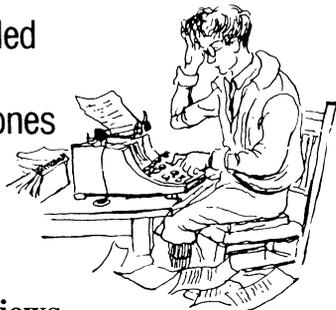


THE SOURCE

edited
and compiled
by
David J. Jones



Budget reviews

Looking and reading a bit like a cross between the *Australian book review* and the *Australian bookseller and publisher*, a newish bi-monthly published in Western Australia notes, sometimes extensively, new books available in Australia and forthcoming attractions.

Entitled *Australasian books in review*, it is aimed at librarians, booksellers and the book-buying public. Reviews in the issues I have seen have been unsigned, even the lengthy ones, and tend to the descriptive rather than the evaluative.

Brief articles make easy, if light, reading. There is a selection of newly released British titles listed, with more extensive coverage of Australian materials. It's well worth getting a sample copy to see how it fits in with your reading/selecting habits.

Australasian books in review is published bi-monthly (I think) and is available from PO Box 176, Kalamunda, WA 6076. It costs \$16.80 for twelve issues, including postage (ISSN 0729-7297).

Verb. sap.

Any book with chapter headings such as 'Angry Anxiety, Hangnails and Quinsy', or (topically as I write) 'Peerless Umpires, Impetuous Partisans' invites reading, just to find out what the chapter headings mean.

To be honest, the look of the pages of *Word for word*, spiked with asterisks, bristling with brackets, infested with italics and with continuous line numbering at five-line intervals throughout the text, does need something of an aperitif to send the reader lurching through the text.

For this work is a long ramble through the labyrinths of English usage and etymology, complete with an index if you lose the thread. Edward C. Pinkerton tells us in his foreword that this work is 'the result of several years of sleuthing through linguistic materials' - he does not indicate whether the Agency, which produced masters in other literary genres, has any connection with his powers of deduction.

Pinkerton starts with the premise that words derived from the same root are often not recognised as being related at all. He was 'struck by the fact that cognate words are often of such disparate form and meaning that no one looking at them in alphabetical order would imagine that they were descended from the same root'. Here he gives us a very large sampling to illustrate his point and ends up with a work which is worth dipping into for its fairly straightforward description of the origins of and links between many English words.

Serialized in digestible chunks - the work actually grew out of a series of articles which Pinkerton wrote for the Baltimore *Evening Sun* - or strictly rationed, *Word for word* is tolerable. Those seeking a scholarly treatment will need to look elsewhere.

Edward C. Pinkerton's *Word for word: a dictionary of etymological cognates* was published last year by Verbatim Books and is distributed by Gale Research. It costs US\$40 (ISBN 0 930454 06 5).

Ready reference

Trying to teach reference services to students of librarianship in Australia has in the past been hampered by the paucity of guides to Australian reference works, a situation now happily being rectified in no small measure by one of my favourite reference librarians.

Ready reference services in the Australian environment have been particularly badly neglected, and a textbook on them is a welcome sight. *Sources of brief factual information*, by Janine Schmidt and Barbara Poston Anderson, was published last year by Kuring-gai College of Advanced Education, and is intended to introduce materials on this topic to library school students. It will also be helpful for beginning librarians, to librarians moving into the reference field and to long-serving reference staff whose mem-

ories need refreshing.

Emphasis in this 116-page book is given to Australian materials, although the most commonly used overseas items are described also. Guidance is given on how to evaluate reference sources, how particular kinds of work are arranged, how to use the materials to answer questions of various types (and ready reference questions are nothing if not varied).

The work covers dictionaries, encyclopaedias, handbooks, manuals, yearbooks and directories, each section rounded off by selection criteria, study questions and a brief list of the inevitable further reading. It's attractively laid out and liberally illustrated with samples of pages from the works discussed and photographs of many of them too.

Reading through this, and following up the examples and trying to answer some of the questions from the reference works described is an excellent way of brushing up one's reference readiness. As an adjunct to a formal course, Schmidt and Anderson will certainly prove its worth. Consideration might be given to an index in future editions, to increase the work's reference value. And there is one unforgivable omission in the section on abbreviations dictionaries.

Even so, it must find its way onto the shelves of reference libraries, and into the hands of reference librarians, everywhere in Australia where reference work is done.

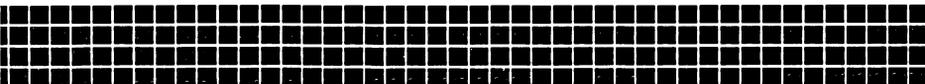
Sources of brief factual information by Janine Schmidt and Barbara Poston Anderson was published last year by the Centre for Information Resources Studies, Kuring-gai College of Advanced Education, PO Box 222, Lindfield, NSW 2070. It costs \$10 (ISBN 0 909177 25 2).

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