

Letters

The poofster menace

Cr Hugh Sanderson (reported in *Incite* no 17, October 2) is right to be concerned about the possibility that Australian boys will become poofsters and sissies if local councils don't allocate funds in the right ways. Poofsterism and sissyism are the two greatest menaces to the Australian way of life today, and unless local government does something decisive this country will go the way of all degenerate cultures and end up in the dustbin of history along with ancient Rome, the Aztecs, etc.

However, Cr Sanderson is right off the track in calling for councils to cut back on libraries and community arts programs and have children play outdoor games instead. Outdoor games are the root of the problem. Far from protecting us against the perils of poofsterism, outdoor sport is taking us straight into the abyss. Outdoor games, if not stamped out, are going to turn this nation into a cesspool of sissyism faster than you can say 'gay liberation'. The last thing this country needs is to have young, impressionable Australians spending their leisure hours watching one another cavort round sports fields and swimming pools practically naked, or hanging around dressing sheds, with all that entails, or playing body contact sports (has Cr Sanderson seen a Rugby scrum?), or making heroes of people with poofster names like 'Lillee'. In England, generations of public school boys have been subjected to a regimen of outdoor sport, and the result is that poofsterism is known as 'the public school vice' and Eton has a school song exhorting boys to 'pull, pull together, / with our bodies between our knees'. As for the myth that Waterloo was won on the playing fields of Eton — what Wellington actually said about his old Etonian troops was: 'I don't know whether they frighten the enemy, but by God they frighten me.' And what frightened the Iron Duke ought to terrify the rest of us, including Cr Sanderson.

What this country needs is not more sport, but less; not the poofsterism of the playing field, but the sedation of the study. In a word, it needs libraries. If this nation is to survive the rising storm of sissyism that threatens to engulf it, and if the minds and bodies of our youth are to be protected against the corrupting effects of the pavilion and the pool, local councils must act now, putting up libraries instead of sports centres, building bookstacks on the ovals, and getting the youth of the country away from the poofster sportsmasters and the cult of the body, and into the local library under the supervision of the middle-aged spinsters. Time is running out; unless local councils acknowledge their responsibilities and use every means at their command, starting with their libraries, to counteract the baleful effects of organised sport, this country is doomed.

John Small
National Library of Australia

Agencies to avoid

I feel I should warn my fellow librarians about the dangers of relying on 'Subscription Agencies' and certain 'Indexes'.

I happen to now find myself anchor person of a profit sharing group which puts out what everyone acknowledges to be a top quality Australian magazine on the arts, *viz*, *Dance Australia*.

Trying to sustain quality on a tight budget, I received my first shock when one subscription agency told me, in no uncertain terms, that the larger the percentage I gave them, the more chance we had of 'getting into the libraries'.

I know some libraries only subscribe to magazines which are on an Indexing list. So I wrote to one of the popular magazine indexers for consideration and received the following reply: *We do not index magazines until librarians request it*. Now how can librarians request it unless they see it? And who has time to write to indexers? No librarian I know anyway.

I will back our magazine *Dance Australia* against any similar on an indexed list. I invite any of my colleagues to put us to the test. I will send free back copies to any LAA member who requests them so they can judge our contribution to education and the arts in Australia for themselves.

I simply ask my fellow librarians to exercise their own professional judgement and not have this judgement made for them by vested interests.

Daily Messenger
Keysborough, Vic

National Information Policy Seminar

OVER SEVENTY LIBRARIANS, public servants and business leaders from all states attended a seminar on National Information Policy held in Canberra on 7 and 8 December. Organised by the ACT Branch of the Association, the seminar was a conspicuous success.

Keynote address

Keynote speaker at the seminar was Bill Welsh, the Deputy Librarian of Congress (see *Incite* 16 October 1981). Bill spoke of the United States experience with the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS), and the 1979 White House Conference on Library and Information Services. A committee of that Conference was appointed to help implement its resolutions, and NCLIS appointed a Task Force to study the interaction of the public and the private sector, the 'information industry'. Its August 1981 report cautioned against the creation of an 'Information Czar'.

Cutbacks in government expenditure (a familiar story!) are now leading to user fees for federal services of all kinds. Welsh sees that 'within the United States, we will continue to have a pluralistic national information policy with participation at the local and State levels, at the national level, and with increased participation of the private sector in providing tailor-made information services . . . libraries will continue to be major conduits for information'.



Bill Welsh

A policy for Australia

Neville Hurst, First Assistant Secretary in the Policy Division of the Commonwealth Department of Science and Technology, looked at the problems of formulating a national information policy for Australia. Government responsibility for it is fragmented; an issue by issue approach, as adopted by the government in other areas, could be the best available.

He then went on to identify major industrial issues (technology, structural adjustment, national control, tariffs, management of infrastructure) and social issues (employment, privacy, access and copyright, cultural issues).

Frank Thompson, Manager of the University of Queensland Press, argued cogently against any 'big brother' approach which would impede the free flow of information. Picking up Bill Welsh's mention of the concern expressed about a US 'Information Czar', he was the first of several speakers to

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GENERAL COUNCILLORS FOR 1982

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JUDITH WILLMOTT, 1 Gemmell Street, Bull Creek WA 6153.

The above people have been elected to represent your Branch on General Council in 1982.