Reconsidering Popular Music in FRBR: Toward Linked Data Discovery

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[TRACEY] Thanks. Today, we're going to talk to you about the current state of popular music cataloging, its relationship to popular music discovery on the Internet, and possible future directions. For the purposes of this presentation, we are focusing on audio recordings by Western popular music artists from mid-twentieth century on.

Whose symphony is this?

If I were to show a library user a score of Beethoven's 5th symphony and ask whose work it is, I am confident that she or he would unequivocally identify Beethoven as the creator of this symphony.

Beethoven, Ludwig van, 1770-1827.
Symphonies, no. 5, op. 67, C minor

And in fact, the library user's expectations would be met by the library catalog; all instances of this symphony collocate under the authorized access point shown here-- a combination of Beethoven's heading and the uniform title for the symphony.

If I were to show a library user a 45 rpm record of the song Thriller and ask whose work it is, I am confident that she or he would identify Thriller as a Michael Jackson song.

Wikipedia

Thriller (song)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

"**Thriller**" is a song recorded by American recording artist Michael Jackson, composed by Rod Temperton, and produced by Quincy Jones.

"Thriller"	
U.S. 12" vinyl	
Single by Michael Jackson featuring Vincent Price	
from the album *Thriller*	
B-side	"Things I Do for You" (live) (UK) / "Can't Get Outta the Rain"
Released	January 23, 1984
Format	7", 12", CD single, 3" CD single
Recorded	1982
Genre	Disco, funk[1]
Length	5:59 (LP Version) 4:04 (7" Version)
Label	Epic
Writer(s)	Rod Temperton
Producer(s)	Quincy Jones

Wikipedia informs us that this is a single by Michael Jackson (although if you keep reading, you find out that it was composed by Rod Temperton and produced by Quincy Jones).

Discogs & AllMusic sites

Michael Jackson – Thriller

Genre:	Electronic
Style:	Disco
Year:	1982

More Images

thriller

Albums

Thriller
Michael Jackson

Thriller [Single]
Michael Jackson

Thriller
Lambchop

Songs

"Thriller"
Michael Jackson

"Thriller [Immortal Version]"
Michael Jackson

"Thriller Megamix"
Michael Jackson

Compositions

Thriller, tango (a.k.a. "Mundial '78")
Astor Piazzolla

The Thriller!
May Aufderheide

Thriller
Rod Temperton

Discogs and AllMusic file this "song" under Michael Jackson's body of work, although AllMusic does have an additional entry for the "composition" Thriller under Rod Temperton at the very bottom.

Amazon supplies the name Michael Jackson and no others in connection with this song.

Library catalog

Temperton, Rod.
Thriller

But a library catalog, in accordance with current cataloging standards, would assign this song an authorized access point of "Temperton, Rod. Thriller." Does that surprise anyone? There's no denying that the work "Rod Temperton's Thriller" exists, [click] but what about Michael Jackson's Thriller? To help you understand how this came to be, we're going to take you on a tour through the decades, starting in a more idyllic time.
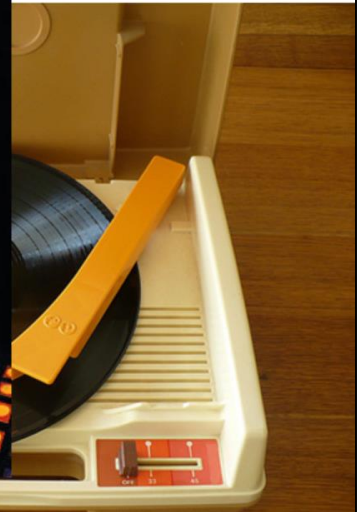
1978

Disco!!

A Taste of Honey

BOOGIE

OOGIE

OOGIE

1978: That time was 1978. Everybody was really into disco music.
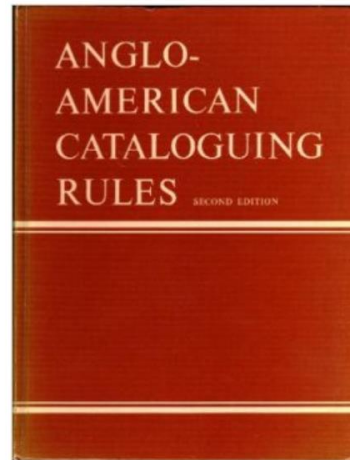
1978: People bought long-playing records and played them on their turntables. [click] Mine looked like this. [click] And here's what was on it.

1978

AACR2!!

ANGLO-
AMERICAN
CATALOGUING
RULES SECOND EDITION

1978: And in the Anglo-American cataloging world, AACR2 was published--a revision of 1967's AACR. In North America, AACR2 was THE cataloging standard for decades to come.

1978

Village People. Macho man
Macho man [sound recording] / Village People.
Los Angeles, Calif. : Casablanca Record and FilmWorks, p1978.
1 sound disc : analog, 33 ⅓ rpm, stereo. ; 12 in.
Macho man -- I am what I am -- Key West -- **Medley. Just a gigolo ; I ain't got nobody** -- Sodom and Gomorrah.
Popular music--1971-1980.
Disco music.

1978: Cataloging popular music albums under AACR2 was pretty straightforward, thanks to the rule that allowed us to select the "principal performer" as the main entry element, even in cases where various songwriters were represented, as on the Village People album Macho Man, which includes renditions of the much older songs "Just a gigolo" and "I ain't got nobody." The name-title entry for this album was made up of the heading Village People plus the album title Macho man.

1997/1998
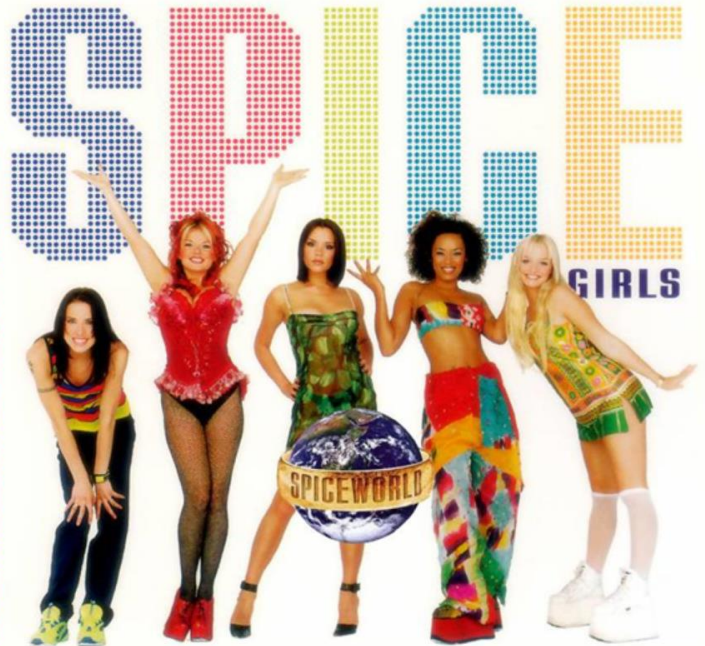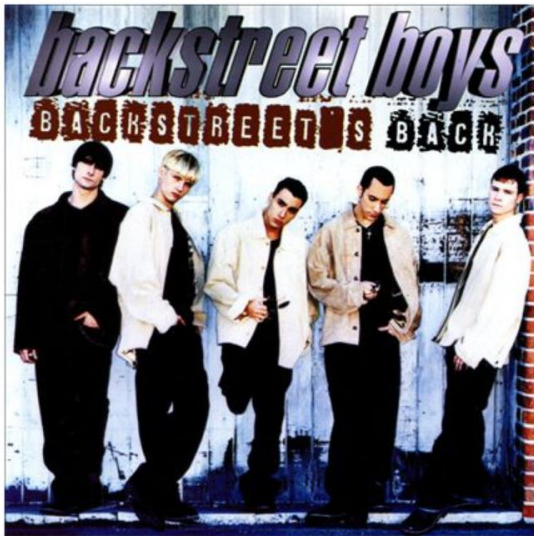
1997/1998: Twenty years later, in the late 1990s, Backstreet Boys and Spice Girls were on top of the world.
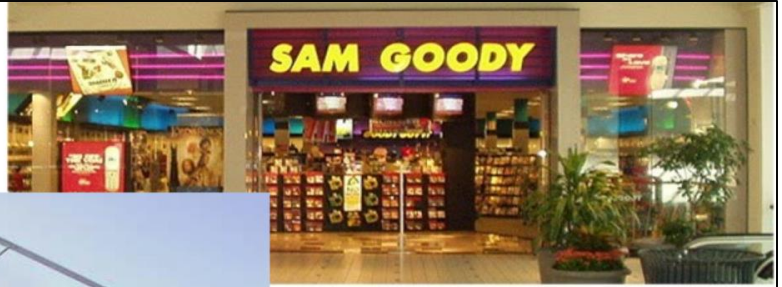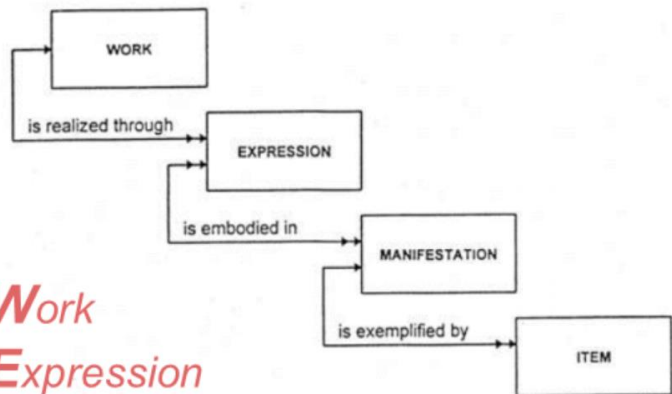
1997/1998: People shopped for CDs in record stores.

1997/1998: And in the cataloging world, a group from IFLA, the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, published FRBR, Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records, a conceptual model of the bibliographic universe. In FRBR, a Work, such as a symphony, is an abstract concept, and any orchestras' performances are Expressions of that Work. More on FRBR & WEMI later.
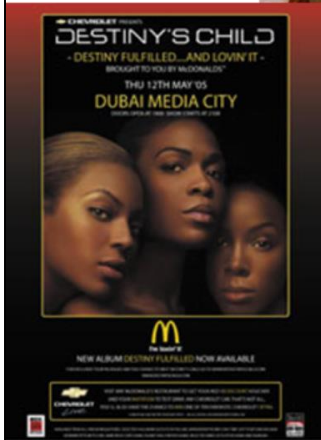
2005: For now, fast forward to 2005. Destiny's Child, the group that gave Queen of R&B Beyonce her start, embarked on their McDonald's-sponsored world tour, called "Destiny Fulfilled...And Lovin' It," AND announced their breakup, which allowed Beyonce to shift her attention to her solo career.
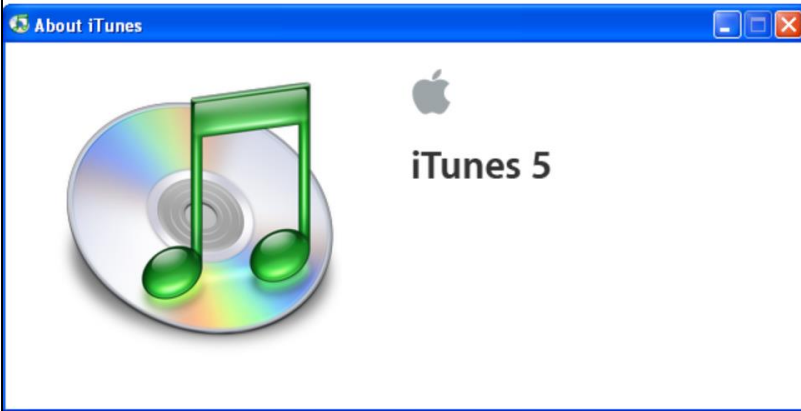
2005: People used iTunes and iPods for buying and consuming popular music.
[iTunes (5); iPod Shuffle (1st generation)]

2005: And in the cataloging world, the JSC, or Joint Steering Committee, the group responsible for maintaining and revising AACR2, announced its breakup with AACR3 and subsequent shift to RDA, or Resource Description and Access, a cataloging code built on FRBR and WEMI.

2005

Sound Recordings (21.23)

ALA has held additional discussions with representatives from the Association for Recorded Sound Collections and the Music Library Association regarding rules for primary access points for sound recordings. These discussions have been successful in reaching some areas of agreement between these communities, and have resulted in some clear recommendations for these rules, including recasting them as rules for primary access for **performances**.

*"... primary access for **performances**."*

Rationale

"... reflect appropriate common citation practice."

"... users ... who expect to find these resources cited under the performers that they recognize as the ... creator(s) of ... new, original works."

ALA strongly recommends that any principle-based solution reflect appropriate common citation practice. Common citation practice in some communities emphasizes the importance of performers in situations where a "performer" is actually acting in a more primary role (for adaptations, re-compositions, and performances that include substantial improvisation) that includes primary responsibility for the intellectual and/or artistic content of the resource. To abandon this common practice within RDA (i.e., to always provide primary access for resources that exhibit these characteristics either under title or under the original work's composer) would not do justice to the role of such "performers-with-creative-responsibility" and would not assist knowledgeable users in certain disciplines who expect to find these resources cited under the performer(s) that they recognize as the author(s) or creator(s) of what they consider to be new, original works.

2005: Various constituencies with a stake in the matter submitted documents discussing the potential impact of revoking the "principal performer main entry" rule that we followed in AACR2 and other "special" rules. In particular, ARSC (Association for Recorded Sound Collections) and MLA (Music Library Association) gave input to the JSC via ALA, who recommended that any solution reflect appropriate common citation practice, which sometimes emphasizes a performer over a composer, and highlighted users' recognition of performers as the creators of certain types of musical works.

2010-2015: Now we're pretty much caught up to the present. In 2013, Robin Thicke and Pharrell had a pretty good year with their summer hit Blurred Lines.

2010-2015

Robin Thicke, Pharrell Lose Multi-Million Dollar 'Blurred Lines' Lawsuit

Marvin Gaye estate wins $7.3 million judgment after months of legal drama

■ BY KORY GROW | March 10, 2015

f Share   ▼ Tweet   8+ Share   💬 Comment   ✉ Email

2010-2015: But in 2015, they had a pretty bad year, when a judge found that they had copied the "feel" of the late Marvin Gaye's disco-funk-soul song, Got To Give It Up.

2010-2015: Nowadays, this is how people can find information about popular music and its makers on the Internet. On the right, Google's Knowledge Card, constructed using Linked Data principles, provides structured data that is easy to navigate,

2010-2015: with intuitive collocation of results for a particular song under the recording/performing artist. The structured relationships are apparent at the top right of this slide (Marvin Gaye > Songs > I Heard It Through the Grapevine).

2010-2015

i heard it through the grapevine

Web   Videos   Images   Shopping   Books   More ▾   Search tools

About 1,790,000 results (0.43 seconds)

Instead I Heard It
Through The Grapevine
Not Much Longer Would
You Be Mine

See results about

I Heard It Through The Grapevine (Song)
Artist: Creedence Clearwater Revival
Album: Cosmo's Factory

See results about

I Heard It Through The Grapevine (Song)
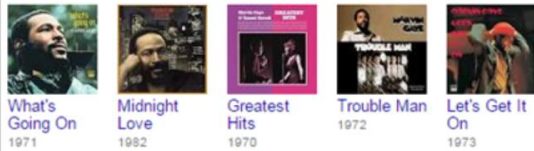Artist: Gladys Knight & the Pips
Album: Everybody Needs Love

Marvin Gaye - I Heard It Through The Grapevine - YouTube
www.youtube.com/watch?v=hajBdDM2qdg

Artist: Marvin Gaye
Album: I Heard It Through the Grapevine
Released: 1968
Lyrics: Honey, honey yeah. / I heard it through the grapevine / Not much longer would
you be mine baby... Full lyrics on Google Play

2010-2015: In a fresh search for a song title like I Heard It Through the Grapevine, most results are for the Marvin Gaye version, but there is an escape hatch on the right that takes you directly to results related to the CCR version. Give Google a little more time, and I bet we'll also see an escape hatch for [click] the Gladys Knight version, which incidentally has a completely different "feel" from the Marvin Gaye version.

2010-2015

- RDA publication and adoption
- RDA revision (JSC; JSC Music Working Group)
- RDA Policy Statements (Library of Congress et al.)
- RDA Best Practices (MLA)

2010-2015: And this is a small glimpse of what has been happening in the music cataloging world: RDA publication, implementation, and revision; and interpretation of RDA via Policy Statements and Best Practices such as those for music.
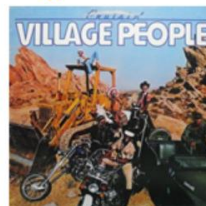
[KEVIN] Despite the 2005 ALA document that Tracey mentioned, RDA did away with special instructions for "principal performer". Our current interpretation of RDA sometimes creates authorized access points for popular music which can be confusing to users. Remember Thriller? Here's another example--three of the Village People's first four albums would have work access points beginning with Morali-comma-Jacques, the band's principal songwriter and producer; maybe not where users would look for a Village People album, but at least consistent. But Macho man is entered under title since Morali did not write all the songs contained therein.

RDA Authorized Access Points

for a song:
AAP = [Creator's AAP]. [Title of Work] ([Qualifier])

for an album:
AAP = [Creator's AAP]. [Title of Work] ([Qualifier])
or
AAP = [Title of Work] ([Qualifier])

The authorized access point is an important component of the RDA guidelines, through which every person, corporate body, and work can be assigned a unique identifier.

In their simplest form, work authorized access points are constructed by combining the AAP of the person or corporate body who created the work with the title of the work. Sometimes, in the cases of albums which contain songs by more than one creator, the AAP is the title of the album.

In certain situations, AAPs will also contain a qualifier.

RDA Authorized Access Points

AAP = [Creator's AAP]. [Title of Work]

Work = "a distinct intellectual or artistic creation", "an abstract entity"--FRBR

Creator= "a person, family, or corporate body responsible for the creation of a Work"--RDA

But what is the Work? And who is the Creator?
FRBR defines Work as an "abstract entity" which is "a distinct intellectual or artistic creation". Being based on the FRBR model, RDA defines Work similarly.
RDA defines Creator as "a person, family, or corporate body responsible for the creation of a work."
But that's really it. The definitions for Work and Creator are vague, at best.

RDA Authorized Access Points

AAP = [Creator's AAP]. [Title of Work]

Creator = composer (songwriter?)

Work = composition (composed song?)

Since its publication in 2010, the music cataloging community has spent much energy establishing a suitable interpretation of RDA instructions surrounding these inexact definitions, finally reaching a tenuous consensus that, across the board, the Creator should refer to the composer of the music, and the Work should be the composition, an interpretation supported by the numerous mentions of "composer" in RDA chapter 6.28, which discusses AAPs for music.
This interpretation works pretty well for classical music, but falls short when applied to popular music.

Work Defined by Culture

"Because the notion of a *work* is abstract, it is difficult to define precise boundaries for the entity. The concept of what constitutes a *work* and where the line of demarcation lies between one *work* and another may in fact be viewed differently from one culture to another. Consequently the bibliographic conventions established by various cultures or national groups may differ in terms of the criteria they use for determining the boundaries between one *work* and another."--FRBR

As previously stated, the FRBR / RDA definition of Work is not exact. FRBR allows quite a bit of wiggle room in its description of the Work entity whose boundaries, and corresponding bibliographic conventions, may be defined differently in different cultural contexts.

New Work from Existing Work

"In some cases, the modification of a previously existing *work* substantially changes the nature or content of the original and results in a new *work*. When this occurs, the person, family, or corporate body responsible for modifying the previously existing *work* is considered to be the *creator* of the new work."--RDA 19.2.1.1

Furthermore, RDA allows for Adaptations, in which the modification of a previously existing work results in a new Work.
Some obvious examples of adaptation are a choral setting of a traditional spiritual or Walter Murphy's disco songs "A fifth of Beethoven" and "Toccata and Funk in D minor."

RDA Authorized Access Points

AAP = [Creator's AAP]. [Title of Work]

Creator = composer (songwriter?)
or   = popular music performer
Work = composition (composed song?)
or   = performer's version of song

So, is it possible to create sensible access points for popular music while maintaining RDA's principled approach?

Could we logically and philosophically shift our perspective so that Creator could also mean "popular music performer" and Work "that performer's version of the song"?

Let's consider FRBR's assertion that the boundaries of Works may vary from one culture to another, and look specifically at the cultures of Western art music vs. popular music.

Comparing Musical Cultures

Classical music
- Composers well identified on resources
- Composers revered by users
- Users primarily choose based on composer
- Literate tradition; easily disseminated via printed music

Popular music
- Songwriters often not prominent on resources
- Users may not know or care who wrote songs
- Users primarily choose based on performer
- Recorded tradition; mostly disseminated through recordings

When comparing the classical music and popular music cultures, we see some striking differences. Here are some broad generalizations that, of course, have exceptions.

Composers are revered and well-identified in the classical music tradition, whereas popular music songwriters are often not prominent in resources or in the minds of users.

In popular music, users tend to choose resources based on performer rather than composer.

Classical music is a longtime literate tradition in which works have been disseminated through printed scores. Popular music, on the other hand, is mostly disseminated through recordings. Printed music, when it exists, is typically based on recordings.

Comparing Musical Cultures

Classical music
- Performers strive toward faithful interpretation of composition

- Compositions tend to be fully fleshed out
- Compositions have specific musical style

Popular music
- Performers expected to have creative / individualized interpretations
- Composed songs are often skeletal
- Same song can exist in different styles / genres

In classical music, performers strive toward a faithful interpretation of the composition, which tends to be fully written out and has a specific musical style.
By contrast, popular music performers are expected to create original individualized interpretations of songs.
Many of these songs pre-exist only in skeletal form (melody, lyrics, chords), incomplete until fully fleshed out by the performer or producer.
The same song could even be performed in different musical styles or genres based on the performer's creative decisions.

Roots Rock — CREEDENCE CLEARWATER REVIVAL — PROUD MARY — 1969
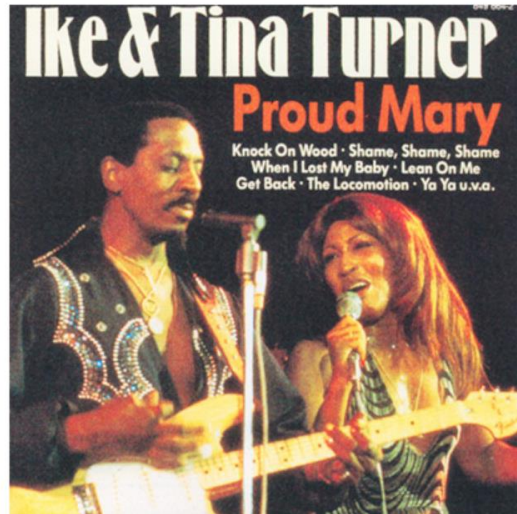
Soul / Funk Rock — Ike & Tina Turner — Proud Mary — 1971

Such as these two renditions of Proud Mary, which differ greatly in tempo, instrumentation, overall feel, and indeed the musical content.

Comparing Musical Cultures

Classical music
- Authorship fairly clear

Popular music
- Authorship can be fuzzy
  - Many collaborations
  - Reuse of melodies / lyrics / harmony / feel
  - Parodies
  - Sampling
  - Remixes
  - Mashups

And finally, while the authorship of classical music works is usually straightforward, popular music authorship can be fuzzy.
Songwriting is often a collaborative process in which the exact distinction of roles (such as who wrote lyrics vs. who composed music) is unstated.
Musical borrowing is used in both traditions, but popular music has many more techniques at its disposal, including sampling, remixing, and mashup.

New RDA interpretation?

- Popular music songs are new works based on underlying composition; performers, producers, etc., are creators
- Original composed song also exists as separate work; songwriter is creator
- Variant versions of same song by a performer are same abstract work (within reason)

We believe that by expanding our interpretation of the popular music Work, we would create metadata much more in line with user mental models. So, what's our proposal? Popular music performances should be considered new works based on the underlying composition, and the performers, producers, etc., should be considered the creators of these new works.
The original composed songs also exist as separate works, the songwriters being the creators of those.

Now here's the part which allows this idea to comply with the FRBR conceptual model:
A popular music Work is not any specific performance or version, but the abstract entity created when a performer's or producer's general artistic style and creative choices are applied to the original composed song. Variant versions or performances of THAT song by THAT performer are Expressions of THAT abstract Work.

The possibility remains that a single performer could create another, entirely new version of a song and this CAN again be considered another new work. If Michael Jackson had chosen to remake Thriller as a country song, that would probably be considered a new work.

New RDA interpretation?

AAP = [Performer's AAP]. [Title of song / album]

Use cataloger's judgment in:
- Determining "principal responsibility"
- Linking to original composed song in authority record
- Linking to related songs in authority record
- Applying to jazz, folk music, other non-classical

So, authorized access points for popular music works are constructed by combining the AAP for the performer (or producer) with the title of the song or album.
Since much popular music is collaborative, use judgment in determining who has principal responsibility and creating references to other collaborators.
If deemed important, create relationships to the original composed song or other related songs with 5xx cross references in the authority record.
This method could also work with other types of music like jazz and folk music.

Temperton, Rod. Thriller

While Rod Temperton's composed song Thriller exists as a Work, ...

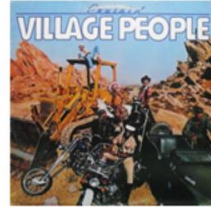# Jackson, Michael, 1958-2009. Thriller

...so does Michael Jackson's version of Thriller, with an AAP more helpful to most users.

Morali, Jacques. Village people

Macho man (1978)

Morali, Jacques. Cruisin'

Morali, Jacques. Go west
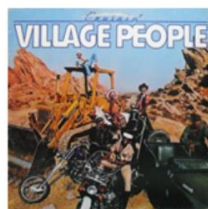
And the various Village People albums would be collocated together...

Village people. Village people (Album)
Village People. Macho man (Album)
Village People. Cruisin'
Village People. Go west (Album)

...under the name of the band.

Proud Mary

Fogerty, John, 1945- Proud Mary

Creedence Clearwater Revival (Musical group). Proud Mary
➢ **Based on (work): Fogerty, John, 1945- Proud Mary**

Ike and Tina Turner Revue. Proud Mary
➢ **Based on (work): Fogerty, John, 1945- Proud Mary**

And the radically different versions of Proud Mary by CCR and Ike & Tina Turner will have separate AAPs, as well as the original song composed by John Fogerty, distinguishing them all as separate works.

[click] A quick tour around the internet shows that most user-created data for popular music, like that in Wikipedia and the MusicBrainz database, conceptualize Works in the manner we've outlined. By harmonizing with these sources, libraries may one day be able to integrate their metadata with linked data from sources like LinkedBrainz or DBPedia.

2015-[2016?]

- RDA: ongoing revision of RDA, Policy Statements, and Best Practices
- JSC working group on aggregates
- FR consolidated model (FRBR, FRAD…)
- BIBFRAME revision (Library of Congress)
- BIBFRAME Task Force (MLA)

[TRACEY] 2015-[2016?]: Back to our timeline. The next year or so will see more RDA revisions; a JSC working group on aggregates, which will build on the work of an earlier IFLA working group on aggregates and their 2011 report; a consolidated model to supplant FRBR; and exploration and revision of BIBFRAME, the Linked Data model in development that is intended to replace the almost 50-year-old MARC standard for encoding bibliographic data, informed by the 2014 BF AV Modeling study and the work of the MLA BIBFRAME Task Force appointed in 2014. It's worth noting that BIBFRAME, in its current state, does not even distinguish between Work and Expression.

Dystopian future??

110 2_ *Marvin Gaye Estate.*
240 10 *Got to give it up. $s*
"Feel"
245 10 *Blurred lines / $c*
Robin Thicke ; feat. T.I. +
Pharrell.

110 2_ *Marvin Gaye Estate.*
240 10 *Got to give it up. $s*
"Feel"
245 10 *Word crimes / $c*
"Weird Al" Yankovic.

Whatever we wind up with, we don't want to be forced into doing something like this.
(A little joke for you MARC catalogers out there.)

Our principled & practical solution

- Culturally appropriate
- Commonsensical
- Backward-compatible (AACR2)
- Forward-looking (BIBFRAME, Linked Data)
- Cost-effective
- Sanity-preserving

A far happier future would be one in which our library data, as outlined in RDA's objectives, is in accord with users' expectations, is compatible with our legacy data as well as with the Linked Data environment that is in development, and is created intuitively and efficiently by happy and productive catalogers who have been spared their sanity. It would be a whole lot easier to hunt down the RDA records created according to this problematic practice and change them than it would be to search out the zillions of AACR2 records for earlier releases of the same albums and convert them to a practice that may not even be defensible.

And if we make a change now, we can look forward to living in a BIBFRAME Wonderland.

Acknowledgments

Composing in Real Time: Jazz Performances as "Works" in the FRBR Model
(Raymond Schmidt, 2012)

Pop and Rock in RDA: The "Compilation" Conundrum
(Kevin Kishimoto and Tracey Snyder, MOUG, 2014)

BIBFRAME AV Modeling Study
(Kara Van Malssen, 2014)

The Application of FRBR to Playback Musical Works
(Chris Holden, ARSC, 2014)