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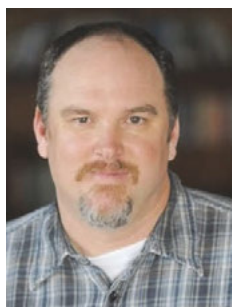C. Soos and G. H. Leazer. Presentations of Authorship in Knowledge Organization

Presentations of Authorship
in Knowledge Organization

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Abstract: The "author" is a concept central to many publication and documentation practices, often carrying legal, professional, social, and personal importance. Typically viewed as the solitary owner of their creations, a person is held responsible for their work and positioned to receive the praise and criticism that may emerge in its wake. Although the role of the individual within creative production is undeniable, literary (Foucault 1977; Bloom 1997) and knowledge organization (Moulaison et. al. 2014) theorists have challenged the view that the work of one person can—or should—be fully detached from their professional and personal networks. As these relationships often provide important context and reveal the role of community in the creation of new things, their absence from catalog records presents a falsely simplified view of the creative process. Here, we address the consequences of what we call the "author-as-owner" concept and suggest that an "author-as-node" approach, which situates an author within their networks of influence, may allow for more relational representation within knowledge organization systems, a framing that emphasizes rather than erases the messy complexities that affect the production of new objects and ideas.

1.0 Introduction

Generations of knowledge organization (KO) scholars have fixated on the troubles that arise while attempting to ascribe authorship to translated works. Patrick Wilson highlighted this struggle in his well-known essay, *Two Kinds of Power* (1978, 7-8), yet canonical theories of authorship including Barthes, Foucault, and Harold Bloom have grappled with the same question. Although current *Resource Description and Access* (*RDA*) standards assert that all translations constitute a different expression of a work, not a different work altogether (Joudrey and others 2015, 997), this practice inevitably devalues the role of the translator and ignores the creative license and labor required in the translation process; similar claims might be made of editors, the people who determine what actually gets published and often alter the wording, syntax, and content of a published piece. There are a variety of practical reasons to give priority to the author rather than the translator or editor, in particular the tendency of researchers to search for materials by an author's name. Recognizing this user-warranted practice, the author set collates the works created by an individual author, which, ideally, offers an easier way of browsing their bibliography. However, we must recognize what is lost in this process: prioritizing a single authorial name often erases networks of connection, an absence that minimizes inter-

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personal relationships and ignores the political, professional, social, and economic factors that greatly influence the creation of any single work. But to acknowledge these connections is to recognize and accept "that some things are possible because of who and what has preceded them" (Moulaison et. al. 2014, 32).

We examine the various dilemmas inherent to authorship claims. Although examples are presented to illustrate specific cases and concepts, we ultimately argue that "the author" as a lone and entirely detached figure simply does not exist; the complex nature of intellectual and creative production makes it impossible to draw a clear and distinct boundary around a particular work and attribute it to one unique individual. Beyond the unavoidable pressures that emerge from mainstream and traditional publication practices, all individuals learn from, build upon, and deviate from the ideas of others, and networks of collaborative and communal support are often erased through the privileging of a particular name. Although there are genuine personal and professional reasons someone might require primary ownership over a particular idea or concept, we emphasize that attention must be paid to the prominent, largely capitalist factors that drive and necessitate these types of claims. Similarly, it is important to acknowledge which types of labor and forms of influence are ignored through such attributions, as the factors that demand clear and distinct authorship are typically the same pressures that have historically ignored the contributions of marginalized individuals and communities. When authorship is framed as a form of ownership, the power dynamics embedded within such claims become clear.

In the first section of this paper ("Composition of the author set"), we examine the technical standards that moderate authorship within the *Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records* (*FRBR*) and *Resource Description and Access* (*RDA*). In the second ("Understanding and attributing authorship"), we question how various theories of authorship contribute to our understanding of what belongs in the author set and provide two general groupings in which to sort and view authorial claims: author-as-owner and author-as-node. Whereas the first names the tendency to view creative works as the product of individual labor, the second positions the author as one node within a network of relationships, direct and indirect collaborations, and influences. In our third section ("Whom do we serve?"), we discuss the risks and opportunities offered through the literary and user warrants often presented in defense of standardized KO practices. Although we recognize and acknowledge the values of each concept, we challenge the view that either sufficiently defends the author-as-owner method, as both satisfy the needs of unique constituents and prioritize particular research practices at the expense of others, all while presenting a reductive view of cre-

ative production. To conclude, we recognize that no theory is wholly satisfactory; perhaps unsurprisingly, we provide no concrete solution or answer. Yet by questioning the pedagogical opportunities provided by the limits of our KO systems (Drabinski 2013), we believe that complicating the author set provides a valuable opportunity for education, discussion, and critique. Developing cataloging tools that reveal relationships and build associations offers the opportunity to both honor the role of the individual and draw connections among objects and actors. This has the potential to expand the value of individual records and encourage users to develop a critical understanding of catalogs and KO practice.

1.1 Some definitions (and consideration of alternative terms)

Before we begin, a few ambiguous words must be defined. We use the contentious title of "author" to refer to all named, unnamed, and anonymous creators associated with a particular work, as it is used in the term "author set."

A "work" will be viewed as the intellectual concept produced by an author and organized in their author set. Works are made through "creative production," which we use to refer to the process of producing new works, ideas, theories, objects, etc. The "creative" qualifier addresses the process of creation and is not intended to imply artistic or aesthetic value. We consider concepts such as knowledge production and intellectual production to be subsets of creative production, but the distinction between various forms of production are complex and not discussed extensively in this paper.

Now, for the author set itself. An author set is a tool for authority control, which, ideally, provides consistent connections between records and a particular authorized access point (AAP). In this conversation, we will use the definition of an author set provided by Elaine Svenonius, which names the collocated "set of all works by a given author" that can be represented by the equation (2009, 45):

$$WA_j = \text{def } \{x\text{: } x \ W_i \ \& \ A_j \text{ is the author of } W_i\}, \text{ where "is the author of" is indicated on representations of } W_i \text{ by phrases } a_i \dots a_n \text{ appearing in locations } l_i \dots l_n$$

Put differently, the author set is an expression of associated names for a particular entity under which all related works are linked. As the ability "to enumerate the various ways in which an author may be represented" is central to the function of the author set, linear relationships are prioritized. Svenonius importantly notes that "automatic application" of this concept is "possible only in those cases where authorship is not diffused," a warning that gestures towards the "increasingly collaborative" (44) nature of authorship.

While it is important to note that the struggle of attributing authorship may vary depending on context and circumstance, we build upon this point to argue that all forms of creative production, regardless of time or place of creation, are diffused to some extent. This decentralized complexity should cause us to pause before reflexively or authormatically applying any authorial label.

As Svenonius herself notes, the presence of non-book materials in the library catalog—not to mention the attempt to develop more general terminology and theory in the organization of knowledge—means we have other kinds of creators: composers, performers, editors, producers, among others. Considering this abundance of roles, some may wish to modify the name of the author set in a way that is more expansive and inclusive. For example, we could rename the author set an *oeuvre*, terminology that has warrant in literary and artistic communities as well as cataloging literature, such as Domanovsky (1975). However, the term has inherited an implied sense of organic wholeness from histories of literary criticism, connotations that may not prove beneficial in the KO context of the author set. We have also considered "creator set" to recognize the kinds of creative roles associated with formats other than the book, but ultimately the inclusiveness of that term feels awkward and not particularly evocative. For our usage, author sets are not limited to literary authors, and the usage of "author" is used broadly to mean a person or organization that serves in some primary creative capacity in regards to the items associated with that person or organization. Additionally, a name change does not resolve the problem inherent to the organizational model, which conflates authorship as ownership.

2.0 Composition of the author set

With the author set, the task is to create a grouping of all related names and objects (including, among other things, books, films, sound recordings, articles, and documents) associated with any one entity. To this end, five distinct yet interrelated questions must be asked and answered:

1. Which items belong within the author set?
2. How are those items within the set to be arranged?
3. How should creator sets be related to each other?
4. What additional information should be included within the creator set?
5. How should that information be conveyed?

Rules and guidelines of KO aim to facilitate the categorization of creative works by their agency of creation. Understanding those rules necessitates an examination of the *Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records* (*FRBR*) and *Resource Description and Access* (*RDA*) to see how they represent frameworks for various ontological commitments, alliances that are realized in catalogs to support a particular notion of authorship.

RDA was published in 2010 following a decade of effort to translate *FRBR* into professional cataloging practice, primarily in libraries. It is currently the major standard in library practice in the United States, as well as many other countries, where its instruction is often offered as an elective element in many masters of library-and-information science degree programs. Section 3 of *RDA* provides guidelines for the attributes of "agents," the framework's preferred generic term for an author, and divides agents into three types: persons, families, and corporate bodies. As such, *RDA* is generally expansive and generic regarding the types of entities that can serve as an author or creating agent, and the standard continues the general cataloging practice of associating an author with a single authorized form of a name. Although some accomodation can be made for nominal variation, general practice is to record all other names associated with the author as unauthorized variants that circle back to the AAP.

RDA Rule 8.2 states, "The name or form of name chosen as the preferred name for an agent should be: a) the name or form of name most commonly found in resources associated with that agent; or, b) a well-accepted name or form of name in a language and script preferred by the agency creating the data." This practice of a single authorized name and unauthorized variants for an agent is the same nomenclature problem described by Olson (2002), who noted that issue can arise when the name or designator for a concept, agent, or object varies from one community to another. To mediate these incongruencies, a system design such as traditional authority control operates by selecting one name as preferred or authorized, and all variants as unauthorized. Olson characterizes (2002, 142) this process as "harmful ... in the sense that it marginalizes and excludes *Others*–concepts outside of a white, male, eurocentric, christocentric, heterosexual, able-bodied, bourgeois mainstream." A source of cultural bias, the practice places an extra burden on those who use or prefer variant names, including variations caused by translation or transliteration, and increases the possibility of retrieval errors.

We contrast *RDA*'s approach from that used by systems like Wikidata that assign each data object an arbitrary identifier number and lists all names as labels with equal standing within the system. See Figure 1, for example, which shows a brief portion of the name entries for Muammar Gaddafi, Q19878. For entries in Wikidata that refer to Gaddafi, only the Q number is provided; the language of the browser selects the label from Wikidata record. Other than the selection of a preferred label, all the names listed under "Also known as" have equal weight, at least from a retrieval perspective.

Figure 1. The Wikidata entry for Muammar Gaddafi.

RDA Section 6 provides guidelines for associating agents to bibliographic objects. Rule 18.2 states the objectives and principles of this activity, namely that data should allow users "to find all works … associated with a particular agent. To ensure that the data created using RDA meet that functional objective, the data should reflect all significant relationships between a work … and agents associated with that work." The information used to establish this relationship can come from any source (18.5.1.2), and should express the nature of the relationship. "All relationships" is a highly expansive notion, even when limited by reference to "significant relationships."

However, there is still opportunity for confusion. *RDA* 19.2 advises, "If there is more than one creator responsible for the work, only the creator having principal responsibility named first in manifestations embodying the work or in reference sources is required. If principal responsibility is not indicated, only the first-named creator is required." This rule is accompanied by a policy statement from the Library of Congress Program for Cooperative Cataloging (PCC), which notes that, "After satisfying the RDA core requirement, catalogers may provide additional authorized access points according to cataloger's judgment" (PCC 2012, 17). In the space of one rule, from *RDA* 18 to 19, we

have moved from incorporating all agent-work relationships, to all significant agent-work relationships, to requiring only the first-named agent in collaborative efforts. How does the cataloger navigate this apparent conundrum, and what does it say about our notions of authorship? Are second, third, or eighth authors on collaborative projects not really authors? This leads back to a common tension in academic publishing, where primary authorship "counts more" than those listed after the first name. How does one assign weight to particular forms of labor in a collaborative project? Can these contributions be accurately represented by a simple ordering of names? What about those agents in works of mixed responsibility, such as an artist book based on another text? In studio films, what do we make of sound editors? Production assistants? Does the *de facto* concept of authorship also exclude them? The Internet Movie Database, for example, includes a much more extensive list of agents than the typical library catalog.

RDA simply provides contradictory instruction. One can view this dilemma either charitably or less so. In the charitable interpretation, *RDA* foregrounds a cataloger's judgement in the face of ambiguous or conflicting rules, that is, the contradictory rules present a navigable space amenable for localized practice. In this view, judgement

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within *RDA*'s framework allows catalogers to provide access points for creators and contributors beyond those minimally mandated elements, such as those represented by the PCC's BIBCO Standard Record (Library of Congress 2010). This position is supported by the variety of "best practice" commentaries that accompany Rule 19.2—for example, the Music Library Association Best Practices (MLA BP) recommends, "If feasible, give separate access points for all creators (beyond the first) for each work for which an access point is given." From this perspective, *RDA* provides a minimal, baseline concept of authorship, but allows for a more expansive concept when dictated by the best practice guidelines associated with specific documentary formats, genres, and user communities. This is also true of the specialized libraries and collections that collect those materials, as seen in the particular access requirements used by music libraries. "Localized practice" means, at least in part, that access guidelines pertaining to authorship and other forms of attribution will vary by format of material and by type of library or collecting institution.

But if viewed less generously, the contradictions in the guidelines partnered by the very low minimally acceptable standard represented in *RDA* 19.2 can be interpreted to mean that RDA simply does not provide effective guidance in representing authorship and other forms of documentary production. What is authorship? If it is malleable enough to mean different things for different forms of material and specialized collections, or for different kinds of contributors, why does *RDA* present it as a straightforward, universal principle? What is the basis for this amorphis concept? Is it to meet the needs of users who have habituated ways of representing and seeking certain forms of documentary production? The only guidance to some of the "localities"—some of the variations of authorship in its treatment by various domains of practice—is in *RDA* 19.2.1, where restrictions are placed on the concept of corporate authorship (e.g., 19.2.1.1.1: "Corporate bodies are considered to be creators when they are responsible for originating ... works that fall into one or more of the following categories"), government and religious officials, and whether individuals can be considered the author of a serial. However, these are not wholly representative of the kinds of variances in authorship encountered in the organization of knowledge. By failing to acknowledge these issues, the standard implicitly endorses the view expressed in 19.2, that only a minimal amount of access by authorship is required. *RDA* appears to be more concerned with developing broad disciplinary rules of attribution than explicitly supporting the various ways people search for information.

3.0 Understanding and attributing authorship

It is revealing of a bibliocentric or document-centric approach that Svenonius describes the problem of set creation from the perspective of locating statements of responsibility within a book, a claim that allows the expression to be attributed to a particular author. This approach is not simply bibliocentric because its primary examples are books and authors, but also because it begins with the examination of the book-as-document as the first step in a process of entering a description into a database system. Our process, per *RDA* and previous cataloging codes, is to select a book, examine it for evidence, and to ask the attribution question: "who wrote this?" We could also reverse the process, conceiving the catalog as a database of people, where, for each person and organization, we ask "what books, sound recordings, etc., did this agent create?" The catalog then, for example, could be conceptualized as a database of information about people, their characteristics, contexts, interrelationships, and creations.

If orienting ourselves to books/documents is one approach and to author/creators a second, we could also characterize a third approach that begins the discussion with the needs of the user. What kinds of information would users of KO systems like to see about documents and document creators? To meet these needs, we would need to speculate about the ways a hypothetical individual might enter an inquiry, an exercise that cannot acknowledge and exhaust the full variety of needs and wants held by all those using a particular database (see, for example, Star 1990). For an agent, which names will be searched? And, for a given creator, which documents would people expect to see? An example of the first question is whether a person known primarily as a translator should be included in this database. For example, would users search for Michael Henry Heim, and if so, which works would users like to see associated with the person? This approach is tantamount to the one characterized by Raya Fidel (1994) as "user-centered," though she advocated in particular for an understanding of "user queries" as the basis for that approach. More broadly, we should not ask merely what names are associated with a particular agent (and then select one as an authorized term) but rather what notions and commitments we should make about the various kinds of association amongst agent types and forms of creative production. These commitments should be based on an inclusive assessment of the needs of users rather than a perpetuation of a particular regime of attribution. This approach also conforms to Cutter's admonishment (1876) about the convenience of the "public." The ethical issues related to the user-centered approach will be discussed later in this paper.

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3.1 Author-as-owner: LIS knowledge organization and rationality

Recent KO literature (in particular Moulaison et al. 2014) has sought to understand authorship, a tradition we ourselves are following. To comfortably situate ourselves within the KO context, we will very briefly summarize a fairly broad area of study and practice: The process of cataloging belongs to the field of knowledge organization (also known as bibliographic control or information organization), a subset of library and information studies (LIS) practice concerned with the description and management of information. One common definition of bibliographical control is given by Svenonius (1981, as quoted by Joudrey, Taylor and Miller 2015, 3), who explains that the "skill or art involved in the practice of bibliographical control is that of organizing knowledge (information) for retrieval." Notably, and expectantly, Svenonius centers the notion of retrieval. It may seem unnecessary to mention such a basic fact, but it is vital to remember that cataloging-as-activity primarily occurs so that a particular item of information can be recalled at a later date or, as Mooers (1950) said, that "information retrieval is a process of signalling through time." However, as a catalog or database is itself informative and provides context that influences the care, access, and use of information, we must push the conversation around authorship to incorporate issues beyond mere retrievability.

Another, slightly more complex, canonical definition is provided by Taylor, Joudrey and Miller (2015, 3). They define information organization as a "process of describing information resources and providing name, title, and subject access to the descriptions, resulting in records that serve as surrogates for the actual item of recorded information and in resources that are logically arranged." Two points are worth examining in this definition, the first being that records serve as surrogates. This statement is conceptually similar to Svenonius, which centers retrieval in the organization of things. Through the use of standardized metadata and bibliographic models, catalogers use KO programs to create and organize system records that reference collection materials in various forms, allowing library employees and patrons to locate the works. In that manner, catalog records are stand-ins for something else. However, the use of the word "surrogate" potentially obscures the fact that records are, themselves, seperate objects and not simply placeholders for the "real thing." It is essential to acknowledge that any representation is a separately constructed entity, a thing with its own history of production, distribution, and manipulation, attributes all influenced by the pragmatics of intention and use. A person's salary history and sick leave accrual is important in a human resources database; a representation of the same person on Grindr likely foregrounds other characteristics (Crooks 2013).

The second point we wish to address is that bibliographic resources are arranged logically. Again, this might seem like a very simple and mundane argument, but the ontological commitments rooted in any classificatory system—no matter how "rational" it may be—severely impact the way relationships are formed and expressed. On a functional level, the organization of these resources in a fashion deemed logical allows for a particular entry to be recalled within the catalog, and, ideally, anyone who understands the organizational pattern should be able to navigate the system. Essentially, that is how any type of classification functions: Entities are examined and grouped according to selected attributes, with the space between each implying a rigid distinction that separates the things organized within each. Bowker and Star describe these groupings as a set of "boxes (metaphorical or literal)" into which things are placed to perform "some kind of work" (2000, 10). The relationships will vary depending on the criteria selected to form the classificatory schema, and, theoretically, there are an infinite number of ways that these groups can be positioned; decisions largely depend on the "work" being performed (e.g., HR or Grindr). Yet all classification is a socially constituted process ultimately based on a particular view of which things are similar and which things are different. The power to name (Olson 2002), the "power to define" (Collins 2009, 125), and the power to construct relationships are always political. Claims of rationality do not negate these influences and effects and often occlude them.

Geismar and Mohns (2011) state that the "'view' of representation of relationships is also how relationships are made." According to this logic, representations do not simply signify relationships—they legitimize them, giving validity to a particular kind for their representation. Thus, as systems that utilize the production of relationships, catalogs and bibliographic models directly alter how users approach and interpret information. This is why Geismar and Mohns (4) have argued that

> [understanding] database technologies as truly relational (in both technical and sociological terms), rather than just in the narrow sense that the conventional history of the technology has constrained, permits us to see them as socially embedded as facilitators of the incorporation of global forms within local structures of meaning in potentially multiple ways.

Acting as a subjective and highly edited information broker, the catalog itself is greatly informative. It tells users what records are relevant to their requests and suggests a particular ontological frame through which these records and related materials, ideas, and objects should be examined. Far from neutral, catalogs are situated cultural artifacts that shape our expectations of use and frame how we see creative production.

Dependency on a logical, rational perspective is a cornerstone of many KO practices. Rooted in a foundation of scientific positivism, rationality is viewed as synonymous with correctness, undercurrents of which can be sensed in the call for "logically arranged" systems. Although a large portion of scholars today adamantly reject these "parables about objectivity and scientific method" (Haraway 1988, 576), remnants of the myth of scientific purity stubbornly persist and, we would argue, provide the historical foundation for rationality-based knowledge organization. Yet Haraway has said that struggles "over what will count as rational accounts of the world are struggles over *how* to see the world" (587), a statement that does not fault rationality itself but with its use as a tool of hegemony. Writing in defense of rationality, Haraway argues (589) for "politics and epistemologies of location, positioning, and situating, where partiality and not universality is the condition of being heard to make rational knowledge claims." So while rationality itself is not inherently bad, we emphasize the importance of recognizing the historical and contemporary use of "rational" classification methods to establish racist, sexist, abelist, and heteronormative hierarchies that form and perpetuate oppressive relationships. One example of such classification is the historic and contemporary use of "blood quantum" to moderate access to Tribal Nations in the United States, a complex topic with an abundance of literature; for some examples, see *Hawaiian Blood* by J. Kēhaulani Kauanui (2008), *The Mismeasure of Man* by Stephen Jay Gould (1996), and "DNA, Blood, and Racializing the Tribe" by Kimberly TallBear (2003). The use of a single body mass index (BMI) to deduce a person's health is another popular but severely flawed system of bodily classification.

Haraway suggests that a particular kind of rationality might be used to create a critical and justice-based epistemology, but this is not the form of rationality generally reflected in professional LIS practice. These rational goals have resulted in a number of industry-wide and national standards, including the *FBRB* and *RDA* models, which seek to regulate the organization of materials within KO systems and moderate how catalogers enter information into these reductive frameworks. In the case of *FRBR*, there are three main concepts that support and moderate cataloging habits, which are creators, works, and subjects. Although all three of these entity groups are contentious, the concept of creator has, surprisingly, received the least amount of critique. Coyle states (2016, 4), "The easiest [of these three concepts to grasp], from a bibliographic organization point of view, is creator: when neither deceptive nor anonymous, these can often be identified."

The previous statement deserves attention, as it references two common beliefs: 1) that most works have a stable author figure responsible for its production; and, 2) that

"deceptive" works, which deviate from this stable authorship, are rare. While many catalogers and KO specialists might yearn to actualize these statements by sheer power of will, these same individuals probably agree that a decent number of things do not conform very well to the *FRBR* model. Both of these ideas require a very limited conception of authorship, based on a very limited conception of creative production.

Foucault dates contemporary notions of authorship to the Enlightenment, arguing (1977, 124), "Speeches and books were assigned real authors, other than mythical or important religious figures, only when the author became subject to punishment and to the extent that his discourse was considered transgressive." His particular interest in disciplining and punishment influenced his approach to a more general question: "Who is responsible for this work? To whom is this work attributed?" In both Foucault and Johns (1998), concerns about legal ownership aligned with concerns about piracy and censorship, which led to the development of the authorial concept still in common use today. As later forms of industrial publication, rooted in capitalism, monetized the production and distribution of texts, this view of the author figure was used to "provide compensation and support copyright laws" (Foucault 1977, 212). Once a person is given ownership over a text, that creator is subject to reward (such as payment) and discipline (such as fines) within various professional, personal, and legal sphere, and it is within this theory of author-as-owner that we place Coyle's above-mentioned conception of creators. If we believe and accept that authors are individuals or simple assemblages that hold sole legal responsibility over a piece of property, Coyle is (mostly) correct in stating that assigning a creator to a particular work is fairly straightforward. However, creative production is more complex than this theory implies.

The attribution of texts to authors was one operation in the stabilization of texts and its near synonymous association with knowledge. Where Foucault provides disciplinary and discursive frameworks for associating texts with persons and tracing the development of modern conceptions of the author, Johns' examination of early modern England (1650-1750), where "knowledge had to be made, articulated, communicated and defended" (1998, 182), provides the historical detail for understanding the transformation of early print into the stabilized textual and authorial productions we recognize today. The complex operations required to produce a book, book piracy, and "scribbling" (i.e., the creation of plagiarized or falsely attributed texts) undermined trust in printed text. The process of printing was protean and involved a complex series of operations—writing, editing, composing a forme, pressing, binding, warehousing, and distribution into bookshops—each involving a series of "decisions that substantially affected the

reception of the resulting volume" (183). The general lack of esteem accorded to contemporary authors, the error-prone complexity of press production, and the social prominence given to printers and stationers lengthened the chain of provenance between author and reader; any errors could widen this gap, making attribution even more difficult.

Piracy was also commonplace in the same period. Rights regarding copy-ownership were nascent, and the slow speed of reprography and the logistics of dissemination were important limiting factors in meeting local demands for books, thus limiting any bookseller's ability to satisfy this demand. The pressure for lower-cost books resulted in lower-quality publishing that further weakened the bond between author and text that we take for granted. Regarding pirated books, Johns states (2010, 13) "[f]idelity of reproduction—the ability to replicate an original to a given degree of accuracy—is clearly not all-important," but some contemporary readers developed the capacity to critically read and detect pirated copies. "In an environment where unauthorized printing was seen as a real possibility, the identity of the author, the authenticity of the text, the credibility of the knowledge contained in the text were all ... destabilized" (620) and, therefore, affected the construction of attribution (1998, 621).

While piracy in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was understood as a obvious hazard that deprived authors and legitimate booksellers their due, a more subtle unraveling of the trustworthiness of print was due to the production of spurious texts. "Rusworth [was concerned by] reports of Parliamentary speeches that had never been spoken, declarations that had never been passed, battles that had never been fought, and victories that had never been obtained. Far from fixing certainty and truth, print dissolved them. It exacerbated the ephemerality of knowledge" (ibid, 172). Piracy and the production of spurious texts meant that authorship itself had become (187) "volatile and transient." Summing up (137), "Isolating a consistent, identifiable and immutable [text] attributable to the individual author would be virtually impossible in these circumstances." Johns recognizes that improvements in the mechanical printing processes, copyright, and the protection of texts from piracy led to contemporary concepts of authorship.

Ultimately, this Enlightenment view of authorship builds the foundations for what appears in our contemporary bibliographic models and KO systems, where authors are most commonly isolated based on the ownership of ideas. Through the perpetuation of this specific notion within databases, the majority of U.S. library catalogs position authorship as a concrete, universal concept that ignores the diverse ways objects and ideas may come to fruition. This simple authorial theory is perhaps tempting, but many forms of creative production are far more complicated than this model implies. Making things is often messy. And although the work of many authors can be made to conform, more or less, to Enlightenment standards and capitalistic priorities, works created outside of or in opposition to these values can struggle to conform to these regimes of authorship.

For example, Naira Christofoletti Silveira and Aline da Silva Franca (2016) explain that some forms of Brazilian Indigenous knowledge and creative activity cannot be assigned to a particular individual, but are more accurately viewed as the products of community collaboration. They state that (Silveira and Silva Franca 2016, 7):

> Works by indigenous communities (as abstract creations in the author's mind) are somehow considered collective authorship and the cataloguing librarians must comprehend the context of production of that authorship in order to attribute it to them. The one who writes the *work* is just responsible for the *expression,* making that abstract knowledge into something tangible, in this case, readable.

Silveira and Silva Franca provide examples of how records of Brazilian Indigenous knowledge within the Fundação Biblioteca Nacional's catalogue fail to attribute responsibility to communities, instead assigning sole ownership to a particular individual—action in line with bibliographic standards. María Montenegro (2019) discusses this rejection of solitary authorship in her work on the metadata standards used by the Karuk Tribe, describing how the concept of individual "authors" and the prioritization of "originality" fail to accurately represent the ways ideas, materials, and resources, are passed down between generations (2019, 737). The consequences of such cataloguing choices must not be overlooked. "The omission of the actually responsible community," Silveira and Silva Franca argue (2016, 5), "would be the beginning of the devaluation and non-recognition of the indigenous knowledge."

Brian Carpenter (2019) argues that this devaluation of Native tradition and community production within archives continues to situate "Indigenous peoples as a subject matter rather than as intellectual authorities and as the archives' constituencies." Montenegro similarly addresses the violence of reducing Indigenous individuals and communities to subjects, explaining how (2019, 738) "a film of a traditional ceremony recorded by an ethnographer makes the filmmaker the 'author,' while the subjects of these colonial documentation practices are rarely given that status." This perpetuates the view that "Native people are not authorities on their own experiences" (Littletree and Metoyer 2015, 642), a dangerous train of thought that preserves and strengthens a long-standing institutional belief that such communities hold value only as historical entities rather

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than autonomous individuals, active communities, and the rightful caretakers of their creative and cultural heritage—that of the past, present, and future. The ongoing erasure of Indigeneity by colonizing powers is fueled by what Shannon Speed calls the "settler logics of elimination" (2009, 41), a method of control that affects an individual's ability to connect with and take pride in their identity, subverts repatriation demands, and allows for state-sanctioned violence to be ignored. A person cannot fully honor the identity they are denied, there is no urgency to return materials to a community that apparently does not exist, and violence cannot be inflicted upon a group that is not there. These logics are seen when our KO systems force materials to conform to colonial institutional standards and language.

The concept of author-as-owner, monolithic in nature and solely responsible for the creation of a work, is the predominant model expressed in library catalogs. It is a simple notion, perhaps reassuring in its relatively uncomplicated presentation, but one that is far from universal and consequently obscures the common complexities of creation. Although we have chosen to emphasize the ways that many forms of Indigenous creative production reject reductive notions of individual ownership, the author-as-owner concept is an insufficient framework for most (if not all) works, regardless of source. That being said, the similarities between these authorship limitations does not mean that community-specific projects and Indigenous LIS practices are not necessary; the needs of a community often require unique solutions, and a general move towards a more networked approach to authorship does not negate the importance for these initiatives. Especially considering the "structural erasure of indigenous peoples whose knowledge was defined as folklore/myth/legend and thus open for all," KO scholars must take caution before presenting homogenizing solutions guised as "technologically inspired democracy" (Christen 2007, 5-6). Rather than an either/or decision, Gracen Brilmyer explains that "projects can work in tandem" (2018, 109) with Indigenous interventions and suggests that this multiplicity can provide LIS professionals with additional tools for critical reflection. With that in mind, we now turn to a de-stabilized notion of authorship, one that is more complex, and attempt to understand how it might be implemented in a more inclusive KO system.

3.2 Authorship-as-node

While there are cases in which the essentializing of authorship is not particularly problematic—as with independent authors producing monographic works intended for publication and circulation within mainstream markets—the historic foundations of the author-as-owner shows that it is not a universal concept and cannot be made to easily form to many kinds of creative production. Although we

acknowledge that the design of any single KO system cannot be forced to accommodate all epistemological viewpoints, it is important to recognize how notions of authorship that affirms Enlightenment and colonial values are situated within LIS discourse. Furthermore, by labeling works that deviate from this type of production as "deceptive," the underlying implication is that these forms of production are inherently strange and disingenuous. This rhetoric consequently privileges works that seemingly align (or can be made to appear congruent) with the values of personal ownership at the expense of more ambiguous, collaborative, and relational projects.

The most direct effect of establishing and defending a distinction between individualistic concepts and community/network-oriented concepts of authorship is the validation of the belief that ownership over works can be reduced to intellectual production by a particular person in a particular instance. In "The Discourse on Language," Foucault connects (Foucault 1972, 226) this desire to establish rigid boundaries around works and authors to the functioning of discourse:

> The separateness of the writer, continually opposed to the activity of all other writing and speaking subjects, the intransitive character he lends to his discourse, the fundamental singularity he has long accorded to 'writing,' the affirmed dissymmetry between 'creation' and any use of linguistic systems—all this manifests in its formulation (and tends moreover to accompany the interplay of these factors in practice) the existence of a certain "fellowship of discourse."

By defending the individual character of creators, disciplinary discourse is more easily regulated. The position that creative production is an "intransitive" act distinct from all others defends the belief that works can be reduced to ownable goods.

This concept of knowledge production, Foucault argues, is a myth. Networks of influence prevent any idea from being solely attributed to one person; arguably, any primary attribution of this sort views the complex relationship between influence and production as of secondary or no importance. In the hope of placing the author figure firmly within their assemblage of influence, he theorized the concept of the author function. Summarizing the four main characteristics of his theory, Foucault claimed (1984, 113) that:

> (1) the author function is linked to the juridical and institutional system that encompasses, determines, and articulates the universe of discourses; (2) it does not affect all discourses in the same way at all times

and in all types of civilizations; (3) it is not defined by the spontaneous attribution of a discourse to its producer but, rather, by a series of specific and complex operations; (4) it does not refer purely and simply to a real individual, since it can give rise simultaneously to several selves, to several subjects—the positions that can be occupied by different classes of individuals.

Foucault's author function emphasizes the complex operations that surround and intersect with knowledge production. In viewing any work as a product situated amongst various discursive vectors, this theory attempts to demonstrate the inseparability of a maker from their network of influence. Although this theory of production does not deny that the individual maker is of vital importance in the creation of new works, it does argue for the equal recognition of support systems and networks. The author is but one node in a network of relationships, inseparable from its relationships, and in many ways a product of them. And just as documents exist in a network of citation, authors exist in a network of influence, and the latter networks can join the former towards the exploration of literature.

Within Foucauldian discourse, individuals are all actors within a larger web of influence. Each of these nodes has some influence on the other members of the network, interactions and power relations that construct the discourse dynamic as a whole (Olsson 2007, 221). Based on the "discursive rules" of play, nodes decide which meaning-making methods, forms of evidence, and types of interactions are acceptable within the community. "If a discourse community holds a given statement to be 'true,'" Olsson explains (223), "this acceptance imbues it with a certain power in the context of that discourse. This power will also, to a degree, flow on to the author as an 'authoritative speaker.'" Once initiated, the result is an autopoietic feedback loop of sorts; the author is granted power through the discourse, but the discourse is also dependent on the power and influence wielded by the author.

Influence as a driving force behind various forms of creative production is well discussed in the field of literature studies. In *The Anxiety of Influence,* literary critic Harold Bloom examines the complex relationships between generations of western poets. Poetic influence, or what Bloom calls "poetic misprision," (1997, xxiii), refers to the lifecycle of emotional conflict felt by "great" poets throughout their career. This "family conflict"—heavy-handed Freudian implications fully intended (27)—between father poets (those of an older generation) and their sons (the younger generations) results in a struggle for control and literary dominance; the sons wish to usurp their fathers, resulting in a series of internal battles. Notably, Bloom chooses the patriarchal dynamic of father/son, excluding all female and non-

binary poets from the discussion. As Bloom is outwardly critical of feminist discourses (ibid, xv and xviii-xix), this is not surprising.

"Poetry is the anxiety of influence, is misprision, is a disciplined perverseness," he argues. "Poetry is misunderstanding, minterpreation, misalliance" (95). Viewing poetry as a series of misunderstandings between poets emphasizes the essential nature that reaction plays in the production of new creative works. Bloom states (xxiii):

> Without Keats's reading of Shakespeare, Milton, and Wordsworth, we could not have Keats's odes and sonnets and his two *Hyperions.* Without Tennyson's reading of Keats, we would have almost no Tennyson. Wallace Stevens, hostile to all suggestions that he owed anything to his reading of precursor poets, would have left us nothing of value but for Walt Whitman

Poets need other writers to influence their work; without these intergenerational conversations, Bloom argues that poetic discourse would not exist in its current state. Although Bloom is highly skeptical of Foucault—referring to researchers incorporating his theories as "resentful historicists" (xxv)—aspects of the poetic misprison theory converse quite well with Foucault's author function. Within a network framework, Bloom illustrates one type of vector of influence that erodes the central position of the author given in later Enlightenment theories of the author.

The artificiality of the author is most visible in the absence of one. Within KO, Foucault is invariably quoted as saying that the concept of authorship serves as a classificatory function used to unify the "homogeneity, filiation [and] authentication of" of texts (1977, 123)— that is, as a node to group some texts and, by extension, exclude others. He adds that for collections of texts we believe should be affiliated with a specific individual, such as the works of Homer and Aesop, we invent a personage to fulfill the absent authorship function, as we do with the *Corpus Hermeticum*, a series of sacred texts that form the core of Hermeticism, studied in the Renaissance and Reformation periods, with particular influence on Thomas Aquinas and Isaac Newton. People so needed to unify these writings, needing them to be the product of a single individual, Foucault argues, that they invented the person of Hermes Trismegistus, a node who links the texts and acts as a placeholder for the *Corpus* itself.

Admittedly, these examples are perhaps the lowest hanging fruit in the battle against authorship, and some have contended (Soll 2003, 151) that "[Foucault] relies upon ... atypical examples of putative 'authors' who turned out not to have existed as real persons, or about whose existence as real persons there is some doubt, as if these cases were typi-

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cal." However, the fabrication of Hermes Trismegistus does more than enable a kind of intellectual thought experiment, and the important question is not if Hermes actually existed. Rather, the "need" for Hermes gestures towards a European tradition of validating information through ancient authority, an association that provided an unearned legitimacy to the writings. If Hermes Trismegistus was accepted as a wise Egyptian priest and contemporary of Moses, then the *Corpus* could be cited, as it was in the Renaissance, as evidence of the existence of a single true theology, present in all religions, and one that predates the birth of Christ. However, Isaac Casaubon found in 1614 that the writings date from the third century CE, and were of Greek origin. That is to say, Hermes is more than just a placeholder: he is a personage that was concocted to lend evidence for a particular theological argument. Without its reliable author positioned in a particular time and place, the validity of the *Corpus* is void.

While a variety of professional and personal demands might require an individual to defend their claims to authorship, the fabrication of Hermes Trismegistus acts as a reminder that, even in European countries, the valuing of new and original works is a relatively recent phenomenon. Hermes had to exist to validate the *Corpus*, as Renaissance discourses largely rejected the value of new and unique contributions. Up until the seventeenth century, scholars did the most they could to make their works seem congruent with and extensions of ancient theories, rather than original discoveries. If a person "could portray one's own work as implicit in, continuous with, or having precedent in the work of an ancient ... that new work would immediately appear more respectable and hence more likely" (Dear 2019, 44). Our contemporary respect for new theories and radical concepts surely generates exciting and innovative literature, but this was not always the goal.

4.0 Whom do we serve? literary and user warrants

Given the various issues with the author-as-owner concept, one might ask why it is still central to KO practice. Although it is undoubtedly a multifarious and complex question, a nod to literary warrant is typically the most referenced defence. First introduced by Edward Wyndham Hulme in his 1911 "Principles of Book Classification," the concept attempts to establish classificatory consistency by supporting additions and modifications to terminology "only when resources actually exist about a concept" (Joudrey, Taylor and Miller 2015, 984). This concept is still central to subject cataloging, as can be seen in section H-180.6 of the Library of Congress's *Subject Cataloging Manual*, which specifies that a concept must be represented in roughly 20% of a work to warrant a subject heading on that topic (Library of Congress 2016, 3). Because it is frequently

difficult for a cataloger to determine when an idea makes up exactly 20% of a text, an individual must estimate the importance and general use of a concept prior to selecting a preexisting subject headings or creating new ones.

As the successful usage of a controlled vocabulary typically requires both homogeneity and selectivity, the existence of entry H-180.6 makes sense; if we were encouraged to apply the Library of Congress subject heading for "dogs" to any work that made passing reference to a dog, a good chunk of an institution's general collection might be sorted under the term. Heuristically, H-180.6 and similar entries are often best applied after considering: "If someone was looking for items solely about dogs, would they want to find this?"

Yet, once this question is raised, we begin the migration from the realm of "literary warrant" into that of "user warrant," a concept traceable as far back as Cutter, who used the similar term "common usage" (1876), or to relatively more recent contributions by F.W. Lancaster (1977) and Fidel (1994). Whereas literary warrant emphasizes the importance of a concept to a group of works or a particular discourse, user warrant obviously prioritizes the needs of the user. This concept acknowledges two important facts: one, that ideas important to a user may not be represented in standard discourse; and two, that the *de facto* terminology of one culture or community might differ from those of another social, professional, or academic expectations. User warrant is particularly important in situations where a collection requires sensitive handling or the use of community-centered language. Patricia Hill Collins discusses the importance of self-definition in *Black Feminist Thought*, noting (Collins 2009, 44) that an "oppressed group's experiences may put its members in a position to see things differently, but their lack of control over the ideological apparatuses of society makes expressing a self-defined standpoint more difficult." When a particular group has been systemically silenced, it is vital that they be given responsibility over the ways their community is discussed.

The deployment of literary warrant is an interesting note in the history of LIS, as it shows how well-intended policy can have adverse consequences. Early practitioners such as Hulme believed controlled vocabularies could reduce linguistic complexity and improve the utility of KO systems. As they considered the basis for naming concepts and individuals in a controlled vocabulary, using the most common term or name as it appeared in literature was a seemingly fair way to proceed: it is reasonable to surmise that a user would default to those frequently found terms and names, so librarians should simply use the conventions most commonly found in print. Good democratic intentions in, bias and discrimination out. But such a theory, as democratic as it might appear, relies on an overly simplistic model of social formations and simply universalizes majoritarian view-

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points. If subject nomenclature or naming practices varies from one group to another—generational differences, minority linguistic communities, subcultures—then a universalized approach that is based on the predominant culture is one that obliterates minority naming practices.

In circumstances where the desires of a user group are placed front and center, an institutional shift away from strict literary warrant and towards user warrant seems quite logical. However, the practical application of such a concept immediately leads to an assortment of tricky questions. Most immediately, one is left with the task of determining the profile of the warranted user. Who is this person, and which of their characteristics should a cataloger prioritize? Their gender? Race? Sexual orientation? Primary language? Nationality? Religion? In more general collections where a variety of users with a variety of identities will be referencing the catalog, "the user" has endless possibilities.

One might presume it easier to define the user of a specialized collection than a general one, and, as a basic rule, this is probably true. But conflicting user needs are unavoidable even within the narrowest of collection policies and targeted audiences. This is well demonstrated within the LGBTQ community, where some, but not all, have reclaimed the slur "queer" as a personal identity. Similarly, some members of the transgender community still use phrases like "transsexual," whereas others reject the term entirely. Given these differences in preferred terminology, whose words should be prioritized by the cataloger? Especially in cases where once derogatory terms take on new, positive meaning for some while retaining negative connotations for others, or vice versa, it becomes quite difficult to pick and choose the exact language within a controlled vocabulary.

Preferences of language are often generational, a linguistic conundrum thoroughly discussed by theorist Emily Drabinski in her article (2013) "Queering the Catalog: Queer Theory and the Politics of Correction." Building upon a lineage of queer thought that emphasizes the temporal components of language, Drabinski explains that the roots of many cataloging woes lie in the fact that a vocabulary changes along with the humans that use it. Personal and communal identities are never static—which is a beautiful testament to the nuances of human diversity, but a fact that poses very real challenges for KO. Thus, Drabinski's suggestion is to be open and flexible to modifications while accepting that our solutions will never be perfect or eternal. "Viewing classification and cataloging from a queer perspective," she explains, "requires new ways of thinking about how to be ethically and politically engaged on behalf of marginal knowledge formations and identities who quite reasonably expect to be able to locate themselves in the library" (96). While Drabinski's theory most readily applies to subject headings and descriptive cataloging, this queering

offers a challenge to the use and role of the library catalog, which, therefore, includes reference to authorship.

Just like any choice of classificatory language is innately political, so are representations of authorship. When we ignore or minimize the networks of influence that support our publication practices, which of our values are we supporting? What types of relationships are we privileging? Whose labor goes unrecognized? While we acknowledge the need for practical solutions within our KO systems, solutions that recognize and honor the very real importance authorship plays in the lives of many creators, we also believe that this practicality does not eliminate the possibility for additional interventions. The catalog will always be an imperfect and incomplete representation of the items it organizes, always expressing a viewpoint. Our task is to recognize how some KO constructions reiterate cultural hierarchies and contribute to oppression; once seen, we have a responsibility to address them—and keep addressing them. While surely to come with its own dangers and pitfalls, an information system that highlights relationships, community interaction, and networks of influence is one that not only operationalizes diverse notions of authorship, but is also one that acknowledges and highlights, rather than minimizes and obscures, the importance of community and interpersonal relationships in all our creative practices.

5.0 Conclusion

Universalizing and reductionist classificatory systems, including those that organize texts by authors, often support and perpetuate hegemonic ways of knowing at the expense of marginalized individuals, their communities, and their values. These systems can perpetuate bias by incorporating socially situated and localized constructions and presenting them as atheoretical (Hjørland 2016); often a byproduct of functionality, this transference dangerously obscures the intellectual roots, cultural biases, and conceptual faults peppered throughout our bibliography models.

Those who recognize, accept, and embody these priorities gain affirmation through engagement and typically face little to no issue using such a system. However, while working under such circumstances is undoubtedly comfortable, this familiarity neglects to inform prioritized users that their way of knowing is but one of many, a luxury that comes at the expense of (potential) users with differing ontologies, needs, and preferences. Given the political aspects of technological accommodation, we must thoughtfully consider what is at stake and contemplate what our options actually are, rather than what we assume them to be. Can only one concept of authorship be prioritized within a singular catalogue interface? Can we provide alternatives? Or do technical limitations, such as default settings, only allow for one format to be truly and wholly accommodated? Without

critical consideration and careful design choices, asking a system of classification and description to represent contradictory authorial paradigms can result in unsatisfactory and sloppy results for all parties. That being said, technical and systemic limitations should not be used as intellectual scapegoats. As we evaluate our authorial assumptions, we must equally consider both pragmatic and utopian KO possibilities.

Although user-warranted or goal-oriented solutions are typically prioritized for understandable reasons, when mentioned in practical KO discussions, these approaches often—ironically—restrict the functionality of such systems: that is, they limit the number of functional uses and attainable goals. As Drabinski explains (2013, 101), the authoritative nature of organizational systems can be used for "dialogic pedagogical interventions that push all users to consider how the organization of, and access to, knowledge is politically and socially produced." When catalogues are viewed as spaces for pedagogical intervention, simple modifications to language and design may provide individuals with opportunities to learn about the intellectual and historical roots of seemingly innate and neutral concepts, such as authorship, without greatly inhibiting other system functions. Importantly, this type of information should not be viewed as secondary to object descriptions and call numbers, as learning that the way something is represented affects the way it is perceived can be just as valuable as learning "about" the thing itself. Metadata is still data.

While it may seem counterintuitive to highlight a system's limitations through its outward-facing interface, these types of decisions can challenge system engineers, designers of controlled vocabularies, institutional administrators, and users alike to consider what is often left unsaid or unexplained. When viewed as pedagogical tools, catalogs can provide space for individuals to learn about themselves and others while reflecting on their own cultural biases and intellectual traditions. Considering these powerful possibilities, critical KO scholars must weigh the implications of just passively "giving the user what they want," especially if those we are placating hold privileged identities and positionalities they may be rarely forced to consider. Additionally, we should generally not assume we know what users want, imply that these wants are homogenous, or ignore the fact that people often construct their wants based on what they believe to be possible. When library catalogs are viewed as places to get basic information about collection materials, and when this basic information typically includes a simplistic presentation of authorship, we should not be surprised if that is what users want or expect.

When either left unaddressed or passively validated through a "good enough" mentality, our classificatory choices can, and often do, perpetuate unspoken, seemingly neutral biases and beliefs. KO systems can be mechanisms for

hegemony, but they can also be sites for cultural analysis, collective reflection, and social change. Acting in support of the latter, a number of critical scholars have discussed the political issues perpetuated through our KO systems (a few examples are: Bowker and Star 2000; Hope 2002; Drabinski 2013; Littletree and Metoyer 2015; Adler 2017), including a few notable discussions around authorship theory (Moulaison et. al. 2014; Montenegro 2019). Like all our classificatory decisions, the way we position authorship within our catalogs and databases has the potential to either challenge or authenticate common use concepts often viewed and accepted as neutral reflections of "the way things are." However, the solitary author-as-owner mentality is not some atheoretical concept devoid of historical and cultural bias, but is in fact a particular, albeit often useful, notion that largely ignores the professional, social, and personal relationships that support all forms of creative production. Ideology should not operate with such a free hand. There is great power in our positions as KO researchers and designers, and it is our responsibility to critically reflect upon and challenge the apparent limitations of our technical systems.

Uncovering the epistemic assumptions that form our authorial claims is useful, because they show us that there is not one correct way to attribute documents to people and vice versa, and of the cultural variability in making particular pairings. Ultimately, the challenge of a user-centered approach is to understand or even anticipate these culturally and historically situated pairings between names and documents and not to apply a truth standard of authorship or attribution by specifying its condition. That people associate texts with authors, or that they use author names in their search for information, has never really been in dispute. But just because this popular concept has proven useful does not mean an alternative or modified approach will not prove similarly so; in fact, it is specifically because authorship is so important to users' research practices that we must strongly consider, and continuously reconsider, the way we present it through our bibliographic models. Ideally, what do we want our systems to be doing? What values and goals do we want to apply, or at least work towards? How can we simultaneously honor the work of the individual while also elevating, rather than obscuring, the influences that support their creative practices? What can this add to records and database entries? Careful and critical work must continue to evaluate and uncover the epistemic foundations of our authorial theories and the possibility for KO intervention.

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