funded by readers. These stories have a common theme of community outreach that Sheehan ponders in the final chapter. As long as proprietary software formats and restrictive digital rights management exist, Sheehan believes readers will be trapped "in their own walled gardens" (113). She feels that engaging communities of readers and colleagues may be the only way to break down these barriers and keep libraries alive.

This short book provides an exhaustive overview of the current e-book environment. At times, the density of information is dizzying, as Sheehan carries readers back and forth through circumstances in different libraries and marketplace conditions. While the book is a must-read for public librarians tossed into the digital fray, it will not serve the needs of every e-book enthusiast. For those who want in-depth coverage on specific aspects of e-books, this title is not for you. Yet the book is easy to negotiate with chapters that are titled informatively and that contain double-lined boxes of additional information. It's the perfect beginning for the e-book novice.— *Brian Norberg (brnorber@ncsu. edu), North Carolina State University, Raleigh, North Carolina*

Information Resource Description: Creating and Managing Metadata. By Philip Hider. Chicago: ALA Editions, 2013. 220 p. $99.95 softcover (ISBN: 978-0-8389-1201-0).

This book about descriptive metadata specifically for use in information retrieval systems is divided into nine chapters and includes lists of selected resources, further reading, and metadata standards. In his latest book, Philip Hider discusses metadata produced by information professionals, authors, users, and computers in broad terms. It is not a manual, but an introduction to the field intended for students and practitioners looking for bigger picture. Hider had previously co-authored a book with Ross Harvey on metadata and information organization titled Organising Knowledge in a *Global Society: Principles and Practice in Libraries and Information Centres* (Chandos, 2008).

Information Resource Description focuses on how information resources are organized through their description (metadata) in the contemporary environment and the process of description and metadata as related to retrieval tools. The author addresses questions such as, Why are descriptive metadata critical? In what contexts do metadata exist? When do metadata work and when not?

After a brief introduction to the vocabulary and defining of scope, the book dives into the concept of information resource attributes to look at the nature of metadata and why metadata are needed. Both describer and user contexts are important to consider: "Metadata creators should all start with the same fundamental question: what metadata will most help users to obtain the information they are looking for?" (16). A variety of information-seeking styles and goals are identified through review of several decades of literature on this topic. Information resource contexts are also considered, as are particular information resources designed for specific uses.

Tools and systems are the other side of the coin in understanding metadata's role in information retrieval. The author describes organizing information as arranged, labeled, and indexed to improve effective access, drawing from examples such as bibliographic databases, library catalogs, archival finding aids, and museum registers. A variety of metadata sources are also compared. Resource creators, publishers, indexes and abstracts, and computers are examples of metadata sources. "In a world so full of information, some might wonder why people need help finding it. The more information there is, however, the more difficult it is to find the best information" (61). To make use of the flood of information resources, one needs information-seeking and literacy skills and effective information-retrieval tools.

Metadata quality is vital and can be assessed by its functionality, comprehensiveness, accuracy, clarity, and consistency. Vocabulary and authority control, principles of best practice, and quality assurance are discussed as ways to improve metadata quality. Higher quality generally means higher cost, so cost–benefit analysis is covered in this discussion as well.

Metadata standards are needed to facilitate sharing. In a chapter that looks unavoidably a bit like alphabet soup, the author looks at standards created for elements, format, and transmission. These standards are divided among web publishing, libraries, digital libraries, archives, museums, book publishing, book indexing, database indexing, e-research (for example data repositories), education, audiovisual industries, business, government, and registries. Second, the author looks at vocabularies as standards for metadata values, and discusses controlled subject vocabularies, subject headings, subject thesauri, subject classification schemes, taxonomies and ontologies, nonsubject vocabularies, vocabulary mapping, and identification systems.

The final chapter of the book considers the future of metadata and prospects for different approaches to information retrieval. Three approaches are discussed: content-based information retrieval done by computers, social metadata created by end users, and professional description. The author concludes that there are merits and shortcomings of all three, but that they often complement each other.

This textbook gives a great overview of the complicated issues that affect information resource description today. Readers will need to do more research if they want to get deeper into any specific standard or schema.—*Hilary L. Robbeloth (hrobbeloth@ pugetsound.edu), University of Puget Sound, Tacoma, Washington*