

# Disposition of *LCSH* Video Recording Headings in the New Genre/Form Environment

Discussion Paper  
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## Introduction

In the spring of 2007 the Library of Congress embarked upon a project to create genre/form headings in the area of moving images (films, television programs, and video recordings), along with policies for assigning them. Soon thereafter, a similar project to create genre/form headings for radio programs got underway. Now, two years later, the Policy and Standards Division (PSD) has approved over five hundred genre/form headings for use, and LC and several other libraries around the country have begun to apply them.

In the respect that most moving image and radio program genres and forms are now represented by authorized headings, those two projects are essentially complete. However, there is one major heading issue yet to be resolved from the moving image project: the disposition existing topical headings (MARC 21 tag 150) that are specific to video recordings and that often have film equivalents. This paper will explain the issue and provide background on it, suggest a disposition for each video recording heading, and provide a rationale for the decision. The Policy and Standards Division requests input from interested parties before making a final decision. Comments will be accepted through June 15, 2009.

## The Issue and Background

The principle of literary warrant drives the development of *Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH)*. Literary warrant allows catalogers to propose new headings and revisions to existing headings as vocabulary changes and develops. By following this principle, *LCSH* terminology remains relatively current. However, since authors are not always consistent in the terms they use, literary warrant can occasionally lead to inconsistencies within *LCSH*.

One of the apparent inconsistencies dwells in the area of moving images. There are separate headings for genres of video recordings and genres of films, and they often overlap to some extent (e.g. **Documentary videos** and **Documentary films**). If an author used the term “videos,” a heading using that word was used, or proposed if necessary. If on the other hand an author discussed “films,” a film heading was used or proposed. However, the use of the terms videos and films is very fluid in American usage. Every use of the word “videos” does not refer to works originally recorded on videotape, and every use of the word “films” does not refer to works originally recorded on motion picture film.

In an attempt to be more rigorous in the terminology used in the genre/form thesaurus, in 2007 the Cataloging Policy and Standards Office (CPSO, now PSD) expanded the definition of the word “film” as it is to be understood in the context of the genre/form list.

According to the *Subject Headings Manual* instruction sheet H 1913, “the term films refers to works that are originally recorded and released on motion picture film, on video, or digitally.”

This new definition allowed PSD to accomplish two goals:

1. To develop a genre/form list that is used to describe the expression, not the manifestation, of a work. In other words, the headings refer to the intellectual or artistic expression of a work, and are not dependent on the physical carrier of that work.
2. To create uniformity in catalogs, whereby the same heading(s) will be applied to a work (e.g., *Spaceballs*) whether a library has it on DVD, VHS, or podcast, or all three.

There are currently two exceptions to the general rule. The headings **Video recordings for the hearing impaired** and **Video recordings for people with visual disabilities** were added to the genre/form list because the library community asked that they be included, as a service to users. Captioning, signing, and audio description are usually aftermarket enhancements and thus are specific to a particular manifestation of a work, but it is useful to collocate such works.

The genre/form headings **Rock videos** and **Music videos** were also approved, because they are based on American English usage.

Throughout the moving image genre/form project there was a concerted effort made to keep headings consistent between *LCSH* and the genre/form thesaurus. This removes barriers to users, who now have to know only one term to find examples of a genre or form, or works about it. The preferred term within the genre/form thesaurus is “films,” so the question of what to do with the two dozen existing topical video headings (MARC 21 tag 150) is an important one. All of the topical video headings are valid in that they have literary warrant, but do they serve the user? Should they be cancelled and turned into *used for* (UF) references to the corresponding film heading, for the sake of collocation and consistency? Or are there sound reasons for retaining them despite the newly-broadened definition of the term films, which in effect invalidates them?

### **Disposition of the headings**

The headings in the attached chart comprise the subject headings in the hierarchy of the topical heading **Video recordings**, as well as subject headings that begin with the phrase “video recordings.” The chart outlines the actions that PSD proposes with respect to each of the remaining headings. The chart provides:

- the subject heading and its LCCN
- the number of times each heading was used in LC’s catalog as of March 30, 2009, broken down into three categories: the number of times the heading was used without the correlated film heading (e.g. **Animated videos** was used without using **Animated films** in the same bibliographic record a total of five times); the number of times it was used in conjunction with the correlated film heading; and

the number of times it was used in a moving image record as a form heading (albeit in MARC field 650)

- whether there is a scope note in the authority record, and if so, what restrictions are placed on the use of the heading
- PSD's proposed disposition for each subject heading
- whether PSD proposes to create a genre/form heading for the concept.

Most of the existing headings fall into one of three distinct groups:

1. Headings that denote a genre or form of video recording
2. Headings that denote a method of distribution of videos
3. Headings that will be retained because there is already an equivalent genre/form heading

The Policy and Standards Division suggests that all of the headings in the first group, those that denote a genre or form of video recording, be cancelled in favor of the correlated film heading; a genre/form heading would not be created. These headings, along with their correlated film headings are:

*Video heading*

**Animated videos**  
**Biographical videos**  
**Comedy videos**  
**Documentary videos**  
**Educational videos**  
**Ethnographic videos**  
**Erotic videos**  
**Experimental videos**  
**Gay erotic videos**  
**Instructional videos**  
**Nature videos**  
**Promotional videos**  
**Sponsored videos**  
**Sports videos**  
**Video recordings for children**  
**Wildlife videos**

*Correlated film heading*

**Animated films**  
**Biographical films**  
**Comedy films**  
**Documentary films**  
**Educational films**  
**Ethnographic films**  
**Erotic films**  
**Experimental films**  
**Gay erotic films**  
**Instructional films**  
**Nature films**  
**Promotional films**  
**Promotional films**  
**Sports films**  
**Children's films**  
**Wildlife films**

With the exception of **Video recordings for children**, none of the above video headings were used more than ten times in LC's catalog; most were used five or fewer times.

**Video recordings for children** was used 31 times, but in eleven of those records it was postcoordinated with **Children's films**. Therefore, there does not appear to be a well-established pattern of use of this group of headings, and removing them should not unnecessarily inconvenience librarians or users.

The second group is composed of the headings **Internet videos** and **Podcasts**, both of which denote methods of distribution and are therefore more problematic. As envisioned by PSD, the genre/form thesaurus will be composed of headings that describe the

expressions of works, not the manifestations or methods of distribution of those expressions.

However, an important consideration is that these headings refer to “new” forms of media, which may not fit neatly into the established film/television construct. The works may follow their own stylistic conventions; the existence of such conventions is one of the characteristics of genre. The works may also follow standard release and exhibition parameters, which helps denote a form, according to the *Moving Image Genre-Form Guide (MIGFG)*.<sup>1</sup>

With those thoughts in mind, PSD suggests that the topical headings **Internet videos** and **Podcasts** should be retained and that identical genre/form headings should be created and approved. These headings would be considered exceptions, and should not be construed as a desire to create subgenres of podcasts and internet videos (e.g. Comedy podcasts, Animated internet videos).

The third category, those headings that already have genre/form headings and will be retained as topical headings, consists of six headings: **Music videos**, **Rock videos**, **Video recordings for people with visual disabilities** and **Video recordings for the hearing impaired** were discussed above; **Stock footage** and **Travelogues (Motion pictures)** are the other narrower terms of **Video recordings** that have been retained.

There are two existing headings that are not covered by the foregoing discussion: **Video mini-series** and **Interactive video**. **Video mini-series** was approved in 2007, but appears to be of limited utility. The Policy and Standards Division suggests that it should be cancelled, as should the heading **Television mini-series**. New topical and genre/form headings in the form **Mini-series** would then be created, and would be applied to both video and television mini-series. A similar approach was used for the heading **Oral histories**, which is applied to filmed, video-recorded, and audio-recorded oral histories.

The heading **Interactive video** has been applied to works published as early as 1981. The heading is well-established with very clear and consistent warrant; LC’s catalog does not include any works with titles employing the phrase “interactive films.” The Policy and Standards Division recommends retaining the topical heading but making it plural, and proposing a new genre/form heading in the form **Interactive videos**.

### **Comments**

Interested parties are invited to submit comments on this plan to PSD through June 15, 2009. Comments may be sent to Janis Young, genre/form coordinator, at [jayo@loc.gov](mailto:jayo@loc.gov).

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<sup>1</sup> Introduction on to the Moving Image Genre/Form Guide via Library of Congress WWW page, viewed April 26, 2009. <http://www.loc.gov/rr/mopic/migintro.html>

### Appendix: Disposition of LCSH Video Recording Headings

<i>Current heading and LCCN</i>	<i>Times heading used in LC's catalog, March 30, 2009</i>				<i>Scope note in topical heading?</i>	<i>Proposed disposition of topical heading</i>	<i>Propose genre/form heading?</i>
	<i>As topic without correlated film heading</i>	<i>As topic with correlated film heading</i>	<i>As genre/ form heading (but in 650 tag)</i>	<i>Total</i>			
<b>Animated videos</b> sh2003004835	5	0	0	5	Yes: Use as topical heading	Cancel; make reference to <b>Animated films</b>	No
<b>Biographical videos</b> sh2001012328	1	0	0	1	None	Cancel; make reference to <b>Biographical films</b>	No
<b>Comedy videos</b> sh2006020173	0	0	0	0	None	Cancel; make reference to <b>Comedy films</b>	No
<b>Documentary videos</b> sh2001000814	4	2	4	10	None	Cancel; make reference to <b>Documentary films</b>	No
<b>Educational videos</b> sh2001000482	7	0	0	7	Yes: Use as form heading	Cancel; make reference to <b>Educational films</b>	No
<b>Ethnographic videos</b> sh2002000133	0	0	0	0	None	Cancel; make reference to <b>Ethnographic films</b>	No

<b>Erotic videos</b> sh 92004731	4	0	0	4	None	Cancel; make reference to <b>Erotic films</b>	No
<b>Experimental videos</b> sh2002000079	4	5	1	10	None	Cancel; make reference to <b>Experimental films</b>	No
<b>Gay erotic videos</b> sh 99014453	3	0	0	3	None	Cancel; make reference to <b>Gay erotic films</b>	No
<b>Instructional videos</b> sh2001000483	3	0	2	5	Yes: use as form heading	Cancel; make reference to <b>Instructional films</b>	No
<b>Interactive video</b> sh2001000483	62	n/a	64	126	None	Retain as topical heading; make plural	Yes, in plural form: Interactive videos
<b>Internet videos</b> sh2007001612	5	n/a	0	5	None	Retain	Yes
<b>Music videos</b> sh 85088946	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	<i>Topical heading retained; genre/form heading already exists</i>		
<b>Nature videos</b> sh2003003052	0	0	0	0	None	Cancel; make reference to <b>Nature films</b>	No
<b>Podcasts</b> sh2007001518	1	n/a	1	2	None	Retain	Yes
<b>Promotional videos</b> sh2002000129	0	0	0	0	Yes: Use as form heading	Cancel; make reference to <b>Promotional films</b>	No

<b>Rock videos</b> sh 85114698	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	<i>Topical heading retained; genre/form heading already exists</i>		
<b>Sponsored videos</b> sh2002000130	0	n/a	0	0	Yes: Use as form heading	Cancel; make reference to <b>Promotional films</b>	No
<b>Sports videos</b> sh 92004885	1	0	0	1	None	Cancel; make reference to <b>Sports films</b>	No
<b>Stock footage</b> sh2001004107	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	<i>Topical heading retained; genre/form heading already exists</i>		
<b>Travelogues (Motion pictures)</b> sh2008005545	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	<i>Topical heading retained; genre/form heading already exists</i>		
<b>Video mini-series</b> sh2007004091	0	n/a	0	0	None	Cancel; also cancel topical heading <b>Television mini-series</b> ; make new heading: <b>Mini-series</b>	No; cancel genre/form heading <b>Television mini-series</b> ; make new heading: <b>Mini-series</b>
<b>Video recordings for children</b> sh 87003917	20	11	0	31	None	Cancel; make reference to <b>Children's films</b>	No
<b>Video recordings for people with visual disabilities</b> sh2007010419	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	<i>Topical heading retained; genre/form heading already exists</i>		
<b>Video recordings</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	<i>Topical heading retained; genre/form heading</i>		

<b>for the hearing impaired</b> sh2007010420					<i>already exists</i>		
<b>Wildlife videos</b> sh2003004595	2	0	0	2	None	Cancel; make reference to <b>Wildlife films</b>	No