

ALCTS Heads of Cataloging Interest Group
ALA Annual Conference
“Preparing Copy Catalogers for RDA”
27 June 2011

Topic overview: During this session, presenters will discuss the RDA Toolkit, preparation of staff for non-book formats using RDA, and other formal and informal training used to ready catalogers for RDA.

Moderator: Linda Smith Griffin (Chair), Louisiana State University

Presenters: Troy Linker, Publisher, ALA Digital Reference, American Library Association
Jeannette Ho, Coordinator of Cataloging, Texas A & M University Libraries
Nancy Kall, Catalog Librarian, Douglas County Libraries, Colorado
Robert Rendall, Principal Serials Cataloger, Columbia University Libraries

Recorder: Christopher Cronin (Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect), University of Chicago

Presentation Slides: The presenters have kindly made their slides available on the Heads of Cataloging IG’s ALA Connect page at: <http://connect.ala.org/node/66155>.

The meeting was very well attended with 75 people signing the attendance sheets. The majority of attendees were from academic institutions.

Troy Linker, Publisher, ALA Digital Reference, American Library Association

- Double use offer for the RDA Toolkit has been extended for an extra year to 31 August 2012, which could prove especially use for copy cataloging because an institution can double the amount of subscriptions at no extra cost. Details at <http://www.rdatoolkit.org/blog/189>.
- ALA is planning on having three “virtual user group” meetings per year, which will work like webinars and allow users to exchange ideas on how to improve the Toolkit.
 - First one will be July 12/11. Someone from the Test Coordinating Committee will be there. ALA will demo the new ToC design, the ability to re-order results by rule number, relevancy ranking, and also the speed issue related to loading the entire chapter will be fixed soon. Rather than load the whole chapter for context, it will load according to logical page breaks.
- Troy clarified that rather than use the word “rewrite,” the Coordinating Committee should more appropriately have used the word “reword” in its RDA recommendations, as the content of the instructions will not change, just the language. ALA will approach the editorial process in much the same way it does for translations, where they update wording/language.
- *Question from audience: Is it better to go to the Toolkit through Cataloger’s Desktop, rather than the Toolkit directly?*

- Answer: This is really user preference. When you open the Toolkit from Desktop, you are going directly into the Toolkit itself, not a different Desktop version. All changes to the Toolkit will apply, no matter how you get into it. Whenever you see the full text of RDA, you are in the Toolkit. Same with OCLC Connexion.

Jeannette Ho, Coordinator of Cataloging, Texas A & M University Libraries

- One of the essential aspects of training is the core elements, and developing an understanding that the core is a floor, not a ceiling.
- Jeannette outlined a number of the major changes between AACR2 and RDA, including chief sources of information, preferred titles, statements of responsibility, the differences in moving from GMDs into 33Xs, and the multiple options for recording types of media and discs in the 300 field.
 - The 538 field can be used in some circumstances to record mode of access or media required, but usually do not show up in brief record displays.
- Jeannette provided an overview of challenges related to publication/distribution/manufacture, etc., especially for moving images (i.e., videos), where publication information may not be present on the resource.
- Jeannette recommended that copy catalogers be encouraged to go beyond the core when including access points, and to continue to justify them in records. Be generous.
- Relationship designators: will you accept as-is in copy? Are some so obvious, like “author,” that they need not be applied?
- *Question from audience: Will large umbrella groups like OLAC create vocabularies for relationship designators?*
 - Answer: Definitely a possibility.

Nancy Kall, Catalog Librarian, Douglas County Libraries, Colorado

- Douglas County has not yet trained its copy catalogers in RDA, so she will share considerations based on experience as a formal RDA tester. One of their original catalogers has continued cataloging with RDA after the test (for books and special collections).
- Institutions will need to consider: what are the training goals; what should be covered; what existing training can be used? Trainees will need exercises and lots of examples.
- Douglas County asked its systems administrator to identify all RDA records coming in as copy. Approximately 150 records were added between Jan-May 2011. Seventy-five per cent were their own records, with the remainder mostly from LC, so the timing was likely not right for them to start training copy catalogers.
- Catalogers at Douglas County believe that RDA really does have the ability to take us beyond the walls and silos of libraries, but it will also require copy catalogers to have at least some understanding of linked data, FRBR models, and the Semantic Web generally. They will need to know and have more than “cheat sheets” – they will need to understand FRBR concepts.

Robert Rendall, Principal Serials Cataloger, Columbia University Libraries

- Columbia also has not yet done much training with copy cataloging staff, who are largely decentralized organizationally.
- Columbia resumed AACR2 cataloging after the test, and will be discussing how and when to start RDA again in light of the final test report.
- Robert provided an overview of main questions managers have received from catalogers over the past few months:
 - Capitalization conventions
 - Abbreviations
 - Presence of 33X fields
 - CIP completion (300 fields; entering publication and copyright dates)
- Managers are now going through Columbia's local cataloging manuals and documentation to see what would need to be revised for copy catalogers specifically. These include instructions on basic copy cataloging, CIP completion, and cataloging of variant editions.
- *Question from audience: How are you communicating RDA changes to public services staff?*
 - Answer: Columbia catalogers presented on RDA to the OPAC committee and reference librarians. They are working with ways to get icons to make both AACR2 and RDA work well together. Nancy added that at Douglas County, someone from public services was on the RDA test team.
- *Question from audience: Are you using workflows in the Toolkit for copy catalogers?*
 - Answer: probably won't use workflows initially, though LC has some that are available in the Toolkit that may be useful.