

FRBR

Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records

With all the hype around Harry Potter this month it's a good time to talk about FRBR (Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records). FRBR isn't a standard, it's a set of concepts aimed to rationalize the way we present bibliographic data to users. Leveraging FRBR will help get users to what they need without all the distinctions that are important to us for collection management and inventory control, but aren't necessarily important to users. Excuse me, but did you want Scholastic edition or the Raincoast edition of *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows*?

Yes, even though *Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows* hasn't been released yet there are already 14 records in WorldCat. Some of the differences such as paper, audio CD, large print could be important to the reader, but others really don't matter to the millions of library users who can't wait to see how Book 7 ends.

So, let's talk about the FRBR concepts of

- Work
- Expression
- Manifestation
- Item

Work ("A distinct intellectual or artistic creation")

Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows

Expression ("The intellectual or artistic realization of a work")

The book. The original, English-language version is one expression; Each translation will represent alternative expressions.

Manifestation ("The physical embodiment of an expression")

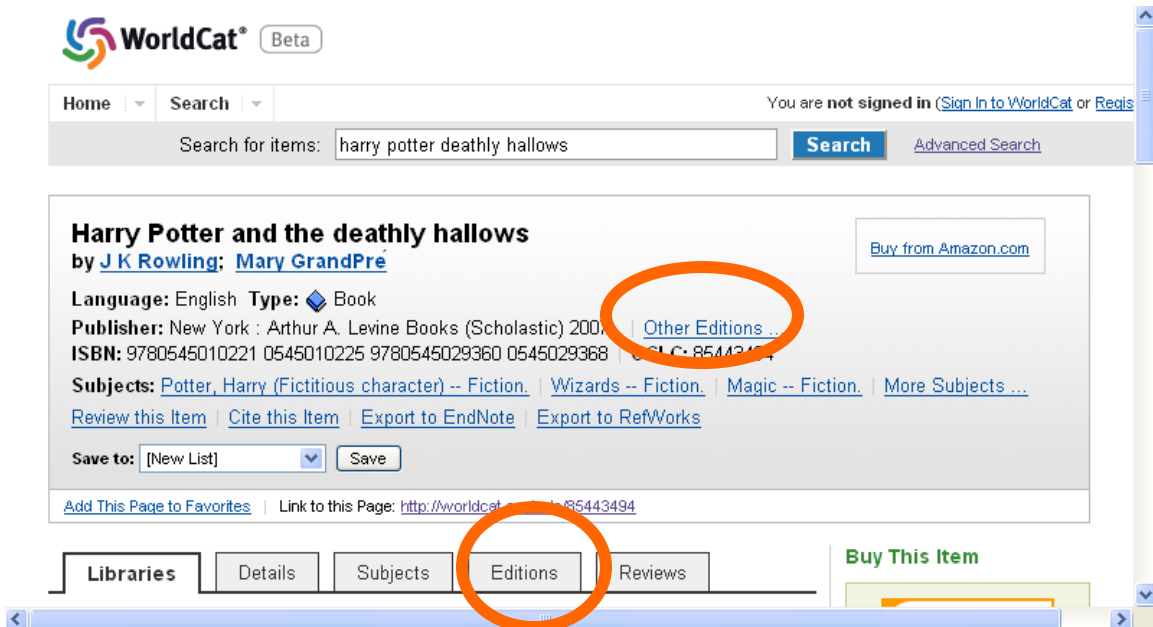
There are several manifestations.

For the book there's print, large print, Braille, library binding....

Item ("A single exemplar of a manifestation")

The specific manifestation you're using. Or, in my case, the one copy of the many, many my public library will have available. I'm number 672 on the wait list!

WorldCat.org is using FRBR principles to make it easier for users to find what they're looking for. If you search "Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows" in Amazon, you'll see one record and a note that there are 7 other editions with links to those other editions. Amazon doesn't care about FRBR, but they care about making it easy for the customer to find the edition they want to buy. WorldCat.org uses FRBR principles to help guide users to their libraries. Search "Harry Potter and Deathly Hallows," and you get one record with a link and tabs to other editions.



To learn more about FRBR and WorldCat go to:

<http://www.oclc.org/research/projects/frbr/>