To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA

From: Kathy Glennan, ALA Representative

Subject: Colour Content (RDA 7.17)

Background

ALA has found the inconsistent treatment of Colour Content (RDA 7.17) problematic. RDA permits recording "black and white" for still images (7.17.2.3) and for moving images (7.17.3.3), but not for illustrative content (7.17.1.3).   As a result, the type of resource determines whether or not "black and white" is included in the description, which we find disconcerting. We note that the British Library has decided to solve this problem by applying 7.17.2.3 when describing the colour content of illustrations ("BL Monograph WEMI Workflow," *RDA Toolkit*, July 2013).

In addition, the Joint Steering Committee has discussed the vocabularies associated with the Colour Content element and expressed a preference for a single set of terms that would be used in describing colour content for any resource. The JSC also questioned whether there should be distinct element subtypes for Colour of Still Image, etc.

With this proposal, ALA sets forth two options for a complete replacement to 7.17, both of which address the above concerns. We offer a consistent set of terms for describing colour content in any context, and provide a single set of instructions for describing the colour content of resources such as still or moving images, as well as the colour content of illustrations. We also propose a list of terms and definitions for inclusion in the RDA Glossary.

Issues and Recommendations

1. **Vocabulary vs. instructions.** RDA 7.17 currently provides a set of instructions for recording certain terms; it does not define a controlled vocabulary. ALA is uncertain whether a controlled vocabulary here is appropriate, primarily because such a vocabulary can only be partial, due to the instruction to record the names of specific colours if considered important. Therefore, we have presented two options. Option 1 continues to present instructions for recording particular terms under given circumstances. Option 2 instructs the cataloguer to "record one or more appropriate terms from the following list:" and gives a list of terms. At this time, ALA does not have a preference between these two options.

2. **Vocabulary issues.** The published text of RDA included no controlled terms for Colour Content. This was revised from an earlier draft because ALA (in particular) was unwilling to agree to spell "color" with a "u" as RDA editorial policy required. The JSC agreed that no term (or spelling) would be specified for this element. They also agreed to provide examples that illustrated both spellings.

    A further issue arises because of the separate instructions (deriving ultimately from rules in different chapters of AACR2) for recording the colour of moving images, still images, and three-dimensional forms. This results in the situation noted above, in which "black and white" is indicated for still and moving images, but not for illustrations.

ALA recommends that there be a single vocabulary and a single set of instructions for recording the colour content of all resources.

3. **Definition of "colour".** There was no definition of "colour" in RDA or in the Registry. The one included here was suggested to ALA by Thurstan Young of the British Library. We propose it for discussion, while noting that it seems to rely on understanding that black and white are not *primary* colours.

4. **Spelling: colour vs. color.** We believe that this sort of variant spelling can be controlled by systems, and therefore do not oppose using the preferred spelling. However, we have suggested the inclusion of "[or *color*]" at several points to underscore that this is a legitimate variant.

5. **Grey scale.** We considered whether grey scale should be limited to digital images. Our investigations showed that this is indeed a method of rendering a black and white digital image using pixels that differ only in intensity, not in hue. We recommend that this exception be retained.

6. **Tinted and toned.** Based on our investigations, ALA believes that tinting and toning should be considered as refinements of the term "black and white". Although there are broader definitions of tinting and toning, the use in Anglo-American cataloging seems to be limited to the process by which black-and-white film (both photographic and motion-picture film) is chemically altered to produce colour. The tinting process colours the film base, while the toning process colours the film emulsion (leaving the "clear" portions unaffected). While the process applies to the film, these terms can also be used to describe a print made from the film. The definitions proposed below attempt to capture this.

In the light of this limitation to black and white film stock, we believe that "tinted" and "toned" should not be defined as independent terms, but should be considered as refinements of the term "black and white". We have therefore proposed three terms for this purpose:

> black and white (tinted)
>
> black and white (tinted and toned)
>
> black and white (toned)

However, the discussion above suggests to us that something strange is going on here. A black and white image that has been tinted is no longer black and white. If we are attempting to describe its colour content, then describing it as "black and white" seems inappropriate and misleading. Further, tinting and toning are not colours; they are chemical processes that alter the colour of the image. Therefore, it has been suggested that tinting and toning really belong under the RDA element Production Method (RDA 3.9). That element, however, has been defined as the production process used to produce the resource; in this case, tinting and toning are the processes used to produce (or rather, to alter) the colour content. The only way to add tinting and toning to Production Method would seem to be to add another special category (3.9.4) for Production Method for Tinted and/or Toned Images. ALA is not ready to recommend this solution. The proposals below retain tinting and toning as refinements of "black and white" and also describe the specific colors by applying 7.17.1.4, Details of Colour Content. We suggest that the JSC discuss whether this information more properly belongs in Production Method.

7. **Sepia.** We note in passing that *sepia* is actually a type of toning. Given the long history of singling out this category, we have retained it. In Option 1, we have kept the instruction to record *sepia* under 7.17.1.3.2, Tinted and Toned Images. In Option 2, it is simply one of the terms listed under 7.17.1.3, Recording Colour Content.

8. **Order of elements when recording both "colour" and "black and white".** In option 1, 7.17.1.3.4, Combination of Colour and Black and White, we did not provide instructions for ordering these terms, leaving that to cataloger's judgment. In both options, the supporting examples in 7.17.1.4, Details of Colour Content, support this decision.

9. **Foreground and background colours.** Both options below retain the current sense of 7.17.5.3, Recording Colour Content of Resources Designed for Persons with Visual Impairments. However, we have expanded the instruction to include non-textual resources. We decided not to generalize this further to apply to all resources, regardless of intended audience, since that should be covered by 7.17.1.4, Details of Colour Content.

10. **Hand colouring.** ALA notes that an entire manifestation may be issued with hand colouring. Therefore, we propose to limit the reference to RDA 3.21 in the fourth paragraph of 7.17.1.1 (both options) to item-specific hand colouring.

Revision Proposals

Note: Proposals #1 and #2 are designed to replace the entire text of RDA 7.17. In other words, the current 7.17.2–7.17.5 are to be deleted. Because these represent eclectic texts based on various current instructions, no mark-up is shown.

1. RDA 7.17 – Option 1:

7.17 Colour Content

7.17.1 Basic Instructions on Recording Colour Content

7.17.1.1   Scope

Colour content▾ is the presence of colour, tone, etc., in the content of a resource.

Colour content is also the specific colours, tones, etc., (including black and white) present in the content of a resource.

Colour content does not include matter outside the actual content of the resource (e.g., the border of a map).

For instructions on recording information on item-specific hand colouring, see 3.21.

For instructions on recording the broadcast standard used for colour in videos, see 3.18.3.

7.17.1.2 Sources of Information

Use evidence presented by the resource itself as the basis for recording the presence of colour content in the resource. If desired, take additional evidence from any source.

7.17.1.3 Recording Colour Content

Apply these instructions to describe the colour content of:

  a) the resource itself

  or

  b) the content of the resource, including illustrative content (see **7.15**).

Record details of colour content as instructed under **7.17.1.4**.

7.17.1.3.1 Black and White

If the resource or its content is in black and white or shades of grey, record *black and white*.

> **EXAMPLE**
>
> black and white
> **A motion picture film in black and white**

Exception

> *Digital still images.* For digital still images in grey scale, record *grey scale*.

7.17.1.3.2 Tinted and Toned Images

If the image or images in black and white are tinted and/or toned, specify *tinted*, *toned*, or *tinted and toned* as appropriate, in parentheses, following *black and white*. If considered important for identification or selection, record the details as instructed under **7.17.1.4**.

> **EXAMPLE**
>
> black and white (tinted)
> **A photograph in black and white, tinted blue**
>
> black and white (tinted)
> **A motion picture film in black and white, tinted yellow**
>
> black and white (tinted and toned)
> **A motion picture film in black and white, tinted yellow and toned green**

If the images contained in the resource are in sepia, record *sepia*.

> **EXAMPLE**
>
> sepia
> **A photograph in sepia**

7.17.1.3.3 Colour

If the resource or its content is in colour, record *colour* [or *color*].

EXAMPLE

colour
A set of slides in colour

Alternative

If the specific colours are considered to be important for identification or selection, name the colour or colours instead of recording *colour* [or *color*].

EXAMPLE

blue
red
An oil painting

blue
white
A porcelain bowl with blue figures on a white background

7.17.1.3.4 Combination of Colour and Black and White

If the resource or its content is in a combination of colour and black and white, record both *colour* [or *color*] and *black and white*. If considered to be important for identification or selection, record the details as instructed under **7.17.1.4**.

EXAMPLE

colour
black and white

7.17.1.3.5 Foreground and Background

If the foreground and background in a resource designed for persons with visual impairments are other than black on white, record the colours of the foreground and background. Otherwise, ignore the colour of textual content.

EXAMPLE

blue text on yellow background

7.17.1.4   Details of Colour Content

Record details of the colour content if they are considered important for identification or selection.

EXAMPLE

Colour maps, black and white photographs
Illustration which include colour maps and black and white photographs. Colour content recorded as: colour, black and white

Some colour
10 maps, some of which are in colour. Colour content recorded as: black and white

Chiefly colour
Illustrations, most of which are in colour. Colour content recorded as: colour, black and white

2 maps in colour
Resource containing 10 maps, 2 of which are in colour. Colour content recorded as: black and white, colour

Tinted blue
A photograph in black and white, tinted blue. Colour content recorded as: black and white (tinted)

Yellow tint
A motion picture film in black and white, tinted yellow. Colour content recorded as: black and white (tinted)

Film tinted yellow, image toned green
A motion picture film in black and white, tinted yellow and toned green. Colour content recorded as: black and white (tinted and toned)

Colour with black and white sequences
A motion picture film. Colour content recorded as: colour, black and white

Black and white with colour introductory sequence
A motion picture film. Colour content recorded as: black and white, colour

Title and headings printed in red
An early printed resource. Colour content not recorded

Displays in red, yellow, and blue
An online resource. Colour content not recorded

Technicolor
Colour content recorded as: colour

Colourized
Colour content recorded as: colour

2. RDA 7.17 – Option 2:

7.17 Colour Content

7.17.1 Basic Instructions on Recording Colour Content

7.17.1.1 Scope

Colour content▼ is the presence of colour, tone, etc., in the content of a resource.

Colour content is also the specific colours, tones, etc., (including black and white) present in the content of a resource.

Colour content does not include matter outside the actual content of the resource (e.g., the border of a map).

For instructions on recording information on item-specific hand colouring, see 3.21.

For instructions on recording the broadcast standard used for colour in videos, see 3.18.3.

7.17.1.2   Sources of Information

Use evidence presented by the resource itself as the basis for recording the presence of colour content in the resource. If desired, take additional evidence from any source.

7.17.1.3   Recording Colour Content

Apply these instructions to describe the colour content of:

a)   the resource itself

or

b)   the content of the resource, including illustrative content (see 7.15).

Record the colour content by using one or more appropriate terms from the following list:

black and white

black and white (tinted)

black and white (tinted and toned)

black and white (toned)

colour [*or* color]

sepia

> **EXAMPLE**
>
> black and white
> **A motion picture film in black and white**
>
> black and white (tinted)
> **A photograph in black and white, tinted**
>
> black and white (tinted)
> **A set of slides in colour**
>
> sepia
> **A photograph in sepia**

Exception

> *Digital still images.* For digital still images in grey scale, record *grey scale*.

If the image or images in black and white are tinted and/or toned, specify *tinted*, *toned*, or *tinted and toned* as appropriate, in parentheses, following *black and white*. If considered important for identification or selection, record the details as instructed under 7.17.1.4.

> **EXAMPLE**
>
> black and white (tinted)
> **A set of slides in colour**

black and white (tinted)
A motion picture film in black and white, tinted yellow

black and white (tinted and toned)
A motion picture film in black and white, tinted yellow and toned green

Alternative

If the specific colours are considered to be important for identification or selection, name the colour or colours instead of recording *colour* [or *color*].

EXAMPLE

blue
red
An oil painting

blue
white
A porcelain bowl with blue figures on a white background

If the foreground and background in a resource designed for persons with visual impairments are other than black on white, record the colours of the foreground and background. Otherwise, ignore the colour of textual content.

EXAMPLE

blue text on yellow background

Record details of colour content as instructed under 7.17.1.4.

7.17.1.4   Details of Colour Content

Record details of the colour content if they are considered important for identification or selection.

EXAMPLE

Colour maps, black and white photographs
Illustration which include colour maps and black and white photographs. Colour content recorded as: colour, black and white

Some colour
10 maps, some of which are in colour. Colour content recorded as: black and white

Chiefly colour
Illustrations, most of which are in colour. Colour content recorded as: colour, black and white

2 maps in colour
Resource containing 10 maps, 2 of which are in colour. Colour content recorded as: black and white, colour

Tinted blue
A photograph in black and white, tinted blue. Colour content recorded as: black and white (tinted)

Yellow tint
A motion picture film in black and white, tinted yellow. Colour content recorded as: black and white (tinted)

Film tinted yellow, image toned green
A motion picture film in black and white, tinted yellow and toned green. Colour content recorded as: black and white (tinted and toned)

Colour with black and white sequences
A motion picture film. Colour content recorded as: colour, black and white

Black and white with colour introductory sequence
A motion picture film. Colour content recorded as: black and white, colour

Title and headings printed in red
An early printed resource. Colour content not recorded

Displays in red, yellow, and blue
An online resource. Colour content not recorded

Technicolor
Colour content recorded as: colour

Colourized
Colour content recorded as: colour

3. RDA Glossary:

Add:

black and white	Colour content consisting of shades of black and white.
black and white (tinted)	Colour content of previously black and white film (or prints from such film) produced by a chemical alteration of the film base to get a dominant hue that affects the entire surface of the film.
black and white (tinted and toned)	Colour content that adds colour to black and white film (or prints from such film) by using a tinted base and a toned emulsion.
black and white (toned)	Colour content of previously black and white film (or prints from such film) produced by a chemical alteration of the film emulsion that affects the silver image of the positive film, but leaves the clear portions unaffected.
colour	Colour content consisting entirely or in part of primary colour, or colour derived from primary colour.
grey scale	Colour content of a digital image consisting of pixels that differ only in intensity, varying in stages from black to white.
sepia	Colour content consisting of a cool brownish colour with overtones of violet or olive colour, varying from light to moderate value.