

the works of an author are arranged alphabetically by title, rather than by date.

As an attempt to integrate IR research, *Understanding Information Retrieval Interactions* prompts many questions. How do the goals of searchers relate to their searching and stopping behavior? Do goals and search behavior vary in different IR environments such as public versus academic versus special libraries? How does searching vary between manual versus machine-readable files? Files of surrogates versus full-text files? Hypertext versus flat files?

While it is good to have some variety of outlooks in any discipline, the lack of consensus on crucial issues is a problem. How can we build on each other's work if we use different terms and different frameworks? What are appropriate definitions of "information need" or "goal" or "object of the search"? What is the right unit of analysis? What are appropriate levels of change for "interaction"? Assuming that agreement and consensus are good things, how can we facilitate them? It isn't enough to cite each other's work when relevant. In conversation, Hert has suggested that it is time for a conference of researchers with similar interests and values but slightly different approaches to the same problems. My fervent hope is that *Understanding Information Retrieval Interactions* will help forge agreement about what is missing in search behavior research and what needs to be done.—Dee Michel (damichel@facstaff.wisc.edu) School of Library and Information Studies, University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Catskill: An Interactive Multimedia Course on AACR2 and MARC. Mary Mortimer, Karen Lochhead, and Margaret Hyland. Learning Curve and DocMatrix, 1996. \$750 U.S., single user; \$450, consortium; site license, \$1125–\$1495, depending on the number of users.

Catskill is a clever, do-it-yourself CD-ROM course on AACR2 (*Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, 2d ed.*) and the MARC (MACHINE-Readable Cataloging) format. As integrated library

systems develop in all types of libraries—requiring good bibliographic records in MARC format from staff who are not always well-trained in cataloging codes and in MARC—there is a definite need for this type of interactive learning tool. *Catskill* can serve as a basic course for a novice cataloger or as a refresher for an experienced librarian in need of a skills update. Versions are available for U.S., British, Canadian, and Australian MARC.

Librarians, library staff, and a library science student tested the demonstration disk, which provides a fairly complete introduction to *Catskill's* content and format, though it lacks the depth of coverage of the full version. The library science student, having recently completed a cataloging course, found the beginning modules tiresome because of the remedial material regarding MARC fields 100 and 245. However, the student found the advanced sections quite useful. Thus, for library science students, *Catskill* would be more effective as a supplement to a cataloging class rather than as a stand-alone training tool.

Sterner tests came from a cataloger and a staff member at the University of Illinois Library, where cataloging is decentralized and training is a critical issue. The cataloger noted that *Catskill* presented the concepts of AACR2 very clearly, although some of the details required in academic library cataloging did not appear in the demonstration disk and could not be reviewed. The product allows the user to bypass consultation of AACR2 rules—this could be an asset or liability, depending on the users. The staff member, who did not have prior formal cataloging training, found *Catskill* very thorough because it forces the user to learn cataloging vocabulary and provides a helpful glossary.

As a proud member of the class of librarians that Michael Gorman calls "lapsed catalogers," I was keen to see how easily I could upgrade my skills in cataloging and MARC tags. I found the notebook format somewhat tedious to look at after a while, but was pleasantly surprised at the complete array of concepts and issues that are represented here. Uniform

titles, for example, are not particularly easy to explain, but the topic is broken down into manageable parts that make sense. The authors of *Catskill* show that the rationale for cataloging lies in service to the library user.

The strengths of *Catskill* are quite substantial; of the many available training tools, rule books, and rule interpretations, none is so fully developed in interactive CD-ROM format. *Catskill* allows users to work at their own pace, to learn by responding to situations and questions, and to test skills on a regular basis. It is international in scope, current, and easy to load and use. Both Mac and Windows

versions are available. It can supersede other training tools and provide a significant supplement to cataloging classes in library school or to continuing education programs for support staff. *Catskill* is expensive but is likely to remain fresh and useful for a relatively long period of time. The developers of this product, catalogers and professors from Australia, have found a fine way to introduce to a large number of people the sometimes boring, sometimes difficult, but always useful concepts and rules of cataloging.—Karen A. Schmidt (*karens@uiuc.edu*), Director of Collections & Assessment, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

The Hugh Atkinson Memorial Award

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- library automation
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The Award:

- \$2,000
- a Citation
- a Tiffany's Gold Giraffe Pin (for risk-taking)

Nominations are due by December 1, 1998

Information is available at <http://www.ala.org/acrl/atkinson.html>

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