

TO: Randal S. Brandt, Chair, RBMS Bibliographic Standards Committee

FROM: John Myers, Chair,
ALA/ALCTS/CCS Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access (CC:DA)

SUBJECT: CC:DA Comments on DCRM(S)

CC:DA is very appreciative of the opportunity to comment on *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Serials)*, in response to your request of May 30, 2008. In order to review the document in a timely and thorough manner, a Task Force (TF) was charged to do the review and issue a report. The Task Force's report was discussed and approved by the CC:DA membership.

General comments

This manual marks a huge improvement over what existed previously for catalogers of rare serials, who had to apply the transcription rules for rare books, as modified by the 4-page Appendix C of *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Books (DCRB)*, as best they could, making ad hoc decisions for particular problems or peculiarities as they arose. As the first real manual for rare serials catalogers, the manual benefits greatly from the prior existence of DCRB and *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Books)* (DCRM(B)), and shares the virtues of the latter, including (but not limited to): the "grounding" of the rules in specific sources and previous codes; the listing of explicit "objectives and principles"; the addition of rules for machine-made publications; a section on precataloging decisions; specific rules for transcribing publisher and manufacturer when both are present; the flexibility to allow for different "depths" of treatment of materials; and several extremely helpful appendixes, especially one on collection-level records.

When it deals with issues of description common to books and serials, the manual follows DCRM(B) very closely. However, it provides greatly expanded guidance for problems specific to serials, such as choosing the basis for the description and the chief source of information, dealing with incomplete runs, recording variations or minor changes to the title, recording numbering or issuing peculiarities or complexity, and "pilot" issues. It also includes an appendix for cataloging individual or special issues of serials, and an appendix, with detailed examples, covering the sometimes vexing problem of "reissues."

It is probably possible to disagree with solutions chosen for particular problems, but on the whole the issues have been thoroughly hashed out, and reasonable solutions have been provided.

Specific comments

Some of the following comments recommend wording changes. We realize one of the principles behind DCRM(S) is that it will not depart from DCRM(B) unless there is a serials-specific reason to do so, but we nevertheless make these suggestions for your consideration, particularly given that DCRM(S) is the first of a number of manuals to follow DCRM(B).

Introduction, I.5. Application within the bibliographic record

Here and elsewhere, we recommend consideration of replacing “record” with “description”.

Introduction, VII. Acronyms

Full citations for the following publications from the list of acronyms should be included in the List of Works Cited: BDRB, DCRB, DCRM(B).

Introduction, X.1.2. Cataloging code: AACR2 vs. DCRM(S)

We suggest the following revised text for this section:

Determine which cataloging rules will guide the preparation of the description. Both AACR2 and DCRM(S) contain required rules and optional rules, allowing varying levels of description.

Using AACR2 produces a description that highlights the common features of a serial and obscures some of the differences between manifestations or between variants of a single manifestation. Use of DCRM(S) produces more faithful transcriptions and more accurate physical descriptions of manifestations.. Use of DCRM(S) is more likely to facilitate differentiation between manifestations and reveal the presence of bibliographic variants among seemingly identical items. DCRM(S) is most suitable when a serial carries artifactual or bibliographical significance.

0B1. Required elements

Numbering is among the elements that the “description must always include ... regardless of the completeness of the information available,” but 3A1 gives conditions under which it is not included. The conditions in 3A1 are a matter of completeness of the information available (i.e, the cataloger does not have the first and/or last volume or issue).

0B2.4

Here and elsewhere, “e.g.” is used in the same phrase as “etc.” This is redundant; cf. *Chicago Manual of Style*, 5.202, under “etc.”

0B2.6

We suggest that this section come at the beginning of 0B2.

0E. Prescribed punctuation

We recommend displaying an em dash for a dash, not two hyphens, which have been used only as a work-around. This was an implementation decision based on the capabilities of typewriters and the earliest online systems. We are no longer restricted to using typewriters, and DCRM(S) is not only applicable in MARC 21 systems. Such implementation questions shouldn't be part of a standard like this, except maybe in Appendix A. The same comment applies in 0G3.5, 1B6.3, 7A4.2, 7A5.1, 7B8.2, 7B8.3, 7B19.2, Appendix H4.3, H5, and the Index.

0G3.5

The word “respectively” is usually set off with commas. A space is needed after the parentheses in the phrase “a virgule (/) in gothic typefaces”.

0G4.1

The alternative rule deals with spaces within numbers but not punctuation, and the example shows punctuation in the transcription. This conflicts with 0G3.4, which says to omit punctuation within roman numerals. (This is an issue in DCRM(B) as well.)

1B6.3. Chief title

The meaning of this instruction is not clear. Since the chief title is part of the title proper, the first sentence seems obvious. It is not clear which part of the instruction the example is meant to illustrate. We suggest the example could be revised:

Price guide presents Muscle car and truck buyer's guide
(*Comment:* The chief title is "Muscle car and truck buyer's guide")

1E14.3

This seems internally contradictory. On the one hand, words are being omitted because they are less important, but on the other hand, they are being transcribed in a note if they are considered important.

2B3.1

Greek characters are now available in the MARC character set, so we suggest replacing the example "[alpha chi] edition" with "[Three stars] edition"

2C1.1

The example conflicts with 1E13 and 2C2.1, as well as with AACR2 1.2C1, where similar statements are treated as part of the statement of responsibility. The statement of responsibility relating to an edition seems to be treated differently from a statement of responsibility in area 1, in that there can be no statement of responsibility relating to an edition without a name (2C1.2), whereas, for instance, "translated from the French" alone can be a statement of responsibility following the title (1E12).

2C2.3

This instruction seems to be already covered by the second sentence of 2B6.

4C5

This instruction applies to statements that are known to be fictitious or incorrect, but the example is a name that is "probably" a pseudonym and "possibly" attributed to another person. In some cases, the note would be enough without the bracketed insertion in the publisher statement. Possibly the text of the rule should be adjusted.

4D1.4

3rd example lacks comma at beginning.

4D2.1

3rd example lacks comma at beginning.

4D4.3

The use of angle brackets is not explained in 0E, 0G6, or 4A1.

4D5.1

The introduction states that these rules follow AACR2 as much as possible. We don't see why a copyright date should not be transcribed in the publication, distribution, etc., area, where AACR2 allows it. We do not see a rare-materials reason for this departure from AACR2 in most cases.

7B4.1.1

We would like to see an example showing a romanization of the title.

7B8.2

"Statement of limitation" should be defined in the glossary.

Appendix B, 505 field

The text mentions ISBD structure in the contents note, but the ISBD consolidated ed. (section 7.7) does not use dashes (or double hyphens) between titles; it uses space-semicolon-space when there are no statements of responsibility. The example follows AACR2 practice, so we recommend deleting the reference to ISBD.

List of Works Cited

The general URI for FRBR is <http://www.ifla.org/VII/s13/frbr/>