

To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA
From: John Attig, ALA Representative
Subject: Clarification of leaves and pages (3.4.5.2 and Glossary)

ALA thanks the Library of Congress for this attempt to clarify the instructions relating to recording *leaves* and *pages* in the Extent statement.

ALA does not support this proposed change. The following background statement was offered by Robert Maxwell:

This proposal substantively changes the RDA instructions. The RDA instructions are not accidental; it was clearly noted during the draft stages that this was a change from AACR2.

AACR2 defined pages and leaves in terms of whether the text was printed on one side of the leaf or on both sides of the leaf (AACR2 25B1). This is not actually a correct definition of those terms. A leaf is a sheet in a bound volume taken as a whole, considering both sides. It doesn't matter where the printing is, and indeed it can have no printing at all on it. A page is one side of a leaf, but again it doesn't matter where any printing might or might not be on the sheet. And in neither case does it matter where numbers appear or do not appear, and so in neither case is the definition of "page" or "leaf" strictly relevant to the definition of "pagination" or "foliation" which is what we're recording in an extent statement.

RDA instructions for extent changed this and began, correctly, speaking in terms of recording pagination and foliation rather than recording "pages" and "leaves", and defined pagination and foliation in terms of how the numbering is arranged: if the numbering appears on both sides of a leaf in a bound volume we say the volume is paginated; if it appears on only one side of the leaf we say it is foliated, regardless of the positioning of any other printing on the sheet.

"Pagination" is defined in OED as "a sequence of numbers or signatures assigned to pages in a book, periodical, etc." "Foliation" is defined as "the consecutive numbering of the folios (or leaves) of a book or MS." In neither case is the location of printing on the leaf (front and back or just one side) referred to. Since we are recording the pagination or foliation it is logical to follow the normal definition of pagination and foliation, which is reflected quite accurately in the current RDA definition. No "clarification" is needed. I do agree that entries in the glossary are warranted. The proposed definitions of leaf and page are fine, but what is really needed for use with the extent statement are definitions of foliation and pagination.

I believe the RDA definition is a real improvement over AACR2's definition and would be sorry to see us backtrack and return to the old definition. Under AACR2's definition, we were subjected to horrendous and fairly ridiculous extent statements

such as “48 [i.e. 96] p.” (AACR2 2.5B4). That particular book’s pagination is only numbered on one side of the leaf but printed on both sides, and so according to AACR2’s definition of page vs. leaf, “48 p.” gave a “completely false impression of the extent of the item.” RDA very neatly and logically solved this by defining what we record in terms of how the book was paginated or foliated, not by how it was printed. The extent of this book would be recorded in terms of leaves: “48 leaves,” which does not give a misleading impression of the extent of the resource. Since we are recording page/leaf **numbers** in the extent element for a printed text, it is entirely logical that the base definition of page be based on how the **numbers** are presented.

Another reviewer noted:

The suggested revision to 3.4.5.2 "mixes metaphors." The words "paginated" and "foliated" are *generally understood* to refer to what had been done with printed numbers on the pages or leaves (as in the original wording of the section) whereas the revision appears to redefine the terms as referring to the nature of the textual printing on the leaves (on both sides or on one side, respectively) without regard to the printed numbering.

The revision reads as if one is to "record the number of printed pages" (recording "the number of leaves" if printed on only one side) in disregard of any printed numbering that appears on them. They're not always synonymous.

Some other concerns:

- There are situations, covered by 3.4.5.3.1, in which it is necessary to record the extent in terms of unnumbered leaves or pages. This instruction should be revised to make it plain that the use of “leaves” or “pages” must be based on whether the leaves are printed on both sides, rather than on how they are numbered (because they aren’t).
- We are also puzzled at the change from “i.e.” to “e.g.” at 3.4.5.2. This implies that there may be other (unspecified) situations under which a volume is paginated or foliated. If this is true, those situations need to be specified.
- Representatives from the Rare Books and Manuscripts Section note that the current RDA instruction is in harmony with the instructions in *Descriptive Cataloging of Rare Materials (Books)*, 5B1.2. They therefore strongly prefer that 3.4.5.2 and the definitions not be revised.
- The practice among manuscripts catalogers in the United States (at least) is to use “leaf” to describe single loose sheets of manuscript text. Neither the current nor the proposed definition of *leaf* would support that practice. On the other hand, the term *sheet* is used in RDA for single loose sheets, whether containing printed or manuscript text. ALA notes this concern, but prefers to avoid the use of two different terms for the same type of carrier.