

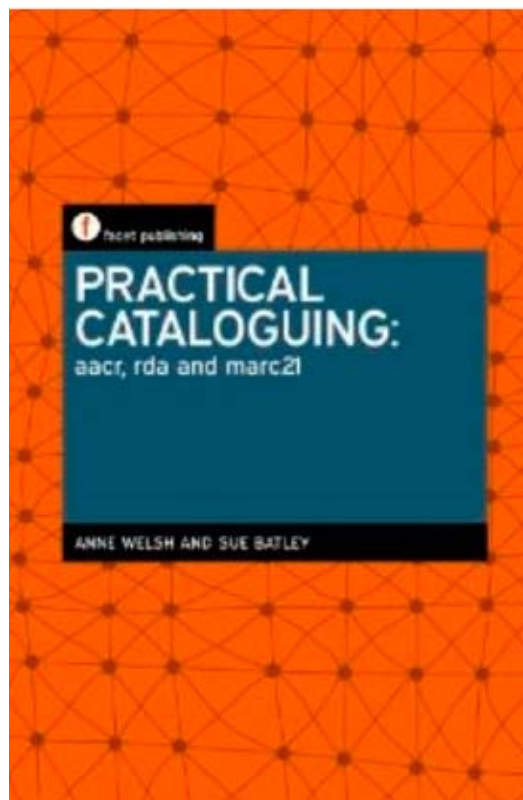
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# Practical cataloguing: AACR, RDA and MARC21

Anne Welsh and Sue Batley  
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The publication of this book is very timely, particularly with the possible implementation of RDA within the coming year. It is divided into three sections: the history and theory of cataloguing and cataloguing standards; the types of format used for recording items, and finally, the future for practical cataloguing. It is set up to aid those who are new to cataloguing, providing practical examples and helpful practice notes, especially highlighting exceptions to the rule. At the same time it is also useful for experienced cataloguers

to consult, particularly when deciding to adopt RDA policies.

The section on the history and theory of cataloguing and cataloguing standards is not too heavy-going for the novice cataloguer, and the authors highlight founding theorists' ideas by using contemporary examples and future RDA predictions. As an experienced cataloguer, I discovered that the information was accessible and easy to understand.

The section on cataloguing formats provided clear step-by-step examples of AACR and MARC 21, which I shall definitely use when training new staff in my department. The chapter covering RDA offers invaluable practical advice to librarians on whether they should adopt new practice, highlighting key factors likely to affect their cataloguing, including the controversial RDA 'Content Type' as opposed to AACR's 'General Material Designators' and the dreaded withdrawal of the 'rule of three' when cataloguing authors' names. The book contains a very helpful chapter on the differences between AACR and RDA and provides useful equivalency tables that highlight the changes, using actual sample records; the practice notes at the end of each section are highly beneficial, especially for experienced cataloguers new to RDA.

The final section, on the future of practical cataloguing, gives us an insight into the thoughts and feelings of librarians concerning the RDA toolkit while also providing the results of national testing which recently took place in the USA. The authors state that the whole situation is still very uncertain and, at the time of writing, they felt that things had moved a lot more slowly than originally anticipated. They do, however, provide useful advice and contact details for cataloguers wishing to consider all or some elements of RDA.

The sample records at the back of the book offer invaluable examples of AACR, RDA and MARC21 at all levels, useful for both novices and experienced cataloguers. I found the book extremely helpful and interesting and would definitely recommend it to first-time cataloguers for use as a step-by-step training manual; I would also encourage experienced staff to consult it when deciding to adopt RDA policies.