

What's in a (Family) Name? DACS, LCSH, and Mixed-Standard Catalogs

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With the publication of DACS (*Describing Archives: A Content Standard*) by the Society of American Archivists in 2004, archivists took a decisive step away from the bibliographic approach to the description of archival materials toward one that adheres more closely to internationally accepted archival principles. DACS now serves as the content standard for archival description at various levels and in various formats, such as finding aids, catalog records, and metadata records structured according to the Dublin Core (<http://dublincore.org/index.shtml>), MODS (<http://www.loc.gov/standards/mods/>), and others. For the most part, adopting DACS has created few difficulties for those who wish to use it in MARC catalog records. However, when catalog records based on different – sometimes even conflicting -- content standards coexist in an online catalog, the results can be confusing for researchers. Case in point: records containing family name headings taken from the *Library of Congress Subject Headings*, and records including family name headings based on DACS.

If a family is an important subject or the creator or (or both) of a body of archival materials, the form of the family name supplied as an access point must be standardized in order to insure consistency and effective retrieval of relevant records. DACS rule 12.29B provides guidance on formulating a family name for use as an access point: "In general, choose as the basis of the heading for a family, the name by which it is commonly known." Rule 12.29C lists the sources that may be used in determining the most commonly known form.

AACR2 (*Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules*), the rules for description that are followed by most bibliographic catalogers in North America, does not accommodate the concept of family as author or creator and therefore provides no rules that pertain to use or formulation of family name headings.* Authority records for family names as *name* headings are not currently created in the LC/NACO Authority File (maintained by the Library of Congress and the Program for Cooperative Cataloging's name authority component). Instead, authority records for family names are created as LC *subject* headings in the LC/SACO File (maintained by LC and the Program for Cooperative Cataloging's subject authority component) according to the Library of Congress *Subject Cataloging Manual: Subject Headings* (5th edition).

LCSH family name headings may be used only as subject headings (in MARC field 600) in an AACR2-compliant catalog record; they may not be used as name headings *per se* in the MARC fields reserved for names of primary and secondary authors and other creators (the MARC 1XX and 7XX fields). The subject authority records for family names contain an explicit code (MARC 008/14) indicating that they are not valid for use as name headings. A cataloger who wishes to provide an access point for a family as the *subject* of a work may do so, but until very recently, that cataloger was expected to use a family name already established as an LC Subject Heading or to create a new LC subject authority record based on the LC *Subject Cataloging Manual*, section H 1631: Genealogy and Family Names. Unfortunately, the rules in H 1631 (part 3a.) directly conflict with DACS on this issue. H 1631 does, like DACS, instruct the cataloger to "establish the family name, using the most common form of the name," but it also stipulates that only one form or spelling of the name may be used as the established heading. Other forms of the name are to be listed as *non-preferred* variants in the authority record, which means that "see" references will be made in an online catalog from any of those variants to the one "approved" formulation of the name.

* *Resource Description and Access* (RDA), which will replace AACR2, will include rules for assigning family names as descriptive access points and will provide guidance on formulating family name authority records. RDA is scheduled for publication in 2008.

This rule works well for genealogists, whose research is simplified by the grouping of all variants of a family name under a single heading. For an archivist who wishes to index a group of family papers under the actual name of that particular family, however, H 1631 causes real problems. The subject authority record for the “Adams family” (not the fictional television/movie family), for example, lists “Adams family” as the preferred form of the family name and “Addams family,” “Adam family,” “Adamson family,” and several more spellings as non-preferred variants. A subject search on “Addams family” in the LC database (or any other integrated library system (ILS) that includes LC subject authority records) causes the system to display the message “See: Adams family” – even if the researcher is seeking the Addams family papers. The archival cataloger cannot prevent this message from appearing in a catalog that mixes DACS-compliant family name headings with LCSH family name headings and subject authority records. Even worse, ILS systems and authority services that check headings entered into catalog records are programmed to “flip” (change) a variant form of a heading in a catalog record to the “authorized” or established form of the heading. The cataloger may follow DACS in formulating a family name, but if that spelling is given as a variant in the LCSH subject authority record, it will simply be replaced by the “approved” LCSH version of the name.

When a cataloger at the University of Washington Libraries encountered a family name flip in a DACS-compliant record for the papers of a Seattle family in May 2006 (in which family name access points were given for the family as both creator and subject of the papers), staff members in Monographic Services discussed possible solutions to the problem. The most promising way to prevent the name flip, at least for family names used as *subject* headings in catalog records, was to somehow explicitly mark such a heading in a way that would prevent it from being matched against the LC subject authority file. One way to do this is to make use of subfield ‡2 in the MARC 600 field. In MARC 6XX fields for various types of subject headings, standards other than LCSH may be used as sources for name, topical, and geographic subject headings if the sources are identified by their official codes (assigned by the LC MARC Standards Office) in subfield ‡2. Family names that are subjects of a published work or a collection of papers are recorded in the MARC 600 field. To prevent a family subject heading flip, a cataloger might indicate that the family name was based on DACS rules rather than the LC *Subject Cataloging Manual* by specifying “dacs” as the source of the heading in subfield ‡2. Principal Cataloger Adam L. Schiff therefore conveyed a proposal to the Network Development and MARC Standards Office at the Library of Congress requesting authorization to use “dacs” in subfield ‡2 of field 600. The proposal was approved, as reported in the May 26, 2006, Technical Notice of the Network Development and MARC Standards Office. After July 26, 2006, anyone will be able to use “dacs” in MARC field 600, subfield ‡2.

Protecting DACS-based Family Name Headings

To indicate that DACS is the source of a family name used as a subject heading in MARC 600, enter the name and field coding as shown in the following example for the Addams family:

600 37 Addams family. ‡2 dacs

The “3” used as the first indicator code following the 600 tag specifies a family name (as opposed to a personal name); the “7” used as the second indicator code means that the name was taken from a source whose code appears in ‡2; “dacs” used in subfield ‡2 indicates that the source is DACS. Enter a period (full stop) following the family name but preceding “‡2”. No period is given following “dacs.”

To have family names based on DACS included in the subject and keyword indexes in your catalog, you also have to ascertain how your system has been set up to index the MARC 600 field. If only LCSH headings are indexed, a subject search on a DACS-based family name will fail to retrieve a record containing that heading. Set your database or online catalog to index not only the LC subject headings in MARC 600 but also the headings that contain “3” and “7” as the indicator codes and “dacs” in ‡2.

Adding “dacs” to MARC field 600 ‡2 for a family name used as a subject heading should protect a name that does not comply with LCSH from being flipped to the LCSH version. And making sure that these “dacs” headings are indexed in the online catalog gives users the opportunity to do subject searches on them. The coexistence of DACS-based and LCSH-based family name headings in one online catalog, however, is an uneasy one. If the family name you have selected (following DACS family name rules) is given as a variant in the LCSH subject authority record for that family, and if your system contains LCSH authority records, the system will still advise the user to search on the LCSH version of the name rather than on the DACS version. But the DACS version of the family name will also appear. A subject search on “Addams family” might generate the following confusing message from the system:

Addams family: See Adams family
Addams family

Until a solution is devised that allows users consistent access to terms based on different standards (perhaps by programming system software to recognize the codes for the various standards and if appropriate, to generate qualified “see also” rather than “see instead” messages), researchers will be presented with sometimes contradictory search results and system messages. But coding and indexing the DACS version of a family name insures that the heading will at least appear in the results of a subject search for a family name.

What about a family name indexed as the primary creator (in MARC field 100) or additional creator (in MARC field 700) of a collection of papers? According to AACR2, a family name may not be given as the creator of a resource (although this will change when *Resource Description and Access* replaces AACR2 in 2008). Moreover, there is no subfield ‡2 defined in the MARC 100 and 700 fields, so there is no way in those fields to designate “dacs” as the source of a family name. However, in the MARC 040 field, subfield “e” may be used to indicate that rules other than the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules* (AACR2) were used to create the catalog record. In MARC 040, “dacs” has been approved for use in subfield “e” for some time, and catalogers should always include it in records based on DACS.

040 ‡a WAU ‡c WAU ‡e dacs

[the code “WAU” in ‡a and ‡c indicates that the University of Washington created and input the record]

In theory, entering “dacs” in subfield “e” of the 040 field should convey to indexing and name authority software that the content in the catalog record, including names indexed in MARC 1XX and 7XX, adheres to DACS and should not be altered to conform to AACR2 or the LC subject cataloging rules. In actuality, though, integrated library systems (ILS’s) and name authority services do not always make appropriate use of the MARC coding in every field of a catalog record; nor is software promptly reprogrammed to reflect MARC code changes. We can’t blame these authority services and ILS developers – software programming is expensive. Nevertheless, verifying that search functions and name displays in your system actually work as intended by the coding in the MARC record is a wise move. If you use an authority service to check for indexing errors in your records, make certain that the vendor does not make automatic changes to your DACS-compliant records and headings based on non-DACS standards. Verify, too, that the standards represented in the records are applied correctly. After UW Libraries began creating DACS records for family papers, we discovered that our authority service matched not only family name subject headings in MARC 600 but also family name headings in MARC 100 and 700 against LC subject authority records. DACS-compliant family names not matching preferred LCSH family names were flipped in all three MARC fields. ILS software and authority vendors should not match *descriptive* access points in MARC 100 and 700 against *subject* authority records. We contacted the vendor and the mistake was corrected.

What's in a family name? It can be an essential discovery tool for users of archival *and* genealogical materials. In a catalog that provides access to records based on varying standards (as many catalogs do), however, it can be a source of confusion and failed searches. Eventually, information providers may determine a way to offer seamless and consistent access to users of mixed-standard catalogs. (Suggestions are welcome.) Meanwhile, using the "dacs" code in MARC fields 600 and 040 can help prevent family name headings based on DACS from being flipped to LCSH headings, and making sure that software and service providers don't impose AACR2/LCSH standards on records and fields based on DACS can provide further protection.

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