

**Art Libraries Society of North America, 33rd Annual Conference, Hilton Americas, Houston, Texas, April 1-6, 2005**

**Session XVII: *Cataloguing Cultural Objects: Implications for the Field***

**Tuesday, April 5, 2005, 9:30-11:00 AM**

**Moderator:** Elizabeth O'Keefe, Pierpont Morgan Library

**Speakers:** Ann Baird Whiteside, Fiske Kimball Art Library, University of Virginia  
Maria Oldal, Pierpont Morgan Library  
Sherman Clarke, New York University Libraries  
Eileen Fry, Indiana University

**Recorder:** Eric Wolf, New York School of Interior Design Library

*I. Cataloguing Cultural Objects: An Overview and Answers to Questions – Ann Baird Whiteside*

Cataloging Cultural Objects (CCO) presents content guidelines for cataloging objects and images of objects of cultural heritage. CCO is an initiative of the Visual Resources Association (VRA) and was developed for museums, archives, and visual resources collections. CCO can be used with any other standard guidelines for formatting. CCO is not a data element set (such as VRA Core 3.0, Dublin Core, etc.). It can be used in conjunction with such sets. CCO recommends the use of controlled vocabularies such as Getty's Art and Architecture Thesaurus (AAT), but does not provide its own. CCO is designed for the description of objects (works) or images of works; its chief constituency is thus museum collections and visual resource collections, but it is also useful in library and archival environments that contain collections of works and images. The CCO is intended as a supplement to the Anglo-American Cataloging Rules (AACR). The rules additionally contain 118 examples of records following the CCO. CCO is divided into three sections: I. Theoretical Cataloging Issues, II. Cataloging Manual (nine chapters divided by metadata elements), III. Authorities and Controlled Vocabularies. The current draft of the CCO is available on the VRA website at <http://www.vraweb.org/CCOweb/index.html>.

*II. Rules are made to be broken, or stretched: AACR as Inspiration – Sherman Clarke*

Why do we need rules in the first place? They allow us to know what to do or what not to do. In order for rules to be applied they usually need to be interpreted. Throughout the history of civilization, library cataloging rules have evolved. Early on they were merely intended to list the contents of an institution's collection. In the mid-nineteenth century rules developed and began to form the basis of modern library cataloging. As cataloging developed, the desire to share cataloging gave rise to the need for standards; cataloging cannot be shared without a common way of doing things. CCO provides a set of rules that promises to promote such shared cataloging. Libraries have shared cataloging first by sharing catalog cards. The common standards in the VR world come chiefly through sharing the literature of art history. An important question when cataloging is "What are you cataloging?"; for book catalogers, this has been the book in hand. For catalogers of visual images this is a more difficult question, as the same image may be cataloged by different

institutions. A recent real-world example was an image of a photograph taken by Erwin Panofsky of a fifteenth-century manuscript illumination of an ancient Roman sarcophagus. Obviously a collection focusing on manuscript illumination will catalog this differently than a Panofsky photo archive. A good catalog will allow access to the image through multiple access points regardless of the principle decisions. IFLA came out with Functional Requirement for Bibliographic Records (FRBR) to elucidate whether something is a work, a manifestation, an expression, or an item. However, there is still ambiguity in many cases. CCO is spoken of as a data content standard and its closest parallel among library cataloging tools is AACR. Yet it goes beyond the basic description and access rules of AACR by providing a section on authorities and an XML schema and data structures while AACR does not. There are many similarities and differences between CCO and AACR. No matter how old or new your rules are, it is really a matter of applying them. Even a literal application of rules by two catalogers will not yield the same results. The fundamental thing to remember, however, is that you have to use some sort of rules and guidelines, and use them consistently in conjunction with controlled vocabularies, if you want to effectively share your records with others. For full transcript and powerpoint of the paper go to <http://artcataloging.net/arlisna/cco.html>.

### III. *Testing the Waters: Applying the CCO Guidelines in the MARC format* – Maria Oldal

CORSAIR, the online catalog of the Pierpont Morgan Library, contains a lot of non-traditional materials. These include manuscripts, drawings, unpublished works, objects, and archival material. Rules such as AACR do not adequately describe all of these materials so other guidelines and local practices are often used. In the process of reviewing the current version of CCO (it must be stressed that it has not yet been finalized), it occurred to the speaker that CCO might be used by the Morgan Library and by other libraries as a supplement to AACR for the cataloging of non-traditional materials. However, in order to use CCO in a library OPAC, it must be in harmony with the MARC format, the data coding standard used by virtually all libraries. Since the MARC format is more flexible in many ways than AACR, and can accommodate basic descriptive data for just about any type of material, an experiment with applying CCO to MARC seemed worth trying. Three sample records, for a porcelain teapot, a drawing, and a statue from Pompeii, were analyzed to reveal what this mapping would look like. The records do not include two required CCO elements, "class" and "view." Both concepts are firmly rooted in the visual resources world, where images of works are cataloged, rather than in the museum world, where the works themselves are being cataloged. The CCO element "work type" proved very difficult to map to MARC, but was eventually placed in the 245 \$h. While AACR would require that "art original" be used as the 245 \$h for all the works in the examples, CCO has the advantage of allowing the cataloger to choose from an unlimited number of terms. 655 \$a is the MARC field for form/genre terms and allows for a combination of controlled terms. For title, the MARC fields 245 \$a and 246 \$a can easily be mapped to preferred title and alternate titles. The creator display field can be mapped to the MARC 245 \$c. The 300 or 340 field can be mapped to measurements. The 260 \$a field can be used for place of creation, while the 752 field can list all the other associated locations. CCO is very inclusive regarding subject. The different subject categories can be mapped to the various 6XX MARC fields. Culture and style terms are difficult to map to MARC, but can be included in the 655 field. A version of one of the MARC records, formatted as it would appear in the online public catalog, harmonized very well with the way non-

MARC CCO records display (indeed the record looked very similar to the sample record that Eileen Fry constructed in the following presentation).

#### *IV. Making Bricks without Straw: the Field-by-Field Challenge of Implementing CCO in a University Image Collection – Eileen Fry*

This presentation demonstrates the application of CCO rules as implemented by the image collection at Indiana University. The top ten problems encountered in cataloging a statue of Gudea were used as an example. The first problem is what is being cataloged. It can be either a work or an image, but cannot be both. The work record will contain tombstone information (artist, date, site, nationality, etc.). The image record will contain information such as view, detail, source, etc. Information for the work record can come from standard reference sources (example here from Scholars Resource), as can information for a corresponding image record. What identifies a work? Four required elements: object type and title, agent or culture, date and location. The second problem is selecting a work type. For Gudea, six different AAT terms could be used: statues, votive images, portraits, seated statues, colossi, figurines. Statue is selected. The third problem is title. CCO allows for various titles, an index title, a display title, and others entered as alternate titles. The fourth problem in cataloging Gudea is its unknown creator. As this is a required element, it is necessary to use "unknown." This can be created in an authority file (i.e. Unknown Neo-Sumerian) or simply as "unknown" with a descriptor from the Culture / Nationality Element added at the time of display (i.e. "unknown" + "Mesopotamian" or "unknown" + "Iraqi." The fifth problem is dealing with Nationality/Culture/Style/Period. Cultures are not identified as such in the AAT, while "nationality" is only appropriate for the modern era. Culture, Style, and Period terms often overlap. This leads to the sixth problem: the fact that authorities do not always agree with current scholarly usage. The seventh problem is assigning dates. CCO mandates pure numerical "earliest and latest" date fields, as well as a date display field. BCE display dates are represented by negative numbers in "earliest and latest" fields: A display value of "2125-2110 bce" would equal "earliest date: -2125" and "late date -2110". The eighth problem is names of locations and structures. While TGN provides geographic authorities, the only readily available online authorities for structures are the Dictionary of Art and Library of Congress. Multiple locations with qualifiers are often necessary, such as "discovery location" and "current location." The ninth problem is what defines uniqueness. To define this, institutional accession numbers, descriptive titles noting gestures, seated vs. standing, etc., dimensions, conditions and other physical attributes, and reference images are often necessary. The tenth major problem is how to integrate the record into an institution's "big picture": how to translate classification codes into usable browsing and retrieval terms. For this the CCO class element is used; it is a required element, but is designated as "local." For Gudea, at Indiana University, the Class terms would be "Sculpture" "Ancient" "Near East" "Religious." CCO provides a guide for consistently formulating each separate piece of identifying information, but it cannot help locate missing information or reconcile differences. CCO recommends only "four buckets" for all authorities: concepts, subjects, names, places. It can be difficult to determine what are names, what are proper subjects and what are concept/generic subjects. It is still unclear how we will deal with difficult issues like related works that depend on local system implementations. It is generally still unclear to most of us how we will incorporate CCO and VRA Core 4.0 into our local systems or when the official version of CCO and Core 4.0 will be published, but the effort of trying to apply CCO has been worth it. Now we don't worry about "where

they go"; we worry about correct field values, shared authorities, time and how to generate both good XML and legible labels.