

3 RDA, AACR2, AND YOU: WHAT CATALOGERS ARE THINKING

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A new cataloging code, based on the bibliographic framework of IFLA's (International Federation of Library Associations) FRBR (Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records) construction for relating works, entities, and subjects, was finally made available for review in the cataloging world in late 2008 through February 2009. RDA (Resource Description and Access) "provides a set of guidelines and instructions on formulating descriptive data and access point control data to support resource discovery."¹ The objectives and principles for development of RDA, as stated by the committee tasked for its creation, the Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA,² sound right to catalogers: comprehensive, consistent, clear, and rational cataloging guidelines and instructions that are responsive to new types of resources, compatible with established cataloging standards and models, easily adaptable for libraries and others, and easy and efficient to use. This does *sound* good. The problem, even after listening to so many of its ardent and vocal supporters, was actually seeing its monolithic online presence, and trying to imagine how to use this new code to achieve all the nobly stated objectives and principles in real life. It hasn't been achieved. Neither FRBR nor RDA has been tested in production and outcomes reviewed (even though the Library of Congress and its testing associates are in the midst of this process), and FRBR remains a theoretical notion of the bibliographic universe that is still neither concrete nor available in the only platform most libraries use to provide access to their collections: online catalogs. Plus, the cost of RDA itself is prohibitive for many libraries, training will be difficult and costly, and the learning curve will negatively and significantly affect all cataloging agencies. My question is, and all this is for *what*?

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That prompted me to wonder if we could retain AACR2 and its updating device, LCRIs (Library of Congress Rule Interpretations), for those libraries that cannot afford to move to RDA, as well as having RDA (if implemented by the Library of Congress) available for those who want to utilize this code. This survey was written and administered to gather answers from practitioners and all interested parties on this question, and many other temperature-taking questions, to see what we are all thinking and doing regarding RDA and AACR2, and other issues.

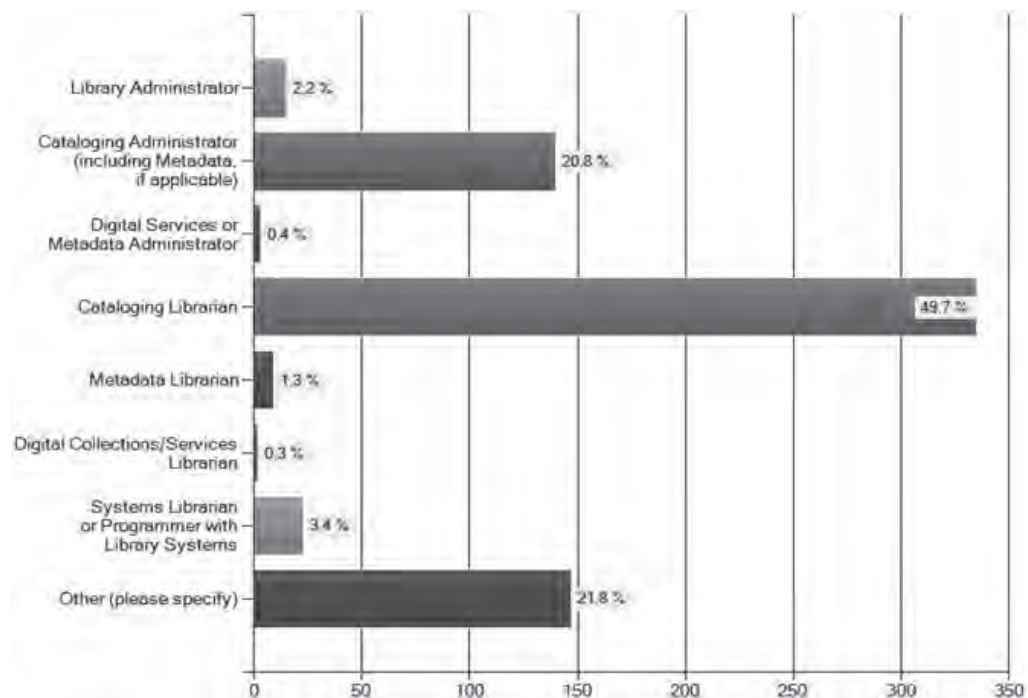
There were 685 respondents to the survey, with a final count of 459 completed and usable responses. Ninety-one percent of the respondents to this survey were from the United States. Canada was the second-highest respondent at 3 percent, followed by the UK at 2 percent, and Mexico and Australia at 1 percent each. The remaining ten countries completed the last 2 percent of the respondents: China, England, Italy, Lebanon, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, and Sweden.

Most of the respondents, as just noted, are from the United States. The positions of survey respondents, in Figure 3.1,³ following, also have a predominance of a certain type of position—cataloging librarians.

Figure 3.1 shows that basic catalogers and their administrators responded in the highest percentage (71%). Systems librarians (3%), library administrators (2%),

Figure 3.1 Question 3 on survey

Your position. (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by SurveyMonkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)



CONVERSATIONS WITH CATALOGERS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

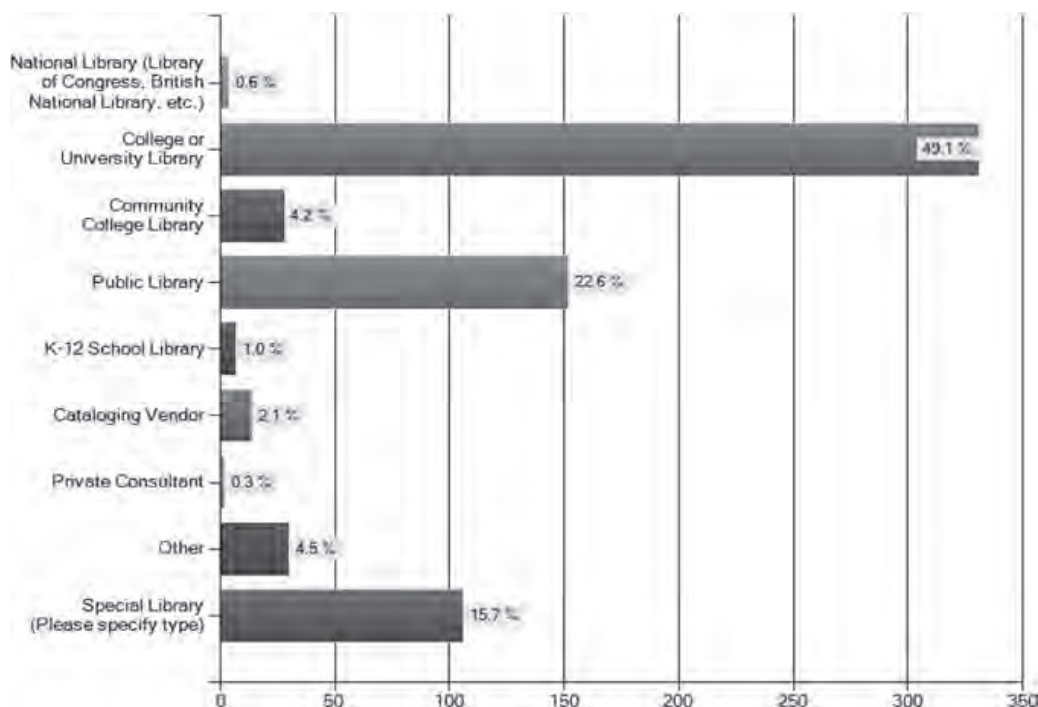
and metadata librarians (1%) followed in response percentages. In addition to the positions listed in Figure 3.1, many other types of respondents fell into the “Other” category, including the following main position types: technical services librarian/coordinator/head, cataloging technician, library educator/instructor, collection manager, research and instruction librarian, special collections librarian, database manager/specialist, library associate, graduate assistant, library director, archives manager, technical assistant, knowledge management, paraprofessional cataloger, electronic resources librarian, acquisition clerk/librarian, reader development and stock librarian, consultant, and many kinds of format catalogers.

Just as catalogers dominated the number of responses, academic libraries were the predominant respondents, as shown in Figure 3.2.

It should come as no surprise that most respondents to the survey (53%) work in academic libraries; however, public libraries also participated in high numbers (23% of the total), as did special libraries (16%). In all the types of library categories shown in Figure 3.2, the survey had at least one respondent. In addition to the categories of libraries above, and their percentage of responses, the 106 special libraries that responded to the survey included the following basic types: Law libraries of all kinds (20%); art/photography/film museum

Figure 3.2 Question 4 on survey

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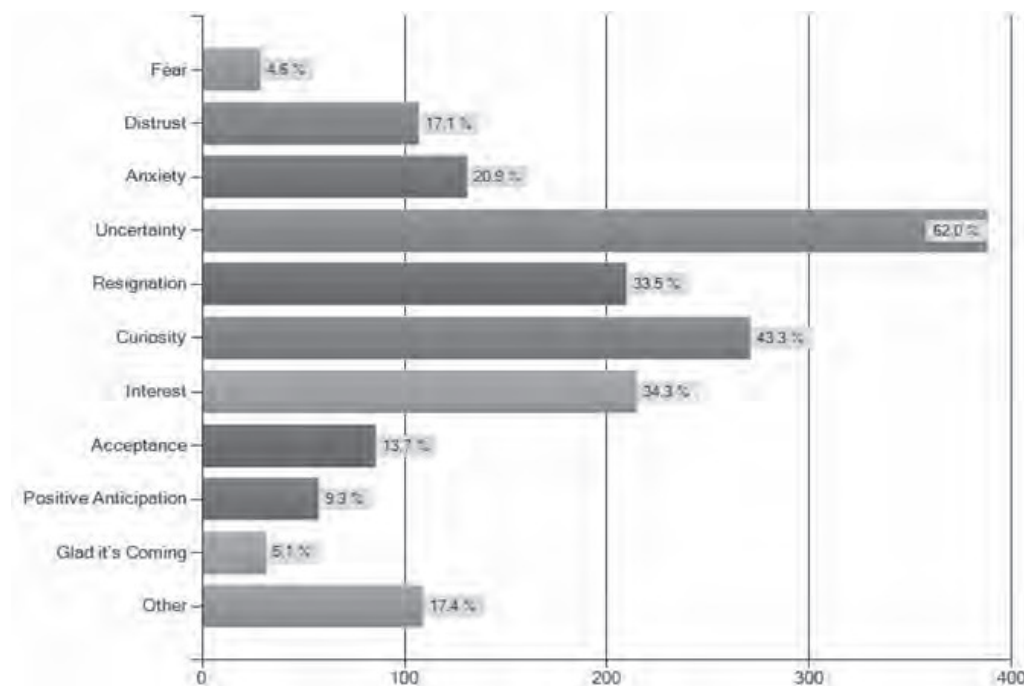
libraries (15%); state and state agency libraries (12%); consortiums of all kinds (8%); government research libraries (6%); historical research, society, and genealogy libraries (5%); seminary and theological libraries (4%). The remainder of the libraries, comprising 30 percent, were fairly all equal in low actual numbers of one or two per category: archives and media archives, botanical, corporate, federal, federal and state court, health sciences, humanities research, legal depository, legislative, medical, membership, nonprofit organization, private contractor for government agency, private research, rare books and special collections, and science.

The survey was designed to capture feelings toward RDA and AACR2 and its implementation, as well as facts and knowledge levels of respondents. Figure 3.3 reflects the specific feelings of respondents.

Uncertainty (62%) and curiosity (43%) are the two feelings expressed most commonly by the respondents as shown in Figure 3.3, with resignation (34%) and interest (34%) not far behind. However, 43 percent in total have negative feelings (fear, distrust, anxiety) compared to 28 percent with positive feelings (acceptance, positive anticipation, glad it's coming). Seventeen percent of the respondents also described their feelings in the "Other" category.

Figure 3.3 Question 6 on survey

Words that most closely match your feelings toward RDA. (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by SurveyMonkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)



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The percentages in the following ambivalent, negative, and positive categories are percentages of the overall 17 percent in the “Other” category.

- Ambivalent feelings: Apathy, ambivalence (4%); ignorance about RDA (4%); confusion (3%); doesn’t change the fundamentals of cataloging (1%); and some other categories with only one respondent: sounds good in theory, but cataloging is already strained by bare-bones operations; make it easier to understand; will learn when we need to, right now it’s waiting and watching; want improvements to AACR2
- Negative feelings: Disappointment/despair/disillusion (11%); annoyance/frustration/irritation (9%); it is complicated, vague, and full of jargon (6%); disgust/dislike (4%); worry about cost and usefulness (4%); farce, hyped, skeptical, cynical (4%); not necessary, it’s reinventing the wheel (3%); antipathy, loathing, anger, resentment, resistance (3%); don’t see a cost-benefit (3%); waste of time and money (3%); nervous, hesitant (3%); exhausted by all the talk (3%); wish to retire before it comes (2%); fear of losing job and losing the value of cataloging (1%); and others at one response—unimplementable or will take much work; won’t be good enough; boondoggle; already obsolete; draconian solution to unclear problem; cataloger won’t have access to the Toolkit; not serve users as well as AACR2; RDA won’t be used by other agencies outside the library
- Positive feelings: It’s our responsibility and professional duty as well as curiosity to see what RDA is and can do (3%); cautious optimism and a hope that it will be a better standard for library services (3%); library will follow other major libraries (2%); and with one category that had only one respondent: some aspects of it may be okay.

In the next section of the survey, represented by Figures 3.4 and 3.5, catalogers are asked to respond to questions that attempt to identify the level of their understanding of RDA concepts.

Connecting the categories with the highest percentages, in Figure 3.4, may show us how the majority of catalogers (and others) rank their knowledge of the listed RDA issues or components. Most respondents (39%) rank themselves in the middle category, average, in regard to knowing why RDA was created and AACR2 was left behind. Most (32%) are not as knowledgeable or comfortable with understanding the use of RDA as a cataloging metadata application profile for non-library entities, but still have some knowledge. Similarly, most respondents (40%) are not as knowledgeable or comfortable with understanding the use of RDA element sets, but have some knowledge of them. Finally, in the same fashion, most respondents (41%) are not as knowledgeable or comfortable with the use of RDA vocabularies. It is also enlightening to review the lowest knowledge rankings and percentages in column 1, “No knowledge,” and compare them to the higher 4 and 5 category rankings and percentages. Somehow, in order for RDA to be effectively used in order to maintain consistent good quality records in our shared databases, the gap between these two extremes in knowledge will have to be lessened.

Figure 3.4 Question 7 on survey

Knowledge or understanding of RDA components. (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by SurveyMonkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)

7. Please explain your knowledge or understanding of the following RDA issues or components, using the scale of 1-5, with 1 as the lowest: "No knowledge" and 5 as the highest: "Expert knowledge." Select only one scale value per topic. Create Chart Download							
	1 No Knowledge	2	3	4	5 Expert Knowledge	Rating Average	Response Count
1. The reasons why RDA was created, and modification of AACR2 was abandoned	8.6% (47)	22.7% (124)	38.6% (211)	27.4% (150)	2.7% (15)	1.00	547
2. The use of RDA as a cataloging metadata application profile for non-library entities	30.0% (164)	32.2% (176)	28.3% (155)	8.8% (48)	0.7% (4)	1.00	547
3. Use of RDA Element sets	26.4% (143)	39.9% (216)	26.6% (144)	6.7% (36)	0.4% (2)	1.00	541
4. Use of RDA Vocabularies	24.8% (136)	41.0% (225)	27.0% (148)	6.9% (38)	0.4% (2)	1.00	549

Figure 3.5 continues the rating of knowledge and understanding of RDA concepts, as well as introducing the opportunity to comment on whether the respondent believes the statements are true, or agrees with them.

Using the same approach to analysis as in Figure 3.4, let's look at the categories with the highest percentages in Figure 3.5, as these may show us how the majority of catalogers (and others) rank their understanding of and agreement with the statements regarding RDA. Most respondents (41%) understand and agree that RDA's defined element set allows bibliographic data to be more easily shared in other formats than MARC. An even larger percentage (59%) also understands the FRBR model and linking relationships between entities. But, when it gets to specific components of RDA, such as the RDA vocabulary and element set, this same percent of respondents (59%) either don't understand or don't know about these documents. The next part of RDA in this question concerns its basis of FRBR as the underlying model of bibliographic organization. Thirty percent of catalogers (and others) agree with the statement that FRBR is a necessary requirement for future online catalogs. It is fairly close in number to those who have no opinion or don't understand, as well as the 25 percent who disagree, so this may indicate some ambivalence about this statement. RDA's next feature, the "take-what-you-see" transcription approach, seems

Figure 3.5 Question 8 on survey

Level of understanding and agreement with statements regarding RDA. (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by SurveyMonkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)

8. Indicate your level of understanding and agreement with the following statements regarding RDA, choosing only one level per topic.					Create Chart	Download	
	1 Strongly Agree and Understand	2 Agree and Understand	3 No opinion and/or Don't Understand	4 Disagree and Understand	5 Strongly Disagree and Understand	Rating Average	Response Count
1. RDA's defined element set allows our bibliographic data to be more easily shared in many different formats other than only MARC	3.9% (21)	41.4% (225)	36.1% (196)	16.4% (89)	2.2% (12)	2.72	543
2. The underlying FRBR model supports linking between entities, such as works and persons, allowing the description of relationships between them	10.5% (57)	59.1% (321)	21.2% (115)	7.2% (39)	2.0% (11)	2.31	543
3. RDA's Vocabularies and Element set have consistent and complete terminology to describe the relationships between FRBR and RDA elements, etc.	1.3% (7)	16.1% (87)	59.0% (318)	18.9% (102)	4.6% (25)	3.09	539
4. FRBRized catalogs, using RDA rules linking all types of works, expressions, manifestations and items, is a necessary requirement for future online catalogs	7.2% (39)	29.9% (162)	28.4% (154)	25.1% (136)	9.4% (51)	3.00	542
5. RDA's take-what-you-see in transcription approach facilitates re-use of metadata from non-library entities and enables automated machine matching	3.5% (19)	29.4% (159)	44.2% (239)	16.5% (89)	6.5% (35)	2.93	541
6. AACR2's transcription rules and exceptions for corrections and abbreviations impedes automated data re-use and causes difficulties for non-library entities	7.2% (39)	30.9% (167)	28.1% (152)	25.4% (137)	8.3% (45)	2.97	540
7. AACR2 is too bound to the limitations of the card environment	16.1% (87)	31.2% (169)	12.4% (67)	29.8% (161)	10.5% (57)	2.87	541
8. RDA's elimination of tracing only 3 added authors increases user access, improves machine-processing, provides better representation of the resource	25.3% (137)	48.3% (262)	10.5% (57)	12.2% (66)	3.7% (20)	2.21	542
9. Machine-generated, automatically applied publisher and vendor data is sufficient for a basic record, providing the necessary quality data for subsequent building on that record	2.6% (14)	21.1% (114)	18.3% (99)	31.8% (172)	26.2% (142)	3.58	541
10. Latin abbreviations no longer transcend linguistic boundaries	10.3% (55)	27.8% (149)	28.5% (153)	24.4% (131)	9.0% (48)	2.94	536
11. It is important to encourage publisher or distributor RDA use, and to begin to use their upstream bibliographic data so that some data doesn't have to be re-entered when cataloging, and it is less important to be overly concerned about the quality of the publisher or distributor-supplied data	6.5% (35)	24.1% (130)	19.4% (105)	29.1% (157)	20.9% (113)	3.34	540

unfamiliar with most respondents, as 44 percent don't understand this, or don't have an opinion. Thirty-one percent of catalogers think that AACR2's transcription rules, which are heavily standardized and abbreviated, impede automated data reuse and usage by non-library entities, close to the same percentage rate (31%) of those who believe AACR2 is bound by these limitations, which were set by the card environment. Related to this is the statement that Latin abbreviations, as used in AACR2 and the card environment, no longer are useful across all countries. Twenty-nine of the respondents are uncertain about that notion. RDA's change to allow more than three author added entries is approved by 48 percent. Most catalogers and others (32%) disagree on the statement, which proposes that machine-generated vendor records are sufficient for a starting bibliographic record. This idea is related to the last item in Figure 3.5, which says upstream bibliographic data use, such as vendor records, is efficient for the distribution of cataloging. Again, the largest number of respondents feel negatively about this, as 29 percent disagreed.

Figures 3.6 through 3.8, following, concern catalogers' (and others') thoughts on RDA and training issues, such as numbers of staff to train, the amount of time training will involve, and from what source funding for this training will come.

Percentages in Figure 3.6 indicate that most respondents (56%) had five or fewer staff to train. As the number of staff increased, generally the number of libraries represented decreased until the last category of thirty or more staff, which garnered more library respondents than three of the prior categories. Five to ten staff to train: 19 percent; ten to fifteen staff to train: 11 percent; fifteen to twenty staff to train: 4 percent; twenty to twenty-five staff to train: 3 percent; twenty-five to thirty staff to train: 3 percent; thirty staff and up: 5 percent.

The next section on training, shown in Figure 3.7, reviews staff training time. Although this was hard for respondents to gauge, not having any experience with RDA or the training needs it will require, many gave it their best estimates.

The majority of respondents, as reflected in Figure 3.7, sensibly noted that they don't know and can't determine the estimated training time for librarians

Figure 3.6 Question 9 on survey

Number of staff to train on RDA. (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by SurveyMonkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)

9. Please guesstimate the number of staff to train for RDA, selecting the range of staff that matches your agency. Download								
Number of staff to train								
	1-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-25	25-30	30 or more	Response Count
Ranges of staff numbers	55.5% (288)	19.1% (99)	10.6% (55)	4.2% (22)	2.9% (15)	2.5% (13)	5.2% (27)	519

Figure 3.7 Question 10 on survey

Estimated staff training time for RDA, FRBR, and ILS functionality for FRBRized displays. (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by SurveyMonkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)

10. Estimated training time per staff: please estimate training time per type of staff member as categorized in the following table. All training hours are guesstimates only. Training would include RDA, FRBR, and new ILS functionality for FRBRized displays. If a guesstimate cannot be provided, go to question 13.						
	5-10 hrs.	10-20 hrs.	20-30 hrs.	30+ hrs.	Don't know/Can't say	Response Count
Librarian	9.6% (49)	16.6% (85)	13.5% (69)	23.2% (119)	37.1% (190)	512
Paraprofessional	10.2% (49)	12.9% (62)	10.2% (49)	22.4% (108)	44.4% (214)	482

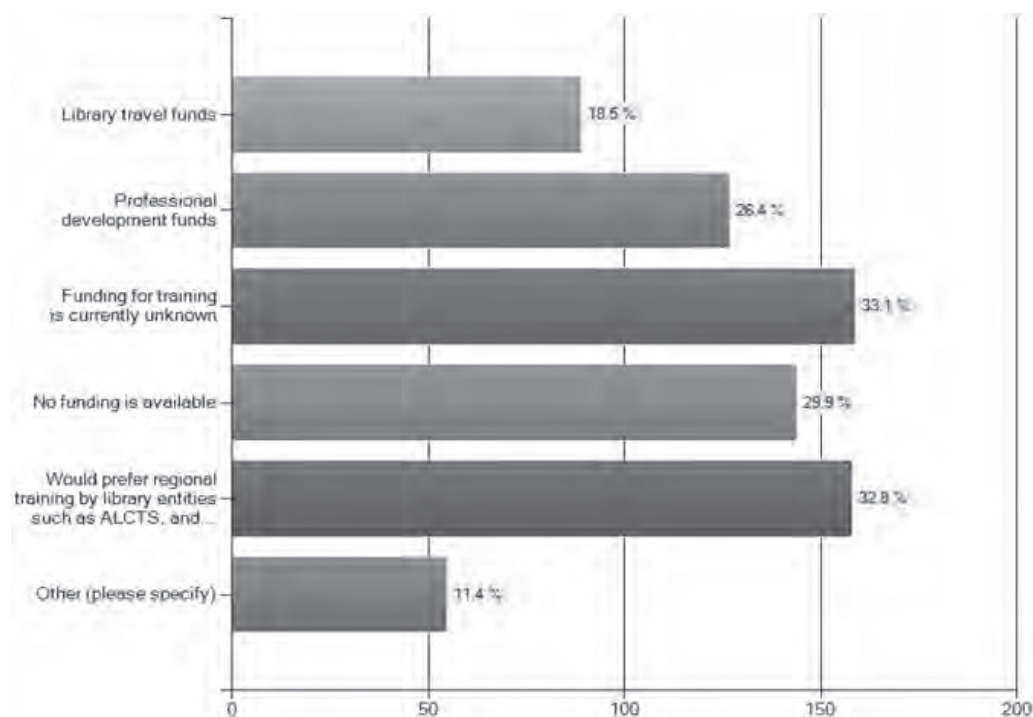
and paraprofessionals. For those who train librarians, 37 percent could not estimate training time. This is compared to the 44 percent who train paraprofessionals, and who are unable to estimate training time. The comparison of training time percentages between librarians and paraprofessionals may not serve any purpose for this essay, but it is worth pointing out that for both types of library workers, respondents estimated training time of 30 or more hours at the highest percentages, 23 percent for librarians, and 22 percent for paraprofessionals. This is a significant recognition of the training commitment that will be required for everyone to learn RDA, FRBR, and ILS functionality for the new cataloging code, the new bibliographic universe structure, and the changes they will evoke in integrated library systems.

Figure 3.8 shows the last responses regarding training in this survey, which is funding and training preferences.

Most libraries do not currently know where funding for RDA training is coming from (33%), but would prefer regional training by ALCTS and other library entities (33%). Figure 3.8 percentages show that fully 30 percent of the respondents do not have money for training at all, but 44 percent have identified training funding possibilities such as travel and professional development funds. The 11 percent of "Other" comments by respondents include categories as follows: Wherever training is from, it should be free, Web-based training, an online interactive webinar (13%); many libraries will have some in-house training, for main and branch libraries, generally sending someone for outside training which is then brought in house (13%); can't send library staff out for training, nor can it be afforded to bring in trainers from the outside, due to budget cuts now and in the future (13%); several libraries prefer local or regional OCLC training, Minitex, Lyraxis, NYlink, state consortia (11%); libraries in Alaska are remote, and may need much training funding (perhaps grants) for small libraries to be trained, hopefully in the major cities, or perhaps via distance education as on-site training would be cost prohibitive (7%); some libraries will send staff to

Figure 3.8 Question 11 on survey

Funding and regional training preference for RDA training. (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by SurveyMonkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)

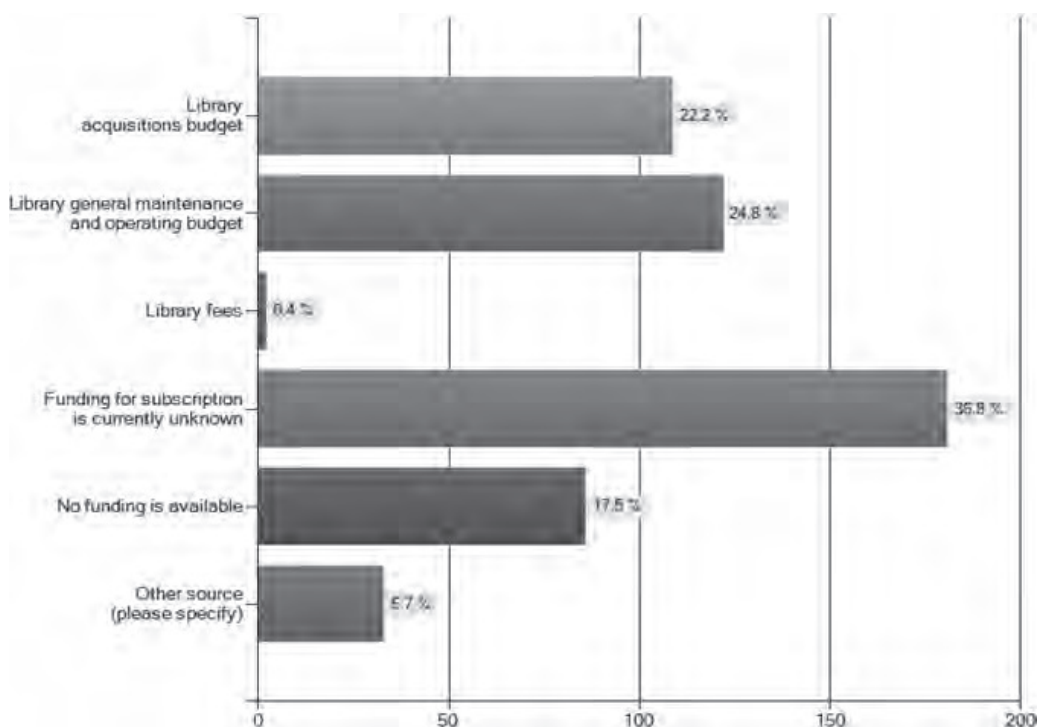


ALA to receive training, which they will bring back for on-site local training, but travel to ALA is also in question (7%); statewide budget cut crisis puts training funds at risk, and RDA training needs couldn't have come at a worse time (7%); several have funds available only for in-state travel, and would prefer training in one of the three largest cities (4%); a couple of libraries indicated that RDA developers should do this training, and have them foot the bill (4%); a few said that they were official RDA test sites, and would do their own in-house training (4%); and the remainder of comments were generated by only single libraries: prefer same day, within driving distance, no overnight stay training; OCLC and/or ALCTS should offer a free or low-cost training schedule, either online or in person; the survey assumes that libraries will train staff in the use of RDA, but this library won't as it is irrelevant (however, they will monitor the situation); in-person training is essential, as webinars are all but useless for this kind of training; this will cost a lot of money; one person sincerely hopes she won't have to train the 150 people who work with her!

Figure 3.8 reflected catalogers' views on funding for training. Figure 3.9 expands this funding question beyond training to the actual training document itself, RDA, in order to determine respondents' views on how this cataloging code will be paid for, so that library staff can train, learn, and work with it in

Figure 3.9 Question 12 on survey

How would your library fund the subscription to RDA? (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by SurveyMonkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)



cataloging. Having RDA available for training is essential, and the cost of the RDA subscription is considerable, growing with additional concurrent users.

Figure 3.9 clearly indicates that most libraries do not know where funding for the RDA subscription will come from (37%), or there will be no funding available at all (18%). For those libraries that know the funding source, it seems that the library general maintenance and operating budget is the most likely candidate for RDA (25%), followed closely by the acquisitions budget (22%).

Comments in the “Other source” category in this question indicate that 25 percent of respondents just don’t know where the money will come from to pay for an annual subscription to RDA. Another 25 percent suggest funding from areas such as cataloging funds, technical services operating budget, library technology budget (although it has been cut in half), from the university library, staff development fund, and from cooperation with the university’s library school program. Nineteen percent of the comments indicate that these libraries are part of a consortium and will use this arrangement to share costs, although their budgets are also stretched. Thirteen percent indicate that they are not going to implement RDA, one because it fears their library cannot afford RDA (its budget already cut in half), and one doesn’t see a cost-benefit when subscription prices are so high and benefits so slight. The remaining comments include a few different ideas, such as: decreasing

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OCLC services to pay for RDA; definitely paying for RDA if LC (the Library of Congress) adopts it; a vendor will use general overhead budgets which customers pay for; and a library educator worries how to provide access to multiple LIS (Library and Information Science) students.

This last comment from the library educator, who worries how to provide multiple user access to RDA, is further explored in the next question on the survey: Given the cost of RDA, what would this mean at your cataloging agency regarding the availability of this code for the staff that need it? In order to understand this issue better, the current cost of RDA, in May 2010, is as follows. RDA cost is based on concurrent users. \$325 for the first user; 2 to 9 concurrent users will be charged an additional \$55 for each designated user; 10 to 19 concurrent users will be charged an additional \$50 for each designated user; 20 or more concurrent users will be charged an additional \$45 for each designated user. Comments and percentages regarding this question are categorized into Table 3.1 and represent a large swing of opinions.

Respondents in Table 3.1 who either will not purchase RDA, will purchase it but with economic difficulty, are uncertain of obtaining RDA because of the cost, or will limit access to concurrent users because of the cost, totaled 53 percent.

Table 3.1

Comments: Considering RDA's cost, what would this mean at your cataloging agency regarding the availability of this code for the staff that need it?

Category of Comment	Percent of Respondents
BUDGET ISSUES: WE WON'T SUBSCRIBE TO RDA, OR ARE NOT SURE	
Unknown if we'll buy or not.	8
Tight budget, expensive title; would have to subscribe, but might need to cut something else to be able to afford.	7
We had to reduce budget; not sure we can afford or justify cost.	1
No budget for it this year, especially in these economic conditions.	5
Unlikely to subscribe, can't afford.	8
Can't afford it in the future unless library funding increases.	1
Total Percentage	30%

(continued)

Table 3.1. *(continued)*

Category of Comment	Percent of Respondents
ACCESS ISSUES	
We would have to limit access as we can't afford one for everyone.	11
We will only get one user, even though we need one for staff.	12
Total Percentage	23%
WE'LL SUBSCRIBE TO RDA	
We can afford it, it's not a problem, or it is at least doable; staff that need it will get it.	20
Cost is low, or nominal; it will be available to all that need it.	1
We'll subscribe.	1
Total Percentage	22%
OTHER COMMENTS	
It's very expensive.	5
We are in a consortium, and hope our group can get special group pricing; but, we're not sure how our group will handle this.	4
We want to pay for it once; the pricing model for annual subscription is not good, and we can't do this method.	3
After initial training, libraries will probably reduce users, because as much access won't be needed.	2
If the entity responsible for RDA wants catalogers to adopt it, it should be open access or free; needs to be available in an affordable, indexed print version, or as basic online text for a much lower price; we plan to print out relevant rules or whole chapters as a convenience and cost-savings method.	2

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OTHER COMMENTS	Percent of Respondents
Small and school libraries find it prohibitive, puts them at a disadvantage.	2
The changes in RDA are not enough to justify the cost of its manual.	2
RDA means we may or will have go to vendor cataloging and eliminate local cataloging.	1
It is hard to justify, along with cost of Cataloger's Desktop and RDA. Could we get a discount if we utilize both?	1
For Library and Information Science students: how will this be paid for, as they need access. Could it be free? We need information on the cost to library schools.	1
Productivity and cataloging quality and efficiency will go down as we can't afford the needed consecutive users.	1
Library administration will resist purchasing RDA as they don't see the need for it, or this change for cataloging.	1
Percentage	25%

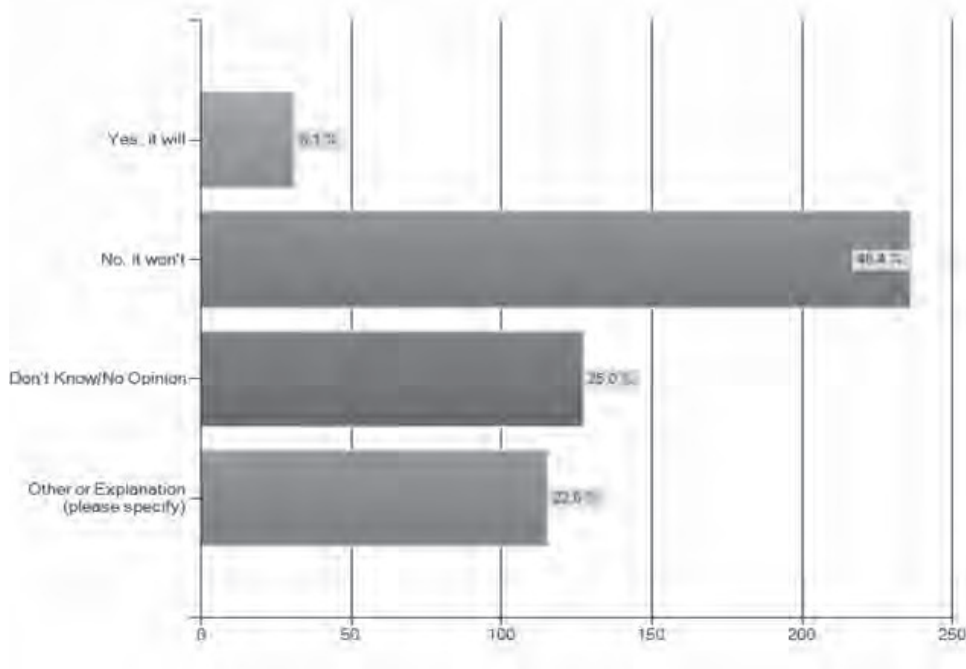
Those who indicated that they will purchase RDA and make it available to all staff that need it totaled 22 percent. If these numbers remain steady, this will represent a large inequity in access to and availability of the new RDA cataloging rules, which will perhaps have one of the consequences that was mentioned in a comment in the above table: Productivity and cataloging quality and efficiency will go down as we can't afford the needed consecutive users (1% envisioned this).

Considering this question of cataloging productivity and efficiency, Figure 3.10 and Table 3.2 portray catalogers' (and others') views on whether RDA will be cost effective in relation to the quality of the cataloging records produced by its use, and the ability of catalogers to immediately, and effectively, begin using it as a working cataloging code.

Almost half of the respondents in Figure 3.10 fall into the "No, it won't" category (46%) on the question: Will RDA be cost effective in relation to its cataloging results and its immediate ability to serve as a useful and useable cataloging code for your cataloging agency? Six percent are optimistic, and think it will be cost effective and able to serve as a useful cataloging code nearly immediately. The highest combined number of respondents (48%), though, either replied

Figure 3.10 Question 14 on survey

Will RDA be cost effective in relation to its cataloging results and its immediate ability to serve as a useful and useable cataloging code for your cataloging agency? (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by Survey-Monkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)



“Don’t Know/No Opinion” (25 %), or cannot so easily judge yet whether RDA will be immediately useful, thus they prefer to explain their thoughts in the “Other or Explanation” (23%) category. The comments are analyzed in Table 3.2 and are in order by the categories with the highest, to lowest, percentages.

It seems that many catalogers (and others) are looking forward to RDA and FRBR as better and more modern, flexible, user-friendly cataloging and bibliographic organization standards (21%). Of course, there are the caveats as with anything new, such as testing, and waiting to see how RDA and its implementation work out, and 17 percent of the respondents indicated that this was a sensible thing to do. Thirty-three percent of those who responded leaned toward questioning the cost-effectiveness and ready implementation and use of RDA as a cataloging code: 13 percent noted that ILS systems are not yet ready for FRBR, along with other problems; 11 percent declared RDA to be too expensive to be cost effective; and 9 percent wrote about their uncertainties regarding the use, benefits, and implementation of RDA. The remaining 29 percent were unique comments, but interesting enough to put into Table 3.2.

Table 3.2

Comments: Will RDA be cost effective in relation to its cataloging results and its immediate ability to serve as a useful and useable cataloging code for your cataloging agency?

Category of Comment	Percent of Respondents
AACR2 OUTDATED, RDA AND FRBR ARE THE HOPE OF THE FUTURE	
We need to move on, AACR2 is outdated and can't be easily linked to other web data; FRBR will help with user displays; it will cost more in the future to do nothing; there is also a cost to continuing with AACR2. There are many technological features to consider and we may look back and say it was a failure, but we will not know until we try.	7
It depends—if it does what is hoped, it will be quite cost effective, although this may not be immediate; however, if RDA becomes the standard of the cataloging community, the results will be immediate and useful; the implementation will be long and unknown, so let's hope for the best.	11
It will be wonderful, and the sooner we start, the better; we will just have to backtrack later if we don't do it now.	3
Total Percentage	21%
WAIT TO SEE TESTING RESULTS AND HOW RDA WORKS	
Wait and see testing results and how it works.	10
As the national libraries go, so will we, so that we can serve our customers. We will follow their standards, but the benefit is not clear.	5
We hope the RDA testing process will provide data for evaluation of its effectiveness and use.	2
Total Percentage	17%
ILS DETAILS HAMPER COST-EFFECTIVENESS	
It's not just the cataloging costs, but also reindexing of existing records and retooling of the mapping/indexing for the public catalog; working with our vendor and IT department.	3

(continued)

Table 3.2. (continued)

ILS DETAILS HAMPER COST-EFFECTIVENESS	Percent of Respondents
It won't be cost effective because our systems are not set up to work with RDA effectively yet.	3
If our ILS doesn't adjust to the new FRBR and RDA fields and displays, this is all moot anyway. How will RDA work in ILS?	7
Total Percentage	13%
TOO EXPENSIVE	
I can't see how it is a good use of funds, especially with the economy as it currently is. We are lucky at this point to have money to purchase books! We cannot afford it, budget is tight, hiring freezes are possible.	8
I was on board with RDA until the pricing structure came out. If not all libraries can afford to purchase the new structure then it will never work as an international standard. The training costs are high but to access the documents is prohibitive.	2
Have RDA already included in the subscription pricing for Cataloger's Desktop and it will be more cost effective.	1
Total Percentage	11%
UNCERTAINTY OF COST-EFFECTIVENESS AND QUALITY OF RESULTS	
Initially it won't be cost effective, as time and money for training and the Toolkit is required; it is unclear what the learning curve will be, and it will take time for catalogers to achieve the same level of quality currently experienced.	6
Not sure how widely it will be used, nor what savings this brings to libraries.	3
Total Percentage	9%
OTHER COMMENTS	
We already have enough bib maintenance and cataloging to do, and we know AACR2. Who will do my work when I'm learning RDA?	4

OTHER COMMENTS	Percent of Respondents
The real cost is in “old dogs” trying to learn a lot of new tricks, so backlogs may grow, making public services and patrons unhappy; quality might decline.	4
RDA’s success depends on LC, OCLC, staff training, and individual ILS systems, so few immediate results might be possible; however, the worry is that once all these changes are made, we will have to change again as it will take considerable time.	3
RDA is mired in confusion and indecisiveness, and FRBR and RDA are explained in vague ways, so it is hard to form an opinion.	2
No, it won’t be immediately useable, as it is too large and will take too much time to learn to use it online, and we’ll need funding for larger or multiple monitors.	2
If vendors and major libraries adopt RDA, it will eventually cost less for smaller libraries; or, shared cataloging between larger and smaller systems will disappear; but cost, now, for small libraries is significant.	2
Implementation will be gradual, perhaps a multiyear implementation period in which all interested libraries receive extensive free training at their own pace prior to enforced implementation.	2
This survey seems to be written to push people to fear RDA, think it isn’t cost effective, and give an overall negative view of it. RDA is necessary, may be cost effective.	2
Having a print product would make it easier to share on with the team, and more cost-effective. Please!	2
Cost-effectiveness is not an applicable concept in regards to catalog codes; at least, after a certain common-sense point. That view is one of the problems that has gotten us where we are. Cataloging is always changing, and we don’t usually ask if it’s cost-effective or not. When a subject heading changes, we just change it. It’s something we have to do in order to fully participate in the universe of shared cataloging. I wonder if people asked this question when AACR was published.	2

(continued)

CONVERSATIONS WITH CATALOGERS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Table 3.2. (continued)

OTHER COMMENTS	Percent of Respondents
RDA looks nearly identical to AACR2, so there isn't much change.	2
We have a consortial catalog and our choice of cataloging code is determined at the consortial level.	1
FRBR is pretty much useless without proper catalog display and relationships, especially for Rare Books and Special Collections. We could achieve much of the desired interoperability with MARC XML and concentrate on implementation of FRAD.	1
Total Percentage	29%

Respondents shared their thoughts on RDA's cost-effectiveness and usability in Figure 3.10 and Table 3.2. This question is expanded in Figure 3.11, as the survey asks whether RDA is better suited to the future, when linked bibliographic and authority data on the Semantic Web will be available for data mashup and reuse.

Although those who support the effort to implement RDA as a cataloging code for the Semantic Web, as shown in Figure 3.11, represent a large number, 15 percent, the majority of respondents (33%) feel that it will not be worth the cost and effort to implement RDA. Close to this number, 29 percent are refraining from offering their opinion, most likely because they either don't know, or because it is still very hard to realize what implementation of such a new idea as a FRBRized cataloging code will mean. The "Other or Explanation" category of 24 percent is where most of the thoughts on this topic will be found.

There were 108 comments analyzed, and they are categorized, with percentages of respondents, in Table 3.3, by order of percentage of responses.

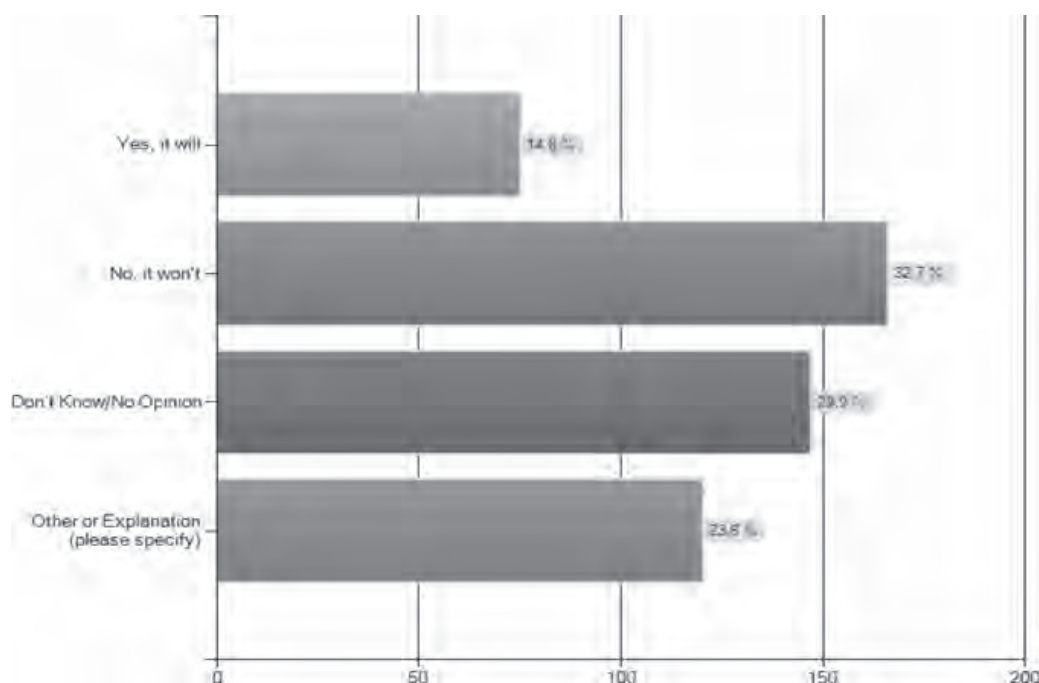
Table 3.3 comments resemble the percentages in Figure 3.11: a good number want RDA to be successful and think or hope it will be; others are sure it will not meet its goals and wonder about its necessity and cost; and a large number are still uncertain of its usefulness, but are unable to judge whether it will be worth the cost to implement it, and move away from AACR2.

The concern that cataloger productivity will decline if RDA is implemented has been mentioned in prior figures and discussions of respondents' comments. It is yet another worry among several, linked to RDA training and learning curve, quality of cataloging, and the necessity to keep up with current materials, so as to avoid stockpiling uncataloged materials. Figure 3.12 includes respondents views on how RDA implementation will affect productivity and cataloging backlogs.

There are many statements in Figure 3.12 concerning various predictions of RDA's effect on cataloger productivity. The survey posed these questions to determine catalogers' (and others') reactions. To determine the mainstream of

Figure 3.11 Question 15 on survey

Will it be worth the cost and effort to implement RDA, as it will be a useful and more forward-looking cataloging code than AACR2, better suited to the future of automated reuse of publisher and other linked bibliographic and authority metadata available on the Semantic Web? (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by SurveyMonkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)



cataloger reactions from those responding to the survey, the entries with the largest percentages in each category will be discussed. Thirty-two percent agree that RDA implementation will slow down cataloging production for a significant amount of time, but the larger number of respondents (51%) think it will only be for a limited time when catalogers are learning to apply RDA. It's close, but 36 percent of the respondents agree that RDA will require significant restructuring of cataloging workflows, compared to 35 percent who think it will have minimal or no affect. From the percentages on Figure 3.12, no matter how it is viewed, respondents definitely agree that increasing cataloging turnaround is something to be avoided. Similarly, a backlog is expected to develop due to the RDA learning curve; 39 percent agree with this. Thirty-nine percent think that having to type in phrases, as RDA requires, instead of abbreviations, as AACR2 requires, will increase cataloging time. Finally, 60 percent expect some negative impact on cataloging productivity or turnaround time due to RDA.

Since cataloger productivity is an issue, the idea was presented to continue AACR2 and LCRIs, as well as RDA. Libraries could choose their cataloging code, and both would be acceptable. Figure 3.13 shows catalogers (and others) response to this idea.

Table 3.3

Comments: Will RDA be worth the cost and effort to implement, because it will be a useful and more forward-looking cataloging code than AACR2?

Category of Comment	Percent of Respondents
Not enough evidence yet that RDA will meet all its goals and objectives.	12
Implementation will be long and hard, but RDA will eventually be worth the effort. Let's hope there is money to train and implement it.	10
Depends on ILS vendor and OCLC to implement RDA and FRBR functionality.	8
Time and usage of RDA will tell.	8
Sources of cataloging other than catalogers will increase, and the outlook for quality data is not optimal, unless we work with providers; need to consider ramifications of lower quality cataloging, dumbing down cataloging.	8
FRBR and RDA are very theoretical and hard to envision; I'll have to use it to see.	6
AACR2 works fine and does what it is supposed to do.	4
Hope so.	4
AACR2, as RDA, is librarian-centered, so they are really very similar, and there won't be much change; however, it is good to change.	4
Not at this time of budget cuts and fiscal uncertainty; cost is a big factor.	4
Would like to see how it works for a user in the PAC, to see if it delivers better search results; PACs don't use much of our data now, would RDA make it better?	4
RDA doesn't go far enough, and perhaps FRBR is outdated.	4

RDA, AACR2, AND YOU: WHAT CATALOGERS ARE THINKING

Category of Comment	Percent of Respondents
The national test will give a better idea of cost and usage.	3
If publishers start using RDA, it has the potential to be useful and improve reuse of metadata, but reality is far from theory.	3
Superiority of RDA over AACR2 has not yet been proven.	3
Libraries get mostly copy, and some original, so either way they will have a mix of RDA and AACR2 to work on.	2
Several 1 percent respondent-rated comments included: RDA would be better for nonbooks; wouldn't be better for nonbooks (especially DVDs); would be better for books than nonbooks; would be better for digital formats; seems a cosmetic solution to adapting catalogs to the Semantic Web; its language hinders its usefulness; school and small libraries will not be able to afford RDA; and so on.	13

Fifty-five percent of those surveyed agreed that a fully maintained AACR2 should be available as well as AACR2—33 percent agreed with this strongly. Nineteen percent stated their disagreement with this idea—6 percent of them strongly. The difference between the two sets of percentages (55% supporting the idea, 33% against it) seems to indicate acceptance of the idea is fairly strong. However, 13 percent of the respondents selected “Other,” and the statistical analysis of their responses shows that this group believes that maintaining two cataloging codes is not an optimal action, among other things.

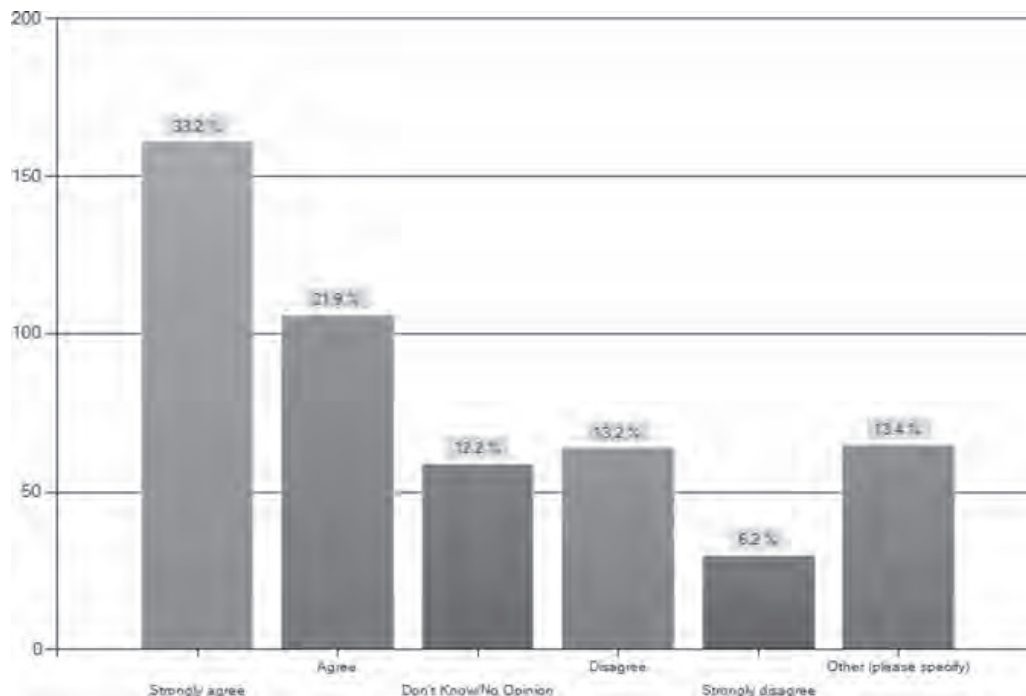
- Thirty-five percent disagreed, and are against the idea of maintaining AACR2 and RDA.
- Twenty-two percent agreed that a fully maintained AACR2 should be available.
- Fifteen percent believe that LC's decision will be one that they will follow, and they think LC (and RDA's Joint Steering Committee) cannot support both AACR2 and RDA—it is unrealistic.
- Seven percent believe maintaining two cataloging codes would be expensive, redundant, and/or confusing.
- Seven percent think that RDA should be scrapped or revamped, with more modern theoretical grounding.

Figure 3.12 Question 16 on survey
RDA implementation and cataloger productivity. (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by SurveyMonkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)

16. RDA Implementation and Cataloger Productivity: please indicate your level of agreement with the statements below, choosing only one per statement. Create Chart Download							
	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 No Opinion/Don't Know	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree	Rating Average	Response Count
1. RDA implementation will slow down cataloging production for the foreseeable future	22.6% (109)	32.2% (155)	27.0% (130)	17.0% (82)	1.2% (6)	1.00	482
2. RDA will slow down cataloging production only for a limited time as catalogers learn the rules	14.9% (72)	51.0% (246)	15.1% (73)	15.6% (75)	3.3% (16)	1.00	482
3. Cataloging workflows WILL require significant restructuring to implement RDA	17.6% (85)	27.7% (134)	36.4% (176)	16.7% (81)	1.7% (8)	1.00	484
4. Cataloging workflows will require MINIMAL OR NO restructuring to implement RDA	1.9% (9)	16.4% (79)	34.6% (167)	33.8% (163)	13.3% (64)	1.00	482
5. Increasing cataloging turnaround time (from receipt to patron) is NOT a service problem at my agency	10.0% (48)	27.7% (133)	8.5% (41)	34.7% (167)	19.1% (92)	1.00	481
6. Increasing cataloging turnaround time (from receipt to patron) IS a service problem at my agency	21.2% (102)	33.1% (159)	8.9% (43)	27.4% (132)	9.4% (45)	1.00	481
7. NO INCREASE in backlogs is expected due to RDA implementation (RDA learning curve WON'T increase backlog growth)	1.9% (9)	13.3% (64)	30.0% (144)	34.2% (164)	20.6% (99)	1.00	480
8. An increase in backlogs IS EXPECTED due to RDA (RDA learning curve WILL increase backlog growth)	20.3% (98)	39.4% (190)	25.9% (125)	11.8% (57)	2.5% (12)	1.00	482
9. As required by RDA, typing "Place of publication not identified" for S.I., and providing spelled out abbreviations in the transcription rather than using shortened forms, will NOT increase cataloging time	5.2% (25)	23.5% (113)	15.4% (74)	40.2% (193)	15.6% (75)	1.00	480
10. As required by RDA, typing "Place of publication not identified" for S.I., and providing spelled out abbreviations in the transcription rather than using shortened forms, WILL increase cataloging time	18.2% (88)	38.8% (188)	16.1% (78)	22.3% (108)	4.5% (22)	1.00	484
11. I anticipate NO negative impact on cataloging productivity or turnaround time due to RDA	1.9% (9)	4.6% (22)	17.6% (85)	49.8% (240)	26.1% (125)	1.00	482
12. I anticipate SOME negative impact on cataloging productivity or turnaround time due to RDA	23.9% (116)	59.3% (288)	11.3% (55)	4.3% (21)	1.2% (6)	1.00	486

Figure 3.13 Question 17 on survey

Select the choice that most closely matches your opinion on this statement: A fully updated and maintained AACR2, with continuing LC and Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA support, and LCRI service, should be maintained in addition to RDA for those libraries that choose not to utilize RDA cataloging rules. (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by SurveyMonkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)

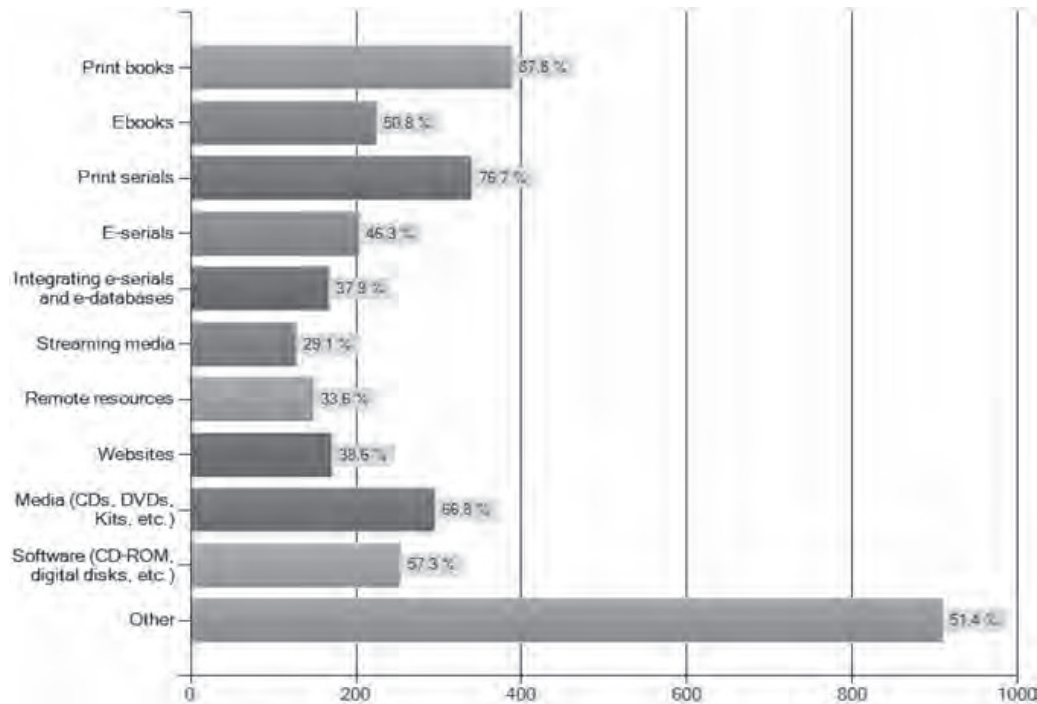


- Five percent of the respondents in the “Other” category think AACR2 should be available, but not fully maintained and/or updated—it could die a slow death and allow libraries to start working with RDA when they were ready.
- The remainder of the “Other” responses, which make up the remaining 9 percent, includes these ideas: better to use ISBDs for descriptive rules; if RDA, as it is supposed to do, simplifies the process of cataloging, can’t it be made easier? AACR2 is outdated; some RDA principles are valid, but it is complicated and there is not an inexpensive print version; incorporate some RDA ideas into AACR2.

AACR2 as a continuing, viable cataloging code has support, although many disagree and feel it would be impractical to have two cataloging codes. Figure 3.14 questions catalogers on their opinions regarding for which formats AACR2 could still function as an effective cataloging code. Figure 3.15 asks a similar question, but addresses use of the RDA cataloging code.

Figure 3.14 Question 18 on survey

If AACR2 were to continue as a fully maintained cataloging code, in addition to RDA, what formats could continue to be effectively cataloged *using* AACR2? Choose all that apply. (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by SurveyMonkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)



From Figure 3.14, it is clear that catalogers are confident in AACR2's ability to handle print materials, as they rate AACR2 at an average of 83 percent in being an effective cataloging code for print books and serials, together. AACR2 for cataloging media and software is rated by an average of 63 percent of the catalogers as effective for these resources. Digital resources have a lower statistical rating, although catalogers deem that e-books and e-serials can be handled moderately well, with 51 percent and 46 percent ratings, respectively. It is the other digital resources that catalogers feel less confident about AACR2's ability to be an effective cataloging code. Catalogers (and others) have rated AACR2's effectiveness in handling integrating resources, streaming media, remote resources, and Web sites together at an average of 35 percent.

"Other" responses in this figure (51%) represent catalogers' thoughts on either other formats not covered in the list of material types, or general comments. Comments are listed in percentage order, from highest to lowest, in the following categories.

- We already use AACR2 for all the things on this list, and it can be developed as new formats develop: 39 percent.

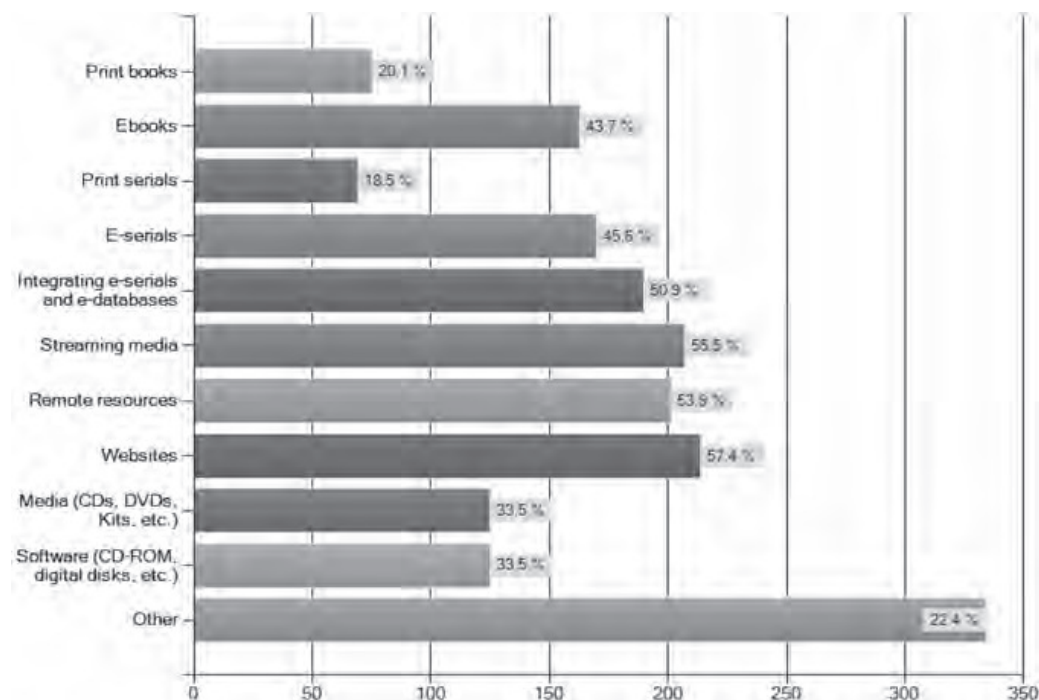
RDA, AACR2, AND YOU: WHAT CATALOGERS ARE THINKING

- Opposed to continuing to use AACR2; let's be done with it: 19 percent.
- In addition, the following resources can be cataloged using AACR2: Unpublished materials, realia, manuscripts, microforms, 2-D collections, archival collections, manuscripts, music, oral history, kits, puppets: 14 percent.
- Using both AACR2 and RDA at the same time would be confusing, and cause national level standard problems: 12 percent.
- Don't know enough about RDA versus AACR2 to say: 4 percent.
- All formats can benefit from RDA: 4 percent.
- Remaining three categories, all with 2 percent each: AACR2 needs to be updated for nonprint resources; we already have conflicting rules from AACR2, CONSER, BSR, e-book neutral; takes more time to catalog e-books with AACR2; and, not necessarily any of the above can be cataloged better by AACR2.

Figure 3.14 has given a very good overview on catalogers' thoughts regarding AACR2's ability to handle different types of resources. Let's compare all these percentages to RDA's handling of the same, as shown in Figure 3.15.

Figure 3.15 Question 19 on survey

If AACR2 were to continue as a fully maintained cataloging code, in addition to RDA, what formats would be cataloged most effectively *using RDA*? Please choose all that apply. (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by SurveyMonkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)



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Catalogers are considerably less confident about RDA's ability to be an effective cataloging code for both print books and serials, averaging 20 percent who believe RDA can handle both formats effectively. This is much lower than AACR2's average percentage of 83 percent for print. The average percentage for the effectiveness of RDA to catalog media and software is 34 percent. AACR2 has an average of 63 percent. This clearly demonstrates that for "traditional" formats, catalogers rate AACR2 significantly higher than RDA as an effective cataloging code. Perhaps e-books and e-serials might be considered a little more traditional, as they have been in existence for some time. The percentages reflect this, as catalogers rated RDA's efficacy as a cataloging code for e-books at 44 percent (compared to 51% for AACR2) and 46 percent for e-serials (the same as AACR2's 46%). The difference in confidence is in RDA's functionality with newer digital media. Catalogers (and others) have rated RDA's effectiveness in handling integrating resources, streaming media, remote resources, and Web sites together at an average of 55 percent, which is markedly higher than AACR2's 35 percent for these same digital formats.

There were a large number of comments (22%), which are contained in the "Other" category. They can be categorized into the several types of responses in the list below. Comments are listed in percentage order, from highest to lowest, in the following categories.

- Don't know enough about RDA versus AACR2 to say: 53 percent.
- RDA will perhaps prove itself more suitable for online and e-materials, new formats, blogs, podcasts, with the new content, carrier fields, and works with accompanying material, while AACR2 still can excellently serve traditional resources, music: 8 percent.
- RDA is designed to effectively catalog all the above: 8 percent.
- Not necessarily any of the above can be cataloged better by RDA: 8 percent.
- Using both AACR2 and RDA at the same time would be confusing, cause national level standard problems: 3 percent.
- AACR2 should not continue: 3 percent.
- AACR2 can work for any of these: 3 percent.
- In theory, RDA should be more effective for cataloging nonprint resources, streaming media, Web sites: 3 percent.
- Can't answer until I start using it and see how it interacts with my ILS and other things: 3 percent.
- Either RDA or AACR2 would work fine: 3 percent.
- RDA is not effective cataloging, will create sloppy database construction and maintenance, disservice to scholars: 1 percent.
- None will be more effectively cataloged using RDA than AACR2; problems will be in transitioning between one system and another: 1 percent.
- RDA description looks good, as do entry changes. Will change accordingly and ignore FRBRization: 1 percent.

Figure 3.16 Question 20 on survey

Indicate your level of agreement with these statements regarding AACR2 and RDA. (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by Survey-Monkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)

20. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements, choosing only one per topic.						Create Chart	Download
	1 Strongly Agree	2 Agree	3 No Opinion/Don't Know	4 Disagree	5 Strongly Disagree	Rating Average	Response Count
1. RDA is going to replace AACR2	9.1% (44)	38.1% (184)	38.3% (185)	11.4% (55)	3.1% (15)	2.61	483
2. Changing to RDA from AACR2 is something all catalogers need to be ready to implement	6.2% (30)	50.8% (246)	22.3% (108)	16.1% (78)	4.5% (22)	2.62	484
3. AACR2 is still an excellent, easy to use, inexpensive set of rules with a viable updating LCRI mechanism, and remains a useful cataloging code	30.1% (145)	45.4% (219)	7.1% (34)	15.4% (74)	2.1% (10)	2.14	482
4. AACR2 can handle the cataloging of digital resources as effectively as RDA	15.5% (75)	21.7% (105)	39.5% (191)	19.2% (93)	4.1% (20)	2.75	484

- RDA must be tested first: 1 percent.
- A good cataloger can catalog anything with any set of rules: 1 percent.

In Figures 3.14 and 3.15, catalogers gave their observations on how they believe AACR2 and RDA would effectively handle the cataloging of the varying specific material types or formats, and comparisons are analyzed and described. Figure 3.16 demonstrates catalogers' views on several statements comparing the two cataloging codes and their relationship.

In order to see the most prevalent view, let's compile the rankings of these statements with the highest percentage of respondents. The highest number of catalogers (38%) do not know, or have no opinion, on whether RDA is going to replace AACR2. This is sensible—the rules aren't even tested yet. Over half of respondents (51%) think that catalogers do need to be ready to move to RDA from AACR2, if this becomes necessary. Catalogers, in the majority (45%), believe that AACR2 is still an excellent, easy-to-use, inexpensive, and viable cataloging code. The last statement concerns AACR2's ability to handle the cataloging of digital resources as well as RDA, and most catalogers are still uncertain about this: 40 percent have no opinion or don't know—again, a sensible response, since RDA is as yet untested and unused in daily cataloging.

Since the comparison of AACR2 and RDA is such a strong indicator of catalogers' views on the usefulness of the respective cataloging codes, a short analysis of the overall positive ("I agree") and negative ("I disagree") responses is enlightening. Combining ranking categories 1 and 2 gives the overall "agree" responses, and combining categories 3 and 4 does the same for the "disagree" responses. Forty-seven percent of catalogers (and others) in this survey believe that RDA will replace AACR2. Fifty-seven percent think that catalogers need at least to be ready to move to RDA and leave AACR2 behind. In the minds of catalogers, 75 percent believe that AACR2 is still an excellent, easy-to-use, inexpensive, and viable cataloging code. Finally, 37 percent have the opinion that AACR2 can handle digital resource cataloging as well as RDA.

In contrast, the combined negative responses show that 14 percent of the catalogers who responded to the survey think that AACR2 will not be replaced by RDA. Twenty-one percent hold the view that catalogers do not need to be ready (at least for now) to implement RDA and leave AACR2. Seventeen percent disagree with the statement that AACR2 is still an excellent, easy-to-use, inexpensive, and viable cataloging code. Twenty-three percent of respondents feel that AACR2 cannot handle digital resources cataloging as effectively as RDA will be able to.

Comparisons of AACR2 to RDA in Figure 3.16, and the prior comparisons regarding how respondents think both cataloging codes would handle different formats, in Figures 3.14 and 3.15, have created a fairly thorough impression for the views of the respondents on these topics. The survey next asks for catalogers' (and others') viewpoints on the problems and limitations of AACR2 and how or if AACR2 could be improved to maintain its viability for present and future cataloging needs. Respondents answered the AACR2 improvement and viability question frequently in relation to RDA, but always in a variety of thoughtful ways. Their comments are categorized below in Table 3.4, and are in percentage order from highest to lowest.

Catalogers have a lot invested in AACR2, and many still believe it to be as useful as ever, with a few updates and modifications. Many others believe, though, that AACR2 has outlived its usefulness, and new digital formats and new online catalog structures, as well as FRBR, require a new cataloging code. Table 3.4 covers many of their suggestions for this, as well as many comparisons to RDA, and is a possible source of information for those who would change both codes to more closely adhere to perceived cataloging needs for better access, description, and display.

Catalogers (and others) have a wide range of opinions on the viability and future of AACR2, as the survey has shown. Some feel AACR2 should be continued and maintained, and of course, others don't. This is a common thread that shows through many of the survey respondents' answers to various survey questions. Figure 3.17 contains the responses to the next logical question for catalogers, given their feelings about AACR2's viability: Would you support an AACR2 maintained by a cataloging community, if its official supporting agency did not?

Table 3.4

Please explain your thoughts, if any, on problems or limitations of AACR2, and how or if AACR2 can be improved to maintain its viability for present and future cataloging needs.

Category	Percentage of Respondents
AACR2 is adequate for cataloging, should be adapted to accommodate new and digital media as they evolve; keep using it; keep it updated to match RDA if this is what will work.	29
AACR2 is too based on card environment, for example: rule of three example, punctuation.	11
Dynamic, digital forms of communication cause problems for cataloging descriptions in AACR2, such as digital resources, new formats, and more future forms.	7
In AACR2 there are too many options and exceptions, esoteric abbreviations, card-bound rules, too much repetition.	7
Eliminate Festschriften in AACR2; get rid of GMDs and only use SMDs; add new fields for material designators; get more explicit instructions on including data support FRBR linkages; update the carrier-versus-content fields; adopt RDA's expansion of rule of three, update chapters 21–25 and FRBRize them.	7
AACR2 is conceptually outmoded and needs to be abandoned.	6
AACR2 is mostly print oriented, and books oriented.	3
The problems with AACR2 are more to do with MARC; MARC needs enhancement.	3
FRBR is very worthwhile and AACR2 can't make very good use of it, can't describe relationships of resources	3
AACR2's rules provide a philosophical and methodological framework, which is without question an excellent one.	2

(continued)

CONVERSATIONS WITH CATALOGERS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

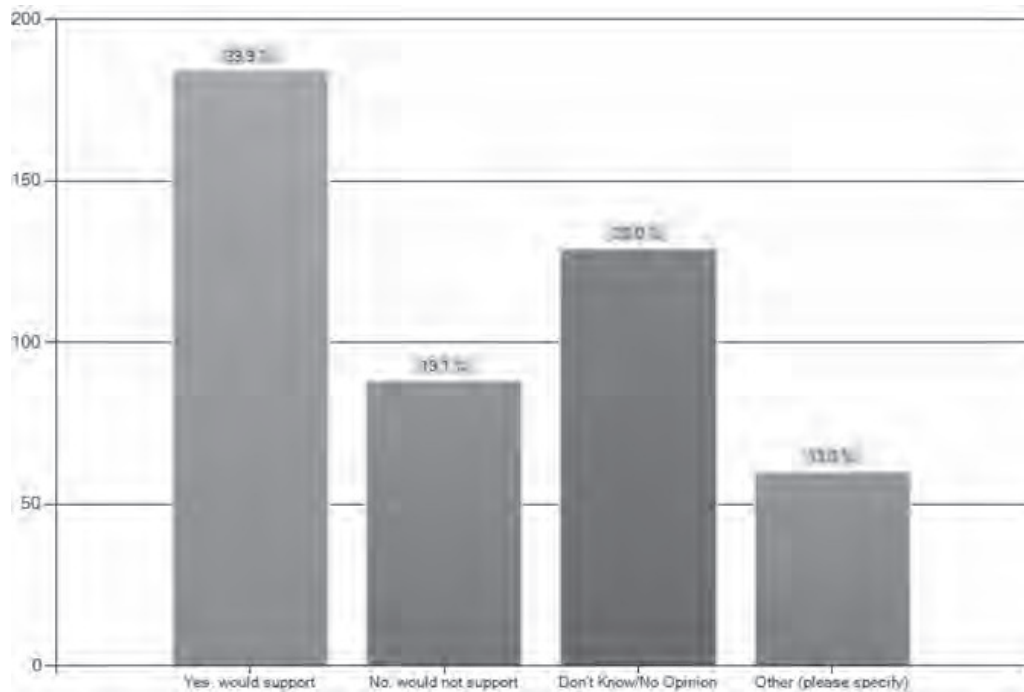
Table 3.4. (continued)

Category	Percentage of Respondents
AACR2 and RDA are both all right, similar, and need streamlining and changes.	2
Need a code that reflects the Web environment, computer-to-computer communication, language, and structure, which AACR2 is not strong in.	2
AACR2 is too tied to the physical manifestation of the work being described and not to the actual intellectual content of the work.	2
AACR2 is not as easy to work with for nonprint media.	1
RDA is not true change, nor in the right direction, and we need something that will have a true understanding of data presentation.	1
Need a code that reflects the new types of ILS coming, handles the new and different way that information is shared and used, and AACR2 doesn't do this.	1
Cataloging interfaces need improvement, not the cataloging codes.	1
RDA doesn't seem to go far enough.	1
Several other comments, equaling 11 percent: AACR2 needs support from the highest levels of the cataloging profession; use of outside rule interpretations to keep AACR2 up to date is inflexible; AACR2 is just as adaptable to FRBR as RDA; RDA will most likely handle digital media better; RDA will enable more data mining from upstream sources of all kinds; special materials can be cataloged with AACR2, with no problem; make AACR2 easier so that people other than catalogers can use it; AACR2 can be maintained and updated more cheaply than implementing RDA—use a wiki if JSC won't cooperate; release AACR2 as an open source alternative to RDA.	11

Forty percent of the respondents indicated they would support an AACR2 maintained by a cataloging community, with voluntary discussion and adoption of standards and changes, but almost half that, 19 percent, would not. A significant amount of respondents indicated that they had no opinions at present, so

Figure 3.17 Question 22 on survey

if AACR2 were not maintained by its official agency, Joint Steering Committee on Development of RDA, would you support an AACR2 maintained by a cataloging community, with voluntary discussion and adoption of standards and changes? (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by SurveyMonkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)



many of them are most likely waiting to see how the testing of RDA ends, and what national libraries will do regarding RDA implementation. Comments on this question varied as much as the percentages of responses. Here is just a sample of some repeated themes, and some interesting remarks:

- Huge task, and if it's not authoritative, what would its value be?
- Yes, I would support, but assume it would be a transition, and eventually shut down.
- Wouldn't like to see a listserv handle rule changes.
- This depends on which institutions populated this "cataloging community."
- Yes, I would support, because I don't believe LC will commit to supporting two codes, and I believe it is completely "on board" with the gang of infidels who are pushing RDA as a panacea!
- No, I would not support it as it would be even slower and more chaotic than now.
- This suggestion is not even possible and reflects a lack of understanding of the JSC's last few years of work. WE are the JSC (ALA, LC, LAC, BL, etc.).

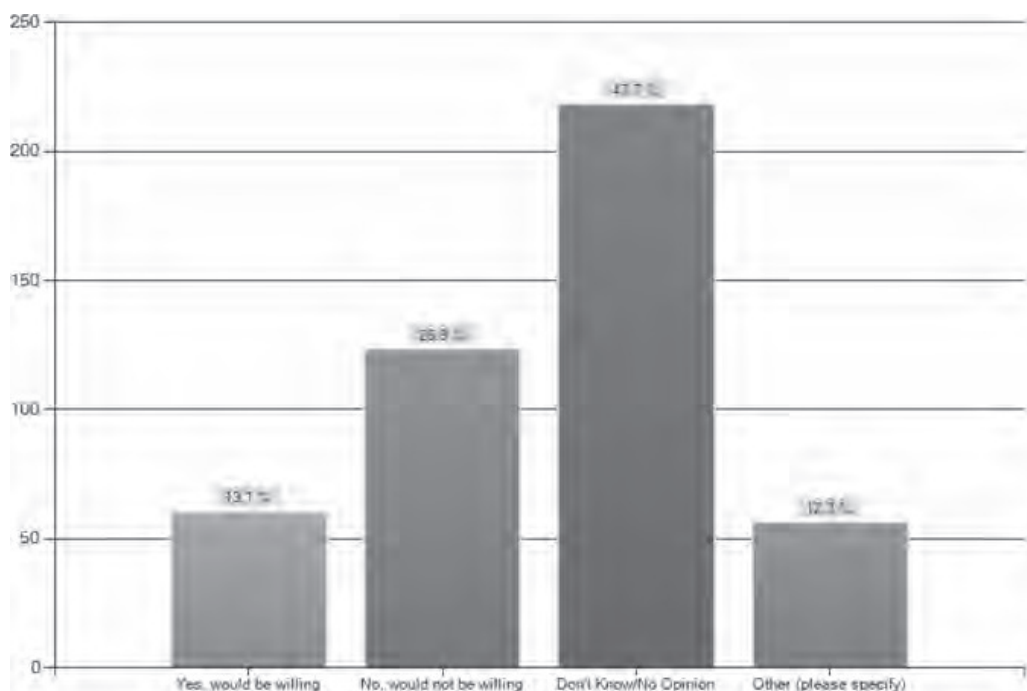
CONVERSATIONS WITH CATALOGERS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

- Although I do not want to abandon AACR2 for RDA, I do not believe that it is in the best interests of the cataloging community to maintain two separate cataloging codes, diminishing the benefits of shared cataloging.
- AACR2 should not be a Wikipedia; some body in authority should maintain it.
- Yes, but that is inefficient; the JSC needs to be chastised and replaced within the existing structure; we already paid for their work and should have a result that we can work with without having to try to reinvent the wheel.
- AACR2 is a published resource covered by copyright so you could only do this to a certain extent without the rights.

The responses in Figure 3.17 indicate a general consensus for some kind of interim support of AACR2 as a community standard, if it were not continued by its responsible agencies, although this is not viewed as a very workable way to maintain cataloging standards. Figure 3.18 follows this topic and asks if libraries would be willing to subsidize or pay a small subscription fee to continue AACR2 and LCRI updates.

Figure 3.18 Question 23 on survey

Would your agency be willing to subsidize or pay a small subscription fee to continue AARC2 and LCRI updates? (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by SurveyMonkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)



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Money is tight, especially during a time of economic hardship. Not unexpectedly, when having to select a yes or no answer to provide monetary support, most (27%) indicated they would not subsidize or pay a small subscription fee to continue AACR2 and LCRI updates. Half that number (13%) would be willing. The majority, though (48%) are not sure, which is reasonable, because the future of RDA and AACR2 is not written, and anything could be possible. The main types of comments for this question, and some other interesting ideas from respondents, are covered in the following list:

- I would personally be willing to subsidize the continuing development of AACR2 and LCRIs. Because of my library's special circumstances, I'm not sure it would be willing or able to make such a commitment.
- Only if RDA is not used on a national level; I disagree with having two standards.
- The open-source software community offers an excellent model for what needs to be done here; the success of Firefox and Linux proves that it really CAN be done.
- I don't see any reason to do anything but maintain the status quo of AACR2 until all libraries can adapt to RDA; therefore, subscriptions will not be necessary.
- In this economy, it would have to be a small subscription fee.
- Cataloging as a practice should move forward with everyone involved. It seems like most of the practicing catalogers are not sold on RDA so are not ready to incorporate it. Or they may know it is just a solution in search of a problem. To be part of the global cataloging community, we should not split into RDA and AACR2 camps. Would we not use the sharing and the value of our records?
- The cost of buying access to the new RDA was a shock. I would be willing to pay a fee to have AACR2 continue, but only as a stop gap to a better code, more affordable code than RDA. I would prefer for RDA to be affordable and functional, but right now I fear it is neither.
- Define "small."
- We will adopt RDA if NLM and our peer institutions do. So we would not be willing to pay to maintain AACR2 even if we felt it was the better alternative.
- Only if we didn't buy into RDA.
- We would be willing to continue to pay what we are paying now for AACR2, LC:SCM, and LCSH updates.

While the question that Figure 3.18 covers demonstrates respondents' views on whether libraries would help pay to continue AACR2 and LCRI updates, Figure 3.19 asks catalogers (and others) to actually comment on particular AACR2 and RDA rule changes and workarounds.

As has been done in prior analyses, let's take the middle-of-the-road approach and use percentages that reflect the majority of responses in Figure 3.19.

Figure 3.19 Question 24 on survey

Please categorize your level acceptance of the following RDA rules that differ from AACR2, and your acceptance of selected workarounds. (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by SurveyMonkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)

	1 Would accept	2 Consider accepting	3 No Opinion/Don't Know	4 Won't accept	Response Count
1. Accept RDA O.T./N.T. changes. Globally fix the O.T./N.T. differences to be implemented by RDA in your online catalog	31.4% (143)	26.5% (121)	39.0% (178)	3.1% (14)	456
2. Map the new MARC fields 336 (content type) 337 (media type) 338 (carrier type) to a modified 245 \$h [GMD]	17.8% (81)	35.5% (161)	38.3% (174)	8.4% (38)	454
3. Don't use or map the 336-338 fields and instead insert usual 245 \$h [GMD]	13.5% (61)	19.0% (86)	50.3% (228)	17.2% (78)	453
4. Use the new MARC 336-338 fields as is, once online catalog displays allow this	27.2% (123)	32.2% (146)	37.3% (169)	3.3% (15)	453
5. Adjust to spelled out Department as per RDA (instead of Dept. as per AACR2)	40.9% (186)	33.0% (150)	15.4% (70)	10.8% (49)	455
6. Use or add in spelled out words, instead of AACR2 abbreviations	41.0% (188)	35.4% (162)	14.2% (65)	9.4% (43)	458
7. Use RDA rule of main entry for treaties under the first country to appear on source	28.7% (131)	28.9% (132)	39.3% (179)	3.1% (14)	456
8. Follow the dissolution of the rule of 3 added entries and add as many as found	47.9% (219)	33.5% (153)	11.8% (54)	6.8% (31)	457

Further analysis of the extremes can be left for another time. In the five following RDA rules, most catalogers don't know whether they would use the workarounds! There are current system limitations, and we aren't cataloging with RDA yet, so that makes perfect sense.

1. Accept RDA O.T./N.T. changes. Globally fix the O.T./N.T. differences to be implemented by RDA in your online catalog: 39 percent don't know if they would do this; however, 58 percent might consider it, or would accept it.
2. Map the new MARC fields 336 (content type) 337 (media type) 338 (carrier type) to a modified 245 \$h [GMD]: 38 percent don't know if this is what they want to do with these fields, but 54 percent might consider it, or would accept it.
3. Don't use or map the 336–338 fields and instead insert usual 245 \$h [GMD]: 50 percent aren't sure if they would do this; 33 percent might consider it, though.
4. Use the new MARC 336–338 fields as is, once online catalog displays allow this: 37 percent haven't yet made up their mind to use these fields (most likely due to system limitations); but, 59 percent would do it or consider it (once it becomes available in OCLC and our online systems).

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5. Use RDA rule of main entry for treaties under the first country to appear on source: 39 percent are not certain about this rule; but 58 percent would use it, or consider using it.

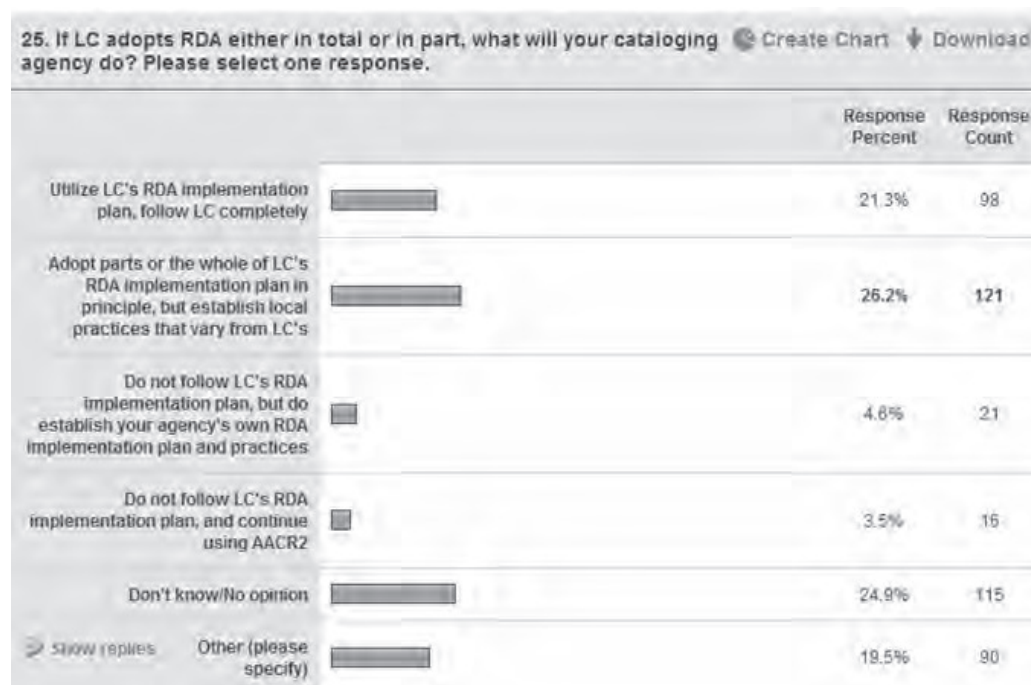
The remaining two categories are both viewed favorably by respondents, who indicate they would accept the rules:

1. Adjust to spelled-out Department as per RDA (instead of Dept. as per AACR2): 40 percent of catalogers said they would accept this. Add to that the percentage of those who would consider it, and that's a large percentage of respondents who might actually use this RDA rule: 74 percent.
2. Follow the dissolution of the rule of three added entries and add as many as found: When you combine percentages of those who would (48%) and those would consider it (34%), the result is 82 percent who would use this rule, the largest percentage of all, so far. It is a popular rule!

The survey now changes its focus from cataloging rules to the adoption and implementation of RDA. Figure 3.20 is an important question for libraries, as most libraries depend on cataloging done by the Library of Congress to provide records for their online catalogs.

Figure 3.20 Question 25 on survey

If LC adopts RDA either in total or in part, what will your cataloging agency do? (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by SurveyMonkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)



CONVERSATIONS WITH CATALOGERS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Following the lead of LC is a popular choice of survey respondents. Most libraries, 26 percent, will utilize LC's RDA implementation plan, but adapt it to local needs. Close behind that, 21 percent will follow LC completely. In the cataloging world, this acceptance of LC's lead is pragmatic (most cataloging copy for many libraries comes from LC), and clings to the hope and dwindling tradition that LC will choose the method that offers excellent quality cataloging. Five percent will make their own way, without LC's example, and 4 percent have already determined that they will not utilize RDA, but will remain with AACR2. Those 25 percent with no opinion are just waiting to see the results of the national RDA cataloging experiment before they commit to a course of action. The comments are very telling: catalogers are trying to use logic, keep costs down, follow standards, and come up with an implementation plan that will work for them. Here are a few representative comments that are repeated in the entire group of comments, as well as a few interesting ones:

- I am in a consortium. The group would decide, not just I, so I would follow the group's decision.
- I would hope that we would establish local practices that vary from LC/RDA, but again, this would depend on whether there is a large enough number of fellow institutions doing their own thing. We would not wish to become isolated.
- Again, I don't know enough—plus we can't imagine being able to afford the RDA yearly subscription cost, so that may drive how much we are able to do and when. We may just end up following Mac Elrod's cheat sheets.
- We will probably follow LC, and accept their cataloging as is, but may also allow varied practice locally. We have to accept large tape loads from other sources, and their practices may vary from LC. We can't recatalog things we already own, so we will have a hybrid no matter what we implement.
- [We] hope there is an alternative that allows libraries to continue using AACR.
- Why does LC have to be the ones to which we look? I am interested in learning about other institutions implementation as well. I will not propagate the continual reverence of LC when they will not step up and take any responsibility. They are an entity too big to make effective changes in this profession.
- In terms of teaching, until we know the outcome of the LC and British Library trials, it is impossible to know what to do!
- For us it will probably depend on what our customers' request. We will probably have customers on both sides and will have to walk a path between the two.
- We tend to wait and see what everyone does. I believe we will wait at least six months from the conclusion of LC's testing phase, take a look at how it went for LC and also what other libraries are doing, look at

what accommodations OCLC and our ILS have made for RDA display, look at the number of RDA compliant records in OCLC, and train, and when all those factors reach a critical mass, then we will implement.

- We have not talked about it, at all.
- If LC adopts RDA, I will need to teach both RDA and AACR2 for a while so students can understand all of the records that currently exist and the new ones being created.
- We would still wait for Library and Archives Canada to lead the way for us, but LC's full adoption would certainly affect our view of how and when that would happen, and how we should prepare.
- Keep AACR2 and implement RDA only when we must.
- Will not adopt RDA due to lack of funding for rules and training.
- I think we are going to try implementing it, but to what extent, I haven't a clue. I'm kind of being forced to learn about all this, and don't really want to. I have only 3.5 years until retirement and I don't want to have to learn a new system this late in the game.
- We will teach RDA, and probably not teach AACR2.

Everyone is looking for the right answer for their institution, and all the information to find the answer is not yet available!

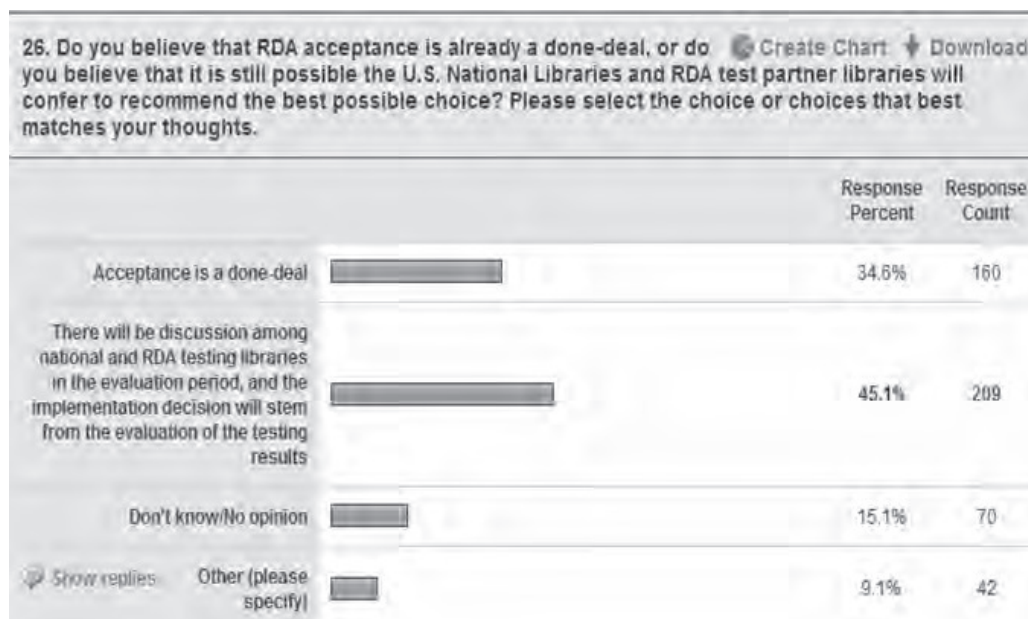
In Figure 3.20, and elsewhere in this essay, mention has been made regarding the RDA testing by national libraries, because the results of the testing will drive many libraries toward a decision whether to go with RDA, stay with AACR2, or take a hybrid approach. There has been much discussion on cataloging listservs that even though libraries are testing RDA, there may be a certain "done deal" effect in place, meaning that the decision to implement RDA has already been made by LC and other national libraries, regardless of the results of the test. Figure 3.21 responses show catalogers' views on this possible situation.

Forty-five percent of the respondents believe that there will be discussion among the testing libraries, and that the RDA implementation decision will be made based on the testing results. It is encouraging that most libraries still believe in the integrity of the process. Thirty-five percent, however, think that the decision has already been made to go with RDA. The 15 percent who indicated that they don't know are being safe in their response, because no one really knows! Selected comments, reflecting the majority of opinions, and some unique ones that are of interest, are as follows.

- RDA acceptance is a done deal; testing may result in some modifications.
- Too much time and money has been invested to abandon it.
- About one year ago, it seemed RDA had been shelved; too unclear to most; now going forward and to be released in June. But nowhere has clear information on what it will mean to our daily work been distributed. Very late notification and awareness of what this actually means to people doing daily cataloging of thousands of materials, especially

Figure 3.21 Question 26 on survey

Do you believe that RDA acceptance is already a done deal, or do you believe that it is still possible the U.S. National Libraries and RDA test partner libraries will confer to recommend the best possible choice? (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by SurveyMonkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)



with budget issues. At conferences, RDA talk is heated and jargon based, and nothing that is practical or daily use is discussed.

- While partisans of RDA (many of whom do not at all understand the implications) want us to believe that the change is inevitable, I hope at least that it may be stopped and re-evaluated realistically, which has not yet happened.
- National libraries and test partners will have to confer to justify their work to their constituencies. Unconceivable that LC would renege on RDA. LC has already done quite a bit of RDA/MARC revision. Part of the consideration will be the opportunity to discontinue the LCRI apparatus. LC's reduction in staff, and history of scaling back on legacy operations, and given philosophy that LC cannot be "the" national library, LC will approve the move to RDA.
- I think it's a done deal but that the cataloging community will be the Party of No and do everything to slow it down. It will happen, though.
- Can't be a done deal, if I'm not dealing with it yet.
- I think there will be a pretty even split, not at all based on the merits of either standard. Some stubborn librarians will refuse to toss out RDA simply because they put so much time and effort into it, and some

stubborn librarians will refuse to accept RDA on principle, even if they eventually get it right.

- I hope it isn't a done deal!
- Hope there is a discussion after some release of this project can be tested on a wide scale.
- I would hope the test libraries comments will be taken into consideration.
- As one of the testing institutions, we certainly plan to offer criticisms and comments.
- The testing libraries, who probably didn't have to pay for it, will give it an impartial test. But because the financial considerations aren't being included, a HUGE part of the impact on other libraries isn't being assessed. This is a mistake.
- I would like to think that discussion resulting from evaluation would rule, but I do not believe that. There is only one K-12 testing site, and those least affected are the ones making the decisions. I am very disappointed in the lack of democracy in this entire project.
- I think for LC it's pretty much a done deal, but if the rest of the country doesn't obediently follow they might have to reconsider.
- It's probably a done deal, since there seem to be no better options on the table. But there is still the hope that the hand-picked on-board libraries will realize that it is no better for emerging standards and no more adaptable than AACR2.
- I am on a testing committee so I believe that the testing is sincere.

So, those are the moods of the catalogers in the country regarding the national testing of RDA.

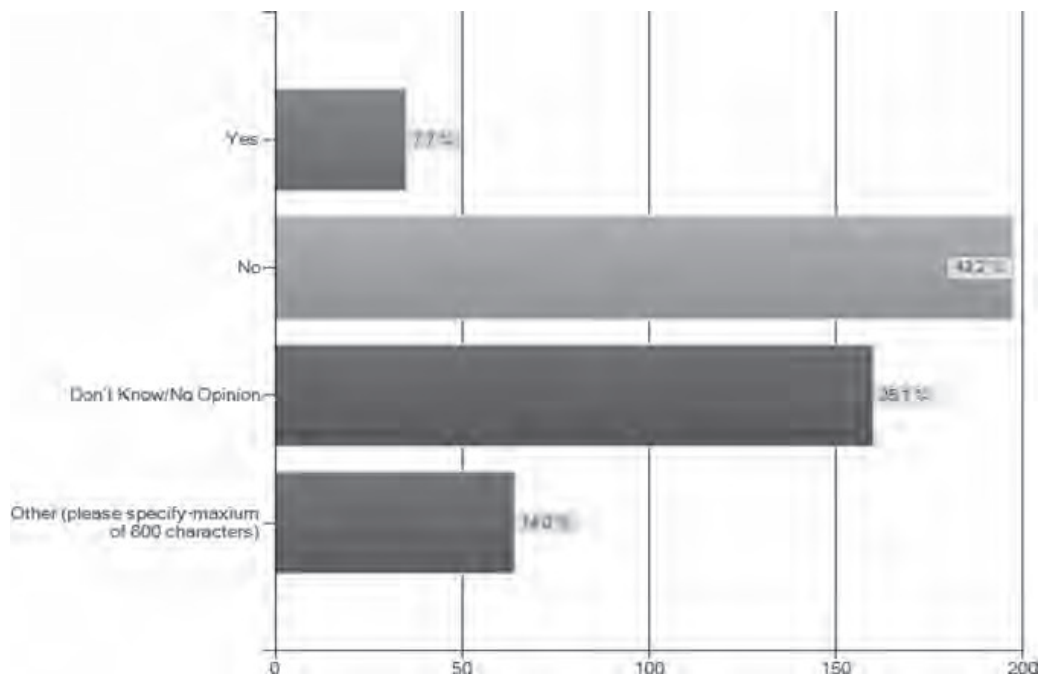
The survey turns to FRBR and RDA in the next few questions, Figures 3.22 and 3.23.

Forty-three percent of the respondents state that FRBR is currently not able to be implemented in current ILS. The next highest response rate is 35 percent, who don't know whether it can be or not. Only 8 percent think it can be implemented. A lot of catalogers (and others) need more information on FRBR before they can imagine its use in their online catalogs. Of the 14 percent in the "Other" category, representative, and unique, comments from this group are:

- Yes, it could work. We have Primo, and Ex Libris is trying to make it work there.
- Pieces of it are implemented in principle, but I don't think any implement it fully.
- No, because of holds issues—even now cannot place holds on all vol. 1 copies. Once you have series like graphic novels, it resorts to item level holds. Think what that would mean if you tried to place hold on best seller available in audiobook, hardback, LP, paperback, three different publishers, different editions, etc., and they were all on one record. With consortia, a user would be faced with dozens or over a hundred

Figure 3.22 Question 27 on survey

Is FRBR able to currently be implemented in our current ILS (integrated library systems)? (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by SurveyMonkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)



choices very frequently. There is no way now within one bibliographic record to place separate queues within groups of items. Either bibliographic hold or actual copy/item level holds are required.

- Yes, but the interface is often clunky and getting specific editions may not happen.
- To a very limited extent, since our current data and standards contain inadequate information to identify relationships, which is the most important improvement FRBR brings to cataloging.
- Yes, in part, as a III user I know that they tried one way that failed and have yet to come up with an acceptable way to implement FRBRization of search results.
- No, as evidenced by the lack of ability to display and work with hierarchical subject concepts, which have been in place since practically the beginning of time (except for WorldCat, of course, that can almost get it right!).
- There will probably need to be software changes from the ILS vendors.
- Our Systems Librarian has developed our OPAC and has incorporated some FRBR elements.
- Most examples of FRBR are a disaster in current ILS systems. We are a rare book library and manifestation, and especially item level descriptions

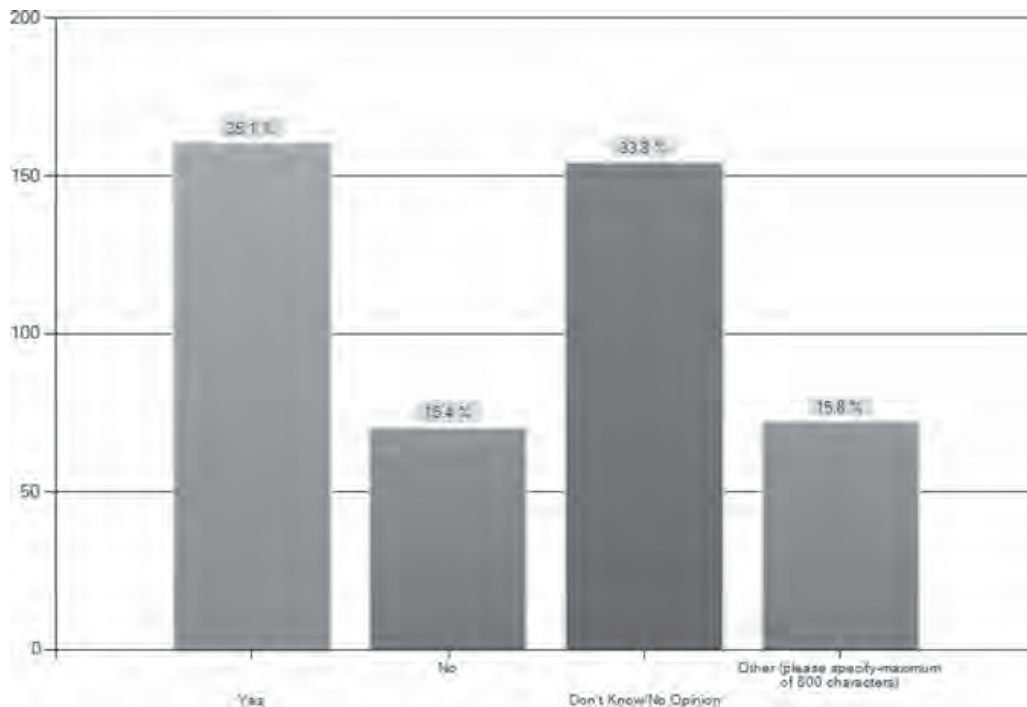
are vital to our mission. FRBR as it stands requires not only a complete retraining of professional staff, redesign of ILS systems, but also a reeducation of the public user. Is this practical?

- When I was in library school, eight years ago, FRBR was the “next big thing.” We’re still waiting.
- We have Polaris ILS. Not sure if it is ready for this.
- It is impossible to say with certainty that an ILS will be able to “do” FRBR; however, I have confidence that it will work and am excited about the increased access and easy of availability of varied resources.
- No. Even AACR2 uniform titles are a mishmash of Work, Expression, and Manifestation (e.g. “Aida. Vocal score”). Until we have relational databases that can pull work information from a single work record and house only expression/manifestation/item information in the bibliographic record, our current ILSs cannot fully accommodate all the principles behind FRBR and FRAD.
- Yes, with next-gen OPAC overlays.
- It’s probably able to be implemented, but should we? For starters, it points out all the problems when you don’t keep up with authority work (and we don’t have the time or money or support from higher up to keep up that well).
- I’m sure FRBR could be implemented anywhere when higher quality standards are not sought. In my opinion, FRBR is extremely unstructured and will continue the “dumbing down” of cataloging records that has become so pervasive with vendor records and the acceptance of abbreviated records on OCLC. It doesn’t seem to me that consistent quality is something associated with FRBR.
- Too many catalogers still don’t fully understand it. Has it really been properly tested on different media and relationships?
- FRBR is not well defined and far too nebulous in its concepts. At the training that I went to there was no agreement in the room about the examples posited—supposedly chosen by the presenter because they displayed the various levels so clearly. Everyone was sort of bewildered that he seemed to think that it was so clear, and he was unable to counter the various perceptions in the room in any sort of logical way to explain why it was supposed to be the way that he perceived it.
- Since I use open source, the community will probably implement it as quickly as any commercial agency.
- It is possible, but it would require: (1) changes in OPAC display by ILS vendors, and (2) changes in MARC cataloging practice, e.g., rigorously apply 77X-78X linking fields to ALL materials to indicate relationships.

The ability to implement FRBR is linked to its usefulness as a user tool to bring together works, entities, manifestations, and items in meaningful relationships and displays. Figure 3.23 gathers respondents views on whether FRBR does this well, and if it is still a workable model of the bibliographic universe.

Figure 3.23 Question 28 on survey

Indicate your opinions on this statement: FRBR is a useful and up-to-date model of the bibliographic universe and relationships between its entities (authors, works, etc.), and is well suited to meet user information needs in the Web and digital environment. (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by SurveyMonkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)



Catalogers (and others) are nearly split on the utility of FRBR: 35 percent find it is useful, but 34 percent don't know if it is or not. Thirty-four percent represents a lot of catalogers that cannot grasp the full meaning and measure of FRBR, and its ability to meet user information needs in the web and digital environment. In addition to that, 15 percent of the respondents believe FRBR doesn't have what it takes.

There are a sizeable number of comments for this question, and they reflect these starkly contrasting views:

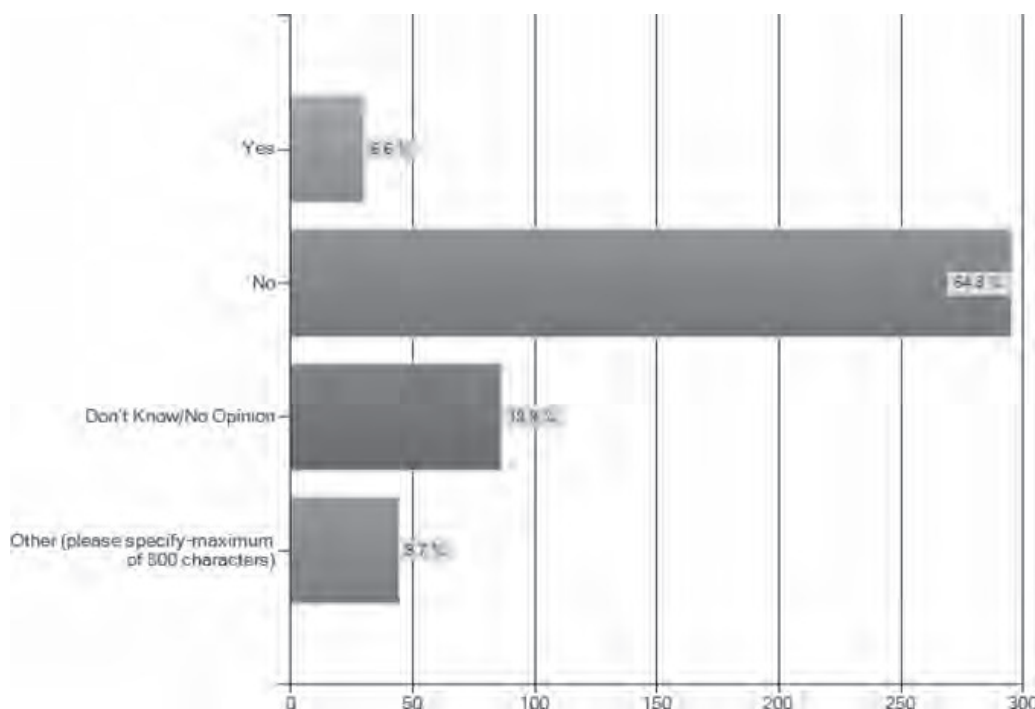
- I would like to see how it functions in a public library OPAC. Will users EASILY be able to identify and locate the exact format of a work from all other formats?
- Looks good on paper, but will be a nightmare to implement. A lot like health care reform
- FRBR is a beginning model and needs further work and research.
- I agree somewhat, but the fact that understanding the difference between manifestation and expression can be so difficult complicates its real-life application.

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- FRBR has the potential to be useful and even valuable. As presently constituted, I believe it cannot be effectively implemented by existing technology.
- The terminology is too esoteric to be easily understood.
- It is functional, but how well suited? Hard to tell—not enough examples.
- It's good conceptually, but it's useless unless ILS vendors implement it.
- It is a useful idea, but has been made too complex for easy implementation.
- It will need to change in the future.
- The library community as a whole needs to study user reaction to FRBRized data more.
- I don't believe FRBR works well for all types of items, especially serials. However, it does seem to be an attempt at grouping information in categories that users naturally conceptualize. I don't know to what extent our catalogs will ever be successful at doing this, but I do think we need to try, and FRBR is a step forward.
- I love FRBR. My issue is the *retrospective* work that needs to be done to implement FRBR/RDA. It is a classic theory versus pragmatism conflict!
- FRBR is a hard-to-understand model but it does bring things together better and will benefit users.
- To my knowledge, FRBR has never been tested to determine if it is useful and will meet user information needs. Until it is tested, we have no idea if it is better model.
- I am still skeptical about FRBR. Its rules are vague and subject to interpretation, meaning everybody will implement it differently, and the data will be less standard as a result
- I think it has great potential.
- The very few times I've encountered FRBRized practices, they have been extremely confusing and counterintuitive to a user's needs. I've never heard it adequately explained (even after taking a FRBR workshop).
- I still can't get my mind around it.
- FRBR is a horrendous mish-mash of computer-modeled data and has no place in a bibliographic universe. It is a hindrance to searching and is foolish in the extreme.
- Absolutely not. I am far more against the FRBR model as it was introduced to me than I am RDA itself.
- No, I believe FRBR is already outdated. I believe the technology that is being developed for faceted browsing will make the need for FRBRized displays of search results unnecessary.
- It's an abstract model which conforms to a view of the universe frozen in the early 1990s. It doesn't account for how people use information in the internet age. People do more than find-select-obtain-use. They want to annotate-share-repurpose. FRBR is not robust enough to model that.
- The model is useful. What we need is the GLUE to hold the pieces together, and that is dependent on ILS vendor implementation/capability.

Figure 3.24 Question 30 on survey

Have you heard from your ILS vendor about any plans and/or timeline to redesign their systems for RDA and FRBR as well as any additional costs this might require? (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by SurveyMonkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)



The next couple of figures discuss vendor implementation of RDA and FRBR and funding for the cost of RDA and any ILS redesign necessary to implement RDA and/or FRBR.

Libraries are beginning to ask ILS vendors about any plans and/or timelines to redesign their systems for RDA and FRBR as well as any additional costs for this. The percentages in Figure 3.24 aren't very encouraging in terms of numbers of vendors who are working on this and communicating about it with their constituent libraries. Sixty-five percent had not heard from their vendors. Only 7 percent had heard anything (but we don't actually know how detailed the information was). A large number of respondents, 19 percent, didn't know at all, more than likely because they are not in the administrative or system level loop with ILS vendors.

The comments with the highest number of respondents are listed in the first five bullets below, and they reflect the majority of their opinions on whether libraries have heard from their ILS vendor about any plans and/or timeline to redesign their systems for RDA and FRBR, as well as any additional costs this might require. The remaining comments were selected due to their mention of specific ILS, as well as unique, contradictory, or general interest content.

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- ILS vendors said they are watching and waiting, thinking of planning for FRBR, RDA: 27 percent.
- Just have heard discussion, nothing particularly enlightening or helpful, no cost information yet: 12 percent.
- In a consortia we don't usually hear: 8 percent.
- We use Evergreen open source ILS, which means our community will need to plan and pay for RDA, FRBR development, which has not yet happened—wait-and-see mode: 8 percent.
- We are doing the modifications ourselves; or, we will tweak our in-house system when the time comes: 8 percent.
- Could be two years after RDA is rolled out before ILS reworks with changes.
- I'm sure it will cost something.
- Update will be same as any other, and no additional costs are expected.
- Vendors are waiting for FRBR to be implemented before changing, and FRBR is being used in some ILS in Europe.
- Our vendor is ready for RDA, and has some FRBR, but in an expensive discovery layer, not yet complete.
- ILS vendor will implement new MARC 336–338 fields, used by RDA, but no news on making the catalog FRBRized.
- Haven't heard, but there will be a cost, as we are a LibLime Enterprise Koha library.
- III indicated they are working on RDA compatibility; I don't know about FRBR.
- Our ILS vendor already supports FRBR, but I don't know about RDA.
- I don't think our ILS will handle all of this and we don't have money for a new one.

Following the funding train of thought, Figure 3.25 queries respondents on how they might fund costs for vendor redesign of their ILS for RDA and FRBR.

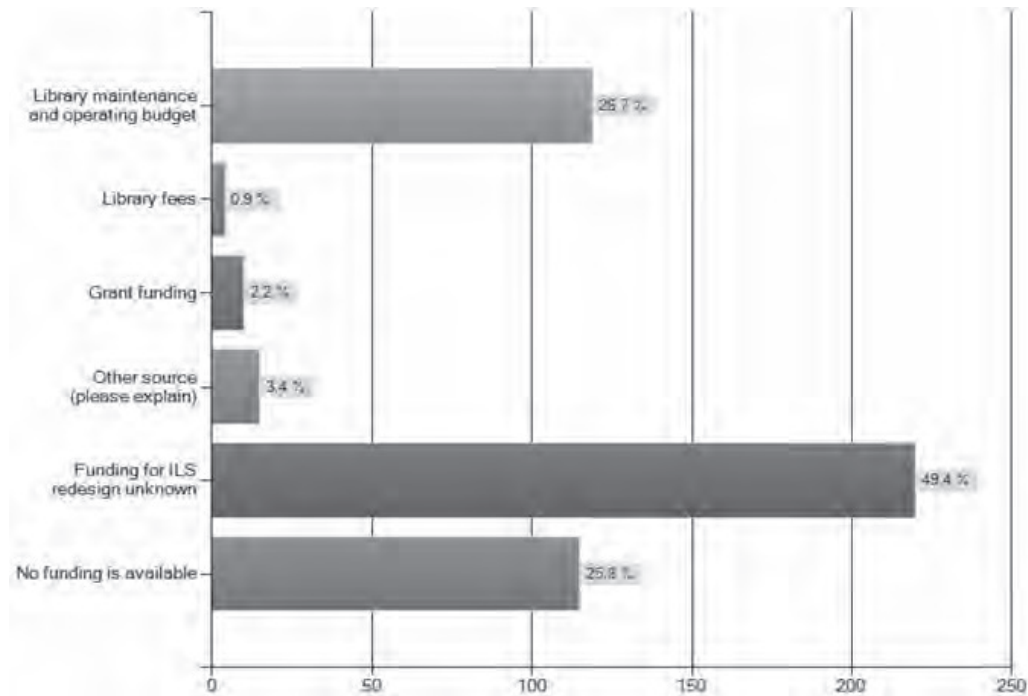
Seventy-five percent of the catalogers (and others) responding have no funding (or don't know where it would come from) for a vendor redesign of their ILS (integrated library system) for FRBR RDA. The most prevalent source is the library's own maintenance and operating budget (27%). "Other source" data (3%) was not reported in any comments on the survey, so more information regarding these sources is unknown. Grant funding, always an uncertain source of funds, makes up 2 percent of the overall funding sources that respondents indicate they might use. Library fees, at 1 percent, are the smallest source that catalogers foresee being able to utilize for ILS redesign.

The remainder of the survey covers topics that are futuristic cataloging concepts, on the use of upstream data as a basis for building a cataloging record and cataloging on the Semantic Web (Figure 3.26), and a final question for respondents to offer any comments they felt necessary.

The Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control issued a report in 2007, "Report on the Future of Bibliographic Control," the premise of which is based on their introduction:

Figure 3.25 Question 31 on survey

Please select the method or methods your library would use to fund any necessary costs for vendor redesign of ILS for RDA and FRBR. (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by SurveyMonkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)



The future of bibliographic control will be collaborative, decentralized, international in scope, and Web-based. Its realization will occur in cooperation with the private sector, and with the active collaboration of library users. Data will be gathered from multiple sources; change will happen quickly; and bibliographic control will be dynamic, not static. The underlying technology that makes this future possible and necessary—the World Wide Web—is now almost two decades old. Libraries must continue the transition to this future without delay in order to retain their relevance as information providers.⁴

The report has five recommendations, all of which unleashed a torrent of controversy, anger, anguish, vision, and continuing upheaval and change in the cataloging world. The two recommendations concerning the use of upstream data as a basis for building a cataloging record, and cataloging on the Semantic Web, are as follows:

1. Increase the efficiency of bibliographic production for all libraries through increased cooperation and increased sharing of bibliographic

records, and by maximizing the use of data produced throughout the entire “supply chain” for information resources.

2. Position our technology for the future by recognizing that the World Wide Web is both our technology platform and the appropriate platform for the delivery of our standards. Recognize that people are not the only users of the data we produce in the name of bibliographic control, but so too are machine applications that interact with those data in a variety of ways.⁵

Catalogers (and others) had many comments on the survey question regarding the use of ONIX and publisher or distributor metadata as a basis for starting a cataloging record in a shared bibliographic utility. ONIX stands for Online Information eXchange, and is an “XML-based family of international standards to support computer-to-computer communication between parties involved in creating, distributing, licensing or otherwise making available intellectual property in published form, whether physical or digital.”⁶ ONIX for Books⁷ has many elements that are the same as, or similar to, those in cataloging records, such as title, contributor, persons and unnamed persons, edition, language, extent, illustrations, subjects, audience, and award notes. It also has much other information specific to the publisher, distributor, and retail community, as this is its prime audience and reason for being. Because of that, the bibliographic information so critical to cataloging description and access is not as high priority to those publishing and other entities that create the ONIX data, which means that the resulting data in ONIX records for these important elements is often lacking, incorrect, or not consistent in quality.

Responses were categorized into the predominant issues arising from the results. The first analysis of responses measures catalogers (and others) thoughts whether the use of ONIX and publisher or distributor metadata as a basis for starting a cataloging record in a shared bibliographic utility is a good idea, or not. The following list categorizes the responses in positive, negative, and neutral components.

- Yes, it's a good idea: 17 percent.
- Yes, it could be a good idea if publishers control quality and make the records more useful for cataloging information: 29 percent.
- No, it's not a good idea, or catalogers are skeptical and doubtful: 9 percent.
- No, it's not a good idea, as records are poor quality for cataloging needs: 21 percent.
- No, it's not a good idea, because publishers have different purposes and needs for the records than a cataloging record has: 7 percent.
- Don't know enough to respond to the question: 16 percent.
- If publishers want it to work, and think it is worthwhile to make their ONIX data useable as cataloging information, they will do so, and it will work: 1 percent.

CONVERSATIONS WITH CATALOGERS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

It is interesting to note that the composite score for the positive responses is 36 percent, and the composite score for the negative responses is 37 percent. I think this may mean that catalogers know it could be a good thing if it were to work well and could create good basic records, but that in reality, publisher- or distributor-supplied records currently are not good quality, and catalogers are skeptical that this will change.

The second analysis of the ONIX and cataloging record question categorizes respondents' other comments into the most commonly repeated themes. The following list of these comments is in descending order according to percentage:

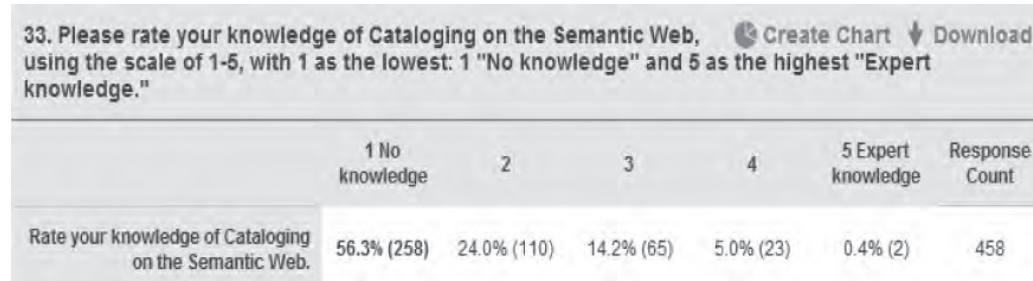
- It's better than nothing, can provide a starting point, and, if it works, the cataloger doesn't have to reinvent the wheel each time: 32 percent.
- Publishers are not the best source for metadata, as they do not have the same standards as catalogers, and errors will increase in the bibliographic utility; additionally, pre-publication data changes and data entered by publishers is not reliable: 18 percent.
- Level 3 publisher or distributor records in OCLC are poor quality, and if this is any indication of the worth of ONIX information for cataloging records, this is not a viable situation: 16 percent.
- Sharing bibliographic data across systems is a good thing to do, and increases efficiency: 7 percent.
- The idea is good in theory, but it doesn't hold true in practice, or it is not in common everyday use as of yet: 6 percent.
- Reducing duplication of work is a good thing to do, and relying on publisher upstream data could achieve this: 6 percent.
- Garbage in, garbage out: 4 percent.
- ONIX data should be used to create only minimal or core level records: 4 percent
- This is already happening: 4 percent.
- Using this data will require double work for catalogers to edit and make the records of sufficient quality, as the records are the lowest possible quality of "dumbed down" records; this, in turn, will cause many duplicate records in the shared bibliographic utility: composite of 3 percent.

These "other" comments reflect the varying thoughts on the usefulness of ONIX data for cataloging records, similar to the responses on whether it is a good idea to use them as a starting point records for a shared bibliographic utility, or not.

The second "futuristic" cataloging concept, and the last question in the survey with a specific topic, asked respondents to rate their knowledge of Cataloging on the Semantic Web. As previously noted, this was one of the recommendations of the Library of Congress Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control, "Report on the Future of Bibliographic Control: Draft for Public Comment."

Figure 3.26 Question 33 on survey

Please rate your knowledge of Cataloging on the Semantic Web. (All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by SurveyMonkey. Material is copyright and trademark protected.)



Position our technology for the future by recognizing that the World Wide Web is both our technology platform and the appropriate platform for the delivery of our standards. Recognize the people are not the only users of the data we produce in the name of bibliographic control, but so too are machine applications that interact with those data in a variety of ways.⁸

Figure 3.26 presents the data gathered from respondents on their knowledge of this topic.

Cataloging on the Semantic Web is a very difficult concept to understand.

The Semantic Web, representing Berners-Lee's initial vision of the World Wide Web (Web), is an extension of the Web where "information is given well-defined meaning, better enabling computers and people to work in cooperation" . . . The goal is to construct a network of structured, sharable semantics that is accessible, understandable, and manipulable by computer agents. Computer agents (Semantic Web agents), acting on behalf of people or other computer agents, will traver[se] the semantic network, find and manipulate information, perform desired tasks, and offer services.⁹

For bibliographic data and cataloging records, this means the disassembling of the record into discrete elements and marking it up to provide permanent and unique links, or identifiers, to this data across the Internet. When the data is searched, the computer agent uses the identifiers, assisted by network structures and standards, to find and gather the matching text associated with the link or identifier, and generate some kind display of all linked elements to represent and/or actually "be" the desired item. I hope that's right—that's what it seems.

It's no wonder that 56 percent of the cataloging (and other) respondents indicated that they have no knowledge of cataloging on the Semantic Web. Some do have some knowledge (24%), and it's good to see that almost 20 percent have average to expert knowledge. This is a theoretical concept, and has no immediate,

live, holistic, and active cataloging application in our present time, so it remains to be seen if it will become a necessary concept to learn in the future.

CONCLUSION

I need to reiterate that the survey itself was not “professionally” created—it was just written by me, a practicing cataloger. I tried to not be too biased in its questions, but I received several responses about my negative attitude toward RDA and my AACR2 slant. I did try to include questions that would bring out everyone’s comments, no matter what cataloging code they were leaning toward. I hope that I haven’t squelched or diminished anyone’s opportunity to participate and have his or her say because of the format of the survey. Catalogers are a passionate, dedicated, intense bunch who know what is right, but also know that the world has a lot of ambiguous gray, too. I hope the results of the survey will offer the light of ideas and sharing of knowledge to help us all in this most unsettled time, to find our way.

NOTES

1. RDA Scope and Structure, 5JSC/RDA/Scope/Rev/4/1 July 2009, to Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA from Alan Danskin, Chair, JSC, 1, <http://www.rda-jsc.org/docs/5rda-scoperev4.pdf> (accessed May 27, 2010).

2. RDA—Resource Description and Access: Objectives and Principles, 5JSC/RDA/Objectives and Principles/Rev/3 1 July 2009, to Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA, From Alan Danskin, Chair, JSC, <http://www.rda-jsc.org/docs/5rda-objectivesrev3.pdf> (accessed May 27, 2010).

3. All material is copyright and trademark protected. All title and copyrights in and to the Software are owned by SurveyMonkey. All title and intellectual property rights in and to the content which may be accessed through use of the Software Application Services is the property of the respective content owner and also may be protected by applicable copyright or other intellectual property laws and treaties. The Company contact information is as follows: SurveyMonkey.com, Portland, Oregon, USA; author and owner, Ryan Finley.

4. Library of Congress Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control, “Report on the Future of Bibliographic Control: Draft for Public Comment,” 1, November 30, 2007, <http://www.loc.gov/bibliographic-future/news/lcwg-report-draft-11-30-07-final.pdf> (accessed May 28, 2010).

5. Ibid., 1–2.

6. ONIX FAQs, <http://www.editeur.org/74/FAQs/#q1> (accessed May 28, 2010).

7. EDItEUR, Jointly with Book Industry Study Group, New York and Book Industry Communication, London, “ONIX Books Code Lists, Issue 11, for Release 3.0, March 2010,” http://www.editeur.org/files/ONIX%203/ONIX_Code_Lists_Issue_11_for_Release_3.0.pdf (accessed May 28, 2010).

8. Library of Congress Working Group on the Future of Bibliographic Control, “Report,” 1, <http://www.loc.gov/bibliographic-future/news/lcwg-report-draft-11-30-07-final.pdf> (accessed May 28, 2010).

9. Jane Greenberg, “Advancing the Semantic Web via Library Functions,” *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly* 43, no. 3–4: 203–4.