Library of Congress Subject Headings: Module 8.5

Library of Congress Subject Headings
Module 8.5
LCSH-Related Codes in the Fixed Field:
Continuing Resources Format

Policy, Training, and Cooperative Programs Division
Library of Congress
August 2019
Although we have been referring to the MARC bibliographic format as a single entity in this unit, it actually consists of seven different formats that are specific to the type of the resource being cataloged.

For example, there is a continuing resources format for cataloging periodicals and serials, a music format for cataloging scores, and a visual materials format for cataloging films, television programs, and similar resources.

There is a high level of similarity across the formats for different types of resources, and the subject access fields are consistent. Each format, however, does include fields that are unique to the format. For example, the visual materials format includes a field for the running time of a film, and there is no need for such a field in the books format.
The fixed field and its coding varies from format to format, although there are some similarities. Several bytes of the fixed field relate directly to subject analysis, and those are the topic of this module and the previous one.

In this module, we will focus on the LCSH-related fixed field bytes in the continuing resources format. For a full description of the LC policies see SHM Appendix G.

Our discussion will be limited to LC policy on coding the bytes.
In the continuing resources format, the fixed-field bytes related to LCSH are:

- 008/24, the nature of the entire work,
- 008/25-27 The nature of the contents, and
- 008/29 Conference publication,

Let’s start with the nature of the entire work.
There is one byte available for indicating the nature of the entire work – that is, the form of the *whole* resource.

There are 28 one-character codes defined in the format, and all of them can be used by LC catalogers.

Some examples are “b” for bibliographies and “h” for biography.
Many of the most popular codes have a corresponding LCSH form subdivision.

For example, code “b” for bibliographies has the corresponding subdivision –Bibliography and the code “s” for statistics corresponds to the subdivision –Statistics.
While byte 44, Nature of Entire Work, is used when the entire resource is of a particular form, the three Nature of Contents bytes are used when there is a significant amount of that type of content in the resource, but it is not the whole resource.

The values for the three bytes are identical to the values used for Nature of Entire Work. You should use as few or as many of the bytes as necessary. Some bibliographic records do not have any values, for others you may code one or two, but rarely will you need all three bytes.
If you are cataloging a resource that consists entirely of filmographies, you would assign “q” in byte 24, Nature of Entire Work.

If you are cataloging a resource that is about the film industry and also includes some filmographies and biographies of producers, directors, actors, and others in the film industry, you would code “h” and “q” in Nature of Contents.
There is one byte provided for conference publication, and there are three possible values.

- A 0 (zero) means that the resource is not a conference publication;
- a 1 (one) means that it is a conference publication;
- and there is a blank value, which is used when there is no attempt to code the byte.
LC policy is to assign a 1, the resource is a conference publication, if the LCSH form subdivision –Congresses is used.

If the subdivision –Congresses is not used, then the value is 0.

LC does not use the blank value, so for LC, the choice is binary: it is or it is not a conference publication.