FRBR – A Refresher Course

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Charles Ammi Cutter

- **Rules for a Dictionary Catalog** in 1876 for the Boston Athenaeum

- In addition to writing a thorough and comprehensive list of cataloging rules, Cutter also professed a philosophy of the principles of a catalog
Cutter’s Principles of a Library Catalog

- To enable a person to find a book of which either the author, the title, the subject is known
- To show what the library has by a given author, on a given subject, in a given literature
- To assist in the choice of a book as to the edition (bibliographically), as to its character (literary or topical).
Which Edition?

- Have been able to fulfill Cutter’s first two principles (finding and showing what a library has in its collection)
- Have not done so well in tying together different editions and translations or different physical formats containing the same content
The Importance of Relationships

- Linking the different aspects of how works are related to one another
  - Different editions of the same work
  - Translations
  - Analysis and criticisms
  - Adaptations
  - Works where the *content* stays the same but the *carrier* differs
Cataloging Semantics - What Do We Call This?

- Difficulty arises when we have multiple physical versions of the same title
- What do we call them?
- “Editions” are clear in meaning
- “Issues” or “numbers” also have a specific connotation
AACR2 and “Multiple Versions”

- Catalog each physical form of a title with its own bibliographic record
- Results in multiple records for the same title
- Catalog users rarely think in terms of multiple records for the same title
- Not a “user friendly” approach
Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR)

- Developed by a Working Group from IFLA’s Cataloging Section
- Addresses issues of semantics in a multi-format world
- Demonstrates relationship between and among materials, creators of works, and subjects
FRAD

- Functional Requirements for Authority Data
- Similar in concept to FRBR but deals with authority records
FRBR, FRAD and Relational Databases

- Concepts of showing relationships between different editions, translations, physical formats of the same work not new
- Current relational database structure allows us to link them efficiently
FRBR Organization and Terminology

- FRBR is organized into
  - Groups – which are subarranged by
  - Entities – which have
  - Attributes
FRBR’s Three Groups of Entities: Group 1

- Group 1 Entities: Four levels to identify materials
  - Work – Intellectual concept
  - Expression – Realization of the work
  - Manifestation – Different physical formats
  - Item – Specific piece
Voltaire’s *Candide*

- Inspiration for it, or speaking about Candide in general terms = Work
- Realization, editions, interpretations = Expression
- Translations = Expressions
- Different formats (carriers) = Manifestation
- What’s in your library = Item
Leonard Bernstein’s *Candide*

- Inspiration for it = Work
- Broadway show = Expression
- Revival = Expression
- LP = Manifestation
- CD = Manifestation
- What I have in my library = Item
FRBR’s Three Groups of Entities: Group 2

- Group 2 Entities: Relation of Persons and Corporate Bodies
  - Related to Group 1 entities through specific relationships
    - Who creates, produces or realizes the work, expression, manifestation or item
    - Ties into authority control
FRBR’s Three Groups of Entities: Group 3

- Group 3 Entities: Subjects of works
  - Concepts, objects events, places and any of the Group 1 or Group 2 entities (e.g., a work about another work such as literary criticism) or a work about a person or a corporate body
Now, You Try It…

I ask you “Have you read Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*?” In FRBR terms, *Romeo and Juliet* is a …
Now You Try It…

- I ask you “Do you have a French translation of Shakespeare’s *Romeo and Juliet*?
- Or, “Do you prefer the Seiji Ozawa recording of Berlioz’s *Romeo and Juliet* or Neville Mariner’s?”
- In FRBR terms, these are…
Now You Try It…

- A patron says to you: “I want to see the movie *Romeo and Juliet*, but I don’t want it on VHS. Do you have it on DVD?” or
- I ask you: “Have you seen the digitized version of *Romeo and Juliet* from Shakespeare’s first folio?”
- In FRBR terms, these are…
Now You Try It...

- A patron is doing a paper on *Romeo and Juliet* and comes to the Circ Desk to check out a paper copy of the play, a CD of *Romeo and Juliet* by Berlioz, and a DVD of the movie *Romeo and Juliet*.

- In FRBR terms, these are...
Your Homework Assignment

- Play the FRBR game – think of a work and assign Group One entities (work, expression, manifestation, item)
- Might want to experiment with one of the Harry Potter books…
FRBR’s User Tasks

- **Find** - based on a user’s search criteria
- **Identify** - confirm that user finds what she wants
- **Select** - meets a user’s needs with respect to content, physical format, etc.
- **Obtain** - ability to acquire through purchase, loan, etc.
- **Navigate** - find what you are looking for in a catalog
FRBR and RDA

- FRBR and FRAD form the foundation of the new cataloging code, *RDA, Resource Description and Access*
- Especially important are the user tasks of
  - Find
  - Identify
  - Select
  - Obtain
Use of FRBR Terminology in RDA

- RDA emphasizes FRBR terminology throughout – including the user tasks
- Ties RDA instructions to the FRBR tasks as well as to the three groups of entities
To Conclude with Dr. Pangloss

- “All’s for the best in this best of all possible worlds.”

- Lillian Hellman, based on Voltaire. Candide.