

AACR 2 as Viewed by the Library of Congress in Mid-1980

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The Library of Congress began to apply chapters 22-25 of AACR 2 in October 1978. These are the chapters that deal with the form for all classes of headings (personal, geographic, and corporate names and uniform titles). This application does not affect current or past headings, which still must conform to AACR 1 and superimposition, but it means that whenever the heading differs from AACR 2, then the AACR 2 form is added as information within the name authority record. To evaluate the heading vis-à-vis AACR 2 and then formulate an AACR 2 heading when necessary requires our catalogers to apply the rules in chapters 22-25. This real-life experience has caused us to begin framing some rule interpretations for these chapters. The entire cumulation of these rule interpretations was published in *Cataloging Service Bulletin* (CSB) 6 (fall 1979). We have compiled a list of the headings used 25 or more times in the MARC data base, and the old and new (AACR 2) forms of these headings began to appear in CSB 5. This listing, which continues to the present day, is another way of disseminating information about AACR 2. One can consult CSB 5 for examples of AACR 2 headings and then check CSB 6 for the rule interpretations, which together with the rules themselves, explain the new headings. CSB 6 also republished our policy for compatible headings, another piece of information essential to a proper understanding of how the Library of Congress views AACR 2. (CSB 6 also includes an explanation of our automated name authority file, with several illustrations of the products derived from this file; the explanation and illustrations should be particularly scrutinized for the AACR 2 information

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mentioned above.)

Other issues of CSB have carried and will continue to carry information related in some way to our implementation of AACR 2 next year. For example, CSB 7 published the special decision related to the choice of main entry for cartographic material, and CSB 8 provided both a comprehensive restatement of all our decisions on AACR 2 options and also some special details related to the display of an AACR 2 record in a format such as a 3x5 card (paragraphing certain areas of the description, spacing after personal initials in headings, and the form and order of tracings for secondary entries.)

The dissemination of information via CSB has been supplemented recently by the ALA/CRG/LC AACR 2 Institutes. Library of Congress experts in descriptive cataloging serve these institutes as faculty offering instruction in six areas of AACR 2:

1. Chapters 1 and 2: General bibliographic description and description of books
2. Chapters 3-13: Bibliographic description of materials other than books
3. Chapter 21: Choice of access points
4. Chapter 22: Headings for persons
5. Chapter 23-24: Headings for geographic names and for corporate bodies
6. Chapter 25: Uniform titles

Opening and closing sessions give additional information on details of AACR 2 not covered in the sessions indicated above (e.g., the AACR 2 appendix on capitalization) and on pervasive matters such as our authority file or the distribution of our catalog records under AACR 2. Each registrant at a particular institute receives a handout containing all AACR 2 rule interpretations developed thus far, a comprehensive statement of our decisions on the AACR 2 options, and a list of all headings used in examples under rules in chapters 22-25 with an indication of the different Library of Congress form where necessary. Two institutes have been held and twelve more are planned for cities scattered over the United States.

We reach these decisions, including rule interpretations and policy statements of various kinds, by a complex of consultation like no other under previous rules and policies. A selection of bodies

consulted regularly or at least on the most important issues as the need arises is given below to provide an idea of our involvement with opinions and preferences arising outside the Library of Congress:

American Association of Law Libraries
American Library Association (Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access)
Anglo-American Committee on the Cataloging of Cartographic Material.
Association of Research Libraries
British Library
Council on Library Resources (Joint Committee on Bibliographic Standards)
Joint Committee on Specialized Cataloging of the Council of National Library Institutions and Associations
Joint Steering Committee for Revision of AACR
Library of the Government Printing Office
Music Library Association
National Agricultural Library
National Library of Australia
National Library of Canada
National Library of Medicine
OCLC, Inc.
Research Libraries Information Network
Special Libraries Association (Geography and Map Division)
Washington Libraries Network

It might be fairly asked what this so-called "new code" is all about. In other words, since it calls itself "second edition," why do others call it a "new code"? Instead of forming an opinion based on someone else's rhetoric, one will find on reading AACR 2 and a little later on applying AACR 2 that most of the generalizations made, both pro and con, are inadequate. Because of the new ISBD(G), which serves as the backbone of Part I of AACR 2, there is a completely new look to this part. For printed monographs, this means only minor changes since ISBD(M) was incorporated into chapter 6 of AACR 1 in 1974. Here one might properly call the code a second edition of AACR 1. For other materials, however, the denomination "new code" is more appropriate since ISBD provisions for the arrangement and punctuation of data elements are new to these materials. Prominent examples are a publication, distribution, etc., area for all sound recordings and a statement of responsibility for serials. Part II looks roughly the same as the comparable rules in AACR 1. In fact, many of the rules are essentially

unchanged. It would be easy to call this part a true second edition if one's attention were not called to one or more of the few but extremely significant changes from AACR 1, e.g., the deletion of corporate authorship, the cancellation of all form subheadings, or the use of parentheses for all qualifiers added to corporate and geographic names.

Far Eastern materials will be affected by AACR 2, but no more so than any other language material. A specialist may note that in Part I certain rules of chapter 6 of AACR 1 that addressed Far Eastern materials have disappeared (134B1, 134C, 134D9c, and 138C2). One reason for this is to iron out the differences in treatment of various special materials. The main reason, however, is to shift the emphasis from specific rules to general guidance as far as bibliographic description is concerned. Paragraph 0.9 of the General Introduction to AACR 2 also bears on this point when it says

"The necessity for judgement and interpretation by the cataloguer is recognized in these rules. Such judgement and interpretation may be based on the requirements of a particular catalogue or upon the use of the items being catalogued. The need for judgement is indicated in these rules by words and phrases such as *if appropriate*, *[if] important* and *if necessary*. These indicate recognition of the fact that uniform legislation for all types and sizes of catalogues is neither possible nor desirable, and encourages the application of individual judgement based on specific local knowledge."

This point deals only with bibliographic description. (For the question of form of heading (Chapters 22-25), individual judgement is not so frequently legitimate.) In Part I often the cataloger will find no specific solution to a specific problem. This will be one of the most interesting challenges offered by AACR 2. Some specific and detailed interpretations will have to abet AACR 2, even in Part I, but the license for judgment should otherwise allow the cataloger to tailor the cataloging according to general rules plus an amalgam of judgment, experience, and knowledge of local or other particular requirements. As every cataloger knows, there's no end to special cases, and thus we think it pointless to keep adding to the list of special rules.

Various published articles, etc., provide more detailed information about AACR 2 itself than is given here. The winter 1978 and summer 1979 issues of *Library Resources and Technical Services* (LRTS) published three articles that are good choices.

- Carol Kelm. *Historical development*, LRTS, winter 1978 (for the background and history of code revision)
- Michael Gorman. *AACR 2*, LRTS, summer 1979 (for a brief, eloquent statement by one of the editors)
- Wesley Simonton. *An introduction to AACR 2*, LRTS, summer 1979 (for a detailed introduction to the rules).

Finally, there is the best possible detailed analysis of the relation between AACR 1 and AACR 2: Ronald Hagler's *Where's That Rule* (Ottawa: Canadian Library Association, 1979). (This work is being distributed also by the American Library Association.) This excellent work tells what happened to every AACR 1 rule: some disappeared; some are still present although buried in one or more new rules; some still stand with only the rule number changed; in some cases the previously mentioned phenomena are true of the whole rule in question and in other cases they are true of only parts of the rule.

As has been suggested already, it is not appropriate to generalize about the value of AACR 2 when the question is one of the advantages/disadvantages of AACR 2 rules. Whether one rule looks good or bad now or will have excellent or distinctly poor results on application is an evaluation to be made rule by rule. What is true of one in this respect is false of another. Two legitimate generalizations on the side of AACR 2 are still possible:

1. AACR 2 and the process by which it was produced have raised the consciousness of everyone about cataloging, including some librarians who have heretofore ignored the cataloging department. Even the post-publication controversy over AACR 2 has had the salutary effect of a heightened consciousness as to the many forces that impinge on the implementation of such new rules, from international agreements to local budget cuts. This greater degree of awareness will be beneficial to us as we develop a policy of implementation at each of our libraries.
2. AACR 2 represents the first new code fully adopted by the Library of Congress. (All previous new codes were adopted only for cataloging new headings, all existing headings being continued unchanged in each case.) Thus, AACR 2 will be a single standard replacing a multiplicity of standards that is reflected in our current data base. This will eventually tend

to make our announced policy statements much simpler and, moreover, will permit others to predict what we are going to do far more accurately than in the past. This is important, since with shrinking budgets we more and more need to make a virtue of necessity and develop ways of sharing one another's labor.