

Comments on Geir's "An initial attempt to describe some info in some record types for BetterGEDCOM"

Tom Wetmore, 28 May 2011

Objective and Task Records

I don't think these records will be used often, so I haven't paid much attention to them. No comments.

Repository Record

Not described but mentioned in passing; eventually should be documented.

Source and Source Lookup Records

Why two records? There should be a single Source Record.

The Source Lookup records may refer to extracted records, including the infamous "Persona" records, and later will, I hope, what I have called "Eventa" records. This is great. In the DeadEnds model, however, I don't have the Source records pointing to the Persona records, as in your model, but in the other direction, which seems more natural when you consider how genealogy apps behave. Pointers should be in the "depends on" direction in my opinion, not in the "generated by" direction.

Citation Record

In the DeadEnds model I have the *SourceReference*, which is a structured link in one record that points to a Source record. Besides pointing to the Source, the *SourceReference* may contain any other fields needed to distinguish this particular reference to the Source from any other, in other words anything that you would put in a Citation record. I don't see a need for a separate Citation record, but I can still appreciate its usefulness.

Source Free Text Extract Record

Why not make this a structure within the Source record? Or better yet, why not make it a structure within an EP, since it is likely to be the text that caused the EP to be created, so it would be the most useful place for the extract to be for the user.

In my DeadEnds documentation I have mentioned different type of free text extractions, including summaries, synopses, abstractions, transcriptions, markups, and others. These are all useful in different contexts.

Person Record

Nice. That might be self-serving, because I see most of what I want to be in there in there. You don't cover vital events or relationships yet, so I'd say the record is not complete.

What you call an Event Participation I call an *EventReference*, in keeping with the idea that anything that is a structured pointer be called an *xxxxReference*.

I like that you are paying attention to 1-level, 2-level and multi-level person systems. That should cover all bases and all vendors. Guidelines about conversion “downwards” is a good idea. Conversion “upwards” may be difficult. I especially like the fact that you are using the physical Person record to handle logical Persona records and logical conclusion Person records. Brave man.

When you have a 1-level system, every component of a Person record must be able to have its own Citation, or as I would prefer, its own *SourceReference*. This is obvious because, in a 1-level system every Person record is a conclusion record.

You haven't put vital events or relationships in the Person record yet. I think these are critical components. I strongly recommend that your model handle all three of the concepts of 1) multi-role events, 2) vital event structures within Person records; and 3) inter-person relationships within Person records. All three play an important role in different kinds of genealogical sources, and each should be supported. You can often simulate one with another, but it's like forcing a square peg into a round hole.

For 2- and multi-level systems, you have the field called Climbing Note, I think to help resolve ambiguities, and discrepancies and handle preferred facts. I can't figure out how you intend that to work from the document. Since it's an important issue it should be described in some detail.

Person records higher than level one are, in one form or another a conclusion. I therefore assume that the Citation record has been generalized to also be able to hold conclusion justifications instead of the more conventional pointers to sources. Is this true?

Event Common Data Record

This is the Event record. Why give it such a long name?

In the DeadEnds model I put *roleReferences* in this record to link Event records to the Person records of the role players. I think you should too.

Like Person records, Event records should be able to exist in multiple levels, so need subordinate events.

Charts on Page 6

I have some trouble with these.

Chart 1 (1 level a)

In general CP's should point to EP's should point to Citations should point to Sources (that's the “depends on” idea I mentioned earlier). Since CP's aren't described in sources, I don't see how you can have a CP point to a Citation, unless you have generalized the Citation idea to include conclusions, which I am now guessing that you have. And I think EP's should point to Sources, not vice versa.

Chart 2 (2 level (Gentech?))

I don't understand this at all. Why is GenTech even mentioned?

Chart 3 (N level 1)

I assume that in this chart and the rest of them that the box labeled “Citation” represents separate citations for each EP, and the box labeled “Lookup” represents separate Source records for each EP. In the chart CP2 points to a Citation. What is this? Is this a “conclusion citation?” And you

have the Source records pointing to EP's. Do you think that is needed? I think the most natural relationship is EPs are derived from sources so should point to them, not the other way around.

Chart 4 (N level 2)

Same basic comments. What is EP5 supposed to represent. What does the notation "NB" mean?

Chart 5 (N level 3)

Same.

Chart 6 (1 level b)

GEDCOM doesn't have Citation records, so what does this diagram mean?