

Cataloguing Outside the Box: A Practical Guide to Cataloguing Special Collections Materials

Patricia Falk and Stefanie Dennis Hunker. Oxford: Chandos Publishing, 2010.

Cataloguing is one part rules and one part judgment. I've been in situations where two catalogers have accidentally cataloged the same manuscript collection and each has written an abstract focusing on different aspects and assigned widely divergent subject headings. When catalogers deal with the same types of collections such as oral histories or those covering the same subject such as the Civil War, they know the format and subjects they are going to assign. Encountering new formats can slow down the cataloging process as catalogers adjust to describing materials they do not usually handle.

Falk, the Special Collections Cataloger at Bowling Green State University (BGSU), and Hunker, the Digital Resources Librarian in the Browne Popular Culture Library at BGSU, selected a variety of types of materials that are sometimes found in special collections libraries but are unusual enough that many catalogers do not routinely encounter them. Drawing only from examples and their experience at the BGSU Music Library and Sound Recordings Archives (MLSRA) and the Ray and Pat Browne Library for Popular Culture Studies (BPCL), the authors offer guidelines for cataloging eight "unusual kinds of materials that many academic libraries do not collect and for which there are no set cataloguing guidelines": self-published music scores and recordings, popular music compact discs, fanzines, comics and graphic novels, special periodicals, popular fiction, scripts (movie, television, and radio), and press kits. (p. xix)

Both authors come from a book cataloging background and this informs not only their choice of unusual materials to discuss but also their approach and recommendations for cataloging. As a manuscripts cataloger, I handle a variety of non-book formats, including some listed above and believe that if it is not a book, serial, map, or sound recording, it is manuscript, graphic, or realia, and even some groups of books can have a collection-level catalog record.

It is disconcerting that Falk and Hunker recommend cataloging self-published music scores and recordings (that are not technically "published" but produced in limited quantities) correctly as scores coded as manuscripts but follow AACR2 rather than DACS standards for the MARC fields used in the catalog record. For example, in the 245 field for title, rather than include a subfield f for the date, they use the books format field 260 for publication date subfield c. Also, in the 245 they do not distinguish a manuscript version from a later published version by adding a General Material Designation (GMD) subfield h [manuscript] after the title. When they do not have the original in hand, they use a 500 general note rather than a more precise 533 reproduction note to describe the reproduction. They are not necessarily wrong, but their recommendations reflect their local practice rather than national standards.

For popular music compact discs, the authors use the well-established recordings format. However, they do not employ the formatted 505 content field with subfield t title and subfield r performer/composer except for compilations of multiple performers. They do include notes about the unusual shape of CDs and limitations on playback equipment. For "folk songs"—science fiction folk songs—which is not a Library of Congress Subject Heading authorized term, they

put the phrase in a 500 general note where it is more easily keyword searchable rather than in a 690 local subject heading field.

With fanzines, they correctly catalog them as serials but create an item record for individual issues which they barcode—the equivalent of itemizing and barcoding each issue of *American Archivist* rather than each volume; this practice can really clutter the online catalog when a simple holdings note in the main record would suffice. Reversing their policy of putting local subject headings in a 500 general note, for fanzines they assign the subgenres such as musiczines and reviewzines to a 690 local subject heading field. The local subject headings (490, 590, 690) only appear in a repository's local online public access catalog, not in OCLC. They also erroneously use 650 Fanzines for a subject heading as if the item being cataloged is about fanzines rather than add a subfield v Specimens to indicate they are cataloging an example of a fanzine. Coming from a manuscripts cataloging perspective, I routinely use the Getty's *Art and Architecture Thesaurus* (AAT) for form/genre terms and would have added a 655 for Fanzines. These book catalogers almost exclusively use the American Library Association's *Guidelines on Subject Access to Individual Works of Fiction, Drama, Etc.* (gsafd) 2nd ed. (2000) for their 655 form/genre terms. Since Fanzines does not appear on the gsafd list, they have three options: add a subfield v Specimens to their 650 Fanzines LCSH term, add a 655 Fanzines from AAT or add a 655 Fanzines from Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH). It appears that if the appropriate term is not on gsafd, they do not provide a 655.

In the Popular Fiction chapter, they fail to note that different subject headings are applied to the same book with a different title in a reprint (and both were cataloged by BGSU). They do not mention cataloging Ace Doubles—two books bound together with separate title pages and pagings inverted—as “bound-withs.” The authors are inconsistent; they give 700 field added author entries for illustrators but do not always add subfield e illustrator (incorrectly using subfield c illus. on p. 107 Example 6.8; I checked their OCLC record online and it was updated in 2008 and corrected to subfield e ill.)

While they note that for movie scripts, “a great number of these are not published or produced” and could therefore be considered manuscripts, they still try to catalog them as books, and fail to add a 655 for Screenplays although they add a subfield b [screenplay] in the title as if it was the implied subtitle of the work (since there is no GMD for screenplay). Their current practice is to catalog television scripts as single episodes rather than the entire series—contrary to an archival approach, especially in the wake of “more product less process” (MPLP). However, they catalog radio scripts as a series on one record. This inconsistency is frustrating and contrary to best practices. Press kits for movies and television shows are cataloged using the books format even though these are definitely mixed materials (textual press releases, photo stills, ad slicks); here they give the form/genre term Press kits in a 690 local note, not the preferred 655 (because gsafd and LCSH lack the term that AAT includes) nor even in a 500 note like they did for folk songs in the popular music compact discs chapter.

Another inconsistency appears in their chapter on authority work, the checking and creating of name and subject headings. The Name Authority Cooperative (NACO) requires that if a Web site is cited as a source of information that “WWW site” be included in the 670 source note. Even though the Internet Movie Database (IMDb) is only available online, it should still be cited as IMDb WWW site and the authors fail to do so (and incorrectly call it the International Movie Database). Falk and Hunker provide a page of useful sources for name authority work for music-related performers, movie-related authors, fiction authors, and romance authors but not science fiction authors, such as *St. James Guide to Science Fiction Writers*.

The main problems I have with this book are that the authors draw all of their examples from the BGSU collections for a myopic view of how to catalog unusual materials, as if their way is the only way; in addition, they provide MARC record examples that they admit are less than complete (I would have upgraded the records in their online public access catalog (OPAC) before publishing them as work to emulate). Admittedly, some of their examples are copy cataloging from OCLC so BGSU catalogers are not responsible for less than stellar records, but they could have chosen better examples. Breaking from their MARC examples, the authors include the Dublin Core (dc) metadata for a digitized nickel weekly individual issue in two examples, a simple item record using text descriptors (title, date, subject, etc.) and a full item record using the dc tags without explaining what they mean or how they correlate to a MARC record.

Another quibble is with the works cited; they oddly add the word “Print” at the end of each citation for books but not journal articles or *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules*, although no electronic sources appear on the bibliography. This is just one more case of authorial inconsistency. On a more positive note, Falk and Hunker include exercises in each chapter and provide the answers in appendices, a glossary of terms for the types of materials cataloged, works cited, and an index.

Most archivists will probably only encounter three types of materials covered by this monograph: self-published music scores and recordings, scripts, and press kits. Everything else is a book or serial and can either be handled by creating a collection level record if the piece is part of a larger collection, by adding holdings to an existing OCLC record to give access to specific titles, or by handing the material off to a book cataloger for original cataloging. The authors’ popular culture focus limits the usefulness to specific types of special collections, and given the book’s inconsistencies and price point, it is not worth reading “how I do it in my shop” at Bowling Green State University.

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