

To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA
From: Dave Reser, LC Representative
Subject: Fictitious and other entities in RDA and the consolidated FR models

We appreciate the analysis and discussion from the working group, and the preliminary comments that result. We strongly agree with the working group that limiting the application of the RDA “person” entity to real persons is not a practical solution, for all of the reasons documented by the group. The elimination of the distinction between real, fictitious and non-human entities has been a significant improvement in RDA over AACR2.

We believe that children looking for Geronimo Stilton books should be able to find them by searching for him. However, we also believe that children and juvenile literature scholars who know the books were actually written by Elisabetta Dami should also be able to find the books by searching for her. If the needs of both groups of users are not being served, then the same type of problems caused by AACR2 are still present. Fortunately, we believe RDA’s increased flexibility with variant access points for works (so access points can be made to satisfy both groups of users), and expressing relationships to associate different entities accommodates those who think dogs write books, and those who know dogs are incapable of doing so.

In the follow-up work, we would encourage the working group to review the earlier constituency comments on extending the principles applicable to persons to families and corporate bodies—some of the challenges are noted in the LC response to 6JSC/BL/21. While it should be acknowledged that there are some corporate bodies that use different names (a practice often attributed to performing groups, though for a variety of different reasons), the extension of the concept and need for special instructions for ‘pseudonymous’ corporate bodies is not likely to be worth the effort or result in a change in practice (each corporate body is established as a separate entity). They are all ‘real’ in that context, and relating them is important, but we hope that this can be accomplished without a parallel set of instructions for chapter 11 that are found in 9.2.2.8. We believe the distinction between a “collective pseudonym” that conveys the idea of a group of persons and a “real” corporate body is also elusive so treating them the same way is logical. We look forward to future papers from the working group.

The Places Working Group should also be involved in the discussions about fictitious places.