

Library service to children: an international survey/ed Colin Ray. New ed. Munich: Saur. 1983. IFLA Publications 12. 168pp. 48DM. ISBN 3 598 20392 6. Supplied by James Bennett Group.

Since 1978, when the last edition of this text appeared, library scene changes have led to fourteen out of fifteen contributing countries making substantial alterations to their articles. This edition includes an additional six countries. Probably, for antipodean librarians, the key omission is that of New Zealand.

The editor gave contributors a framework to follow. But, since no index has been provided, subheadings to signpost material would have been kinder to the reader. Anyone interested in making a study of, let's say, extension activities, will have to burrow into each chapter to find the relevant passages. Since the articles are short (USA's 10 pages, inclusive of bibliography, is the longest) the onus this places on the readers is manageable.

The comprehensive Australian article by Hazel Hume is written with an eye to overseas readership; her pen-pictures economically evoke Australia, and contrast with the sobriety characteristic of the other entries. That is not to say that every Australian librarian will agree with everything Ms Hume says. Some will wonder about her description of Aboriginal languages as 'verbal' (p. 10); and perhaps some will be misled by her references to certain automated libraries (p. 11) into thinking that there were no others.

Common concerns emerge. Foreign workers, for instance, are seen as users with special needs in Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and the German Federal Republic.

Some of the entries challenge the predictability of the concerns of children's librarians, wherever they are. Juliana V. Sackey (Ghana) for instance, discusses the problem of overvalues, exacerbated by the shortage of books. Lioba Betten (German Federal Republic) writes of children who use the library as a place to hang out, particularly in wet weather; he describes difficulties in relating to latchkey children of foreign workers.

This volume throws into perspective local headaches about staffing, finance and imported books. It is intended to convey information, but also to spark off ideas around the globe. Despite some proofing errors and some eccentric English, the book is readable and likely to catalyse action.

I am grateful to Marion Brown and Duncan Marshall of Wagga City Library, who both examined this volume. Their comments have been incorporated in this review.

Maureen Crago
Wagga Wagga

Creative encounters: activities to expand children's responses to literature. Anne T. Polkingharn and Catherine Toohey. ill. Lynn Welker. Littleton, Colorado: Libraries Unlimited. 1983. 138pp. US\$15. ISBN 0 87287 3714.

The exercises in this large format book with its retentive title have been devised by a US librarian and teacher 'to allow children to

express their creativity in a way inspired by a particular book'.

They have been selected from over 200 ideas developed in eight years of workshops and eagerly acquired by 'educators from all over the United States'. An examination of the contents reveals that this does not say much for the imagination and creative potential of these educators.

The treatment for each selected title comprises a basic storyline, a statement of purpose, a list of materials, some line drawings and suggested programme beginning with the instruction to read the book under discussion, followed by some sketchy notes stating the obvious. For example, 'Younger children may need to have an adult write their color words.' and 'The individual children's work may be combined and made into a class book'.

From visits over the last twelve years to schools Australia-wide where books and literature are cherished, and some, alas, where they are not, I can testify that librarians and teachers in every state can and do stimulate activities more original and spontaneous than these.

However, lest any Australian teacher/librarian temporarily bereft of inspiration be tempted by the title, it should be noted that the 50-odd stories included for specific activities are all US publications and a mere dozen are stories which might be found in Australian libraries. Lists of 'related books' show a similar proportion of titles unknown or unavailable here.

My recommendation to teacher/librarians is to spend the price of this pedestrian and stereotyped activities book on a couple of 'real books' of integrity and imagination. The joy and fun in sharing such books through reading aloud will feed the innate creative spark in children which all educators worthy of the name seek to nurture.

Christobel Mattingley

Reaching young people through media/ed. Nancy Bach Pillon. Littleton, Colorado: Libraries Unlimited, 1983. 279 pp US\$23.50 ISBN 0 87287 369 2. Supplied by James Bennett Group.

The term media is interpreted very broadly to include print and non print material in this 'collection of original articles designed as a textbook for college courses in adolescent literature'. The volume is divided into two sections, the first on selection and the second on

programming and promotion, each of which begins with a historical review and overview of current trends before moving into specific aspects of the topic. The needs of librarians working with young adults in both school and public libraries are considered.

The articles on selection tend towards the simplistic, comparing unfavourably with the comprehensive, analytical approach of Donelson and Nilsen's *Literature for today's young adults* which is already widely used in Australian courses on adolescent literature and reading. An exception is the article on sex education books by Patricia Campbell who is well known for her contributions to *Wilson library bulletin*. In nine pages she reviews literature in this field from the late 19th century until the 1980s, relates it to the society in which it was written and evaluates a select number of outstanding contemporary titles.

The programming articles, while frequently more descriptive than evaluative, bring together information not usually found in one place. Since extension programmes are often the area first hit by budget cuts, it is essential that those which survive earn their keep, as is made clear in the general introduction to this section and the articles on computers and films. 'The librarian as advocate for youth' sympathetically explores the philosophy of young adult librarianship familiar to the readers of the thought-provoking and often controversial journal, *VOYA*, (Voice of youth advocates).

As befits a textbook, each article is accompanied by extensive, up-to-date bibliographies of further reading and lists of adolescent books, magazines, films, etc, many of which are readily available in Australia.

For the experienced practitioner there is little here which is new or stimulating beyond the few articles mentioned above. However, with few full-time positions existing in Australia for young adult librarians and the limited coverage given to young adult librarianship in most library schools, it seems likely that many librarians working with young people in public libraries will have limited knowledge upon which to base their work. For such people this book offers a useful overview of current thinking in this specialised field.

In its stated aim as an introduction to young adult librarianship for library school students the collection succeeds satisfactorily.

Anne M. Hazell

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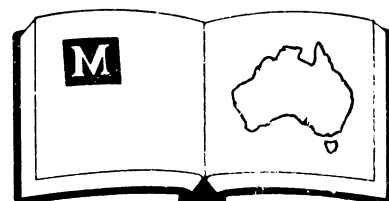
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