

To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA
From: Kathy Glennan, ALA Representative
Subject: Recording the Fuller Form of Name (9.5.1.1)

ALA thanks CCC for this proposal to expand the definition and applicability of the instructions for Fuller Form of Name. We are sympathetic to the concerns raised but do not agree with the approach taken to solve the problems identified. Indeed, we believe that of the four examples presented to justify this proposal, only #2 is not addressed by the current instructions. We have identified the following issues for further discussion, and we have included specific comments on the proposal itself.

Issues for further discussion

What is the scope of fuller form of name, and why is it recorded?

The main instructions for recording fuller form of name are focused only on part of a name. This indicates that the primary function of this element is to record disambiguating information that can also be used in an authorized access point. As a result, the instructions are awkward in defining what portion of the name can be represented by a fuller form and under what circumstances. Catalogers find it difficult to relate the examples in 9.5.1.3 to the preceding instructions.

Although the basic principle underlying the fuller form of name instruction appears to be differentiation, this could be accomplished in other ways. Some alternatives include always recording the complete name in direct order (which can happen occasionally using RDA as currently worded), or using all or part of a variant name as a qualifier in an authorized access point. ALA would support further investigation of these alternatives.

What is the relationship between fuller form of name and variant name?

With variant names (RDA 9.2.3), the names generally represent a “full” version of the name (e.g., surname and given name) and are generally recorded in inverted order. Variant names should be able to capture any significant variations, such as what initials represent, or what nicknames the individual might use. The fuller form of name is a particular subset of the variant name (usually incomplete, presented in direct order). Should the connection between these two elements be strengthened in any way?

Are nicknames in scope for fuller form of name?

ALA respondents are divided on this question. Some see nicknames as different names; for example, “Ferdinand Joseph” is obviously not a fuller form of “Jelly Roll”. Of course, other nicknames are more clearly derived from a given name (e.g., “Liz” or “Beth” for

“Elizabeth”). Some ALA commenters agree with CCC that explicitly including nicknames here (or potentially elsewhere in Chapter 9) would support current practices, at least for some catalogers.

Are instructions needed in 9.5 for fuller form of name, or should the instructions relate only to creating authorized access points?

ALA recognizes that RDA 9.5 is a core element for disambiguating between individuals who have the same name. However, some ALA respondents wonder about the continued value of this instruction. While it is important to be able to break conflicts, this is more relevant to the construction of authorized access points. Perhaps the clarification CCC seeks should be focused on 9.19 instead.

Comments on the proposal

If the JSC agrees to support CCC’s suggested changes to 9.5.1.1, ALA recommends deleting the term “commonly” in the proposed 1st sentence. Once the preferred name is identified, the qualification of “commonly used” is not applicable.

We also do not think that the phrase “group of names” is necessary. Per RDA 8.1.3, “The term **name** refers to a word, character, or group of words and/or characters by which a person, family, or corporate body is known.”

As noted above, ALA could not reach consensus on whether “nickname” should be added to the scope of fuller form of name.

Generally, we prefer the current wording of 9.5.1.1, although we could accept adding “or parts” as suggested for 9.5.1.1.a.