

BOOK REVIEWS

Library Services in Distance Education: proceedings of a National Workshop, Brisbane, June 1981 – edited by Christine Crocker. Sydney: Library Association of Australia, Special Interest Group on Distance Education. 1982. 72 pp. ISBN 0 909915 98 9.

Your reviewer approached the task of reviewing this particular slim volume with a smidgeon of anxiety, born of fruitless hours with an AACOBS Working Party attempting to define 'geographical isolation' and an assumption that library services in distance education was all about speedy delivery of books to students living in geographical isolation and taking correspondence courses for credit.

Of my anxiety and these misconceptions I was disabused in due course having read the papers by Raymond Fisher (Extramural Library, University of Birmingham), Neil Radford (University of Sydney) and Ron Store (Townsville College of Advanced Education) which constitute the bulk of the text of these proceedings of a national workshop.

The emphasis of the workshop, organized by the Special Interest Group of the LAA, was, according to convenor Christine Crocker, on the small group sessions which were concerned with 'drafting guidelines for adequacy in the provision of library resources and services in distance education programmes' (p.1). Nonetheless, the formal papers mentioned above presented provide useful background to the neophyte in the area and discussion of some of the issues and problems of this particular type of librarianship. They supplement well, Elaine Haworth's recent state-of-the-art report on library services to off-campus students (1).

What did I learn from these proceedings? Firstly, as intimated above, I learned that

many off-campus students, far from being geographically isolated, live in cities and are, by definition, close to libraries. The problem is that those libraries are not the libraries of the institution providing the courses in which the students are enrolled, and there are problems of unsuitable opening hours and lack of borrowing privileges.

Secondly, I learned that Australian libraries use a variety of methods to reach off-campus students with books, audiovisual services, information support and so on. Thirdly, that provision for off-campus students in Australia is difficult to streamline given the variety of institutions and therefore educational philosophies involved. On reflection, I decided that this latter fact might not be bad in the long-run from an educational point view, since the approach of the Open University in the United Kingdom which is streamlined and delivers pre-digested packages of information constituting all required reading for courses, denies some of the basic principles of tertiary education such as self-selection of materials and individualized reading. Streamlining might be appealing and alleviate frustrations of students in the short-term but it has within it the dangers of the narrow focus inherent in the Closed Reserve systems operated in most tertiary institutions.

Neil Radford argued that external studies may be as 'good' as on-campus studies and made the point that external students should have a level of library support at least equivalent to that of on-campus students. One wonders therefore about the wisdom of setting up a different set of guidelines for services to distance education students. Could this imply that lower standards are acceptable for them? Some tension in this respect comes through in some group papers, e.g. participants in one workshop stated that separate standards should not apply (p.63). This may be attributable to the fact that the focus and form of the proposed Australian guidelines appeared not to be clear in the context of workshop. The words 'standards' and 'guidelines' were used as if synonymous, yet while Raymond Fisher talked of quantitative standards, the ethos of the workshop as a whole seemed more concerned with general statements of principles to guide development of services to external students from individual institutions. Perhaps it might be most useful if the Australian guidelines were developed with emphasis on identifying *strategies* for achieving, for the external student, the level of service proposed as adequate for the on-campus student? Doubtless these are issues which will be addressed by the working party which has received LAA funding to develop the guideline drafting begun at the workshop.

This work is recommended for any library involved in provision of for off-campus students . . . and if all of those libraries buy the book, it will be a best-seller I expect.

(1) Haworth, D. Elaine. Library services to the off-campus and independent learner: a review of the literature. *Journal of Librarianship* Vol. 17, 3 July 1982, pp. 157-175.

Mairéad Browne
Kuring-gai College of
Advanced Education

Executive Director on Leave

The Executive Director, Susan Acutt will be on recreation leave from 4th February until 8th March. All enquiries should be directed to the Assistant Executive Director, Sue Phillips, (02) 692 9233.

Guide to Northern Territory Research Resources in Northern Territory Collections. Margaret A. Clinch. Darwin: Northern Australia Research Unit of the ANU 1981. 374 pp.

A Bibliography of the Northern Territory: Monographs Part 3. The Social Sciences (Excluding Material Relating to the Aborigines). Carol M. Mills. Bruce ACT: Canberra College of Advanced Education, 1981 (Library Bibliography Series No.6) 174 pp. \$10.00. ISBN 0 85889 191 3.

The preparation of the *Guide to Northern Territory Research Resources in Northern Territory Collections* had two aims: to stimulate research into all aspects of the Northern Territory and, by providing an overview of resources available, to encourage more systematic collection building. Margaret Clinch, on nine months secondment from the Darwin Community College starting late 1980, headed up a project funded by the Northern Territory Government and managed by the North Australia Research Unit of the Australian National University.

An overview of resources available in Northern Territory libraries is provided in several sections:

(i) a directory of sixty libraries in the Northern Territory. These are listed in alphabetical order. Good guidance on collection strengths is supplied under additional information.

(ii) a funding list of about 8,200 entries for books, pamphlets, periodical articles and audiovisual items contained in thirty-seven of these libraries. Access is provided only by author or title.

(iii) a union list of Northern Territory newspapers held in the Northern Territory and another list of those held elsewhere in Australia.

Other useful items are included in the appendices, such as a brief chronology of the Northern Territory. This is compiled from two sources, as a definitive listing is not yet available. Maps, such as those showing location of Aboriginal language groups, also provide assistance for beginning researchers.

The obvious problem with the *Guide* is the lack of subject access. In the directory of the sixty libraries information on subject content of the collections is given in item 13 for each entry. There is no subject index to the collections. There is no subject index provided to the 8,200 items in the finding list. Other sources will have to be used for subject access to individual items, then these looked up in the finding list for locations. In both the foreword and introduction to the *Guide* the lack of subject indexing is noted, and attributed to limitation of time and money.

The book has been produced from accurately typed masters. Entries are well positioned on the page. There is good guidance for the user. One unnecessary inclusion is the item number, a letter and number identification at the beginning of each entry in the finding list. Perhaps this was going to be used for item identification in a subject index to the finding list.

One could quibble over the list of abbreviations used for libraries in the *Guide*. They do not follow the standard conventions for compiling abbreviations for libraries used in Australian union catalogues. It may be confusing for the researcher or interlibrary loan librarian using the *Guide* alongside other union catalogues.

There is no note on the standards used for inclusion of items in the finding list, nor how it was compiled. Presumably the note by F.H. Bauer in the foreword, 'Emphasis has been placed primarily on the more important collections and individual items', refers to the 8,200 items from thirty-seven libraries in-

Diversity & Diversion

An Annotated Bibliography of Australian Ethnic Minority Literature. Edited by Peter Lumb and Anne Hazell.

'The first comprehensive bibliography of its kind, *Diversity & Diversion* is a masterly production for teachers and librarians. Entries are arranged by author's country of birth but the clear and well researched introduction, the author and thematic indexes, and the critically unobtrusive annotations make this book a valuable reference tool in every school and library.'

Radha Rasmussen,
Senior Lecturer,

Graduate School of Librarianship, Monash University

'*Diversity & Diversion* is the best bibliography of, and guide to, Australian ethnic minority literature available now . . . The writing throughout the bibliography is unobtrusively scholarly.'

Judah Waten

'A fascinating and invaluable book.'

Phillip Adams

Cost: \$10.00 (posted free throughout Australia).

Available from HODJA EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES COOPERATIVE LTD.

135 Church Street, Richmond, Victoria 3121. (03) 429 6111

10% discount for Hodja subscribers. 10% discount for school sets (10 or more).

cluded in the finding list.

The *Guide* will certainly accomplish its first aim: to stimulate research into all aspects of the Northern Territory. Margaret Clinch deserves our thanks, and will doubtless earn those of many researchers.

The second item, Carol Mills' *A Bibliography of the Northern Territory: Monographs. Part 3 The Social Sciences (Excluding Material Relating to the Aborigines)* continues the bibliography of monographs which commenced publication in 1977. The definition of monographs used by Mills and noted in the introduction to Part 1 needs to be recalled. The bibliography was originally designed to be completed in 3 volumes; with Part 1 covering sciences, primary industry and recreation, Part 2 covering general, travels, history, humanities and religion, and Part 3 all the social sciences.

It has now been found necessary to split the remaining material into two sections, Part 3 the social sciences, excluding material relating to the Aborigines, and Part 4 concentrating on the Aborigines. Part 4 is promised to appear soon.

This division is a reflection of the amount

of material appearing in the social sciences area since 1975 when planning for the bibliography began. There is no overall cut-off date for the bibliography as a whole, material published up to preparation time for each part is included. No cut-off date is given for this part, however, material published up to 1980 is included.

Arrangement of the entries in the bibliography follows that of earlier volumes: that is arrangement by broad subject grouping, then alphabetical listing. There are nine subject groupings in this part. Some contain many entries, the government section covers forty-one pages and education thirty-three pages. There is an index by author and title and some subject entries referring to the appropriate broad subject section. The numbering system used for individual entries in Part 3 carries on from Part 2.

At appropriate places in the subject sections there are cross-references to relevant material in other subject sections or other parts of the bibliography. This cross-referencing is going to present a major problem in Part 4 relating to the Aborigines, as so much material included in this part and in

Part 2 is relevant to the Aborigines.

Can one hope for continued bibliographic endeavour from Carol Mills, when Part 4 has appeared, to prepare a revision of Part 1, sciences, primary industry and recreation, including new material published since 1977, and incorporating the item numbering system used in later parts of the Bibliography? A consolidated index to the complete set would be another major contribution.

Mills' bibliography serves as one means of gaining subject access to Clinch's *Guide to Northern Territory Research Resources*. If one had found under the section including immigration in Mills an entry for H.I. London, *Non-white Immigration and the White Australia Policy*, one could look up the finding list in Clinch and get a location.

The publications by Clinch and Mills make a major contribution to our Australian reference resources. Our deep North is developing a tropical bibliographic luxuriance.

Maxine K. Rochester

Centre for Library and Information Studies
Canberra College of Advanced Education

Reading Instruction for the Adult Illiterate/Edward V. Jones. Chicago: American Library Association, 1981. 169pp. US\$12.50 ISBN 0 8389 0317 7. Copy supplied by the James Bennett Group.

Many people have contributed to this book and over 100 titles are listed in the Bibliography; it is intended primarily for anyone interested in adult remedial reading. There is a great scarcity of literature in this area and this book makes a most welcome addition. Throughout the book the emphasis is on reducing the complexity and technicalities of the learning-to-read process, thereby making the reading for the untrained person a more valuable experience than in similar books.

The book is divided into 2 parts: the first part gives a profile of the Adult Illiterate, his or her environment and the extent of illiteracy. The second part deals in depth with a program of reading instruction which has been devised by the authors after much thorough and perceptive research. To anyone familiar with the reading process, this approach can be seen as quite a profound contradiction to the generally practised method of teaching reading in the United States and Australia. However to the uninitiated there is much sound sense and their argument is convincing. There is frequent mention of avoidance of teaching the 'sub-skills' or technicalities but currently both in Australia and the United States the sub-skills are seen by many teachers as the prime tour-de-force in the reading process so we are likely to have immediately a clash of views. This book is written with such sensitive reasoning that readers should be forced to question the validity of their own approach on the teaching of reading.

The authors are not in favour of any kind of testing of adult illiterate students but for those interested a few pages of tests in tabulated form are included; unfortunately they are not continued on the facing page which makes it difficult for comparison reading. Few of the tests are used in Australia; most are designed for the school student.

To date no comparable study has been made of Adult Literacy in Australia, apart from a scant survey of the incidence of illiteracy in a capital city but no follow-up of causation and reparation. This book should be included in the reading list of all tertiary institutions which have an educational component and compulsory reading for all those working in the field of Adult Illiteracy.

Kitty Knight

Randwick Technical College

BLANDFORD PRESS

Dear Librarian,

Blandford Press U.K. and A.N.Z. Book Co. are pleased to announce that with effect from the 1st January, 1983 all books published by Blandford Press will be subject to a completely new and ongoing pricing structure in Australia & New Zealand.

BLANDFORD BOOKS WILL SIGNIFICANTLY DECREASE IN PRICE FROM THAT DATE

With the exception of the Blandford Colour Series, Blandford titles will be priced in Australia at a conversion of A\$2 to UK£1. The Colour Series will be fixed at A\$6.95 paperback and A\$12.95 hardback.

As a result of the above decision, all Blandford Press titles in Australia will decrease in price between 25% and 50%.

Comprehensive stocks of all backlist and new books will be carried by the A.N.Z. Book Co. from January onwards.

For further information contact your library supplier or David Inwood, Trade Sales Manager A.N.Z. Book Co., (02) 452-4411.

NEW: Shopping List

General Interest ✓

Family and Childcare ✓

Health ✓

Pop Music ✓

Arts and Crafts ✓

Photography ✓

Cookery ✓

Woodworking ✓

Antique Collecting ✓

Gardening ✓

Nature ✓

Birds ✓

Aviation ✓

Military ✓

Sport ✓


Transport ✓

Railways ✓

Childrens Books ✓

Humour ✓

Religious Education ✓



AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND BOOK CO PTY LTD

10 AQUATIC DRIVE • FRENCHS FOREST • NSW 2086 (CORRESPONDENCE: PO BOX 459 • BROOKVALE • NSW 2100)
PHONE: (02) 452-4411 • CABLES: ANZBOOK SYDNEY • TELEX: AA70727