

RDA Refresher Performance Support: Cataloger Judgment and the Statement of Responsibility

RDA Core Statement (2.4)

“Statement of responsibility relating to title proper is a core element (if more than one, only the first recorded is required). Other statements of responsibility are optional.”

Note that it is *optional* to record other SORs; it is not *prohibited*. Subsequent SORs may convey useful information and/or help users to distinguish different manifestations. If you think a subsequent SOR can help a user, record it. Remember that the first SOR may not be the one that is most important. Follow the guidance provided at 2.4.2.3:

“If not all statements of responsibility appearing on the source or sources of information are being recorded, give preference to those identifying creators of the intellectual or artistic content. In case of doubt, record the first statement.”

One Statement with Multiple Names vs. Multiple Statements (2.4.1.5 and 2.4.1.6)

Remember that a single SOR may list multiple persons, families, or corporate bodies. If the entities are grammatically linked to each other, consider this to be a single statement -- whether the entities perform the same or different functions. This is an example of **2.4.1.5**.

Examples:

- Ellen Goodman, Patricia O’Brien (clearly one statement)
- developed by Dale Kahn with Laurie Fenster (names grammatically linked)
- prepared for the Ethical Union by Mass-Observation (different functions but linked)

Contrast this situation with one in which multiple entities are not grammatically linked to each other. Consider these to be separate statements – and then only the first is required. This is an example of **2.4.1.6**.

Example:

by F. Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald ; selected by Scottie Fitzgerald Smith and Matthew J. Brucoli ; with a foreword by Scottie Fitzgerald Smith (multiple statements)

There are also situations in which multiple names are listed on the source of information with no words or punctuation linking them. This usually occurs when names are listed on separate lines. Determine whether 2.4.1.7 should be applied to supply a statement or statements clarifying the role of the persons, etc. If not, transcribe the names in a single statement and add punctuation for clarity (see 1.7.3).

Record a Statement in its Entirety

For each statement that you decide to record, record the statement in its entirety. An optional omission at 2.4.1.5 allows you to omit any but the first name in each statement that lists more than 3 names. However, the LC-PCC PS states,

“Generally do not omit names in a statement of responsibility.”

But note the word ‘generally’. The prohibition is not absolute. If a statement names a large number of entities – YOU decide what “large” means – you may omit any but the first and replace the others with a summary of what was omitted. If you do omit names, the summary should be in English (the language of the cataloging agency), not the language of the SOR.

Example:

Roger Colbourne [and six others] (note that “... [et al.]” is no longer used)

Clarification of Role (2.4.1.7)

As you could under AACR2, you may “*Add a word or short phrase if necessary to clarify the role of a person, family, or corporate body named in a statement of responsibility. Indicate that the information was taken from a source outside the resource itself*” by enclosing it in brackets.

Abriding a Statement of Responsibility

There is a policy statement (**LC-PCC PS 2.4.1.4**) which addresses the optional omission in RDA: “*Generally do not abridge a statement of responsibility.*”

This means:

‘Generally do not omit titles, affiliations, and degrees appearing in the statement.’

So, if the title page reads: by Dr. Joe Blow, University of Wherever
you record in the 245: ... / \$c by Dr. Joe Blow, University of Wherever.

But, note again the use of the word ‘generally.’

Remember that you can add punctuation for clarity. This can be especially helpful if you have multiple names in a single SOR (see the last example in 1.7.3 for an SOR with commas inserted between names and parentheses added around affiliations).

In Conclusion ...

- With a good reason, you may exercise judgment to omit either
 - names beyond the first in each ‘group’ of responsible entities, or
 - titles/degrees/affiliations, or
 - subsequent statements of responsibility after the first you choose to record
- If you omit names, you *must* indicate what has been omitted
- If you omit titles/degrees/affiliations, *do not* indicate what has been omitted
- If you omit statements of responsibility, use judgment in deciding which ones can be omitted without the loss of important identifying information

Test Yourself! If you want more practice, try the online quiz, “RDA Refresher: Cataloger Judgment and the Statement of Responsibility,” available from COIN’s “RDA Refreshers” website, <http://www.loc.gov/staff/lstraining/trgmat/rda-refresh/>