

To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA
From: Kathy Glennan, ALA Representative to the JSC
Subject: Illustrative content and other augmentations: Discussion Paper

ALA thanks EURIG for presenting their concerns surrounding the treatment of illustrative content in RDA and for providing the extensive examples and diagrams that supplement this paper. We offer the following comments and observations.

Section 2: Drawbacks of Current RDA's Provisions

ALA does not believe that the embodiment of two expressions of two works must be modeled as a single expression in RDA; instead we read RDA as offering flexibility of treatment based on the needs of the cataloging agency and on the nature of the work/expression. Thus a textual work + a graphic work can be cataloged as two separate works/expressions or as a single aggregate work/expression. Retaining this flexibility in treatment is critical, especially since the nature of aggregate works varies greatly.

Because RDA is based on FRBR, the number of expressions associated with a work can always increase, based on the inclusion of different illustrations, translations into additional languages, and revisions to the text, to name just a few examples. As we move into a linked data environment, it will be important to appropriately associate identifiers with each of the FRBR Group 1 entities.

To deal with the case of illustrations that complement a textual work, ALA sees several different options. For example, the approach may vary based on the relationship between the graphic work and the textual work (see FRBR 5.3.1.1).

Section 3.1: Liberate illustrations and other 'secondary' contents

ALA supports this concept, but we believe that RDA already allows for this approach. We believe that not all "secondary" content needs to be treated in the same way.

Section 3.2: Combine primary and secondary contents at the Manifestation level, but also allow for treatment of "secondary" content as Works in their own right

ALA agrees that a Manifestation is the logical entity in which to combine expressions representing (a) the primary content and (b) the secondary content. As mentioned above, we also concur that secondary content should sometimes be described with its own Work/Expression. We note that Chapters 24-28 are available to convey relationships between FRBR Group 1 entities.

Section 4: Move illustrative content from Chapter 7 to Chapter 3

ALA disagrees with this recommendation. As conceived and represented in RDA, this element is “illustrative content” and thus belongs in RDA Chapter 7 (Describing Content), not Chapter 3 (Describing Carriers). We observe, however, that dealing with illustrative content through relationships could be done at the manifestation level, as noted in our comments on 3.2 above.

Section 4: Move information relating to illustrators [etc.] from Chapter 20 to Chapter 21

ALA also disagrees with this recommendation. In all cases, an illustrator is responsible for creating the artistic portion of a work. The determination about whether this role is that of a creator or a contributor depends on the nature of the work, and RDA already supports both approaches. We do not believe that this relationship belongs at the manifestation level in any case.

Additional observation

We believe there is no simple solution to this problem but would support further exploration of the concept of “Publication Expression” as declared in the FRBROO model as a potential approach.