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RESOURCE DESCRIPTION & ACCESS

STRATEGIES FOR  
IMPLEMENTATION

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**RESOURCE DESCRIPTION & ACCESS**

# STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

MAGDA EL-SHERBINI



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# PREFACE



**THE IDEA FOR THIS BOOK CAME FROM CHRISTOPHER L. Rhodes**, acquisitions editor, ALA Editions, who saw the need for an RDA handbook that would address some of the basic precepts of RDA theory and implementation. I was delighted to accept his invitation to author this manuscript. Although the topic is very broad, my task was to present a practical compendium of necessary information that would enable a starting RDA practitioner to begin the process of implementation of the new standard.

This book is an introduction to RDA, and is not intended to cover every aspect or discuss every nuance in detail. It is rather a practical handbook addressed to those who have heard of RDA but are not sure what to think of it. I hope that it will shed some needed light on the new code and help to bring about the transition from AACR2 to RDA.

My own involvement with RDA goes back to ALA's 2007 Midwinter Conference, when I joined the ALA RDA Publisher Advisory Group. Later, my own library became a beta test site for RDA Toolkit. When the RDA Code was released in June 2010, OSUL was part of the US national test. I conducted training for my staff on the RDA Code and the use of RDA Toolkit. At the same time, I conducted workshops and webinars in Ohio to familiarize librarians with the new product. This handbook is a result of my involvement with RDA over the last few years.

As I developed the outline for this book and started to research the topic, I discovered a wealth of material on the Internet. The library community has been debating many of the issues involved with RDA at its various stages of development, and I am grateful to all those librarians who were willing to share their thoughts and observations through conferences, discussion groups, and the Web.

This book describes the status of RDA as of January 2012. Many of the issues have not been settled yet, and many are likely to change as we go forward. The actual RDA implementation will take place in the first quarter of 2013, when all the revisions and rewriting of RDA Toolkit will be completed. From now until 2013, libraries will need to make plans for RDA implementation. It is my hope that this book will set the stage for implementation and provide some guidelines for the decision making process.

I would like to acknowledge many colleagues for their contributions to this book. Although it is impossible to thank everyone who made a contribution, I would like to thank Adam L. Schiff, principal cataloger at the University of Washington, and Judy Kuhagen and David Reser at the Library of Congress Policy and Standards Division for their comments and valuable feedback.

I also would like to acknowledge Barbara B. Tillett, Chief, Policy and Standards Division, Library of Congress, for making her RDA and FRBR presentations available to the library community. Many thanks go to the Library of Congress for making all the RDA test documentation accessible. I also would like to thank the cataloging staff at The Ohio State University Libraries for providing me with title pages of materials. Special acknowledgment and thanks to my husband, George Klim, for editing the final copy and providing valuable comments. Most of all, I would like to thank my son, Adam Klim, for being patient, kind, and supportive throughout this process.

# FROM AACR2 TO RDA

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**RESOURCE DESCRIPTION AND ACCESS (RDA), THE NEW** cataloging code, has been one of the hot topics of discussion on library forums and at professional conferences since 2005. Because the Internet emerged as an important tool for accessing information and electronic publications became increasingly difficult to catalog, classify, and describe, libraries were confronted with the need to examine their traditional tools for description in order to address the challenges of describing the new electronic and digital resources.

The second edition of the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules* (AACR2) remained the dominant cataloging standard, but it presented growing challenges when attempts were made to apply it to Internet-based materials. Cataloging the Internet became an emerging trend in libraries and a major concern for catalogers.

The first edition of the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules* (AACR) was published in 1978. Since that date, there have been many updates and revisions generated from the revision process established by the Joint Steering Committee for the Development of RDA (JSC) of the American Library Association. AACR2 was developed for an environment dominated by the card catalog. The International Conference on the Principles and Future Development of AACR held in Toronto in 1997 identified substantive problems with AACR2. Although the updates issued in the years following that conference addressed some of these problems, it eventually became clear that a fundamental rethinking of AACR2 was required to respond fully to the challenges and opportunities of the digital age.

Recognizing the need to update AACR2, the JSC strategic plan included a new edition of AACR which was scheduled for publication in 2008. In December 2004, a draft of part I of AACR3 was made available to the constituency for review, and the responses were discussed at the April 2005 meeting. Following that discussion, and in response to the constituency's review of the draft of part I, the JSC and the Committee of Principals decided to take a different approach to the new edition. Because the third edition was a radical departure from preceding editions, a decision was made to use the new working title "Resource Description and Access" (Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA 2009).

The library community has been waiting for the release of the new standard since April 2005, and predictions and speculation about the new code are reflected in professional library literature. Medeiros (2005) discussed the goals of RDA and described its potential uses by a large community of information professionals. The same author (Medeiros 2006) gave a brief discussion at the RDA Forum that was held at the 2006 ALA Midwinter Meeting in San Antonio, Texas. A number of practical problems that are likely to arise with the implementation of RDA were discussed by Intner (2006). The author pointed out two main problems: (1) "materials collected by libraries have become more varied and sophisticated since [AACR] first appeared in 1978," and (2) "catalogers as a group have not developed greater inclination to take risks." Intner speculated that "great challenges await the third millennium's new cataloging rules." Hillmann (2006) expressed concerns about transcription and specified sources of information, reliance on notes, and multiple versions.

As RDA continued to develop, the library community offered its opinions and commentary on the proposed changes. Librarians wrote articles about the new code and shared information in order to enhance awareness of the changes among the library community. Duszak (2006) presented general information on the RDA cataloging code, including the scheduled publication dates and major organizations that were involved in the development of the code. In addition, the author provided readers with a list of 15 important facts about RDA.

Bowen (2005) became one of the key contributors to the discussion of RDA as the new code grew and developed. She presented questions and answers related to RDA as a standard designed to replace the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, Second Edition* (AACR2). In her RDA Update, she contributed updated information

on the results of a Joint Steering Committee (JSC) meeting held in Ottawa, Ontario, from April 24 to 28, 2006 (Bowen 2006). She also provided information about other conferences and forums related to the development of RDA.

Moore (2006) presented an overview of the history and processes involved in creating the new cataloging rules. She discussed the structure and the content of RDA and the possibility of non-library and non-MARC information communities, as well as librarians, using the codes. Weiss and Molly (2006) provided the context for this new standard and explained the work that had been done by the JSC. They covered the rationale behind the new standard, the process of developing the first draft, reactions to that draft, and the current direction of the JSC's work.

Much of the early work on RDA consisted of descriptions of the changes, as well as predictions about the future of the new standard. As the publication date approached, authors began to focus their attention on the implementation and various practical aspects of using RDA.

This text has been prepared for catalogers and technical services staff to assist them in making the transition from AACR2 rev. to RDA. It will focus on addressing the differences between RDA and AACR2 rev., understanding the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) *Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records* (IFLA Study Group on the Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records 1988), explaining RDA Toolkit (2010–) and how it works, and highlighting the key adjustments that catalogers will need to make initially as they undertake the transition process to RDA. Examples illustrating key features will be presented throughout the book and practice questions will be included with key answers.

This book

- Is a comprehensive overview of RDA.
- Is intended for all library cataloging staff in all types of libraries, with special emphasis on academic.
- Provides tips on how to make the transition from AACR2 to RDA seem less difficult.
- Describes the Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR) in relation to RDA.
- Explains the structure of RDA and how RDA Toolkit works.
- Provides many examples from various resources.

This book is a discussion of key issues related to RDA. The author's objective is to help prepare catalogers for the implementation of RDA.

Chapter 1 is an introduction that discusses the history and background of AACR2, the need for a new cataloging code, the objectives and principles of RDA, the benefits to users and catalogers, and collaboration with other communities and standards.

Chapter 2 provides a detailed comparison between RDA and AACR2 in order to illustrate the similarities and differences between the two standards.

Chapter 3 discusses RDA implementation strategies and includes the following topics:

- General tips for catalogers
- Selecting the type of RDA description
- Transcribing data elements from the source
- Decision-making by catalogers
- Integrating new RDA records with the legacy records and making a decision to re-catalog a set of manifestations
- Exporting RDA-based bibliographic records from the Online Computer Library Catalog (OCLC) into your Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC)
- RDA and the PCC participants
- RDA's effect on OPAC displays
- Strategy for implementing the new MARC 21 fields to accommodate the new RDA elements
- Adjusting the online system to accommodate the new MARC 21 fields
- Authority processing using vendor services and RDA
- Accessing RDA records from OCLC and LC

Chapter 4 offers an explanation of the Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR) and Functional Requirements for Authority Data (FRAD). In this chapter, the reader will find an explanation of FRBR Group 1, Group 2, and Group 3 entities. A section is devoted to the FRBR user's tasks, FRBR-group relationships, basic principles of FRAD, FRAD's impact on RDA application, and RDA structure.

Chapter 5 provides descriptions of manifestation and item. It includes discussions about pre-cataloging decisions, language and script, transcription, preferred source of information, and mandatory elements of description.

Chapter 6 discusses works and expressions for specific library materials. This includes recording the primary relationship between manifestation and work embodied in the manifestation, constructing the authorized access point, and recording relationships.

Chapter 7 provides tips for using RDA Toolkit, and includes instructions on how to search and browse RDA Toolkit, how to create a workflow, how to use AACR2 rule numbers to search RDA, and how to search using RDA elements versus the table of contents.

Chapter 8 provides RDA examples of specific types of library materials. Most of the examples are taken from the Library of Congress catalog, The Ohio State University catalog, and the University of Chicago catalog. Some examples were created to illustrate specific situations in cataloging.

Chapter 9 includes three checklists: a copy cataloging checklist, an original cataloging checklist, and an authority records checklist. These are based on checklists created by several libraries, with some modifications and additions that are appropriate for a more general discussion.

This book also includes a comprehensive list of readings and references.

## I. HISTORY AND BACKGROUND

The history of AACR2 is well documented. The Joint Steering Committee (JSC) of the American Library Association (ALA) offers a good, brief description on their website (Joint Steering Committee 2009). Development of cataloging rules goes back to when Panizzi (1841) recorded rules for the catalogs of the British Museum. In 1883 the “Condensed Rules for an Author and Title Catalog” were published by the American Library Association in *Library Journal*. About a decade later, the United Kingdom Library Association (LA) (1893) published the *Cataloguing Rules*. Between 1904 and 1967, ALA and LA tried to consolidate their efforts and publish a single set of cataloging rules. The first international cataloging code was published in 1908 in an American edition in two separate versions, North American and British (American Library Association 1908). In 1949 the Library of Congress created rules for descriptive cataloging for their own use. The American Library Association adopted these rules.

The 1949 rules went through several developments, revisions, and editing, which led to publication of two versions of the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules* (AACR) in 1967: a North American text and a British text (American Library Association 1967).

All texts of the AACR consisted of three parts:

### **Part I, Entry and Heading**

- Based on the Paris Principles, the 1949 ALA rules, and Lubetzky’s 1960 draft

### **Part II, Description**

- Consisted of revised rules from the 1949 Library of Congress rules

### **Part III, Non-Book Materials**

- Contained rules for both entry and description of non-book materials.
- Consisted of revised rules from the 1949 Library of Congress rules, and supplementary Library of Congress rules.

A program of International Standard Bibliographic Description (ISBD) was developed at the International Meeting of Cataloguing Experts in Copenhagen in 1969. The ISBD organizes the description of an item into distinct areas: title, statement of responsibility, edition, resource specific information, publication, physical description, series, notes, and standard number identifiers (ISBD (M) ).

In 1974 the Joint Steering Committee for the Revision of AACR (JSC) was established and was charged with incorporating the North American and British texts into a single version. In 1978, the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules*, Second Edition (AACR2) was published in one version unifying the two sets of rules, and made them consistent with the ISBD (American Library Association 2002).

The second edition of AACR2 was divided into two parts:

**Part I, Description**

- Is based on the ISBD framework
- Includes a general chapter (chapter 1) and chapters for individual formats, including new chapters for machine-readable data files (chapter 9) and three-dimensional artifacts and realia (chapter 10)
- Bases rules for non-book materials on alternative codes that were published in the 1970s

**Part II, Entry and Heading**

- Brings rules more closely in line with the Paris Principles

Key principles of AACR include cataloging from the item “in hand” rather than inferring information from external sources, and the concept of a chief source of information that is the preferred source where conflicts exist.

The Library of Congress, the National Library of Canada, the British Library, and the Australian National Library adopted AACR2 in 1981. Since its publication in 1978, AACR2 has undergone many amendments and revisions (in 1988, 1998, and 2002) that reflect changes in entry procedures and the development of new formats, particularly emerging formats such as electronic resources (Adamich 2008).

With the advent of new publishing formats, especially electronic versions of original paper documents, catalogers found that the AACR2 rules were either too specific or difficult to use in describing this new content (Huthwaite 2001).

In 1997 the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) for the Development of RDA held an International Conference on the Principles and Future Developments of AACR in Toronto, Canada. The participants identified a number of issues of concern with AACR. These included the principles of AACR2, content versus carrier, the logical structure of the AACR2 rules, the way to handle serials, internationalization of the rules, amendments to the rules revision process, and incorporating FRBR terminology and concepts (Manning 1998). To address some of these concerns, a draft of part I of the third revised edition of AACR2 was issued in 2003 under the name of AACR3 to address rules for description (Chapman 2006). This draft was made available to the library community in 2004 and comments were solicited. Based on comments and feedback, the JSC changed their direction and decided to adopt a new title that would reflect a move away from Anglocentrism. The words “Anglo-American” and “cataloguing” were removed. The new title, Resource Description and Access, was considered to be more appealing and more easily understood by other metadata communities (Rhodes 2010).

The first RDA draft was made available to the library community for comments in 2008. It was released in June 23, 2010, as the web-based RDA Toolkit. RDA was tested by the Library of Congress, National Library of Medicine, National Agricultural Library, and 20 other libraries across the country for 6 months after its publication. The British Library, Library and Archives Canada, and the National Library of Australia monitored the US national libraries’ tests, but did not conduct testing at the same level (Library of Congress 2009).



The following chart shows the time line of the development of AACR2 and RDA.

AACR2		RDA	
1839	Panizzi's British Museum Rules		
1853	Jewett's Rules		
1876	Cutter's Rules		
1883	American Library Association		
1893	United Kingdom, Library Association		
1908	Anglo-American Rules		
1941	ALA Draft		
1949	LC Rules		
1967	AACR 1st edition		
1978	AACR 2nd edition		
1988	AACR2 2nd edition revision		
		1997	International Conference on the Principles and Future Development of AACR
1998	Revision		
2002	Revision		
2003–5	Updates	2003	AACR3 draft
		2005	Move to RDA
		2010	RDA release

## II. THE NEED FOR A NEW CATALOGING CODE

New types of publications, such as PDF files and digital content, were being created. AACR2 does not provide guidelines for cataloging these materials. Users have different expectations of what a library catalog is and what it can do. The growing popularity of the Internet and the ease of accessing data through the Web created the need for a response from libraries. Library catalogs had to improve their functionality and their interfaces to provide users with an easy way of searching and retrieving information with a single search.

It was imperative that libraries create a new code that covers the rapidly expanding range of information packages, especially electronic and online resources (Huthwaite 2001). Some of AACR2's limitations are:

- Limitations of the class of material concept when describing materials that belong to more than one class of materials

- Alteration in recording data to save space by using abbreviations and the rule of three. Space limitation has been eliminated in RDA and no adjustment is necessary. This change allows libraries to use metadata from publishers or from digital objects without changing this data
- Inadequate rules for the description of continuing resources

Libraries have developed a new set of principles—FRBR and FRAD—that provides the underlying basis for cataloging rules. This set of principles (IFLA 2008) supports

- User tasks (find, identify, select, obtain)
- A better understanding of the range of relationships in the bibliographic universe
- The clustering of bibliographic records to show relationships between works and their creators to make the user more aware of the work's different editions, translations, or physical formats
- New methods to record information that improve search, navigation, and retrieval of appropriate sets of records

In the last few decades, technology has made great strides in the delivery of digital information. Information technology systems now have the capacity to store these resources and to manage them in different ways.

Catalogs and cataloging rules and indexes have enabled improved management of information encompassed in physical items (books, serials, videos, etc.). Many new communities recognize the need for metadata. There are multiple metadata standards that are attempting to define various new formats and resources (MARC, Dublin Core, ISBD, EAD, MARCXML, etc.). AACR2 and RDA are also metadata standards.

Using RDA will help to ensure consistency and interoperability, which will only improve and strengthen the library's position in the information environment. It will enable libraries to keep pace with other information providers, including Amazon, Indigo, Library Thing, etc.

AACR was perceived as having a strong Anglo-American bias (despite being translated into many other languages). The new standard attempts to base cataloging code on internationally agreed principles and to remove this bias. Its goal is to create something completely international, and to extend it beyond the library world to others (museums, archives, and publishers in particular) (Cossham 2009).

There are some basic problems with the current rules, as shown by the regular revisions of the Library of Congress Rule Interpretations. Examples of problems with AACR2 include the "class of materials" concept and the shortcomings of the rules for general (GMD) and special material designations (SMD), outdated and complex terminology, deficiencies in the rules for cataloging digital resources, and the retention of a card-catalog focus. The rules are also complex, and need simplification if they are to work as an international content standard for metadata (Rhodes 2010).

## DESIRE FOR A PRINCIPLE-BASED SET OF GUIDELINES

AACR is case-based (and based on convention, e.g., ISBD); RDA aims to be more principle-based, so that catalogers can use more judgment rather than have to learn so many different rules (Kiorgaard and Kartus 2006).

### III. RDA OBJECTIVES

**Cost efficiency.** Descriptive data should meet the functional requirements in a cost-effective manner.

**A flexible framework for describing all resources—*analog and digital*.** The data function independently of the format, medium, or system used to store or communicate them. Descriptive data is amenable to use in a variety of environments. There is no reference in the main rules to ISBD or MARC; rules simply state what should be recorded, not how to record it. No attempt is made in the examples to show how the element is recorded.

**Continuity.** Descriptive data is compatible with existing records in the online library catalog. It will integrate existing files with a minimum of retrospective adjustment to those files.

**Blended conceptual models** of Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR) and Functional Requirements for Authority Data (FRAD) help users find information more easily.

### IV. RDA PRINCIPLES

**Differentiation.** Descriptive data provided should serve to differentiate the resource described from other resources represented in the file.

**Sufficiency.** Descriptive data should be sufficient to meet the needs of the user with respect to selection of an appropriate resource.

**Relationships.** Descriptive data should indicate significant bibliographic relationships between the resource described and other resources.

**Representation.** Descriptive data should reflect the resource's representation of itself.

**Accuracy.** Descriptive data should furnish supplementary information to correct or clarify ambiguous, unintelligible, or misleading representations made by the resource itself.

**Common usage.** The guidelines and instructions for recording data elements other than those transcribed from the resource itself should reflect common usage.

**Uniformity.** Guidelines and instructions provided in the appendixes on capitalization, numerals, abbreviations, order of elements, punctuation, etc., should serve to promote uniformity in the presentation of descriptive data.

## V. RDA'S IMPACT ON CATALOGING

- RDA will not affect classification systems or call numbers; Dewey and LC can be used as before.
- It can be used with MARC 21 and many other formats.
- Authority records will be affected. The MARC 21 authorities formats will include new fields to deal with RDA details.
- Bibliographic records will no longer fall under RDA's auspices because abbreviations are no longer used and new MARC 21 fields are introduced.
- New MARC 21 fields are created; for example, General Material Designation (GMD) will be replaced by three new terms:

**Content type:** MARC 21 tag 336 (336 two-dimensional image  
\$2 rdacontent)

**Media type:** MARC 21 tag 337 (337 video \$2 rdamedia)

**Carrier type:** MARC 21 tag 338 (338 videodisc \$2 rdacarrier)

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