

To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA
From: John Attig, ALA Representative
Subject: Other designation associated with the person: Revision of RDA 9.0, 9.6.1, and 9.19.1

ALA thanks the British Library for this proposal to expand the scope of Other Designations Associated with the Person. ALA supports the intention of the proposal: to avoid undifferentiated access points for persons. ALA responses to the six proposed changes are as follows:

Change 1: Scope (RDA 9.0):

First, ALA suggests that any change in the scope of the Person entity needs to be proposed as revision of the Glossary definition (as well as the definition in 8.1.2).

Second, ALA finds this scope statement awkward. There is no logical reason why anyone would suspect that “persons named in religious works” were excluded from the definition of “person”. We are not sure that there is a difference between fictitious and legendary persons. We also suspect that “real non-human entities” expands the scope well beyond any reasonable definition of “person”; perhaps adding examples would help: “(e.g., individual animals, robots, extraterrestrial beings)”.

Finally, we agree with the Canadian Committee on Cataloguing that the status of some of these entities as persons is not sufficiently clear in the models we are trying to follow.

Change 2: Core statement at 9.6: We agree with the Library of Congress that designations other than *Saint* or *Spirit* should be core only when needed to differentiate.

Change 3: References to 9.6.1.3: No objection.

Change 4: Addition of 9.6.1.6, 9.6.1.7 and 9.6.1.8: For practical reasons, we are concerned that the instructions on selecting terms are not sufficiently precise.

Change 5: Addition of 9.6.1.9 (Other designation): We believe that this instruction goes too far; it is not always possible to find an appropriate term that both differentiates and meaningfully identifies the entities.

Change 6: Authorized access points: No objection to the revisions to 9.19.1.2; as noted above, we do not believe that the addition of “Other designation” at 9.19.1.8 is warranted.