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Just Because We Can, Doesn't Mean We Should: An Argument for Simplicity and Data Privacy With Name Authority Work in the Linked Data Environment

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ABSTRACT

Neutrality is a core tenet of librarianship, although it is widely accepted that cataloging is not a neutral act. In 1876, Charles Ammi Cutter outlined the model for a library catalog. That model remained largely unchanged for over 120 years; however the publication and adoption of Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (*FRBR*), Functional Requirements for Authority Data (*FRAD*), and Functional Requirements for Subject Authority Data (*FRSAD*) by the international cataloging community in the late 1990s and early 2000s ushered in new models for organizing and describing bibliographic resources. Although the “FRBR Family” of models remains true to Cutter’s guiding principles at their core, they explicitly introduced specific attributes for describing bibliographic entity groups. In particular, FRAD greatly expanded the attributes to record about Persons, and these attributes were codified in the contemporary cataloging standard Resource Description and Access (*RDA*). As a result, catalogers now capture much more information about people in authority records than ever before. The contribution of all this new additional metadata into authority files has the potential to harm the actual *people* we are now cataloging by misidentifying or censoring information through cataloger bias or by capturing personally identifying information that could be used against the person. This has great ramifications in the linked data environment when the metadata is reused and can no longer be controlled by the individuals or institutions who created the original data. The risks are too great and we have yet to see the results in our discovery systems to rationalize adding so much personal information about people in library authority records. This paper argues that we should return to a simpler, pre-RDA authority record. However, the likelihood of changing RDA is slim, but we can adjust our cataloging practice to record only the most necessary information in authority records to curb catalog bias and insure personal data privacy for authors and contributors in our authority files.

KEYWORDS

name authority records; library standards; FRBR; FRAD; LRM; RDA; cataloger’s judgement; data privacy; bias and discrimination

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Manuscript

An evolution of standards

The concept of “neutrality” is a key part of our profession. The American Library Association Code of Ethics (<http://www.ala.org/tools/ethics>) contains eight broad statements, two of which are particularly useful to reflect how neutrality impacts the work of library metadata and access to our collections. The very first and seventh statements of ethics directly affect our work:

1. We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.
7. We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.

Providing unbiased cataloging and fairly representing our resources in the catalog enables “equitable,” “accurate,” and “unbiased” access to our resources for all our users. Neutrality is taught in cataloging courses at library and information science schools. In the most recent 4th edition of the fundamental cataloging textbook, *The Organization of Information*, Joudrey, Taylor, and Wisser (2018) directly address the issue of neutrality and objectivity in the Subject Analysis chapter.

Information professionals are expected to remain objective and impartial in all their work related activities ... (Joudrey, Taylor, & Wisser, 2018, p. 451)

... information professionals are expected to remain neutral ... (Joudrey, Taylor, & Wisser, 2018, p. 451)

Consequently, information professionals often forego long philosophical debates over the nature of reality, aboutness, and subject determination, and just do the task—with an understanding that *although cataloging is not a neutral act* [emphasis added], we should attempt to keep our biases in check as much as possible while performing the process *and remember that self-awareness is crucial* [emphasis added] (Joudrey, Taylor, & Wisser, 2018, p. 452).

The last quote is the most striking, and it was the only sentence changed between the 3rd edition (Joudrey, Taylor, & Wisser, 2009) and the 4th edition. The authors rightly point out that as a profession we rarely get into philosophical debates over the “nature of reality,” “aboutness,” and “subject determination.” It is important to make space for this dialog to understand how our actions as a profession affect library users and access to library collections. That is the intention of this paper: to step back and holistically reflect on how cataloger actions with authority records affect library users, access to library collections, and most importantly the lives of the very people being recorded.

OBJECTS.*

1. To enable a person to find a book of which either

(A) the author	}	is known.
(B) the title		
(C) the subject		
2. To show what the library has

(D) by a given author
(E) on a given subject
(F) in a given kind of literature.
3. To assist in the choice of a book

(G) as to its edition (bibliographically).
(H) as to its character (literary or topical).

Figure 1. Cutter's Objects from his 1904 *Rules for a dictionary catalog*. Source: Cutter, C. A. (1904). *Rules for a dictionary catalog* (4th ed.). Washington: Government Printing Office. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/uiug.30112018620143>.

The authors of *The Organization of Information* go on to acknowledge that catalogers are often just trying to do their jobs and are working with the tools and standards that are on hand. The italicized phrases are new additions to this statement for the 4th edition. The authors acknowledge that cataloging is not a neutral act—but they unfortunately do not go into further detail. It would be helpful to know more about what they mean, but at least they acknowledge this complex issue. The authors emphasize that catalogers need to keep their biases in check and remember that self-awareness is crucial. While catalogers and metadata creators must be self-aware of their own biases—philosophical, moral, social, religious, and political; they must also be aware of the biases entrenched within our cataloging classification and taxonomic systems that privilege a colonial, Western, white, Christian, capitalist, male-dominated, and hetero-normative perspective. Much has been done to improve these standards, and the work of Sanford Berman (1971), Hope Olson (2002, 2008, 2011), Emily Drabinski (2013), Melissa Adler and Joseph Tennis (2013), Melissa Adler (2016, 2017), K. R. Roberto (2011), Kelly Thompson (2016), and others has highlighted and improved these culturally systemic problems within library systems, but there is much more work to be done to ensure the “highest level of service to all library users” (<http://www.ala.org/tools/ethics>).

So let us take a moment to reflect on the essence of our work as library catalogers and metadata creators. Charles Ammi Cutter outlined his three objects for a library catalog in 1876 (Figure 1). According to Cutter, the library cataloging project essentially consists of recording descriptive information about the resources, the authors or agents associated with the resource, and the subjects of the resource. This model remained largely unchanged for more than 120 years. Even the 1961 Paris Principles reflect the model of recording descriptive information about the resources, associated authors or agents, and their subjects. The first edition of the

Anglo-American Cataloging Rules (AACR) was published in 1967 jointly by the American Library Association, the Canadian Library Association, and the Library Association. The *ISBD(M): International Standard of Bibliographic Description Monographic Publications* was issued by the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) Committee on Cataloging in 1974. The second edition of the *Anglo-American Cataloging Rules (AACR2)* was published in 1978 to bring the cataloging rules in line with ISBD. All these standards supported Cutter's guiding principles.

The goal of our everyday library cataloging and metadata work changed with the introduction of *Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR)* (1998), the *Functional Requirements Authority data (FRAD)* (2009), and the *Functional Requirements of Subject Authority Data (FRSAD)* (2010), causing our project to expand from implicit Cutter-like objects of a catalog to fulfilling specific FRBR User Tasks (IFLA Study Group on the Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records, 1998):

- to **find** entities that correspond to the user's stated search criteria
 - (i.e., to locate either a single entity or a set of entities in a file or database as the result of a search using an attribute or relationship of the entity);
- to **identify** an entity
 - (i.e., to confirm that the entity described corresponds to the entity sought, or to distinguish between two or more entities with similar characteristics);
- to **select** an entity that is appropriate to the user's needs
 - (i.e., to choose an entity that meets the user's requirements with respect to content, physical format, etc., or to reject an entity as being inappropriate to the user's needs);
- to acquire or **obtain** access to the entity described
 - (i.e., to acquire an entity through purchase, loan, etc., or to access an entity electronically through an online connection to a remote computer).

At first read, the FRBR user tasks seem like a departure from Cutter's objects, but they are actually quite similar. [Figure 2](#) diagrams the FRBR Entity Relationship Model that supports the user tasks. Upon closer inspection, it essentially still consists of descriptions about resources (Group 1 entities), the authors or agents related to resources (Group 2 entities), and the subjects that resources are about (Group 3 entities).

In addition to the User Tasks, the entity relationship models between all the Groups, FRBR, FRAD, and FRSAD outline specific attributes and relationships for the Entities within and among the Groups. When FRBR was first published in 1998, attributes for Persons were very simple: name,

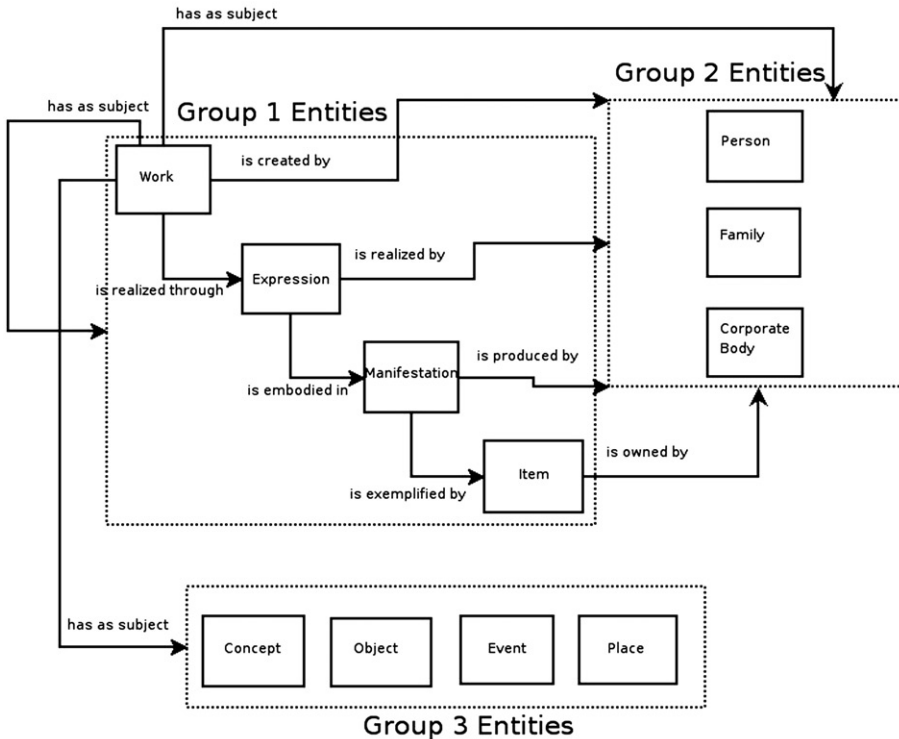


Figure 2. FRBR group entities. *Source:* Miksa, S. D. (2008). *Hello RDA, goodbye AACR2!* [Presentation]. Retrieved from <https://digital.library.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metadc86157/m1/15/>.

dates, title, and other designations associated with the person. FRAD was published to further define the FRBR model specifically for Group 2 Entities. FRAD also had its own User Tasks (IFLA Working Group on Functional Requirements and Numbering of Authority Records (FRANAR), 2013):

- Find
 - Find an entity or set of entities corresponding to a stated criteria ... ; or to explore the universe of bibliographic entities using those attributes and relationships.
- Identify
 - ... confirm that the entity represented corresponds to the entity sought, to distinguish between two or more entities with similar characteristics... or to validate the form of name to be used for a controlled access point.
- Contextualize
 - ... clarify the relationship between two or more persons, corporate bodies, works, etc.; or clarify the relationship between a person corporate body, etc., and a name by which that person, corporate body, etc. is known.

- Justify
 - Document the authority data creator's reason for choosing the name or form of name on which a controlled access point is based.

FRAD greatly expanded the number of attributes to describe people, and as a result authority work dramatically changed. However, the basis on which these specific new attributes for persons were determined is unclear (Billey, Drabinski & Roberto, 2014). The FRAD attributes were then codified into RDA as actual instructions that real-life everyday catalogers use as guidelines that are published in the RDA Toolkit (American Library Association, 2010) to create and edit name authority records in the Library of Congress Name Authority File (LCNAF). New 3xx MARC codes were introduced (<https://www.loc.gov/marc/authority/ad1xx3xx.html>) to accommodate the new attributes that FRAD proposed and RDA realized. RDA is the first instance where catalogers are being asked to *describe people*. With RDA, catalogers are now asked to create contextualized biographical sketches in addition to constructing the unique name string for indexing. When they describe people, they have the opportunity to include much more personal information:

- Name of the Person
- Dates Associated with the Person
- Title of the Person
- Fuller Form of Name
- Other Designation Associated with the Person
- Gender
- Place of Birth
- Place of Death
- Country Associated with the Person
- Place of Residence, Etc.
- Address of Person
- Affiliation
- Language of Person
- Field of Activity of the Person
- Profession or Occupation

Published in 2017, the *IFLA Library Reference Model* (LRM) (Riva, Le Boeuf, & Žumer, 2017) sought to align the FRBR family of models into a single cohesive theoretical modeling framework for the bibliographic universe. Of course, the LRM also prescribes User Tasks (below) and assigned attributes to entities to justify the user tasks. RDA is expected to be

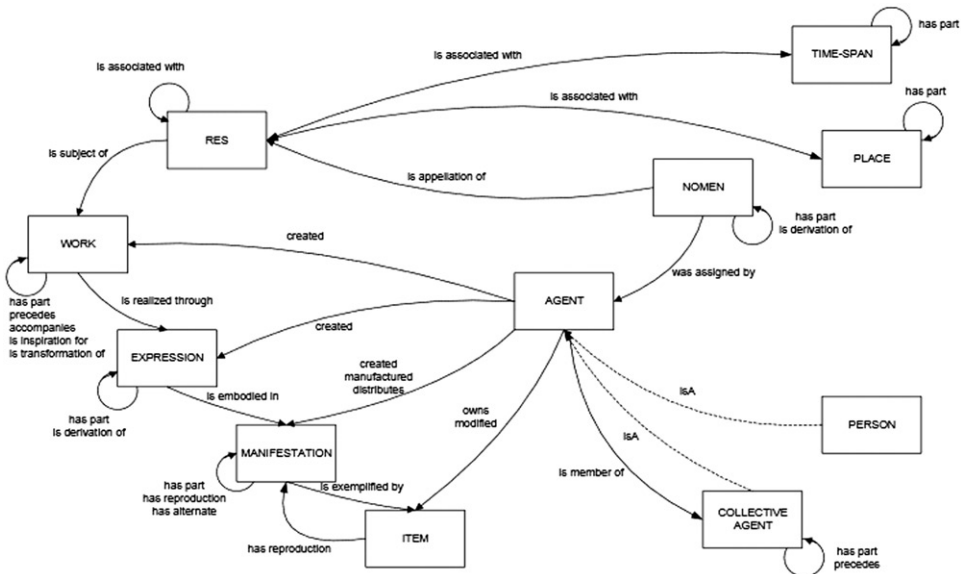


Figure 3. IFLA Library Reference Model (p. 86). Riva, P., Le Boeuf, P., & Žumer, M. (2017). *IFLA Library Reference Model*. IFLA. Retrieved from https://www.ifla.org/files/assets/cataloguing/frbr-lrm/ifla-lrm-august-2017_rev201712.pdf.

updated to adhere to this new IFLA standard model sometime in 2019 with its RDA Toolkit Restructure and Redesign Project (also-known-as the 3R Project) (<http://rda-rsc.org/node/551#10>).

- Find
 - To bring together information about one or more resources of interest by searching on any relevant criteria
- Identify
 - To clearly understand the nature of the resources found and to distinguish between similar resources
- Select
 - To determine the suitability of the resources found, and to be enabled to either accept or reject specific resources
- Obtain
 - To access the content of the resource
- Explore
 - To discovery resources using the relationships between them and thus place the resources in context (p. 15)

However, the organization of the Entities in the LRM (Figure 3) still reflects Cutter's primary objects. *Works*, *Expressions*, *Manifestations*, and *Items* (WEMI) are the resources held within a library, *Agents* are the persons and organizations who are related in some way (primarily as

creators/authors) to WEMI Entities, and *Res* are the subjects that resources are about. The LRM model is not that different than the one introduced by Cutter 142 years ago but it complicates the cataloging project into abstract concepts and relationships rather than concrete actions that everyday library catalogers and metadata creators actually perform.

Authority work, then and now

Prior to RDA, the primary goal of authority work was identification and disambiguation. Catalogers constructed a unique “heading” or “authorized access point” for indexing and display. As documented in FRAD (Patton, 2009), traditional authority work included:

... the authorized access point for the entity as established by the cataloguing agency as the default form for display in its catalogue, as well as access points for variant forms of name and authorized access points for related entities. The authority record will also normally include information identifying the rules under which the controlled access points were established, the sources consulted, the cataloguing agency responsible for establishing the controlled access point, etc. (p. 15).

In traditional authority work, bibliographical or contextual information was not typically recorded. The MARC Authority 678 tag for Biographical or Historical Data was introduced only in 2001.

Since 2013, with the development of FRAD/LRM and RDA, catalogers aspire to achieve the user tasks, so we record a great deal of information about people that resemble biographical sketches or profiles. With Cutter disambiguation is implied, while FRAD makes this explicit in the “Identify” User Task. The shift from implicit to explicit authority data resulted in the new elements for describing people in RDA, and expanded the work of catalogers to record more information in authority records. This has resulted in more opportunities for cataloger bias and the recording of personally identifying information in authority records. Since the RDA elements were so recently added to MARC21 they are not applied reliably enough which could lead to misleading results even if library systems utilized the MARC 3XX tags in authority records. Unfortunately, library systems do not allow for this kind of sophisticated searching on authority record metadata. While libraries continue to build the traditional authority file, there are other external identity management sources of linked data that could be used instead, thereby fulfilling the promise of linked data.

Bias & risk

Catalogers presume that they are recording facts about the person, but there are plenty of places in an authority record where judgment or biases

may creep in and potentially cause harm for the individual being described. As catalogers, we choose what information goes into and stays out of an authority record. The risk of bias is implicit in that choice of what information is recorded and what terms are used. Cataloger bias can lead to consciously or unconsciously censoring information from being added to an authority record. For example, it is well known that Maya Angelou worked in the sex trade during her life—this is documented in her Wikipedia article, biographies, and encyclopedias as well as her autobiography—but this information is missing from her LCNAF record (<http://id.loc.gov/authorities/names/n50024879>). So any user wanting to Find, Identify, and Obtain resources on sex workers who are also poets would miss Maya Angelou because that attribute was not recorded in her authority record. Why was this information left out? Did the catalogers who worked on Angelou's record over time think it was inappropriate to mention or did they not think it was important? This is where the bias or even time constraints lead to gaps, censorship, or misinformation in authority record metadata.

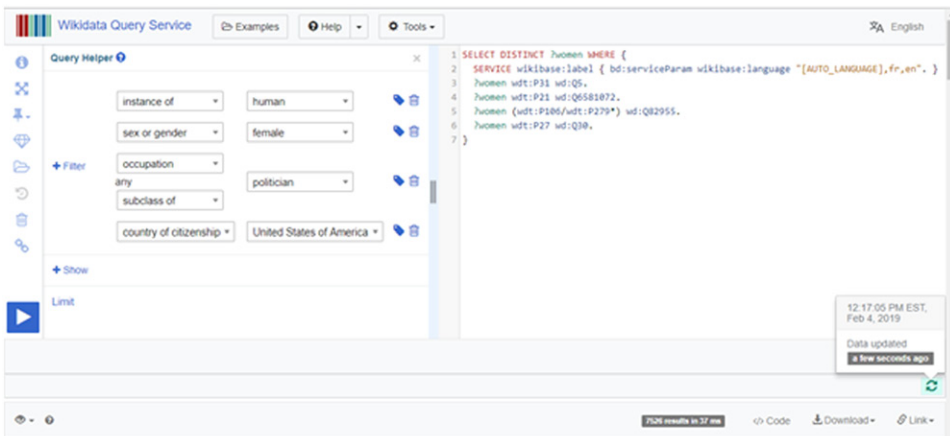
Another peculiar example is that some catalogers chose to record the enslavement of individuals by adding 374 \$a Slaves \$2 lchsh for the Occupation RDA element in their record. The question of whether enslavement is an occupation is beyond the scope of this paper; however the necessity and accuracy of recording such information is within its scope. The cataloging utility Connexion by OCLC allows users to search on the 3XX tags. A query for the Library of Congress Subject Heading “Slaves” on the Entity Attributes in Connexion returns 50 results, however well-known enslaved individuals such as Hannah Crafts (<http://id.loc.gov/authorities/names/n2002033450>), Harriet Jacobs (<http://id.loc.gov/authorities/names/n50027972>), Denmark Vesey (<http://id.loc.gov/authorities/names/n50013944>), Nat Turner (<http://id.loc.gov/authorities/names/n50016161>), Harriet Tubman (<http://id.loc.gov/authorities/names/n79106623>), and most likely many others are not in those results. It was catalogers' judgement that permitted this inconsistent and egregious metadata, and catalogers' judgement also permits bias and discrimination to enter into the authority file.

When the new RDA elements for describing people were introduced to the cataloging community the proponents put forward use cases for the new 3XX tags in MARC, such as finding all the publications by women politicians in the United States. A simple query of “United States AND Politicians AND Females” on the Entity Attributes in Connexion returns only 19 results (Figure 4). Whereas a similar SPARQL query (Figure 5) of Wikidata returns 7526 results (<http://tinyurl.com/y7e5oer6>).

Catalogers are invited (even encouraged) to record very personal information about people. Much of this information qualifies as Personally

Record	Description
1	Anyanwu, Chris Ngozi [100]
2	Brewer, Gale A., #d 1951- [100]
3	Brown, Kate, #d 1960- [100]
4	Clinton, Hillary Rodham [100]
5	Daniels, Geraldine, #d 1933-2012 [100]
6	Davis, Grace Montañez, #d 1926- [100]
7	Diallo Telli, Kadiatou, #d 1928- [100]
8	Feinstein, Dianne, #d 1933- [100]
9	Francis, Jane, #d 1854-1924 [100]
10	Holtzman, Elizabeth [100]
11	Killea, Lucy Lytle, #d 1922-2017 [100]
12	Lee, Denise, #d 1970- [100]
13	Meek, Carrie P., #d 1926- [100]
14	Myrdal, Rosemarie, #d 1929- [100]
15	Obama, Michelle, #d 1964- [100]
16	Pelosi, Nancy, #d 1940- [100]
17	Ryles, Nancy, #d 1937-1990 [100]
18	Solomon, Malama, #d 1951- [100]
19	Warren, Elizabeth [100]

Figure 4. Results of OCLC Connexion authorities search for “United States AND Politicians AND Females” on the Entity Attributes.



The screenshot shows the Wikidata Query Service interface. On the left, the 'Query Helper' panel is active, showing filters for 'instance of' (human), 'sex or gender' (female), 'occupation' (politician), and 'country of citizenship' (United States of America). The main area displays a SPARQL query:

```

1 SELECT DISTINCT ?women WHERE {
2   SERVICE wikibase:label { bd:serviceParam wikibase:language "[AUTO_LANGUAGE],fr,en" . }
3   ?women wdt:P31 wd:Q5.
4   ?women wdt:P21 wd:Q6581072.
5   ?women (wdt:P186/wdt:P279*) wd:Q82955.
6   ?women wdt:P27 wd:Q30.
7 }

```

At the bottom right, a status box indicates the data was updated a few seconds ago on Feb 4, 2019. The bottom status bar shows '726 results in 37 ms' and options for Code, Download, and Link.

Figure 5. SPARQL query of Wikidata for Female politicians in the United States.

Identifiable Information (PII) (<https://nvlpubs.nist.gov/nistpubs/Legacy/SP/nistspecialpublication800-122.pdf>). RDA attributes that qualify as PII according to the definition used by the National Institute of Standards and Technology are Fuller Form of Name; Address of Person (specifically home address and email address); Date Associated with the Person (specifically birth date); and Place of Birth. To a lesser degree but still potentially PII include: Name of the Person, Gender, and Affiliation (specifically if race or ethnicity is recorded, and their school or workplace). Recording this information could

violate a person's privacy, make their personal information vulnerable to bad actors, and even possibly put someone in danger. For example, if we record the email address of a person and that information is used maliciously, we could be putting that person at risk for identity theft. If we record that a person is transgender, this could have serious implications for their safety, particularly in countries where being transgender is illegal.

This emphasizes that we do not know where the information that we record in name authority records will end up. With linked data, this information travels far beyond the servers at OCLC and the Library of Congress. The LCNAF is reconciled against datasets such as the Virtual International Authority File (VIAF), the International Standard Name Identifier (ISNI), and Wikidata. Once the information is published about a person on <http://id.loc.gov> it will stay out there, because as soon as the metadata is made available as an open dataset for anyone to download, cache, and reuse, that metadata is no longer in the control of the original data creators. The Facebook and Cambridge Analytica story (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Facebook-Cambridge_Analytica_data_scandal) illustrates this argument. Catalogers have the best intentions when creating name authority files. The records help users find, identify, and select resources for researchers. But as catalogers and metadata creators are recording more personal information about authors in the name authority files, these wider implications outside the library walls must be considered.

Unreliable library systems

Catalogers choose what information is recorded or left out of authority records. However, after 25 years of FRBR, and nearly 10 years of FRAD, and over 5 years of MARC 3XX tags for recording additionally available information, library catalogs still do not use this data to enhance the user experience to allow patrons to more easily fulfill the FRAD/LRM User Tasks (Rose, 2012). Discovery layers attempt a FRBR-like experience and some succeed better than others, however few (if any) utilize authorities and their rich metadata to help users discover resources in new ways. If authorities metadata is not being fully used in our catalogs, it should not be necessary to record so much information in the first place.

Regardless of data in the authority records, we still do not have a catalog or discovery layer that facilitates a search or browse experience that utilizes the RDA elements being recorded about persons. Given the limited utility of the additional information available, the risks in storing and publishing so much personal information in authority files as linked data clearly outweigh any perceived benefits. Additionally, the new elements were so recently added to our standards and a cursory examination of the LCNAF

reveals that they are inconsistently applied. The recall of a query utilizing any of the new metadata elements about people would be imprecise (as demonstrated by the examples mentioned above). Only a fraction of authority records contain the new elements, so the query results would not be accurate or reliable enough to be helpful to users.

Redundancy & reuse

The extra work of adding these RDA elements could possibly be generating redundant information that already exists in publishers' author questionnaires, or other identity management platforms such as Wikidata, MusicBrainz, IMDb, ISNI, and ORCID. While these sources could also potentially contain harmful/bias information as well, they are either managed by commercial entities (MusicBrainz and IMDb); collaboratively edited and openly maintained (Wikidata); or they do not record as much personally identifying information (ISNI and ORCID) and instead focus on entity names and their related works.

Linked data promised to resolve the redundancy problem and reduce the labor of duplicating metadata through linking and reusing data from linked data sources. Unfortunately, the implementation of linked data in the MARC environment through the new \$1 and \$0 for recording unique resource identifiers (URIs) in bibliographic and authority records seems to have only added more complexity to the cataloging project, rather than simplifying it. Discussions on cataloging list-servs document confusion about when and how to record URIs, and when to use a \$1 and \$0. A recent PCC report on formulating and obtaining URIs (https://www.loc.gov/aba/pcc/bibframe/TaskGroups/formulate_obtain_URI_guide.pdf) sought to clarify the issue, but with so many potential sources of linked data it further proves the increased complexity of our work. With library budgets and technical services staff levels consistently shrinking, we should make our work easier to accomplish rather making it more difficult and cumbersome. If we had cataloging tools that could utilize external URIs and actually reuse the data from open datasets, it has the potential to greatly improve cataloger efficiency and truly create an open Web of linked data.

Questioning authority (work)

It is time we question our own authority. The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education (<http://www.ala.org/acrl/standards/ilframework>) contains six key concepts, and the first concept is one that catalogers and metadata creators should consider: "Authority is constructed and contextual" (<http://www.ala.org>).

org/acrl/standards/ilframework#autho). Resources (even our own standards) reflect the creators' expertise and credibility. Our authority files are a resource, and we create them with our own cultural experiences and biases. As hard as we try to be neutral, that simply is not possible. Every decision we make to record information in an authority file includes a simultaneous decision about what not to record about a person. And what we choose to record or not record can have ramifications far beyond the library experience.

Do the RDA elements help LRM User Tasks? In many ways, they could help users Find, Identify, and Explore the people associated with the resources in our collections, but at what cost? It is not worth publishing personally identifying information to slightly improve the user experience. How exhaustive should authority records be to facilitate user tasks? A cataloger cannot possibly anticipate every possible use case or user need. What evidence do the creators of the LRM have to justify the necessity of recording so much more information about people? As Billey, Drabinski and Roberto (2014) state in an earlier publication, no convincing evidence has been made that justifies the necessity of recording so much more information about people.

Perhaps the IFLA LRM and 3R could be an opportunity to revisit what information is recorded about people? Unfortunately, given the new RDA Steering Committee governance structure (<http://www.rda-rsc.org/rsc-members>) which leaves American catalogers with a single representative for all of North America, the likelihood of these concerns being heard and addressed are slim. FRBR, FRAD, FRSAD—now the LRM, and the new elements that are codified in RDA, were forced upon the cataloging community without much consideration from its members (Coyle, 2016, p. 67) and they are unlikely to change.

So, what can catalogers do? I recommend that we keep our authority records simple and move toward identity management principles in a linked data environment. The truly neutral act that would ensure the privacy of personally identifying information would be to focus on the Name of the entity and their associated Works. Catalogers could choose to simply record:

- Name(s) associated with a public entity
- Associated work(s)
- Lifespan dates (if known and publicly available)
- Field of Activity (Creation class)
- Occupation (Creation role)

We need systems that coin and use URIs for machine processing, as well as utilize the additional metadata for disambiguation by the end-user. So, we can move away from the necessity of unique name strings for data

management in authority files, and instead focus on identity management and linked data reuse in library cataloging. There are projects under way in the library domain that are exploring or already implementing this principle: National Strategy for Shareable Local Name Authorities National Forum (<https://ecommons.cornell.edu/handle/1813/56343>), PCC ISNI Umbrella Membership Pilot (<https://wiki.duraspace.org/display/PCCISNI/PCC+ISNI+Pilot+Home>), NACO Lite (<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/3ss1t4xx>), and the PCC Task Group on Identity Management in NACO (<http://www.loc.gov/aba/pcc/taskgroup/PCC-TG-Identity-Management-in-NACO-rev2018-05-22.pdf>). Existing identity management platforms such as ISNI and ORCID already coin unique identifiers for public entities with their names with a focus on related works and creative relationships, rather than unique name strings and biographical information (<http://www.isni.org/> and <https://orcid.org/about/what-is-orcid/mission>).

If we must continue to add personal information in authority records in accordance with RDA instructions, then we should respect the privacy and dignity of individuals. Record information about people as they describe themselves, using easily/readily available public sources of information. Only record what is necessary for disambiguation. Record enough information so that we can identify between authorities of the same name if necessary. This follows a similar model to Wikipedia with their disambiguation pages for concepts or people that share the name. Then utilizing URIs to shift the goal of authorities to identity management and remove the necessity for unique name strings for disambiguation. Catalogers could then focus on simple contextualizing authority records that take into account the following considerations proposed by Thomson (2016):

Is there potential for this information to harm the [person] through outing or violating the right to privacy?

Is there an indication that the [person] consents to having this information shared publicly?

Will including this information help a library user in the search process? (p. 152)

By utilizing Thompson's proposed consideration when creating new authority records, we can provide unbiased cataloging and fairly represent the creators and contributors of the resources in libraries as outlined in the ALA Code of Ethics and as taught in core cataloging textbooks.

Conclusion

Neutrality is a core tenet of librarianship, although it is widely accepted that cataloging is not a neutral act. FRAD greatly expanded the attributes to record about Persons, and these attributes were codified in RDA. As a result, catalogers now capture much more information about people in

authority records than ever before. The contribution of all this new additional metadata into authority files has the potential to harm the actual *people* being cataloged by misidentifying or censoring information through cataloger bias or by capturing personally identifying information that could be used against the person. This has great ramifications in the linked data environment when the metadata is reused and can no longer be controlled by the individuals or institutions who created the original data. The risks are too great and we have yet to see the results in our discovery systems to rationalize adding so much personal information about people in library authority records. This paper argues that we should return to a simpler, pre-RDA authority record that focuses on entity names and their related works and utilize URIs for machine processing. Leave biographies to bibliographies and encyclopedias. However, the likelihood of changing RDA is slim, but cataloging practices can be adjusted to record only the most necessary information in authority records to curb catalog bias and insure personal data privacy for authors and contributors in authority files.

We try to record information about people, but people are complex and ever-changing beings. In the words of Fuller, Fiore, and Agel (1970),

I live on Earth at present.

And I don't know what I am.

I know that I am not a category.

I am not a thing—a noun.

I seem to be a verb,

an evolutionary process—

An integral function of the universe” (p. [1]).

As catalogers and metadata creators our goal is to record information in a structure to provide access to our collections, but hard as we try, we cannot fix what is always in flux.

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