

New CD revives the image of cataloguing

Ebe Kartus reviews *CatSkill*

Cataloguing is usually perceived as a rather dry, conservative branch of the library profession. This has changed with the release of *CatSkill*, an interactive computer-based learning package designed to teach the application of *Anglo-American cataloguing rules second edition 1988 revision* (AACR2R) and MARC coding with a choice of either ABN, CAN, UK or US MARC formats. The package can be used as a stand-alone or can be networked.

CatSkill is made up of 24 modules — from a general introduction to cataloguing, through parts one and two of AACR2R, as well as a 'help' module. Each module stands alone making it possible to 'jump in' wherever you want — making the package useful for both novices and those who wish to update a particular section of their skills or check on a particular cataloguing rule. At the beginning of each module there is an outline of objectives and tasks the user should be able to complete at the end of the module.

Each screen has a 'navigation bar' containing seven buttons. A useful feature for the browser and user looking for a specific aspect in any module is the 'Go to...' button. This feature allows users looking for a specific aspect of a topic to find the page and go directly to it.

At the end of each module there is a test — when doing the test if the user does not pass a question, *CatSkill* throws them back into the relevant section in the module. If you pass the questions you pass the module. There is a facility for keeping scores, which can be very useful for teachers who

can later incorporate these into the students' yearly marks if required. Since each user has their own sign-on, teachers and supervisors can check who has been using the package and for what period of time. This facility is also available to the user to check their own progress — statistics show the time spent on modules, test status and the last date of access to modules.

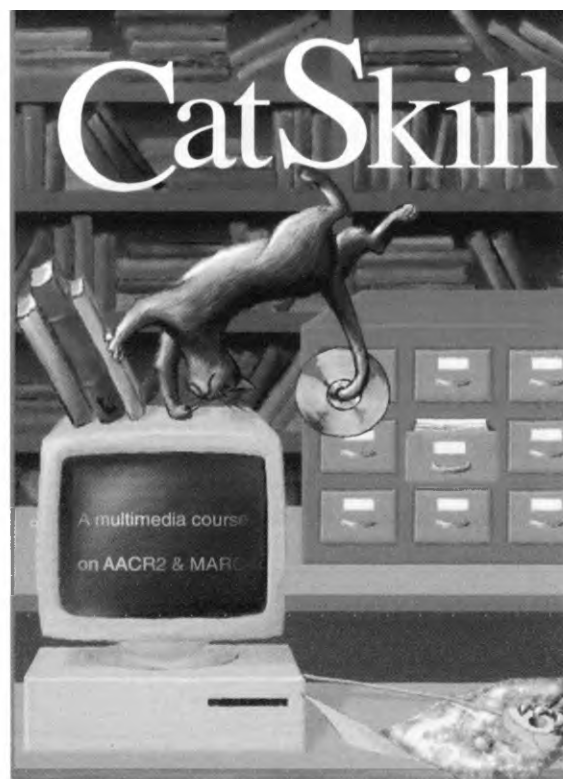
A small feature in the overall scope of the package, but one of the most useful in explaining the correlation between various components of a card catalogue record and a MARC catalogue record appears on page 22 of module 2 'Introduction to the catalogue'. The various components from the MARC record are moved down to the relevant section of the card catalogue. There is a small quibble, though, in the card catalogue the punctuation before the edition statement and publication details is missing. An added bonus for teachers would be if there was a facility to also go the other way — from card catalogue record to MARC.

CatSkill is an excellent package that can service multiple uses in both library cataloguing departments and librarianship schools. In the school setting it can be used to reinforce the cataloguing skills and rules taught and help students to further master these skills at their own pace. With regard to library cataloguing departments it can be used as a 'refresher' tool for cataloguers who have not been cataloguing for a while, as well as a double-check on new employees. For new cataloguers it can be a useful reference tool, which they can check themselves to try to solve a problem before asking for help. The package is also extremely useful for libraries who suddenly find themselves having to do their own cataloguing.

Although *CatSkill* does use a variety of format examples it would be useful in future versions to have sections dealing more thoroughly with 'non-monograph' formats. This feature would aid monograph cataloguers learning to catalogue other formats.

I would strongly recommend this product to all different types of libraries as well as librarianship schools.

CatSkill: a multimedia course on AACR2 and MARC. Mary Mortimer, Karen Lochhead, Margaret Hyland, programmed by Learning Curve Pty Ltd, distributed by InfoTrain, PO Box 666, Mawson ACT 2607, phone (06) 281 5899. ■



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Major improvements include:

The books (4 volumes): major revisions in 350–354 Public Administration, 370 Education, and 560–590 Life Sciences; revised table for countries of the former Soviet Union; over 150 pages added to the Relative index; manual expanded by over 100 pages and indexed in the Relative index.

New compact disc: DDC 21 in a Microsoft Windows environment; LAN compatible to support multiple users; more ways to search and display Dewey; multiple records from anywhere in DDC displayed on a single screen; drag-and-drop information between windows; annotation feature to reflect local classification decisions; over 4000 new entries in the electronic index; compatible with PRISM via Passport for Windows.

For more information on DDC 21 contact DA Information Services on (03) 9210 7777, fax (03) 9210 7788 or e-mail service@dadirect.com.au.