

A DRAFT
NOTES

TITLE: What's gender got to do with it? A critique of RDA rule 9.7

Quarterly

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Cataloging and Classification

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MARC records; our work wasn't boring to this author Once the bibliographic record was

complete and to the author's liking, we moved on to the authority record. We worked our way

"cisgender" is a term commonly used to refer to non

female from a glance at the title page, the author's biographical

made no sense that the Library of Congress would be interested in the author's gender, why

didn't want to disclose gender, they would

According to LC, the fact that the author had a "feminine" name was sufficient to direct the

RDA for NACO Catalogers: 2d. MARC 21 in NACO RDA

Authority Records: Personal Names

says, "We're

equipment? Not who you go to bed with." Polutta goes on to explain how to make a "safe assumption" of someone's gender based on their name and biographical information.

ways of conceptualizing sex and gender that challenge LC and NACO's narrow articulation of

really

really

alternate labels, RDA's insistence on the relevance of gender as a descriptive attribute reifies

analyzed and critiqued LC classification as "passively hostile"

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describe

specific directive by NACO to include any information about a person's gender in their authority

several sources for deriving the list of attributes for persons: IFLA's FRBR and Guidelines for

"appropriate" term (female, male, not known), and, if none of the terms are appropriate, record

In early 2008, ALA's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Round

"does not acknowledge the fluidity and variety of possible gender identity or identities of

le."

natural and binary by many people, it isn't by everyone. In fact, gender identities are complex

female pronouns. Or uses "they" and "their" or "ze" and "hir." Or uses no pronouns at all. When

to know, and know completely, about an individual. Indeed, "unknown" is listed as the only

next doesn't conform to many trans people's narratives, and many transgender people don't

requirement ties changes in gender markers to specific events in a person's life that are legible

Melanie Polutta states, "You can't really expand beyond those [male, female, not known] at this point in time... You don't have any authorized terminology for fuzzy areas" (07:03:07). This statement dismisses people's lived realities, and the words they already use to describe

Chaz Bono's authority record provides a useful example of the problems

authority record has been used as a training example in Ana Lupe Cristián's September 12,

RDA Elements in Name Authority Records (NARS): MARC 21 Fields

istán begins by suggesting that, "There's not much to say about gender...if you don't have a picture or some other clue it's best not to code this field, but to leave it out." problematic in part because it locates authority about a person's gender

look like

useful for "unisex" and non

, Chaz Bono's authority record to demonstrate how dates can

Cristián experiences Chaz Bono's gender

does not account for Bono's lived experience of his gender, which was

"female." While the actual person, Sheldon, may have

ale. In this case, the cataloger has had to seek out the "truth" of Tiptree's gender,

Recording Tiptree's gender as female adds

gender as "female."

work and call himself Big Freedra Queen Diva, in a 2011 interview Big Freedra stated "I am not transgendered; I am just a gay male... I wear women's hair and carry a purse, but I am a

drivers licenses at the DMV, on the survey forms that comprise census records, at the doctor's

construct authority pages for authors. Marking an author's gender would allow users seeking a

description cannot solve. RDA's decision to forego marking the ethnicity of authors, for example,

er 'he' or 'she.'"

about security and discrimination. By blithely noting an author's gender transition via authority record, catalogers remove that person's

us, the cataloger's impulse to fully describe an item.

simply aren't there.

ender is not a "core" or require

" plumbing" of Chaz Bono over t

representation and description of the individual author's authority record. While we see this