Cataloging Around the Bend:  
The Anticipated Implementation of RDA

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- **Paving the way**
  - Refresher in historical cataloging theories
  - Major changes in cataloging codes leading to AACR2

- **The Current Debate**
  - What is RDA and why is it needed?
  - Differences between RDA and AACR2
  - Reactions and Criticisms

- **What to expect**
  - What still needs to be considered?
  - Timeline
150 Years of Cataloging Code
(in just a few minutes)

- 1800’s
  - Anthony Panizzi - *Rules for the Compilation of the Catalogue* (1841)
    * Collocation by author
    * Identify and distinguish editions, translations, etc.
    * Assemble all editions so user can choose
  - Charles Ammi Cutter - *Rules for a Dictionary Catalog* (1876)
    * allow the user to find a book
      * if the title author and subject is known
    * show the user what the library has
      * by a given author, on a given subject, in a given kind of literature
    * assist in the user’s choice of the book
      * as to its edition and to its character

- First half of 1900’s
  - Various codes by ALA and BL (1902, 1908, 1941, 1949)
  - ALA’s “Red” and LC’s “Green” books (1949)
150 Years of Cataloging Codes
(in just a few minutes, cont’d)

  - Purpose of the catalog:
    - to show whether the library contains a particular book based on its author and/or title
    - and to show which works by a particular author and which editions of a particular work are in the library
  - 12 sections based on structure and function of the catalog, kinds and use of entries, and kinds of authorship
  - Esteemed as a landmark in Universal Bibliographic Control

- Anglo American Cataloging Rules (AACR) (1967)
  - Two versions (NA and UK)
  - Incorporated Paris Principles, ALA and LC’s 1949 rules
  - Three parts: Entry and Heading, Description, Non-book formats
150 Years of Cataloging Codes
(in just a few minutes, cont’d)

- International Standard for Bibliographic Description (1971)
  - A content and display standard
    - Interchangeable across countries
    - Interpretation across language barriers
    - Conversion of records to machine-readable form
- AACR2 (1978)
  - Unified the separate US and UK codes
  - Incorporated the use of ISBD
  - It was organized into two parts
    - Part I. Description (which absorbed section 3 of the original AACR for various formats)
    - Part II. Headings, uniform titles, and references
  - Rules for the description of library materials and how to provide access points for this materials
  - Added to chapters and added formats
Which brings us to the present…

- Problems with AACR2
  - written when “library catalog” still meant “card catalog”
  - difficult to adapt to digital resources
  - too complex and intricate
  - lacked internationalization
  - has little use outside of library profession
  - inconsistencies throughout the chapters
  - limitations of existing GMDs and SMDs (outdated)
  - the multiple versions problem
  - separation of content vs carrier concepts
Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records

- A conceptual framework meant to:
  - Address cataloging issues such as
    - Constantly changing information environment
    - Emergence of new formats (multiple issues problem)
    - Increasing density of networked information resources
  - Display bibliographic relationships hierarchically
    - Work (ex. *One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest* by Ken Kesey)
    - Expression (ex. the film directed by Miloš Forman)
    - Manifestation (ex. the special edition DVD version)
    - Item (ex. copy 1 at the Chicago Public Library, Harold Washington Branch)
  - Highlights attributes
  - User tasks which embody principles of Panizzi and Cutter
    - “Though a reader may know the work he requires; he cannot be expected to know all the peculiarities of different editions; and this information he has a right to expect from the catalogues”
    - Find, Identify, Select, and Obtain
Functional Requirements for Authority Data

- Originally referred to as FRAR (records)
- Conceptual model for access points and authority control
- Focuses on personal, corporate, and family names and their controlled access points
- BUT nothing has been documented yet about its application to real authority files
- Also in the works, FRSAR (subject auth. rec.)
Why not AACR3?

- Began in 2004 as AACR3
  - Proposed structure too awkward
- Renamed Resource Description and Access in 2005
  - needed to be a more vigorous overhaul of the cataloging code and a complete rewriting of the text
  - Integrate FRBR principles
  - More metadata friendly
  - Less library jargon -> eschews word “cataloging”
What is RDA?

“RDA is the new standard for resource description and access designed for the digital world. Built on the foundations established by AACR2, RDA provides a comprehensive set of guidelines and instructions on resource description and access covering all types of content and media.”

- Set of guidelines and instructions for the content of descriptive metadata (resources, persons, corporate bodies)
- Defines **what** goes into a descriptive record but **not how** it is encoded or displayed
- Standard designed for the Web environment
- Is itself a web-based tool
- Based on theories FRBR and FRAD
Intentions of RDA

- RDA aims to:
  - be international
  - be independent of formats
  - be simpler to use
  - be easily applied to a variety of resources with minimum specific instruction
  - be adaptable, flexible, extensible framework
  - create records usable across fields and schemes
Format of RDA

- Divided into 2 parts, 10 sections, 37 chapters, 12 appendices, 1 glossary

  - Attributes (Chpts. 1-16):
    - Sect. 1. Recording attributes of manifestation and item
    - Sect. 2. Recording attributes of work and expression
    - Sect. 3. Recording attributes of person, family, and corporate body
    - Sect. 4. Recording attributes of concept, object, event and place relationships between entities
Format of RDA, cont’d

- Relationships (Chpts. 17-37):
  - Sect. 5 – Primary relationships between a work/expressions/manifestations/items
  - Sect. 6 – Relationships to persons, families or corporate bodies
  - Sect. 7 – Subject relationships
  - Sect. 8 – Relationships between different works, expressions, manifestations and items
  - Sect. 9 – Relationships between different persons, families, corporate bodies
  - Sect. 10 – Relationships between concepts, objects, events and places

- Appendices
Differing foundations and format

- **AACR2**
  - Integrated with ISBD
  - Based on Paris Principles
  - Divided into two parts
    - Description
    - Headings, Uniform Titles, and References
  - Statement of responsibility is required
  - Format is first decision

- **RDA**
  - ISBD is optional
  - Based on FRBR & FRAD
  - Divided into two parts
    - Recording attributes
    - Recording relationships
  - Statement of responsibility is optional
    - Reduces redundancy
    - Compatible with other metadata schema
  - Identification of resource type is first decision
Changes in Terminology

- **AACR2**
  - Item
  - Heading
  - Main Entry
    - Uniformity in citations
  - Added Entry
  - Uniform Title
  - Chief source of info.
  - Authority control
  - GMD

- **RDA**
  - Resource
  - Access point
  - Primary access point
    - “Main entry” not used
  - Secondary access point
  - Citation access point
  - Preferred source of info.
  - Access point control
  - Media, carrier, content type
Initial reactions to RDA

- Filled with contradictions
  - Aims to be international
    - but ISBD is optional
    - Anglo American bias in membership of JSC
  - Aims to be simple
    - but many argue that it more difficult to use because it can be both too vague and too specific
  - Trying to break with the past for a greater change
    - but built on the foundations of AACR
  - Mean to be format-less
    - but still textually biased

- Not enough testing
  - WGFBC - suspend work on RDA; FRBR not tested; need more cost evaluation; id. real benefits of implementation

- Not radical enough
  - Keeps us rooted in the 20th century
Reactions Post-Draft Review

  - Agreement that new code is needed
  - Delay in release damages credibility
  - Insufficient amount of time
  - Released in differing format from final product
  - Typos, errors, faulty references galore
  - Unclear = “not written in clear plain English”
  - No demonstration available
  - Still not enough reaching across fields
Concerns still to be resolved

- What about MARC?
  - MARBI
  - Flat records
- Multiple records
  - Dual records for AACR2 and RDA records
- OCLC
  - Been very quiet
- Online only
  - Will only be available online
- Subscription
  - Purchasing book once vs. annual subscription/licensing fees
Where is RDA Now?

- Full draft released in PDF Nov. 17, 2008
- Comment period on full draft ended Feb. 2, 2009
- JSC compiled comments at March 2009 meeting
- RDA content finalized 2nd quarter 2009
- RDA release, 3rd quarter 2009
- Testing by national libraries, 3rd-4th quarters 2009
- Analysis and evaluation, 1st-2nd quarters 2010
- Implementation(?) 3rd-4th quarters 2010
- Subject to change
Resources for further information

- **Understanding FRBR: What It Is and How It Will Affect Our Retrieval Tools**, edited by Arlene Taylor
- JSC for the Development of RDA
- RDA-L
  - [LISTSERV@LISTSERV.LAC-BAC.GC.CA](mailto:LISTSERV@LISTSERV.LAC-BAC.GC.CA)
- Various blogs, listservs, committee pages
Articles consulted:


