

## SECTION THREE: NEWS AND VIEWS OF THE MEMBERS OF THE ATLA TECHNICAL SERVICES SECTION

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### MY EXPERIENCE WITH RDA: PART TWO: EXAMPLES

The results of last year's RDA test are currently being evaluated by the Library of Congress and there is much debate about the value of RDA on cataloging discussion groups. Many of the discussions seem to center around specific points of detail, such as a recent debate about the correct way to establish authority headings for fictitious characters (there were strong opinions about the need to disambiguate Dr. Snoopy and Snoopy). There is no doubt that many details still have to be addressed in RDA and that we will almost certainly see changes and revisions if RDA is adopted. However, the true value of RDA and FRBR/FRAD-based cataloging lies not in its provisions for identifying characters created by Charles Shulz, but rather in its ability to address differences in content and media in organizing information that is not limited to printed paper. Let me identify a few concrete cases, where RDA can help clarify information and benefit catalogers as well as users.

At my institution, we are currently preparing for an ILS migration involving 3.5 million records in 5 different libraries. Many of the difficulties that have come up in this preparation had to do with mapping and conversion specifics related to non-book materials. How should electronic equipment be organized or what is the best way to create an index filter for online records? In all these discussions I could not help thinking that these issues would hardly present problems in an RDA environment. Under AACR2 rules, for example, the presence of an 856 field would not be sufficient to identify an online resource, since the URL given there may be only a link to a table of contents in a record for a printed resource. Under RDA rules, an online resource would be clearly identified by a 338 field with the carrier term "online resource" and would also no longer be confused with a version of the same text on CD-ROM, which would also be identified as an "electronic resource" in subfield \$h in the 245 field under current AACR2 rules.

To see an example of an RDA record for an online resource look up OCLC# 681900867. The record was derived from OCLC# 10163866, which described the print resource from which the online resource was produced. The RDA record has no 007 or 533 fields, AACR2 fields that had long been used inconsistently or left out altogether. Instead, it has a 336 field (content), which would be identical in an RDA record for the corresponding print resource, a 337 field (media), which specifies that a computer is needed to access the information and a 338 field, which specifies that it is an online resource, distinguishing it from the print resource as well as a possible record for a corresponding CD-ROM record. The RDA record is also lacking a subfield \$h in the 245 field. The title information is therefore identical to that of the print resource, which should facilitate proper bundling and de-duping in a library's OPAC. All in all, the RDA record is both cleaner and more granular than an analogous AACR2 record would be and should therefore also present more specific and helpful information to the user.

Another advantage of RDA is the discontinuation of the rule of three and the expanded use of the subfield \$e in 100 and 700 fields. As catalog information is maintained online rather than on small cards, there is no justifiable reason to limit the number of contributors to a work (or rather the manifestation of a work to use proper FRBR terminology). At the same time, RDA records can provide much more information about the role a particular contributor played in the production of a book or recording. A good example is OCLC# 692186583, which identifies the book's authors, its contributing photographer, the person responsible for its design as well as a number of sponsors that made the production of the book possible. In theory, a patron would be able to search for all books the production of which was sponsored by a particular institution.

These are only two examples of advantages offered by RDA. It is my hope that the proposed new cataloging standard will be judged by such conceptual or structural innovations rather than by minute eventualities like the use of professional titles of fictitious characters.

Previous issue: MY EXPERIENCE WITH RDA: PART ONE: OVERVIEW

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## RDA TOOLKIT WEBCAST

Introduction to RDA Toolkit, a webcast originally presented Feb 8-9, 2010, is now available ([http://www.ala.org/ala/onlinelearning/collection/classes/publishing/rda\\_toolkit\\_intro\\_wecast.cfm](http://www.ala.org/ala/onlinelearning/collection/classes/publishing/rda_toolkit_intro_wecast.cfm)).

## RDA WEB COURSES

Understanding FRBR for RDA and Beyond, July 6-7 or August 2-3,  
([http://www.lyrasis.org/?sc\\_itemid={3C8B5D3B-057A-4881-9442-388ED83F8C72}&RowId=1-L01NQ](http://www.lyrasis.org/?sc_itemid={3C8B5D3B-057A-4881-9442-388ED83F8C72}&RowId=1-L01NQ))

FRBR, FRAD, FRSAD: A New Model for Cataloging, May 17 or September 13,  
([http://www.lyrasis.org/?sc\\_itemid={DDD1FDFC-617D-4C72-9BF4-B29619BAE12A}&RowId=1-GXPME](http://www.lyrasis.org/?sc_itemid={DDD1FDFC-617D-4C72-9BF4-B29619BAE12A}&RowId=1-GXPME))

Introducing RDA: 1, Structure, Principles, and Core Elements, May 31 or June 21 or July 19,  
([http://www.lyrasis.org/?sc\\_itemid=%7bCD4FE86E-529A-43F6-A1A6-EAF1AF567621%7d&RowId=1-LW2VA](http://www.lyrasis.org/?sc_itemid=%7bCD4FE86E-529A-43F6-A1A6-EAF1AF567621%7d&RowId=1-LW2VA))