of current technology.—*Dr. Brad Eden, Coordinator of Technical Services/Automated Library Services, North Harris Montgomery Community College District, Houston (beden@nhmccd.edu)*

The Bibliographic Record and Information Technology. Ronald Hagler. 3d ed. Chicago: American Library Association; Ottawa: Canadian Library Association, 1997. 394p. $45 [ISBN 0-8389- 0707-5 (ALA); 0-88802-280-8 (CLA)].

As the title indicates, the author of this work has set himself a large task. Even at 394 pages, a work that addresses both topics will of necessity use a broad treatment. This book is a general text, not a specialist's text or a handbook for either topic. In the preface, Hagler states that this is not a how-to manual: "This is a conceptual treatment of current bibliographic practice in the context of its principles and history....It acknowledges primary, rather than secondary, sources in the formulation of that practice" (p. xv).

The work, structured in two parts, has many strengths. In Part I (chapters 1–5), Hagler discusses the principles of bibliographic control in library and nonlibrary environments, and in Part II (chapters 6–9 and an appendix) he discusses library standards for record creation. Hagler does an excellent job of keeping the reader aware of the very different contexts in which bibliographic records exist (footnotes, print bibliographies, abstracts, indexes, and library catalogs). He highlights and explains clearly the difference between, and issues surrounding, the document (item) and the work (content).

Chapter 6, "Controlled-Vocabulary Name Access Points," is interesting in view of the October 1997 Toronto conference on the future of the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules,* 2d edition (*AACR2*). Hagler very effectively compares and contrasts Cutter's cataloging rules and *AACR2*, noting how each is affected by the technology of its time. The author's clear, consistent distinction between document and item and his discussions of
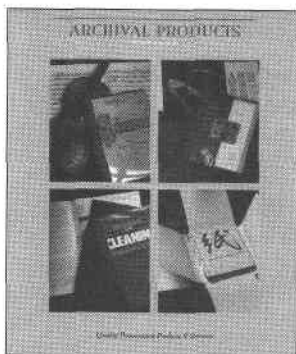
the problematic issues of series and serials combine to give readers a context in which to view the current discussions of *AACR2*.

At the conceptual level, this book is a comprehensive overview of its subject, with creative discussions of the relationship of technology to bibliographic data. Hagler is a professor at the School of Library, Archival, and Information Studies, at the University of British Columbia. He wrote the first edition as a beginning cataloging text; this third edition continues to serve that function well. Any further edition would be improved by the addition of a bibliography and more illustrative examples to make Hagler's reasoning clearer to both experts and nonexperts.

Hagler explains carefully the book's lack of a formal bibliography: "The journal literature in this field remains the follower and describer, not generally the harbinger of developments. These are the reasons why this book lacks a formal bibliography and why only primary sources and the few direct quotations are documented in notes" (p. xv). This omission will disappoint many readers, both students and librarians, who would appreciate more convenient access to further readings on the topics Hagler discusses.

Many of the topics treated in this book would benefit from more examples and supporting data. Occasional overstatements, such as "...serendipitous meandering may have caused the awarding of more Nobel Prizes than purposefully directed experiment" (p. 95–96), emphasize a point, but some of Hagler's assertions would be easier to understand if accompanied by fuller explanations.

The following comments are interesting, but an absence of supporting data or examples leaves the reader in doubt about the context of the statement.

"The most traditionally printed bound book is not published if it was produced only for private distribution..." (p. 5). "Traditionally, name authority work is done in the largest libraries...by people trained as descriptive cataloguers...Subject authority work is done in those libraries by people whose qualifications include graduate degrees in an academic subject

discipline..." (p. 119). "Yet failure to examine every new controlled-vocabulary access point...almost ensures a very high proportion of duplicate records..." (p. 195).

Discussions of complex issues would benefit from clear examples of application. The author of an introductory text cannot expect readers to have a wealth of experience from which to draw. The library cataloging world has tended toward specialization by media, so even experienced catalogers can have limited knowledge of specific areas.

Hagler is sometimes vague where clarity is vital. Several times, he states that online public access catalogs are multifile databases that incorporate Abstracting and Indexing (A&I) products (p. 27, 33, 187). This is misleading. Access to the A&I products via a subfile or menu option is a widespread online catalog feature, but true integration into the library's catalog of bibliographic records is rare. In this case, a reference is required so the reader can see such an online catalog in action. Similar cases are found in the need for clarification regarding the weakness of the Z39.50 interface to multiple databases (p. 165, 185) and clearer description of the various means of automated authority control. Not all are as comprehensive as Hagler outlines (p. 196).

The promotional flyer from the publisher calls this "the most comprehensive text on creating clear and complete bibliographic records." This statement does not describe the book accurately. To the contrary, the author states, "This book has never purported to be a how-to manual..." (p. xv). The book is a very good general overview of the bibliographic record in relation to the technology used to manipulate it in a variety of ways. The book does not serve as a technical text, nor does it treat the subject of information technology in a technical manner. This book belongs with other works that treat cataloging and information technology broadly.—*Daniel CannCasciato, Head of Cataloging and Interlibrary Loans, Central Washington University Library, Ellensburg, Washington (dcc@cwu.edu)*