

When to Establish a New Genre/Form Term J 120

BACKGROUND: *The genre/form terms that are already established are sufficient to catalog most resources acquired by libraries with general collections. This instruction sheet provides guidelines on when a new term should be established, for cases in which the existing terms are not sufficient.*

DEFINITION OF GENRE/FORM: *Genres and forms may be broadly defined as categories of resources that share known conventions. More specifically, genre/form terms may describe the purpose, structure, content, and/or themes of resources. Genre/form terms describing content and themes most frequently refer to creative works and denote common rhetorical devices that usually combine elements such as plot, settings, character types, etc. Such terms may be closely related to the subjects of the creative works, but are distinct from them.*

1. General rule. Establish a new term for definable and identifiable genres and forms for resources being cataloged, even if the library has only a single instance of the genre or form. All new terms must be supported by research in addition to the resource being cataloged. See J 160 for guidelines on the requirements.

Do not generally establish genre/form terms that combine two or more already-established terms. Instead, assign the already-established terms (e.g., assign **Romance fiction** and **Novels** instead of establishing “Romance novels”).

2. New genres and forms that are not yet identifiable. When a resource being cataloged is of a genre or form that appears to be new but it is judged to be not yet definable and identifiable, assign available terms that most accurately describe the genre/form of the resource.

3. Newly emerging genres and forms. Genre/form terms are usually established to reflect current American usage, but sometimes no consensus as yet developed as to the accepted terminology. When that happens, prefer to assign available terms that most accurately describe the genre/form of the resource.

If the genre or form is judged to be of such high significance that a term should be established despite the lack of consensus on terminology, conduct authority research according to the principles given in J 160 and then make an intuitive judgment based on available evidence by selecting elements that allow the term to express what is intended and at the same time serve as a retrieval term. Provide UF references from any significantly different terms that were found to be used for the same genre or form. If terminology other than that used in the authorized term becomes well established, it may be necessary to change the term.