Revised Report on Recording Gender in Personal Name Authority Records

PCC Ad Hoc Task Group on Recording Gender in Personal Name Authority Records

April 7, 2022

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Background

On August 1, 2016 an ad hoc task group was formed to address concerns raised by the Program for Cooperative Cataloging (PCC) membership on best practices for recording information about gender in name authority records (NARs). The group was directed by Paul Frank to draft instructions on recording information about gender in MARC Authority Field 375 to publish in the *Descriptive Cataloging Manual, Section Z1* (DCM Z1). The group submitted its recommendations to be published in the DCM Z1, as well as in the Library of Congress-Program for Cooperative Cataloging Policy Statements (LC-PCC PS), and drafted new and revised term proposals for the Library of Congress Demographic Group Terms (LCDGT), together with the justification for those recommendations, in its report dated October 4, 2016.

At the 2016 PCC Policy Committee (PoCo) meeting, the task group's best practice recommendations were approved in principle, with an additional request that the

recommendations be shared with the PCC community for wider comment. A survey was sent to PCC membership on May 1, 2018.

On February 15, 2021, a new PCC Advisory Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) was formed as a part of the PCC's extended Strategic Directions. On April 6, 2021, it was announced on PCCList that the PCC DEI Advisory Committee would plan to revisit unresolved outcomes from the original report by the Ad Hoc Task Group on Recording Gender in NARs. In May 2021, the ad hoc task group was reconvened, including all of the original members and two new members. Meanwhile, the targets of our original recommendations have continued to change. Minor revisions were made to DCM Z1 375 in February 2017 and December 2020, separately from our recommendations. The Network Development and MARC Standards Office approved several source codes for additional relevant vocabularies on the Gender Code and Term source code list. The RDA Toolkit Restructure and Redesign (3R) project and alignment with the IFLA Library Reference Model (LRM) has changed the structure and content of the accompanying LC-PCC Policy Statements and Metadata Guidance Documents. PCC implementation of "Official" RDA will take place no earlier than October 2022. A moratorium on acceptance of new or revised proposals for Library of Congress Demographic Group Terms (LCDGT) was announced by the LC Policy and Standards Division (PSD) in February 2018. This moratorium was in place until January 2022, following changes to the LCDGT model being implemented by LC as of October 1, 2021, which included the deprecation of the gender and sexual orientation categories and moving of terms from those categories into the social category. Two demographic term proposals originating from our 2016 report were scheduled in March 2022.

The reconvened group was charged to update its original report, in light of this changing landscape, and based on extensive feedback in the form of approximately 250 responses to a survey conducted in May 2018, subsequent discussion on PCCList, and criticism in the literature.

This report represents a marked change from our earlier recommendations. In order to expedite the implementation of this long-overdue guidance, we have also decided to defer a number of related issues we considered, to be addressed in separate reports by this or subsequent task group(s) at a later date. Those other issues include recording of gender or gendered terms in other 3XX fields (including Authority 374 for occupation/profession, Bibliographic or Authority 385 for audience characteristics, and Bibliographic or Authority 386 for creator/contributor characteristics), recording of unstructured information about a person's gender in Authority 6XX fields, and recording of deadnames in Authority 400 and supporting 6XX fields.

Recommendation for Personal Name Authorities

Do not record the RDA gender element (MARC 375) in personal name authority records. Delete existing 375 fields when editing a record for any other reason.

Proposed revisions to relevant LC-PCC documentation (including DCM Z1, LC-PCC PS, LC-PCC Metadata Guidance Document, LC Guidelines Supplement to the MARC 21 Format for Authority Data, and the NACO Participants' Manual) can be found in the appendices to this report.

PCC should work with LC, OCLC and other NACO nodes to programmatically remove the 375 field from existing name authority records, and take necessary technical steps to prevent the use of the 375 field in NACO records, including updating validation tables, macros, and other documentation, such as training materials.

Further guidance on gender in other 3XX and 6XX fields will be issued in a separate report. In the meantime, unstructured information about a person's gender included in 670 fields may continue to be recorded, including source information that contains gendered personal pronouns, occupational terms, relational terms, honorifics, etc. However, avoid outing, misgendering, or deadnaming the person, or recording details about a person's gender transition. Respect requests from the person to remove or update information pertaining to the person's gender or name changes.

Rationale

Gender, like many other attributes of persons specified in RDA, is an *optional* element that the PCC and cataloging community considered potentially useful to record in Name Authority Records for the following purposes:
- Distinguishing among persons with same or similar names
- Providing contextual information for users and catalogers
- Identifying persons known by phrases, pseudonyms, initialisms, ambiguous names, or names unfamiliar to catalogers or users
- Facilitating searches that limit to a particular gender (e.g., female composers)
- Facilitating grammatical labeling of entities and relationships in data displays, especially in languages with grammatical gender (e.g., autor/autora in Spanish, Herausgeber/Herausgeberin in German). In some languages, romanization, pronunciation, and case conversion of a name may change depending on the associated gender.

However these considerations do not outweigh the potential risks involved in recording gender for the following reasons:
- The primary goal of authority data is for disambiguation, not contextual biographical information
- It is not the role of the cataloger to determine and record personally Identifiable Information (PII) in authority and bibliographic data.

- Gender identity, the vocabulary used to describe it, and the degree to which individuals are able to and choose to disclose it, are complex, contextual, personal, and subject to change over time and in different environments and jurisdictions.
- Trans and non-binary individuals in particular are more likely to experience negative consequences (such as discrimination, psychological harm, and violence) as a result of of being misgendered (when a gender identity is incorrectly imposed on them by someone else), "outed" (when their gender identity is disclosed by someone else without their consent), or "deadnamed" (when a given or birth name is disclosed or used without their consent), whether intentionally or not.
- As library data is increasingly opened and repurposed, there could be additional unforeseen and potentially irreversible ramifications for recording gender information.

Appendix A: Draft DCM Z1 375

375 Gender

General

Do not record.

Appendix B: Draft LC-PCC PS for RDA Element: Gender

LC-PCC policy statements for gender

Prerecording

Option

LC/PCC practice: Publicly available gender information including personal pronouns may be included in source notes or biographical information if considered important for identification, disambiguation, etc., but do not out, misgender, or deadname the person. See the PCC Ad Hoc Task Group Revised Report on Gender in Personal Name Authority Records [link] for more information.

Recording

Recording an unstructured description

Option

LC/PCC practice: Use judgment. Gendered terms may be recorded as part of a 670 note or in a biographical note (678).

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Option

Recording a structured description

Option

LC/PCC practice: Do not apply the option.

Option

LC/PCC practice: Do not apply the option.

Condition Option

LC/PCC practice: Do not apply the option.

Recording an identifier

Option

LC/PCC practice: Do not apply the option.

Option

LC/PCC practice: Do not apply the option.

Recording an IRI

Option

LC/PCC practice: Do not apply the option.

Appendix C: Draft LC-PCC Metadata Guidance Document for element: Gender

gender

Guidance

- Do not record as structured descriptions, identifiers, or IRIs.

MARC 21
- Do not record in the 375 field.
- Gendered terms may be recorded as unstructured descriptions in source information (670 field) and in biographical notes (678 field).

BIBFRAME
- NARs for persons will continue to be created and maintained in the LC/NACO Authority File using MARC 21 coding and syntax.

MAPPINGS

Original RDA	Original RDA LC-PCC PS	DCM Z1	Other
9.7		375	

Appendix D: Draft LC Guidelines Supplement to the MARC 21 Format for Authority Data

375   Gender

NACO:

Do not use this field.

SACO:

Do not use this field.

LC:

NAMES/SERIES:

Do not use this field.

SUBJECTS:

Do not use this field.

Appendix E: Draft NACO Participants' Manual

375 - Gender

$a - Gender (R)
$s - Start period (NR)
$t - End period (NR)
$u - Uniform Resource Identifier (R)
$v - Source of information (R)
$2 - Source of term (NR)

A gender with which a person identifies.

NACO Practice: Do not use this field.