

# BIBFRAME Title Proposal

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Library of Congress

This is one of a group of change proposals for the BIBFRAME Vocabulary. In early 2014 the vocabulary was stabilized with the intent to keep it stable for a year for experimentation and discussion invited. This proposal is based on that discussion and suggestions from experts and the community over the year. Comments welcome to [BIBFRAME@listserv.loc.gov](mailto:BIBFRAME@listserv.loc.gov).

The following changes are proposed for BIBFRAME titles:

1. Define subclasses for bf>Title (see discussion point 1), as well as access conditions
  - a. bf:WorkTitle
  - b. bf:InstanceTitle
  - c. bf:VariantTitle
2. There will be one single title property **bf:title**, property of bf:Work and bf:Instance, object is a bf>Title.  
All other title properties will be eliminated (workTitle, instanceTitle, variantTitle, abbreviatedTitle, and keyTitle).
3. Define Subclasses of bf:VariantTitle
  - a. bf:AbbreviatedTitle
  - b. bf:KeyTitle
  - c. Additional subclasses currently represented by bf:titleType, property of bf:VariantTitle.
4. Change bf:titleType to bf:variantDescriptor. (See discussion point 2.)
5. The Title String  
We informally define the "Title String": one or more of the title components (see "Properties" table) strung together (it could be a constructed title or a simple title). The title string may be represented as the value of rdfs:label within bf>Title. (Alternatively, the title string may be parsed out into its component via the properties of bf>Title, and the title string may be omitted, or it may be redundantly included.)
6. Change bf:titleValue (within bf>Title) to bf:mainTitle (see discussion point 3).
7. Remove bf:formDesignation as a property of bf>Title and instead make it a property of the Work or Instance.
8. bf:titleAttribute, also a property of bf>Title, may be eliminated altogether.
9. bf:qualifier and bf:source remain as properties of bf>Title. bf:variantDescriptor and bf:date would be properties of bf:VariantTitle.

## Summary of Classes and Properties

Classes	
Class	Subclass of
bf:WorkTitle	bf>Title
bf:InstanceTitle	bf>Title
bf:VariantTitle	bf>Title
bf:KeyTitle	bf:VariantTitle
bf:AbbreviatedTitle	bf:VariantTitle

In the following table of properties, “Possible title component” means that the value may be included or excluded in the title string, at the discretion of the cataloger or based on the cataloging rules in use.

Properties			
Property Of	Property	Expected Value	Note
bf:Work or bf:Instance	<b>bf:title</b>	bf>Title (or subclass)	
bf>Title	<b>rdfs:label</b>	literal	The title string
bf>Title	<b>bf:mainTitle</b>	Literal	Possible title component
bf>Title	<b>bf:subTitle</b>	Literal	Possible title component
bf>Title	<b>bf:partName</b>	Literal	Possible title component
bf>Title	<b>bf:partNumber</b>	Literal	Possible title component
bf>Title	<b>bf:qualifier</b>	literal	Possible title component
bf>Title	<b>bf:source</b>	literal	e.g. “dnlm”, “issnkey”
bf:VariantTitle	<b>bf:variantDescriptor</b>	Literal	e.g. “spine”
bf:VariantTitle	<b>bf:date</b>	Date String	
bf:Work or bf:Instance	<b>bf:formDesignation</b>	Literal	Possible title component. Label from a Genre resource
bf:Work	<b>bf:musicNumber</b>	Literal	Possible title component
bf:Work	<b>bf:musicKey</b>	Literal	Possible title component
bf:Work	<b>bf:treatySignator</b>	Literal	Possible title component
bf:Work	<b>bf:version</b>	Literal	Possible title component
bf:Work	<b>bf:legalDate</b>	Date string	Possible title component
bf:Work	<b>bf:originDate</b>	Date string	Possible title component
bf:Work	<b>bf:originPlace</b>	Literal	Possible title component
bf:Work	<b>bf:musicMedium</b>	Literal	Possible title component

## Discussion Points

**DiscussionPoint 1: Classes vs. Properties.** We would now distinguish the type of title (Work, Instance, Variant, Abbreviated, Key) by class instead of property. This is in line with BIBFRAME philosophy to denote types by class rather than property wherever practical. Some advantages to this approach:

- **Reusability.** When a BIBFRAME, bf>Title resource is created it may be a linked data resource that can be accessed and reused outside of BIBFRAME.
- **Type independently conveyed.** Using the class to reflect the title type means that the type will be known when it is used as such. If the type is conveyed only by the BIBFRAME property then that type will be known only when accessed in the BIBFRAME context.
- **Query Efficiency.** Expressing types as classes makes the data more easily queried. “Find things of type X”, for example, is much simpler when X is a class rather than a property.
- **Graceful degradation.** Suppose someone coins a new property or class, which itself is not very well-known, but is a subproperty or subclass of a well-known property or class. Should it be a property or class? The argument is that it should be a class. Consider for example a new note type. If a client sees:

```
<http://example.com/xyz//Instance1>
  bf:note
    [ a xyz:SomeTypeOfNote ;
      rdf:value "a note" ]
```

It might not have any idea what xyz:SomeTypeOfNote is but it at least knows that it is a note (by virtue of property bf:note) of some kind. On the other hand if it sees:

```
<http://example.com/xyz//Instance1> xyz:someTypeOfNote "a note "
```

If it doesn't know what xyz:someTypeOfNote is, then it isn't even going to know it's a note.

**Discussion Point 2: Variant titles.** There are several types of variant titles, currently conveyed by bf:titleType, which seems to be a confusing name for this property and bf:variantDescriptor seems more straightforward. It is currently a property of bf>Title and will become instead a property of bf:VariantTitle. Subclasses of bf:VariantTitle will be defined for several of these, for example bf:KeyTitle and bf:AbbreviatedTitle. Other variant classes being considered, but which are not yet defined, include CanLabelTitle and ContainerTitle – for audiovisual material – SpineTitle, CoverTitle, AddedTitlePageTitle – for books and serials – as well as TranslatedTitle and ParallelTitle. bf:variantDescriptor would be used in cases where there is no class defined for the variant type, to further refine the type VariantTitle, that is, to indicate the type of variant.

**Discussion Point 3: Change bf:titleValue (within bf>Title) to bf:mainTitle.** This is a cosmetic change. TitleValue causes some confusion. Main title is used to contrast it with subtitle.

## Examples

### 1. Simple title.

```
<http://id.loc.gov/resources/bibs/630296> a bf:Work ;
  bf:title [
    a bf>Title ;
    rdfs:label "Reflexive interpreters and autobiographical texts" . ] .
```

### 2. Main title and subtitle.

```
<http://id.loc.gov/resources/bibs/844308> a bf:Instance ;
  bf:title [
    a bf:InstanceTitle ;
    bf:mainTitle "Private Eyeballs :";
    bf:subtitle "golden treasury of bad taste" . ] .
```

### 3. Title String includes parsed components.

In the following example the title string includes components from properties outside of the Title resource.

```
<http://id.loc.gov/resources/bibs/14390036> a bf:Work ;
  bf:title [
    a bf:WorkTitle ;
    rdfs:label "Sonatas, piano, no. 13, op. 27, no.1, E major. 1986." ;
    bf:mainTitle "Sonatas" . ] ;
  bf:musicNumber "no. 13, op. 27, no. 1" ;
  bf:musicKey "E major" ;
  bf:originDate "1986" ;
  bf:musicMedium "piano" .
```

### 4. "Abbreviated" title.

For an abbreviated title, class `bf:AbbreviatedTitle` is indicated. `bf:source` indicates the source of the variant (which in this case implicitly indicates the type of abbreviated title: an abbreviated key title).

```
<http://id.loc.gov/resources/bibs/11200372> a bf:Work ;
  bf:title [
    a bf:WorkTitle ;
    rdfs:label "Operative dentistry" . ] ;
  bf:title [
    a bf:AbbreviatedTitle ;
    rdfs:label "Oper. dent." ;
    bf:source "issnkey" . ] .
```

## 5. Another “abbreviated” title

For this example, the source of the abbreviated title is NLM.

```
<http://bibframe.example.org/instances/instanceABC> a bf:Instance ;
  bf:title [
    a bf:InstanceTitle ;
    rdfs:label "Journal of Dental Research" . ] ;
  bf:title [
    a bf:AbbreviatedTitle ;
    rdfs:label "J Dent Res" ;
    bf:source "dnlm" . ] .
```

## 6. “spine” title

Since there is no subclass of VariantTitle (yet) defined for spine title, the more general class bf:VariantTitle is indicated, and bf:variantDescriptor is supplied.

```
<http://bibframe.org/resources/13781336instance24> a bf:Instance ;
  bf:title [
    a bf:VariantTitle ;
    rdfs:label "--Ahead of their time : history of the WLSC" ;
    bf:mainTitle "--Ahead of their time :" ;
    bf:subtitle "history of the WLSC" ;
    bf:variantDescriptor "spine " . ] .
```