Cataloging Problems Discussion Group
Minutes
March 19, 2000
Art Libraries Society of North America 28th Annual Conference, Pittsburgh, PA

Moderator: Sherman Clarke

The meeting began with an apology about the lack of a separate NACO session, and the hope that at future conferences the CPDG session could take place earlier -- before CAC and Section meetings. Daniel Starr, chair of the Cataloging Advisory Committee reported on the committee's recent work -- notably the approval of subfield j for personal names to indicate the relationship of a unknown artist (circle of, workshop of) to a known one. He also mentioned the committee's response to the Library of Congress's proposed revisions in the cataloging of art materials. Things they're watching or working on in the year ahead include a core-level standard for treatment of exhibition catalogs, migration of headings for buildings from subject to name authority files, and a decision on how to treat the work of artistic duos (e.g. Gilbert and George).

There was a bit of discussion about copy cataloging -- whether it's done by professionals and/or para-professionals. There seemed to be a great variation as far as who does what where, with para-professionals doing original cataloging at some institutions, while at others professionals do both original and copy cataloging (as well as the more expected division of work flow).

This segued into a discussion about whether people are still creating local headings at all or whether the trend was toward increasing standardization. Most local practices were fading, either because recon and authorization were taking their toll or because tasks like NACO and SACO contribution were demanding more time. Some still remain, many dictated by custom or curatorial demand.

People wondered whether others were (in RLIN) using RLIN copy or SCIPIO records for handling auction catalogs. The problem of a separate different authority list for SCIPIO remains a stumbling block. Some solve the problem of a date of sale search by using this field as the classification device.

Other topics discussed included the need for a "guide to best practice" for cataloging offprints, whether to treat dealer catalogs as monographs or serials, and how to instruct recon vendors to code local subject headings. The current lack of free access to LC authority records concerned many, as well as the fact that 50% of LC's catalogers will be eligible to retire by 2002. One participant wondered whether going to ALA conferences was beneficial and another asked about documentation for cataloging Slavic publications. In the end there was no Art NACO discussion, which either leaves a lot to be discussed next year or shows that these matters often get case-by-case treatment from coordinator Sherman Clarke.

Respectfully submitted,
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