

To: American Library Association,
ALCTS/CCS Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access

From: Ann Caldwell, PCC Liaison to CC:DA

Subject: AACR2 rule 26.3A6 ABBREVIATIONS and corresponding Rule Interpretation

Background

The PCC Standing Committee on Standards (SCS) reviewed and responded to the Final report of the Cross Reference Task Group available on the PCC web pages at: <http://lcweb.loc.gov/catdir/pcc/xreftgfinal.html>. The following proposals stem from the SCS recommendations as presented in the PCC Standing Committee on Standards response, dated Oct. 1, 2000, also found on the web at: <http://lcweb.loc.gov/catdir/pcc/xreftgscsresp.html>. This proposal addresses one recommendation from that report.

In preparing its report, the Cross Reference Task Group was guided by the goal of accommodating efficiency and simplicity in cataloging, making the creation of authority records easier, and providing more effective search results for the public services staff and users. In drafting their recommendations, the Task Group's hope was to provide consistency and simplicity both in cataloging rules and in the resultant syndetic structure, thus providing clearer and more useful references for online catalog users.

Recommendation #4 of the Final report was reviewed and unanimously endorsed by the SCS, which recommended that a rule change proposal be prepared. In its initial review, the SCS considered comments from the library community. As this proposal was in preparation, additional comments were received from SCS members, suggesting that parts of the Library of Congress Rule Interpretation be retained. The final consensus of the group was to prepare a rule change that would incorporate most of the Cross Reference Task Group's recommendation in such a manner that precludes the need for retaining any part of the Library of Congress Rule Interpretation.

The proposed rule change incorporates most of a Library of Congress Rule Interpretation that dates back at least as far as February 1989. It calls for making a cross reference when the name chosen for the heading 1) contains an abbreviation that is not represented in its full form in Appendix B of AACR2; 2) contains a symbol; 3) contains an ampersand or other symbol representing the conjunction "and" or its equivalent in other languages.

Recommendation #4: Add LCRI text to AACR2 rule 26.3A6 regarding written-out abbreviations, including special symbols.

Rule 26.3A6 currently reads as follows:

26.3A6. Abbreviations. If, in the catalogue, abbreviated words are files differently from words written in full and if the heading begins with an abbreviated word or contains an abbreviated word in such a position that it affects the filing of the heading, refer from the form of the heading with the abbreviated word written in full in the language of the heading.

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Rule 26.3A6 with proposed changes included; added examples taken from LCRI 26.3A6:

26.3A6. Abbreviations, including symbols. ~~If, in the catalogue, abbreviated words are files differently from words written in full and if the heading begins with an abbreviated word or the name chosen for the heading contains an abbreviated word in such a position that it affects the filing of the heading, refer from the form of the heading with the abbreviated word written in full in the language of the heading if the abbreviation is not represented in its full form in Appendix B. If the name chosen for the heading contains a symbol, refer from the form of the heading with the symbol expressed as a word in the language of the heading. If the name chosen for the heading contains an ampersand or other symbol representing the word “and” (e.g., the plus sign (+)), refer from the form of the heading with the ampersand or other symbol expressed as the word “and” or its equivalent in the language of the heading.~~

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Rule as it would read (without formatting)

26.3A6. Abbreviations, including symbols. If the name chosen for the heading contains an abbreviated word, refer from the form of the heading with the abbreviated word written in full in the language of the heading if the abbreviation is not represented in its full form in Appendix B. If the name chosen for the heading contains a symbol, refer from the form of the heading with the symbol expressed as a word in the language of the heading. If the name chosen for the heading contains an ampersand or other symbol representing the word “and” (e.g., the plus sign (+)), refer from the form of the heading with the ampersand or other symbol expressed as the word “and” or its equivalent in the language of the heading.

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Rationale

Content from the LCRI regarding the ampersand (or other symbol) logically belongs in the rules. This topic is not addressed in AACR2 at present. Removing the concerns about where in the heading the ampersand/abbreviation falls in the heading simplifies heading construction for catalogers.

Impact

The change in the rule would require some additional cross references. The original Task Group recommended that, were the proposed rule revision accepted, the existing LCRI should be removed. They pointed out that although some concern was raised that this would mean additional work (such as spelling out every “Dept.” and “Corp.”), the general consensus was that simplifying the process by eliminating some decision-making, and providing better access through more cross references and keywords would balance this requirement.

In the final stages of preparing the proposed revision, the SCS received comments pointing out the impact of removing the LCRI altogether, particularly as it relates to making references from "Dept." and other abbreviations. The SCS then proposed retaining an LCRI addressing the making of additional references. There followed a comment suggesting that the proposed rule change be as comprehensive as possible. Further consideration led the SCS to broaden the proposed rule change to clarify the treatment of symbols and to propose wording limiting the number of references to be made from abbreviations that would otherwise be covered in an LCRI. Therefore, if the rule revision is accepted, the SCS judges there would be no need for an LCRI, at least as it would relate to issues covered by the present LCRI.