

**Report of the AALL Representative to the American Library Association,  
Association for Library Collections and Technical Services,  
Cataloging and Classification Section: Description and Access (CC:DA)  
Midwinter Meeting, San Antonio, January 2006  
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ALA's Cataloging and Classification Section's Description and Access (CC:DA) Committee regularly meets on Saturday afternoon and Monday morning. To better enable the committee to discuss the various drafts of *RDA*, *Resource Description and Access*, an additional Friday meeting was held during both the midwinter and annual meetings. All meetings were well attended with lively discussion and more visitors than available seating. Who knew our cataloging rules could inspire such interest? With the exception of a few reports, including the Library of Congress, and representatives from NISO, Marbi, and the ALA Publications Office, *RDA* dominated the discussions.

A draft of several chapters of part one was released in mid December, only a few weeks before the first day of the midwinter meetings. The Joint Steering Committee took an unprecedented step in making *RDA* drafts publicly available and starting a list to encourage public comment. Drafts of *RDA* and other working documents can be accessed at: <http://www.collectionscanada.ca/jsc/>. With public access, law catalogers can fully participate in the process of developing *RDA*.

The second draft was released shortly before our June meeting, allowing little time for the committee to read and reflect upon the new work. However, the members of CC:DA are a dedicated group of professionals, and many used time spent flying to the meeting to carefully study the new draft.

Individual comments on the drafts are entered into a shared database called Confluence and reviewed by others on the committee, who agree or disagree with the comments and suggestions. In commenting on part 1, AALL suggested improvements to the rules for integrating resources and to the section concerning mode of issuance. The rules for when to create a new record did not include integrating resources, which do, in fact sometimes end an old edition and start all over. Even an integrating website sometimes freezes the content in place and starts a new site. We also proposed that the rules for replacement volume sets be included in *RDA* and suggested a possible means to that end in our Confluence comments. Our suggestions were included in the CC:DA response and were forwarded to the Joint Steering Committee. The editor is working on a discussion paper on modes of issuance that will be released in August; we should know more with the release of that document.

AALL will enter comments for chapters 6 and 7 this month, especially concerning the legal rules, in time for them to be incorporated into the CC:DA comments sent to the Joint Steering Committee in September. One question is whether the special rules for legal and other special types of material need to be kept in separate sections rather than being incorporated within the general rules. The current draft keeps most of the legal rules previously included in AACR2 chapter 21 intact, with some simplification and clearer language. In most cases the rule of 3 has been eliminated, although it still can be found in the section on choosing the primary access point when more than one person, family, or corporate body is responsible for creating a work.

Many of the old catalog card based terms have been replaced by terms taken from natural language. Because we no longer have a card on which to type a "heading" taken from the "tracings" at the bottom of the card, the term access point clarifies what we really mean, as does "primary access" for the cataloger jargon "main entry."

Although *RDA* is being developed for use in English language communities, there is also a push for internationalization of the standards. The Library of Congress has issued a proposal for making *RDA* open to use by any community with a context other than English language, other than latin script, and other than Western-style Arabic numerals, and other than Gregorian/Julian calendar. The key issue affecting the law community is the proposed revision of the rules concerning treaties (rule 7.9.5.1, deletion of 7.9.5.2, and revision of 7.9.5.3. The proposal is designed to remove the preference for English alphabetic order from the rule, using the title of a treaty as the primary access point, with additional access points for the governments or other parties concerned. AALL will need to respond to this proposal shortly.

*RDA* will be used most effectively as an electronic resource, although a print loose-leaf version will also be published. Because it is designed to be a content standard, independent of the format used to communicate the information, *RDA* will not use a particular display standard within the document. Rather it will provide links to ISBD and other presentation formats which will be contained in appendices. An advantage of the electronic version will be the ability to easily identify rules and bring together rules for specific kinds of resources. At this time a prototype can be viewed at <http://www.rdaonline.org> for an idea of what the online version might contain.

The last part of *RDA* will be released at the end of 2006, with a projected publication date of 2008. Revising our cataloging code to reflect the electronic age requires us to focus on how best to provide access to our resources for our users. The task is not for the faint of heart. I hope the Law community will participate in review and comment on *RDA* and other documents so that we ensure that our needs are met by the new cataloging code.