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Contents

Editorial

'. . . of the many satisfactions librarianship brought me none exceed the friendships I made.'

The title for this editorial is the last half of the last sentence of the last chapter of *No gray profession*, Harrison Bryan's reminiscences. In this issue we mark his passing in February this year. Harry's contribution to libraries and librarianship was distinguished, sustained, and for those fortunate to work with him in library or library association, inspiring.

Dr Neil Radford, formerly Librarian at the University of Sydney, worked with Harry for many years and has written a measured and comprehensive obituary for the *Journal*.

Ted Vellacott also worked closely with Harry, at the National Library, and he generously agreed to share some personal recollections.[1]

Averill Edwards, former President of ALIA and member of the National Library's policy secretariat has also contributed a personal view of the man at the time.

The late Jean Whyte wrote the entry on Harrison Bryan which appears in the encyclopaedia Harry edited:[2]

> Bryan has contributed to librarianship in many ways – as chief librarian of three major libraries, as a prolific writer on professional matters, as an advocate of co-operative systems, as a very active member and president of the Library Association of Australia . . . and as chairman of its Board of Examiners, and as an important delegate and speaker at conferences both in Australia and in other countries.

Vale Harrison Bryan, giant figure in Australian librarianship, supportive colleague of many librarians overseas, author of some 300 books, articles and speeches, and editor of this journal from April 1954 to January 1957, and from January 1980 to May 1981. Indeed a friend to librarianship.

[1]   In his reminiscences, *No gray profession: reminiscences of a career in Australian libraries* (Adelaide, Auslib Press, 1994), Harry credits Ted's role in, amongst other things, helping him come to grips with an unfamiliar Canberra public service culture.

[2]   Bryan, Harrison, ed. *ALIAS: Australia's Library, Information and Archive Services – an encyclopaedia of practice and practitioners*, Sydney, Library Association of Australia, 1988. Vol.1 p.125.

Also in this issue we celebrate the richness and diversity of professional issues. Roy Sanders from Charles Sturt University reports on a recent survey of Australian employers of library and information services graduates, testing their preference for bachelor or postgraduate qualifications and concluding 'The major consideration for employers is having sufficient quality graduates to choose from, with factors such as experience, maturity and personal attributes weighing heavily in the selection of professional staff.'

We usher into print Patricia Kennedy's 2007 Jean Arnot Memorial Fellowship essay on the wider context of metadata, and courtesy of Roxanne Missingham, reproduce federal politicians' comments on the value of their library service. Richard Maker presents a Western Australian view on the most helpful arrangement of adult fiction in public libraries.

Finally, there are a dozen book reviews, including two review articles: by R.L. Cope on W.J. McEldowney's biography of Geoffrey Alley, the first National Librarian of New Zealand; and by Colin Steele on three books on books.

We trust that in both breadth and depth Harry would have found this an absorbing issue, reflecting many of his own interests, and providing further evidence of the vitality he brought to our profession.

Ian McCallum
May 2008

Harrison Bryan AO, FLAA (1923–2008)

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HARRISON BRYAN, AO, MA, HonDLitt, HonLLD, FASSA, FLAA (1923–2008)

Harrison Bryan had the good fortune to start his career at the top and to stay there. During 36 years he headed three major Australian libraries and was instrumental in advancing the cause of libraries and librarianship in Australia and internationally, and was honoured for his achievements by his country, his profession and the scholarly community.

Born in Brisbane in 1923, Bryan entered the University of Queensland in 1941. After a year of study towards an Arts degree he enlisted in the Army and spent most of the Second World War in a signals unit in far north Queensland. His war was largely uneventful and he was able to continue his university studies by correspondence. In 1946 he resumed full-time study and in 1947 completed his Bachelor of Arts with honours in history.

He was uncertain about his future career. Early thoughts about journalism and teaching had been re-directed towards librarianship at the suggestion of the Professor of History. At that time the only full-time school of librarianship in Australia was at the Public Library of New South Wales, so Bryan, with his new wife Florence, went to Sydney in 1948.

After completing the one-year course Bryan was urged to return to Brisbane to take over the running of the University of Queensland Library as the Librarian had resigned. In 1949 he commenced duty as Assistant to the Librarian (a curious title as there was no Librarian) and effectively ran the university library. His appointment coincided with the move of the library to the university's new campus at St Lucia, and Bryan was faced with the problems of occupying and making serviceable the new library building, an imposing structure quite unsuitable for its intended purpose. From this experience sprang his lifelong interest in the design of library buildings.

His energy and obvious ability impressed the university authorities and in 1950 he was appointed James Forsyth Librarian of the University. In 1950 the University of Queensland Library boasted only a modest collection of 97,000 volumes and a staff of ten, with a tiny budget for new acquisitions. A more experienced librarian would have found the library's problems severely daunting, but Bryan approached his new responsibilities with youthful optimism and enthusiasm. He was successful in securing regular and quite substantial increases in the budget and the collection grew threefold during his 13 years there. Improvements in the

collection encouraged greater use and a reference librarian was appointed for the first time and emphasis was placed on service to readers. The catalogue was improved, branch libraries were brought under proper control, library service to Queensland's large body of external students was improved, and the library's profile as an integral part of university teaching and research was raised considerably.

Somehow Bryan found time for further study. He supplemented the training course at the Public Library of NSW with private study of the syllabus of the Library Association of Australia (LAA) and was awarded the Association's Qualifying Certificate in 1951. Believing that an academic librarian should have some experience of academic research, he undertook research in history and was awarded a Master of Arts in 1954.

In 1957 he and Florence proceeded on study leave to Great Britain and the United States, his first exposure to libraries and librarianship overseas. This trip opened his eyes to the potential of the library as a vital force in the university, and provided both a professional invigoration for him and a stimulus to further improvement in the University of Queensland Library. In 1960 his report on this leave was expanded and submitted to the LAA as a thesis for the Association's Diploma. Bryan is one of only two people ever to have been awarded the Diploma.

His position as Librarian of the University of Queensland made him *de facto* one of the leading figures in the library profession in that state. He joined the LAA in 1949, was a member of the Queensland Branch Council for thirteen years and President for three. In 1951 he was elected to represent Queensland on the Association's General Council, the beginning of a quarter century of unbroken service to that body. In 1954 he volunteered to be Editor of *The Australian Library Journal* and spent three years at that rather thankless task. Writing fifteen years later he admitted that he enjoyed his period as editor more in retrospect than he had at the time.

In 1962, rather to his surprise, Bryan was offered the position of Librarian of the University of Sydney. This was not of his seeking. The outgoing Librarian, Andrew Osborn, had written to the Registrar with advice about library matters including the appointment of a successor. 'The one person in the country who deserves consideration is Harrison Bryan of the University of Queensland. He has ideas and drive; he has more ability than any other librarian in Australia; but he is brash in speech and writing ... [The University] can do no better than to invite Mr Bryan to be its next Librarian. There is no-one else in Australia who ought to be appointed ...'

The University of Sydney apparently thought any tendency to brashness a minor flaw in one so well recommended, and invited Bryan to take its Librarianship. He accepted and took up his duties in March 1963. He found the transition to Australia's largest university library both exacting and exciting.

His arrival in Sydney coincided with the occupation of the first stage of the new Fisher Library, planned by his predecessor. With a new building and a new Librarian, 1963 marked, in a sense, a new beginning for the University of Sydney Library. The new Fisher Library represented a new era in accommodation and permitted the library staff to offer professional service of a standard hitherto unknown to the university community. It became the largest and busiest university library Australia had ever seen.

During Bryan's tenure Sydney pioneered the application of automation in Australian university libraries. In 1964 an IBM punched card circulation system was introduced, and in 1966 the catalogue of the undergraduate collection was printed in book form by computer. By the mid-1970s both circulation and cataloguing were controlled by online computer systems. The award-winning Fisher building was completed in 1967 and Bryan was largely responsible for its internal design and for some substantial modifications to the interior of the first stage in the light of experience. He also had a major role in the design of several branch libraries, and the success of these buildings led to his being asked to act as library building consultant to a number of universities and colleges, and to his appointment as adviser on library buildings to the Commonwealth Committee on Advanced Education. In time he became the best-known and most prolific writer on Australian academic library buildings.

Bryan never considered himself to be a book collector or collection builder, in the old tradition of librarianship, yet it fell to him to direct what was probably the greatest sustained effort in collection building in the history of Australian university libraries. Sydney's collections, which totalled 775,000 volumes when he arrived in 1963 had grown to 2,700,000 by the time he left in 1980. This was, of course, largely made possible by the very substantial financial resources provided by the Vice-Chancellor of the time, Sir Bruce Williams, for whom the library was a top priority. But Williams would not have committed such generous funding had he not had complete confidence in his Librarian's ability to use it wisely and to deliver the goods in terms of services to staff and students. It was a propitious partnership which Bryan used to his library's great advantage. He considered his seventeen years at Sydney to have been 'immensely satisfying' and recalled that 'My time at Sydney was certainly the most effective as well as the most pleasant of my career.'

Bryan also waded at least waist deep in the passing stream of professional activities to which he believed he could contribute. He represented Queensland, and then Sydney, on the Committee of Australian University Librarians, and served several terms as its Chairman. He had joined the Australian Advisory Council on Bibliographical Services (AACOBS) in 1960, and was elected to the AACOBS Standing Committee in 1965; he served an almost unbroken term on the Standing Committee for twenty years, and was twice its Chairman.

The LAA received a very great deal of his time and energy. He was a member of its General Council almost continuously from 1951 to 1976 and served twice as President. He served ten years (eight as Chairman) on the Association's Board of Examiners. Under his chairmanship the Board steered the Association through the difficult transition from control over professional education by means of its external examination system to an advisory and influencing role by accreditation of courses in tertiary institutions.

Bryan's professional activities outside AACOBS and LAA were extraordinarily diverse. He was regularly consulted by state and federal education boards and commissions, and by colleges and universities wishing to improve their libraries and library services. From 1964 to 1979 Bryan was involved in the selection of almost every new Australian university librarian. He served on UNESCO's Australian Advisory Committee on Libraries for nearly a decade, and was a prime mover in organising courses on library administration for the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs which brought senior librarians from Asia, Africa and Oceania together to observe Australian library practice. He was a Ford Foundation consultant on the development of library and information services in Indonesia, and represented Australia at the Commonwealth Library Association, on the Council and Executive Committee of which he subsequently served.

These contacts with senior librarians overseas assured Bryan of an easy entree into the official world of international librarianship after his appointment as Director-General of the National Library of Australia. He had applied for the Director-Generalship in 1973, but was unsuccessful and did not apply when the position next fell vacant, in 1980. He was by then 56 years of age and was considering retirement at 60. His counsel was sought by the selection committee and, to his surprise, the position was subsequently offered to him.

It would be fair to describe the National Library in 1980 as an institution facing many problems. The Federal Government's determination to reduce public sector expenditure had led to a gradual decline in the library's ability to maintain its collecting at an appropriate level and had led also to a series of reductions in

staff numbers. After the controversial turbulence of his predecessor, the library's standing with the library community generally was low.

Typically, Bryan did not shrink from these difficulties. An early step was the introduction of a new management structure with the aim of achieving a greater integration of activities and increased economy in the use of staff. He secured approval for the transfer of the Canberra Public Library Service to the Department of the Capital Territory, thus allowing the National Library to concentrate on its growing national and international obligations.

Bryan's knowledge of and interest in libraries outside Australia, particularly in the Pacific and South East Asia, provided a focus for increased involvement by the National Library in international library affairs. He encouraged a high profile in assistance to other institutions in the region, in participation in international library meetings, and in developing relations with China. Asian and Pacific librarians generally saw Bryan as the key figure in the region, and his high international reputation gave credibility to the National Library's initiatives.

The focus of Bryan's efforts as Director-General, however, was in reaffirming the central position of the National Library in the provision of library and information services to the nation. Probably the pinnacle of his achievements as Director-General was the establishment and successful operation by the National Library of the Australian Bibliographic Network (ABN). One of the most important initiatives ever undertaken by the National Library, ABN was not Bryan's creation, but he made it a first priority and without his vigorous support, often in the face of criticism, it could not have prospered. The success of ABN, first as a shared cataloguing system and later as a tool for a wide range of resource-sharing applications was a significant element in restoring the National Library to its proper position of leadership in national bibliographic control.

Overall, though, Bryan did not greatly enjoy his time at the National Library and later described it as the most stressful period of his career. He did not feel comfortable in the translation from the university scene, where collegiality is valued and arguments are based on logic and reason, to the politically-charged atmosphere of the senior levels of the Commonwealth Public Service. After retirement he acknowledged that he did not enjoy the political game and had not been able to master it, and that this had limited his effectiveness.

After five 'less than blissfully happy' years of service to the nation as Director-General, Bryan retired in July 1985, aged 62. He left the National Library, as he had left the University libraries of Queensland and Sydney, very considerably stronger, more vigorous and more highly respected than at the beginning of his tenure.

The nation, the profession, and the scholarly world generally made formal recognition of his outstanding contribution. He had been elected a Fellow of the LAA in 1964 and had received the Association's HCL Anderson Award in 1984. Also in 1984 he received the Alfred McMicken Award of the Australian Library Promotion Council. A Fellowship of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia was bestowed on him in 1981, and in the year before his retirement came national recognition in his appointment as an Officer in the Order of Australia. He received honorary doctorates from three universities, Monash, Queensland and Sydney.

A man is fortunate indeed if his career is as immensely satisfying as Bryan's was. The enjoyment of a fortunate life is enhanced if other interests are equally satisfying and enriching. Bryan's principal extra-curricular interests were gardening, oil painting and hand printing. He was a talented landscape artist, enjoying painting trips to different parts of Australia with Florence, a talented painter on porcelain. His interest in hand printing began at the University of Queensland. In 1961 the University was given a 19th century Columbian printing press which he set up as the Shapcott Press (named for its donor), the first bibliographical press to be established in Australia. He used the Press to teach analytical bibliography to students in the Department of English. Upon his translation to Sydney Bryan found an Albion press of similar vintage already on the premises, but not put to any use. He established the Fisher Press in 1963 (soon renamed the Piscator Press to avoid infringing a registered business name). Operated after hours by volunteers from the Library staff, the Piscator Press produced some modest publications and was used from time to time for demonstrations to students in the Faculty of Arts. The press fell into desuetude after Bryan's move to Canberra in 1980, but was revived for a while when he returned to Sydney in retirement.

A major retirement project was the editorship of *ALIAS: Australia's Library, Information and Archives Services - an Encyclopaedia of Practice and Practitioners*, a 3-volume work published by the LAA between 1988 and 1991. Bryan's contributions to the professional literature exceed in number those of any other Australian librarian - about 300 items. His professional *oeuvre*, unrivalled in scope and lucidity by any other Australian librarian of his generation, was greatly influential among his colleagues and represents a substantial resource for any research into Australian librarianship in the second half of the twentieth century.

As an administrator Bryan took responsibility seriously, but perhaps too literally, and he tended to be rather conservative. The fact that he had only ever been the boss had a downside which he freely admitted: 'From the virtual beginning

of my career I was a chief librarian, though ... I am not sure it was a good thing that I never had to rise through the ranks.' It must be said that he did lack the flexibility and perspective which rising through the ranks fosters. He was always conscious of the fact that the buck stopped with him, and although he tried, he was unable to accept that the professional staff could have any final decision-making role in the library's management. Senior staff managed their own areas with a wide delegation of authority, but decisions on overall policy and strategy could only be his.

In his autobiography he said 'I found it very difficult ... to resolve the dilemma posed by providing [staff with] opportunities for real participation in management at the same time as retaining my ultimate accountability.' His practice, at Sydney and at the National Library, was to convene staff consultative groups and encourage them to offer advice, but the advice was not always taken, and some staff came to view these consultations with a degree of cynicism. Bryan wrote 'I never thought it possible to go any further, but it became increasingly difficult to resist any incursions into what I saw as my area of decision making without being accused of tokenism.'

With family, friends and professional colleagues he was an outgoing and convivial person who enjoyed socializing with a beer or a good red wine. At the University of Sydney he was a popular and respected member of the academic community, and was an active member of the Staff Club and of two academic luncheon clubs. To his senior staff Bryan was an excellent mentor, always willing to talk over problems and give sound advice, always supportive. In return he received their loyalty and respect. However his lower-level staff often saw him as a rather formal and remote figure, but those who made the effort to engage him in conversation were pleasantly surprised to discover a relaxed and friendly person behind the formal facade.

Looking back on his career he modestly allowed that 'I suppose I can be regarded as having had much more than my share of good luck.' He did enjoy remarkable good luck, but his outstanding career was almost wholly a product of natural ability and very hard work. He had the good sense to use his lucky opportunities wisely, and to turn them to the advantage of libraries, library users and the profession generally. He felt privileged to have been part of the 'golden years' of university library development in Australia. We are all fortunate that he was there at the right time to make the most of it.

Dr Neil A Radford, FLAA
University Librarian
University of Sydney, 1980–1996

Harrison Bryan –
some personal recollections

The *Journal*'s editor asked me to set down some recollections of the personal qualities of Harrison Bryan during his five years as Director-General of the National Library. Ian remembered that I had worked closely with Mr Bryan (as I always knew him at that time) in an administrative support role and he may even have been aware of how satisfying those years had been for me.

Commonly, an account of someone's personal qualities will better serve its purpose if it also provides at least a brief outline of the circumstances, and particularly the main challenges, of the times. This is not to suggest that the qualities one displays are merely a response to the times; they may also indicate, especially in someone as thoughtful and knowledgeable as Harrison Bryan, the real nature of the individual. A further caveat – having been retired for more than 10 years, I have written these remarks, albeit with some prompting from former colleagues, without reference to documents other than to Harrison Bryan's memoirs, *No gray profession* (1994) and to *An enthusiasm for libraries: essays in honour of Harrison Bryan* edited by Jean Whyte and Neil Radford (1988).

In his memoirs, Harrison Bryan, having described the outstanding growth and other notable achievements during his 18 years as Librarian of the University of Sydney and having noted something of Dr George Chandler's years at the National Library, records his early reluctance to apply for the position in Canberra. He also lists the challenges he would face when, after some urging from the Council Chairman Ken Myer and the Library's Minister Bob Ellicott as well as from colleagues, he accepted the appointment as Director-General in 1980. At the National Library he would inherit an unbalanced and inefficient staff structure (set up almost as if the components were independent and competitive fiefdoms) and he would need to cope with a quite unfamiliar Public Service environment. Other factors to be taken into account included the new house he and his wife Florence had recently built in Sydney and the desirability of maintaining his growing reputation as a leading figure on the national and international library scene, particularly through his contributions to the professional literature. In the event, these represented a considerable call on his time and energy, both in his weekly journeying to and from Sydney and in his extensive research and writing commitments.

Harrison Bryan also had before him the experience of Allan Fleming who, by dint of an almost super-human effort, had within a few years introduced great changes at all levels of the Library and laid the framework for a further expansion of its roles, only to have it fail to fulfil this potential. For Harrison Bryan, securing policy and organisational stability for the Library were to be vital objectives.

These challenges might have been sufficient to tax any chief executive. They were, however, greatly heightened on his arrival in Canberra by a demanding succession of unforeseen events: a concerted push for the National Film Archive to be removed from the Library's responsibilities, an extended period of union action over the asbestos that had been used to insulate the roof of the building, a devastating fire which occurred on the weekend that the disruptive asbestos removal operation was completed, and the imposition of ongoing reductions in the Library's staffing level and annual appropriation. Not one of Harrison Bryan's years at the Library passed without the need to divert much attention to some new obstacle in the way of his re-focussing of the organisation.

Harrison Bryan came to Canberra with a remarkable 31 years of experience in charge of two university libraries, with the Sydney library being comparable in size to the National Library. This experience was supported by his broad knowledge of the operations of libraries in Australia as well as overseas, notably in the UK, USA, the Pacific and South East Asia. With these capabilities and his well-reasoned views, he was a non-controversial, even conservative, leader and thinker. No significant decision was taken without keen consultation with his senior colleagues. He was always ready to delegate responsibilities to others and generous in appreciating the contributions they made, as he was in making himself available to discuss problems of any sort. The weekly Executive Committee meetings with his most senior staff were conducted in an easy, open but necessarily business-like manner; a full record was kept and subsequently circulated to the next senior levels of staff. Although at these meetings he listened more than he spoke, Harrison Bryan managed to find a ready consensus on each decision reached.

His achievements at the National Library were no more the outcome of Sir Harold White's visionary charting of new waters and founding of new settlements, or of Allan Fleming's immense energy and passion to master the present and prepare for the future, than they were of George Chandler's exhausting single-mindedness. Rather, they were accomplished through the measured paces of a quiet and cautious determination. Many colleagues would agree with one of his Executive Committee members who attributed Harrison Bryan's success in bringing out the best from his officers and in reaching so many goals to his being 'simply Harry Bryan, such a decent bloke

– an authentic Australian, with his sleeves rolled up and with the energy and initiative to take full advantage of his opportunities and talents to advance the services of libraries.'

No account, however brief, can be made of the personality of the pre-eminent Australian librarian of his era without recording two major debts on his life's ledger. The first is that which Harrison Bryan owed to the constant support from Florence – a ready and generous entertainer of visitors and staff alike, and the craftswoman of his emblematic red waistcoats. Many staff used to regret that in the coldness of Canberra's winters he did not sport them more frequently. The second debt is that of the National Library staff, and indeed that of all Australian librarians, to the man who, by accepting the appointment as Director-General, acknowledged both the Library's urgent need at that time for a reconstructive head as well as his own fitness for that role and who thereby took on additional responsibilities and workload, at the same time forfeiting the greater recognition and reward that would inevitably have been paid to him had he completed his full-time career in Sydney. It was through his dedication, commitment and endurance, combined with his deep knowledge of a wide range of libraries and his easy rapport with colleagues throughout Australia that Harrison Bryan managed, despite the arduous circumstances, to enhance in a significant way Australia's library services by implementing new levels of national cooperation and by restoring the National Library's credibility and standing within the Australian library community.*

Libraries are, essentially, places of memory, order and service. All who knew him will readily acknowledge the outstanding contribution made by Harrison Bryan to each of these aspects of libraries. In my experience, the contribution made in his years at the National Library was both timely and laudable.

Ted Vellacott

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*   It is a sad irony that in 1973, when he first applied for the position in Canberra, Harrison Bryan decided that, since he was then President of the Library Association of Australia, he should lead its delegation to press on the Library Council the need for the appointment of a professional librarian. In the view of at least some colleagues, this diminished the likelihood of his nomination for the job at that time.

Recollections of Harrison Bryan

In 1980 I had just been elected as the Library Association of Australia ACT Branch President when it was announced that Harrison Bryan had been appointed as the new Director-General of the National Library of Australia. It was up to the Branch and me as its President to welcome him to the ACT Branch. I clearly remember how agitated I was that as a junior member of the profession I had to welcome this acclaimed leader – how on earth would I do this, could I do it?

I spent much time on the short speech of welcome and was very nervous on the day. However, it all went well and on that evening we all found out how friendly, helpful and down to earth this new head of the Library was – and how very Australian.

Some years later I was to find out what a satisfying experience it was to work one to one with Mr Bryan as I was appointed to the Library's Secretariat. For some time I worked as the Principal Librarian in that area, responsible for running the Library's Council and other matters. What a joy it was to work with Harry! He was approachable, willing to listen, always willing to provide advice (and to follow mine when necessary) or suggest solutions to problems. For the person responsible for the Library's Council, what a pleasure it was to find that if Mr Bryan was responsible for a paper a beautiful, legible, handwritten copy in double spacing (for editing) appeared on my desk within two days of request. In all my time working with him I never had to hound him for copy for a paper he had agreed to write – indeed a bureaucrat's delight. In fact, it was he who taught me how to edit a paper using the correct editor's marks – he was never above assisting staff in what were indeed quite routine matters. He never made unreasonable demands on the staff who worked immediately for him in an area which was often under considerable pressure.

We were all aware that Harrison Bryan had been appointed in recognition of his place as the country's top professional but also to re-establish the Library in the eyes of its own professional community and in the estimation of that other important arena, the Federal Government. It was a delight to see Mr Bryan at work, seemingly without effort, travelling, delivering speeches, writing papers, attending meetings, chairing sessions, demonstrating to the world that it was possible to be a professional librarian and at the same time to be a top administrator and a successful diplomat and a thoroughly nice person. He very soon gained the respect and the following of staff inside the building, the heads

of other libraries and our political masters – a substantial feat achieved in a very short time by a true professional.

Most people in Canberra remember the fire at the National Library in 1985. Mr Bryan would often return to Sydney on a weekend to his house overlooking the Georges River. It was on such a Friday night that a fire broke out in the fourth flour where asbestos removal was taking place. The alarm was raised at about 6pm but the Director-General was in his car and could not be contacted until he reached Sydney. It was typical of Harry that he returned to Canberra as soon as he could. As he says in his memoirs (*No gray profession*, 1994, p.144):

> Florence and I returned from an evening stroll to find our tenants in great distress having seen a television report that the NLA was on fire. It was a mind numbing situation with the only clear impression one of complete helplessness. Our instincts were, of course, to rush back to Canberra, but this would have put us completely incommunicado for four hours or so. We could do no more than wait impotently and worry increasingly. I contacted Ted Vellacott and received a series of reports from him all through that dreadful night, as the fire raged with increasing ferocity and complete catastrophe seemed imminent. By midnight, however, it looked as if the worst was over and, by 2am, we were back on the road to arrive in Canberra at first light.

Mr Bryan's untiring efforts in leading the recovery from this near disaster, and gathering the whole staff around him in the process, was one of the finest achievements of a fine man. I shall remember him with great respect.

Averill Edwards

Current demand and future need for undergraduate LIS education in Australia

Roy Sanders

Through an analysis of the results of a survey of Australian employers of Library and Information Studies (LIS) graduates, this paper explores the current demand and future need for undergraduate LIS education in Australia. In the context of recent calls for adopting a purely postgraduate level of entry to the profession, the overwhelming majority of respondents to the survey clearly believe that the education provided in LIS programs in Australia does equip graduates with the attributes required of professional librarians in their organisation, and that this does not depend on the level of the qualification. Some further discussion of graduate attributes and curriculum issues indicates that there is a need for reform of LIS education – as well as a requirement to build the number of available graduates as the profession seeks to renew itself.

Introduction

This paper seeks to explore the current demand and future need for undergraduate LIS education in Australia. That this is a topic for debate is partly because, during the past decade, several schools or departments teaching LIS have closed their undergraduate LIS programs as a result of falling demand for their offerings.

> Undergraduate education in LIS is a fairly recent phenomenon, and has not been successful in most parts of the world where it has been tried. In Australia, RMIT is closing down its degree from 2003; the University of South Australia will do so as soon as it can after that. Dropping numbers, and in general the poor quality of students have led to these decisions. (Myburgh, 2003)

Since that time, the University of Canberra has closed its undergraduate program (indeed, its postgraduate program also closed). On the other hand, it seems that RMIT has re-energised its undergraduate program as a Bachelor of Business (Information and Knowledge Management), which is recognised by the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA). According to the ALIA website, the professional body still recognises undergraduate programs offered by six Australian universities:

1. Charles Sturt University*
2. University of Technology, Sydney
3. Monash University *
4. Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology
5. Curtin University of Technology *
6. Edith Cowan University *

*   These institutions offer courses in online/distance learning mode. (Australian Library and Information Association, 2007b)

It should be noted that these undergraduate programs provide more than 25% of the qualified professionals entering the profession in Australia each year. The total number of LIS students graduating in Australia in the two years 2003/04 was around 1000 for graduate courses and 470 for undergraduates (Hallam pp. 6–7), comparable with figures from a decade previously of 1048 and 303 respectively (Willard, Wilson and Pawley, 2001).

It is not clear on what basis the claim (above) has been made about poor quality students, but it is hoped this study will also shed some light on the quality of recent LIS graduates, whatever their level of entry to the profession.

This debate provides considerable impetus for the present study. Indeed, the debate continued more recently, when Carroll & Harvey (2007, p.56) expressed concern that the 'rank and file'—'those with professional qualifications, usually gained in Australia, who staff the many information agencies throughout Australia'—have not been heard in this debate. This study rectifies that omission to some extent and allows at least the voices of employers to be heard alongside the opinions of those identified by Carroll and Harvey as the 'elite'—'often high level managers, educators and influential academic librarians who wield influence nationally and internationally'—(Carroll & Harvey, p.56). The majority of those answering this survey fall into the 'rank and file' group, and were responding to the survey on behalf of their employers. Individuals responding this way were in positions such as Associate Librarian (Planning),

Projects Librarian, HR Coordinator, Librarian, Libraries Manager. It was rare for the response to come from a 'high-level' manager.

Carroll and Harvey (2007, p.57) further noted that calls for Masters level entry to the profession

> have failed to address the place of undergraduate qualifications or the issue of the strong uptake of undergraduate qualifications by qualified paraprofessionals. We cannot adopt this approach without measuring the broader impact of such a move, considering the unique Australian condition and questioning the validity and basis of these perceptions of failure.

This is supported by a recent article which seeks to explore significant changes in LIS education in the UK, where it is noted that the role of the information professional is determined by the needs of the people they serve and of the environment in which they operate. (Um and Feather, 2007, p. 261).

Finally, this study is timely if we are to concur with an American view which expresses similar concerns:

> This is an unstable time for LIS programs with name changes (almost one-third of the ALA-accredited programs now make no use of the word 'library' in their names), major technological impact on curricular offerings, shifting demographics in our student and professional bodies, and the increasing interest in digital library concerns by other (often better funded) disciplines, the graduates of which are now entering our faculty ranks. (Dillon and Norris, 2005, p.296)

This comment finds agreement with the findings of a recent study which has indicated, from a small sample of respondents, that LIS education in Australia is in need of curriculum reform and revision (Yu & Davis, 2007).

Methodology

This study reports on a survey of employers of LIS graduates in Australia, and a survey of the coordinators of Australian undergraduate LIS programs.

Of most value to this discussion are the results of a web-based survey of employers, undertaken in mid 2007. The survey was compiled through SurveyMonkey, an online survey tool [http://www.surveymonkey.com] that enables people of all experience levels to create their own surveys quickly and easily. The process, which can be undertaken on the researcher's own web browser, includes survey design, selection of types of question (multiple choice, rating scales, drop-down menus, etc), collection of responses, analysis of results, preparation of reports and downloading of results.

Over 300 individual institutions were invited to respond, with email invitations sent to all national, state, university and parliamentary libraries, and a random selection of public, TAFE and special libraries. The latter comprised libraries in government, corporate and non-profit organisations, and were randomly chosen from the Australian Libraries Gateway tool 'Find a Library' (National Library of Australia, 2007). The 96 completed surveys represent a response rate of 30.8%, a level of data which allows us to gain some useful insights into the opinions of the profession. The range of types and size of library responding was broad, allowing the research to provide useful pointers to the profession's current views regarding the level of qualifications they seek. A further useful product of the survey has been the use of the 'Any comment?' section provided with each survey question, with up to 40% of respondents availing themselves of the opportunity to make unprompted comments.

A very similar web-based survey of course coordinators of LIS programs in Australia elicited responses from three coordinators from the six universities approached. It is hoped that in due course the author will be able to make personal contact with all six coordinators in order to provide a wider canvassing of views from the academic leaders of bachelor programs. In the meantime, some of the comments from this small group have helped to add to the comments from the employer group.

Who responded to the employer survey?

In most cases in the following analysis, the responses from the two parliamentary libraries are included with those of special libraries.

More than half of the university and TAFE libraries contacted responded to the survey, and about one quarter of all other types of libraries contacted responded by completing the survey. The final analysis (Table 1) involves responses from 2 parliamentary libraries, 12 TAFE libraries, 20 university libraries, 22 special / research libraries, and 40 public libraries (including 2 joint use Public/ TAFE libraries). A major glitch with the electronic survey collector resulted in responses from 2 state libraries not being recorded for analysis, and follow up attempts also failed.

Table 1. Types of Library Responding to the Survey

Library type	Responses	Percentage Responding (%)
TAFE	12	63.2
University	20	50.0
Public	40	26.8
Parliamentary	2	25.0
Specials	22	22.9
Total	96	

According to a news item on the ALIA employment page in November 2007, the Australian Bureau of Statistics Labour Force data from the 2006 Census shows there were10,085 librarians in Australia (Australian Library and Information Association, 2007a), meaning this survey was responded to by libraries representing around 10% of the professional library workforce, giving credible data on which to base conclusions about the level and type of graduate that libraries wish to employ.

Current levels of professional qualifications

In response to the question 'How many professional librarian positions do you have in your organisation?', the 96 responding libraries indicated (Table 2) that in total they employ 1077 professional library staff, with 44.7% of institutions represented in the survey employing 10 or more professional librarians, 22.4% having more than 20 professional library staff, and 20% of those responding employing only one or two professional librarians.

Table 2. Number of professional librarians on staff of each responding library

No. of staff	Percent	Number of libraries
0	0.0	0
1	10.6	10
2	9.6	9
3–5	20.2	19
6–9	14.9	14
10–19	22.3	21
20–29	6.4	6
30–49	8.5	8
50 or more	7.4	7

Note: 2 of those surveyed offered no response to this question

When asked how many of their professional positions were filled by each level of librarian graduate (Table 3), respondents indicated that at least 32.4% of professional positions are currently held by bachelor graduates, and over 50% are held by graduates of postgraduate programs.

Table 3. Level of professional qualifications held

	Response total	Percentage for each level (%)
Bachelor graduates	349	32.4
Grad. Dip. graduates	470	43.6
Masters graduates	75	7.0
Other	62	5.8
Unsure	121	11.2

Note: 14 of those surveyed offered no response to this question; and 75% of the large number of unsure responses in the table consist of the responses of 2 large university libraries who presumably were unable to readily access the required information at the time of completing the survey.

When these data are compared between types of library (Table 4), it is clear that university libraries employ a greater percentage of graduates (71.1%) from postgraduate programs than do other types of library, in contrast to public libraries (50.0%) and TAFE and Specials (60.5%). This also means that public libraries employ the highest percentage of bachelor graduates (54.0%) compared with university libraries (28.9%) and TAFE and specials (39.5%).

Table 4. Level of professional qualifications held by type of library

	University libraries	Public libraries	TAFE & Special Libraries
	%	%	%
Bachelor	28.9	54.0	39.5
Graduate Diploma	60.6	40.4	52.6
Masters	10.5	5.6	7.9

Level of qualification preferred

Respondents were asked 'When employing qualified professional librarians for your staff, do you look in particular for Bachelor graduates, Graduate Diploma graduates, Masters graduates, or No Preference?' (Table 5). [It should be noted that the question was phrased to include ALL appointments, not just those designed to attract newly qualified professionals.]

Table 5. Preferred level of professional qualification

Question: When employing qualified professional librarians for your staff, do you look in particular for Bachelor graduates, Graduate Diploma graduates, Masters graduates, or No Preference?: (Please choose ONE response)

Response	Total	Univ.	Public	Other
	%	%	%	%
Bachelor graduates?	9.1	5.6	8.1	12.1
Graduate Diploma graduates?	13.6	33.3	2.7	15.2
Masters graduates?	1.1	0.0	0.0	3.0
No Preference?	76.1	61.1	89.2	69.7

Note: 8 libraries did not answer these questions

When employing qualified professional librarians, 76.1% of employers overall stated that they had no real preference between bachelor and postgraduate graduates. Only 9.1% expressed a firm preference for bachelor graduates, and 13.6% for graduate diplomas, the latter figure boosted by 33.3% of university libraries expressing a preference for these graduates. Through the comments section of this question, the university library respondents gave their reasons, including a preference for new recruits to have subject discipline knowledge, gained through an earlier generalist degree in addition to their professional library qualifications, especially for academic liaison librarian and some other specialised positions. It should be noted that parliamentary, special and research libraries also have a leaning towards graduate diplomas because of their subject expertise.

Comments from public libraries, of which 89% expressed no preference for level of qualification, overwhelmingly indicated a desire for any level of qualification provided that the applicant came with appropriate experience. Public library respondents indicated through their comments that they place more emphasis on employing candidates with practical library experience and those who express an interest or have experience in working in a public library. Several comments suggest that public libraries are on the lookout for the attitude and ability to learn and innovate, suggesting that a combination of qualifications and experience are key to public library recruitment needs.

Selection criteria and professional qualifications

In order to elicit information about the extent to which libraries discriminate between different levels of qualification, respondents were asked to nominate the MOST and LEAST important aspects of the applicant's qualification in selecting professional staff (Table 6). [Again, it should be noted that the question was phrased to include ALL appointments, not just those designed to attract newly qualified professionals.]

Table 6. Preferred aspects of professional qualification in new appointments

Question: Which is MOST Important?

	All	Univ. Libs	Pub Libs
	%	%	%
Who awarded the qualification	5.0	5.9	6.5
Level of the qualification	52.5	35.3	58.1
Grades obtained	11.3	29.4	6.5
Subjects studied in the qualification	31.3	29.4	29.0

Question: Which is LEAST Important?

	All	Univ. Libs	Pub Libs
	%	%	%
Who awarded the qualification	55.0	64.7	51.5
Level of the qualification	11.3	11.8	12.1
Grades obtained	18.8	5.9	24.2
Subjects studied in the qualification	15.0	17.6	12.1

Note: 3 University and 5 Public libraries did not answer these questions

Overall, the results showed that the level of the qualification was considered most important by more than half of the respondents, with the next most important factor being the subjects studied in the degree or diploma. These data seem somewhat at odds with the Bachelor/Graduate Diploma preferences expressed in Table 5, where a majority of libraries (76.1%) expressed no preference for the level of qualification. Some explanation for this apparent contradiction can be found in the comments of those who answered that the level of the qualification was most important: several of these libraries indicated that other factors, such as commitment towards qualification, work experience, special interest & subject knowledge and subjects studied, WERE just as

important. The difficulty for many, clearly, was the need to choose only one factor as MOST important when several criteria guide their staff appointments.

Who awarded the qualification was least important to more than half of those surveyed, with the major comparative difference being that public libraries showed less interest (6.5%) in the grades obtained than did university libraries (29.4%), the latter rating the grades obtained equally in importance with the subjects studied. The other types of library were close to the overall percentages in their rankings, with the main exception being that some special libraries commented that work experience, special interest and subject knowledge are highly valued.

Several libraries commented that these factors are not really considered when making appointments, as long as the qualification is recognised by ALIA. This reflects the recent unsubstantiated statement that 'many employers still require eligibility for ALIA associate ... membership as a pre-requisite for employment' (McVicker and Murphy, 2006, p.36), and suggests that the ALIA recognition processes are accepted to the extent that employers of LIS graduates can concentrate on other contextual selection criteria. It has been reported elsewhere that there is a decline in the percentage of job advertisements indicating that a recognised professional qualification is required, 'with only 32.5% of the ads in 2004 requiring ALIA recognition whereas in 1974 74.2% of ads mentioned ALIA recognition as a requirement' (Kennan, Willard & Wilson, 2006, p. 26). Yet it was clear from a number of comments in this survey that when recruiting professional staff, it is merely a matter of whether or not the applicant has an ALIA recognised qualification. It is worth noting also that there is a substantial minority of libraries of all types who include consideration of the degree/diploma transcript as part of the selection process.

In addition, several public, university and research libraries commented that they are more interested in the person than the qualification, for example

> none of these criteria figure in our selection process

> the reasons for students choosing particular institutions or subjects do not necessarily relate to our selection criteria

> we often employ on the potential of the person rather than specific knowledge.

Selection criteria and personal factors

In order to examine the extent to which libraries consider professional qualifications when employing new graduates, respondents were asked whether professional qualifications rate more or less highly than experience, references,

age, employment record, motivation or personal characteristics (Table 7). It should be noted that this was the first question in this survey which stated that it was seeking opinions about beginning professional positions.

Table 7. Importance of professional qualifications for new graduate positions

Questions: When employing new graduates, how important are professional qualifications? Do they rate more or less highly than:

	More highly	Equally	Less highly
	%	%	%
Experience	29.9	46.0	24.1
Sound references	23.0	51.7	25.3
Age	47.6	17.9	34.5
Employment record	24.4	47.7	27.9
Motivation	24.4	38.4	37.2
Personal characteristics	20.9	44.2	34.9

With these responses, it is clear that age is the least highly rated characteristic, and that less than 30% felt that professional qualifications rated more highly than other factors. This was reflected in the many comments which accompanied the responses, which can be summed up as 'Professional qualifications are a necessity. All other factors are then considered.'

It was clear that other attributes are extremely important to the total package. Experience is valued, but motivation, aptitude, and the personal attributes to deal with a diverse clientele, are more important for some positions. The following comment encapsulates what many of the libraries had to say when commenting about this question:

> While professional qualifications are essential, when deciding between two candidates who both have ALIA accredited qualifications, personal characteristics, experience and references are of more importance than the level of the actual qualification.

Quality of graduates

In order to further clarify whether employers discriminate between levels of professional qualification, respondents were asked to consider whether there is a discernible difference in the quality of their newly employed graduates depending on the level of their professional qualification. The qualities chosen for this question represent some of the widely agreed attributes which are

expected of graduates from Australian universities (Table 8). Whilst it can be assumed that all library types employ different graduate types and are therefore in a position to make comparisons between Bachelor and Graduate Diploma graduates, 14 libraries chose not to answer this question, some of them not doing so because the number of new graduates recently employed by them is nil, or is very small.

Table 8. Qualities of recent LIS graduates

Question: The following statements ask you to consider whether there is a discernible difference in the quality of your newly employed graduates depending on the level of their professional qualification. (Please respond to each statement):

	Usually		Sometimes		Never	
	All	*Univ*	**All**	*Univ*	**All**	*Univ*
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Recent Bachelor graduates are ready to begin work as professional librarians	36.6	33.3	59.8	60.0	3.7	6.7
Recent Grad. Dip./Masters graduates are ready to begin work as professional librarians	42.7	53.3	54.9	40.0	2.4	6.7
Recent Bachelor graduates are valued for their academic qualities	35.4	6.7	54.9	73.3	9.8	20.0
Recent Grad. Dip./Masters graduates are valued for their academic qualities	46.3	33.3	47.6	66.7	6.1	0.0
Recent Bachelor graduates are valued for their employment related skills	37.5	20.0	56.3	66.7	6.3	13.3
Recent Grad. Dip./Masters graduates are valued for their employment related skills	44.4	20.0	54.3	80.0	1.2	0.0
Recent Bachelor graduates are valued for their commitment to life-long learning.	33.3	20.0	55.6	60.0	11.1	20.0
Recent Grad. Dip./Masters graduates are valued for their commitment to life-long learning	46.3	33.3	45.0	53.3	8.8	13.3

Note: 14 libraries (including 5 University libraries) did not answer these questions.

Responses indicated that 42.7% of employers felt recent Graduate Diploma graduates were usually ready to begin work as professional librarians whereas

36.6% felt that Bachelor graduates were. This is not a major difference, and questions about valuing graduates for their academic qualities and employment related skills evoked similar levels of response.

One noticeable difference did appear, with 46.3% of respondents indicating that recent Graduate Diploma graduates were usually valued for their commitment to lifelong learning, compared with 33.3% for Bachelor graduates. Comments on this question indicate this is probably because Bachelor graduates, especially those who have only studied on-campus full time, tend to come with minimal employment experience. (One respondent qualified this by stating that 'graduates who have studied externally are picking up that experience while obtaining their degree'.)

A further conclusion here has to be that whilst most employers avow little discernable difference in a range of qualities between Graduate Diploma and Bachelor graduates, university libraries express a lower opinion of the graduate qualities of Bachelor graduate, especially their academic qualities and commitment to lifelong learning. However, other qualities that are sought, but which were not surveyed, came out in comments indicating that recency [of graduation] is quite often less relevant than whether the applicants studied as mature students or whether they have other qualifications or experience or aptitudes. As one public library commented:

> Usually the telling differences revolve around maturity, communication skills and customer service orientation. In my experience recently qualified graduates without significant relevant work experience are not sufficiently prepared for dealing with the public.

The extent to which recent graduates require further training in order to become ready for a professional role was raised by a university library.

> A recent Bachelor graduate with a prior Library Tech qualification and work experience often needs coaching to move from operational to professional level of work. Recent Bachelor graduates without work experience often need coaching to understand the operational context to make their professional work meaningful within the organisation. Recent Post graduates with some industry experience seem to need less coaching to understand and be effective in a professional role – postgrads and paraprofessionals seem to trust each other more to perform their own roles.

This is a clear indication that simply gaining a LIS degree or graduate diploma is not sufficient, and that a range of other factors, including personal characteristics and inter-personal skills, work experience (preferably, but

not necessarily, industry-related), and maturity, will be important in allowing graduates at either level to present as ready-to-go professionals.

Attributes of graduates

The analysis of responses to this point in the survey indicates that professional qualifications are not the total package required, and that there is little discrimination between bachelor and graduate diploma holders. Respondents were then asked to consider whether different levels of qualification indicate that certain attributes will be held by recent graduates. Graduate attributes are the generic skills and capabilities that all undergraduate students are expected to develop during their studies. These generic graduate attributes are widely understood, and most universities are required to demonstrate, for example in their course documentation, how each course will enable students to acquire them. Such graduate attributes build students' capacity to contribute to their community, their profession, and to the wider society.

For this survey, respondents were asked to consider to what extent (always, usually, or sometimes) each of the two levels of qualification (Bachelor and Graduate Diploma) display the following attributes (Table 9):

- demonstrate a broad overview of the field of LIS

- are able to communicate effectively in a manner relevant to LIS

- demonstrate analytical skills, including the exercise of critical and reflective judgement

- are likely to have the ability to apply knowledge to the workplace

- are able to address unfamiliar problems

- are able to plan their own work

- are able to work as a team member

- are likely to have the adaptability/capacity to cope with change.

Table 9. Attributes held by recent LIS graduates – all respondents

	Always	Usually	Sometimes
	%	%	%
Bachelor – broad overview of LIS.	5.9	58.8	35.3
Grad. Dip./Masters – broad overview of LIS.	4.7	63.5	31.8
Bachelor – communicate effectively.	5.9	68.2	25.9
Grad. Dip./Masters – communicate effectively.	10.6	69.4	20.0
Bachelor – analytical skills.	5.9	49.4	44.7
Grad. Dip./Masters – analytical skills.	16.5	57.6	25.9
Bachelor – apply knowledge to workplace.	11.8	52.9	35.3
Grad. Dip./Masters – apply knowledge to workplace.	14.1	61.2	24.7
Bachelor – address problems.	3.5	48.2	48.2
Grad. Dip./Masters – address problems.	5.9	63.5	30.6
Bachelor – plan own work.	3.6	62.7	33.7
Grad. Dip./Masters – plan own work.	10.7	67.9	21.4
Bachelor – work as team member.	14.1	58.8	27.1
Grad. Dip./Masters – work as team member.	11.8	65.9	22.4
Bachelor – capacity to cope with change.	17.6	50.6	31.8
Grad. Dip./Masters – capacity to cope with change.	14.3	63.1	22.6

Note: 11 libraries did not respond to this question.

The responses showed that over the whole range of libraries (Table 9), the perception is that Graduate Diploma graduates (68%–80%) always or usually display these attributes more than Bachelor graduates (51%–80%). In particular, Graduate Diploma graduates are perceived as being more likely to demonstrate analytical skills, including the exercise of critical and reflective judgement; and be able to address unfamiliar problems.

Most types of library showed responses similar to the overall responses, with the one exception being that 63.9% of public libraries indicated that recent Bachelor

graduates are more usually able to demonstrate a broad overview of the LIS field. Perhaps undertaking their LIS studies over a longer period, and perhaps having more time to study each curriculum area, gives the bachelor graduates an edge here.

Table 10. Attributes held by recent LIS graduates – University libraries

	Always	Usually	Sometimes
Bachelor – broad overview of LIS.	5.9	64.7	29.4
Grad. Dip./Masters – broad overview of LIS.	5.9	76.5	13.0
Bachelor – communicate effectively.	0.0	70.6	29.4
Grad. Dip./Masters – communicate effectively.	5.9	76.5	17.6
Bachelor – analytical skills.	5.9	29.4	64.7
Grad. Dip./Masters – analytical skills.	23.5	47.1	29.4
Bachelor – apply knowledge to workplace.	0.0	47.1	52.9
Grad. Dip./Masters – apply knowledge to workplace.	0.0	58.8	41.2
Bachelor – address problems.	0.0	52.9	47.1
Grad. Dip./Masters – address problems.	5.9	70.6	23.5
Bachelor – plan own work.	0.0	64.7	35.3
Grad. Dip./Masters – plan own work.	5.9	64.7	29.4
Bachelor – work as team member.	5.9	70.6	23.5
Grad. Dip./Masters – work as team member.	0.0	76.5	23.5
Bachelor – capacity to cope with change.	17.6	50.6	31.8
Grad. Dip./Masters – capacity to cope with change.	14.3	63.1	22.6

Note: 11 libraries did not respond to this question.

When university library responses about these two attributes are isolated (Table 10), the gap between bachelor and graduate diploma graduates is even more marked. Only 35% of university library respondents felt that Bachelor graduates were always or usually able to demonstrate analytical skills, including

the exercise of critical and reflective judgement, whereas 71% felt that Graduate Diploma graduates could. Similarly, 53% of university libraries felt that Bachelor graduates were always or usually able to address unfamiliar problems, with 76% acknowledging that Graduate diploma graduates could.

One interesting feature of the university libraries' responses is that they could be seen as a message to LIS educators that their graduates are not necessarily leaving their programs with attributes which allow them to apply their knowledge in practice, or work in teams.

However, comments from university libraries indicate a feeling that work experience plays a part in these questions, including the following comment regarding graduates who commence with other life/employment experiences.

> Work experience plays a part in these questions – someone who has come straight from study, whether bachelor or post grad, with little work experience, will not always have the same practical skills and knowledge as someone who has worked in the area either before postgrad or during their studies.

What is clear from the many individual comments on this set of questions is that the librarians answering this survey consider that these are not necessarily academic qualities. What many of the comments are telling us is that the achievement of these attributes really depends on the individual, that work and life experience are where these are gained, and that the need for these qualities is recognised by libraries when employing staff. However, realistically, most employers do not expect university study to have taught these. As one employer said:

> In my experience, the level of course does not seem to have a huge influence on an individual's capacity to demonstrate these behaviours. Of more relevance appears to be whether they have had an opportunity to develop these skills either in the course program or in a work-place.

Two of the course coordinators surveyed summed it up well:

> My understanding is that employers are looking for practical skills and an understanding of the LIS workplace, at least in general terms.

> In general, I would say that our undergraduates are more flexible and adaptable, go into a much wider range of information related positions and more readily acquire new information skills than many (but not all) of our postgraduates.

What is the appropriate level for professional education for LIS?

As discussed at the beginning of this article, some recent commentators on the profession have indicated that they are unsure whether professional education for LIS is appropriate at the undergraduate level. In that context, respondents were asked if they thought that the education provided in Bachelor programs equips graduates with the attributes required of professional librarians in their organisation.

Table 11. LIS Bachelor graduates as professional librarians

Question: Do LIS Bachelor programs equip graduates with the attributes required of professional librarians in your organisation?

	All	Univ	Public	Other
	%	%	%	%
Yes	64.8	52.6	71.1	64.5
No	18.2	26.3	10.5	22.6
Depends on where they studied their degree	17.1	21.1	18.4	12.9

As discussed also at the beginning of this article, some recent commentators on the profession have indicated that professional education for LIS should be Masters level only. In that context, respondents were asked if they thought that the education provided in Graduate Diploma programs equips graduates with the attributes required of professional librarians in their organisation.

Table 12. LIS Graduate Diploma graduates as professional librarians

Question: Do LIS Graduate Diploma programs equip graduates with the attributes required of professional librarians in your organisation?

	All	Univ	Public	Other
	%	%	%	%
Yes	65.9	83.3	54.1	69.7
No	15.9	5.6	21.6	15.2
Depends on where they studied their degree	18.2	11.1	24.3	15.2

When the 'Yes' and 'Depends where studied' responses are combined, these results suggest that 84% of employers believe that the education provided in LIS programs in Australia does equip graduates with the attributes required of

professional librarians in their organisation, and that this does not depend on the education being at either of the two levels available for professional entry to the profession. However, as part of that suggestion, there is a reasonably strong opinion that the value of the candidate's professional education can depend on where they studied their degree.

The 'No' vote to bachelor entry is strongest amongst university libraries, 26.3% of whom believe bachelor programs do not produce the graduates they desire (with 83.3% of them believing Graduate Diploma programs do). This is probably the strongest endorsement of the Graduate Diploma level entry qualification from this survey. Several university libraries indicated that both Bachelor and Graduate Diploma programs produce suitable professionals, with one commenting that if there is a problem with either then the flaw is in the relevance of the program being taught, and not in the level of course. Another stated: 'I have found Bachelor program graduates to have a broader understanding of LIS.'

As might be expected, public libraries show a somewhat contrasting opinion, with 71% indicating that Bachelor degrees equip graduates with the attributes they require, and although 21.6% of public libraries indicated that Graduate Diploma graduates do not meet their needs, one commented that 'in public libraries, bachelor graduates and masters graduates are regarded as equals in the profession and management are not aware of the difference in qualification'.

Other comments temper this somewhat, with a number of public libraries suggesting that LIS education does not align well with the reality of public library staffing needs. There is a desire for more public library emphasis in degree programs, with skills in the areas of team leadership, supervision and community engagement skills being mentioned specifically.

Further, some public libraries felt that Graduate Diploma graduates don't have a great depth of knowledge of professional duties e.g. cataloguing, reference work, etc. One public library, in commenting on the value of a Graduate Diploma qualification, felt that the value of the professional qualification

> depended more on what the base degree is – a BA in Literature is less useful to a modern library. Yet we still seem to get so many people thinking this is the ideal training base for a job that actually is more like running a business. This is where the Bachelor program participants seem to have a better grasp of what is required in the real world.

There was also some divergence of opinion amongst similar types of library, as evidenced by these contrasting comments from special libraries:

> If anything, I think that Bachelor programs better equip graduates, as they are required to study more library subjects than a grad dip/masters student whose main qualification could be in any field of study. The Bachelor program is targeted at the profession and I personally believe it better prepares graduates to enter the library workforce than a grad dip/masters.

> Diploma course is more interactive/practical, add a BBus(or similar) & you have a better outcome than theoretical Bachelors.

Masters as the entry level?

One of the interesting features of survey analysis can be the surprises which occur by the release of unsolicited information, especially, as in the case of this survey, when space is allowed for comments at the end of each question. Whilst the question of a professional Masters level entry to the profession was raised in the introduction to this article, it was not mentioned in the survey. Yet as you will see shortly, it is a topic for debate for which, inadvertently, the survey gave a platform.

There have been some recent analyses of LIS education in Australia which have questioned the need for, and value of, undergraduate LIS education, and a suggestion by some of the profession in Australia that we move towards postgraduate qualifications as the only means of entry to the profession.

> ... I am convinced that we have done ourselves another major disservice by not actively and energetically promoting ourselves as a graduate (professional masters) profession. (Harvey, 2001, p.17)

> Ironically, the market for LIS qualifications may be moving towards postgraduate entry model, as was first proposed by the Library Association of Australia in the early 1960s. (Hallam, 2006, p.7)

> It may be that this is the start of a trend towards both students and employers expecting a Masters degree as the standard entry level. (Genoni, 2005)

In commenting on the questions relating to the appropriate level for professional education for LIS, several employers expressed the unsolicited view that they are not prepared to endorse a postgraduate (professional masters) only profession:

> A Masters degree on its own would make for a very green professional but no different from a Bachelor degree with no industry experience. That's why I prefer to consider training and experience as a 'package' accommodating several pathways to professional librarianship/information management. If there was only

the Masters pathway, then the experience would take greater weight in appointing to senior positions.

GradDip is sufficient.

With a quality degree I don't think it is necessary to require a Masters.

Masters only would just give us more graduates with less on the job experience.

I don't believe that professional education for LIS should be at Masters only, as this greatly reduces the eligibility of students to enter the profession in a timely and cost-effective manner.

From a course coordinator, whose comments relate to the statement in the survey that some recent commentators on the profession have indicated that professional education for LIS is not appropriate at the undergraduate level:

I think this concern is based on a desire by librarians to ape other professions which have graduate only entry rather than on the merits of the arguments. It is perhaps also based on the idea that a librarian has to be a subject specialist in the area that they provide services in, which has some merit for the employment of some staff in university or research libraries, but is not generally a necessity. It also assumes that the undergraduate programs are preparing students only to become librarians which is manifestly not the case. Other information related areas of employment do not have these status concerns.

Demand for librarians

Respondents were asked for their opinion about the demand for professional librarians in the immediate past and immediate future (past and future 5 years, Tables 13 to 15).

Table 13. Has the need for professional librarians increased in the past 5 years?

	Yes	No	Not sure
	%	%	%
All responses	57.1	42.9	0.0
University	60.0	40.0	0.0
Public	63.2	36.8	0.0
Specials	45.5	54.5	0.0
TAFE	54.5	45.5	0.0

Table 14. Will the need for professional librarians increase over the next 5 years?

	Yes	No	Not sure
	%	%	%
All responses	55.6	25.6	18.9
University	68.4	10.5	21.1
Public	63.2	23.7	13.2
Specials	36.4	31.8	31.8
TAFE	45.5	45.5	9.1

Table 15. Is there a shortage of qualified professional librarians?

	Yes	No	Not sure
	%	%	%
All responses	58.9	24.4	16.7
University	57.9	26.3	15.8
Public	65.8	15.8	18.4
Specials	40.9	45.5	13.6
TAFE	72.7	9.1	18.2

57.1% of respondents indicated that the need for professional librarians had increased in their organisation, with the strongest 'growth' coming from public libraries (63.2%) and university libraries (60.2%). At the same time, 68.4% of university libraries expect the need for professional librarians to increase in their organisation over the next 5 years, and 63.2% of public libraries agree.

In contrast, 54.5% of special libraries indicated a slackening of demand, and opinions are almost equally shared as to whether there or not will be a future increase in demand.

Overall, 58.9% of respondents felt that there is currently a shortage of professional librarians, something which a federal government website, Australian JobSearch (2005), confirms in reporting that unemployment for librarians is low (2%), and that 'employment in this medium sized occupation (12,300 in February 2007) rose strongly in the past five years, and fell slightly in the long-term (ten years)'.

An issue raised by several libraries, especially public, TAFE and specials, is the difficulty of attracting graduates to rural and remote areas:

> The problem for us, as a remote library is attracting qualified people – we're aware that there's a glut of qualified people in the metropolitan centre but this is definitely not the case here.

> We are in a regional provincial area not metropolitan. New graduates do not appear to want to leave major cities.

In larger centres, and in all types of library, professional librarian positions in some cases will attract large numbers of applicants, and in others not so many. Comments seem to indicate that this is a transition time for the profession in terms of the size, growth and retention of staff. The following comments are a few of the many which reflect the main issues raised regarding future demand for professional librarians: the ageing of the profession; the difficulty of attracting staff to rural, regional and remote areas; and the attraction of good graduates to other than library careers.

> Recruiting qualified librarians is becoming more difficult in my experience – we have found jobs only attract a very small field of applicants. This will no doubt become even more difficult as a number of our staff retire in the next 5–10 years. [City university library]

> Not sure if there is a shortage yet but there have been times when it's been challenging to find qualified employees. I do think it will become a problem in the future (next 3–5 years). [Regional public library]

> There doesn't seem to be any consistency in the number/level of applications we receive from external applicants for many of our vacancies. [Growth area public library]

> One only has to see how many professional librarians apply for a newly advertised position to know there is no shortage. This could also be construed as a large amount of librarians unhappy with their positions or conditions in the job. [City special library]

> We rarely have new graduates apply for positions but are always delighted to employ people new to the profession especially if they are Y generation. [City public library]

Skills shortages

A recent survey of job advertisements listed the new skills being sought by employers as including web design and maintenance, and e-resources, along with an increase in the importance of interpersonal skills, behavioural skills, client services and management skills. (Kennan, Willard & Wilson, 2006)

This is supported by the comments made in several of the questions posed by the employers' survey reported in this article. A number of comments from university libraries indicated that in addition to an understanding of, and ability to operate in the library knowledge domain, these libraries need an integrated mix of skills to meet client needs. They are increasingly needing to recruit professionals with skills other than librarianship, including information technology (IT) skills, web design and business analysis. Some university library recruiters look favourably on those with teaching/education qualifications, and would like to employ people with an understanding of the Research Quality Framework (RQF) and an ability to assist academics with data management and bibliometrics. One commented: 'graduates are attracted by other sectors of the information industry with better salaries and more freedom to use new ICT technologies'.

Public libraries who commented on the availability of staff mentioned skill areas as diverse as service delivery to children, information evaluation, and systems management, and more than one stressed a need for stronger skills in IT, supervision and management, finance and marketing.

Some public libraries are frustrated in their search for appropriate graduates:

> The profession is moving quickly and the qualifications are not. Graduate programs need to attract students from a wider range of disciplines than the very traditional literature & history ones we seem to pull from.

> There is a critical shortage of professional librarians and of librarians with the contemporary outlook required for modern public library services. We still seem to be seeing large numbers of graduates who come from a process based focus rather than a customer focus.

Another stated that 'attitude and customer service orientation is central to providing innovative public library services'.

Finally, there were some comments indicating a need for graduates with the ability to work with metadata (one special library commented that there is a shortage of specialist cataloguers for special collections), and with project management training.

Conclusions

Earlier in this article it was reported that 76% of employers overall stated that they had no real preference between bachelor and postgraduate graduates when employing qualified professional librarians for their staff. It was also reported that more than 80% of employers believe that the education provided in LIS programs in Australia does equip graduates with the attributes required of professional librarians in their organisation, and that this does not depend on the education being at either of the two levels available for professional entry to the profession.

It is reasonable to conclude, therefore, that the overwhelming majority of employers believe that the education provided in LIS programs in Australia does equip graduates with the attributes required of professional librarians in their organisation, and that this does not depend on the level of the qualification.

It is a clear conclusion of this survey that employers in all types of library, and more especially in public and special libraries, prefer that the profession continues to provide a variety of entry levels through the recognition of both bachelor degrees and graduate diplomas in LIS as first professional qualifications. If this is accepted, then the survey provides some evidence to support the need to strengthen the curriculum, and enhance in all levels of courses the opportunities for LIS students to gain the experience and attributes which will help them become the kinds of graduates the profession seeks.

The findings of another recent Australian study exploring the current situation in education for information in Australia show

> support for the relevance of traditional subjects of information management or library and information science and expansion of core knowledge into behavioural aspects of information use, for the need for specializations or electives, for a stronger focus on digital libraries and issues in digitization, such as IP, copyright, integrity and authentication of information. (Yu & Davis, 2007).

Although curriculum was not intended as an issue for analysis in the survey under discussion in this article, a number of employers indicated that recent graduates are lacking in some areas of professional knowledge, in some interpersonal and generic skills and attributes, and that it is the knowledge and skills of the candidates (rather than the level of education) that can create difficulties for those recruiting LIS graduates. This survey supports the conclusions of the Yu & Davis study that there is a need for some reform of LIS education.

What this study suggests is that, for many employers, further attainment of generic graduate attributes would be an improvement, as would the valuing, in

curriculum, of people skills used in customer service, IT and web-based skills, and further management and supervision skills. There is a strong feeling from employers that all recent graduates require considerable further development in the workplace. It also indicates quite strongly that the level of professional qualification is not a major issue, and that both bachelor degrees and graduate diplomas in LIS are welcomed in all types of library. The major consideration for employers is having sufficient quality graduates to choose from, with factors such as experience, maturity and personal attributes weighing heavily in the selection of professional staff.

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Manifestations of metadata: from Alexandria to the Web – old is new again

Patricia Kennedy

This paper is a discussion of the use of metadata, in its various manifestations, to access information. Information management standards are discussed. The connection between the ancient world and the modern world is highlighted. Individual perspectives are paramount in fulfilling information seeking. Metadata is interpreted and reflected upon in a broad sense, using its literal meaning.

Introduction

Avise la fin. Consider the end (Latin motto).

Ideas of continuum and diversity provide a logical view of world. This is also the case for information management and use. Connection of people with ideas is a fundamental human activity. Metadata is not new! It was used in earliest times to store, access and retrieve collections of information or objects. Ideas within documents or objects can be viewed as an intangible entity given an identifiable format, with metadata as the abstract representation of the tangible.

Just as biodiversity applies to the variety of species in their relevant ecosystems in the natural world, diversity applies to human interactions and understanding within various circumstances. Same principle – different contexts. Human perspective in information seeking and use is assisted through metadata by using the surrogate or label or identifier for a resource such as a book, web page, image or object.

Definitions

Metadata is commonly and currently simply defined as structured data about data. 'Meta' is a prefix, from the Greek, meaning 'with' or 'after' added to the noun, 'data'. Accordingly, metadata is descriptive information about an object or resource. The term metadata is currently used for managing information available in an electronic format. However, the concepts and use of metadata are long-standing, ie cataloguing or indexing library, museum or gallery collections are centuries-old information management activities.

In the online environment, while metadata is most commonly used for information retrieval, it should be seen as equally important for the governance and administration of information resources. The more specific and authoritative Dublin Core definition states in part:

> The Dublin Core metadata standard is a simple yet effective element set for describing a wide range of networked resources . . . Another way to look at Dublin Core is as a 'small language for making a particular class of statements about resources. In this language, there are two classes of terms – elements (nouns) and qualifiers (adjectives) – which can be arranged into a simple pattern of statements. The resources themselves are the implied subjects in this language. (Dublin Core Metadata Initiative, http://dublincore.org/documents/usageguide/)

Tannenbaum (2002, p. 461) defines metadata as:

> The detailed description of the instance data; the format and characteristics of populated instance data; instances and values depend on the role of the metadata recipient. Examples of metadata include filenames, data element definitions, data element names, lengths, program names, and so on.

Caplan, in her overview of metadata, *Metadata fundamentals for all librarians,* clearly defines and explains metadata applications and implementations. Going beyond descriptive and administrative metadata such as Dublin Core and MARC, Caplan also explains other types of metadata such as structural metadata. The role of structural metadata includes representations of content, ie how content is to be displayed; relationships, ie. between physical files; and metadata for preservation purposes (Caplan 2003, p. 158).

Metadata definitions link the concept of metadata inclusion with information use – the key to the purpose of metadata.

Perspective

As a librarian involved in web publishing, my metadata perspective is most frequently that of subject analysis, the 'aboutness' of content being published. Discussions about information management with colleagues from other disciplines have proven interesting. A records manager legitimately takes the perspective that all information is activity based; related to a specific function of an organisation. A spatial data manager once challenged me to consider how all information is primarily geographically based; his perspective being geospatial. I have tested how these various points of view can be applied equally to all information – to be able to analyse and categorise information evenly according to varying perspectives – subject, ownership, geographical. Which is correct? All are and more! Acknowledging the importance of perspective is at the heart of effective facet analysis for metadata application and inclusion.

Tannenbaum's interpretation of metadata is from an information technology business analyst perspective, with a focus on objects and data analysis. This includes identifying labels for objects such as customers and stock; with the aims of inventory control. However, it is possible to extrapolate the principles of this body of theory into the equivalent specific information management perspectives of web publishing and library services.

Metadata examples

A library catalogue is a perfect and familiar example of metadata inclusion and use. Catalogue fields provide descriptive information about the item, including author, title, subject, publication and series. Objects in an art gallery (realia) have metadata, including the artist's name, date of creation, provenance of the object, its composition and subject. Web pages have metadata included with the resource or in an associated repository, created either as standard, calculated or entered values. Web metadata elements include creator, title, publisher, identifier, subject and type.

These examples fit the definition of the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) *Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR)*:

- to find entities that correspond to the user's stated search criteria (i.e., to locate either a single entity or a set of entities in a file or database as the result of a search using an attribute or relationship of the entity);

- to identify an entity (i.e., to confirm that the entity described corresponds to the entity sought, or to distinguish between two or more entities with similar characteristics);

- to select an entity that is appropriate to the user's needs (i.e., to choose an entity that meets the user's requirements with respect to content, physical format, etc., or to reject an entity as being inappropriate to the user's needs);

- to acquire or obtain access to the entity described (i.e., to acquire an entity through purchase, loan, etc., or to access an entity electronically through an online connection to a remote computer). (IFLA 1998, p. 90)

Essentially, metadata aims to connect a surrogate with the tangible.

Information standards

The use of standards facilitates consistency and allows data exchange. The international metadata standard for web content is the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative. Dublin Core is an example of an international interdisciplinary initiative, which involved collaboration between groups of researchers and practitioners.

National standards extend the international, with specifics relevant to local conditions. In Australia, the Australian Government Locator Service (AGLS) was published as an Australian Standard in 2002, as *AS 5044.1–2002 : AGLS Metadata element set – Reference description* and *AS 5044.2–2000: AGLS Metadata element set – Usage guide.* Other significant national standards are enhanced and managed by Dublin Core international affiliates, such as Finland and the United Kingdom.

More specific standards focus on local or discipline requirements. An example is the Queensland Government Information Standard *Metadata (IS34).* Specific disciplines such as education or mapping have specialised metadata standards such as edna (education) and ANZLIC (spatial).

The metadata standard for archival management is the Encoded Archival Description (EAD). In addition to descriptive and administrative metadata of collection aggregations, the EAD includes finding aids with vital provenance information and groupings such as series and container contents. (Caplan 2003, pp.88–98) The Metadata Encoding and Transmission Standard (METS) is an XML schema, which can combine aspects of structural metadata. (Caplan 2003, p. 162)

Traditional library cataloguing is based upon the International Standard Bibliographic Description (ISBD) Standards and explained in full with examples in the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules (AACR). (Caplan 2003, p. 55)

Crosswalking

Different metadata schemes have been developed and followed for different reasons, focussing on the relevant perspective. For holistic information management, it is possible to map metadata standards for both overlap and difference to meet the goals of data reuse and to indicate specificity. Mapping various metadata schemes is known as crosswalking. Metadata crosswalking provides a logical method to attain interoperability in cross platform or federated searching. It also encompasses the idea that metadata should not be recreated every time but cumulatively built upon for new purposes.

This information science concept of metadata crosswalking and reuse applies as much for business advantage as it does for research purposes. Tannenbaum explores the concepts of meta-metadata and metamodels within the business context and defines 'Metadata solution' in a similar way to crosswalking, as follows:

> An organized and integrated set of related metadata, logically connected but often physically separate, with common access points and methods. The solution can embrace one or more metadata stores with distinct or common metamodels and must be accessible to metadata suppliers and beneficiaries who may reside inside or outside the metadata solution architecture. (Tannenbaum 2002, p. 259)

Crosswalking of metadata facilitates interoperability for XML data transfer and exchange.

MARC

MARC, MAchine-Readable Cataloging, as encoded cataloguing, is the manifestation of metadata which led to the acceptance and ubiquity of online catalogues. As a representative record, MARC is explained in the frequently asked questions:

> It provides the mechanism by which computers exchange, use, and interpret bibliographic information, and its data elements make up the foundation of most library catalogs used today. (Library of Congress, Network Development and MARC Standards Office, http://www.loc.gov/marc/faq.html)

From the 1970s, the metadata of the MARC tags facilitated the functionality of online public access catalogues (OPACs), and other online modules such as acquisition and circulation. Resource sharing between libraries then became a professional reality with national bibliographies such as the Australian Bibliographic Network (ABN) and Kinetica (now Libraries Australia); although

these collaborative efforts were incomplete and necessarily dependent upon cooperation and contribution by libraries.

While many countries devised their own MARC Standards and specific formats, eg. CAN/MARC (Canada), UKMARC (United Kingdom) and AusMARC (Australia), with UNIMARC an interim unifying standard, the contemporary standard being used in Australia is MARC21. MARC tags can be crosswalked or matched to other descriptive formats for interoperability and data reuse. These tags include: Leader, Directory, Variable fields, Variable control fields, Variable data fields, Indicator positions, and Subfield codes.

Databases

Using acoustic couplers and modems to access online research databases was a significant step along the continuum of accessing information collections using metadata. This task has been considered highly skilled professional work for librarians who prided themselves on interpreting a research request and 'going online' on behalf of the client. The iterative nature of search refinements and high online charges involved the heuristics of information searching with evaluation, analysis and selection.

Database collections, marketed by commercial vendors such as Thomson Reuters' Dialog and RMIT's Informit, continue to provide authoritative and comprehensive access to content or to their surrogates. Increasingly, significant research databases are being made available on the Internet, free of charge.

Scientists, with their understanding of taxonomy, use metadata to organise information into database collections. This metadata is then used to facilitate searching allowing a researcher to extract relevant information. An example is Western Australia's FloraBase, a database of over 19,000 records with information about vascular flora. This database collocates pertinent information presented as text, hypertext, image and map. This use of the 'deep web' or the 'invisible web' is still vital for quality research results.

Publications databases

On many websites, publications databases are effectively quasi catalogues, organised by metadata. These listings allow web searchers to quickly access full text publications – which are increasingly published as html content but are still often published as PDF files.

An example is the Search Publications on the Queensland Environmental Protection Agency's website, where it is possible to search by title or series title, by subject (a list of 29 subjects) and by type of publication (including Books, Reports and Plans, Guidelines, Policies). (http://www.epa.qld.gov. au/publications) Similar listings are available on the websites of Australian Government Department of the Environment and Heritage DEH Publications, where publications are organised by subject and type, (http://www.deh.gov.au/ about/publications/index.html), and from New South Wales National Parks and Wildlife Service Staff Research Papers, where the papers can be accessed by subject matter, author or date. (http://www.nationalparks.nsw.gov.au/npws.nsf/ Content/Staff+research+papers+by+author)

In these three examples, metadata has been assigned via allocation of categorisation of the publications.

Indexing

Providing an index is a metadata related activity. Having an alphabetical A to Z listing, in the back of a book, for a journal volume or for a web site provides an accurate access mechanism for an information user. A to Z web indexes are deceptively simple and extremely popular! They are easy to use by merely scanning a list and may provide a high or low degree of granularity.

While indexes can be automatically generated, such concordances lack analysis and systematic organisation. Ultimately, the value of a good index is the human element who, in the organisational context, or with subject and professional expertise, is involved in its creation.

An index on a website meets the diversity principle by catering for alternatives in information seeking patterns, providing an alternative to searching or browsing. An example is the Queensland Environmental Protection Agency's Site Index, which has approximately 1000 terms listed: (http://www.epa.qld.gov.au/site_ information/site_index/).

Three indexing features are:

- the use of scientific names in addition to common names, eg
  B   bilby *Macrotis lagotis*
  M   *Macrotis lagotis*
- the use of *see* references to direct information seekers to another reference, eg,
  L   Lawn Hill National Park *see* Boodjamulla (Lawn Hill) National Park

- and some use of inverted terms, eg.
  - D   dogs, barking
  - B   barking dogs.

This index provides valid multiple paths for seeking information and provides value to users by providing an alternative simple structure.

While manual creation of a site index is initially time consuming, its maintenance can be incorporated at the time of website updates and inclusion of new content. A to Z is a logical metadata structure, known to all.

Image management

Media asset management requires metadata for informed description and retrieval. The saying, 'A picture paints a thousand words' implies that an image can stand alone, without descriptive text or identification. However, an image requires identifying information to make sense of, give context to and legitimise the usage.

An image does not stand alone. Metadata is an integral aspect of identifying, locating, and using images, especially digital images. In addition to enabling resource discovery of digital images, metadata facilitates collection management activities and specifies relationships between images.

> …digital images cannot be directly located or searched; this must be done indirectly through the information that describes them—their metadata—created either manually or with automatic indexing software. A digital image not associated with metadata will be difficult to find or identify and is likely to become useless very quickly. (Besser 2003 p. 3)

Mandatory metadata elements for images include: creator details, ie. photographer (even if specified as unknown); contextual information such as title, description, subject, location, date; technical data such as format variations and identifiers; ownership details such as publisher, copyright, usage and usage restrictions. Metadata can be automatically captured and held within the properties of a digital image; stored in an associated document such as a spreadsheet or a web page; or entered into a repository such as a database. Photographic integrity is improved with the inclusion of metadata.

Controlled vocabularies

Thesauri and controlled vocabularies facilitate control, consistency and choice in choosing appropriate terms when assigning subject headings. The traditional

structure of a thesaurus includes a hierarchy of Authorised Terms, Broader Terms (BT), Narrower Terms (NT), Related Terms (RT), Scope Notes (SN) and References such as Used For (UF).

Controlled vocabularies vary in their specificity and granularity and include:

- broad subject headings lists
  eg. Library of Congress Authorities (http://authorities.loc.gov/)
- focused subject thesauri
  eg. Australian Pictorial Thesaurus (http://www.picturethesaurus.gov.au/)
- functional thesauri
  eg. Keyword AAA (http://www.naa.gov.au/recordkeeping/control/ KeyAAA/summary.html).

Folksonomies

A new metadata development – folksonomies – has occurred at the extreme end, far removed from controlled vocabularies and standardised schema. Folksonomies are informal social categories, assigned by information seekers who tag developed content or retrieved content as they choose, thus developing a personalised metadata scheme. The new hybrid term, 'folksonomy', was coined by Thomas Vander Wal (2007) and is the metadata philosophy (not scheme!) for the new resource sharing environments such as the image repository Flickr. In an anthropological sense, control is held by the 'folks' who own and use.

This concept of personalised metadata is also being proposed as being applicable in the intranet environment whereby information users can arrange access to their own customised set of documents, by developing and arranging their own scheme (albeit after locating content via a traditional taxonomy or architecture).

Libraries of Alexandria

The ancient Library of Alexandria was a beacon of learning as a centre for teaching and research in the ancient world. The ancient research centre included the Mouseion (temple of the muses) and the Serapeion (the daughter library). The collection included scrolls, manuscripts, papyrus and parchment. An annotated bibliography of the ancient Alexandria Library collection was developed by the library assistant, Callimachus of Cyrene. (MacLeod 2004, p.5)

This record of ancient Alexandrian Greek literature is the world's first significant catalogue.

Robert Barnes in his chapter, 'Cloistered bookworms in the chicken-coop of the muses: the ancient Library of Alexandria', explains how the catalogue, *The Pinakes,* was organised by subject and included Greek poetry; prose – history, rhetoric, philosophy, medicine, law; and a miscellaneous section. While fragments from the ancient world are only indicative, the metadata Callimachus recorded included author, biography, bibliography, opening text and length. The full title of this record of the collection was:

> …Pinakes (or Tables) of those who were eminent in every branch of learning, and what they wrote, in 120 volumes. (Barnes in MacLeod 2004, p. 69)

The research of the tutors and their scholars, who were based in Alexandria, was facilitated by this organised record of learning.

The modern Alexandria Library Project, the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, is seeking to renew the existence and status of the ancient Library of Alexandria. Built near the site of the ancient library, the new library's fascinating and unique design of a solar disc facing the sea, is emblematic of openness of access to knowledge and learning. The collection includes approximately 8 million items together with a significant online archive.

The Bibliotheca Alexandrina aspires to be:

- 'The World's window on Egypt
- Egypt's window on the world
- A leading institution of the digital age, and above all
- A centre for learning, tolerance, dialogue and understanding.'

(The Bibliotheca Alexandrina, http://www.bibalex.org/English/Overview/overview.htm)

Just as the ancient library was a centre for gathering and talking, teaching and learning, the modern Bibliotheca Alexandrina is more than a library collection. The new Library of Alexandria includes specialised collections, internet archive, museums, galleries, exhibitions, research institutes and a conference centre. This project, which receives international support, is symbolic of the continuum of the use of organised information from earliest times to the modern day.

Furthermore, the ideology of flow of ideas from organised information is represented in the *Alexandria Manifesto on libraries: the information society in action*, adopted in Alexandria, Egypt at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, on 11 November 2005, which states:

> Libraries and information services contribute to the sound operation of the inclusive information society.

> They enable intellectual freedom by providing access to information, ideas and works of imagination in any medium and regardless of frontiers.

WCMS

A Web Content Management System (WCMS) is an information management system, which manages web published content by separating the design from the content. The system identifies and manages both content and structure. Key components are document templates and scripting language, which combine to present the web content. Publishing is generally distributed, rather than centralised, with workflows and levels of authorisation. The storage and archiving of content is controlled via system processes.

Metadata ideally facilitates the administration and governance of the content. Examples of the use of metadata in content management are the identification of content by specifying content owners and dates for validity or review, as well as management of assets or objects such as images and downloadable documents.

Content management systems available are proprietary or open source. They may be implemented as part of an overall Enterprise Content Management (ECM) or as incremental modules. Metadata is increasingly being viewed as integral to content management, with an increased understanding being demonstrated by vendors, implementers and content owners. This includes understanding of thesauri and knowledge of metadata standards.

Boiko in his diagram, 'The wheel of content management', illustrates metadata as the rim of the wheel, being the control mechanism of content management. (Boiko p.497) He uses another structural metaphor to illustrate the essential nature of metadata in content management:

> More than anything else, the metadata behind a CMS is what defines the system. The set of names and relationships that a metatorial framework contains are the skeleton on which you hang the content. Without this structure, the content is as formless and flaccid as a body without bones. (Boiko 2005, p. 491)

While Dublin Core/AGLS metadata represents the control implicit in standards compliance, many modern content management systems allow a measure of client autonomy regarding the inclusion of metadata. File structure and information architecture recede in importance as metadata driven systems retrieve relevant documents from a data repository.

> This metadata-driven model represents a profound change in how web sites are created and managed. Instead of asking, 'Where do I place this document in the taxonomy?' we can now ask, 'How do I describe this document?' The software and vocabulary systems take care of the rest. (Rosenfeld and Morville 1998, p. 177)

Accordingly, metadata is the key to accessing the content.

Metator

An interesting new occupational title is emerging – 'metator' (no, not the blue-legged grasshopper!) – a hybrid of metadata and editor. This need for editorial oversight and quality assurance of activities associated with inclusion of metadata is increasingly being identified. With a skill set including information retrieval and cataloguing, librarians are ideally suited to working as metators, '… joining the ranks of the *digerati* and applying their incredibly valuable skills to digital information.' (Boiko 2005, p. 166) The job of a metator is similar to that of an editor in the relevant context. While some metadata capture is automated at a system level, '… a *metator* is a person who does the metatorial processing that authors and conversion systems can't do.' (Boiko 2005, p. 511)

A metator uses a metatorial guide to manage content types, elements, element types, element values, usage rules, responsibilities and change rules; and to address management issues of review, retirement, creation rates and growth. (Boiko 2005, p. 513) Encompassing the traditional facets of description, retrieval and administration:

> Metatorial processing accomplishes the following tasks (Boiko 2005, p. 508):

- Ensuring the completeness of metadata

- Enforcing the consistency of metadata

- Ensuring that you can manage the content

- Ensuring that you can access the content

- Ensuring that you can appropriately target the content.

Information architecture

Metadata activities associated with developing an information architecture for electronic content are direct descendants of the Alexandrian *Pinakes* of Callimachus. Two pertinent aspects of the definition of information architecture are:

> The combination of organization, labeling, and navigation schemes within an information system

and

> The art and science of structuring and classifying web sites and intranets to help people find and manage information. (Rosenfeld and Morville 1998, p. 4)

Information architecture is cataloguing by another name within a modern context, using traditional principles of scalability and extensibility – with a modicum of commonsense and organisational fit. Issues such as granularity and specificity should be considered. (Rosenfeld and Morville 1998, p. 94) To iteratively improve the quality of information architecture, website headings can be refined by analysing web metrics.

The challenge in developing an information architecture for electronic content is to organise a unique taxonomy of labels (representing objects or electronic assets) which is based on topic, generally subject matter, and is focussed on audience. (A labelling approach to be used with caution is that based solely on author or the silo approach of organisational alignment.) As information seeking, regardless of physical context, is generally iterative and interactive, grouping of related objects facilitates associative learning. (Rosenfeld and Morville 1998, p.59) This is the theory behind both library catalogue subject access and website information architecture.

Information architecture and WCMS metadata activities include both the descriptive metadata (aligned with cataloguing and classification of information) and the administrative metadata (associated with provenance issues such as content ownership and review). Accordingly, 'Content management and information architecture are really two sides of the same coin.' (Rosenfeld and Morville 1998, p. 11), with metadata the binding and enabling force.

Facet analysis

SR Ranganathan, the Indian mathematician and librarian, developed five enduring concepts of library science philosophy. These are:

1. Books are for use
2. Every reader his book
3. Every book its reader
4. Save the time of the reader
5. A library is a growing organism.

Along with this philosophy, Ranganathan elaborated and advanced five principles for facet analysis, PMEST:

- Personality
- Matter
- Energy
- Space
- Time.

Ellis and Vasconcelos (1999, p. 8) discuss Ranganathan's contemporary relevance and continuing applicability of his principles to the modern world.

> If Ranganathan were alive today he would be aware of the potential of his ideas for searching and organising WWW materials. Indeed, the genius of Ranganathan is attested to by the very portability of his ideas across time, technology and cultures, simply because they address the very foundations of the business of effective information storage and retrieval.

The application of Ranganathan's principles for metadata facet analysis remain relevant and can be successfully applied to the organisation of web based content. Facet analysis is the key to creating a successful information architecture or a site index or subject metadata.

Provenance

Provenance is an interesting aspect of metadata analysis. This applies most specifically to objects and items from the world of the arts, whereby an aspect of the item being described is the history of its ownership and custodianship. This is less often encountered in libraries. However, this metadata facet interestingly was noted by the ancient Library of Alexandria where manuscripts held on the ships passing through the port of Alexandria were confiscated and acquired for the Alexandrian collection. These were described in the catalogue as being 'from the ships'. (MacLeod 2004, p. 5) While the items confiscated were supposed to be copied and the originals returned, often this did not happen and the originals were retained.

The existence of identifying and explanatory information about the exhibits was one criterion for inclusion in the exhibition, *National Treasures from Australia's Great Libraries.* In her exhibition talk at the State Library of Queensland on 7 December 2006, Dianne Byrne, the Heritage Collections Librarian, explained how the relevance and significance of an item is enhanced by its story – its metadata. The why and who of an exhibit resonates as clearly as the what. Whether the item is Mary Watson's diary, the leather suitcase used to transfer oil mid-flight, Ned Kelly's helmet, Henry Lawson's collar, or Captain Cook's *Endeavour Journal* (edited and amended), along with the secret additional instructions from the Admiralty – the associated metadata intensifies understanding and provides context.

Annotations

Personalised comments added by library staff or professional researchers contribute to the continuum of value by adding contextual metadata. Nicholson Baker discusses this theme in his *New Yorker* article 'Discards' where he examines the loss of this contextual information and critical analysis as a product of the replacement of the card catalogue with online catalogues. His lament includes the loss of '…additional subject headings or enriching notes of various kinds' (Baker 1994, p. 66) and highlights '…the irreplaceable intelligence of the librarians who worked on them' (Baker 1994, p.86). The additional quality of annotation led to the quality of retrieval.

Metadata, as value added catalogue entries, facilitates use by remote users when accessing catalogues via the Internet. These value added catalogue entries include abstracts, contents, summaries, reviews and notes fields. A remote access catalogue, with enhanced metadata, supplements the role of reference librarian. An excellent example of the improvements in metadata in web-based catalogues is eLibCat, the Library Catalogue of Brisbane City Council Library Services, where abstracts are increasingly being added to the catalogue records. This improved facility allows a library patron to make informed decisions for selecting and placing holds and for requesting specific advice.

Disintermediation

The term 'disintermediation' has been used by Walt Crawford and Michael Gorman, who have identified the concept whereby the role of information retrieval has shifted to end users, no longer requiring an intermediary. However, metadata may be an intangible aspect mitigating such disintermediation.

The metadata is a part of the information chain which allows the connection between item sought and item retrieved.

Conclusion

Metadata is integral to the resource it is associated with. Whether in word processing document properties or in structured Dublin Core complete metatags, whether in geographical co-ordinates or in the description of an image, whether in keyword and description metatags or a library catalogue record – metadata represents attributes of the information. Metadata is pervasive and inextricably associated with the resource. It is the intangible aspect of information, which, when correlated with the physical representation of the information in its container, extends and contributes to the human experience.

Information is for use now and for preservation for future generations. Be a modern web 'metator', as well as a documentalist in the spirit and practice of Callimachus. Librarians should be encouraged in becoming involved in these modern manifestations of metadata. There is huge scope for information specialists to engage with collections of information to achieve organisational outcomes as well as meeting the personal goals of professional practice.

Avise la fin. Consider the end.

Consider who uses information and consider how information is used. Consider how a professional approach to information organisation provides the nexus between an information resource and an information seeker, regardless of place and time.

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Exhibition

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What the politicians think of the Australian Parliamentary Library

Roxanne Missingham

Parliamentary libraries provide access to information and analysis and advice to members of parliament and their staff. The need for high quality, impartial and timely information is critical in the parliamentary environment, and it is a challenge to balance these requirements in information delivery. This paper summarises from audio transcripts stakeholder perspectives on the Australian Parliamentary Library from the Joint Chairs of the Joint Standing Committee on the Parliamentary Library, Leader of the Australian Democrats and Clerks of the Senate and House of Representatives. Feedback from a recent client survey and focus groups is included, together with reflections on how strategic planning in the Australian Parliamentary Library should address the issues identified. These are the same issues faced by all research libraries.

Introduction

Parliamentary libraries in Australia have supported parliaments and democracy since 1840. They have significant collections and increasingly offer a vast array of online knowledge products. In addition, many provide extensive research services based on professional expertise across relevant subject areas. Understanding the development of these libraries helps set a context for the assessment of current services.

The first parliamentary library was established in Australia in 1840 to serve the Legislative Council of New South Wales. Early parliamentary libraries provided quite a different range of services from those offered in the twenty-first century.

> Parliamentary libraries grew up in the nineteenth century tradition of the cultured gentlemen's library and were, for many years, little more than well appointed clubs where members could read their favourite newspapers and find the occasional literary allusion or quotation for speeches. (Biskup, 1994 p.280)

As Australian state and federal parliaments were established, so were their libraries. The Australian Parliamentary Library is a relatively recent organisation, but one which has seen considerable development in its 107 years. Created in 1901, the Library was launched on 9 May in the Exhibition Building in Melbourne.

Sir Frederick Holder was the first chair of the Joint Parliamentary Library Committee, and in 1907 he outlined the objective:

> The Library Committee is keeping before it the ideal of building up, for the time when Parliament shall be established in the Federal Capital, a great Public Library on the lines of the world-famed Library of Congress at Washington; such a library, indeed, as shall be worthy of the Australian Nation; the home of the literature, not of a State, or of a period, but of the world, and of all time. (Burmester 1981)

This early library developed into the Australian Parliamentary and National Libraries, separating in 1960 with the passing of the *National Library Act*.

Today the Australian Parliamentary Library provides traditional and tailored services to members of Parliament, answering approximately 20,000 research enquiries each year. In 2006–07 it produced around 250 publications and the Library's publications and self-help services were accessed approximately 4.2 million times. In addition to developing an extensive online collection for use by clients, including digital copies of radio and television news and current affairs programs, newspaper articles from the print press and free and subscribed resources, the library maintains a print collection of key resources.

Parliamentary libraries

Parliamentary libraries play a special role in their nations and parliaments. Miller (2004, p.1) has noted that 'Information is important for the functioning of democratic legislatures'. Research is particularly important:

> Good research and information can improve the effectiveness of the legislature along several dimensions… First, research can improve decision making on specific policy issues faced by the legislature… At the next level, research can help improve the institutional dynamics within the legislature… At a political level, the use of high-quality information by the legislature can add to the perceived legitimacy of its actions in an increasingly technocratic era… At the constitutional level, research for the legislature can position it to play a more active role in the policy process of the nation. Robinson (2001:p.561)

In 2005, the role of the Australian Parliamentary Librarian was embodied in legislation. The Act provides for high quality information, analysis and advice

to Senators and Members of the House of Representatives in support of their parliamentary and representational roles. This function must be performed:

a. in a timely, impartial and confidential manner;

b. while maintaining the highest standards of scholarship and integrity;

c. on the basis of equality of access for all Senators, Members of the House of Representatives, parliamentary committees and staff acting on behalf of Senators, Members or parliamentary committees; and

d. having regard to the independence of Parliament from the Executive Government of the Commonwealth.
    Parliamentary Service Act (1999, section 38B (2))

Stakeholders

Serving the 226 members of the Australian Parliament and through them the nation is the core activity of the Parliamentary Library, and independence of the parliament requires a responsibility for parliamentary services which includes awareness of political issues and the separation of power. As Adams notes, (Adams, 2002, p.47) this is embedded within the operation of the Australian Parliament. It was perhaps most clearly articulated as 'Parliament must be master of its own household' (Senate Select Committee, 1921, p. x).

The Parliament contributes to the direction of the library through the Joint Standing Committee whose terms of reference are to:

a. consider and report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives on any matters relating to the Parliamentary Library referred to it by the President or the Speaker;

b. provide advice to the President and the Speaker on matters relating to the Parliamentary Library;

c. provide advice to the President and the Speaker on an annual resource agreement between the Parliamentary Librarian and the Secretary of the Department of Parliamentary Services; and

d. receive advice and reports, including an annual report, directly from the Parliamentary Librarian on matters relating to the Parliamentary Library.
    (Joint Standing Committee, 2005)

In addition to taking advice from the Committee, the Library seeks ongoing client feedback and conducts a formal evaluation once each Parliament. Stakeholder feedback is vital for service planning.

In 2007, the library undertook a client based assessment, including a survey and focus groups. (Australia. Parliamentary Library, 2007) In addition, the Joint Chairs of the Parliamentary Library, the representative of the minor parties and the Clerks gave their perspectives on the Library, its role and services in presentations to the Association of Parliamentary Libraries of Australasia meeting in Canberra at Parliament House in 2007. These presentations gave rare insights into the politician's view of service.

Stakeholders' perspectives place the library's role within the context of the parliament and Australian democracy. They also cover strategic and management roles. These views are detailed below, categorised into the Library's major issues.

Role of the Australian Parliamentary Library

Senator Allison, Leader of the Australian Democrats and member of the Joint Standing Committee on the Parliamentary Library noted:

> According to a paper presented to a parliamentary library conference in Edinburgh in 2003 by Philipp Harfst and Kai Uwe Schnapp:
>
> The primary means to secure accountability and transparency from a parliament's point of view are:
>
> • an efficient parliamentary timetable (enough time for proper consideration of legislation and for scrutiny of government policies),
>
> • an effective committee system (with independence of action, quality staff, and enough resourcing to hold public inquiries and present reports which are guaranteed a government response),
>
> • a robust parliamentary library and research service (able to provide independent, quality, impartial information, analysis and advice to MPs across the political spectrum) and a timely Hansard service of plenary and committee proceedings.
>
> The degree to which these are accepted as givens of the parliament is a major indicator of the parliament's independence of the executive and a parliament's capacity to hold the executive to account (Allison, 2007).

J. Cronin, MP and Chair of the Standing Committee on Transport, South African Parliament, has also noted that libraries are part of the capacity building required for parliaments to operate effectively (Cronin, 2007).

Mr Evans, Clerk of the Senate commented:

> Some of you may have heard an account, which may or may not be apocryphal, of an incident in a certain northern state during the rule of a certain long-serving

and powerful premier. An opposition member of the state parliament quoted some research provided by the parliamentary library to make out a case against some activity of the government.

According to the story, the parliamentary librarian was summoned to the office of the great man, who advised: 'Listen, libraries is for lendin' books. You stick to lendin' books, and you won't get into any trouble.' It may be apocryphal, but it has a certain ring of authenticity about it.

Fortunately for the health of our parliamentary institutions, parliamentary libraries have not taken this advice. They have continued to provide members of parliament with facts and analysis. By doing so, they necessarily live dangerously. The holders of power do not necessarily welcome facts and analysis which do not support their cause. They spend a great deal of time and energy suppressing and manipulating facts and analysis which appear to threaten their hold on power. Anyone who produces facts and analysis contrary to that consideration is likely to be unpopular with the powers that be.

We live in the age of spin-doctoring and information management. It seems that there are no objective facts or impartial analysis anymore; all information is ideologically determined. In recent times, some holders of power have openly stated that they can ignore the reality pointed out by their opponents, because they have the ability to make their own reality.

In spite of this, facts and analysis remain effective in making the holders of power accountable. There was a recent small demonstration of this point, which involved one of these rare occasions on which a parliamentary library was identified as the source of inconvenient information.

The current government proposes to sell Medibank Private. A Parliamentary Library paper was published suggesting that this proposed course is of dubious legality, and this paper attracted considerable publicity. It had the potential to undermine the sale in the market, as buyers would hesitate to take part in a sale which may be challenged in the courts. Also, anyone who floats anything on the stock market is required by law to reveal any possible legal problems. The government then voluntarily produced the advice of its own legal advisers indicating that the sale would be legal. (It is wonderful how government legal advisers are always of the considered opinion that whatever government proposes to do is lawful.) It was pointed out that this publication of the advice rather undermined the claim that advice should not be disclosed, or only in exceptional circumstances. Since that time, government refusals to produce advice have been couched in different terms. They have frankly conceded that the rule now is that advice will not be disclosed unless it suits the government to do so. So one parliamentary library paper changed the language, and probably eventually the balance, of interaction between the legislature and the executive. (Evans, 2007)

These comments place the Australian Parliamentary Library in the context of providing not only 'frank and fearless advice' but of being what some governments might describe as a 'necessary evil' and others a fundamental tool for ensuring that parliaments operate effectively. One of the little known aspects of parliamentary libraries is that they are most heavily used by non-government parties and independent members. This is generally a result of government members having access to government information resources. All Commonwealth senators and members, however, use the Australian Parliamentary Library. An analysis of use has found that the offices of every Member of Parliament have used the research service every year for the past three years.

The Hon. Dick Adams, Joint Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on the Parliamentary Library, also placed the library within a national context:

> In 1995 Bill Hayden wrote 'Democracy depends on the free flow of ideas to flourish. By enabling members to access quickly the latest resources of information, continuing developments, published statistical material and academic research, the diversity of opinion and alternative point of view and to do so analytically and with considerable sensitivity to differing political outlooks the Parliamentary Research Service has made, and will continue to make an invaluable contribution to our free and liberal society.' And I think Bill summed that up rather well and I think most of us would commend him on those words.

> I believe that the contribution of the library goes beyond the walls of the parliament and to the nation itself and libraries facilitate communication, the ideas that need to go out there to be talked about in pubs and clubs and in workplaces and in kitchen tables. Libraries are where some of these things start, where the ideas have to come out of the paper, out of electronic machines these days. And we need to make sure that people have that opportunity to gain that information, to have the opportunity, and of course with the internet the speed of information exchange is enormous but we still need libraries, we need librarians, so changing roles, we need them to give us guides, to guide us through some of the enormous amount of information which I'm sure the politicians that work in this building would tell you. We need it to teach us also the latest methods of how to retrieve that information, how to get that information together and how to get the elusive facts of course that you can whack the other side with and get above everybody else.

> The library here has supported my participation in Australian democracy and its need to be independent is fundamental to the democratic process of this country. In March 2005 I said, 'I believe it is vital that the Library and its Research Service be seen as completely independent of government of either persuasion.' It has also to be seen as independent, no one should be in a position to criticise a researcher should that researcher be critical of aspects of government policy. (Adams, 2007)

Senator Allison has also commented:

> As the leader of a party whose whole raison d'etre is holding the executive to account, I am therefore very interested in hanging on to a robust parliamentary library and research service and that's why I asked for a spot on the Parliamentary Library Committee formed late last year. Putting in place the mechanisms to keep governments accountable is of limited interest to government members and often to the opposition who hope to soon be in government so it was important for the cross bench to be represented.
>
> The Democrats – all four of us now – are fully engaged in the business of parliament – on every bill, in the vast majority of inquiries, in procedures of the Senate and in safeguarding the parliament's ability to bring to bear the checks and balances on the executive of government, of whatever persuasion. People often ask, how can you possibly be across all the issues within your portfolios – mine are Treasury, PM&C, Energy and Greenhouse, Schools, Health and Nuclear. (And right now I should be doing media on Minister Downer's stated intention to ask cabinet if we can sell uranium to India – that country that took up nuclear weapons and refuses to sign the NPT.)
>
> My answer is always that this would be impossible without the parliamentary library. I go on to explain that it is so much more than a place with librarians and books, that crucial to our grasp of the substance of legislation (particularly those that don't perhaps warrant an inquiry) is the analytical research capacity of the library. I tell them our library is not a creature of the executive of government and is free to provide independent advice to members of parliament, from whatever political party, that it can be relied upon, that it is timely and that there are no restraints on what I can ask for by way of this advice.
>
> I also tell them that the parliamentary library is crucial to democracy because the vast majority of its advice is also available to anyone who cares to get on to its website. (Allison, 2007)

Members of Parliament: diverse needs, many pressures

Senators and Members join the parliament with a variety of experiences and face many different demands from the parliament, constituents and their party. The 2007 client assessment identified that increasingly time pressures were affecting all Senators and Members, their staff and committee staff. Committees provide the opportunity for in-depth investigation of issues and have become increasingly important in the parliamentary process (Halligan, Miller and Power, 2007). They have also meant additional work for members of

parliament. Adams, Allison and Trood all outlined the pressures on their time from committee, electoral, party and other parliamentary work.

Senator Trood, Joint Chair of the Joint Standing Committee on the Parliamentary Library, noted that his work also included representing Ministers and dealing with lobbyists. He said:

> But the committee work is a central part of the Senate's activity and that—from my perspective—is a very interesting part of it. I'm a member of the two forms of committees in the building: the Senate Committee and the Joint Committees. The Senate Committee: I'm a member of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee not surprisingly and also the Legal and Constitutional Affairs Committee. And a member of a couple of other joint committees ... I'm also on the Joint Committee for Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade. (Trood, 2007)

Many electorates present diverse issues and their representatives have broad responsibilities:

> I represent 62 per cent of the island of Tasmania so it's a big whack of it and lots of little groups as I said – no big cities thank God, all smaller towns and smaller cities, lot of towns, not cities. So that keeps me very busy and because they are a diverse lot and it's a diverse economy and lots of different things from fishing, to energy generation, to forestry, to farming, to tourism. So there are a lot of different issues involved.

> I've made, I see over 350 speeches in the House and spoken extensively on many, many committees and I've sat on many committees in the Parliament. In the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Employment, Education and Training; Transport and Communications and Infrastructure; Long Term Strategies which was a great one with Barry Jones and Barry's great ability to seek the future; the Library Committee, I think since 1996 which was a long time ago; and Primary Industries, Resources and Rural and Regional Affairs; Primary Industries and Regional Services and that committee is now Agriculture, Fishing and Forestry; and the Industry and Resources Committee, plus publications. I also sat on the Joint Statutory Committee on the broadcasting of Parliamentary Proceedings; the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties which I've been on since it started in 1996; I did a term on the Migration Committee and Select Committee on the Republic Referendum for a short time. (Adams, 2007)

Senators and Members also come to parliament with very different knowledge, experiences and expertise. Senator Trood arrived with specialist policy expertise:

> This is my fourth career. I began modestly, I think I can say, at Qantas shortly after school. I quickly abandoned that for the law and I practised law for a bit and my most recent incarnation before I came to the Senate was as an academic. I was

Associate Professor of International Relations at Griffith University in Brisbane where I taught graduate and undergraduate classes, my main field was Australian foreign policy, Australia's relations with Asia, Asia-Pacific security, international organisations, the whole bundle of things that relate to international relations.

And for my sins I was for about a decade at Griffith, the Director of a small research centre, the Centre for the Study of Australia-Asia Relations, known happily as CSAAR, which did research, and I must say I'm proud of the very distinguished list of publications that we undertook, most of which I hope, I'm sure are in this library and some of you will be familiar with them I hope because they've made an important contribution to Australia's – in particular – Australia's engagement with Asia and there is a … there's a set of memoirs there from people in the foreign service and the like that I think have made a very important contribution to Australian letters. (Trood, 2007)

The Hon. Dick Adams came with a different background:

I also noted that in my first speech that it was a struggle and that I had struggled with literacy and that I'd left school when I was 15 and spent then some years later, when I became a union organiser, realising that I needed to improve my basic learning skills of reading and writing and that I spent seven years at a woman's kitchen table one night a week learning to read and write and become reasonably efficient in being able to carry out my work and take on politicians and try to achieve policy changes.

I also was able to pass English at matriculation level and achieve something which I achieved that I was very proud of doing. But I think, I mention this because in those days I moved to Hobart in the early seventies to – just before Gough Whitlam was elected – to work for the butchers' union as a union organiser. Butchers worked early of a morning in those days – anyway when you used to get butchers – we don't have many butchers, supermarkets have taken over, but I used to work very early and then I'd finish about eleven o'clock which gave me an opportunity to, I was striving to learn about politics and economics and lots of other things and the state library was a great access for me to go and spend several hours there of a morning several days a week reading and improving my knowledge base. So libraries mean a lot to me in that sense.

They also led me to, you know, reading to become one of my favourite pastimes and I love history and still take on history as my main subject I think and is something that I really, really enjoy being a part of. (Adams, 2007)

Significantly, the Library is able to provide quality support to the diverse needs of Senators and Members. The success of the library is reflected in the results of the 2007 client survey which found that overall, clients who responded to the

survey were very satisfied with library services. The satisfaction rate increased slightly compared to the previous client survey (89% as compared to 85%). Most significantly, 99% of those who responded expressed the view that they would recommend the service to colleagues. (Australia. Parliamentary Library, 2007)

Senator Trood noted:

> The library undertook the survey early this year. The last time a survey was done was 2002 I think and so we hadn't done one for five years or so. It was an online or print survey and not only was there a survey document, there were focus groups that followed-up to try and get a sense of the way in which the library services were being used. It was a survey for essentially all users of the library, so senators and members and their staff, people within the departments of the library and all of the people in the building essentially who make use of the library services – and outside of course, people in electorate offices, my staff, members' staff and so on.

> We had, I think, 223 responses to the survey and happily for a co-chair of the library committee the library services were regarded as being – the people who use the library services is a better way to put it – regarded themselves as very satisfied. The figure there was 89 per cent of the respondents regarded themselves as satisfied with the library services.

> I note Dick that this is an increase. The last time the survey – and I think we probably need to take credit for this – it's up from 85 per cent from last time. So the four per cent increase – as you know politicians pay a lot of interest to percentages – so I think Dick and I … although he's been on the Library Committee a long while, I think it's only a relatively short time he's been co-chair so I don't see why we shouldn't take credit for this.

> And more happily perhaps, 99 per cent of the people who responded said they'd be prepared to refer the library services to their colleagues so I suppose that's encouraging.

> The clients who responded were very much aware of the range of services which the library offers. And 80 per cent agreed or strongly agreed that they met their particular needs. (Trood, 2007)

Shaping future directions

The Parliamentary Library is committed to ongoing service improvement. The 2007 client assessment was conducted to:

a. understand key issues in the information needs and preferences of clients of the Parliamentary Library

b. review the extent to which current services meet these needs, and the value of our services to clients

c. seek feedback on areas where services should be improved, changed or introduced

d. establish an information base to ensure that efficient use is made of Library resources to deliver service in accord with our clients' priorities, and

e. consider the information environment and position the Library to successfully provide quality services in accordance with its legislative requirement under the *Parliamentary Service Act 1999*.

Senator Trood remarked:

But of course there's no point in a survey unless it seeks to uncover some of the problems or the issues that might confront libraries. And there was a range of issues which people expressed as being a matter of concern. And perhaps I can just mention those very briefly.

First of all the desire or a need for greater consistency in the provision of services, particularly in relation to communication between the Library and its clients. Consistency in the delivery of services was an issue that emerged. And tailoring responses to the clients' needs, there's some suggestion that we might be able to do that somewhat better.

Secondly, a broad expression of concern about the timeliness of some of the Library's activities or the Library publications and in particular in relation to the *Bills Digest;* the real challenge of course in parliamentary libraries is getting the *Bills Digest* out so we know what legislation is about; I suspect that's a common problem for every parliamentary library in the country and perhaps around the known democratic world.

Thirdly, better communication with clients to improve their understanding of the Library's services.

Fourth, improved online services. Of course increasingly we are making demands for information via our computers, whether we are in the building or at our electorate offices and there was some expression about that particularly in relation to our Media Monitoring Service which is now being extended.

Fifth, a need to improve the online services, particularly to get them down to the desktop so not only to have them in the Library here if they might be accessible, but in the offices at the desktop so they are readily available when needed.

And finally, an improved means of letting clients know which particular services were available from the Library, what resources were relevant to them; I think this is a matter of the Library doing a bit of marketing of its services and the kind of things that one can draw on.

But as you can see the, for the most part the Library received very encouraging support. And we draw from this some priorities for the next year or so and of course we can draw them further out. There is a need to focus on client service and quality. Improving the collection, of course is always a challenge. The services to desktop I think is a priority for the next 12 months. And collaboration, linking libraries up more effectively which seems almost an impossible task because I know how well linked libraries are linked these days but if we can take that further then it'll be better for parliamentarians in this building anyway. And of course one can't avoid the challenge which I suspect is common to all of us, the need for funding and how we're going to sustain funding in the context of tighter budgets and increasing demands for all sorts of things. (Trood, 2007)

Oversight of the Library

Given the importance of the Library's role, and the independence of parliament from the executive, oversight of the Library is complex. The Parliamentary Librarian is a statutory officer, responsible to the Joint Standing Committee on the Parliamentary Library and the Presiding Officers (Speaker of the House of Representatives and President of the Senate), as well as to the Secretary of the Department of Parliamentary Services for the use of resources under an annual *Resource agreement*.

Comments from the Joint Chairs reflect the complexity of oversight arrangements and associated issues:

But most importantly I think for the purpose of this exercise and indeed my own situation is I'm one of the co-chairs with Dick of the Joint Standing Committee on the Parliamentary Library. This is a very odd animal in some respects.

I might just spend a minute explaining this; you may not be familiar with it. It has oversight of the Library. There used to be a House Committee and a Senate Committee separately and some three years or so ago the Presiding Officers decided in their wisdom they ought to be combined.

So they created this Joint Committee and decided in their wisdom that it ought to have co-chairs – unpaid, which is unusual for committees in the building – and that one member of the committee, one co-chair should come from the House of Representatives and one co-chair should come from the Senate.

And if that wasn't a considerable enough complication, that they should come from different parties.

Now who in their right mind would create an animal … this seems to me almost a recipe for immobilisation and lack of progress, some sort of wicked and devious mind could only have created this kind of committee. But in fact it works pretty well. We've only been going for about 12 months I suppose but perhaps not even that long and it works pretty well. Dick and I see each other in the swimming pool in the morning and we work out committee affairs reasonably easily and move forward.

Let me just say a few things about the Library now. I'm very familiar with libraries of course coming from an academic background but this a particularly fabulous resource that the nation has and indeed the Parliament has. It's difficult to see how life as a politician could continue without having this particular resource in the building.

When I became co-chair, and I think I'm called the senior co-chair or at least the one who chairs the meetings as it happens, I said that I had two primary aims. One was to try and make sure that during the period that I was one of the co-chairs that we maintain the integrity of the collection and of the library services more generally. And secondly that we ensured that it remained readily accessible to all of the people in the building and that we wouldn't want to fall into the situation where by virtue of limited resources that there might be an inclination to exclude people from its services. And I hope and I think we're certainly on that course and I hope we'll continue along that course.

However the greatest challenge I've discovered since taking on this responsibility is trying to corral the members of the Library Committee to come to a meeting at a common time. This has proved a profound challenge, one that I hadn't imagined.

And all this is true but the library is not perfect and the management of the library within parliamentary services has been subject to big changes and some anxieties about what this means for accountability and transparency.

Our Department's new CEO came from the department that drafted the Government's legislation. Would she curtail the advice from the library that might criticise legislation? Either we fought off these threats, for now, or they were non-existent in the first place.

What we do need I think is the capacity to draw on independent expert advice about our library – I doubt that a library committee or surveys can do this adequately – parliamentarians are often too busy to give accurate responses.

The Committee has had difficulty finding a meeting time that suits its big membership and our few meetings so far have been hampered by attendance and division bells.

So far the committee has not I think found its feet in driving an agenda or even knowing what that agenda might be. In my experience a parliamentary committee that is just there to tick off the day to day decisions that are effectively already made, will have difficulty in the competition for our time.

Perhaps we could learn from library committees in other countries. (Trood, 2007)

Resources and independence

The Library's operation, including resource management and independence, have been the subject of considerable discussion.

The President of the Senate, the Hon Senator Calvert has written of the inclusion of the Library's role and resources within the *Parliamentary Services Act* in 2006:

My strong view is that a significant reason that previous attempts at rationalisation failed has been the concerns about the independence of the Parliamentary Library, especially from the opposition of the day, minor parties and independents. Accordingly, the Speaker and I went out of our way to impress on Mr Podger the importance of the Library. We suggested that particular attention be placed on restoring the office of Parliamentary Librarian – but within the new department …

I am delighted to see, enshrined as far as I know for the first time in an Australian law in any jurisdiction, what we all know is the most important function of a Parliamentary library – to offer impartial and confidential research support, independent of the government of the day. That is crucially important. The Librarian has direct reporting responsibilities to the Presiding Officers and to the Parliament. She is also responsible to report to the Joint Library Committee. Each year the Librarian and the Secretary of the Department of Parliamentary Services will, under the Act, conclude a resource agreement, essentially detailing the funds available for the Library function for the ensuing year...

Thus, for the first time in an Australian context, a formal role is provided for our Library Committee, which hitherto has been an ad hoc committee with no formal role other than to advise the Presiding Officers. It allows opposition, government and minor party Senators and Members a voice in the resources available to the Library, and is an important bulwark against the executive.

These measures were quite deliberately taken to protect the Parliamentary Library's function as a multimedia resource for all Members, and, as I have said, the new legislation explicitly says that the Librarian must act with equity to all Senators and Members, and may not be directed by the executive government.

The amendments to the Act also provided that the Secretary of the principal department, with the approval of the Presiding Officers, could confer other responsibilities on the Parliamentary Librarian (so long as they are not inconsistent with the statutory responsibilities and functions of the Librarian). This enabled the Library to be part of a recent internal restructure of the Parliamentary Services Department and to gain some functions it lost some years ago (e.g. transcripts and e-publishing), and certain others. The new arrangements in Canberra seem to have bedded down well. Although it is early days, and there were some costs inherent in the amalgamation, it seems that savings will result. How significant will the savings be? As they say, the jury is still out. (Calvert, 2006)

The Joint Chairs have noted the role of the committee and the importance of the Library's ongoing independence.

Senator Allison has been critical of the Library and suggests that the operation of the Department of Parliamentary Services and Parliamentary Library reflects a government move to corporatisation. The *Macquarie dictionary* defines corporatisation as 'to develop by adopting the structures, procedures, and goals of big business: *the government wants to corporatise the state'*. The *Parliamentary Service Act* requires the Library to have an annual *Resource agreement* with the department and to deliver certain services. Moreover, the department and the Library have not been immune from efficiency dividends required by the government, together with all public and parliamentary service agencies. Senator Allison said:

… the library is not perfect and the management of the library within parliamentary services has been subject to big changes and some anxieties about what this means for accountability and transparency.

Like so many other parliaments, we've been corporatised and amalgamated and forced to endure annual productivity cuts. The Parliamentary Services Department had to wear the cost of quite a lot of extra security after 9/11.

It is said that the key to independence for libraries is control of their budgets which is not the case for our parliament.

Corporatisation is driven by the dollar and not accountability and whilst we have a library committee there are questions about its capacity to know what's really going on. In any case, it's an advisory committee, not a decision-making board.

Some say you need a library commissioner to do this job and this is the case in the UK for instance.

Six of the seven parliamentary library executive staff have left since these reforms. Were they all dunces? I doubt it, given the very high international reputation of our library. (Allison, 2007)

The Parliamentary Library's budget is established each year through a *Resource agreement*. The Library experienced a higher rate of ongoing staff separation for 2005/06 and 2006/07 compared to 2004/05. Like the rest of the Australian library workforce, the library has an ageing workforce which is increasingly looking to retirement. Our staff age profile is significantly older than that of many organisations in the parliamentary and public sectors. A background report undertaken as part of workforce planning, found that, as at November 2006, 71 per cent of staff were aged 45 years and over and, therefore, eligible to retire in the next ten years – compared to 41 per cent of APS employees. Indeed, at that time, around 20 per cent of Parliamentary Library staff were aged 55–59, 10 per cent were aged 60–64 and 2 per cent were aged 65 and over. While mature age retirement has played a role in Parliamentary Library separations, it is notable that many mature aged staff have elected to remain in employment in the Library beyond age 55, and beyond age 60. Planning to ensure that the Library continues to provide quality services is a significant issue.

Research services

Research is a major service provided by the Library. It includes:

- Commissioned information, research and advisory services. These are tailored responses prepared following requests from individual Senators, Members and their staff, and other parliamentary clients

- Publications. These are prepared where strong client demand is anticipated for briefing on specific policy issues. Publications include *Bills Digests*, which provide Senators and Members with an independent explanation and commentary on bills as they come before Parliament. A significant proportion of publications is available to the general public through the Library's Internet site http://www.aph.gov.au/library/pubs/index.htm.

Senator Trood commented that:

> The resource that I most value is the research capacity that exists here in the Library which can be very specifically tailored to the needs of individual Senators and Members. And I suspect that's probably true of many people that work in the building. (Trood, 2007)

Senator Allison expressed some concern about the support for the service:

> Many of us are worried about the move from specialist analytical researchers to generalists. Early on there were threats, perceived or real, that library resources would need to be handed out equally which sent shivers down our collective

small party spine, knowing that our need is a good deal greater than that of a government backbencher. (Allison, 2007)

In 2007, the Library implemented the findings of a continuous Improvement study of the research service, conducted by a study team comprising staff from the library and the department and a union representative. The recommendations did not include changing specialists to generalists.

Impartiality

Without doubt the parliamentary environment highlights the need for the Library to be impartial and treat all enquiries confidentially. The Hon. Dick Adams commented:

> I know there has been pressure in the past and this means that staff are frightened to offer a proper unbiased opinion. Like all professional academics if they cannot offer an informed opinion then they can no longer be seen by their peers in the field as qualified to give one. And this will see them walking out the door; if that occurs we are going to be left with library aids with no research skills because the professionals will not be available. I suppose that would suit some of the bureaucrats but the government and opposition ought to be incensed by this and should ensure that intimidation does not occur. (Adams, 2007)

Not an island

In his closing comments to the Conference, Mr Harris, Clerk of the House of Representatives, remarked:

> I have just returned from workshops in parliamentary administration in Abuja that the Nigerian National Assembly asked me to conduct. (I returned via Brisbane, where I participated in a panel discussion with staff undertaking the ANZACATT Parliamentary Law Practice and Procedure course. I was delighted to meet a number of staff from Parliamentary Libraries in Australia and New Zealand undertaking that course.)
>
> The work that I undertake in the international arena frequently occurs in conjunction with training for Members of Parliament and staff under the auspices of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, based in London, or the Inter-Parliamentary Union, based in Geneva. Australia's own Centre for Democratic Institutions, based in Canberra, has also promoted projects, particularly in relation to Indonesia. I have also had opportunities to participate in evaluation teams in respect of the operations of the United Nations Development

Program's parliamentary strengthening projects in Cambodia, Laos, Timor-Leste and Vietnam.

There are two common themes that I pursue in relation to these activities, and it is in this regard that I would like to return to the theme of the Westminster system of government. The first is the consideration that nobody can come from outside and tell another nation what is best for it. The most that anyone can suggest is that a 'best fit' approach be adopted. I then proceed to use Australia as an example of this approach, and I quote from my recent presentation in Nigeria:

> '*The basic consideration should always be what best fits the background and traditions of the country . . .*'

Australia takes great pride in the fact that its federation was forged not by war or rebellion, but by discussion groups, called 'conventions', and by consultation with the people at the plebiscite and ballot boxes. Even though the participants of the constitutional conventions in the 1890s took considerable inspiration from the Westminster tradition, there was a quite conscious global search to identify the most appropriate elements of other systems of government for the new nation…

The second theme that I pursue in overseas presentations is that a number of countries around the world have found that effective support to legislators involves Chamber and committee support, and financial and administrative support, but library and media support are also vitally essential. In this regard I will quote from another presentation I gave last week in Nigeria:

> '*There are a number of additional constituent services that parliamentary administration should provide to be totally effective. In thinking of parliamentary administration, attention is usually paid to the core features such as supporting the legislative chamber, and providing salary and similar services to members of parliament. However, most effective parliamentary services have included library and research assistance, committee support, media services. Library support is usually regarded by members of parliament as essential to their effective discharging of their functions. In many parliaments, the library provides the usual bibliotheque facilities, such as monograph and periodical provision and lending. Facilities have extended to DVD and video services. However, parliamentary libraries often provide a legislative research service, to assist members with their speeches and presentations and to supplement their understanding of specialist topics more generally.*'

In some of the reports I have produced evaluating UNDP parliamentary strengthening projects, I have attached a copy of an indicative Bills Digest produced by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Library. I attached to the Timor-

Leste report a report produced by Michael Ong, from the Commonwealth Parliamentary Library, into resource sharing. This is also a part of my message in relation to library services: where resource provision is a consideration, there is no need to reinvent the wheel. Provided that users are familiar with English, it is preferable to travel on the coat tails of resources readily available on the internet.

This approach reflects the very sincere appreciation I have for the benefits brought to the legislature by the Parliamentary Library serving the Chamber and the Parliament which I serve, and I am sure that it is true of all parliamentary libraries. Most Members of Parliament are very much aware of the significant contribution parliamentary libraries make to their effective operation as legislators and representatives of the people.

International collaboration involving the Australian Parliamentary Library has included:

a. active participation in the International Federation of Library Association's section on Library and Research Services for Parliaments;

b. support for professional development of regional librarians through visits and development activities in conjunction with the Parliamentary Relations Office and the Inter-Parliamentary Study Program;

c. resources to increase the collections of these libraries (including donation and purchasing material for the Solomon Islands, Timor and Samoa with support from the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association);

d. support for reference/research services by encouraging libraries to pass on any relevant questions to us (during the year the Library answered a small number of enquiries from libraries in the region);

e. support for staff in regional parliamentary libraries with skills for specific tasks such as assisting the Kiribati Parliament set up their web site; and

f. support for libraries by providing free access to material on the Library's web site and free Parliamentary Library publications such as the Parliamentary Handbook.

Conclusion

The Australian Parliamentary Library plays a critical role in the parliament and in Australian political life. Its services are highly valued by Senators and Members. The changing environment means that the Library needs to meet the changing needs of its clients.

While the members of the 41st Parliament, the prime clients for the library, were 'middle-aged, well-educated men, who are likely to have been employed

in politics-related occupations, business or law before entering parliament in the last decade' (Miskin and Lumb, 2006), there is a trend to younger and better educated members of parliament and their staff. For the Library this means that services must evolve to be delivered faster, and online, so Senators and Members have access wherever they are or whatever the time. Mobile devices provide both opportunities and challenges to provide information in sufficient detail to be useful.

The Joint Chairs reflected on the ongoing role of the Library as follows:

> ADAMS: It plays a very important role. I see it as playing an enormous role for democracy and for our nation generally and libraries generally.

> TROOD: I think we're immensely fortunate to have this resource and at the federal level I'm sure every state parliamentarian would say the same thing about the services you provide but I'm very conscious of it here. As I said it's very difficult to imagine that life could continue as a politician with all of the demands that are made for information without having the Library. And my limited experience of the Library, two years actually as a Senator, is that there is an immensely dedicated and professional staff here that will do much of what they can and go beyond what is almost humanly physically possible to serve the needs of their clients and from my perspective it makes it a great privilege to be the co-chair of the Library and to be here making use of its services.

The new parliament (42nd parliament) is already providing new challenges for many new Senators and Members, and the Library will continue to deliver information, analysis and advice to ensure that they can participate fully and with confidence in the affairs of the land.

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Finding what you're looking for: a reader-centred approach to the classification of adult fiction in public libraries

Richard Maker

This article argues that the classification of adult fiction according to 'genre' in public libraries causes more confusion than clarification. Whilst the system purports to model itself on bookstore design the reality is that the actual arrangement is quite different. In the bookstore model, genre is a marketing category and not a literary category as it is currently used in many Western Australian public libraries. The use of a genre system also alienates many readers, with good reason, as the nature of the system is ambiguous. The adoption of a 'reader-centred' method for adult fiction classification would mean that the library collection was more accessible because the underlying principles are easier to understand.

Introduction

Public libraries are under increasing pressure to correct the perception that they are outmoded and largely irrelevant institutions, particularly by today's youth. Libraries are not alone in playing catch-up to an increasingly time-hungry populace who have far more choices than their predecessors. Libraries, churches, sporting clubs and theatres face a decline in numbers and compete with an increasing range of other services and activities for people's leisure time.

In order to grasp the problems that libraries face it needs no more than to quote some statistics supplied by the *Building better library services* report on public libraries in the United Kingdom:

> But, despite growing demand for books and information (and broadly stable resources of £770 million) traditional library services are in decline. Since 1992/93 visits have fallen by 17 per cent, and loans by almost one-quarter.

> Twenty-three per cent fewer people are using libraries for borrowing than just three years ago. (*Building better library services: learning from audit, inspection and research*, 2002 p. 23.)

The situation is the same in Western Australia. A recent report notes that in relation to issues of adult fiction and non-fiction and junior book stock 'turnover has been declining in all categories since 1998–99'. (*Structural reform of public library services in Western Australia*, August, 2007, p.36.)[1]

There have also been wider changes relevant to library services:

> People are increasingly choosing to buy their own books – with consumer book sales up by around one-quarter in real terms in the last ten years. Libraries have thus faced increasing competition from bookshops which have responded to (and encouraged) the public's rising expectations by extending opening hours, improving layouts, and increasing their ranges of books and other services. The end of the Net Book Agreement has enabled bookshops and other retailers (including supermarkets and internet booksellers) to adopt more aggressive pricing strategies, while publishers have invested significant sums in book design to make them desirable to own*. (Building better library services, (2002) p. 48.)*

One thing that stands out here is the paradox that whilst books and information are in demand, public libraries, it seems, are not.

Problems with changes

It should come as no surprise that public libraries have recently made changes in order to try and attract new patrons while retaining their existing customer base. Computer access, internet terminals, word processors, X-Boxes, book clubs, copiers and fax machines, are now fairly common in most public libraries and this array of facilities is reflected in the marketing emphasis with slogans like: 'we're not just about books', 'Libraries – the complete experience', 'Ask a Librarian', and so on. By and large though, these facilities remain at the periphery. It is true that computer access is in demand but space constraints limit the number of terminals that can be housed. Despite these new trends, the core business of public libraries is books.

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[1] Editor's note: According to *Australian public libraries statistical report 2005–2006*, published by the State Library of Queensland in September 2007, on a national basis circulation is up: 'Overall, lending from libraries has increased by 3.1% over the past five years, with only a slight 1.3% increase from the previous year. The strongest growth was achieved in the ACT (15.3% increase) while both Queensland and Western Australia suffered a 1.3% decrease.' p.8 .(http://plnintra.plain.sa.gov.au/stats/Aust%20Pub%20Lib%20Stats%20Report%202005-06%20Final.pdf Accessed 22 April 2008

That is why most patrons come to the library and, furthermore, most patrons come to the library to borrow fiction. Fiction generates 'higher circulation and returns and a better turnover rate of 5.6 compared to 3.0 for non-fiction' (*Structural reform of public library services in Western Australia*, 2007, p. 52)

One change that has been introduced in some public libraries is the arrangement of the adult fiction collection by category or 'genre'. In Western Australia this is relatively new but in the eastern states of Australia and in the UK in particular it has been in place since the late 1980's. Books are arranged by genre: Western, Romance, Crime, Science Fiction, War etc., and then alphabetically by author. This idea has been 'borrowed' from a bookstore model because it is thought people prefer to browse and choose books by genre rather than alphabetically by author. The positive and negative elements associated with this scheme are discussed in some detail by Trott & Novak (2007) but the following are some of more common problems.

1. The difficulty in deciding what goes where. Some books fall naturally into a genre. Indeed, they are produced with that reading market in mind. Thus, Barbara Cartland falls in to the category of Romance, Zane Grey into Westerns. But what about the books of Cormac McCarthy or Larry McMurtry? *All the pretty horses* and *Lonesome Dove* sound like Westerns. They have a Western setting and cowboy heroes, so presumably this is where they would be classified. But how would a reader who normally dislikes this category ever find these books? And where does Annie Proulx's *Brokeback Mountain* stand? A Romance? A Western? (Lad lit perhaps?) Barry Trott calls this 'the genre stigma':

2. There are many readers who use genre classification not so much as a tool for selection of titles but rather as a means of rejecting titles they do not wish to read. These are the readers that all readers' advisors have encountered, who say things like 'I never read science fiction' or 'Fantasy stories are for teenagers'. In the case of such books as *The sparrow* or *The time traveller's wife,* putting these titles in a genre collection will mean that readers who automatically reject those genres will rarely come across these books. (Trott and Novak, p.1)

3. The works of some authors fall into more than one genre: 'Increasing numbers of authors are crossing genres from book to book and publishing titles that encompass multiple genres in a single work'. (Trott and Novak, p. 1)

4. The classification is inconsistent. One librarian may deem a novel to belong in action and adventure; another may put it in historical. *Sons and lovers* by

D. H. Lawrence is a case in point. One librarian may place it in Romance, another in Classics and yet another in Relationships.

5. The statistical evidence to support this arrangement is dubious. Sharon Baker has stated that 'several studies show that more than half of those readers seeking fiction are looking for works of a particular genre' (Baker, cited in Shearer, 1996, p.141) This may be true but it begs the question of what the other percentage of readers are looking for and, more importantly, how do they find it. Similarly, Cannell and McCluskey report that a change to genre classification showed an increase in circulation of 36% (Cannell & McCluskey, cited in Shearer, 1999, p. 163). Again, this may be true but to say that this is a good thing for library patrons overall is to assume that what is true for individual members of a class is also held to be true for the class considered as a whole. Many library members may be vehemently opposed to a genre classification scheme and whilst you cannot please all of the people all of the time it is important to please as many as you can without alienating one particular group of users.

Bookstores and libraries

I compared two leading bookstore chains to see how they classified their collections and how they differed from a public library system that has a genre-based fiction collection. The two bookstores were Angus and Robertson and Dymocks. This was the result:

Angus and Robertson	Dymocks
Crime/Mystery	Crime Fiction
Science Fiction/Fantasy	Science Fiction/Fantasy
Romance	Popular Fiction Romance
–	Horror
–	Australian Literature
Fiction A–Z	Popular Fiction A–Z
Literature A–Z	Literary Fiction A–Z
Classics	–
Best Sellers	Best Sellers
New Releases	New Releases

The first and most obvious difference is that both bookstores differentiate between 'Literature' and 'Popular Fiction' whilst libraries do not. The second difference is that the bookstore has far fewer categories than public libraries. (The 'Horror' section in Dymocks is very small and the 'Classics' section

in Angus and Robertson, whilst separately signed, is contained within the 'Literature' section.)

What are the implications if this system were to be adopted in public libraries?

Firstly, by making a distinction between 'Literature' and 'Popular Fiction' the bookstore model is targeting two different markets. The primary decision then for the librarian becomes not what genre does this book belong in, but what reader market will want to buy it, or, in the case of the library, borrow it? I know that some librarians are reluctant to promote a hierarchy whereby certain books are deemed to be in some sense worthier than others but I cannot see that this matters providing it helps readers find what they want. Once the first decision is made it then becomes a relatively simple task to place the books into their respective sub-categories. Popular fiction is much simpler to place in genres than 'literary fiction' because it is more formulaic and, thus, easier to categorise – especially when you only have to determine whether a book is a romance, science-fiction/fantasy, or crime novel. If it isn't any of these – and there must be very clear guidelines on what constitutes a work in these genres – it gets catalogued and shelved in 'Popular Fiction' by author. This becomes classification and selection by elimination. It is a customer-driven, not a product-driven approach. The first consideration is the end user.

Secondly, it reduces the number of signs that are needed. Fewer signs mean cleaner sight lines, easier navigation and better accessibility. Less clutter, in other words. (This is something retail outlets do much better than libraries. The design of the retail store, principally in terms of merchandising, has become something of a science with key figures such as Paco Underhill in the United States and John Stanley in Australia being two influential exponents.) Unfortunately many public libraries seem to think that because something exists it must also have a sign. This defeats the purpose for the user trying to navigate around the library because the excess signage simply overloads human comprehension. The eye and the brain can only accommodate so much information before they switch off. Bookstores, like any retail outlet know this, as do web site designers, which is why less is better than more if signage is to be read and understood:

Thirdly, many public libraries in Western Australia who have classified their adult fiction into genres have more than nine different categories: War, Western, Comedy, Romance, Historical, Family Saga, Crime, Thriller, Relationships, Chick Lit, Classics, Action and Adventure, Short Stories and General being the most common. This is far too many and creates unnecessary errors in classification as well as frustrating the patrons in their

searches for books they are likely to enjoy. (Apart from the ambiguity inherent in the names themselves. What, for example, does 'Relationships' mean? Heterosexual relationships? Homosexual relationships? Family relationships? One-gender relationships? And would the reader who enjoyed Alan Hollinghurst's book *The line of beauty* necessarily enjoy Vladimir Nabakov's *Lolita*? – both are housed in the 'Relationships' section.)

The law of diminishing returns also comes into play once there are too many options. In *Hamlet* Shakespeare gives us an example of categories breeding sub-categories until the refining process results in the meaning of the system disappearing into a sort of semantic black hole:

> The best…in the world, either for Tragedy, Comedy, History, Pastoral, Pastoral-Comical, Historical-Pastoral: Tragical-Historical:Tragical-Comical-Historical-Pastoral.

There us nothing new under the sun it seems as Janette Dillon's comments on this quotation attest: 'The length and over-complication of the list makes a joke of genre categorisation, but the joke tells us categorisation according to genre was becoming an increasingly fashionable and complex matter.' (Dillon, 2006, p14)

Fourthly, public libraries place a sticker on the spine denoting the genre. Bookstores do not. Stickers are placed on books for two reasons: the reader can easily identify the genre of the book and the shelvers know in which category the book belongs. The negative side to this is that stickers look ugly, sometimes obscure the title or author's name and generally add still more signage. They are also difficult to remove. It would be better to have the sticker – if indeed one is needed, on the inside of the book. I am indebted to Rachel Van Riel for her comments on this issue:

> If you do introduce genre classification please don't go for those horrid stickers on the spines. A Sherlock Holmes deerstalker or a badly drawn gun will do nothing for your issues. The reader needs the book bay labelling, not the book. If the staff need labels to know where to reshelve, put these inside the book. Better still, give your staff some stock awareness training! (Rachel Van Riel, personal communication, August 15, 2007)

On a market or reader-based system of classification, the librarian, rather than deciding what book belongs in what genre, decides in which reader market the book should be placed. (In the instances quoted above of Hollinghurst and Nabakov the problem solves itself. They would both be shelved in 'Literary Fiction') In a bookstore model, genre is a marketing category and not, as it is used in public libraries, a literary category. Even the division of novels into

'Literary Fiction' and 'Popular Fiction' is done primarily for commercial reasons. The distinction here is crucial as the hierarchical order in the classification is different in the two models.

I appreciate that the distinction between 'Popular Fiction' and 'Literary Fiction' can sometimes seem arbitrary but no classification system is perfect. Besides, if over time it should appear that a certain title has achieved the status of literary fiction it can easily be placed into the correct category with a slight modification to the catalogue. (In the cases where the library has two copies of the same book the books can be shelved in two separate places.) With an author such as H. G. Wells, a decision has to be made as to whether his books should be classified as 'Literary Fiction' or 'Science-Fiction'. One goes back to first principles. What reader would want to borrow this book? Most readers who like literary fiction are not primarily concerned with genre. They tend to be more eclectic in their tastes, therefore, the first category, 'Literary Fiction', overrides the second. (In terms of the selection of books by the reader the converse is also largely true. By definition the patron who prefers only Romance novels usually has a narrower reading range.) With an author such as Graham Greene who sometimes wrote what he defined as 'entertainment', his serious works would be in one category and his lighter ones in another. There is no inconsistency here once one understands the reasons why books are placed where they are.

This emphasis on marketing should have flow-on effects in other areas. Paco Underhill points out that books and book jackets are not in themselves packaged in terms of a product and 'as a result, a book's jacket isn't measured on the cruelly efficient terms used to judge most packaging'. (Underhill, 1999, p. 226.) Underhill argues that in terms of window displays 'the window should limit itself to big blowups of books or some other display scheme'. (Underhill, p 226.) Underhill also draws our attention to what he calls the 'store's prime real estate' section which should be reserved for displays that have a high importance. (He cites an example of a bookstore having calendars being displayed in this area in August when the more obvious and appropriate time choice would be December.) Rachel Van Riel, the director of a U.K marketing company specialising in book display furniture specifically for libraries called 'Opening the Book', echoes this view.

> Where libraries in the UK can learn from bookshops is in locating the best spots (often given over to council notices or local art exhibitions) and relying on the book covers to make the display instead of dressing things up with home-made lettering, amateur desk-top publishing and pink ribbon. (Rachel Van Riel, personal communication, August 20, 2007)

Van Riel also mentions another idea:

> The most important concept we have introduced to UK libraries is **Quick choice** - a section near the front of the library which is mixed titles with younger appeal, all paperback, has a lot of face-out display and is designed to catch the impulse borrower and people in a hurry. (Rachel Van Riel, personal communication, August 20, 2007)

A recent report has highlighted the inadequacies in public libraries in Western Australia making particular note of the fact that:

> The current model of delivery was created in the early fifties and is no longer appropriate to the current environment. There is little point in making minor changes: significant and radical change is required to meet diverse needs and provide ongoing flexibility. To do this there must be a re-invention of the W.A. model for public service delivery.

> The key finding of this report is that a tinkering around the edge of the existing model of delivery is not the answer. There will need to be significant structural and overall change. *(Structural reform of public library service in Western Australia*, p. v)

This is a trenchant and pertinent observation. Marketing practice dictates that once a brand has lost touch with the customer, particularly if this is due to a perceived lack of relevance, it is an uphill struggle to energise it. You cannot introduce an X-Box into a Young Adult section of a library and expect that it will somehow transform that area of the library or that the patronage by young people will suddenly increase. Brand revival needs more than this.

When borrowing from another model one must be sure that one understands, not only the nature of the model itself, but how and what elements will be transferred. A library is not a bookstore. The two models correspond in some but not in all respects. (A bookstore, for example, does not stock large print books. It would be foolish to assume though that a library should not do so.) A certain amount of selectivity obviously comes into play.

Conclusion

However, the fact cannot be ignored that arranging novels into different subjects increases circulation but I trust that I have shown that it is far better to use a reader-centred method for the classification of adult fiction than the genre based method, which is currently prevalent. (In this respect the public library's choice of the word 'genre' for this system is not well suited as it is traditionally associated with the division of works into various species of literature.) If public libraries were to use bookstores as their models they

would do well to think carefully about how and why a bookstore divides and displays its adult fiction department and then decide what elements will work successfully for their own collections.

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Richard Maker is a librarian in Perth. He holds an honours degree in English Literature from the University of Western Australia and a post-graduate Diploma in Information Services from Edith Cowan University. His background is in training and management. He is particularly interested in the instructional role of the librarian in the field of information literacy.

Book reviews

Law librarians challenged

Law Librarianship in the Twenty-First Century. **Ed. by Roy Balleste, Sonia Luna-Lamas, and Lisa Smith-Butler. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2007. 229 pp. US$55.00 hard cover ISBN 13: 9780810858817**

This anthology on law librarianship has been written by a team of academic law librarians, though at least one of them has worked for a law firm library. The 10 chapters include: 'A Brief History of Law Librarianship'; 'Working at the Law Library: A Practical Guide'; 'Administration'; 'Public Services'; 'Collection Development, Licensing and Acquisitions'; 'Technical Services'; 'Foreign, Comparative and International Law Librarianship'; 'Technology Trends in Law Libraries'; 'The Evolution of Government Documents'; 'The World of Library Consortia: Collaboration and Resource Sharing in the Twenty-First Century'.

In his chapter on collection development James Heller suggests: 'the first rule of collection development: there are no rules. Every law library is different, and the policy should fit the library'. Then he suggests, 'there is only one guideline to follow when determining what a library's collection should look like: it must meet the needs of its users'. Heller comments on the multiple formats in which legal materials are published and notes the diminution of print collections vis a vis electronic materials. The topics of weeding, updating, and monitoring are covered, and there is a section on licensing.

Law libraries have evolved with hard copy duplicates replaced by electronic versions and 24/7 access. A generation ago, 24/7 access would have been a dream hampered by a lack of physical access. Now with both subscription and free websites available, this dream is a reality. Academics and library staff regularly receive emails from their students and clients at all hours of the day.

In his chapter on technology trends in law libraries, Balleste notes the development of the Internet, wireless technology and emerging artificial intelligence technologies. He also discusses the ramifications of virtual reference, case management software, quantum computers and the nature and role of the electronic services librarian. This chapter blends a foretaste of the future with familiarity with current developments.

This book, although largely aimed at the novice to law librarianship, would also be beneficial to managers of law libraries seeking to understand both the practice of law librarianship and the emerging trends in this field. Are we ready for the challenges ahead of us?

Colin Fong
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New text, new field

Art Museum Libraries and Librarianship. Ed. by Joan M. Benedetti. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2007. 312 pp. US$61.00 soft cover ISBN 9780810859210 (available from DA Information Services)

Art Museum Libraries and Librarianship is the one of the first books published in the field of art museum librarianship. The author, Joan Benedetti, has extensive experience in art museum libraries, including a position at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art Research Library. She has written books on various aspects of librarianship, including art museums, 'solo' libraries and folk art terminology. Sixteen chapters cover a range of issues relevant to the art museum librarian, including collection development, reader services, leadership, cataloguing and handling difficult items such as ephemera. Essays from practising librarians in a variety of specialised libraries are included in the volume. The author has even included fundraising, public relations and issues related to handling library volunteers. The volume is extensively illustrated, with over 90 monochrome images that enhance the text.

Part 4 offers profiles of 15 art museum libraries with a view to comparing collections, staffing and facilities. The profiles cover a range of libraries from the large (The National Gallery, London), to the university (Arizona State Museum), the medium (Corning Museum of Glass), the mono-cultural (California African American Museum) and the one person (Georgia O'Keefe Museum). The description of each museum covers address and other contact details, website, opening hours, collection size, staffing and a description of the collection – invaluable information that is interesting and informative. The diversity of the libraries is fascinating, and, while many have only one or two professional staff, the size of the professional staff of some libraries is surprising (13 professional staff and 15 support full-time at the Art Institute of Chicago), with many utilising the services of volunteers. Appendix A lists professional art museum associations

from around the world, while Appendix C incudes a very helpful collection of sample documents such as archive and collection development policies.

Overall, this volume is a comprehensive guide that covers every conceivable aspect of art museum librarianship. It is highly recommended, and while the main audience of the volume is limited as it is aimed directly at art librarians, the book includes a wealth of interesting facts and information useful to other specialist libraries, general libraries and students interested in a career in art museum libraries or managing unusual collections.

Kay Neville
TAFE New South Wales

Rounding out last century

***British Librarianship and Information Work 1991–2000*. Ed. By J.H. Bowman. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2006. 582 pp. £70.00 hard cover ISBN 9780754647799**

Between 1928 and 1990 the Library Association commissioned and published a series of volumes – initially annually but later quinquennially – recording the history of librarianship and information science in Great Britain. The last volume, covering 1986–1990, was published in 1993 under the editorship of David Bromley and Angela Allott. As a collection, these volumes form a continuing official history of the profession for much of the 20th century and serve as a valuable source for future research.

Perhaps as a sign of the times, and of a growing lack of interest in this kind of historical analysis, the successor to the Library Association, CILIP, decided to discontinue the series. The present volume, therefore, is an unofficial history edited by J.H. Bowman from University College London, published by a commercial firm and covering a full decade. The 31 chapters deal with almost every aspect of the library and information sector, including different types of libraries (national, public, university, art, music, etc.), professional activities (research, cooperation, publicity, etc.), and technical services (systems, cataloguing, preservation and so on). The contributors are an impressive selection of senior professionals from all the different areas.

Inevitably, the quality and approach of the chapters vary somewhat, but most of the contributors provide an authoritative and impressive analytical account of their field. Probably the most important chapter is Phil Bradley's 'The Impact of the

Internet on Libraries', which documents some of the most momentous changes ever faced by the library and information professions – given that this was the decade which saw the emergence of the World Wide Web. But the volume as a whole gives the professional context in which those developments occurred, and provides a valuable record of what was a remarkably important decade.

Toby Burrows
University of Western Australia

Getting through this century

The Library in the Twenty-First Century. 2nd ed. By Peter Brophy. London: Facet Publishing, 2007. 248 pp. £39.95 hard cover ISBN 9781856046060 (available from James Bennett Pty Ltd)

Brophy hopes, in this 2nd edition of his earlier work, to provoke thought in librarians so they may remain relevant in a world that many commentators believe is leaving them behind. As he states, 'libraries have survived – some have prospered – but most remain under threat from new technologies'. These threats include new publishing paradigms, e-commerce, social networking, print-on-demand, mobile communications and even librarians themselves being unprepared for change, among others.

Like its predecessor, this edition is in two parts. Part 1 covers the question 'What is a library?' by examining first the library in the modern age, views from different library sectors, theoretical models of libraries, the profession's view, digital libraries, and finally measuring the 'goodness' of a library. Part 2 covers 'future libraries' via the topics of linking users to resources, libraries acting beyond the intermediary role, and placing the library user in the information universe.

Chapter 3 presents theoretical models that are designed to be cross-sectoral. These range from the Alexandrian library to the resource sharing library, the access library, and the 'immersive' library. It is this last model which is most thought-provoking and which Brophy presents as, in his inexorable logic, the model to which all libraries must move. The idea of an immersive library is that it designs and delivers services 'which are not just embedded in user environments but [are] an integrated part of those environments'. This section of the book is particularly interesting for library professionals, challenging them to think outside their normal sphere of operations to a new place where they can be an integral part of their users' lives.

In his final chapter Brophy offers suggestions for helping libraries progress and grow in the 21st century. They are: move from being user-centric to being life-flow-centred, learn the language, support creativity, join the broader literacy movement, understand learning, the library as place, put technology in its place, and form alliances. There is an excellent bibliography and extensive use of examples throughout the work. While the flavour is Anglo-American, the work is still relevant for information professionals around the globe.

Read *The Library in the Twenty-First Century* if you want to stay informed about the issues affecting libraries into the 21st century.

Emma Datson
University of Wollongong

Australians on indexing

The Indexing Companion. **By Glenda Browne and Jon Jermey.**
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. 249 pp. A$49.95 soft cover
ISBN 9780521689885

Librarians and indexers are fellow travellers in that in their own under-acknowledged ways both professions try to make knowledge more accessible. The best indexes help people to unearth information buried in a book or a website. Like a swan swimming, no one can see the hard work going on beneath the surface. Creating an index which is functional and even elegant is the result of the indexer making numerous decisions to achieve the greatest usability. Browne and Jermey have written the perfect guide to indexing, and although professional indexers will derive the most from it, anyone who is ever required to compile an index will find this book of immense help. The range of material requiring indexing is huge, and the authors cover everything from book indexing in the traditional manner to journal, website and database indexing. To add to its utility, there is a real Australian flavour to the book; the authors are highly-regarded members of the local indexing community. It demonstrably fills the need for a guide which is aware of regional diversity of approach.

The crucial skill of indexing is term selection, and the authors devote several chapters to how indexes are structured and which terms are to be preferred. Controlled vocabularies and thesaurus creation, both familiar to cataloguers, are discussed clearly and cogently. Indexing has its controversies (for example, are cross-references annoying? or where do the 'Mcs' and 'Macs' go?) which

are treated here with judicious impartiality. Newer aspects of indexing thrown up by the web, such as folksonomies and cloud maps, show that it is a dynamic, evolving process. Website indexing, a particular forte of Browne's as evinced in her articles for *Online Currents*, is given due space, and covered with real authority. Quality control and sharing of indexing, interoperability, is given a chapter, and the parallels with cataloguing work are intriguing.

For those thinking of making a career in indexing, the authors outline the rates of pay on offer and skills demanded, and a chapter is devoted to the tools available, such as specialised indexing programs. A concluding chapter on threats and opportunities points to new avenues for indexing work at a time when some traditional indexes are shutting down or being outsourced.

This is an excellent work, highly recommended for librarians and for the general reader. This book has delightful touches of wit throughout, and its own index, expertly compiled by Browne, is similarly amusing and piquant. The authors do not touch on this, but surely indexes reflect their compiler's personality?

John MacRitchie
Manly Library

Children are our future – better be good today

Outstanding Library Service to Children: Putting the Core Competencies to Work. **By Rosanne Cerny, Penny Markey and Amanda Williams. Association for Library Service to Children. Chicago: American Library Association, 2006. 112 pp. US$25.00 (ALA members US$22.50) soft cover ISBN 0838909221**

Children are both our future library users and one of our biggest groups of library users now. Library services to children draw in not only the children but also their extended families, and appropriately so, as libraries are a community service. We all provide library service to children, but how do we make this an excellent library service?

Outstanding Library Service to Children is based around the seven core competencies compiled by the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) – these competencies aim to serve as the base for the professional development of children's librarians. Each competency includes a list of specific skills that comprise that competency. The authors have compiled this companion to outline the skills and illustrate them with explanations, examples and references to further reading, with much emphasis on the last element.

The core competencies cover knowledge of client group, administrative and management skills, communication skills, materials and collection development, programming skills, advocacy, public relations and networking skills, and professionalism and professional development.

The book is concise, but it does not aim to be the definitive source on qualities required of a 'good' children's librarian. Instead, it is a platform from which librarians can compare their skills against those recommended and then follow through on the list of comprehensive resources in those areas they need to develop. The book can be used as a tool by individuals for self-improvement, and also by managers looking to encourage professional development of their staff.

The core competencies also apply to most aspects of librarianship, not just children's librarianship. The skills listed here could easily be adapted for other specialisations within librarianship. The reading lists are comprehensive, and many of the materials are related to the skills in broad terms, so would require little translation to other areas of librarianship. The listings of skills could also be used as a checklist for professional development, as staff improve their competencies in each area.

Although not the how-to of children's librarianship that some practitioners might want, this book outlines, explains and illustrates a foundation set of skills that every librarian should have, with references to further resources which will help librarians enhance their learning and incorporate developments into their skill sets.

Michelle McLean
Casey-Cardinia Library Corporation

Practical tool for learning library leaders

Leadership Basics for Librarians and Information Professionals.
By G. Edward Evans and Patricia Layzell Ward. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2007. 246 pp. price not reported soft cover ISBN 13: 9780810852297 (available from James Bennett Pty Ltd)

As someone relatively new to a management role in a small library, this book is of particular personal interest. Librarians and information professionals operate in environments which often have different needs from the business or corporate sector. It is refreshing to see a book that brings together the viewpoints on leadership from all sectors, while still keeping a focus on the specific leadership skills required in libraries. It effectively highlights the

differences between management and leadership roles, and makes one ask, 'Do I want to become a leader?'

The authors have researched the subject comprehensively by conducting surveys, case studies and interviews, and provide an exhaustive review of the literature, with lists of references at the end of each chapter. The text is concise and well written; chapters are clearly set out, with subheadings and useful 'highlight boxes' throughout the text emphasising key points, recommended reading, tips, expert opinions and self-help exercises. This makes the book very easy to read and particularly useful for skimming through to points of interest.

The first section of three chapters covers the definitions of leadership, a description of the past, present and future of leadership, and a range of approaches to think about when developing leadership skills. The second section focuses on how to develop leadership skills for the 21st century. These skills include how to create a high-performing team, honing political skills (an absolute must), thinking and acting strategically, and e-leadership, which covers the virtual challenges for information services and managing virtual teams. The third and final part of the book focuses on the experience of leadership, covering some of the surprises to expect, mistakes to avoid, and the crucial success factors that must be considered in order to excel as a leader.

This is an extremely valuable resource for new leaders or those considering the move to a leadership or management role in libraries. Particularly useful for library students and new graduates, this resource will assist in deciding if a career in library leadership is appropriate. I also recommend this for any librarian or information professional in a management role, particularly for evaluating one's role as a manager vis a vis leader. There are strategies for assessing leadership abilities, and Evans also discusses the benefits of mentoring. The work drives home the importance of partnerships, networking and continuous learning, which is something the library profession in general does quite well. The chapter on political skills is useful, as it highlights some of the pitfalls to avoid and the skills required to negotiate, influence and manage change effectively.

This is an excellent book and a useful tool for developing a library collection using the comprehensive reference lists and recommended reading. In comparison to other library management titles, I found this to have a much more practical approach to leadership, with strategies that can be easily applied and changes that one can start putting into practice immediately. That said, this is not a 'one stop' resource, but a starting point to use as a framework for skill development and further reading.

Troy Watson
Emergency Management Australia

21ˢᵗ century strikes again - this time public libraries

Public Libraries in the 21st Century: Defining Services and Debating the Future.
By Anne Goulding. Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2006. 387 pp. price not
reported hard cover ISBN 13: 9780754642862

Where do libraries fit in the 21ˢᵗ century? This is the question making the rounds in different libraries across the world. Dr Anne Goulding from Loughborough University has undertaken an extensive literature review and conducted interviews with public library professionals and stakeholders, all resulting in this look at services now and into the future in UK public libraries.

The first part of the book deals with context. Chapters are dedicated to setting the scene (public library development, local authority context), how public libraries operate within the local government structure and national agendas, and the growing interest and pressures from national politicians. Interspersed with interviews, these chapters provide a good background to public libraries and the environment in which they operate in the UK. The opening chapters also give an idea of where libraries may be heading, with reference to existing national policies, as well as the opinions of stakeholders through the interviews.

Public library users are examined not only through current statistics, but also through a review of how they have changed over time, in use or non-use, demographics, satisfaction, changing services and collections, attitudes and activities. Public library staff are also explored, especially the growing concern over staff shortages, recruitment, skills, human resource management and the ever-changing area of staff development.

The People's Network, the government initiative to get the British public on the Internet, is examined in relation to its impact on public libraries, both current and future, including stories of successes and issues that have come about as a result of this programme.

The public library's future is then examined in detail through chapters on regenerating communities, including neighbourhood renewal, social exclusion and challenges; building communities, including community development, partnerships and community resources; libraries and learning, covering up-skilling, early learning, young people's development and adult learners; and books and reading, exploring the National Literacy Strategy, stock management and reader development.

The final chapter offers discourses on public library futures, giving snippets from the interviews the author conducted, on strategic direction, role and purpose, vision of the future and communicating the vision of public libraries in the UK.

Although based on British public libraries, statistics, staff and stakeholders, there is much for all public library managers and stakeholders to take away from this work. As public libraries reinvent themselves in the 21st century to better meet the needs of all their users, this book helps to highlight ways in which this can be achieved.

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Michelle McLean
Casey-Cardinia Library Corporation

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A Man in full

Geoffrey Alley, Librarian: His Life and Work. By W.J. McEldowney. Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2006. 504 pp. NZ$59.95 soft cover ISBN 0864735340

Introduction

This large, complex book, really a combination of several books, is primarily a biography of Geoffrey Alley (1903–1986), the first National Librarian of New Zealand, whose career went hand-in-hand with the growth of New Zealand library institutions, the development of modern education for librarianship, and the emergence of that country into the stream of modern librarianship. It is also a study of Alley's exceptional skills in politics and public administration in a country with conservative traditions, powerful local interests and loyalties, yet also notable for advanced social legislation.

McEldowney devotes much attention to the origins and nature of the Alley clan, tracing the influence of Alley's father, Frederick, an authoritarian and even obsessive personality, as a strong determinant in the life of all his children. Alley senior believed that his children had to shine at whatever they undertook, and the dour influence of what we might call the Protestant work ethic was integral to their upbringing. Luckily, the children proved naturally gifted to survive and succeed. Geoffrey Alley's public career also included early fame as a rugby player and as an All Black in the 1920s. Sporting prowess, which included exceptional physical strength and a commanding stature, proved a kind of talisman throughout much of his career, but the public career is only part of the story. Psychologists and social historians will find much material

for an understanding of aspects of New Zealand life and history during the 20th century in the family background, with its emphasis on family solidarity, adherence to inherited values and social views where the role of women was very constrained.

Australian readers, possibly with little interest in purely New Zealand matters, will find many similarities and parallels in particular aspects in each of our library histories. Both Australia and New Zealand experienced the fertile attention of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, which organised the investigation of their respective library systems under Ralph Munn (*Munn-Pitt Report* of 1935 for Australia, *Munn-Barr Report* of 1934 for New Zealand); the English public librarian, Lionel McColvin, as well as Harvard luminaries Keyes Metcalf and Andrew Osborn, were active and, to varying degrees, influential in each country; the cementing of personal relationships between Australian and New Zealand librarians, chiefly within academic and national library contexts, as a result of the December 1958 Metcalf Seminar in Canberra, is worth noting. The struggle to define the nature of education for librarianship, especially at the tertiary level, offers familiar parallels. Another important thread is the development in each country of a specific 'mode' of national librarianship, which promised at one stage to bring the two systems into closer relationship after Alley was no longer in charge.

McEldowney's impressive tome encompasses all these (and a number of additional) matters to offer the reader a stimulating volume which will long be a source of reference and general information, drawing on archival and private records as well as personal recollections to form a substantial picture of an era with its band of particularly talented individuals. The biographical side of the work is rich and, while the lion's share is given to Alley, other men and women receive ample attention. Indeed some of these people are intrinsically more interesting and appealing as individuals than Alley himself. This is clearly a major work and should find a place in libraries where scholarship is taken seriously. But other aspects of this work may cause readers some unease.

McEldowney states on page 11 that Alley was 'arguably the greatest librarian that New Zealand has yet produced'. Those words come from his tribute to Alley in 1987. Keyes Metcalf, the celebrated librarian to Harvard University and a close friend of Alley, shared this view as well. However, Alley's inflexible personality could not fail to find critics. His powerful urge to control and a reluctance, not always properly controlled, to communicate with, much less than brook disagreement from, colleagues, were not endearing characteristics. McEldowney frankly deals with these qualities and negative aspects of Alley's character and behaviour. To disagree with him did in fact blight the prospects of younger men. There is a surprising amount of insider information of this kind in

this work which reminds us, if a reminder is needed, that a rounded picture may not be without unwelcome revelations.

McEldowney has also shown daring in quoting from private correspondence revealing personal matters never meant to be known to the wider world; he also mentions wounding episodes which concern still living colleagues of Alley. But the author is also generous in his praise and respect for Alley, at times perhaps strangely so. All this may interest the student of librarianship less than the psychologist, but in confronting such questions McEldowney casts a light on the challenges facing conscientious biographers. Australian librarians may wonder how we would tackle the problems within our own profession without rancour and without avoiding the all too human.

Taking soundings

Alley's career from the 1920s onwards embraced such a range of major issues in which he was often the main player that they cannot be adequately analysed in the space allowed in a paper of this kind. His political skills as a negotiator were early in evidence and rarely seemed to desert him. He started first with activities in adult education, which expanded into what became the Country Library Service where he started as a field librarian and bookmobile driver. In this job he made his enduring mark as an organiser, serving there 1937–1945, before becoming Director of the National Library Service, 1945–1964, and finally National Librarian, 1964–1967. He was equally prominent in the New Zealand Library Association (NZLA), and McEldowney provides much insight into the operations of that body and the control that Alley exercised. That much of the detail is tedious will surprise no one, nor that major battles were fought on what might seem minor issues. It is interesting to see how the same players constantly recur in different contexts. What does stand out is how many of our New Zealand colleagues were first-class people working in what was for long a rather constricted library scene. The departure of some of these for overseas seems the only way to escape this fate.

Part of the interest in the work lies in the fact that McEldowney belongs himself to the story: he was active in the NZLA and was a colleague of Alley in the NZ National Library Service before he became Librarian to Otago University in 1961. He is able to offer a 'counter-history' in some parts, especially when dealing with the internal workings and decision-making processes of the NZLA. Alley had such eminence that his views and his attitudes could prevail over most contrary currents. Such strong trees cast deep shadows which can stifle other plants. There seems evidence enough that this, together with his undoubted

political skills, was the key to Alley's success over the decades. Politicians were comfortable with him and sought his guidance.

Within the library profession, however, some colleagues seemingly had motive enough to want to avoid working under him. This was one theme in the very tangled story of the creation of the National Library. The idea of amalgamating under one head the National Library Service, which included the Country Library Service, the General Assembly Library and the Alexander Turnbull Library in particular, caused great agitation in the last two libraries. Each of these libraries, with their own separate and distinguished histories struggled to avoid incorporation. It is this part of the story which is likely to interest Australian readers as much as New Zealand ones. The Parliament was not anxious to have its General Assembly Library fall under the umbrella of the National Library, thus running the risk of limiting Parliament's control in its own very effective library. There are some echoes here of the experiences of the National Library of Australia and the Australian Parliamentary Library.

Chapters 14 and 15 deal extensively with the creation of The National Library of New Zealand and represent the highpoint of McEldowney's book. In these pages he brings together threads stretching back over most of Alley's career and deals in illuminating detail with the political, professional and personal manoeuvrings that led in 1965 to the passing of the National Library Act. The text is dense in parts and requires the reader to take a lot in. All this detail is important for its insider value and for its attempt to do justice to the many actors in what became a great drama in the little world of New Zealand librarianship.

Alley naturally played a crucial role, ably aided by Graham Bagnall, in advising the Minister and the Government on the passing of the Bill. The tensions within the library profession and among stakeholders were at their height. The ultimate success of the Bill was not assured until the very end. Although the victory is fully acknowledged by McEldowney, his praise is tempered by sober assessments of what came from all the struggles. He writes:

> It might still be too early for a dispassionate account to be produced, especially by an aged one-time protagonist, but a cool appraisal of the controversy over the inclusion of the Turnbull Library by a younger writer, Rachel Barrowman, suggests ways in which the arguments of the fleeting moment can be considered in retrospect. (p. 369)

He then cites a passage from her history of the Turnbull Library, stating that her account is 'fair and judicious'. But a later electrifying paper by Rachel Underwood, entitled 'David and Goliath? A Recent History of the Alexander Turnbull Library' (2002) puts a case which points in other directions. This paper

forms part of *The La Trobe Library: Past, Present and Future,* a publication by the Centre for the Book, Monash University. This paper is not mentioned by McEldowney. The Alexander Turnbull Library story seems to need more space devoted to it, but of course part of that story lies beyond the parameters of the present book. It is not only the inclusion of the Alexander Turnbull Library which gave cause for reflection.

The General Assembly Library of Parliament was equally unhappy with its proposed inclusion, but finally it became part of the National Library of New Zealand. Subsequent developments which led this library (now called the Parliamentary Library) to be withdrawn from the National Library of New Zealand umbrella, speak for themselves but do not form part of the author's immediate concern.

In explaining the problems which surfaced with the creation of the National Library of New Zealand, McEldowney points to the unusually close relationship between the NZ Library Association and the National Library Service, 'so linked that it was sometimes hard to tell them apart'. This situation had existed for decades but then changed its character after 1949. He then continues:

> If only Alley had taken the initiative in 1966–67 and got together a strong working party to work out a new relationship between the National Library and the library profession which acknowledged the proper independent roles of each group, he might have left in place a good basis for future co-operation…. (p. 395)

These words are somewhat puzzling since it might raise the question in the reader's mind why create a National Library with so much effort if its *raison d'etre* was likely not to settle questions but to open up new contentions? Some of this seems to be already indicated by remarks made at the NZLA annual conference of 1965. The widely respected librarian John Cole spoke passionately against the proposed Bill, claiming 'the truth is that no full and open discussion[s] of the functions of the National Library have taken place among professional librarians for fifteen years to my knowledge'.

There was further agitation with Cole later the same day which ended with him publicly resigning from the NZLA. However, after dust had settled, after lunch Cole withdrew his resignation, and 'the applause which greeted the withdrawal was as great as any that had ever occurred at any meeting of the NZLA'. One wonders at the force of his charge that no open discussion had taken place: there was plenty of discussion, but perhaps it was restricted to an inner circle?

The creation of a tertiary-based library school was one issue where passions again exploded. A second controversy concerned the creation of policies

supervising the development of national book resources. The lack of a 'well-planned and collaborative programme of identifying and finding ways of dealing with emerging problems' was, McEldowney avers, the stumbling block where Alley failed to give the leadership required. In the view of Alley's son, Roderic, his father was not a team man: 'Emotionally, psychologically, he was ill equipped to deal with the teamwork needed, deriving strength from loftiness if not disdain'. The early days of the long-sought National Library were thus not free from rifts and rancour. Alley had only two years left to serve before his retirement fell due.

The pages devoted to the creation of the library school at Victoria University of Wellington (VUW) continue a story in which great efforts and counter-efforts played a large role: VUW finally agreed to its establishment in 1978. McEldowney traces all this with his great grasp of detail and an admirable ability to deal with complex issues taking place almost simultaneously. The same remarks apply to his treatment of the creation of the New Zealand Library Resources Committee. Australian librarians would find in these two issues much to stimulate their consideration of the history of parallel developments in Australia. The issues may have changed their nature in the later years of the last century, but one would be rash to consider them dead and buried for good.

Biographical sidelights

Among the many persons mentioned in *Geoffrey Alley: Librarian* are several who have more than a passing interest to students of Australian librarianship. These are Andrew Osborn, Keyes Metcalf and Jean Whyte. Much has been written about the first two, and the third is reported to be the subject of a biographical memoir not yet published[1]. The friendship between Alley and Jean Whyte led to a correspondence upon which McEldowney draws. Some of the passages he cites reveal what appears to be new information about Andrew Osborn. In retirement Alley was invited to spend three years as a visiting professor at the library school in London, Ontario which Andrew Osborn established. What started out as a venture full of promise ended badly, with personal relations between the two severed. This experience is reflected in the correspondence which casts, as it were, a retrospective light on the controversial career of Andrew Osborn in Sydney. Those letters will be a valuable source to future library historians.

The friendship between Alley and Keyes Metcalf lasted until death, and they too exchanged many letters which have survived. That Andrew Osborn features in these is no surprise, but some of the frank expressions of opinion do surprise. The publication of the Alley–Metcalf correspondence would be a welcome

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[1] Jenkin, Coralie E. *Jean Primrose Whyte: A Professional Biography.* To be published in 2008 (Ed.)

addition to our knowledge of these two outstanding men and their associates, and of the period in which they were active.

In retirement Alley kept an eye on the library matters dearest to him and was not reluctant to criticise his successors, at times in unbridled terms. Mary Ronnie seems to have been a favourite target: 'he remained in a state of paranoia about Ronnie as long as she was national librarian'. This and other remarks about colleagues cast a bad light on Alley's temperament and lack of judgement. While backbiting is not unknown in most professions, this seems to be a particularly virulent fault with Alley and makes the reader wonder at the psychological roots of this behaviour. Certainly the reader is made aware of the contradictions in Alley's character which can only puzzle. But a picture of the man in full cannot avoid the warts and all.

While McEldowney is frank in mentioning character faults in his chief protagonist, quoting the Alley family on various internal family matters, the most extraordinary episode of Alley's Canadian sojourn for about three years seems hard to credit. In negotiating the details of his lengthy attachment to the library school at the University of Western Ontario, Alley did not tell his wife Euphan about his intentions. When Mrs Alley learned of the proposal, she naturally wondered about her part in it. Alley did not want her to go with him, and this is in fact what happened. Mrs Alley maintained appearances by 'saying publicly that she could never have stood the North American winter'. This was obviously a bizarre marriage.

The character of Alley is scrutinised in a variety of settings, and the reader receives strong impressions about his forcefulness and unbending nature. Alley does not fall into the class of intellectual which is common among librarians. He does not appear to have written much, although what McEldowney does cite is impressive in its directness and common sense. The man's inner life remains a puzzle, yet he clearly had his admirers and supporters. He does not seem to have had much humour in his character; his harshness makes one wonder that he did not drive most associates away. Obviously a man difficult to be objective about!

Summing up

Enough has been said to indicate that this is an unusually rich and searching biography. It is to some extent a history, a personal memoir, and a biography without being clearly any one of these. The autobiographical element where McEldowney deals with his own not insignificant part in the history creates some interesting challenges to the author. The work is made readable by the author's sometimes colloquial asides and personal tone, but it is questionable whether

the frequent use of 'Geoff' to refer to Alley is appropriate. The long gestation of the work may also account for what this reviewer felt were different tempos in the narrative. Some parts seem to have been written for different types of readership. One lack the reviewer found irksome in the earlier parts of the book was the absence of a map showing the location of the many localities mentioned. New Zealanders may not need this, but others not familiar with geographical details do. McEldowney has a fluent style, but one wonders how any proofreader allowed the eight-line sentence on page 181 to survive. The photos are welcome, providing glimpses of a vanished world. The photo of the exterior of the National Library building in Wellington is, however, sadly drab and uninspiring.

This book makes demands on readers because of its complexity and length, but it is still a wonderful achievement and a notable contribution to a new way of writing library history. It opens possibilities of comparative studies in national librarianship in Australia and New Zealand and will stimulate younger researchers to follow up with side studies to bring the story up to date. It deserves a place in any substantial library collection. One can only salute the dedication of Jock McEldowney, who has made a monument for himself as well as for Geoffrey Alley.

R. L. Cope

Developing leaders for the 21st century

Continuing Professional Development: Pathways to Leadership in the Library and Information World. Ed. by Ann Ritchie and Clare Walker. IFLA Publications, 126. Munich: K.G. Saur, 2007. 319 pp. €8.00 hard cover ISBN 9783598220340

This collection incorporates papers presented at the Seventh World Conference on Continuing Professional Development and Workplace Learning for the Library and Information Professions, held in Johannesburg in August 2007. All included papers follow one of the themes of international, national and cross-cultural programmes, workplace learning and leadership training workshops, leadership institutes and generational differences and succession planning.

The introduction outlines the reason for the conference, agreed definitions, current trends, leadership training and the role of continuing professional development, setting the scene for the papers following.

The section titled Leadership Programmes incorporates papers on library leadership development, a library leadership institute, partnerships,

programmes in the UK and France and succession planning. The Workplace Learning and Leadership Training Workshops section contains only two papers, one on e-learning for leadership development and the other on the three functions of leadership. Leadership Institutes includes papers on research library leadership, developing future leaders, impact of an academy of library leadership and self-assessment in leadership development. Finally, Generational Differences and Succession Planning incorporates papers on leadership skills, partnerships, managing isolation, succession planning from Generation X to Generation Y and developing leadership concepts.

Papers come mainly from an academic background, discussing projects from, or partnered with, academic libraries in the US. However, some good content is also included relating to public and special libraries and also coming from projects and/or speakers from Africa, Australia, Canada, England, France, Hong Kong and New Zealand.

These papers are, in the main, very academic in content and presentation and would be of most use to academics teaching, researching or generally interested in library leadership development. However, many of the principles, experiences and programmes are translatable across all sectors of librarianship and, as a result, would be relevant to interested librarians in public or special libraries and are worth investigating further.

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Non-fiction readers' advisory

The Readers' Advisory Guide to Nonfiction. **By Neal Wyatt. ALA Readers' Advisory Series. Chicago: American Library Association, 2007. 320 pp. US$48.00 (ALA members US$43.20) soft cover ISBN 13: 9780838909362**

According to the author, most librarians are ignorant about non-fiction. He sets out to remedy this lack by commencing his book with a discussion of the ingredients that make up a non-fiction work, namely narrative content, subject, type and appeal which, itself, is subdivided into eight 'appeal elements', including pacing, learning/experiencing and detail. He concludes this section with a grid of 'Terms: What It Is, What It Measures and Ways to Express It' in order to clarify his earlier points.

After discussing barriers to non-fiction, including how to elicit information from patrons so they can be assisted, Wyatt moves on to nine subject chapters, among them Food and Cooking, Memoirs and General Nonfiction. Each is divided into sections: what readers enjoy in these books, types, detailed discussions of benchmark titles to read and suggest, a list of key authors, a bibliography of suggestions (listed by title but alphabetically by author), and resources and awards. The general non-fiction chapter includes sections on humour, war, religion and spirituality, plus other subjects which do not fit elsewhere. To indicate the diversity found in the volume, authors and titles mentioned range from William Bligh and Robert Louis Stevenson to some 20 books on the Iraq War.

The final chapters deal with how the librarian can learn about – seemingly a rather time-consuming process – and market the collection, and how the advisory service can include, with the non-fiction, not only related fiction but also non-book materials. There are five appendices concerned with methods of getting the best out of both the librarian and the collection, such as building a subject guide and setting up a reading plan. There is a single author/title/subject index.

Although most of the authors and titles mentioned are American, a number of Australian entries can be found, among them Peter Carey, Sarah Turnbull and Jill Ker Conway (whose book is one of 10 suggested reads in the Memoirs section). The Sports chapter, especially, is likely to be of limited interest to local readers, but more significant than any inclusions are the exclusions. Books on parapsychology, pop psychology, conspiracy theories and the like are ignored: there is no *Men Are from Mars, Women Are from Venus* or *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail*, for example, despite their bestseller status.

The list of key authors in each chapter gives no indication as to what those authors actually write, while, although at least the type of book is known in each subject bibliography, that is all: even a single line comment would have been useful, as would the original publication date of each title. The index is not always correct, and there are some typos.

Still, this would be useful starting point for public librarians who feel that their knowledge of non-fiction is inadequate and, despite the American bias and notable omissions, they would gain useful assistance from it.

John Foster
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Books on books

The Book Is Dead: Long Live the Book. By Sherman Young. Sydney: University of New South Wales Press, 2007. 189 pp. $29.95 hard cover ISBN 9780868408040

Making Books: Contemporary Australian Publishing. Ed. by David Carter and Anne Galligan. St Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 2007. 416 pp. $39.95 soft cover ISBN 9780702234699

Arts of Publication: Scholarly Publishing in Australia and Beyond. Ed. by Lucy Neave, James Connor and Amanda Crawford. Melbourne: Australian Scholarly Publishing, 2006. 197pp. $29.95 hard cover ISBN 9781740971355

The cover blurb for David Carter and Anne Galligan's collection of 23 essays in *Making Books: Contemporary Australian Publishing* asks, 'Is the Australian publishing industry flourishing or floundering? What is the future of the book? Has lifestyle replaced literary publishing? Have new technologies revolutionised the nature of the industry?' Big issues indeed.

If Sherman Young had seen the hordes of people staggering out with bags of books from September's Canberra Lifeline Book Fair, he would not be asking if the book is dead. Young, a senior lecturer in media studies at Macquarie University, admits, however, that the phrase 'the book is dead' is an absurd proposition. Young fervently believes that the book's 'place in the cultural milieu is essential and must be protected'. His solution is to release the book from its print form into a digital 'heavenly Library - the world's collection of books available in an instant'.

Young also asks the important question, 'does anybody still read books?' A recent US Associated Press-Ipsos poll came out too late for Young to use, but it reveals that a quarter of US adults read no books at all in the past year. Of those who did read, women and pensioners were the most avid readers, with religious works and popular fiction the top choices. The median figure for books read was nine books for women and five for men. The figures also indicated that those with college degrees read the most, and people aged 50 and over read more than those who are younger. More women than men read every major category of books except for history and biography.

Young quotes British author Ian McEwan, who in 2005 attempted to give away free books in a London park. McEwan told *The Guardian* that nearly all but one of the takers were women, who were 'eager and grateful' for the books, while the men 'frowned in suspicion, or distaste'. McEwan's conclusion was that 'When women stop reading, the novel will be dead'. A recent issue of the

UK *Bookseller* noted that Penguin's biggest selling living fiction author is Clive Cussler (age 76), who just beat Jack Higgins (79), Frederick Forsyth (69) and Wilbur Smith (74). It was suggested that male readers, to whom these ageing authors appeal, are seeking 'solid reassurance and juicy narratives'.

Joyce Carol Oates wondered at the June US BookExpo how American culture could 'sustain ideas longer than the language of a fortune cookie', and Young laments how publishers have turned away from ideas in favour of diet cook books and celebrity biographies. Carter and Galligan also reflect that, while 'the local book industry is a major sector within Australia's cultural infrastructure', publishers face a major dilemma as they try to straddle both 'commerce and culture'.

Professor Glyn Davis, Vice-Chancellor of Melbourne University, quoted in *The Age* of 29 September, stressed that a University Press 'that doesn't talk to the things that preoccupy thinking people in this country is probably a University Press that's missing its mark'. Robin Derricourt's succinct overview essay in *Making Books* on 'Book Publishing and the University Sector in Australia', and several of the chapters in *Arts of Publication*, echo this sentiment, although the ways of achieving Davis' edict in access and business models clearly differ. *Arts of Publication* required two subsidies from ANU; 'otherwise it could not have been published'. Therein lies another debate in the digital era.

The nature of book publishing and the reading public in Australia is well covered in *Making Books*, which is divided into three sections, Industry Dynamics, The Industry and New Technologies, and Industry Sectors and Genre Publishing. As in all collections of essays, some are better than others, and some have been previewed elsewhere, such as Mark Davis' incisive and controversial comments on 'The Decline of the Literary Paradigm in Australian Publishing' and Richard Flanagan's 'Colonies of the Mind' originally delivered in June 2003.

Lorien Kaye and Katya Johansen in 'Publishing and Book Selling' note the changes in the Australian book-selling landscape, although K-Mart and Big W are yet to achieve the book depth and price range that Tesco's have in the UK. The recent purchase by Pizza Express mogul Luke Johnson of the Borders bookshop chain in Britain indirectly reflects the increasing fast food concept of the business.

Young notes how 'The intellectual butterflies of the publishing industry devolved, not into caterpillars, but slugs, as they were absorbed borg-like by multinational corporations. ...The idea of public good has been largely cast aside'. If Young believes this is true for the general book publishing industry, he should note what is happening in the academic publishing world, where large multinational companies, particularly in science, technology and medicine, are making huge

profits and squeezing out smaller publishers, learned societies and monograph publishing, a crucial issue for the concerns outlined in *Arts of Publication.*

James Connor in the collection of 11 essays, edited by himself, Lucy Neave and Amanda Crawford, notes that publishing 'academic work is a symbiotic relationship - although a few of the academics we spoke with would prefer the term parasitic'. The symbiotic link between profits and the leading academic publishers is strengthening at a rapid pace. According to *Publishers Weekly*, the world's 45 largest book publishers generated revenue of approximately US$73 billion in 2006, with Reed Elsevier topping the list with revenue of US$7.6 billion, followed closely by Pearson with sales of US$7.3 billion.

Arts of Publication, subtitled *Scholarly Publishing in Australian and Beyond*, has its origins in papers given at a symposium at the National Museum of Australia in August 2004. The challenges of 'publish or perish' for academics and PhD students in the social sciences and humanities has not diminished since the original symposium. It is unfortunate, however, that the book has taken over three years to appear, reflecting a recurrent problem with academia and print publishing. One of the authors in *Arts of Publication* told me that he has three other chapters submitted in 2004/2005 to other publishers which have still not yet appeared, and this is far from a rare case.

As a result of the time delay, several of the 11 essays have dated significantly. A number of contributors make cross references to Russell Smith's chapter on 'Web Publishing', which is the chapter that needed the most updating in terms of developments in publishing, digital access, repositories and the impact of e-presses since 2004. Smith does, however, conceptually capture the opportunities in, and the growing importance of, blogs, wikis, and new social publishing frameworks.

Academic authors are between a publishing rock and a Research Quality Framework hard place at the present time in Australia, New Zealand, Britain and elsewhere. One of the original motivations in the *Arts of Publication* was to provide a *vade mecum* for PhD students on how to get published, how to deal with manuscript rejection, etc. Several chapters, such as James Connor on 'Publishing a Book' and Rhonda Black on 'Writing a Book Proposal' contain much good advice in traditional publishing contexts.

Young recognises that the pages of *The Book Is Dead* will probably only be read by a few thousand people, while his doctoral thesis was read by a 'grand total of four people'. He and some of the contributors to *Arts of Publication* seem unaware of the ADT (the Australian Digital Theses) programme. Lucy Neave's conclusion to *Arts of Publication,* that 'we look forward to a future in which it is

hoped that academics will not only be more informed about publishing but more active participants in the process', is an apt one.

John Byron, in his Foreword to *Arts of Publication*, provides a well-articulated call to arms for new academic strategies, reminding academia that 'a failure to disseminate research will be read as a failure of quality'. The growing Open Access publishing movement, within peer review settings, offers hope in this context. The digital environment will also allow for vastly different methods of distribution and access beyond the traditional print sequence of publisher, warehouse, book and remainder shops and then second hand outlets.

Matt Rubinstein pointed out at the 2007 Sydney Writers Festival out that digital books will allow many authors to reach a worldwide audience and that currently 'for most authors the problem isn't privacy but obscurity'. Young, however, if he truly believed in this heavenly digital library, would have put his text, like his blog, on the Internet.

Jeff Gomez in his forthcoming US book, *Print Is Dead: Books in Our Digital Age*, believes 'the old publishing system is disappearing.... The question is what is the path of migration for us to the new ecosystem'. Natalie Ceeney, Chief Executive of the UK National Archives, in an address at Parliament House on September 18, reminded us that Google has only been operational for nine years, yet it is already a fixture in many lives. For many people in Britain and America a bookstore is Amazon reached through Google.

Young, at the Sydney Writers Festival this year said, 'in the MTV age of instant gratification...blind devotion to printed objects threatens the very existence of books'. Yet despite this comment on print, many readers will prefer to print off text from digital originals. Print On Demand (POD) units in book stores and universities will become commonplace. A senior Amazon representative recently indicated that POD is currently the fastest growing segment of their book sales through partner company BookSurge. Given rising global postal costs, it makes more sense to download books locally and distribute within countries and ultimately at the desktop. Jason Epstein, a pioneer of the paperback revolution in the 1950s, said recently, 'Think of this (POD) machine as a visit to Kitty Hawk'.

E-books, moreover, still only constitute 1 per cent of total global book sales, although it should only be a matter of time before readers will be able to download books, as cheaply as music, on to iPods and MP3s. Major issues to be resolved here include copyright and industry standardisation. Amazon's new e-book reader, Kindle, will probably not help the latter, although readers will be able to download books wirelessly from the e-book store on the Amazon website.

Whatever the Internet book futures, the ideas in text, and what they stand for, will remain paramount, as Young and Davis remind us. Jeanette Winterson wrote earlier this year in *The Sunday Times* that 'to carry a book in my pocket is a reminder of my freedoms, my values, my way of life, not the one that the Government has prepared for me. Next time you see a CCTV camera read to it.'

Colin Steele
Australian National University

Guidelines for authors

The Australian Library Journal welcomes contributions documenting developments in research and professional practice as well as more general articles on issues relevant to librarians and libraries.

Most articles are peer reviewed. These include substantial pieces and articles whose authors request review.

Preferred length is 3000–5000 words, and the preferred format for submission is an MS Word attachment to an email sent to the Editor at:

ian.mccallum@alianet.alia.org.au

Articles should be accompanied by an abstract of up to 150 words, plus brief biographical details of the author(s).

All submissions will be acknowledged, and when accepted will be the subject of a formal shared agreement on copyright with ALIA.

The Commonwealth's *Style manual for authors, editors and printers*, sixth edition 2002 (ISBN 0 7016 3648 3) should be used be used where choices need to be made.

Reference style should follow the *ALJ's* current practice.

Contributions are equally welcome from established and beginning authors.

ALIA in 2008/09

Australian Library and Information Association

Who are we

As the national professional association for the library and information sector, the Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) represents the interests of members, the profession, and Australia's 12 million library users.

ALIA 2008 Biennial Conference
2–5 September 2008
Alice Springs

Your voice: NAC National Advisory Congress
1 September 2008,
Alice Springs

ALIA 4th New Librarians Symposium
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Melbourne

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Get in the game, READ!
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early February 2009

ALIA Information Online Exhibition and Conference
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14 February 2009
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25–31 May 2009
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ALIA's website
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