may come from later manifestations, reference sources, etc.

A sentence that jumped out to me, “In some cases the derivation history of the expressions of a work is sufficiently complex that the expression considered most “canonical” or significant is not actually the original expression.” (p. 63, first paragraph) and then the first sentence of the second paragraph, “The significance of the “canonical” expressions of works, those expressions that best represent a work, is fundamental to library practice for the identification of works.” But making Representativity only yes/no, could potentially be problematic for the rare materials community (there are a lot of gray areas out there...)

**4.3 Relationships:**

**WEMI-to-Agent relationships:**

I find it interesting that expressions and manifestations can now also be "created' by an agent. This is a welcome departure from the RDA language in which creation pertains only at the Work level, as production, publication, etc. processes of embodying works/expressions in manifestations may be significant creative and intellectual products in their own right.

**WEMI to Place and Time-span relationships:**

The relationships from Res entities to Place and Time Span entities, in particular manifestation and item to place and time span, are something we've discussed quite a bit before. I welcome the ability to relate resources to dates and places beyond what is possibly simply through transcription of dates and places in the Manifestation statement attribute. False/erroneous imprints, and transcribed statements with historic place names, orthography, misprints, etc. cannot easily accommodate controlled access to places and time-spans.

**Subject relationship:**

The general Work-subject-Res relationship has created issues for modeling references to published descriptions in RDA. While descriptive bibliographies and catalogs may have a subject relationship to the manifestations and items they describe, rare materials references serve different user tasks, namely identification of manifestations and items. In order to accomplish this, the relationship frequently must specify the expression or manifestation of the reference resource, as catalogs and bibliographies may differ across editions, translations, etc. The reference must also frequently point to specific entry numbers, page numbers, etc. RDA does not currently allow for such relationships across WEMI entity levels such as Manifestation-is referenced in-Expression; is this possible in FRBR-LRM?

In Figure 5.6, should the arrow between Res and Work be labeled "is subject of"?

**5.5 Aggregates:**

The model recognizes the potentially significant contribution of aggregators and editors in making an aggregate, along with augmentations by illustrators, authors of supplementary content, etc. In LRM R7, R8, and R9, Manifestations can also have creators, producers, and distributors. In a sense, each resource is an aggregate of work, expression, manifestation, and item contributions. Especially in the case of manuscripts, fine press books, graphics, etc., the creation and manufacture of the physical carrier/object itself (with binding design, typography, layout, papermaking, printmaking, etc.) may similarly be considered a creative work in its own right (such as the Kelmscott Chaucer), if not inherent to the work as in art objects, etc.

I might like to see the modelling of aggregates extended to account not just for expression-level contributions in aggregates, but also to binding, typeface, layout, coloring, etc. beyond what’s expressed in the “primary” WEMI relationships, when these are a notable creative contribution to the work.

**Bound-withs as aggregates:**

The FRBR-LRM treatment of Item aggregates raises questions (for me).

How will we now model the fact that two items are bound together but are not part of the same manifestation, which was on the objectives of the former “item whole/part relationship” ? More precisely, what would be the FRBR-LRM equivalent of the PRESSoo class “Z9 storage unit”?

Examples: The physical storage unit held by the BnF and containing, in one box, printed exemplars of volumes 1 to 6 (1930-33) of the periodical entitled ‘Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution’, together with holograph manuscripts by André Breton, Louis Aragon, Salvador Dalí, René Char, Max Ernst, and others (both the box and the individual bindings were created by bookbinder and craftsman Renaud Vernier in 2006)

Perhaps it’s useful to look at an example, and for this I’ll copy from FRBRoo, under F4 Manifestation Singleton.

The manuscript score of Charles Racquet’s ‘Organ fantasy’, included in Marin Mersenne’s personal copy of his own ‘Harmonie universelle’ [Marin Mersenne planned a second edition of his ‘Harmonie universelle’ after it had been first published in 1636, and he asked the composer Charles Racquet to compose his organ fantasy especially for that planned second edition; but Mersenne died before he could finish and publish the second edition and Racquet’s score remained until the 20th century as a manuscript addition to Mersenne’s copy, held in Paris by the Library of the Conservatoire national des arts et métiers.]

There are at least two Manifestations worth articulating here: Racquet’s manuscript score and the 1636 publication of Mersenne’s *Harmonie universelle*. Presumably they are bound together. I think it makes sense to treat the aggregate artefact as a distinct entity that has its own set of relationships and attributes (e.g., former owner, exhibition history, shelf mark, reproductions). I also assume that the collective artefact can be modeled as an Item (or Manifestation Singleton, in FRBRoo) containing component parts: Racquet’s manuscript, and a particular copy of the *Harmonie universelle*, etc.

RDA appears to offer multiple paths for recording these relationships:

- *Contained in (item) / container of (item)* allow us to describe whole-part relationships between items, if I want to articulate the aggregate item.

- If I don’t want to formally articulate the aggregate item, I can use the *bound-with* relationship to connect the components.

In FRBR-LRM, however, I have trouble seeing how the relationships between these items can be modeled.

FRBR-LRM deprecates FRBR’s Item whole/part relationship (see page 12 of the relationships section of the transition mapping). It says: “Removed, prefer longer path through manifestation whole-part.” This longer path assumes, however, that one manifestation is a component of the other (as in the example given in LRM-R32). This is clearly not the case with the Racquet and Mersenne example, in which there is no relationship at the Manifestation level.

The other FRBR-LRM property worth considering is LRM-R11: Item - was modified by / modified – Agent. This replaces FRBR’s Item - has reconfiguration / is a reconfiguration – Item (see page 11 of the relationships section of the transition mapping). Is there a way in which LRM-R11 can unambiguously record the aggregation of the Racquet – Mersenne example?

**General comments:**

The conceptual model of FRBM-LRM does seem to allow elaboration, expansion, omissions, and consideration of available cataloging rules. This is all good news for the rare materials cataloging community.

Editorial comment: I notice several comma splices throughout the text.