CCM Module 15
Subject Headings

Contents

Module Introduction

Guidelines for recording relationships of works to concepts, objects, events and places do not yet exist in RDA (RDA Chapter 23). The following serves as a guide to subject headings for serials in lieu of new guidance from RDA and/or Functional Requirements for Subject Authority Data (FRSAD). Furthermore, while "headings" do not exist in RDA, which identifies entities with "access points," this module retains the term "subject heading" as this is the terminology of both *Library of Congress Subject Headings* (*LCSH*) and *Medical Subject Headings* (*MeSH*), the thesauri used in CONSER cataloging.

Subject headings include topics, forms/genres, persons, families, corporate bodies, places, works and expressions. These headings comprise one of the four areas of subject-related data in serial records. The others are classification numbers, the geographic area code (field 043), and fixed field contents codes (008/24-27). In addition, the abstracting and indexing coverage note (field 510) indicates the sources in which the contents of the serial are indexed. As many libraries choose not to classify all or part of their serial collections, subject headings are a primary method of providing access to the subject matter of these publications and the only method to be covered in this module. For information on classification fields, fields 043, 008/24-27, and 510, see the *CONSER Editing Guide* (*CEG*).

This module explains the philosophy of subject heading assignment for serials. It does not cover the specifics of subject heading construction, assignment of subheadings, or authority work. For information on these aspects, consult the sources listed below.

Outline

This module will discuss:

- A suggested thought process to apply in subject analysis
- Guidelines to apply in assigning subject headings
- Where specifically to look in a serial for indications of its subject content
- Ways to expedite and attain a degree of consistency in serial subject analysis
- A review of the difference between LC's and NLM's subject heading systems

References

CEG

> *CEG* B4.3.5. Revising subject analysis fields to reflect current practice
> *CEG* C4. Authority records
> *CEG* Subject Headings—General information, fields 600-655
> *CEG* App. I. Participant Responsibilities for Applying Subject Indexing Languages
> *CEG* App. J. Use of LC Subject Heading Subdivisions Appropriate to Serials

Subject Headings Manual (SHM), 1st ed. Washington, D.C. : Library of Congress, 2008-

(Also available online in *Cataloger's Desktop*--subscription required)

Free-Floating Subdivisions: an Alphabetical Index. Washington, D.C. : Library of Congress, 1989-
(Also available online in *Cataloger's Desktop*--subscription required)

Basic Subject Cataloging Using LCSH. Available at:
http://www.loc.gov/catworkshop/courses/basicsubject/

Fundamentals of Library of Congress Classification. Available at:
http://www.loc.gov/catworkshop/courses/fundamentalslcc/index.html

MeSH Browser. Available at: http://www.nlm.nih.gov/*MeSH*/MBrowser.html

Using Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) in Cataloging. Available at:
http://www.nlm.nih.gov/tsd/cataloging/trainingcourses/mesh/

15.1 Thought process involved in subject analysis

While experienced catalogers use a number of successful approaches to determine which subject headings to assign to a title, this module attempts to provide new serials catalogers being trained with a method with which to start.

After completing the descriptive cataloging of the serial issue(s) in hand, and becoming somewhat familiar with the contents, try describing in plain English what the publication is about. Ideally this is done **before** consulting the subject heading vocabulary in that it prevents getting carried away with the possibilities found there. Are there special geographic, time period, population group, or format aspects that should be brought out in the headings and subdivisions? When finished, imagine at the reference desk being asked for material on one of the subject headings just assigned. Would the patron be satisfied if handed the serial? Did the subject headings succeed in functioning as a summary of the entire publication? Did they bring to the attention of the catalog user the most important topics discussed?

For CONSER participants and other institutions cooperating with the Library of Congress to further develop the *Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH)*, additional parts of the thought process include: When looking for the heading in *LCSH*, was there a suitable term or at least a reference to one? Finding a suitable term but not on the first try may indicate the need for a new reference. Having to settle for an overly-broad heading or to resort to a combination of headings that cover the subject matter in a roundabout way should trigger consideration of a new subject heading proposal.

15.2 Guidelines[1]

15.2.1 Matching headings with the serial as a whole

Generally, select headings that correspond with the subject matter of the serial as a whole, as opposed to the topics of certain sections of the serial, special theme issues of periodicals, etc. (SHM: H180 Assigning and Constructing Subject Headings)
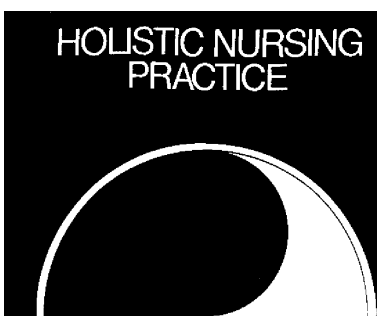
For example, in Fig. 15.1., the following heading has been assigned, based on the title and subject matter of the serial *Holistic nursing practice*:

```
650  #0   $a Holistic nursing $v Periodicals.
```

---

[1] These guidelines are based in part on instructions sheet H 180 of the *Subject Headings Manual*.

Because "spirituality and healing" is a distinctive title for this issue only, no heading is assigned to cover this topic.

Figure 15.1

15.2.2 General principle on assigning subject headings

When considering the topics covered by a serial, assign headings for topics that comprise a major part of the serial. If a specific portion is important, assign a heading to cover that portion provided that it constitutes at least 20% of the serial.

```
245  00   $a Library & information science abstracts.
650  #0   $a Library science $v Abstracts $v Periodicals.
650  #0   $a Information science $v Abstracts $v Periodicals.
```

15.2.3 How many headings to assign

While there are no specific guidelines that dictate how many or how few subject headings should be assigned to a given description, catalogers should keep in mind that topical access to a serial is not necessarily increased or improved through the assignment of many, specific subject headings. It can be just as much a service to the user to assign only one subject heading when it adequately reflects the subject content of the serial. Assignment of numerous, unnecessarily-detailed headings may clutter the results of a more specific search request. Instead, assign subject headings that match the level of topical specificity of the serial being described.

Typically, when a resource calls for more than three subject headings at the same level of specificity, catalogers should try to determine whether there is a broader topical term in the thesaurus, which would encompass all of the more specific terms. For example, a report on American apple, orange, and banana production might be assigned subject headings for those three crops:

```
650  #0   $a Apples $z United States $v Periodicals.
650  #0   $a Oranges $z United States $v Periodicals.
650  #0   $a Bananas $z United States $v Periodicals.
```

However, if the topical content of the resource also includes pears and grapes, a single, broader heading that more closely matches the scope of the resource as a whole should be applied:

```
650  #0   $a Fruit $z United States $v Periodicals.
```

Apply this principle to geographic headings, as well as topical, geographical, and chronological subdivisions. For example, an annual report on water conservation programs in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, and San Diego Counties would be assigned the subject heading: **Water conservation--Southern California--Periodicals**, rather than individual subject headings for each county (even though the Southern California region includes counties other than these four).

15.2.4 Level of specificity and overlapping headings

Assign headings only at one level of the same subject hierarchy, being as specific as possible (SHM: H 180, 4. Specificity). For example, the *Journal of Hospital Care* would receive the subject heading **Hospital care--Periodicals**, but not **Medical care--Periodicals**. While the latter heading includes hospital care, it also includes many other types of medical care that are not covered by the periodical.

Determine the appropriate level of specificity, as illustrated in the box below. Each item listed is a subset of the term(s) to its right.

```
                Narrowest term  <  Intermediate term(s)  <  Broadest term
```

```
< = less than
             squares < rectangles < parallelograms < quadrilaterals < polygons
             painting < art < arts {includes photography, music, dance, literature}
                   accounting < business <economics < social science
                   American poetry < American literature < literature
```
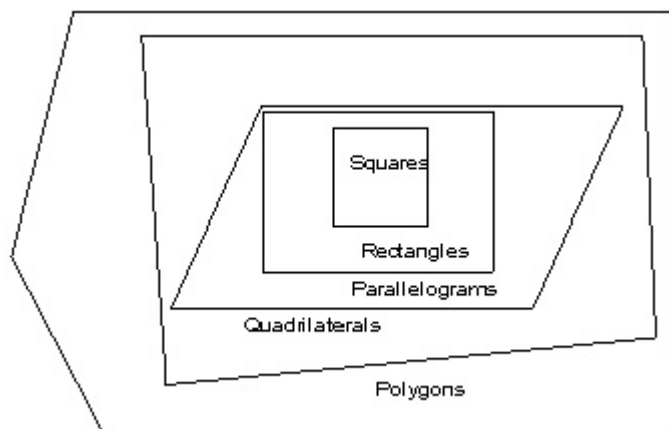

Figure 15.2
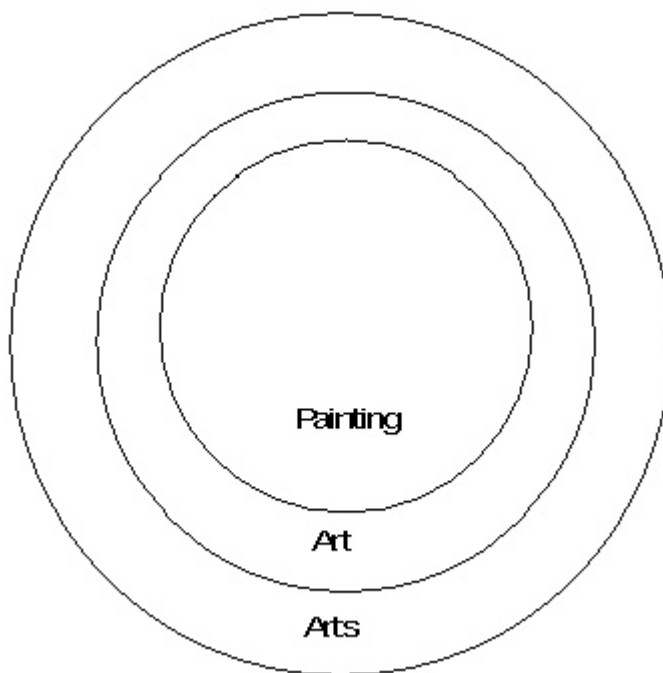
Figure 15.3

Figs. 15.2. and 15.3. present different graphic representations of the concept of overlapping headings.

Exceptionally, when a serial's title indicates coverage of subjects at different levels, assign overlapping headings. This may also be done to reflect the organization of a serial that is primarily general but has a significant section on a specific narrower topic.

```
    245  00  $a Journal of mathematics and sciences.
```

```
650  #0   $a Mathematics $v Periodicals.
650  #0   $a Science $v Periodicals.


245  #4   $a The stock and investment bulletin.
650  #0   $a Stocks $z United States $v Periodicals.
650  #0   $a Investments $z United States $v Periodicals.
```

Use a broader heading alone for titles that cover the entire topic without a special focus.

```
245  #4   $a The journal of transportation : $b travelling by land,
          sea, and air.
650  #0   $a Transportation $v Periodicals.
```

15.2.5 Assigning headings when a corporate body is the subject

Material about a corporate body often receives a heading for that corporate body alone.

```
110  2#   $a W.R. Grace & Co., $e author.
245  10   $a Annual report / $c W.R. Grace & Co.
610  20   $a W.R. Grace & Co. $v Periodicals.
```

Note, however, for annual reports of corporate bodies that are responsible for certain activities, it may be appropriate to assign headings for both the individual corporate body and the corresponding activity or field. For example, for the biennial report of the Minnesota State Board of Medical Examiners, the following headings could be assigned:

```
610  20   $a Minnesota State Board of Medical Examiners $v Periodicals.
650  #0   $a Medical personnel $x Licenses $z Minnesota $v Statistics
          $v Periodicals.
```

However, do not assign a general heading to reflect the type of corporate body when only one body is discussed. For example,

```
650  #0   $a Health occupations licensing boards $z Minnesota $v
          Periodicals.
```

is not an appropriate heading for the biennial report of the Minnesota Board.

For the annual report of a state board of health that reports on its activities, it may be appropriate to assign several types of subject headings.

```
110  1#   $a California. $b Department of Public Health, $e author.
245  10   $a Report of the Department of Public Health of California.
610  10   $a California. $b Department of Public Health $v Periodicals.
650  #0   $a Medical care $z California $v Periodicals.
651  #0   $a California $v Statistics, Vital $v Periodicals.
```

15.2.6 Place names in serial titles

For titles containing nouns or adjectival forms of countries, regions, ethnic groups, etc., ascertain whether those words denote the subject matter of the serial or the place of origin or both. Does *Brazilian Journal of Veterinary Research and Animal Science* focus primarily or completely on the situation in Brazil or is this just the main veterinarians' journal published in Brazil? This determination will affect the decision to include a geographic subdivision in the heading(s). A title like *Italian Geography* requires a choice among three different headings:

```
650  #0   $a Geography $v Periodicals.
          [a plain geography journal that just happens to be published in Rome]

651  #0   $a Italy $x Geography $v Periodicals.
          [the geographical study of that part of the world]

651  0#   $a Geography $z Italy $v Periodicals.
          [the discipline of geography as practiced there]
```

15.2.7 Audience/viewpoint versus content

Distinguish between the audience for whom the serial is intended and the actual subject matter contained in the serial. Subject headings are based on the content of the serial.

Consider, for example, *The Guide for Stock Investors* which might merit the single subject heading, **Corporations--United States--Finance--Periodicals**, because its contents are limited to the name and address of the chief executive officer and current profit and loss data. While this title might be of great interest to those contemplating stock investments, there are no actual investment advice or stock quotations to justify the heading, **Stocks--United States--Periodicals**.

Another example is the excerpt from the introduction to the serial *Reforming the Health Care System: State Profiles*. (Fig. 15.4.) The publication names the audience (health care system reformers) far better than it does the subject matter (statistical profiles of the health situation and health service availability in all 50 states).

> *Reforming the Health Care System: State Profiles* has been developed to provide information on each state's health care system to AARP volunteers, members and staff as well as policy makers, state officials and others active in state health care issues. In general, this publication focuses on describing the major health care characteristics of each state and selected measures of each state's efforts to begin solving problems within its system.

Figure 15.4

Similarly, do not express the viewpoint of the authors in the subject headings assigned. Librarians have traditionally avoided labeling materials, considering that to be the prerogative or responsibility of the reader.

```
245  04   $a The Cato journal.
650  #0   $a Policy sciences $v Periodicals.
710  2#   $a Cato Institute, $e issuing body.
```

[reader has to know or learn from using the serial that it is associated with a Libertarian viewpoint]

15.2.8 General interest publication

Serials that cover a wide range of subject areas usually receive no subject headings since they are about "everything." General interest serials include: *Newsweek*, *People Weekly*, *The Atlantic*, etc.

For similar publications issued in foreign countries, when they contain a significant amount of information about a particular place, it may be beneficial to provide a subject heading for the place for the benefit of North American readers. [2]

```
050  00   $a AP7 $b .Q8
245  00   $a Quadrant.
651  #0   $a Australia $v Periodicals.
```

15.2.9 Depth of indexing

When the various aspects of a serial's contents cannot comfortably be subsumed under a broad heading or two, consider assigning headings for each of the subjects covered. But do so only when the importance of the publication warrants such treatment to meet the needs of your users.

For example, the serial cited in Fig. 15.4. covers many different aspects of health care. Rather than just assigning one general heading, the cataloger may choose to assign a number of specific headings to cover those aspects.

```
650  #0   $a Medical care $z United States $x States $v Statistics $v
          Periodicals.
          [Health care is a reference to Medical care]
651  #0   $a United States $x Population $v Statistics $v Periodicals.
650  #0   $a Health status indicators $z United States $x States $v
          Periodicals.
651  #0   $a United States $v Statistics, Medical $v Periodicals.
650  #0   $a Insurance, Health $z United States $x States $v Statistics
          $v Periodicals.
650  #0   $a Medical policy $z United States $x States $v Periodicals.
650  #0   $a Medical care, Cost of $z United States $x States $v
          Statistics $v Periodicals.
```

15.2.10 Applying appropriate subdivisions

Consider the appropriateness of subdivisions before assigning them across-the-board to each subject heading in a record. For example, a directory of British astronomers studying extraterrestrial life could receive the headings:

```
650  #0   $a Astronomers $z Great Britain $v Directories.
```

---

[2] The Library of Congress does not normally assign a subject heading in this circumstance.

```
      650  #0  $a Life on other planets $v Periodicals.
```
not
```
      650  #0  $a Life on other planets $v Directories.
```

For another example, see the subject headings suggested for Fig. 15.4 above. The subdivision "Statistics" is not used after **Health status indicators**, as the topic is already inherently statistical in nature. Similarly, it does not make sense to break down **Medical policy** by "statistics" since one does not usually gather quantitative data on that topic.

The fact that the rules allow for the formation of a particular heading and subdivision combination does not mean that the combination is necessarily appropriate. First, consider whether the combination makes sense and, if possible, search to see if they have been used together in other records. For a list of subdivisions commonly used for serials (including specific instructions on application of the subdivision "Periodicals," see *CEG Appendix J*.

15.2.11 Free text headings

While assigning headings from a controlled list, such as *LCSH*, is preferable because doing so facilitates searching, assigning uncontrolled subject headings (field 653) may be used for serials which would otherwise go without subject index terms. In the case of foreign language serials, the substantive nouns and adjectives found in the title can be translated into English and used as uncontrolled headings. Field 653 may also be useful for current terminology that has not settled down sufficiently to permit establishing the concept in a subject authority record. For further information, see *CEG*, field 653.

15.3 Sources for subject information

Apart from the more obvious title proper and other title information on the publication, there often are additional useful places to consult. The Journal of Assisted Reproduction and Genetics is a publication which features nearly all of them, as illustrations below will show.

15.3.1 Masthead

The subject scope statement often found in the masthead can be concise and useful. Fig.15.5. is a good example in that it explains the scope (human as well as animal experience) and emphasis (*The utilization of genetic diagnosis ... is emphasized*).

Journal of Assisted Reproduction and Genetics publishes original peer-reviewed papers on assisted reproductive technologies and early genetics in all areas of the human as well as animal experience. The utilization of genetic diagnosis in conjunction with assisted reproductive technologies is emphasized. (A detailed description of the journal's scope is included in the Instructions to Authors.)

Journal of Assisted Reproduction and Genetics is published bimonthly by Plenum Publishing Corporation, 233 Spring Street, New York, N.Y. 10013.

Figure 15.5

15.3.2 Contents page

The titles listed in the contents page may indicate the subject matter.

Journal of Assisted Reproduction and Genetics

CONTENTS   Volume 9, Number 1 February 1992

1   Announcement

EDITORIAL

2   A New Name, an Expanded Journal
         Norbert Gleicher

REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH CARE POLICIES AROUND THE WORLD

3   Religious Views Regarding Treatment of Infertility by Assisted Reproductive
         Technologies
          Joseph G. Schenker

ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS

9   Relation Between Antisperm Antibodies and the Rate of Fertilization of Human
         Oocytes in Vitro
         Steven S. Witkin, Debra Viti, Sami S. David, John Stangel, and Zev Rosenwaks

14   Correlation of Cervicovaginal Fluid Volume with Serum Estradiol Levels and Total
         Follicular Volume During Human Gonadotropin Stimulation
         Donna E. Pratt, Eva Vignovic, John A. Holt, and Gebhard F. B. Schumacher

Figure 15.6

15.3.3 Announcements

Announcements may be found either in the publication or on the publisher's promotional material that led to the institution's decision to acquire the title. While the announcement in Fig. 15.7. is intended to alert subscribers to the expanded coverage and subsequent price increase, the information relating to the subject matter is quite helpful to the subject cataloger.

ANNOUNCEMENT

Effective with Volume 9 (1992), the *Journal of in Vitro Fertilization and Embryo Transfer* is **expanding its scope** significantly--to cover all assisted reproductive technologies and the genetics related to these. To reflect this greatly expanded scope, effective with Volume 9 (1992), the journal is being **retitled** *Journal of Assisted Reproduction and Genetics.*

We are pleased to announce that, due to the increased flow of excellent papers from all over the world, the *Journal of Assisted Reproduction and Genetics* will be **expanding** in 1992, with the number of published pages *increasing by 34%*. The subscription price for Volume 9, 1992 (6 issues) is therefore $265.00 (outside the U.S., $310.00). The price for individuals certifying that the journal is for their personal use is $65.00 (outside the U.S., $75.00). We appreciate the continuous support of our contributors and subscribers.

Figure 15.7

15.3.4 Editorial commentary

EDITORIAL

A NEW NAME, AN EXPANDED JOURNAL

To change a journal's name is never a decision made easily. The change in this journal's name was no exception. The editorial board grappled with this issue for almost four years. Already then it had become apparent that in vitro fertilization and embryo transfer represented only one among many evolving assisted reproductive technologies. To restrict the journal to a relatively small area at a time when assisted reproductive technologies proliferated and alternative procedures were widely reported did not make sense ...

Why the new name? The editorial board signaled with its decision that an expansion in the scope of the journal had to take place and had to be reflected in its title. We do not want the journal to compete with general infertility journals, but we want it to cover all assisted reproductive technologies. Moreover, the editorial board feels very strongly that assisted reproductive technologies, presently utilized primarily for the treatment of infertility, will in the future be applied increasingly to genetic problems ...

We are also pleased to announce a number of additional features for the journal. Our new affiliation with the *International Working Group on Preimplantation Genetics* will result in a journal section dedicated to preimplantation genetics. A new series, "Controversies in Assisted Reproduction," edited by Drs. Zion Ben-Rafael and Neri Laufer, will review complicated and complex issues and will provide an opportunity to face up to contradictory opinions of leading experts in a particular area ...

Figure 15.8

Often present in the first issue, commentaries such as the one in Fig. 15.8. can explain the rationale for the serial's existence, its place in the bibliographic universe, a recapitulation of the knowledge development that has preceded it, and the plans for its subject coverage.
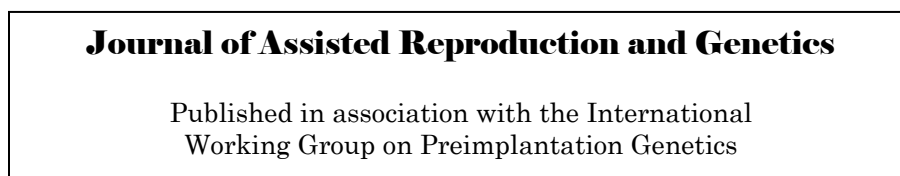
15.3.5 Instructions to authors

These policy statements, usually in one issue of each volume, can indicate a serial's subject scope. Even more than the previous example, this allows a cataloger to arrive deductively at a generalization of subject scope.
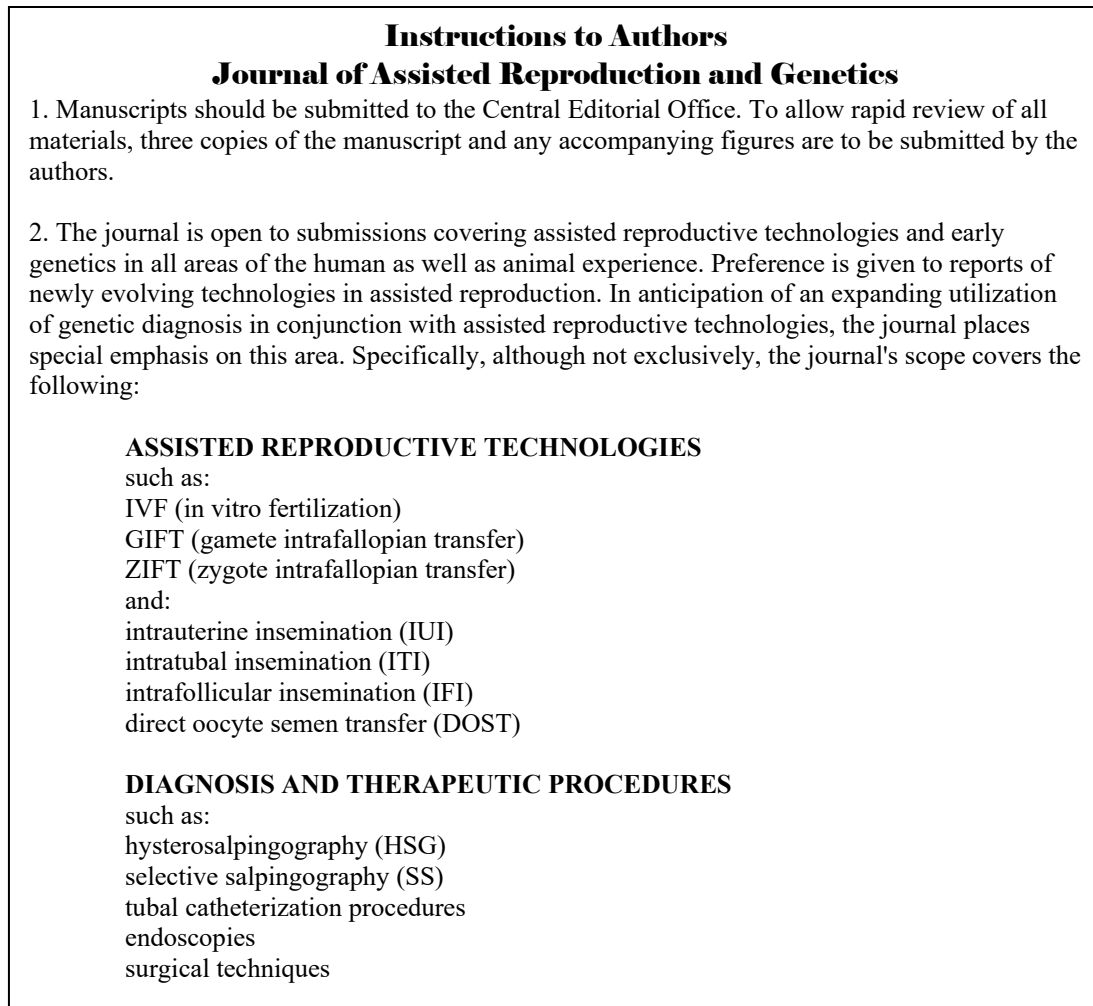
Figure 15.9

15.3.6 Issuing body statements

The name of the issuing body can often be enlightening. The body's name in Figure 15.10. was helpful in deciding how to work the "genetics" aspect of the title into the subject headings. Based on this information, the subject heading **Preimplantation genetic diagnosis--Periodicals** might be appropriate.

Journal of Assisted Reproduction and Genetics

Published in association with the International
Working Group on Preimplantation Genetics

Figure 15.10

In summary, use any of the areas given above when they are helpful. But verify headings derived from these areas or the title by examining the contents of the publication so as to be sure that the most appropriate subject headings have been assigned.

15.4 Strategies for streamlining subject analysis

One goal of learning to catalog is identifying ways to catalog faster without decreasing the quality of your records. When assigning subject headings, a cataloger should consider selecting from the shortcuts below. Then double-check that the results are suitable for the serial in hand through a quick examination of the areas cited in the previous section. Finally, be sure the subject headings are formulated with up-to-date vocabulary and according to the latest policies.

15.4.1 Applying the subject analysis from the preceding title

Quite often a change in title has no effect on the subject matter. Provided there have been no relevant changes in the subject vocabulary, the subject headings can simply be carried over to the new title.

For instance, the periodical *Soviet studies in philosophy* changed its name to *Russian studies in philosophy*. In the introduction to the renamed periodical, the editors assure readers that "*The title change reflects not a shift in content but simply the disappearance of the term "Soviet" from the world map. Even before the dissolution of the USSR, items selected for translation in this journal were drawn exclusively from Russian-language Soviet publications, though the authors were not always Russians ...*" Thus, the subject headings **Philosophy--Periodicals** and **Philosophy, Russian--Periodicals** have been carried from the old record to the new.

In a more complicated example, two serials merged into a new serial which later took on the title of one of the earlier serials: *Scale ship modeler* and *R/C race boats* merged to become *R/C model boats & racing*, which later changed its name (by popular demand!) to *Scale ship modeler*. The record for *Scale ship modeler* (before the merger) has the heading: **Ship models--Periodicals**. When the two serials merged, two headings were assigned to the new serial: **Boats and boating--Models--Radio control--Periodicals** and **Ship models--Radio control--Periodicals**. From the publisher's introduction (Fig. 15.11.), the cataloger determined that there was no change in content when the title reversed and thus, the same subject headings were carried over to the new record.

SCALE SHIP MODELER
FROM THE PUBLISHER

Scale Ship Modeler is back ... though it never went away!

When we announced that *Scale Ship Modeler* was being retitled to encompass model boat racing as *R/C Model Boats & Racing* we didn't anticipate the reaction of our dedicated, ultra-loyal readers. They perceived the new title as a total refutation of our long established format rather than a move that sought to include ALL ASPECTS of model boating ...

But perceptions and realities often clash and scores of disappointed readers felt they had been abandoned; that the new title simply was NOT the magazine they had supported for more than 15 years ...

The truth is the issue that again appeared as *Scale Ship Modeler* contained EXACTLY THE SAME FEATURES that were scheduled for the next issue of the new title. It was all a matter of perception.

Figure 15.11

This is not always the case. Some title changes are motivated by a change in content or at least represent an opportunity for such. Going back to the *Journal of Assisted Reproduction and Genetics* and its earlier title, compare the statement of function in Fig. 15.12 to that given for the later title in Figs. 15.7-15.9 above.

> The *Journal of in Vitro Fertilization and Embryo Transfer* reviews and updates human as well as animal data relevant to the process of in vitro fertilization and embryo replacement. The journal publishes original contributions as well as review articles covering any aspect of this field.

Figure 15.12

Because the scope of the earlier title was much narrower than the later title, the cataloger decided that new, broader headings were needed. Following are the headings assigned to the two titles:

Journal of in vitro fertilization and embryo transfer:
```
650  #0  $a Fertilization in vitro, Human $v Periodicals.
650  #0  $a Human embryo $x Transplantation $v Periodicals.
```

Journal of Assisted Reproduction and Genetics:
```
650  #0  $a Human reproductive technology $v Periodicals.
650  #0  $a Reproductive technology $v Periodicals.
650  #0  $a Human chromosome abnormalities $x Diagnosis $v
             Periodicals.
```

15.4.2 Extracting subject headings from monographic records recataloged as serials.

When an annual or less frequently published serial has been cataloged as a monograph and is to be recataloged as a serial, the monograph record may contain subject headings that are valid for the serial record. Some minor adjustments may be necessary, such as adding the form subdivision "Periodicals." Be careful, however, not to use headings that are too specific because they suit only a single issue of the serial.

15.4.3. Consulting the subject analysis on analogous records

Check the serial publication in hand for the mention of a comparable title, serial or nonserial, and consult an appropriate cataloging database for helpful suggestions contained in the subject headings for **those** works. Publications that are similar in content may be cited as such in the new serial's editorial commentary. Such publications may appear in the form of publishers' advertisements in the issues at hand. Monographs on the same subject as the serial, judging from the similarity of primary words in the titles, might be found in the book review section. Such monographs or serials may be cited in the references or bibliographies of articles.

This technique is based on the assumption that publications truly similar in subject matter ought to be consistently receiving the same or similar subject headings.

15.4.4. Searching for other publications of the issuing body

It may be useful to apply the same strategy to other titles issued by the same corporate body provided that the other titles are actually on the same topic. For example, the issuing body of a newsletter being cataloged may have also published a more substantive title--serial or monograph--on the same subject which has already received full cataloging.

15.4.5 Using other subject analysis systems as a starting point

Record(s) being consulted or adapted for cataloging may contain subject analysis on which to build. Sometimes, however, the subject headings or classification numbers found on these records have been assigned from a different vocabulary or scheme. For example, the U.S. ISSN Center assigns a broad Dewey number (field 082) on records that may not otherwise contain indications of subject content. The subject of the serial can be derived by consulting the Dewey classification schedule. When subject headings from other vocabularies are available (e.g., *MeSH*) the heading could be searched against a bibliographic database, when possible, and the retrieved records examined for appropriate equivalent headings from the vocabulary that is used.

15.5 Differences between LCSH and MeSH

Two of the vocabularies most commonly used by CONSER Participants are *Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH)* and *Medical Subject Headings (MeSH)*.[3] The second indicator in the 65X field signifies the vocabulary a heading comes from: 0 for *LCSH* and 2 for *MeSH*. A second indicator of 2 in a 600-630 means the heading has been taken from the NLM's controlled vocabulary thesaurus. Some corporate names may be found in *MeSH*, but they are annotated with a note: "CATALOG: Use NAF entry", reminding catalogers that they must check the name authority files for these headings and use the form found there, which may differ from the form in *MeSH*.

In *MeSH*:
    Prospective Payment Assessment Commission (with note CATALOG: Use NAF entry)
Name Authority file:
    United States. $b Prospective Payment Assessment Commission

Catalogers should use the name authority form as a 610.

15.5.1 Context

LCSH is used for works covering all human knowledge, whereas *MeSH* was developed by the National Library of Medicine both for cataloging books and serials and indexing journal articles

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[3] The Library and Archives Canada also assigns headings from Canadian Subject Headings, the LAC authority file English headings, and the Répertoire des Vedettes-Matière, 8e ed. For more information, see CEG, Subject Headings--General Information.

in medicine and related fields. The difference in the two vocabularies often results in the use of different headings for what are essentially the same concepts, as shown in these examples:

```
650  #0   $a Medicine $x Research.
650  12   $a Research.

650  #0   $a Medical writing.
650  12   $a Writing.

650  #0   $a Affect (Psychology).
650  12   $a Affect.

650  #0   $a Altitude, Influence of.
650  12   $a Altitude.
```

15.5.2 Terminology

The two vocabularies do not always use the same terminology. LC bases its headings on common American usage, while NLM prefers to base *MeSH* headings on scientific terminology in most instances.

```
650  #0   $a Ringworm.
650  12   $a Tinea.
650  #0   $a Chest.
650  12   $a Thorax.

650  #0   $a AIDS (Disease).
650  12   $a Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome.
```

Because *LCSH* and *MeSH* are two independent vocabularies, users must always check for the appropriate terminology in *MeSH*, since there are likely to be variations from *LCSH* in the terms available, the specificity available, direct vs. indirect order of headings, and the use of phrase headings vs. subdivisions.

15.5.3 Order of headings

In assigning *LCSH* and *MeSH*, the most important subject heading, the one normally correlating with the classification, commonly appears first in the subject heading list. In the mid-1990's, NLM began use of the first indicator value of "1" in the 650 field to indicate the primary subject heading(s) which correspond to the classification number selected. A 650 first indicator of "2" is used on all other subjects. Records created prior to that time are coded "blank" in the first indicator of the 650 field. In NLM's MARC 21 distribution to the CONSER database, while those subjects coded with a first indicator of 1 appear first, all subjects with a first indicator of 2 are arranged in alphabetical order.

In CONSER:
```
650  12   $a Pulmonary Disease, Chronic Obstructive $x drug therapy.
650  22   $a Bronchodilator Agents $x therapeutic use.
650  22   $a Steroids $x therapeutic use.
```

15.5.4 Capitalization

LCSH capitalizes, in addition to proper nouns and adjectives, the first word of each subfield, the first word of an inverted part of a heading, and the first word in a qualifier. Examples of all these cases may be seen in *CCM* 15.5.1 and *CCM* 15.5.2.

MeSH capitalizes all the words in the 65X subfield $a except articles, prepositions, and conjunctions (with the exception of Genus species terms, where the species is always lower case), and it systematically lowercases all words in topical subdivisions (with the exception of age groups). Form subdivisions are uppercased in the CONSER database and are recorded in separate 655 subfields under current NLM practices (see *CCM* 15.5.6 below).

```
650  12   $a Vision Disorders +x therapy.
650  22   $a Optometry.
650  22   $a Child.
650  22   $a Infant.
655  #2   $a Periodicals.
```

15.5.5 Subdivision practice

LC allows the use of appropriate subdivisions with any 6XX field. In assigning topical headings to a 650 subject term, NLM uses only those subdivisions that are appropriate to the assigned *MeSH* tree category for that term. Subdivisions are not used with 600, 610, 611, or 630 fields.

15.5.6 Changes in MeSH practice

In late 1998, NLM made significant changes to its subject heading content and structure to harmonize cataloging and indexing practices. As a result, NLM structures its subject headings in separate subject fields in the cataloging records resident in its integrated library system and *MeSH* subjects appear in this internal format in the MARC VIEW of its online public access catalog, LocatorPlus.
In 2015, NLM announced (https://www.nlm.nih.gov/pubs/techbull/so15/so15_cataloging_unstringing_subject_heading.html) that as of December 2015, they were changing the way they distribute MeSH in all of their bibliographic records. In February 2016, OCLC completed re-loading all re-issued NLM bibliographic records in WorldCat, including CONSER records. Since that date, OCLC WorldCat Quality staff have worked to also revise MeSH headings in non-NLM member-input WorldCat bibliographic records to confirm to current MeSH practice. This was done in accordance with the instructions issued by NLM (https://www.nlm.nih.gov/tsd/cataloging/unstringmesh.html).

For complete information regarding the structure of subject headings in NLM's online public access catalog, see the most recent documentation on subject analysis in cataloging on the NLM Cataloging Section home page at http://www.nlm.nih.gov/tsd/cataloging/subjanalcat.html .

15.6 Modifying Subject Headings

In addition to routine maintenance of headings to reflect vocabulary changes, changes of policies governing the formulation of headings, and changes in the MARC tagging practices, there are two other situations where headings are modified.

One is an obvious change in the scope of a serial's coverage that is not at the same time signaled by a change in title. A title that expands its coverage beyond the United States to include Canada would require additional, parallel subject headings for Canada. A title that broadens from national to international scope should have the geographic subdivisions deleted from the subject headings.

Another instance is the establishment of a new vocabulary term offering a degree of specificity not previously available, which more closely matches the subject matter of a serial title than does the existing heading(s). For some vocabulary systems, newly-established terms are not merely applied prospectively; for example, new *LCSH* terms are assigned to previously-cataloged records whenever it is determined that they are needed to replace existing headings that are overly broad.

For example, when the *LCSH* heading **Multiple criteria decision making** was established, serials such as

> *MCDM worldScan : $b the thrice yearly newsletter of the International Special Interest Group on Multiple Criteria Decision Making*

> `650  #0  $a Decision making $v Periodicals.`

Changed to:

> `650  #0  $a Multiple criteria decision making $v Periodicals.`

Changes to other subject-related elements, such as fields 043 and 008/24-27, are made at the same time.

SUMMARY

- Consider the entire serial when assigning subject headings, not just one issue or a portion of the serial.

- Because serial subject headings cover the entire serial, they are often more general than those assigned to monographs.

- In most cases, one to three subject headings are sufficient to characterize a serial.

- Consider assigning more headings when many different topics are covered--and the serial warrants the additional coverage.

- Consider a subdivision's appropriateness before adding it to a subject heading.

- Do not supply a topical subject heading for a serial about a corporate body, such as an annual report, unless the heading is for the activity or field reported on.

- To save time in determining the subject, look for clues in the preface, table of contents, masthead, or editorial pages.

- Consider also whether headings already assigned for the earlier title in the case of a title change, or to a monograph record for the same title, or other related works might be appropriate for the serial record.

- *LCSH* and *MeSH* headings differ because the first covers all human knowledge, while the second covers only medical topics. They also differ in punctuation, capitalization, and the number of headings needed.