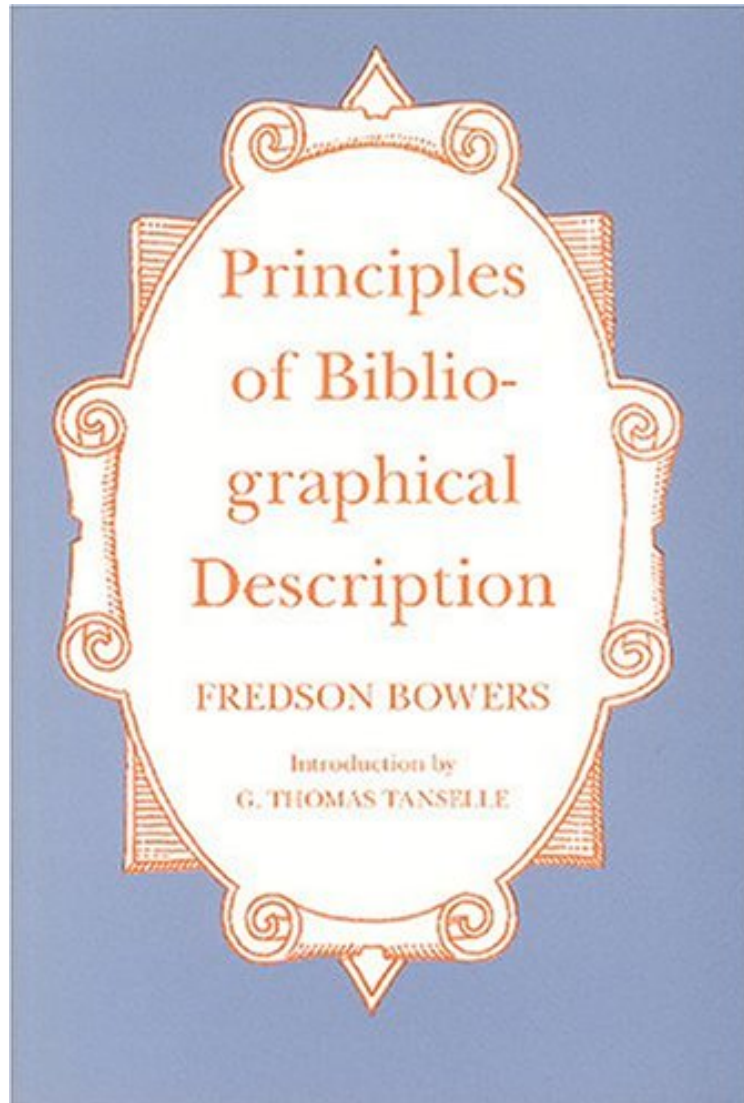


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## Principles of Bibliographical Description (St. Paul's Bibliographies)

*Fredson Bowers*

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1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. scholarly landmark By Curious Carl This is a technical book, laying out the procedures of bibliographical description, is required reading for those who pursue the field of the formulaic recording of the structure of printed books. Of interest to librarians, book-sellers and book collectors, a book description done by this standard is of interest to scholars.

Reprint of the first edition. With an Introduction by G. Thomas Tanselle. One of the indisputable classics of 20th-century scholarship, Bowers's work is one of the standard guides on the subject, providing a comprehensive manual for the description of printed books as physical objects. Although there has been much activity in descriptive bibliography since then, *Principles* still holds its place as the central book to which those engaged in bibliographical work continually return.

Fredson Bowers's *Principles of Bibliographical Description* is one of the indisputable classics of twentieth-century scholarship. When it was first published in December 1949, it immediately became the standard guide to its subject, providing for the first time a comprehensive manual for the description of printed books as physical objects. In it, Bowers consolidated and expanded upon the achievements of an English tradition that was nearly a century old. His book was an act of creative synthesis, which established a new point of departure. Although there has been much activity in descriptive bibliography since then, the *Principles* still holds its place as the central book to which those engaged in bibliographical work must continually return. Bowers ended a 1948 article by referring to the satisfaction of producing a descriptive bibliography that "will stand up under the test of time and will never need to be done again"; it begins to appear that in his book about descriptive bibliography he may have achieved such a work. It is a landmark in the history of scholarship, to be sure, but it is also a work of vital contemporary relevance. --from the introduction by G. Thomas Tanselle