

ALL VERY WELL WORKIN'
FOR TH' REVEL... SH'N...

... HOWEVER, APART FROM
ALIENATING YOU, THE READERS



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PER COPY

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DIS STUFF IS
SEXIST!

At last no.6 is out, several months late (you can tell its late when all those reminder postcards start rolling in from the library subscriptions) due to my concentration on Smoothie Publications this summer.

The schedule for future issues is:

- no.7: Libraries and politics. edited and produced by Keith Armstrong, 10 Greenhaugh Rd, South Wellfield, Whitley Bay, Northumberland. Contributions to Keith, fast!
- no.8: Conference issue. To be produced at the conference, ie in two days, so this really will be a group issue. Contributions to me please so I can type some of the stencils before the conference starts...
- no.9: Feminist Group issue. Contributions to Anne Colwell, 35 Hardy Rd, London SW19 1JA.

Offers for future issues invited!

Anne and Richard suggest that for future issues each group should produce a page or so report on what it's been up to so everyone knows. Also that people should send details of any interesting projects they're undertaking or want to start, so that it avoids duplication and aids collective research. There seems to be considerable interest in libraries and trade unions and Anne and Richard suggest that a pamphlet could be useful, but it needs coordinating by someone else as they're very busy!

I'm getting a lot of letters asking for names and addresses of LfSC readers in particular areas, so I'm doing a list of everyone who bought an issue or taken out a subscription in the past. If you organise anything, let me know so we can record the happy event(s) in a future issue. Also if anyone wants to sell some of the current issue drop me a line.

The cover of this issue is by Borin Van Loon, ex-Birmingham school and general artist, who also did the article on comparative librarianship. There are a number of subscriptions due this issue. Please pay up promptly so I can buy some bulk paper supplies (thus hopefully keeping the cost of future issues down to a reasonable level).

New address for your LfSC coordinator (or whatever it is I'M supposed to be these days:

Flat 2, 83 Montpelier Rd, Brighton, Sussex

Our attempt to subvert the Library Association by getting several LfSC members elected to Council isn't getting very far. The main problem is that candidates need to be chartered (that's one rule that needs changing for a start). Now by chance I'm chartered, but we need another 3 or 4 people. Volunteers please!

Regarding back issues, I've reprinted no.1 due to popular demand. Other issues are down to about dozen copies or less of each issue. If you want to complete your sets, order now! If anyone would be interested in indexing the first six LfSCs let me know as that's another thing I haven't really got time for...

John Noyce, B.F. (hons), A.B.A.

HÖGANÄS PUBLIC LIBRARY, SWEDEN: report of a visit by Keith Armstrong, August 1973.

Höganäs is a small town situated on the west coast of the southern part of Sweden. The 1973 census figures for the great town district and for the town itself were 19,711 and 7,000 respectively. In the 16th century Höganäs was a small fishing village consisting of only 3 boats and a few houses. In 1797 coal-mining started on a small scale and by 1850 had proved quite successful. In 1904 the joint-stock company became 'Höganäs-Billeholms Aktiebolag' and by 1972 sales had increased dramatically. The 'Höganäs Company' now deals with many different articles, the most important of which are iron-powder and pipes. The town is also well-known for its different ceramic industries. The harbour, built in 1889, handles goods for all parts of the world.

A few words on the general structure of library services in Sweden are necessary before I go on to describe the particulars of the system in Höganäs itself. In all there are 275 municipalities in Sweden, each of them having one library for which it must pay all costs (there is no 'state' money involved). The service is free and offers not only a complete media-loans service but also a great many cultural activities (Höganäs more than most others). Librarians are employed full-time and have a university education - the remaining staff are classed as office employees. There are 3 central book-depots in Sweden from which every library can borrow books, fiction and non-fiction: a) Malmö for south Sweden, b) Stockholm for mid-Sweden and c) Umeå for north Sweden. There are cooperative schemes between all libraries, research and public. In the light of the present campaign by the Writers' Action Group in this country it is interesting to note that authors receive 15Sw. öre for each book borrowed (8 öre of which they retain for themselves and the rest which they donate to the Authors' Fund). For each book placed in a reference library the author receives 40 Sw. öre.

The Central Library in Höganäs is a pleasant, homely building set in a prominent position in the town with a small square, affording the opportunity of outdoor events in fine weather. The most striking part of the Library's services to me was the emphasis on activities - in 1972 the following extra-mural events were held: 2 theatre shows, 3 author gatherings, 3 concerts, 35 art exhibitions, and 12 book exhibitions. There are separate areas for these events with a children's play-room and story-telling grotto, together with a sizeable meetings-hall. As well as the Central Library there are 3 branch libraries and 5 small libraries. The latter have no books of their own but borrow from stock placed at the main library. Books are ordered from the 'Bibliotekstjänstens sambindning' (library service for collective binding) in Lund who send all libraries booklists twice a month.

The classification system in use when I made my visit was the alphabetical Swedish Library Association system. The system for loaning books was then the Detroit system. However, in Jan. 1974 Höganäs became the first public library in the whole of Scandinavia to adopt the ADB system for lending, reservation and cataloguing. This has enabled the service to abandon all

present statistical compilations and to abolish the card catalogue. Under the AIB-Datasystem a book catalogue will be produced twice yearly. One of the branch libraries in Viken employs a TV which the Librarian to observe the two stories of the building at a glance - it can, in addition to maintaining vigilance over book-stocks, be used as a media-resource with TV cassettes. This is another example of the unique blend of technical innovation and staff enterprisewhich pervades the Högana's set-up. It is very much a community-resource centre and not a mere repository of books. British librarians would do well to study not just the systems involved but the ways in which librarians themselves can participate in the community and the ways in which the community can participate in the library service! There is, I am sure, a lesson to be learnt.

SWEDISH LIBRARY ASSOCIATION CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The system is alphabetical A-Z then Å, Ä, Ö. The following is a sample of the main subject categories:

- A - Books and libraries
- C - Religion
- D - Philosophy and psychology
- E - Education
- F - Language
- G - Literature
- I - Art, music, theatre and film
- J - Archeology
- K - History
- L - Biography
- N - Geography
- P - Technology
- R - Sport
- T - Mathematics
- U - Natural science
- V - Medicine
- Å - Maps
- Ä - Periodicals
- Ö - Miscellaneous

WOMEN'S INDEX

Anne Colwell and Richard Alexander, using the large amount of material they have accumulated over the past few years are compiling an index to British feminist periodicals 1967-74 plus British produced books and pamphlets. They'd like to hear from anyone else doing similar work re subject headings, etc. They'd especially like help on tracking down early (pre 1971) issues of periodicals, special feminist issues of alternative/left papers, and lesbian feminist papers and pamphlets.

ALTERNATIVE PRESS INDEXES

John Moyce, using his accumulated wealth of material, is trying to produce a series of indexes to alternative/radical papers. So far: INSIDE STORY (John Vincent) and PEACE NEWS (June Neilson) have been tackled and are being published by John under his Smoothie imprint. Help needed for the rest. It would make a fine Flathesis if anyone interested in that sort of professional advancement!

LfSC Meets at Last!

Fran Steinberg

That nebulous community of library workers, users, students, and dropouts known as Librarians for Social Change met at last on Sunday July 21st at Release in London. Originally planned as a weekend conference it was decided to limit it to a one day preliminary session, to discuss what, if anything, merited talk and action on an in-depth, national basis. The consensus of the 13 people present, after 5 hours of free-flowing discussion, was that there was plenty to talk and act about, and that a weekend conference should be held this coming spring, tentatively in February, at the North London Polytechnic, with London-based people providing accomodation for people coming from elsewhere.

Structured in small group workshops, with communal meals, and perhaps a booze up on the Saturday evening, the weekend is for anyone involved with libraries and library materials, the more people who can look at libraries from a users' point of view, the better. Among the workshops will be:

- 1) LfSC Journal (we're going to do the whole issue in the two days folks!)
- 2) library education
- 3) school libraries
- 4) libraries and gay people
- 5) anarchist librarians
- 6) "libraries for the majority" (ie how libraries can serve people outside of a small fraction of the -usually middle class- population they now reach)
- 7) sexism/ feminism in libraries (for this group(s), there was some disagreement as to whether there should be one group for all interested people or whether there should be female and male groups. The decision will be left to the actual conference participants).

Participants will not be limited to one workshop, and there will be a session at the end to sum everything up (if possible). Several London people have agreed to take responsibility for starting the various group discussions, but help from interested people and ideas for other topics are very welcome. The people co-ordinating catering (Mandy - 28 Veronica Rd, Tooting, SW17, 01-673 0827) and publicity (Borin, same address) will be needing some help, so get in touch if you've got some time to spare!

If you want to take part in this conference (the date is still not fixed (end of Sept, as we go to press) please send £1 to cover expenses, etc, to

Chrissy Allott

~~Chrissy is moving in the next few months, so please send money, offers of help to her, c/o Fran Steinberg, 70 Blenheim Crescent, London W11 (01-221-6144)~~

If you don't send your quid to Chrissy then you won't get details of when the conference is, so send it now....

STOP PRESS!! Send your money to Chrissy
c/o Lealey Reid, 4 Lingards Rd, London SW13 6DH

DESIGN OF INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS



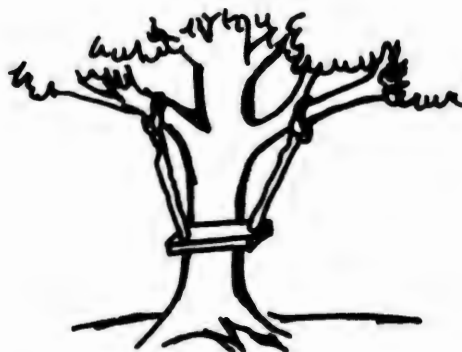
- what the experts proposed



- what the inter-governmental agency specified



- the design after review by the conference of Member States



- the final compromise design agreed



- the information system finally installed



- what the potential users really wanted

(from Pierre Vézina)

THE LIBRARIAN'S CODE

1. A Librarian never takes ^{unfair} advantage - even of a reader.
2. A Librarian never betrays a trust - as long as there's something in it for him.
3. A Librarian always tells the truth - even during working hours.
4. A Librarian is kind to small children, old folks and animals - but keeps them out of the library whenever possible.
5. A Librarian is free from racial and religious prejudices.
6. A Librarian is helpful, and when anyone is in trouble he lends a hand.
7. A Librarian is a good worker (even when at work)
8. A Librarian is clean about his person and in thought, word and deed.
9. A Librarian respects womanhood, his parents and the library rules and regulations.
10. A Librarian is a patriot - red, white and blue are his favourite colours.

A parody of Gene Autrey's "Cowboy Code" which first appeared in the staff magazine of Merton Public Libraries.

Squatters and Camden: a sequel

Shortly after LfSC no.4, containing my article, was published, Camden withdraw the staff instruction which caused all the fuss. Dave Quayle, who works in Camden, sent me extracts from the staff newsletter together with his own thoughts:

"The thing drives me schispid: with anti-squatters I'm pro- and vice versa. Not about the prod and cons of the action, but the people, discrepancies of moral justification, and social reality under that umbrella. The downer kids lapping up Trowley, etc. The fuckers rip-off books; generally true of most "movement" (RIP?) literature, and the 133s of course, and not just, and certainly not all squatters, blah blah prevarication. Anyway, I don't think the original staff memo you printed caused many to go without. Maybe a few at a couple of small branches, but then they wouldn't have been missing much since da "brothers and sisters" before 'em had pinched all the books anyway - community property liberated from the market place (publishers squeal PLR etc). Too many contradictions here.

If anyone is interested in this question - never know it might happen to you one day - I'll be pleased to send the bundle of clippings, etc, that Dave sent me. JH

Discriminatory practices department

Mr. W.A.G. Allison, Chief Librarian of Glasgow Public Library, wins this year's Male Chauvinist Pig award for writing a letter to a married woman applicant stating that he could only accept applications for jobs from single persons. You mean you apply that ruling to men as well Mr. Allison?

We were going to reproduce the letter in question, unfortunately someone from Spare Rib borrowed it to print in one of their issues. We aint seen either photocopy or published version since... Never mind. Mr. Allison stills wins our coveted award and our congratulations - he was up against some stiff competition from Robert Ashby of Surrey (see also where in this issue)

Response to 'Libraries after der revolution' (sorry Richard!) which appeared in LfSC no.4 and as a separate pamphlet.

We had a ten page article complete with references from W.J. Martin, a lecturer at Queen's University library school, Belfast. Whilst he made a couple of good points he's taken so long to say it that we haven't the room to print it in full and I don't like cutting articles about. So as space is short I've concentrated on the grass roots stuff like the young children in Dorking library rather than pad the issue out with theoretical ideas.

John Lindsay summed up the attitudes of several people to Richard's article in two paragraphs:

"That article on libraries after the revolution was quite fascinating, if delightfully naive. The difference between all those workers councils, etc, and the existing system escapes me. The important change I thought was in the people's minds, not in the structures, and as a change in people's minds cannot be forced but must be voluntarily adopted this would mean that a change in structures would merely replace one tyranny with another.

It then follows that "the revolution" must be a gradual transition, together with a change in the attitudes of people and that this can carry on all the time; further that the librarian can do a lot towards this now in small branches where he is more likely to get authority first, by working with local organizations, ratepayers, housing associations, whole earth societies, Gaylibs, food co-ops and anything else he can find. He can also examine his own bureaucracy, can scrap that which appears to fulfil no useful purpose, and then scrap that which does, testing whether he can do without it... Those ghastly "no smoking", "silence please", "no spitting" and "whites only" (sorry that is South Africa) could go for a start, testing the system in which he is employed to its limit. Librarians seem to like bureaucracy for its own sake - we have certainly gone overboard in obeying Edwina's "crisis" the LA library is almost unusable at the moment and they have bureaucracy gone mad sometimes. No - we are in the middle of the revolution, its going on all the time and its in our own heads, there is no point in waiting for someone else to happen it."

my thoughts entirely, and John took a lot less space to say it too. If anyone wants to read Bill Martin's article they're welcome to borrow the typescript.

FEMINIST BOOKS LTD, PO Box HP5, Leeds LS6 11N publish non-fiction fiction, drama, non-sexist children's books, etc. Their first book- Lee Comer's Wedlocked Women - is published this month (Sept '74) and their second book, an anthology of non-fiction feminist writings from the women's movement, is in preparation. They'd like people to order Wedlocked Women from libraries so as to sell the cloth edition: details are 296 pages, £3.95 (paperback is £1). They do their own design and distribution so every bit of help gets the books that much better known.

YOUNG CHILDREN IN PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Richard Alexander and Anne Colwell

The Feminist Group of LFSC has recently received a couple of letters relating to the problems of people looking after very young children when visiting public libraries. It would seem that certain librarians are in the habit of refusing to let prams and pushchairs into "their" libraries. As it is not always possible for people to arrange for an alternative it is inevitable that people will have to bring their children to the library. Whilst there are not many libraries that go to extent of refusing admission to prams and pushchairs few make any positive provision for 'toddlers' - either play areas or creches. We would be very interested to hear of

- 1) any instances of positive provision
- 2) any information on admittance regulations regarding prams and pushchairs (with, where possible, comparisons with the treatment of wheelchairs and shopping trolleys)
- 3) any correspondence relating to these matters, either between people and the authorities or in the press
- 4) any action undertaken by local people and library staff to change admittance regulations and whether anyone is interested in starting-up such action
- 5) any views, opinions people have on the subject in general.

This is one issue where the dictates of the local authority, either the council itself and/or the library hierarchy are operating in a way which is detrimental to a large section of the community. We wonder how many people are discouraged from using their local library simply because of admittance rules, lack of creches/playareas, or the officious attitude to having small children in the adult library. We are hoping to produce a sizable pamphlet on this matter and look forward to hearing from as many people as possible.

Anne & Richard's address: 35 Hardy Rd, London SW19 1JA

The following is an exchange of letters between a teacher with a small son and the County Librarian of Surrey, Robert Ashby. Several of the points the latter makes are quite ludicrous -eg. the "wheeled vehicles" - and in general his letter is condescending and showing the usual lack of understanding for users which so many library administrators sadly now exhibit. It would be interesting to see if several letters from readers has any effect on him -probably not- so his address is: Robert F. Ashby, F.L.A., County Librarian, County Library, 140 High St., Esher, Surrey, KT10 9QR.

VIRAGO LTD is a feminist publishing imprint -the first of its kind in Britain. They begin publishing in Spring 1975 using the facilities of QUARTET BOOKS to reach a mass audience. They are interested in any ideas and research being carried out by women in the areas of education; history, economics, medicine, sociology, religion, art, fiction, and would like to hear from potential writers. 27 Smith Street, London SW3 4EW (01-352 6634/5)

Dear Sir,

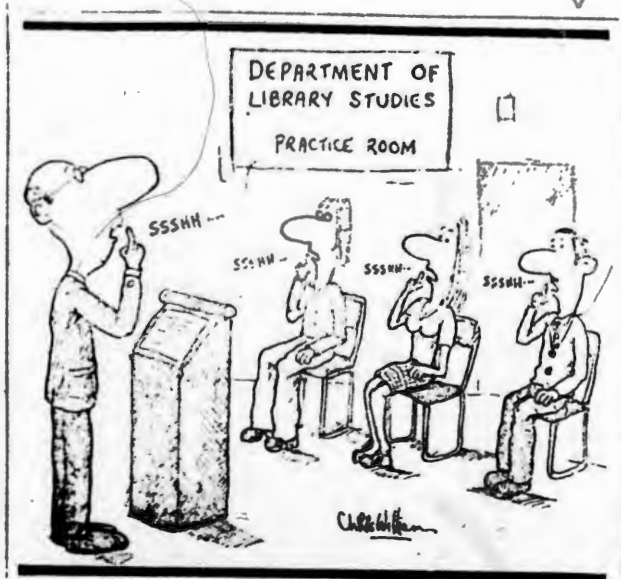
I am writing to complain about the attitude of libraries in Surrey to young mothers with small children, and about that of Dorking Library in particular.

I accept the rule that pushchairs are not allowed in the library although the picture of people being mown down by pushchairs in the rush for the door in the event of fire seems a rather bizarre and unlikely justification for its existence. However, although I accept it, I would point out that this leaves the young mother with four choices: (1) she leaves her child with her husband or friend, when she goes to the library; (2) she does not go to the library at all; (3) she leaves her child in the pushchair outside or in the foyer and takes the risk of him being "snatched"; (4) she carts him round the library desperately trying to quell his noise and physical activity. I have tried all these alternatives and none of them is entirely satisfactory: the first may seem so but it is not always convenient or possible to leave ones child elsewhere and anyway it seems sad that the youngest member of the family should be excluded from trips to the library.

I think my experience last Saturday illustrates my difficulties. I ventured into the library carrying my 21 month old son in my arms. He weighs over 2 stone so before long I put him down while I quickly searched for two books and hastily filled in some order cards. He was as well behaved as an energetic toddler can be; he did run around, he did shout "Mummy" loudly several times but he did not cry nor did he pull the books off the shelves. Whilst I was filling in the last card the Head Librarian told him -albeit gently- to be quiet. I pointed out that he would probably not understand the need to be quiet at his tender age and added that if I had been allowed to use a pushchair I could have been in and out in half the time and caused half the noise and none of the running around; but as that was no longer allowed it seemed the library would have to put up with a toddler for ten minutes.

The librarian then informed me that it did not: I could be "struck off" so to speak. There then followed a rather heated exchange in which my basic premise was that a library should exist to serve a community, to encourage people to read and not discourage them. The librarian answered that there are some places one cannot go with a small child. If this is the official view I think it is a pretty poor one. As a teacher I feel that it is never too early to encourage children to be interested in books; as a mother and ratepayer I do not see why I should be forced to stay away from the library for several years because I have a young child. Nor do I see why a tone of hushed reverence is so essential to the workings of a library; there should be quiet in the reading and reference rooms obviously and because of that it is a pity so many libraries are open plan, but apart from that it would seem good educational policy to encourage discussion about books and a relaxed, friendly atmosphere in the main section. Too many libraries - and Dorking is one of them - have the air of literary morgues.

I am not hoping for a revolution in libraries - I



Loose In The Library

Like your correspondent from County Durham whose letter was published in the February issue of *MORNING*, I was very annoyed when a notice appeared on the door of our usually deserted local



library, categorically forbidding entry to prams and pushchairs.

However, unlike her, I immediately decided to unstrap my son, then aged about twelve months, from his pushchair and let him toddle where he wished among the books.

I was fully prepared for the staff of the library to complain, and equally prepared to answer back, but they did not. The result of allowing him the freedom of the library has been that he has developed a delight in looking at books. One of his favourite excursions is the weekly exchange of his library book. He has been taking home picture books, issued on an extra ticket in my name, but chosen by himself, from the age of twenty-two months, and has never damaged or disfigured any book.

I would, from my experience, advise every mother to take her toddler into the local library while she changes her nappies and let him explore its possibilities, whether prams are barred or no.

Incidentally, when my son and I visited the library last week, the offending notice had been removed.
—Mrs. M. Anderson, Winkles,
Tyne and Wear.

merely ask that some thought should be given to the problems of a young mother with a lively mind and lively children. Would it not be possible, for example, for one afternoon a week to be set aside when young mothers with toddlers would be made welcome, instead of suffering under the stony glare of the Chief Librarian to whom silence is all?

I would like to conclude by saying that I know several young mothers in Dorking who feel the same as myself now that the pushchair rule is being so rigidly enforced - and some of them no longer bother with the library any more which is a great shame. I also enclose a copy of a letter from a magazine published this month to emphasize the fact that the problem is not purely a local one, although Dorking aggravates it by asking for silence from toddlers as well.

I would be happy to meet the committee any time to discuss this problem.

Yours faithfully

The reply from Robert Ashby:

Dear Mrs.

I have received your letter of 25 June and have carefully considered your comments, but the problem to which you draw attention is not at all unusual and in fact is a perennial one in any public library.

As you will readily appreciate the public library service is for all members of the community both young and old. Some people have no objection to noise made by young children, others have. Obviously my staff must do their best for all and it is not unreasonable to ask that consideration should be given to the comfort and convenience of other readers. Our policy is that generally adopted, and is undoubtedly acceptable to most people.

We are quite adamant that "wheeled vehicles" will not be admitted to the Dorking Library; we have the Chief Fire Officer's advice on this from which we are not prepared to depart.

On your particular suggestions - it would scarcely be practicable to reserve certain periods for certain categories of readers: all readers have equal rights. Also there is no provision for members of the public to address Committees of the County Council and you have to be a member of the Council yourself to do that.

I am sure you will be able to deal with a difficulty which is inseparable from the ownership of young children and does not relate only to libraries.

Yours sincerely,

County Librarian.

Richard Alexander points out that Rising Free have done a good booklist on "men's lit" for men who oppose sexism. One could quibble over the contents of a couple of the sections but nevertheless a valuable list. Send Rising Free (197 Kings Cross Rd, London WC1) 10p in stamps for a copy. A second edition is in preparation.

According to the liberal traditions of British librarianship the library provides, the reader chooses. There are many fields in which this British liberalism is farcical and none more so than in the provision of literature related to sex. Oscar Wilde said that pornography was bad writing - why writing on sex should automatically be regarded as bad is a manifestation of those Victorian attitudes which we have not yet overcome. But then whether something is well written or badly written has never been a criterion for inclusion in a library stock since Norman Vincent Peale and Billy (theresno godintheskyonlybombers) Graham have no difficulty in finding inclusion. We have no idea now of what good and bad mean in aesthetics and no way of bringing objectivity is apparent, instead we are taught that certain attitudes will be acceptable and others not; instead of trying to give a rationalisation for them they are mystified and then accepted as articles of faith, unto the last volume of "Scrutiny". At least there is one objective test of good sex writing - it gives a hard on.

Whatever the reason, whatever the psychological limitation, whatever the sexist unliberated uptight reason, there is a large group of readers in Britain whose wants are not being catered for by our libraries and that is the group which gets its sexual thrills from the printed word. It is easy for those of us who are young and healthy to talk of liberation; it is somewhat less easy for the obese, cripples and the aged. Certainly there is a cheapening of human relationships, an objectifying of people, a reification of cocks and cunts in pornography and even more so in pictures, but at the same time, until a much greater change has come about in society as a whole, there are people who have a need, and this need must be satisfied. Not only are they not satisfied but because of the law they are forced to purchase material at inflated market prices, often from imported sources, thus adding to our balance of payments problem and causing accusations of unpatriotism to be thrown at their heads. Were I to hear that Mary Whitewash, Sausage Longford and St. Mugg hold shares in a huge import business, I should remain unsurprised.

I am quite prepared to admit that a great deal of sexual literature is not worth reading, is repetitious, unimaginative, boring and deflating, but that hasn't stopped Barbara Cartland from appearing on library shelves. The paucity of material which is worth reading is a result of these attitudes, not of the subject for the producer-market determines quality and as long as it is difficult to get it will remain poor. Money which has to be spent avoiding the law cannot be spent on authors. Let us admit that the attitude of the librarian has nothing to do with abstract literary principles - it is simply a matter of content. And that is the librarian unfairly and unprofessionally forcing his opinions on other people, or when he is forced to do so by law, then failing in

his duty to work for a change in those laws which are contrary to his professional ethics.

But once all the excuses are out of the way, rather than "providing for the wants of the community paying particular attention to minority groups", it appears that the personal opinion of the librarian has a lot to do with what appears on his shelves. Islington Public Library can have the "Wild Bunch" on display in the window, Ealing had one copy of the "Hand-reared boy" hidden away in the stack, except that when requested someone remembered that it hadn't been seen since May '71 "and there is a considerable waiting list". Waiting for reserved books which are no longer in stock is a new occupation, even for me. There cannot be that much difference between the man on Islington High Street and the man on Ealing Broadway.

The malaise goes further than pornography however - there is a general conservative tendency amongst librarians to provide that which has always been provided. Librarians seldom study and seldom understand changes in social attitude and are reluctant to admit the needs of social groups other than their own, or of which they have had no experience. Alternative publications and alternative publishers have had a great deal of difficulty getting material represented. Something as hack as Private Eye resides only in the Bodleian, according to BUOOP. There have been changes certainly, something over half the libraries in London take Time Out, but Harrow has amidst publicity refused Gay News which even Bath magistrates admit is not obscene nor likely to deprave. Except for London boroughs (and a worthwhile piece of work would be to identify them, comparing libraries with other departments, and working out possible reasons for this liberalism) libraries are failing to provide for the whole of anything other than straight middle class - and these are articulated needs. When will they begin on the unarticulated ones?

Most disturbing of all is the extent to which the campaign for the removal of censorship has had to waste its time fighting rearguard actions against the vociferousness of Mary Whitehouse to avoid a deterioration rather than in progress. The "cinematic and public displays bill" was ditched with the conservative government, but that is no cause for congratulation. I heard David Frost and Longford word-wank their way through telly one night and found the arch-priest completely lacking in logic or rationality for his position - people of his ilk are going to succeed in forcing their absurdity on us, and it won't stop with that for following them comes a cohort of repressive legislation as the "Western Christian family way of life" tries to support its flagging civilization.





But how, you cry in desperation, can I do anything? Order books yourself if in a position of sufficient seniority, otherwise fill in request cards with friends names and addresses, or get friends to do it. Make sure you have full bibliographic details, tell your friends to carry on pushing and not be fobbed off with "not in stock". You know it isn't in stock, that's why you requested it. As long as a library subscribes to Punch, there is no reason for not taking Gay News or IT.





It only takes so many requests before someone gives in, particularly if a letter has to be written each time, or a stream of correspondence is kept up. Get friends to write to labour and liberal councillors, even try the conservatives- they are always touchy when an election is around. Send LfSC your list of books which are worth pushing for. It is the activity of Whitehouse and Co that has got them where they are. Any politician is prepared to change his personal views if there is enough capital to be made out of it. Take it from there before they burn us and our books in the market square.





FICTION: COMPARATIVE LIBRARIANSHIP AFFLICTION Borin Van Loon

Jim wondered what to do with his life. The world is your oyster they said to Jim. He was not impressed or happy and felt insecure. Sifting the entrails for the pearl he grasped something. Shit he said another gallstone. There they said to Jim look through this half ton of careers propaganda printed on heavy art paper kept in the library, then we will show you some films and a Youth Employment Officer will come and talk at you. Jim was still neither impressed nor happy and still felt insecure. He cast around the fields and streets as he walked home and was ready to plumb for any job he came across. Rejecting the police force and sweet shop girl he shuddered at the accountant architect surveyor and suddenly a book hit him on the back of the head as he was bending down in the school library one day and it hit him. Of course a librarian he cried. If it's a choice between teaching and librarianship I don't fancy facing a mob of kids like this lot. So off he went and when he got to college he found that lots more were there just like him who couldn't think of anything else, and couldn't face teaching either. He learnt all about libraries and looked forward to working in one. So Jim let the British Council send him out fully fledged to a poor country and Jim tried to teach the ignorant natives all about books. For he said when you underdeveloped heathens have learnt to read Knowledge will be yours. There was no reply because they didn't have Knowledge so Jim brought them Knowledge and the ignorant natives learnt how to be civilised and to wear clothes. Jim taught them about the true god and H.J. Eysenck and they found out how hungry they were and once they sat and cried hungrily got the camera crew from News at Ten and they learnt about the exploitation of primitive cultures by whitey and killed Jim for his Knowledge. But not so as to seem ungrateful they ate him all up and made good use of all the literature he had brought to blow their noses and as toilet paper to wipe away every last trace of Jim.

A lot of good radical librarianship writings coming out of the states these days. Noel Peattie goes from strength to strength with his SIPAPT (Noel Peattie, Route 1, Box 216, Winters, CA 95694, USA); whilst a fine journal comes out of Canada under the title of EMERGENCY LIBRARIAN (Barbara Clabb, 697 Wellington Crescent, Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3M 0A7, Canada).

<p>THE HEAPS © S. J. F.</p>	<p>I WAS IN A GREAT MOONLIT WILDERNESS AND ALL THE HEAPS IN THE WORLD WERE GATHERED TOGETHER.....</p>	<p>THEN THERE WAS SILENCE - AND THE GREAT HEAP CAME DOWN AMONGST US AND HE SPOKE TO US.....</p>	<p>... SAYING THAT ALL HEAPS WOULD BE BROTHERS AND LOVE EACH OTHER FROM THAT NIGHT TO THE END OF TIME.....</p>
<p>I DREAMED A DREAM.....</p> 	<p>AMAZING! FANTASTIC!</p> 		

<p>THE HEAPS © S. J. F.</p>		<p>FOR PLEASURE, BECKETT, HIGHER, HIGHER.....</p>	<p>YAA</p>
<p>READY - AFTER THREE - ONE - TWO - THREE.....</p> 			

<p>THE HEAPS © S. J. F.</p>	<p>O JOY - ♪ THERE LIES HAPPY DAYS WHEEE! ♪ TUM - TUM</p>	<p>WHAT THE SHIT IS WITH YOU TODAY, BECKETT?? I WANT IT ON THE BEST AUTHORITY.....</p>	<p>..... THE SUN'S CHANGING IN THE FIFTY</p>
<p>HEY HE - BEAUTIFUL DAY</p> 			

I WAS IN A GREAT
MOONLIT WILDERNESS
AND ALL THE HEAPS
IN THE WORLD
WERE
GATHERED
TOGETHER.....

AMAZING!



THEN THERE WAS
SILENCE - AND THE
GREAT HEAP CAME
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FANTASTIC!



... SAYING THAT
ALL HEAPS WOULD BE
BROTHERS AND LOVE
EACH OTHER FROM
THAT NIGHT
TO THE END
OF TIME.....

INCREDIBLE!



..AND ALL ON
ONLY HALF A TAP!!

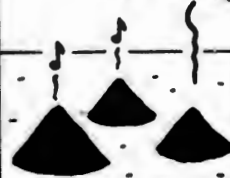
WOW!!



FOR FUCKSAKE,
BECKETT,
HIGHER, HIGHER.....

YAAAAA

A.K. - SCENE THE
WARDI REQUEM -
BACK TO THE
INTERNATIONALS.....



O JOY -
TERRA LARGA
HAPPY DAYS
WHEE!
TERRA
TERRA

WHAT THE SHIT
IS WITH YOU
TERRY,
BECKETT?? I WANT IT
ON THE BEST
AUTHORITY.....

..... THAT THE
SUN'S COMING OUT
IN THE FORTH FRAME

I SHALL GO OUT
OF MY SHALL
AND DELICATE
MIND.....



I SELECT; YOU DISCRIMINATE : some thoughts on censorship

Chrisay Allott

I don't agree with censorship in book selection, and I say so (repeatedly and with sincerity), meaning that I object to people who keep books on sex under the counter, that I disagree with tutors at the school of nursing where I work who question my purchase of books by radical psychotherapists ... and so on. Yet it occurs to me that censorship may not only be a matter of the forces of conservatism suppressing works that they consider corrupting and dangerous.

Take my selection policy for example. I buy, in addition to medicine and psychology, some sociology, anthropology, criminology, ethics, political science and the like.

I've bought a couple of books on women recently - Greer and de Beauvoir. I deliberately didn't get Ms. Arianna Stassinopoulos on female women, but although I disagree with her, a still small voice which I recognize as my conscience suggests that my readers have a right to sample her views too.

"Nonsense", I say to it firmly. "Her work is dangerous rubbish and may corrupt my flock!"

"That", says my conscience, trained at university at great public expense to avoid intellectual dishonesty at all costs, and apt to be embarrassingly objective, "is more or less what that tutor said about your choice of David Cooper's "Death of the Family", and you were very indignant at this mere hint of censorship. Don't you trust your readers to think it out for themselves?"

"No", I mutter.

"Patronising cow", it snarls.

It happens over other subjects too. (Mine is a library rich in emotionally-laden material). I compromise. I try to be fair. I buy things I disagree with, particularly if specifically requested to by a reader without employing delaying tactics or other dirty tricks. All my books go on the open shelves, though I don't put anything I am really concerned about, and feel will do positive harm, on any display. I do tend to discriminate in my selection, even so, often rationalizing on grounds of expense, relevance to our needs, etc.

In short, I achieve an uneasy balance between the right of library users to have open access to anything that is written, and my own feelings and beliefs. But there is a point at which access should be restricted, and if so, where is it?

I would be interested to know how other librarians solve this problem, and indeed how many other people think there is a problem at all.

(don't want to be nasty, Chrisay, but liberals go through all sorts of conscience-wrestling, intellectualizing over censorship, et al. Radicals just get on, put their beliefs into practice. Apart from which if you talk to yourself too much you might find hair growing on the palms of your hands... JM)

If anyone wants a copy of REVOLTING LIBRARIANS published in paperback by Booklegger Press in California, please let me know so we can put in a bulk order. Should be £1-£1.50. Well worth it! - JM

REVIEWS REVIEWS REVIEWS REVIEWS REVIEWS REVIEWS REVIEWS REVIEWS REVIEWS REVIEWS John Noyce

A strange mixture of material this time. First off three from Mansell (publishers of the famous NUC and BM catalogues): Acquisition and Provision of Foreign Books by National and University Libraries in the United Kingdom goes into detail on the libraries acquiring literature from overseas and the problems involved in its purchase. Lots of valuable info; with the immaculate printing and binding one has come to expect from the publishers. British Library Resources by Robert Downs is the companion volume to his American Library Resources. An impressive volume which I cannot fault (he's even traced the first edition of my Directory of Alternative Periodicals!). Impeccably produced, an essential work for any reference library. I'd like to say much the same about Robert Collison's Published Library Catalogues, except that it duplicates much of the Downs' volumes, doesn't cover the field properly - I found 150 additions in one day searching in a university library before giving up in disgust - and, unless you want a complete list of Hall's reprints, a waste of money. The listing of the Br. Museum's catalogues is a joke, he's left out more than he's included! Nicely bound and printed though.

LfSC has a two line mention in Frank Atkinson's Librarianship: an introduction to the profession. This is for me the first volume of its type which I could recommend to someone wanting to take up librarianship (god help 'em) on leaving school or university. Highly recommended. Published by Clive Bingley at £2.50.

Academic Press sent us the first issue of their new Ethnicity. Nothing earth-shattering here, although the restoration of the Irish language is interesting. I suppose the academics will buy it but I do have my doubts about whether this journal is really necessary.

Two from Penguin. Ken Coates and Tony Topham continue their relentless pursuit of workers' control in The New Unionism: the case for workers control (60p) which is valuable background in the light of Tony Benn's current nationalisation plans. The US journal Radical Therapist (now Rough Times) reprint of articles in paperback (60p) just out from Penguin. Good solid stuff which should be all libraries that have any of the conventional psychiatric tomes. Section three: Women, Men and Children especially recommended.

Three from alternative publishers. Makin' It: a guide to some working alternatives shows how the vision of the alternative is being put into practice by a whole range of groups. The info, of course out of date before it was printed, but as an example of what has been done it is invaluable. Please get this one into every reference library you can. A paperback at 85p postpaid from Paper Tiger Productions, The Loft, The Manor House, River Lane, Petersham, Surrey, TW10 7AG. They hope to produce two books a year. I hope they succeed. I know only too well from running Smoothie how difficult it is to be an alternative publisher! Despite the doubts people have about the retail and wholesale side of Books of Leeds, they've produced a good pamphlet/books recently. The Latin America Review of Books is a brave attempt, survey current writing on Latin America from a more committed viewpoint than elsewhere. Unfortunately the Latin American bibliographical scene is already well covered. I wish them luck, but I fear they won't succeed. Apity as the first issue is impressive though at £1.25 a bit hefty for personal sales. (from 84 Woodhouse Lane, Leeds) From the same source comes Generals and Tupamaros £1 essential for anyone interested in the Tupamaros.

NOTES FOR THE "LIBRARIANS AND SOCIAL COMMITMENTS" CONFERENCE organized by the East Midland Division of the AAL, Bedford, Sept. 18th, 1974

So we're talking about 'librarians and social commitments'? Nice trendy subject for a one-day conference. Have a balanced set of speakers - a librarianship lecturer from somewhere like Clw or the Northern Poly or Leeds to put the theoretical side; then a practising librarian, if possible one whose written a book and various articles, and then one of them angry youngsters from that group, what's their name, oh yes, Librarians for Social Change. Book a library for the day and have a session of cleansing ones middle-class, white, liberal conscience. Are we all sitting comfortably, then we'll begin...

Okay so I'm cynical, and maybe it won't turn out this way, but on the other hand it probably will. I don't like situations where there are speakers (ie teachers) and audience (ie pupils), in fact I reject any clear out learning situation in that we can all learn from each other. So 'my' hour will be a group discussion rather than me speaking formally. Below are a few random notes which could act as a basis for discussion - on the other hand we could discuss something completely different depending on what people want to do. All these points below are topics which are of concern to people in Librarians for Social Change. However they are essentially my views not the group's, so don't regard this as a definitive LfSC statement or anything similar.

Sexism: a subject which affects everyone. We have been brought up in a society where the male is supposed to be dominant and the female passive. However good a woman may be at librarianship unless she adopts supposedly male characteristics such as arrogance, ability to make decisions in the approved managerial way, etc, then she will not reach the upper echelons of the profession - and in this context marriage and having a family is a disadvantage. I reject the view that as a man I am automatically somehow superior to any woman in anything I do. In the work situation this leads on to Hierarchical structures: a fancy name for a simple concept. Why should I as a 'qualified' male be regarded as better than anyone unqualified? Should the same people be the 'bosses' in all situations? Why not team work where different people take the lead on the work they have the aptitude/ability/experience for? The current debate ^{over} whether librarianship should be an all-graduate profession only serves to highlight this problem. Do children's librarians really need to be graduates or even chartered? I understand that in Lambeth some of Janet's staff spend more time/are more interested in management work, than in working with the children. Is this right? Is this necessary? Or is it one of the penalties we pay for expecting our children's librarians to be 'trained' at college to a standard laid down by lecturing staff who haven't worked in libraries for aeons (nearly)? The same applies to other aspects of librarianship.

The consumers: most of us exhibit a fine disregard for our users. It seems as if we'd much rather have no users at all, than the books wouldn't continually re-tyding (why can't users learn the decimal classification after all we do). So how do you react when a mother brings her 20 month toddler + pushchair into the library? Tell the child to be quiet, and icily inform the mother that the fire regulations absolutely forbid any wheeled vehicles in the library? That's what happened at Dorking recently (see LfSC no.6). What provision do you make for sex education for young children? Do you provide romances, thrillers and westerns for your fiction-loving readers? Or do you say a) they're never on the shelves so what's the point, b) they're rubbish, c) they fall apart after a few issues.

We're onto book stocks now, so have you got in stock

Jill Johnston Lesbian Nation; or Abbott & Love's Sappho was a right on women (the two best works by gay women). Have you got the Boston Women's Health Book Collective's Our bodies, ourselves? What's your reaction to being asked to buy William Drake's The Connoisseur's Handbook of Marijuana (the best book on the subject) or don't any of your readers use dope, just as you know for a fact that there are no lesbians on your membership lists. As we're all in or near London we all of course have Alternative London in our reference library, with a lending copy as well of course, just as those in London stock Time Out in their libraries. Naturally we've all stocked Spare Rib right from the first issue.. (hands up all those who haven't seen the latter).: I could go on.

Just what is social commitment and how does it relate to libraries? Is it just making sure that the typist of the conference handout knows in future that 'commitment' has only one t? (that's fighting adult illiteracy). Are we still trying to be 'impartial' in our book selection and the rest of our work, or is that more often than not preserving the status quo. Can we be impartial in our work?

I maintain one cannot. I've worked in a library system (West Sussex) where everyone was always 'impartial' and 'committed'. The same library system where the (male) county librarian told the female members that they couldn't wear trouser suits, long skirts, or jeans. No reasons given, but the public wouldn't like it. After a staff revolt, he consented to allow women to wear trouser suits, but only if they were sombre in cut and colour. Long dresses continued to be taboo, as did very short skirts, and trousers which weren't part of trouser suits. Just in case you think I have a fetish about women's clothing, the men had similar problems - suits weren't insisted on, on the other hand you knew pretty quickly when a jacket was worn instead. Ties were of course obligatory. I have yet to discover a more useless piece of male clothing.

That's probably enough to give you some idea of what I'm thinking about these days in the librarianship context. I haven't mentioned at all the racist problem, our attitudes to anyone from any culture which is different to our own - is our attitude genuinely one of interest or friendship or is it a patronising and/or condescending attitude? I haven't either talked about new trends in enquiry work - the eternal reference/lending question - or our attitudes to ephemeral literature, some of which will be important for the future.

I hope our discussion is a fruitful one this afternoon, but more important I do hope that everyone thinks about social commitment in their own libraries in the coming weeks and months. This one-day conference may be by way of light relief for you, but it's not for me....

John Noyce

SMOOTHIE PUBLICATIONS IN PRINT LIST

- ALTERNATIVE BOOKSHOPS compiled by John Noyce. 2nd ed. 1974
individuals 20p; libraries 40p. Supplements are produced.
- ALTERNATIVE BRECHTON compiled by Francis Jarman and John Noyce,
published by Unicorn Books, 1973. Obtainable from Smoothie, 50p.
- ALTERNATIVE PRESS IN BRITAIN: a bibliography by Mick Hoey. 1973
individuals 10p; libraries 30p. Expanded 2nd ed in preparation.
- ALTERNATIVE PUBLISHERS compiled by John Noyce. 1974
individuals 15p; libraries 30p. Supplements will be produced.
- BIBLIOGRAPHY OF BRITISH POSTAL HISTORY compiled by John Noyce,
1968-69 in three parts. 25p per part; 65p the set.
- CONTACTS: a list of alternative organization compiled by John
Noyce. 1st ed (only one so far) Spring 1972, so of historical
interest only now. 15p.
- DIRECTORY OF ALTERNATIVE PERIODICALS edited by John Noyce.
1st ed, 1970: a few copies left at £1 (for libraries)
2nd ed, covers titles published 1965-71, + supplement
individuals £1.30; libraries £2.45.
3rd ed, currently published titles 1974
individuals 50p; libraries £1.20. (4th ed expected late 1975)
- EROTIC BIBLIOGRAPHIES: a survey by Peter Jenner. 1973
individuals 20p; libraries 40p.
- FAIR TRADING ACT, 1973: a list of references by John Noyce. 1974
individuals 15p; libraries 35p. (includes a supplement)
- INSIDE STORY INDEX compiled by John Vincent. 1974
individuals 20p; libraries 50p.
- IRISH SECTARIAN PERIODICALS by Paula Howard. 1973
individuals 10p; libraries 30p.
- THE JAPANESE ANARCHISTS by Phil Billingsley (reprint) 1974
individuals 15p; libraries 40p.
- LIBRARIES AFTER THE REVOLUTION by Richard Alexander. 1973
individuals 10p; libraries 30p. (reprint from LfSC no.4)
- LIBRARIES IN INDOCHINA: a survey by J. Rowlands. 1973
individuals 20p; libraries 40p.
- LOVE THE LATIN WAY: erotic Latin poetry and prose with translation.
Translated and compiled by Natasha Bayli. 1973.
individuals 20p; libraries 40p.
- MAIL INTERCEPTION & TELEPHONE TAPPING IN BRITAIN (reprint) 1974
individuals 15p; libraries 40p (classic Committee of 100 text)
- PEACE NEWS INDEX for 1972, compiled by June Neilson. 1974
individuals 40p; libraries £1.00 (1973 and 1974 in preparation)
- PPBS & MBO in libraries: a list of references by John Noyce.
4th ed. 1974. individuals 20p; libraries 40p.
- QUALITY OF MERCER: a bibliography of writings by and about
David Mercer, compiled by Francis Jarman, John Noyce and
Malcolm Page. 1974. individuals 50p; libraries £1.50
- SELECTIVE BIBLIOGRAPHY OF PPBS by Roger J. Taylor 1972
individuals 20p; libraries 35p.

SEXISM IN CHILDREN'S BOOKS: a bibliography by Richard Alexander (reprint from LfSC no.5 with supplement) 1974
individuals 10p; libraries 30p.

Journals

BRIGHT TIMES: Brighton's alternative paper. monthly
5p + 5p postage; subscription 50p for 5 issues.

DATR: occasional poetry & prose journal.
no.1:1971, 10p; no.2:1972, 15p. 1 issue planned for 1974.

LIBRARIANS FOR SOCIAL CHANGE
three issues a year. 20p each (libraries 40p)
subscriptions: individuals 60p; libraries £1 (via agent £1.20)
overseas - individuals £1; libraries £2.00 (via agent £2.50)
back issues available in limited numbers -sheet available.

Poetry pamphlets and booklets

Robert Conrad: *The Lead Singer* (1971) 25p.
Kingsley Flint: *Arc* (1972) 30p.
Kingsley Flint: *Backwards* (1971) 25p.
Nigel Jenkins: *First collection* (1972) 10p.
Norman Price: *Into the meatgrinder* (1972) 10p.

Alternative Technology series edited by Horace Herring.

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What future for Alternative Technology? by Peter Harper *

Appropriate technology for small developing countries
by Peter Johnston. individuals 40p; libraries £1.00

The Feasibility of Worker Self-Management by Mike Hill
individuals 30p; libraries 80p.

Some unconventional energy sources by Steven Cuddy
individuals 30p; libraries 80p.

Aspects of Recycling by Graham Tubb *
(the bibliography will be available separately)

Environmental pressure groups by Philip Lowe *

Self-build housing by Robert McCutcheon *

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