

To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA
From: Dave Reser, LC Representative
Subject: RDA and FRBRoo treatment of aggregates

We offer thanks to the JSC Aggregates Working Group for the discussion of aggregate monographs. While we may find it difficult to familiarize ourselves with the new terminology and modeling required to fully comprehend this paper, we are pleased that the JSC working group is developing such expertise.

The two examples used are well selected, as they are typical examples of aggregates that are encountered daily. The analysis of example 1 (single work augmented) illustrates nicely that augmentations to a work can be viewed in very different ways. To consider each ‘component’ to be an individual work within a container work is a valid practice, and would have applicability when such details are needed. Our use of RDA for such works, on the other hand, would place emphasis on the primary work, with an indication that the other contributions are incorporated, but generally no direct treatment of them as individual works.

The “collapsed from FRBRoo to current RDA” representation of Example 1 typifies how many libraries would treat this in RDA currently. As concluded in the paper, the relationship designators typically found in Appendix I.3.1 (Relationship Designators for Contributors) would be used to identify the role played by the agents responsible for the augmenting content, as a relationship to the expression. To follow an approach more similar to FRBRoo, the whole/part Related Works relationships in Chapter 25 could be exploited to identify every individual work, but such techniques are not always obvious in RDA. For example, 6.27.1.4 (Compilations of Works by Different Persons, Families, or Corporate bodies) could make useful references to Chapter 25 informing the cataloger that relationships to each of the works in the compilation could be made. Likewise, the instructions at 6.27.1.6 (Commentary, Annotations, Illustrative Content, Etc., Added to a Previously Existing Work) would benefit from a more thorough review. If the working group further investigates RDA’s treatment of FRBRoo’s serial works, performance works, recording works, etc., similar issues may be identified and revisions to RDA could be proposed. While it seems unlikely that many practices of our library cataloging operation would necessarily change, RDA does describe itself as having a “flexible and extensible framework” in RDA 0.1.

RDA’s treatment of Collaborative Works (6.27.1.3) sees all collaborators at the work level as creators, whereas it seems that FRBRoo might want to tease out each collaborator’s contribution and identify it (i.e., treat it more as an RDA compilation). Although conceptually feasible, this approach does present some challenges, such as identifying the preferred title for each individual work. Other than authors of titled columns in serial works or similar cases, identifying the preferred titles of other aggregate

components (the work of an actor, conductor, editor of a moving image work, etc.) would most likely require devised titles.

As noted above, many users of RDA do in fact use the “short-cut” technique to identify the creators of what FRBRoo chains would consider individual works. The challenge, of course, is to clearly present relationship designators that are applicable at different levels or using different approaches—the JSC Relationship Designator Working Group may want to investigate styles that help the user of Appendix I to understand which list is being used when they are using the “short-cut” technique vs. the “FRBRoo” technique, in order to reduce the confusion encountered now with terms such as “artist” and “illustrator”.

On a final note, some discussions of topics like this seem to treat the various cultural heritage communities as monolithic, e.g., museums do X, archives do Y, and libraries do Z. We know from the diversity of descriptive standards for library resources that libraries do not have one model for bibliographic information because there is a diversity of needs. We imagine there is such diversity within the other communities as well. While we have no objection to any agency using the FRBRoo model for their data, we are concerned about how much of that approach needs to be developed within RDA, and the expense of this development by the JSC and co-publishers. The CoP’s work to investigate the application of RDA in other communities may inform the return on this investment (e.g., increased RDA implementation). We look forward to this ongoing discussion.

Questions for the Aggregates Working Group:

1. The “Statement 1.8” for the first example: Should the second paragraph read “ex:IntroCastleSCE rdae:workExpressed ex:IntroCastleIW” (rather than the final component being “ex:EmmaIW”)?
2. In the section on “Role of Publisher” there is a subsection on “Preferred label for the expression” and an indication that there is no RDA element for such label. We’re not sure we understood what “Preferred label for the expression” represents, and would appreciate more explanation.