Beyond flat, black, and circular: Dimensions of complexity in historic sound recordings
Diane & Arthur B. Belfer Audio Laboratory and Archive
Arrival of the (current) catalogers
THE GREAT BACKLOG
Additional competencies

Scope

http://library.syr.edu/digital/guides/b/belfer_lps_labels.pdf
78 RPM recordings

Invented circa 1880s
1910-1959 DOMINANCE
78 RPM speed...?
Shellac...?
10” & 12”... but also 7”
Time limitations (3:00/4-5:00)
Preferred source of information

RDA 2.2.2.3.1 ... a label that is permanently printed on or affixed to the resource...
Clues on the label...
Other sources of information

- Embossed shellac
- Container
- Program notes
- Discographies
- Labelographies
- The audio on the disc
- Catalogs
- Videos and recordings
- Just about anything that can help in description!
Examples of sources consulted

Discographies

Labelographies

Record label photo retrieved from http://majesticrecord.com/labels-columbia.htm
Another source frequently consulted

The audio played through our ATC All Transistor 300 VT Tutorette Record Player
Why listening is sometimes required
Challenges of bibliographic description

• Inaccuracies

• Name abbreviations

• Limited information on label

• Ambiguous information on the label

Example of ambiguous information

Minuet in C major with variations / Haydn.
Condition Terminology

• Describes condition of the disc when there is a particular problem.

• In-house created controlled vocabulary.
• Local note created in Voyager.

• Examples: worn, scratched, worn center hole, rim chip, etceteras.
Rim Chip
Rim Bite close-up
Bleeding Chunks

BLEEDING CHUNKS OF WAGNER

Mein Kind = My child
Another bleeding chunk
Processional of the Knights of the Holy Grail

What became of the Processional...

Autographs

[Image of a signed Columbia record]

Pablo Casals
Label information

264 _1 $a [New York] : $b Columbia, $c [1920]
Information embossed on shellac
Manufacturing process

http://www.normanfield.com/78manufacture.htm
Information embossed on shellac

028 10 $a 59818-1 $b Columbia

028 10 $a 59818 $b Columbia

500 Columbia: E-5283: (59818 matrix—59819 matrix).

500 Alternate matrix numbers on shellac: 59818-1, 59819-1.
Electrical or acoustic
Sets
Set sequences

Record Changers

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http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Record_changer_dscn1667a.jpg#filelinks
Disc 1, side A

Set M (manual)

Set MM (drop-automatic)
Disc 1, side B

Set M (manual)

Set MM (drop-automatic)
Set sequences

**MANUAL**
- Disc 1: sides 1 & 2
- Disc 2: sides 3 & 4
- Disc 3: sides 5 & 6
- Disc 4: sides 7 & 8

**DROP-AUTOMATIC**
- Disc 1: sides 1 & 8
- Disc 2: sides 2 & 7
- Disc 3: sides 3 & 6
- Disc 4: sides 4 & 5

**SLIDE-AUTOMATIC**
- Disc 1: sides 1 & 5
- Disc 2: sides 2 & 6
- Disc 3: sides 3 & 7
- Disc 4: sides 4 & 8
Set sequences

**MANUAL**
250 [Manual sequence]

**DROP-AUTOMATIC**
250 [Drop-automatic sequence]

**SLIDE-AUTOMATIC**
250 [Slide-automatic sequence]
Thank you

• Questions?