# Book Review

*Michael Fernandez, editor*

**RDA and Serials Cataloging, Second Edition.** By Ed Jones. Chicago: ALA Editions, 2025. 240 p. $69.99 softcover (ISBN 978-0-8389-4871-2).

The second edition of *RDA and Serials Cataloging* is an update to the 2013 first edition and focuses on what author Ed Jones calls "Official RDA." That is, the 2020 Resource Description and Access (RDA) standards described in the RDA toolkit.[1] According to Jones, this book "is designed to be used by serial catalogers who are new to RDA and by monograph catalogers who are new to serials cataloging" (vii).

Overall, the style is easy to read, and the terms used are thoroughly explained. The instructions are very detailed, and appropriate background information is provided. This new edition still discusses the changes from AACR2 to RDA, which are helpful for catalogers new to RDA or for others to understand older serial records. Jones thankfully includes the old RDA numbering so that readers can search for the desired sections in the RDA toolkit, as it sometimes can be difficult to search.  The beginning of sections and subsections have a list of RDA elements discussed for easy reference. Most of the book is divided into two parts—"Part I: An Introduction to Serials, Serials Cataloging, and RDA" and "Part II: Cataloging Serials and Ongoing Integrating Resources Using RDA." There is also an epilogue titled "RDA and Linked Data."

In part I, Jones begins by defining what a serial is with examples from the International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) manual,[2] detailing some aspects of a serial, and describing the various types of serials. These sections are especially useful for catalogers new to serials and a good refresher for others. He also includes a history of cataloging with some emphasis on serials. This history is interesting, but may be too long for most readers as it is about thirteen pages. For those new to RDA, Jones gives a brief summary of the standard and how it relates to serials. Included are helpful information on the organization of the RDA toolkit and how the Library Reference Model (LRM)[3] deals with serials. The part ends with search strategies on how to locate an existing cataloged serial record, as most catalogers hope to locate an existing record for the serial or at least one they can use as a sample. In the second edition, this chapter moved from part II to part I.

In the first edition, part II also contained one additional chapter (chapter 4) with most of the instructions for cataloging with several subsections and was about two-thirds of the book. The subsections have now mostly become their own chapters. Part II begins with a brief overview and "General Instructions" describing some background information, machine-readable cataloging record (MARC) fixed fields, terminology, core elements, and some general rules for serials.

Chapter 5, "Bibliographic Description," is the heart of the book as it gives specific instructions of how to catalog a serial. Details include source of information, RDA elements, content/media/carrier fields, titles, statements of responsibility, editions, numbering, publication information, materials description, series, notes, and frequency. There are lots of short-snippet examples of the item being explained and the MARC indicators to use. Jones often gives a short example and then a more detailed example. This section will likely be the most heavily used. However, some readers may need more of an explanation

of the 0-8 International Standard Bibliographic Description (ISBD) standard[4] used as the basis of organization of the chapter.

The subsequent chapters give more details on relationships, authors, and access points—some of the thornier areas of serials. Jones offers a very thorough explanation of how one serial is related to another and provides several examples of how to connect two serials toward the end of the chapter. But it may have been beneficial to include a couple of full MARC record examples showing the former serial title and new serial title. In "Identifying Serial Works and Authors" (chapter 7), Jones focuses on corporate authors as most serials do not have personal authors. Plus, he briefly gives instructions when catalogers need to enhance a non-unique title to differentiate titles with the same name. There are several examples at the end of the chapter. However, on page 142, the numbering starts again for criteria of author corporate body; therefore, in the examples that follow, the numbering is off. This could be confusing for some readers and should be fixed in later printings. There is also a brief discussion of creating access points, once again focusing on corporate bodies. Finally, at the end of chapter 8, there is a full example of a serial MARC record with helpful notes. Readers may prefer full MARC records earlier in the book, possibly at the end of chapters 5–7.

Toward the book's end, Jones provides specific information on cataloging online serials and integrating resources. Included in "Online Serials" (chapter 9) are the differences with print serials. Jones does say they are now prevalent—"Nowadays serials tend to be 'born digital' and are only subsequently issued in print" (169). Thus, he probably should have spent more time on them or integrated the differences more into the text. Likewise, Jones discusses the differences between cataloging integrating resources and serials. He also gives helpful advice on whether catalogers should or should not catalog various websites. The full MARC record examples at the end of these two last chapters with notes help catalogers see the MARC record put together.

Lastly, the book concludes with an epilogue "RDA and Linked Data," providing some insight into the future of cataloging. This section discusses linked data aspects of RDA, the Library of Congress's development of the BIBFRAME editor, and some issues associated with its widespread adoption. Jones does not get into many of the details, as he still sees linked data as something in the future.

*RDA and Serials Cataloging, Second Edition* has unmatched information on cataloging serials that will help all catalogers of serials or those wanting to learn more about serials. Readers will find it much easier to locate and understand topics than the RDA Toolkit. Plus, the book has a substantial index for easy topic look-up. However, there are a few places that could be improved. Some sections could use more detailed examples than snippets. Jones makes this concession—"Also it cannot be emphasized enough that this manual, like all static products, was already out of date when it was published" (39). This statement appears to be true in some areas. This new edition should have had more of a focus on online serials and integrating resources instead of adding chapters at the end of the work, since most new serials are likely to be online. Still, this title is a helpful reference tool when cataloging serials.— *Lisa Romano ([lisa.romano@umb.edu](mailto:lisa.romano@umb.edu)), University of Massachusetts Boston, Healey Library, Boston, Massachusetts*

## References

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3. Pat Riva, Patrick Le Bœuf, and Maya Žumer, *IFLA Library Reference Model: A Conceptual Model for Bibliographic Information*, IFLA, 2024, https://repository.ifla.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/7d23aa55-1f85-490f-b500-6170285585a6/content

4. "About the ISBD," *International Standard Bibliographic Description (ISBD) Review Group*, International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, accessed April 3, 2025. https://www.ifla.org/g/isbd-rg/international-standard-bibliographic-description/.