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# Achieving the functions of a Uniform title, without a Uniform title?

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# My perspective

- Familiar with American cataloging practice
  - Work heavily outside of MARC
  - Focus on metadata interoperability
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# Current environment

- Increasingly advanced retrieval systems
- Increase in metadata *not* in MARC/AACR
- Development of RDA

*Now is the time to step back and think about Uniform titles. What are their functions, and are current practices the best way to achieve those functions?*

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# Functions of a Uniform title

- Collocation
  - Disambiguation
  
  - Often *poses* as a work identifier
  - Convenient label
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# Factors affecting the syntax of a Uniform title

- Structure
- Policy

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# Collocation and disambiguation

- Still essential functions of a catalog(ue)
  - Uniform titles originally achieved these goals by generating a (pseudo) unique name-title combination, and using that string for (most) every occurrence of that work
  - Relational databases and related technologies can achieve these goals with back end structure, regardless of the form of the name-title string
  - Many ILS have made the switch, transparently to catalogers
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# Matching a query to a work

- No longer acceptable to expect a user to type in the exactly correct string in order to get the right results
  - Many strategies must work together to match queries to the correct work:
    - Authority files
    - Matching algorithms from the IR community
    - Disambiguation steps
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# Work identifiers

- Uniform titles are *not* consistently work identifiers
    - Selections
    - arr.
    - Etc...
  - Need to move towards:
    - System for true work identifiers (a [uniform] title could be simply a label)
    - Encoding relationships between works
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# Display issues

- Need a compact label to display to users to help them identify the correct work
  - This label doesn't necessarily have to be stored; could be generated when the page is rendered
  - Elements users need to see may depend on:
    - Search conducted
    - Type of work
    - Types of resources matched
    - Scope of catalog
  - Will require structural changes to catalog beyond just Uniform titles
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# Some (incomplete) display possibilities

- Parts and arrangements, current
  - Parts and arrangements, possible
  - Further choices after selecting a work
    - Instrumentation and format
    - Add choice of language
  
  - Catalog displays *must* be flexible!
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# Functions of a Uniform title, revisited

~~■ Collocation~~

~~■ Disambiguation~~

~~■ Often poses as a work identifier~~

■ Convenient label

This label can be anything we want; use as much or as little from current Uniform title practice as we like

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# Thank you!

- `jenlrile@indiana.edu`
- These presentation slides:  
<<http://www.dlib.indiana.edu/~jenlrile/presentations/iaml2006/uniformTitles.ppt>>