Inadvertent RDA: New Catalogers' Errors in AACR2

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ABSTRACT

In Fall, 2010, in the Music Library at the University of North Texas, a subgroup of the full-time music catalogers were both participating in the US National RDA Test and overseeing the cataloging of a large gift of scores. Student workers (graduate students in music or librarianship) who had never cataloged before produced the records, using AACR2. The librarians actively working on RDA checked their work. This project provided a treasure trove of errors that suggest new catalogers will often produce RDA-compliant cataloging without ever reading an RDA rule but by merely doing what makes sense to them intuitively.

Introduction

In the fall of 2010 in the Music Library at the University of North Texas, several factors conspired to illuminate issues related to training catalogers for the new code Resource Description and Access (RDA). A subgroup of the music catalogers were participating in the US National Libraries' RDA Test, and one of them, the author of this article, was at the same time overseeing the cataloging of a large gift collection of scores, the Ben A. Brown Collection, using the current code, Anglo-American Cataloging Rules, 2nd ed. (AACR2). During these months, on email lists such as AUTOCAT, correspondents persistently bemoaned the foreseen cost and difficulty of training catalogers to use RDA.

This confluence of circumstances produced the ideal situation for making a preliminary determination of how easy it would be to train catalogers to use the new cataloging code. The email lists kept the issue of training in the forefront of our minds. Our own experience in the RDA Test gave an indication of what it was like for experienced catalogers to learn the code. The large cataloging project that was going on at the same time and that was staffed chiefly by people who had never cataloged before provided a treasure trove of errors from which it was possible to deduce how readily new catalogers were apt to accept the new rules. This final point is the focus of this article.

Literature Review

Cataloging teaching/training in general. The voluminous literature on teaching or training of catalogers can be represented by two articles from the last decade that bring up the

most prominent issues treated at great length in other writings. Intner (2002) discussed the major recurring issues, dividing them into three overarching themes: 1) the balance between theory and practice, 2) the optimal division in a curriculum of courses covering book cataloging and those covering the cataloging of everything else, and 3) the relative merits of formal courses and nonacademic routes, such as on-the-job training and continuing education. She pointed out that regardless of the teaching circumstance, it is always key to teach (or ask) why we do what we do, not only the actions to be taken. Otherwise, students will be unable to handle situations that are significantly different from the specific ones they have been taught. Intner's "why" is not answerable by "because this rule says so." Rather, it is asking learners to explore the purposes or principles that undergird the structure and handling of the bibliographic universe. These purposes or principles will only coincidentally be the same as those underlying any specific set of cataloging rules; exploring them is an attempt to discern the theory behind cataloging. In addition, the learning of cataloging must be seen as a process that continues throughout the cataloger's professional life; one begins with formal courses, moves to on-the-job training, and then keeps up-to-date with continuing education.

Hill (2004) provided a brief history of cataloging teaching or training, beginning before the time of Melville Dewey, and moving to the situation that prevailed when her article was written. In Part I of her article, which dealt chiefly with historical issues and with education for cataloging in library schools, she observed that many teachers of cataloging have concluded it is better to introduce students to applying principles and rules across formats, rather than to teach separate courses about certain formats. Part II, generally about cataloging education/training outside library school, ended with hopes and admonitions. The author observed that libraries

appeared at the time of writing to be at the start of a period of rapid evolution. As "AACR, MARC, the ISBDs, and bibliographic networks led to the end of isolation of libraries one from another, perhaps the next changes will break down the isolation of librarianship from the world at large." (p. 12) Because major changes in the field seem in large part to arise from and be based on cataloging and bibliographic control, if we are to achieve this melding of libraries with the rest of the world, we need librarians who understand cataloging, whether or not they themselves catalog, and who can view changes in cataloging codes or practices in the context of the whole field of librarianship, including its history and its goals. In short, Hill asserted, we need educated librarians. Although modes of instruction may have changed or, in some cases, may have become obsolete, education for cataloging is no more an obsolete concept than is education for librarianship.

Training for RDA. The Intner (2002) and Hill (2004) articles are only the proverbial tip of the iceberg of discussions of cataloging teaching/training in general. Far less has been written about teaching RDA specifically, since the code is not even in general application yet. Nevertheless, some informative articles have appeared. Hitchens and Symons (2009) have provided a general introduction to ways to approach training on the new code. Their article includes a brief review of writings from the time of the change from AACR to AACR2, showing that the issues now are largely the same as then (for instance, concern with the proliferation of non-book resources, a desire for greater internationalization and standardization, and a need to adapt to new technological advances). Welsh (2011) summarized how catalog teaching is done at University College London, namely, with a mix of theory and practice, incorporating RDA as an alternative when possible. She pointed out that the crux of the issue of how to teach remains

whether to focus on theory or on practice. The underlying issue is the same as in all library school education: Does "training" have a place, especially in a graduate curriculum?

Bloss (2011) wrote about the experience of having a group of library school students at Dominican University participate in the RDA Test and incorporated practical advice on how to teach RDA in school. The article included specifics about what to teach, training materials that are already available, and student assessments of the new code. The author's observations were heavily weighted toward the problems of finding one's way around the RDA text and the RDA Toolkit, which were major stumbling blocks for her students during the Test. Bloss put strong emphasis on the need for learners to understand FRBR (Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records) (IFLA, 2009, and an earlier draft, IFLA, 1998) and, to a lesser extent, FRAD (Functional Requirements for Authority Data) (IFLA, 2008), and to become familiar with RDA terminology. For these students, the experience of taking part in the Test resulted in a highly positive view of RDA, although points of difficulty were not disregarded. The author asserted that for some time to come, students will need to know at least the basics of AACR2 in addition to RDA, in order to understand legacy data; over time, however, the need for teaching the older code will gradually diminish.

Some individual library school students have written short pieces on their experience learning to catalog recently, both in school and on the job. Howard (2011) discussed learning to catalog through courses in the United States and at University College London, plus on-the-job training during internships and volunteer placements. Learning to think critically, that is, understanding what lies behind the standards, played an important part. The author expressed

excitement about the possibilities of RDA, citing specifically the improved handling of electronic resources in the new code and also its emphasis on user needs.

Mariner (2011) provided an intriguing insight in a short piece about catalog procedures in the small poetry library where she works. She pointed out some specifics of that library's procedures that are closer to RDA than to AACR2, although they were developed before RDA existed. For instance, in her library, which uses an inexpensive, non-MARC online catalog, it is customary to spell out place of publication in full; to include something like relator terms with names, so that it is evident to the user what the person's role was in the particular publication represented by the catalog record at hand; and to disregard the "rule of three." The first two of these are prescribed in the new code, although the details differ from what Mariner's library currently does; the "rule of three" is not enshrined in RDA at all, in distinct contrast to AACR2. From observations of this sort, the author concluded that RDA seems to be trying to take small libraries and inexpensive (non-standard and non-MARC) automated systems into account. This little article provides a salutary counterpoint to the insistence on such email lists as AUTOCAT that RDA is only going to be affordable to big, rich libraries and has taken only them into account.

The Gift-Scores Cataloging Project at UNT

The collection. The Ben A. Brown Collection is the entire stock of scores from the New York City music store Music Exchange, Inc., which went out of business in the middle of the 1990s. This stock was held in storage for a number of years and then was donated to the University of North Texas Music Library. The collection as it arrived here consisted largely of

20th-century popular music, most in English, both in compilations (for example, *The new best of Lynyrd Skynyrd* or *A souvenir Disney songbook : favorite songs from Disneyland & Walt Disney World*) and individual song sheets (for example, "I love Paris" by Cole Porter, "The original famous Mexican hat dance" by F. A. Partichela, or "Lover, come back to me" by Sigmund Romberg and Oscar Hammerstein II). Classical or semi-classical scores (for example, a Dover score of the opera *The abduction from the seraglio* by Mozart, a Ricordi vocal score of *Simon Boccanegra* by Verdi, a Schirmer/Hal Leonard vocal score of *H.M.S. Pinafore* by Gilbert & Sullivan, a Boosey & Hawkes score of *The age of anxiety : symphony no. 2 for piano and orchestra* by Bernstein) were a much smaller part of the gift.

With almost no exceptions, the classical and semi-classical scores were either added copies (that is, we already had that exact edition at UNT, previously cataloged in full) or had high-quality copy on OCLC that needed little but routine work before being added to our catalog. In contrast, the popular music, particularly the individual song sheets, often required extensive editing or new input. Although popular music is far easier to catalog than art music, it still presents certain challenges, which are described later in this article.

Personnel. For the cataloging project that provided fodder for the observations recorded here, in Fall 2010 six graduate students from the College of Music or the College of Information (plus a seventh during September) supplemented the regular music cataloging staff. Student workers created or edited the records; full-time staff checked their work and provided feedback. All work was done online, using OCLC via the Connexion Client. The full-time cataloging staff involved with this project were also on the RDA Test team and consequently were concentrating

on the practical use of RDA for part of each day, while some of the balance of their time went toward checking records that were being created according to AACR2.

Although this paper concentrates on the specifics of catalog records produced during this one season (Fall 2010, which coincided with the "actively-cataloging" portion of the RDA Test), the Ben A. Brown or gift-scores project as a whole lasted more than a year. Over the life of the project, the population of student workers was constantly in flux. No single student worked throughout the entire project. Eleven student workers were involved in total; the sorts of errors these project employees made were remarkably consistent across the entire time period, however. That is, Student A, working in Summer 2010, Student C, working in Fall 2010, and Student J, working in Spring 2011, would make the same sorts of errors. Particular types of errors that occurred frequently are discussed in the section **Cataloging the gift scores**.

Training. The student workers, the great majority of whom were completely new to cataloging, were trained in using the relevant documentation for AACR2 through *Cataloger's Desktop* and were instructed that their records were supposed to be done according to that set of rules, in MARC, with ISBD punctuation. Each student followed our usual training regime, beginning with tutorials on Connexion Client and *Cataloger's Desktop,* followed by closely supervised searching and cataloging (both original and copy), which gradually changed to independent work as the student began to show mastery. This training was the responsibility of the project supervisor.

The student catalogers became able to contribute meaningfully to the project after roughly a dozen hours of training. Two features of the learning and cataloging environment contributed to this comparatively quick attainment of quasi-independence. First was the fact that questions and errors were *never* looked on as negative. All workers were told at the start to ask questions freely, whenever they came up, and were assured that corrections to their catalog records were normal and expected. We emphasized that no one produces completely error-free records on the first try for quite a long time and that students should not be discouraged if they received lengthy comments and numerous corrections. This assurance was repeated as it seemed appropriate for the individual worker. Narrative corrections routinely included AACR2 rule numbers or references to other rules or guidelines in *Cataloger's Desktop*; by looking up and reading the rule, with a specific case in mind, catalogers gradually learned enough about the current code and ancillary documents to create records that were correct or nearly so before they were first submitted for checking. It never happened that the error rate failed to diminish as the number of catalog records completed increased. That is, the assurance that errors were normal and expected did not produce a climate in which mediocrity prevailed, as might have been feared.

The second feature of the environment that contributed to relatively quick progress to quasi-independence was our use of Constant Data records in Connexion Client. These records simplified the cataloging task considerably, turning much of it into a fill-in-the-blanks exercise. With these records in place, students did not need to remember in the early stages what the various tags meant but were told by prompts what sort of information should go in each field or

subfield. Neither did they need to remember the peculiarities of ISBD punctuation; all such punctuation and the related spacing were supplied.

The Constant Data for the descriptive part of the cataloging record is given in Figure 1. The prompts in angle brackets, such as <title proper>, would be overwritten by the information described by the prompt. Similarly, question marks would be replaced by information of the sort suggested by the context (indicators after MARC tags, numbers of pages or of centimeters in the 300 field).

	040			INT ǂc INT
▶	020			<ISBN>
▶	024	?		<ISMN, EAN, other number>
▶	028	?	?	<publisher's or plate number> ǂb <publisher>
▶	049			INTM
▶	245	?	?	<title proper> : ǂb <other title information> / ǂc <statement of responsibility> ; <subsequent statement of resp>.
▶	250			<edition>.
▶	254			<musical presentation statement>.
▶	260			<city> : ǂb <publisher>, ǂc <date>.
▶	300			1 score (? p.) ; ǂc ? cm. (If the item is for a solo instrument or is not a score, say ? p. of music instead of 1 score (? p.))
▶	490	1		<series, as it is on the item> ; ǂv <series numbering>
▶	500			<source of title if not title page.>

Figure 1

Constant Data for description

Such constant Data was available for each part of the cataloging record. During this project all students used these guides extensively, especially at the beginning. After only a small amount of coaching, these Constant Data records proved to be adequate guides to *what* should be put in each field. The training librarian could concentrate on more meaty matters, in particular

why this information is important, why it appears the way it does on publications, and what we intend to accomplish by recording it.

Cataloging the gift scores. During this project, when students created a catalog record, especially the descriptive portion, the way they thought it "should" go, not realizing that a specific rule existed to cover the case at hand, they usually guessed a solution that was in accord with RDA rather than AACR2. These students did not have ready access to the text of RDA; most were not even aware that it existed. They produced RDA-compliant cataloging not by reading rules but by entering data the way they thought it made sense. This effect was rather short-lived, however. After only a little experience, flavored with getting back many corrections to their records, most students began to follow AACR2 conventions. At times of fatigue or stress, though, most would revert to RDA-compliant descriptions.

This situation is entirely different from that described in the 2011 special issue of *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly 49 (7-8)* titled *RDA Testing: Lessons Learned and Challenges Revealed*. The various authors of articles in that journal issue discuss the challenges and successes encountered, benefits accrued, and methods applied in trying to catalog according to RDA during the US National Test of the code. Although the UNT testers (three music catalogers) met with experiences similar to some reported in that issue, the student catalogers being discussed here were not trying to apply RDA but were doing so inadvertently on frequent occasions.

What specifically did we see from the student catalogers? The following examples are from records that came across my (the project supervisor's) desk during Fall 2010, but they are consistent with what other beginning catalogers did during the rest of this project.

Capitalization. In titles, which the student catalogers readily understood to be transcribed, the issue of capitalization immediately came to the fore. Publications often capitalize each word of title-page information, or each word except minor ones. For instance, we were often confronted by titles such as

Fallen Apples

The student catalogers persistently transcribed capitalization as found, except that when confronted by a title in all capital letters, they would capitalize each principal word, not each letter. AACR2 1.1B1 says that in transcribed fields one is to capitalize according to an appendix (Appendix A), which prescribes what amounts to sentence case in the language being transcribed. RDA 1.7.1-1.7.2 gives as the principal rule basically the same instruction, but alternative rules allow other conventions to be used; a style manual created by the cataloging agency is a possibility. An LCPS (Library of Congress Policy Statement) in effect creates such a style manual for the Library of Congress, saying that one should either "take what you see" or follow the appendix. Our student catalogers uniformly preferred the "take what you see" option, that is, transcribing literally, with the exception of substituting title case when the item had all capitals. In her portion of a report from Stanford University Libraries (Lorimer & de Groat,

2011), which took part in the US National Test and has continued to catalog using RDA, Lorimer calls RDA's option of transcribing capitalization as given a strength of the code.

Noun phrases. Noun phrases that come between the title proper and the statement of responsibility are treated differently in the two codes. For instance, we saw many title pages of this sort:

The golden west, a silv'ry nest, and you

Waltz song

by Al Sherman & Al Lewis.

AACR2 1.1F12 tells us to "treat a noun phrase occurring in conjunction with a statement of responsibility as other title information if it is indicative of the nature of the work." This would produce (disregarding the issue of capitalization)

The golden west, a silv'ry nest, and you : waltz song / by Al Sherman & Al Lewis.

RDA 2.4.1.8, in contrast, says to treat such a noun or noun phrase as part of the statement of responsibility. The result is what our student catalogers did:

The golden west, a silv'ry nest, and you / waltz song by Al Sherman & Al Lewis.

A noun that is indicative of the nature of the work but does not appear in conjunction with the statement of responsibility continues to be included as other title information (RDA 2.3.4.1). This is not a change from AACR2 and, moreover, seemed to cause no confusion among the beginning catalogers at UNT.

Identifying information given with a name. Identifying information given in conjunction with a name that will go in a statement of responsibility is treated quite differently in the two codes. Here is a typical example of what we saw on title pages:

words and music by Chris Yacich Sp. 2c U.S.C.G.R.

The identifying information in question is "Sp. 2c U.S.C.G.R.," that is, everything after the surname of the creator. In other cases, identifying information might come before the name. In AACR2, most such information is omitted, unless certain quite restrictive conditions are met (AACR2 1.1F7). RDA 2.4.1.4, in contrast, tells the cataloger to transcribe the statement of responsibility as it stands on the source of information. This instruction is not conditional but absolute. Omission of inessential matter is an option, but the LCPS to this rule says not to apply the option.

The result in AACR2 would be

words and music by Chris Yacich.

If following RDA, we would put

words and music by Chris Yacich Sp. 2c U.S.C.G.R.

With considerable regularity, student catalogers transcribed the complete information given on the item, which results in a statement of responsibility correct according to RDA. This practice works beautifully in music materials of the sort cataloged for this project; Biella and Lerner (2011) point out that it is not so successful with all types of materials, however.

Publisher. Publishers or distributors usually are named on items as companies or other incorporated entities. Their names are normally something like T.B. Harms Company or Chappell & Co. AACR2 1.4D2 tells us to give the name in the shortest form that will be recognizable internationally. An LCRI allows us to shorten the name or not, according to judgment, but absolves the cataloger from deciding how well the publisher is known internationally. The LCRIs also include other options, most of them coming down to the general principle of using judgment to decide what is inessential and therefore can be omitted. The practical result in the cases given above will most likely be

T.B. Harms

or

Chappell

RDA 2.8.1.4 simply says to record the publisher's name as it is shown on the item. The result will be

T.B. Harms Company

or

Chappell & Co.

Again, the student catalogers in our project would almost invariably produce the RDA version when they first began cataloging.

Bracketed data. Information not from prescribed sources of information is normally enclosed in square brackets in catalog records. Student workers readily grasped this general concept. They had more difficulty, however, recalling exactly how to configure the bracketed statement.

According to AACR2 1.0C1, there should be one set of brackets around adjacent bracketed elements in one area. The RDA rules give the option of using brackets in such a situation but say nothing about precisely how to deploy them. The appendix on ISBD punctuation, in contrast to AACR2, calls for a separate set of brackets around each data element,

even if it is contiguous with another bracketed element. This rule is stated in ISBD Consolidated, 2010 draft (ISBD Review Group, 2010), A.3.2.8, and also in RDA D.1.2.1.

Students might produce two variations that approximate this RDA/ISBD rule. Some bracketed each element separately, such as

[New York] : [Chappell], [1976]

Others would do something like the following:

[S.l. : s.n.], [1949]

The first of these examples reflects exactly what the RDA appendix and ISBD prescribe. In the second, I surmise that the student was thinking of the place and publisher as one string of information. The date is apparently being considered a separate piece of information; on most pieces of music, especially music from the period covered by this gift (chiefly early and middle 20th century), the evidence used to determine the date of publication is physically separate from that used to establish the place and publisher.

Only after some experience would a student produce the desired AACR2 version of either of these statements:

[New York : Chappell, 1976]

or

[S.l. : s.n., 1949]

Relationships. AACR2 is on the whole not greatly concerned about relationships among the various entities that appear in a catalog record. A few rules, particularly in Chapter 21: "Choice of Access Points," deal with giving access points, and sometimes explanatory notes, for related works or names (persons or bodies). The access points as prescribed in the rules do not say what the relationship is, although notes may do so. Although relationship designators on names have long been possible in MARC, they are optional in AACR2 (21.0D) and an LCRI to that rule says not to apply them. RDA, in contrast, is highly interested in relationships. The code includes six sections on recording relationships (out of ten sections total), plus four appendices about relationship designators (out of twelve appendices total). The appendices include extensive lists of the terms authorized for use in naming relationships.

A local practice in the Music Library at UNT produces headings that accidentally brought out a strong prejudice in favor of relationship designators among the student catalogers. The practice in question is rooted in our abhorrence of undifferentiated personal name headings. We do not want the items by the musician interfiling with the ones by the scientist, even if their names are the same and no information to differentiate them is available. As a consequence, we make heavy use of such modifiers as $c musician to differentiate names, even in situations where

this modifier is not sufficiently supported to be added to the heading in a national authority record.

For instance, the Ben A. Brown Collection included a popular song with lyrics by Robert Bruce. There are many persons by this name in the LC authority file on OCLC. None are our lyricist, however. Because there is also an undifferentiated personal name heading for Bruce, Robert, we cannot simply use the name from the item without conflicting with this record. Consequently, we used Bruce, Robert, $c lyricist.

In our experience student catalogers are happy with this solution immediately. When they encounter the same person acting in another capacity, say as a composer, however, they want to give the name a $c for that other capacity: Bruce, Robert, $c composer. That is, they see the $c as a relationship designator rather than as a distinguishing term to make the heading different from other headings. From this I surmise that using relationship designators will seem correct and easy to new catalogers. They will need to learn the precise format to use and how to locate the appropriate relationship designator in RDA, but the notion of supplying terms specifying roles will be comfortable.

Summary: "Inadvertent" RDA

From the preceding it will be evident that our student catalogers would have little difficulty following many of the rules of RDA. Specifically, the descriptive rules, some punctuation rules from ISBD, and the general concept of recording relationships all seem to be

the way these students would catalog if they were left simply to record information the way it makes sense to them. Moreover, this is the way they catalog when they are tired, preoccupied, or otherwise do not have their minds entirely on the task at hand.

While the sample population is far too small to allow drawing any firm conclusions, the fact that these beginning catalogers often produced RDA-compliant cataloging without ever reading an RDA rule is surely a hopeful sign that training new catalogers to use the new code will be relatively easy. If the basics of description, some punctuation, and the general idea of specifying relationships are likely to be understood immediately and done correctly with little more than a cursory introduction, training and teaching will be able to concentrate on those aspects of RDA that are more difficult to grasp. In addition, supervisors and teachers will be able to put increased emphasis on the ever-important question of *why* the code is the way it is.

Implications for the Functional Future of Bibliographic Control

What do these observations suggest about a "smarter" way to catalog in the future? First, if beginners get the descriptive part of a catalog record in RDA right almost automatically, there is no reason that description of any but the knottiest of materials needs to be the function of a librarian. We will be able to use intelligent student workers or volunteers, probably guided by a fill-in-the-blank template, to do most bibliographic description. In fact, there is little reason in most cases to use humans at all. If the rules are sufficiently straightforward, machine-generated information (assuming intelligently written software) would suffice for this portion of the cataloging task for most materials.

There remain a few rules that require judgment, such as RDA 2.3.1.6, which prescribes that one should not transcribe words that serve as an introduction and *are not intended* as part of the title. Machines (or beginning catalogers) cannot reliably determine intent and thus cannot follow a rule such as this. This rule in RDA is followed by an "optional addition," which allows the title as found to be transcribed as a variant title if it is considered to be important. For the most streamlined application of this concept, perhaps the two rules should be reversed: The title as found should be the "title," and the version without introductory words could be the optional addition. If there is change in typeface, size of type, or other such visible characteristic between the introductory words and the title being introduced, even a machine generating the description could add the variant title. If no such characteristic is present, a human (perhaps a cataloger with some experience) would need to record the variant title. This procedure would not work for certain specialist communities, however, for instance for catalogers of Hebraica (Biella & Lerner, 2011).

The preceding brings out one view of the role of the cataloger in the future. Rather than spending time doing routine transcription, the cataloger would start with a skeletal descriptive record created by machine (or volunteer, or beginner) and flesh it out with those elements that require judgment, experience, and thought. To be sure, this is roughly what is done today with unenhanced vendor records in OCLC. The quality of the description in current vendor records varies greatly, however. Some require extensive cleanup before the cataloger can move to adding subjects, authority-controlled access points, and other non-descriptive material; moreover, deciding what needs to be cleaned up is not a task that could easily be automated or entrusted to

beginning workers. In the hypothetical future being imagined here, the skeletal description would be the product of well-designed software and procedures, as some vendor records already are, and thus would need little if any cleanup.

What would be needed beyond the skeletal descriptive record, if that were indeed created intelligently, whether by a person or by an automated process? Chiefly the cataloger would add links to related works, persons, or bodies. For instance, if the "work record" for the intellectual product embodied in the manifestation being cataloged already said that this work was a symphony and was already linked to the "person" record for the composer, the record for this specific manifestation would not need to repeat this information. If it were also linked to the appropriate expression information, the manifestation record would not need to specify it was, say, the piano-four-hands arrangement of this symphony. The manifestation record itself would need very little beyond the descriptive information that could be created by machine or by a low-level worker, with links to records to related entities.

Our experience with the Ben A. Brown Collection tells us not only that description under RDA turns out to be relatively simple and intuitive, at least for the types of material making up the bulk of this gift, but also that graduate student workers are entirely capable, with instruction and training, of doing a reasonably good job of identifying the works and persons connected with a composition. This collection consisted chiefly of popular music, which is far easier to handle than art music, but students still needed to be alert to such traps as songs published as independent works but actually being from musicals that are unmentioned on the publication, or songwriters with the same name as someone else who is already established in the authority file.

With appropriate training, they usually found this information. Ferreting it out was not a task needing the insight of an experienced cataloger.

My role as the librarian in charge of this project, after the training stages, consisted mostly of checking that students had identified works and persons accurately (and had identified all the relevant people), correcting the occasional misidentification or adding someone who had been omitted, and, much less often, fixing occasional descriptive details, particularly where AACR2 and RDA differ. That is, the majority of the time, my work was focused on higher-level intellectual tasks. The routine work and the easier intellectual jobs were already done by the time records reached me.

In the future, under RDA, training for routine tasks should be far easier and quicker than it now is under AACR2. Automating descriptive work seems entirely possible. The time that need not be spent on teaching the minutiae of the current cataloging code can be devoted to training for the easier intellectual parts of cataloging. The experienced cataloger can concentrate on the more difficult (and usually more interesting) challenges of clarifying the links among the applicable FRBR entities. This will, in turn, result in an improved experience for library patrons, assuming that software becomes available to exploit these linkages to guide the patron to exactly the right publication to fulfill the need of the moment. This is one part of my vision of the future of bibliographic control.

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