

Newspaper indexing

BASIC SPECIFICATIONS FOR A FULL-TEXT ON-LINE AUTOMATED NEWSPAPER LIBRARY. Toledo, Ohio: Automation Committee, Newspaper Division, Special Libraries Association. 1980. US\$9.95. No ISBN.

DEVELOPMENT OF RESOURCE SHARING NETWORKS (Network Study no13) Australian Newspaper Index Feasibility Study. Canberra: National Library of Australia. 1980. 47pp. \$3.25. ISBN 0 642 99209 6

ALTHOUGH most readers of newspapers would regard the typical newspaper article as being of only transient value a growing body of information users consider it important to locate articles published anything from days to years previously. The two publications reviewed here present very different pictures of the state of newspaper indexing in North America and Australia.

Basic Specifications, a small pamphlet of 32 pages of which only four pages are devoted to the specifications, gives an up-to-date picture of developments in newspaper storage and retrieval largely from the point of view of newspaper proprietors. Although this publication suffers from a lack of editorial control and is rather expensive at US\$9.95, readers who are interested in computerised newspaper information will find much of interest.

The four pages covering the basic specifications give 38 desirable and a further five optional features considered necessary in an automated library system. As remote access to the system is one of the optional features it is obvious that needs of users outside the newspaper staff are low on the list of priorities.

The major part of the pamphlet considers the state of the art in newspaper libraries in North America. Most detail is provided on computerised storage and retrieval although non-automated methods are also mentioned. The section on electronic approaches is the most interesting as it outlines some of the most recent advances in information storage and retrieval: the Info-Key system of microfiche reader/printer linked to a mini-computer and introduced at the Louisville *Courier-Journal* in 1972; the electronic full text systems known as QL (*Toronto Globe and Mail*) and Infotex (*Boston Globe*). All these systems are operational. Although QL and Infotex do not require manual indexing a further system under development, the UNIDAS/1100 at the *St Louis Post-Dispatch*, uses manual indexing in addition to electronic full text storage.

In spite of a lack of cohesion *Basic Specifications* is a useful addition to the scant sources of information on newspaper indexes. A bibliography of items available from the American Newspaper Publishers Association (ANPA) Foundation Library is included.

The AACOBS feasibility study of an Australian newspaper index is a timely report presenting an excellent basis for progress in developing access to valuable information. The upsurge in interest in newspaper indexing both in Australia and overseas has largely

been a result of improved access to information generally, by use of computer technology.

Although databases devoted to newspaper information are available on the Lockheed DIALOG and SDC ORBIT systems the lack of any Australian equivalent should allow a rational development of an Australian newspaper database. Currently only the APAIS database on AUSINET offers on-line access to information from a variety of Australian newspapers and this database selects only 10 percent of its input from newspapers. In spite of a survey commissioned by the National Library in 1973 to estimate the demand for a newspaper index and a subsequent proposal in 1977 by Thomson Publications to develop a newspaper index based on microfiche copies of clippings, nothing has been done to implement a full scale index.

After presenting the historical background to the feasibility study current Australian practices in locating newspaper information are reviewed before the detail of what to include in a newspaper index is considered. A very practical discussion is given of the number of newspapers to be indexed, subjects to be excluded and the cost of providing a computerised Australian newspaper index. The cost of an index to nine newspapers with an input of 2154 items per week is given as \$393,000 per year of which the major cost (\$333,000) is staff time. These calculations, based on figures provided by WAIT, ANSOL and APAIS, make the assumption that manual indexing techniques would be applied and a subject authority used to control indexing terminology.

Recommendations of the report are further investigations along three paths:

- 1 An approach to Thompson Publications to establish their intentions of introducing the Info-Key system;
- 2 Co-operative indexing by a group of Australian libraries;
- 3 An approach to Bell and Howell, producers of both printed and computer indexes to major US newspapers.

Full text electronic storage, an unlikely alternative for an Australian multiple newspaper database, is not considered as a possibility. The recommendations like the body of the report are well balanced and should provide a strong framework for improved access to newspaper information in Australia. It is to be hoped that action will be taken on implementing these proposals.

An appendix includes details of the proposal by Thompson Publications (dated November 1977) to index 8000 items per week from 22 daily newspapers at a cost of \$608,220 per year.

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Know your user

REFERENCE SERVICE / Donald Davinson. London: Bingley 1980. 235pp. £7.50. ISBN 0 85157 291 X.

IN his introduction to *Reference services*, Donald Davinson points out that 'reference librarianship and service is, generally, not well taught in library schools. There has been an overwhelming emphasis upon a knowledge of sources; yet it is not much use knowing where to find answers if one does not know what the questions really are! At least as important as knowledge of sources is knowledge of people – how they think and act, what they do, and how to gain their confidence. The biggest single problem facing the user in making an enquiry in a reference library is the librarian. So often after the user begins a statement of need, the librarian stops listen-

ing with complete attention and begins to bend the needs of the user to fit his own conception of the bibliographic structures – the librarian begins to think of a solution before really knowing the question.'

Donald Davinson is Head of the Leeds Polytechnic School of Librarianship, and he has had sufficient experience of reference work to know that the 'reality is often too few staff chasing too much work and never quite catching up with it... a desperate plugging of the more obvious holes in the library dyke to hold back the flood-tide of enquiries...'

He would feel very much at home in South Australia, at least, in 1980.

His book, which draws heavily on many authorities, has chapters on definition of terms and reference library purpose, reference theory, costing and evaluation of reference service, librarian-user relationships, dealing with enquiries, the reference interview, the search for answers [which includes emotional and general psychological influences on a librarian's efficiency], evaluating the results of the search, the library network, new directions in reference service, instruction in library use, and teaching reference service.

Through it all is the insistence that librarianship is about people: lofty academics, flustered housewives, yearning but inarticulate children – and librarians, who have just as many human weaknesses as other people.

This is the true foundation of library work, but foundations are futile unless they can be used. Donald Davinson recognises the hard practicalities of building libraries and library services: he points out that 'increased national prosperity has not necessarily benefited United Kingdom public libraries – although economic depression has often seemed to be transmitted very quickly!'

In fact, 'increasing prosperity has, indeed, often caused increased questioning of the costs and benefits arising out of service activities of the public library type'. The librarian has to face and must learn to fight the 'corporate planners' and other self-styled experts. He cannot fight without training, discipline, strategic and tactical planning – and plenty of ammunition.

Even the British librarian (ie a person who does not live under the shadow of Canberra) must be aware of 'anti-intellectual urges in Western society'. He must know, too, that people who merely resist the new communications technology are likely to be crushed by the relentless need to make profits on the enormous capital invested in the industry.

If you believe in library service to people, this is a book to read, enjoy and cherish. It will help you to stand up to the ignorance of administrators, the stupidity of politicians, the arrogance of bureaucrats, and the menace of the technocrats. After all, they too are people.

Valmai Hankel

State Library of South Australia.

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attitudes, imaginations, capacities and abilities of the chief librarian and his/her subordinates. Team librarianship involves *really* working together to make a contribution to the lives of the people in your community.

Overall, except for Hendry's marvellous paper, *Team Librarianship* is a disappointing publication. It reflects the malaise that seems to permeate much of librarianship – we are uneasy about what we should be doing; we are uneasy about how we should be doing it.

Unless we take Hendry's admonitions to heart team librarianship will be just another gimmick like MBO, PPBS, and all those other miracle management cure-alls of days gone by.

Charles Emerton

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Working together

TEAM LIBRARIANSHIP / eds R.M. Major and P.M. Judd. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Association of Assistant Librarians Northern Division, and Library Association Northern Branch. 1979. 112pp. £1.50. ISBN 0 9506 6820 6.

THE introduction to this work informs the reader that team librarianship was originally conceived as a solution to the problem of giving professional service to scattered small service points while at the same time emphasising professional tasks rather than administrative routines.

The concept took root in public library services in London and Leicestershire and has since spread to a variety of other public library services in the UK. It often, though not necessarily, includes leaving the day-to-day running of service points to non-professionals and providing the required professional input by way of a group of peripatetic librarians.

What does team librarianship really involve though? After reading six of the seven papers collected together for this publication one would be none the wiser. These six contributors – one woman, five men; four chief or deputy public librarians, one academic, one deputy polytechnic librarian – all agree that team librarianship means basing library service on the needs of the community being served, but beyond that the views are diverse.

Some are concerned to revamp the traditional organisation structure – down with hierarchies, up with committees and meetings. Others are suspicious of this approach, pointing out the dangers inherent in leaving things to committees and meetings to resolve; instead they suggest a more imaginative utilisation of the traditional organisational arrangements (eg, increased delegation to subordinates) supplemented as necessary by the committee/meeting approach.

Some, too, argue that subject or functional specialism is anathema as far as team librarianship is concerned – generalism is the only course. Others see such specialism as the real key to the team approach.

Among this babble one contribution stands out, that by the yet unmentioned seventh contributor (really the second in order of papers). This is J.D. Hendry's 'Team librarianship: scoring goals' (the analogy is to football as it is played in Glasgow).

Hendry is Chief Librarian of Scotland's Renfrew District Libraries, and though he is an advocate of matrix as against hierarchical organisations, the gist of his argument is that what makes for real team librarianship are the

however. Most Australian libraries could benefit from the author's advice on gifts, and Australian academic and research libraries from his advice on maintaining a productive and uncomplicated exchange program.

It would be valuable also to librarians who have rejected the idea of exchange as being uneconomical or too complex, because it explains the importance of this method of acquisition while offering practical solutions to the problems involved.

Berry Symons

University of Sydney Library

Chosen for children

SELECTING MATERIALS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG ADULTS: A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BIBLIOGRAPHIES AND REVIEW SOURCES. Chicago: Association for Library Service to Children and Young Adult Services Division, American Library Association. 1980. 80pp. US\$6.50. ISBN 0 8389 3241 X.

This publication would be a useful selection for larger public systems, and for library schools teaching children's literature. It is a comprehensive annotated guide to US bibliographies and review sources related to children's books, films, filmstrips, records and video. Most of the material was published in the last five years, but some older material that is still of value is included.

The listings are divided into eight broad categories with subdivisions by reading level or subject. This subject arrangement can present some difficulties at first sight, but the publication is small enough to scan fairly quickly and an index of titles is given. Subject coverage is comprehensive – it includes general lists, reference books, award winners, folklore, storytelling, drugs, sex education. Three sections that reflect an increased interest since the earlier 1967 edition are ethnic materials, material for and about the disabled and non-sexist materials.

Although the publication is not large (75 pages), more than 250 entries are included. Full publication details are given for every entry, including price. The annotations are short and explanatory rather than analytical and evaluative but seem adequate. For instance, annotations usually indicate how many items are in the bibliography, whether it includes annotations and of what type, arrangements, indexing and any special features.

There is a welcome emphasis on media other than books and these sections should prove specially useful to many large libraries.

Monographic works that include extensive bibliographies as an adjunct to the text are also listed. Examples are Fader's *New hooked on books*, Huck's *Children's literature in the elementary school* and Baker's *Storytelling – art and technique*. Such listings can also act as reminders to those of us who have these books on our shelves, and may not have fully utilised the bibliographies they include.

Except for a very brief section 'Other languages other countries' (only nine entries, three of which concern Spanish materials) all the publications are American in origin. However, because most Australian children's librarians regard the US as a major source of material, *Selecting materials for children and young adults* is relevant to our purchasing.

A similar listing of British and Australian bibliographies would be useful to complete the picture.

Such publications are only useful as selection aids if their information is current, and it is hoped that the American Library Association will not leave another 13-year gap before producing the next edition.

Margaret Aitken

City of Moorabbin Library, Vic

Gifts and exchange

GIFTS AND EXCHANGE MANUAL / Alfred H. Lane. Westport, CO: Greenwood Press. 1980. 136pp. US\$15.00. ISBN 0 313 21389 5.

Gifts and Exchange Manual is a handbook of procedures written by the Head of Gifts and Exchanges at Columbia University Libraries. It is a 'how-to' book which also explains why these methods of acquisition are used.

The author discusses, *inter alia*, the organisation of a gift and exchange unit, exchange work in an academic library, gifts, processing, the disposal of unwanted materials, and the tax deductibility and appraisal of gifts.

In one of several appendices are set out gift policy statements formulated by the University of Utah Library and Columbia University Libraries, which could well serve as guidelines for similar statements in the selection policies of Australian academic libraries. In another are reproduced sample form cards and letters, mostly those used at Columbia.

Every gift and exchange librarian will react differently to these. As the author says in his preface: 'There is no one best way to operate a gift and exchange program. Circumstances will vary from library to library . . . What is presented here is a series of suggestions that work.'

The chapter on exchange work is aimed at academic and research libraries because they are the libraries which need to acquire the kind of material available only on exchange – non-commercial items and publications from countries which are obliged to use exchange because of political and economic restrictions on purchase. This is a good chapter, which answers the questions 'Why exchange?' and 'What is available on exchange?' as well as giving us the benefit of Mr Lane's experience in setting up exchange arrangements, maintaining records and minimising the burden of paper work. The economics of exchange and various co-operative exchange efforts are discussed.

The chapter on gifts is applicable to all types of libraries. Points covered are the acceptability of gifts, appraisal for tax purposes, records and policy statements, the solicitation of gifts and the value of friends' groups.

Gifts and Exchange Manual is written primarily for US libraries. For example, mention is made of publications which list free material but these are, with one exception, US publications. There is a detailed appendix on US tax deduction guidelines for gifts to organisations and another listing American appraisers. This sort of information would make the manual an invaluable working tool for American gift and exchange librarians.

The book as a whole has wider applicability,

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