

THE SOURCE

Not quite what it seems, apparently

How artists communicate — apart from riding their bicycles across their canvases — is at the hub of Sydney Starr Keaveney's *Contemporary art documentation and fine arts libraries* which was published in 1986 by Scarecrow Press. An adaptation of Keaveney's Rutgers PhD, the present work delves into communication patterns in art, identifying a number of 'gatekeepers', librarians among them, and providing some interesting models of the information network.

The author examines in detail the coverage of a sample of contemporary figures by a number of libraries, and makes some interesting conclusions. Among these is evidence of the reality of the 'Matthew Effect' — when an artist is well known, 'not only is more material produced about that artist, but proportionally

even more is collected by libraries'. The incidence of this effect has clear implications for those developing collection policies. Other comments, which I haven't the space to elaborate here, on Zipf-Trueswell and Bradford Distribution are equally interesting.

Occasionally the author's tentative approach in expressing himself made me grit my teeth. Get this, for two bob each way: 'It seems clear that this network is quite real and operates in a relatively clear pattern'. And the word 'appear' does so far too often. But these stylistic jarrings are peripheral. It is an interesting piece of work withal, and well worth your US\$17.50 if you are at all into art documentation.

Sydney Starr Keaveney's *Contemporary art documentation and fine arts libraries* was published in 1986 by Scarecrow. My review copy was supplied by Bennetts Library Services. (ISBN 0 8108 1859 0)

Safe for children

The Australian Council for Children's Films and Television has very enterprisingly put together a guide to videos which are recommended watching for children. One hundred and one videos are listed, with an outline of the story, running time, recommended age level and a brief critical assessment. There is a wealth of material represented here, from film versions of the classics to some very good local drama. Some animated films are included, selected for their 'special appeal and interesting creative style' rather than their bloodthirstiness, I guess.

101 selected videos for children: a guide for parents and teachers was published by the Australian Council for Children's Films and Television, 17 St Andrew's Place, East Melbourne, Vic 3002, and costs \$3.50. (ISBN 0 9592805 1 5)

• How Jane and Johnnie actually watch that powerful medium is the subject of a bibliography of research compiled by Werner Müller and Manfred Meyer.

Entitled *Children and families watching television*, this 159-page, 454-item bibliography is annotated with numerous descriptors, which are fully indexed. It contains mainly references to empirical studies covering children from about 2–12 years published between 1975 and 1985. Most of the materials listed are in the English language.

Children and families watching television was published in 1985 by Saur and costs DM28,-. My copy was supplied by Bennetts Library Services. (3 598 20206 7)

Meanwhile in Detroit

In North Ryde, NSW, Ralph Read has put together his *Directory of Australian directories*, for which reference librarians will be truly thankful. Meanwhile in Detroit, Michigan, Gale Research has produced a companion volume to its well-established *Directory of directories*. The new work is arranged by publisher, both alphabetically and geographically. Like its parent volume, the best coverage is of North American sources, but there is a sprinkling of entries from further afield, including our very own *Directory of special libraries*. Entries include names and addresses of publishers and the titles of the directories which they publish. Numbers refer you to the fuller entries in *Directory of directories* if need be. At US\$150.00 this facility doesn't come cheap. Australian libraries holding the main work and Gale's *Publishers directory* can probably struggle along without it, worthy though it is.

The directory of directories: publishers volume 1987 was published earlier this year by Gale Research. (ISSN 0890-5525; ISBN 0 8103 0444 9)

Verb. sap.

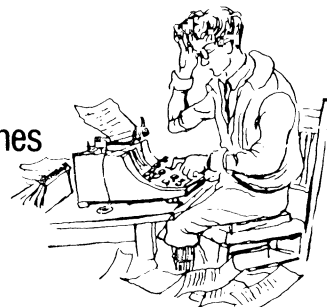
Essential: *Walford's guide to reference material*, fourth edition, volume 3 (Generalia, Language and Literature, The Arts). London: Library Association, 1987. £45.00 (£36.00 to LA members). (ISBN 0 85365 836 6)

In brief

Recent Canadian writers come under close examination in a recent volume of Gale's *Dictionary of literary biography*. Volume 53 in this well-established series deals with Canadian writers who have flourished since 1960, a period of flowering in Canadian literature. Sixty-seven writers 'who use English or French as their main language of artistic expression' are given the familiar *DLB* treatment: bibliography, critical assessment, portraits, cover illustrations and extracts from manuscripts. Included are such world renowned writers as Margaret Atwood and Mordechai Richler.

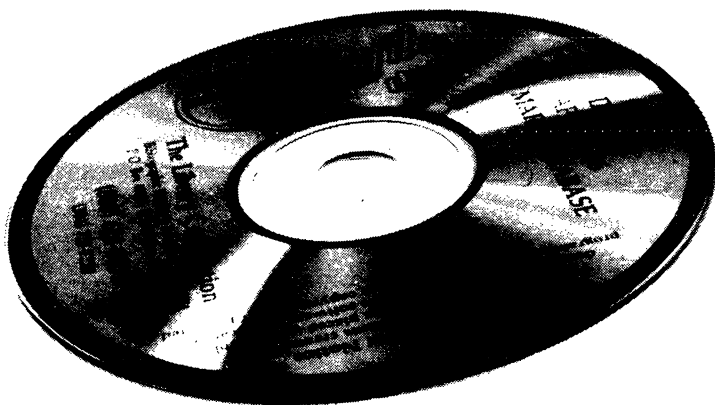
Canadian writers since 1960: first series, edited by W. H. New, was published in 1986 by Gale and costs US\$88.00. (ISBN 0 8103 1731 1)

by
David J. Jones



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