RBMS PS CHAPTER 0

0.0 Purpose and Scope

The Rare Books and Manuscripts Section of the Association of College and Research Libraries offer these policy statements (RBMS Policy Statements) to provide guidelines and instructions for applying RDA to rare materials. Rare materials are those for which an agency chooses to provide a more detailed description. The treatment may be applied for any reason, including, but not limited to age, rarity, fragility, enduring value, or importance as part of a collection.

RBMS policy statements provide guidance for description of and access to a variety of formats. They do not address formats such as integrating resources, textual manuscript material, and archival collections or aggregations of other materials for which comprehensive description would be appropriate (see 1.5.2). These formats require substantially different approaches to description, and are at present out of scope of RBMS policy statements. Other standards (e.g., Describing Archives a Content Standard (DACS) or DCRM(MSS), are more appropriate to use for formats outside the scope of the RBMS policy statements.

The primary focus of RBMS Policy Statements is the description of manifestations and items, with a secondary focus on works and expressions. The policy statements provide minimal guidance for the description of agents, nomen, places, and time-spans

If choosing to apply RBMS policy statements for a description, apply all applicable policy statements throughout the description.

Institutions may promote efficiency by setting cataloging policies for categories of materials in their collections rather than making decisions on an item-by-item basis. For example, an institution may decide to apply RBMS policy statements to all pre-1831 books, to provide access points to printers and booksellers for all pre-18th-century books, but give signature statements and expansive descriptive notes for 15th- and 16th-century books only. A mechanism for easily making exceptions to general cataloging policy is desirable as well. If, for example, a curator buys a photographic print because of its unusual production process, description of and access to the process ought to be recorded in the description, even if it is not the institution's usual policy to describe photographic production processes. Application of the RBMS policy statements will not necessarily be the best choice for every item in an institution's special collections.

The following factors may be considered when choosing whether to apply the RBMS policy statements:

Institution's mission and user needs

Evaluate the relevance of the items awaiting cataloging to the institution's mission and the needs of its users. Ideally, the institution will have developed internal documentation that will facilitate such an evaluation, including a mission statement, collection development guidelines, and a listing of constituent users and their anticipated needs. The needs of all users, from researchers to staff members to the general public, should be taken into consideration.

Institutional and departmental priorities and assets

Evaluate institution and departmental cataloging priorities and assets, e.g. concurrent projects in progress and their requirements; the availability of reference sources, such as specialized biographies or catalogues raisonnés; the availability of funding and space. Be especially mindful of staffing levels, expertise, and current workloads.

The regular review of cataloging priorities is highly recommended and should include discussions with curatorial, public services, technical services, and preservation staff.

Characteristics of the material

- Bibliographic, artistic, historical, or artifactual value
- Monetary or public relations value
- Depth of collecting in a particular area, which may require more detailed description in order to
  - ↘ reveal bibliographic variants of interest
  - ↘ prevent the inadvertent purchase of duplicates or the failure to acquire desirable variants
  - ↘ reduce handling
- Renown of materials
- Conditions of acquisition, such as access requirements imposed by a donor
- Vulnerability to theft or vandalism, which may benefit from more detailed descriptive documentation of objects and their chain of custody

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0.3 Relationship to Other Standards for Resource Description and Access

RBMS policy statements are informed by long-standing Anglo-American practice in describing rare materials, as embodied in the DCRM suite of manuals. When creating RDA descriptions, use the RBMS PS. The DCRM manuals are still appropriate for descriptions based on AACR2.

- Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Books) (DCRM(B)) (Washington, D.C.: Cataloging Distribution Service, 2007).
- Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Cartographic) (DCRM(C)) (Chicago: Rare Books and Manuscripts Section of the Association of College and Research Libraries, 2016).
- Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Graphics) (DCRM(G)) (Chicago: Rare Books and Manuscripts Section of the Association of College and Research Libraries, 2013).
- Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Serials) (DCRM(S)) (Washington, D.C.: Cataloging Distribution Service, Library of Congress, 2008).

ISBD

These policy statements assume ISBD presentation within a MARC environment. Reasonable adjustments for use in other environments are permitted.

RBMS Policy Statements alignment with RDA

RBMS Policy Statements build upon RDA data elements and guidelines. The structure of the policy statements follows that of RDA. The policy statements use RDA value vocabularies, except where indicated.

RBMS Policy Statements are omitted when an RDA guideline is sufficient.

In some cases where the RDA guideline is sufficient, additional examples applicable to rare materials have been supplied.

For a small number of topics, RBMS PS provides guidance where there is no equivalent guidance or data element in RDA. In cases such as these, the policy statement is provided in an appropriate RDA element of broad scope (e.g., dedications and limitation statements are treated in Note on Manifestation).

RBMS Policy Statements relationship to LC-PCC Policy Statements

RBMS Policy Statements are independent of LC-PCC Policy Statements. They do not assume application of LC-PCC PS. If an LC-PCC PS is considered useful for the description of rare materials, RBMS PS provide similar guidance or provide a reference to the LC-PCC PS.

0.4 Objectives and Principles Governing Resource Description and Access

The primary objectives in cataloging special collections resources are no different from those in cataloging other resources. These objectives focus on meeting user needs to find, identify, select, obtain, and understand. However, users of special collections resources often bring specialized requirements to these tasks that cannot be fully met by general cataloging rules, such as those contained in RDA. In addition, the standard production practices assumed in general cataloging rules do not always apply to special collections resources.

Users must be able to investigate physical processes and post-production history and context exemplified in resources described

Users of special collections resources routinely investigate a variety of artifactual and post-production aspects of materials. For example, they may want to locate resources that are related by printing methods, illustration processes, binding styles and structures, provenance, genre/form, etc. The ability of users to identify resources that fit these criteria depends upon full and accurate descriptions and the recording of appropriate access points and relationships.

Users must be able to distinguish clearly among different manifestations of an expression of a work

The ability to distinguish among different manifestations of an expression of a work is critical to the user tasks of identifying and selecting resources. Users of rare materials require full and faithful transcriptions, detailed physical descriptions, and careful recording of various distinguishing points in the notes, in order to identify separate manifestations.

Additionally, users of special collections resources are typically interested in drawing finer distinctions among variants within manifestations than are users of other resources, including not simply between editions and issues but between variant impressions and states; many also need to distinguish between copies at the item level.

Users must be able to perform most identification and selection tasks without direct access to the resources

Users of special collections resources frequently perform identification and selection tasks under circumstances that require the description to stand as a detailed surrogate for the item (e.g., consultation from a distance, limited access due to the fragile condition of the item, inability to physically browse collections housed in restricted areas, etc.). Accuracy of descriptive representation increases subsequent efficiency for both users and collection managers. The same accuracy contributes to the long-term preservation of the materials themselves, by reducing unnecessary circulation and examination of materials that do not precisely meet users' requirements.

Users must be able to gain access to resources whose production or presentation characteristics differ from modern conventions

In special collections resources, explicit evidence concerning details of publication and manufacture will often be lacking or insufficient to distinguish among different manifestations. That which is bibliographically significant may thus be obscured. In order to distinguish among manifestations, the instructions in the RBMS PS provide guidance for recording bibliographic evidence presented in forms that differ from modern conventions (e.g. signature statements).

0.6 RDA Elements

0.6.5 Section 1: Recording Attributes of Manifestation and Item

When recording data identifying and describing a manifestation or item, include as a minimum all the following elements that are applicable and readily ascertainable.

[Comment: Blue text are elements that are core in the RBMS PS, but not RDA proper]

Title

Title proper

Parallel title proper

Other title information

Parallel other title information

Variant title

Earlier title proper (for serials)

Later title proper (for serials)

Statement of Responsibility

Statement of responsibility relating to title proper (if more than one, only the first recorded is required)

Parallel statement of responsibility relating to title proper

Edition statement

Designation of edition

Parallel designation of edition

Statement of responsibility relating to edition

Parallel statement of responsibility relating to edition

Designation of a named revision of an edition

Parallel designation of named revision of edition

Statement of responsibility relating to named revision of edition

Parallel statement of responsibility relating to named revision of edition

Numbering of serials

Numeric and/or alphabetic designation of first issue or part of sequence (for first or only sequence)

Chronological designation of first issue or part of sequence (for first or only sequence)

Numeric and/or alphabetic designation of last issue or part of sequence (for last or only sequence)

Chronological designation of last issue or part of sequence (for last or only sequence)

Alternate numeric and/or alphabetic designation of first issue or part of sequence

Alternate chronological designation of first issue or part of sequence

Alternate numeric and/or alphabetic designation of last issue or part of sequence

Alternate chronological designation of last issue or part of sequence

Production statement

Place of production

Date of production (for a resource in an unpublished form)

Publication statement

Place of publication (if more than one, only the first recorded is required)

Parallel place of publication

Publisher's name (if more than one, only the first recorded is required)

Parallel publisher's name

Date of publication

Distribution statement

Place of publication

Parallel place of distribution

Distributor's name

Parallel distributor's name

Date of distribution

Manufacture statement

Place of manufacture

Parallel place of manufacture

Manufacturer's name

Parallel manufacturer's name

Date of manufacture

Series statement

Title proper of series

Parallel title proper of series

Other title information of series

Parallel other title information of series

Statement of responsibility relating to series

Parallel statement of responsibility relating to series

ISSN of series

Numbering within series

Title proper of subseries

Parallel title proper of subseries

Other title information of subseries

Parallel other title information of subseries

Statement of responsibility relating to subseries

Parallel statement of responsibility relating to subseries

ISSN of subseries

Numbering within subseries

Mode of issuance

Frequency

Identifier for the manifestation

Publisher's number for notated music

Plate number for notated music

Note on title

Always note source of title for serials, graphics, or if the source is other than the preferred source.

Media type

Carrier type

Carrier type

Extent

Extent (only if the resource is complete or if the total extent is known)

Dimensions

Base material (for still image resources)

Applied material (for still image resources)

Mount (for still image resources)

Layout (for cartographic resources)

0.6.6 Section 2: Recording Attributes of Work and Expression

Adding genre/form terms from one of the Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (RBMS) Controlled Vocabularies is strongly recommended. Assign terms from other thesauri as appropriate.

In addition, the following elements are core for rare materials:

Coverage of content (recommended)
Longitude and latitude
Dissertation or thesis information
Language of content
Script
Form of musical notation

Format of notated music
Medium of performance of musical content
Scale (for cartographic content)
Horizontal scale of cartographic content
Vertical scale of cartographic content
Projection of cartographic content
Other details of cartographic content

0.6.11 Section 8: Recording Relationships between Works, Expressions, Manifestations, and Items

[Comment: Place holder text. RBMS PS work on relationships on hold until after 3R release.]

Related work:

[From BSR] PCC recommends providing a contents note (no limit on number of works in the contents note unless burdensome). Give an analytical authorized access point for the predominant or first work in the compilation. Additional access points for other related works may also be included at the discretion of the cataloger. See section above for elements used to identify works and expressions.

[From BSR] Rare materials: Citation notes and references to published descriptions are encouraged. Record in the form prescribed by Standard Citation Forms for Rare Materials Cataloging. For notated music, see also Appendix H of DCRM(M).

Related expression:

[Serial Relationships.]

Related manifestation:

[From BSR] Rare materials: If making separate descriptions for resources that were issued together by the publisher, make a reference to the related manifestation in a "with" note.

Related item:

[From BSR]: PCC recommends for reproductions, bound-withs, and for special relationships for rare materials if warranted.

[From BSR]: Rare materials: If making separate descriptions for resources bound together after publication, make a reference to the related item in a local "with" note.

0.8 Alternatives and Options

In the RBMS PS, "if considered important" indicates that more information may be added to support a particular user task (e.g., identification) or rare materials need (e.g., for collection management) and thus signals choices for more or less depth in the description. This phrase makes no judgment on the

relative importance of the choice and covers the entire range between best practice on the one end, and highly specialized practices on the other.

0.9 Exceptions

If choosing to apply an exception (e.g., nonnormalized transcription (see 1.7.1)), it should be applied consistently throughout all elements of the description.

0.10 Examples

The RBMS PS examples are not in themselves prescriptive, but are meant to provide a model of reliable application and interpretation of the guideline in question.

As in RDA, RMBS PS examples generally illustrate the element to which they apply. Examples in these policy statements are formatted according to ISBD when illustrating adjacent elements; selected MARC examples are intended to clarify the application of the policy statement.

0.11 Internationalization

0.11.2 Language and Script

RBMS Policy Statements were written for use by English-speaking agencies.