

To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA

From: John Attig, ALA Representative to the JSC

Subject: Undifferentiated name indicator: discrepancy between RDA Element Set View and RDA instructions

The following are my responses to the proposal, and to the further comments in the LC Rep response.

1. Daniel Paradis, member of CCC, identified a discrepancy between the Element Set View and the RDA instructions for *undifferentiated name indicator*. In the Element Set View, *undifferentiated name indicator* is given as an attribute of person, family and corporate body. However, according to RDA instruction 8.11, *undifferentiated name indicator* applies only to persons.

This discrepancy was discussed by the JSC during its Nov. 15th teleconference. It was agreed that the Element Set View should be corrected to remove *undifferentiated name indicator* as an attribute of family and corporate body. It is further recommended that the element be renamed *undifferentiated personal name indicator*.

I agree to these revisions.

2. In addition, changes are required to RDA instructions to align with the element set:
 - change the name of the element to *undifferentiated personal name indicator* (at RDA instruction and glossary)
 - move the instructions pertaining to *undifferentiated name indicator* which currently exist at 8.11 to a new instruction 9.19.
 - renumber current 9.19 instructions to 9.20.
 - change references from 9.19 to 9.20 throughout chapter 8 and chapter 9
 - delete last paragraph of 8.6; i.e., *If none of the specified additions can be readily ascertained, designate the name as an undifferentiated name (see 8.11).*
 - delete last paragraph of 10.10.1.1; i.e., *If no suitable addition is available, use the same access point for all families with the same name.*

Alternatively, to avoid the disruption of renumbering and correcting references, the current instructions could remain at 8.11.

I prefer the changes listed, rather than the alternative.

ALA Rep comments:

1. Moving the instructions for Undifferentiated Personal Name Indicator:
Barbara is correct that the wording in 8.11 is clear that the element only applies to personal names. However, I do think that it is important that each chapter include the instructions for recording all of the attributes of the entity covered, excluding only those few that apply to all the entities in the section. This element needs to be moved from Chapter 8 to Chapter 9 at some point, and it seems preferable to do this before a general implementation of RDA. I would hope that the database structure of the underlying XML can facilitate the renumbering and the changes in references that may be required.
2. Overall policy on future insertions: Barbara suggests the need to establish "an overall policy for future insertions and deletions". I agree. I am concerned, however, about placing too much reliance on the existence of a permanent numbering scheme for RDA. It seems unfortunate that we seem to want to take a non-linear text and lock it into a linear structure by assigning sequential numbering based on its present linear arrangement. I wish we could come up with a way of referencing instructions from external documents that does not rely on sequential numbering. Could we create some sort of persistent URI for the instructions?
3. Procedures for updating related documents: There is another "ripple effect" that we need to consider. The change in scope of this element could affect many related documents: the RDA Element Analysis, the ERD, the Element Set view, the RDA Registry, and possibly the mappings. I suggest that we create a procedural checklist for making sure that all these relevant parts of the RDA Toolkit are updated; such a checklist would document (among other things) the responsibility for maintaining each of these.
4. Undifferentiated access points for expressions: Barbara also raises some issues about the application of the concept of undifferentiated access points to expressions. I don't think that should be part of the present proposal, but I would welcome a discussion paper on the issues she raises, which also concern me. Current practice for uniform titles does not fully support the unique identification of each of the FRBR entities that RDA seems to expect. On the one hand, if we are to continue these practices, we need to be able to make it clear how we are applying RDA (e.g., when an access point does not completely identify a person or an expression). On the other hand, we need to make sure that RDA provides the tools for differentiating expressions (and other entities) when we choose to do so. One example of this came up last week at the workshop on RDA at the Music Library Association. It was pointed out that the best way to differentiate musical arrangements is to give the medium of performance for the arrangement (expression). FRAD in fact lists medium of performance (and other attributes) under both the work and the expression entities; RDA does not. It seems to me that there are some significant issues here that need to be discussed, and I would welcome a discussion paper.

5. Application of the Undifferentiated Personal Name Indicator: Also related to the Undifferentiated Personal Name Indicator is a significant issue relating to its application. In the NACO database, we currently create a single authority record representing the unique name that is shared by several persons. As our authority records move towards descriptions of the persons (rather than devices to control their names), doesn't it make more sense to create separate records for each person, even if we choose not to create distinct authorized access points? The Undifferentiated indicator would still be needed to indicate that the access point is not unique, but at least all the other attributes — most importantly, the identifier — could be kept distinct. This is more an application issue than something that RDA itself needs to address, but it seems to me to be a fundamental issue in moving forward in the directions that RDA is pointing.