Overview of Rare Book Cataloging

Definitions of a Rare Book

- "...printed books, pamphlets, and single sheet publications whose rarity, value, or interest make special description necessary or desirable."
- "a book published before 1801."
From Descriptive Cataloguing of Rare Books, 2nd ed.

Definitions of a Rare Book

- "...a book whose utility depends on certain non reproducible characteristics which make it an identifiable physical object." (George Chapman Singer, p. 6)
- "...a book which is sought after for certain definite physical characteristics peculiar to that copy or to exactly similar copies, quite apart from its cultural or educational values" when "physical characteristics include date, imprint, textual state, binding, aesthetic qualities, and condition, among other things." (Josiah Q. Bennett, p. 6-7)
From Josiah Q. Bennett - The Cataloguing Requirements of the Book Division of a Rare Book Library

Definitions of a Rare Book

- "The rare book is a fascinating material object, a document in the history of civilization. If people want only to read it, a microfilm or a reprint will do, and the cataloguing of that microfilm or reprint should, of course, be as brief and simple as the cataloguing of any ordinary book. But the fact that the rare book itself is valued as a material object must be the keynote of any useful approach to rare book cataloguing. An adequate catalogue card for a rare book will tell enough about the physical makeup to set that book apart from all other books." (p. 1)
- "...any book which has value primarily as a physical object" (p. 2)
From Paul Shaner Dunkin - How to Catalog a Rare Book, 2nd rev. ed.

What is a Rare Book?

- Three principle factors determine whether a book is rare:
  - Relative importance
  - scarcity
  - condition
- Importance is the overriding factor.

Aren’t all old books rare?

- No.
- However, the dates below form a rough guideline of dates of likely importance:
  - all books printed before 1501
  - English books printed before 1641
  - books printed in the Americas before 1801 and books printed west of the Mississippi before 1850.
- These dates are rough guidelines at best and are always subject to the overriding factors of intrinsic importance, condition, and demand.
What is a Rare Book?

- For our purposes, a Rare Book is one that is valued for its physical characteristics as much as or more than for its intellectual content.
- Every institution defines the term for itself.
  - Additional factors for consideration:
    - Fragility
    - Age
    - Intrinsic beauty
    - Cost
    - Susceptibility to vandalism, theft
    - Appropriateness to collection

DCRM(B) vs. AACR2

- DCRM(B) (Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Books)) draws on some techniques of descriptive bibliography to document more fully the book as artifact.
- DESCRIPTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY is the analytical examination of books as physical artifacts and involves detailed comparisons of many copies of the same work.
- In practice and in spirit, DCRM(B) is closer to AACR2 (Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules) than to DESCRIPTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY.

DCRB vs. DCRM(B)

- DCRM(B) published 2007
- DCRM(B) acknowledges rare materials of interest other than books. DCRM (Serials) and DCRM (Music) in draft form
- DCRM(B) has clearer and more precise wording, e.g. uses word “transcribe” rather than “record”
- DCRM(B) includes provisions for cataloging machine-press books. Many catalogers were using DCRB to catalog current fine-press books and 19th century items

Relationship of DCRM(B) to AACR2

- DCRM(B) is a supplement to AACR2.
- DCRM(B) cannot be used in isolation from AACR2.
  - Anything not covered in DCRM(B) is assumed to be subject to AACR2.
- However,
  - DCRM(B) does not merely add to AACR2; it contradicts AACR2 on a number of points.

DCRM(B) vs. AACR2: Basic differences

- Faithful vs. regularized transcription transcription
- Mark of omission vs. silent omission
- More required notes vs. fewer required notes

DCRM(B) vs. AACR2: Transcription

- AACR2
  - 4th ed., thoroughly rev. and greatly enl.
- DCRM(B)
  - Fourth edition, thoroughly revised and greatly enlarged
### DCRM(B) vs. AACR2: Omissions

- **AACR2**
  - A manual of diseases of the nose, throat, and ear / by E.B. Gleason.

- **DCRM(B)**
  - A manual of diseases of the nose, throat, and ear / by E.B. Gleason, ... ; illustrated

### DCRM(B) vs. AACR2: Mandatory Notes: Transposition

- 1G3. If a statement of responsibility precedes the title proper in the source, transpose it to its required position unless it is an inseparable part of the title proper according to one or more of the conditions enumerated in 1B1. When transposing the statement of responsibility, do not use the mark of omission. Make a note indicating this transposition.
  - 500 Author’s name transposed from head of title.

### DCRM(B) vs. AACR2: Mandatory Notes: References

- 7C14. References to published descriptions
  - Give references to published descriptions, preferably in the form recommended by Standard Citation Forms for Published Bibliographies and Catalogs ... and “Citation forms for bibliographies appearing in journals ...”
  - For other printed materials, record a bibliographic citation whenever the edition being cataloged is listed in one of the following sources:
    - Blanck, Jacob. Bibliography of American Literature ...
    - Bristol, Roger P. Supplement to Charles Evans’ American Bibliography ...
    - Evans, Charles. American Bibliography ...
    - Pollard, Alfred W. and Redgrave, Gilber R. A Short-title Catalogue ...
    - Wing, Donald., Short-title Catalogue ...
  - 510 4 BAL, #c 2031

### DCRM(B) vs. AACR2: Mandatory Notes: Advertisements

- 5B5. Advertisements
  - For pages containing only advertisements, make a concise mention of them in the statement of extent when they clearly belong to the publication. This is the case when they:
    - are included in the pagination;
    - are printed on the pages of an initial or final gathering;
    - are printed on a separate gathering issued within a publisher’s binding;
    - are known to be present in other copies.
  - If it is not possible to mention the advertisements concisely in the statement of extent, account for them in a note.

### DCRM(B) vs. AACR2: Other issues

- **Printers and publishers**
  - Printers, publishers and booksellers have equal status under DCRM(B).

- **Pagination**
  - Full detailed pagination required under DCRM(B).
  - Must account for every page in text block, including unnumbered pages:
    - ii, [1], 88 p.

- **Binding description**
  - in local note

### DCRM(B) vs. AACR2: When to use what?

- **The Official Answer:**
  - The Library of Congress unilaterally assigns DCRM(B) to all pre-1801 materials only; All later materials are cataloged according to AACR2.
**DCRM(B) vs. AACR2: When to use what?**
- More complicated answers:
  - DCRM(B) is designed for books of the hand-press era -- roughly 1500-1800. DCRM(B) is equally appropriate for hand-press books created after 1800 (such as modern fine press editions).
  - DCRM(B) may also be applied to 19th century materials, but this can be problematic.

**DCRM(B) vs. AACR2: Other options**
- **DCRM(B) Core:**
  - Useful for making backlog items accessible more quickly.
  - 040 #dcrmb Mandatory
  - 050, 082, 086, 090, etc. Not required
  - 245-4XX Mandatory, if applicable
  - 500 Transcription note Mandatory, if applicable
  - 510 Citation note Mandatory, if applicable
  - 655 Genre/form headings Not required

**Interpreting DCRM(B) records, or, What do all those weird codes mean?**
- **Format**
  - Format refers to the relationship between the original sheet of handmade paper and the number of leaves produced by folding.
  - Books not printed on sheets of handmade paper cannot be said to have format.
  - DCRM(B) requires format notation for all pre-1801 books.
  - 300 [8], 410, [2] p. ; #c 17 cm. (12mo)

**DCRM(B) vs. AACR2: When to use what?**
- “Real World” answers:
  - Utilizing both AACR2 and DCRM(B) in the same catalog can be confusing -- especially for the catalogers.
  - No one “best way.” Each institution must decide based on its needs, mission, and resources.

**DCRM(B) vs. AACR2: Other options**
- “Special Collections” cataloging
  - AACR2 in the spirit of DCRM(B), with fuller use of notes and access points and more detailed description.
  - Useful for special collections which include 19th and 20th century materials.

**Interpreting DCRM(B) records: Format**
- **Common formats:**
  - Folio Sheet folded once, producing 2 leaves
  - Quarto Sheet folded twice, producing 4 leaves
  - Octavo Sheet folded 3 times, producing 8 leaves
  - 12mo … and so on …
  - 16mo
Interpreting DCRM(B) records:

Format

• Format can be recognized by relative size, shape, direction of chain lines and placement of watermark.
  – Folio - chain lines vertical
  – Quarto - chain lines horizontal
  – Octavo - chain lines vertical
• Chain lines are formed by heavy wires in the paper molds which run parallel to the short side of the sheet.

Interpreting DCRM(B) records:

Signatures

• The signature statement recorded in DCRM(B) is a collational formula representing the entire text block in the state it left the printer. (Binders blanks, plates, etc. are excluded.)
  – Signature statements are based on a 23-character alphabet (excluding j, u, w)
  – Letters represent signed gatherings of leaves
  – Superscript arabic numerals represent the number of leaves in a gathering
  – Baseline arabic numerals represent a specific leaf
  – "pi" is used to represent an unsigned preliminary gathering
  – A uniform sequence i.e. A4 B4 C4 D4 is rendered A-D4.

• If more than 23 gatherings (A-Z) are used, the sequence continues with AA-ZZ then AAA-ZZZ and so on. A gathering of 12 signed MMM is expressed as 3M12.
• To further complicate things, some gatherings are signed with symbols (*) &/or numbers, and some use duplicate sequences of the same signature.
• And 19th-century printers may have used 26 letters, which must be rendered like so: A-I4 J4 K-U4 V4 W4 X-Z4.

Interpreting DCRM(B) records:

Signatures

• Therefore, in the example shown previously
  – an unsigned preliminary gathering of 8 leaves is followed by gatherings A through T with 12 leaves each. Gathering V consists of only 2 leaves. The last leaf of the text block can be expressed as V2.
• 500 Signatures: pi8 A-T12 V2.

• Fortunately, signature statements are optional under DCRM(B).
**Rare Book Issues and Policy Making**

- DCRM(B) leaves many options up to the cataloging agency. For instance, the institution will need to decide:
  - Whether to use DCRM(B) full, minimum or core level
  - Original punctuation as well as prescribed punctuation (“Double punctuation”)?
  - Signature statements?
  - Form genre headings (655s)?
  - Graphics process/technique of illustration?
  - Optional and/or local tracings for binders, printers, designers, illustrators, donors, previous owners, etc.?

**DCRM(B) vs. AACR2**

- **AACR2**
  - LCRIs or other standard rule interpretations
  - Local rule interpretations (need to document)
  - Options (need to document)
  - Levels (full-level, core-level, minimal-level, collection-level)

- **DCRM(B) (040 $e dcrmb)**
  - No standard rule interpretations
  - Local rule interpretations (need to document)
  - Options (need to document)
  - Levels (full-level, core-level, minimal-level)

**Title & Statement of Responsibility Area**

- **Language of Rare Book Title Pages**
  - Long titles are common
  - Statements such as "in two volumes" are common
  - Illustration statements are common
  - Personal names commonly include titles of address & qualifications
  - DCRM(B) allows for exact transcription; AACR2 calls for silent omission of data
  - The basic principle behind DCRM(B) requires complete and accurate transcription of information. This is particularly important for the title and statement of responsibility.
  - In general do not add accents and other diacritical marks that are not present in the source. In general transcribe letters as they appear. Convert earlier forms of letters and diacritical marks, however, to their modern form

**Edition Area**

- The edition statement should not be abbreviated

**Transcribing rare book imprints: Places**

- **DCRM(B)**
  - Transcribe all places in chief source
  - Transcribe larger jurisdictions after cities even if not needed for identification
  - Transcribe conjunctions & initial prepositions
  - Transpose info from other areas only if separable
  - Place of printing given equal status with place of publication
  - Silent on use of $e

- **AACR2**
  - For places of publication, record only
    - First named place
    - Any prominently named place
    - First place in home country
  - Silently omit larger jurisdictions after cities if not needed for identification
  - Transpose information as needed
  - Silently omit conjunctions & initial prepositions
  - Option to transcribe place of printing in $e
Transcribing rare book imprints: 
Names

- DCRM(B)
- Transcribe all names exactly as appear
- Option to omit addresses & insignificant info using mark of omission
- Give printers equal status with publishers in $b$
- Option to combine names in $b$ from different sources if note sources
- Silent on use of $f$

Transcribing rare book imprints: 
Names

- AACR2
- Describe in terms of first named publisher only, but
  - LCRI: record names of all publishers in chief source
- Use shortest form of name that can be understood internationally, but
  - LCRI: shorten name or not according to judgment; retain terms of incorporation if desired
- Silently omit addresses & insignificant info
- Option to transcribe printer in $f$

Transcribing rare book imprints: 
Dates

- DCRM(B)
- Transcribe years other than Gregorian or Julian as they appear.
  - $c$ an VII 1798 (On publication: An VII, 1798)
- Transcribe dates in roman numerals as arabic numerals
  - anno gratiae 1614 (On publication: Anno gratiae MDXIV)
- Option to transcribe as roman numerals with arabic in brackets
- Option to record date of printing in $g$ if differs

Transcribing rare book : Dates

- AACR2
- Option to add copyright date in $c$ if differs, but
  - LCRI: do not add copyright date for books
- Transcribe dates in roman numerals as arabic numerals
- Option to record date of printing in $g$ if differs, but
  - LCRI: one record should stand for all impressions of an edition

Physical Description Area: 
Statement of Extent

- Unnumbered & Blank Pages
  - DCRM(B)
    - Count every leaf. Include in brackets all unnumbered pages or leaves.
    - If the pages are numbered in terms of leaves, use a leaf count put include a note indicating that the leaves are printed on both sides.
    - Note misnumbered pages in a parenthetical statement at the end of the pagination statement.
    - Note folded leaves using either (folded) or (some folded) in the pagination statement.
    - Note incomplete copies with a “+” at the last page in the library's copy and a note indicating that the copy is missing pages after that number.
    - Note the format at the end of the |c.
  - AACR2
    - Record last numbered page in each sequence
    - Disregard unnumbered sequences (printed or blank)

Physical Description Area: 
Statement of Extent

- Advertisements
  - DCRM(B) instructions: Mention if clearly belong to publication:
    - Included in pagination, or
    - Printed on pages of initial or final gathering, or
    - Printed on separate gathering in publisher's binding, or
    - Known to be present in other copies
    - Why treat ads on separate gathering in publisher's binding differently than other inserted ads?
  - AACR2 instructions skimpy: Disregard unnumbered sequences of advertisements
Physical Description Area: Illustrative Matter

- DCRM(B) provides option to identify graphic techniques in 300 field
  - No guidance on indicating multiple techniques
  - ill. (wood engravings), map (lithograph), port. (steel engraving)
  - ill., map, port. (wood engravings, lithograph, steel engraving)
- No guidance on terminology to use
  - Albertypes, heliotypes, collotypes, & artotypes all refer to same process
  - Prefer one term for all? Which thesaurus? Prefer usage in item?

Physical Description Area: Illustrative Matter

- Types of Illustrations
  - Diagrams
    - DCRM(B) permits term; AACR2 does not
      - No corresponding value in fixed field; use "a" (ill.)
  - Photographs
    - Term not permitted in DCRM(B) or AACR2
    - Value assigned in fixed field
    - Use in 300 field as graphic technique in DCRM(B) /?
      - Example: §b 1 port. (photo.)
  - LCRI 2.5C2.
    - Use "ill." & "map" only (other libraries may give fuller data)

Physical Description Area: Illustrative Matter

- Colored Illustrations
  - DCRM(B)
    - Note presence of hand-coloring
    - Use local note (& omit "col." from 300 field) unless "evidence" issued that way
    - Instructions too strict for 19th-century books?
  - AACR2 silent
- Books often issued with tinted lithographs
  - Typically black, white, & one color tint
  - AACR2
    - Illustrations with one color not considered "colored"
    - Black & white are not colors
    - DCRM(B) silent; assume AACR2 definition of "colored"?

DCRM(B) vs. AACR2: Summary

- Basic differences between DCRM(B) & AACR2
  - Faithful vs. regularized transcription
  - Use of mark of omission vs. silent omission of data
  - More vs. fewer required notes
  - Slower vs. faster (generally)

DCRM(B) vs. AACR2: Summary

- Options within codes allow for "middle-ground"
  - DCRM(B) Full has options for fullness of description
  - DCRM(B) Core has same options & requires fewer notes
  - DCRM(B) Minimal has same options, requires no notes, & no subject analysis
    (especially appropriate for difficult foreign-language items)
  - LCRI options in 260/300 fields permit slightly fuller & more faithful description

DCRM(B) vs. AACR2: Summary

- No one "best way"; each institution must decide based on its
  - Collection
  - Mission
  - Finances
  - Staff expertise, and
  - Degree of consistency desired in catalog