



Guide to nonsexist teaching activities K-12 (ISBN 0 89774 100 5) developed by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory Center for Sex Equality. A sampling of nonsexist teaching resources. Annotated. US emphasis. From Oryx Press. US\$22.50

Sources of library statistics 1972-1982 (ISBN 0 8389 3292 4) compiled by Mary Jo Lynch. 48 pages focussed on American libraries. From the American Library Association, naturally. US\$7.95.

Unity in diversity (ISBN 0 909587 25 6) paradoxical title of the proceedings of two 1982 workshops on multicultural education in Australia. Published in 1983 by the Australian College of Education, 916 Swanston Street, Carlton, Vic 3053. \$5.00. Très bon marché.

Dictionaries for children and young adults (ISBN 0 8389 5655 6). Based on reviews which appeared in the July 1982 issue of *Reference and subscription books bulletin*. Reviews 9 American dictionaries. 38 pages. From the American Library Association in 1983. US\$1.95.

EPA index ISBN 0 89774 032 7) published in 1983 by Oryx. Lists by report number and by title all US Environmental Protection Agency numbered reports cited in the USGPO *Monthly catalog* or distributed to federal depository libraries. Gives SuDocs classifications. Covers 1970-1982. Provides NTIS numbers where applicable. Costs US\$35.00. Edited by Cynthia E. Bower and Mary L. Rhoads. Useful in the right environment.

Directory of research grants 1984 (ISBN 0 89774 021 1; ISSN 0146-7336) was first published, I think, in 1975, and provides brief information on over 2,000, mainly US, grant programmes. Good subject, grant name and sponsoring body indexes. Entries arranged by broad subject. Published by Oryx at US\$55.00 and available locally from Bennetts.

Directory of mental health services for the Sydney Metropolitan Region (ISSN 0813-4630) was produced last year by the NSW Association for Mental Health. Outstandingly useful guide to organisations and departments which are not in or hard to find in the phone book. Plus information on hours of opening, purposes, services and activities, access and costs. Available for \$4.20 (posted) from the Association at Suite 2, 194 Miller Street, North Sydney 2060.

The aged in Australia: library services (ISBN 0 7240 8583 1) prepared by Susan Scott and Carol Yuen contains 85 references to monographs on Australia's growth industry, lists 10 relevant journals and provides a further 58 references for those who want to delve further into library services to the aged. Published last year by and available gratis from the Research Service, State Library of New South Wales, Macquarie Street, Sydney 2000.

Abbreviations and acronyms in documents related to education in Victoria (No ISBN). Title tells it all. It's a preliminary version, and will prove very useful. Further information from Dr. I. Maier, 39 Woonah Street, Chadstone 3148.

Newcastle in the Great Depression (ISBN 0 949579 01 7) by Sheilah Gray is no 11 in the Newcastle History Monographs series published by Newcastle Region Public Library. A thorough treatment, based on an M.A. thesis. \$4.80.

Aslib directory of information sources in the United Kingdom: volume 2: social sciences, medicine and the humanities (ISBN 0 85142 184 9) is now in its formidable fifth edition. A thousand pages, 3583 societies, institutes, museums, clubs, libraries, from the H.G. Wells Society to the Andrew Carnegie Birthplace Memorial: anywhere in the subject area where information might be sought. Good subject index. Good abbreviations index. Published last year by Aslib. £60.00.

Something about the author (ISSN 0267-826X; ISBN 0 8103 0065 6) now in volume 35. Short sidelights in the writer's own words. Portraits. Book illustrations. Bibliographies. Edited by Anne Commire, published last year by Gale Research. US\$58.00.

CHARGES UP, NO PUBLICITY FOR COMMONWEALTH FOI

The Commonwealth Attorney-General, Mr Bowen, has announced a new scale of charges for Freedom of Information requests effective from 1 July 1985. The basic charge has been increased from \$12.50, which included an hour of search and retrieval time and up to 50 pages of photocopying, to a basic \$20 administrative charge plus \$30 per hour of search and retrieval time. Applicants will be required to pay the \$20 administrative charge in advance, plus a deposit of 50% of other estimated charges.

The Government also intends to limit remission of charges to applicants who seek access to documents about themselves and who are receiving income support payments. In other words, charges will no longer be remitted on the grounds of personal hardship, or the requested documents being about the applicant's personal affairs if the applicant is not receiving income support. It will be much harder to establish the public interest as grounds for remission of charges.

Charges will be collected even where documents do not exist or access is refused. Freedom of information publicity is to be suspended 'for the time being'.

A positive aspect of the new arrangements has been a Government direction to Departments not to oppose release of innocuous documents simply because they are technically exempt from release.

'The Government's commitment to effective Freedom of Information legislation remains unaltered,' Mr Bowen said.

The Government's announcement has been greeted critically in the press. The Brisbane *Courier-Mail* said (21 June 1985):

The increased fees will not affect professional researchers. They will affect ordinary people, worried about their social security status, their income tax records, or their defence service entitlements. Generally, these are the people who can least afford to pay.

The *Financial Review* (17 June 1985) also saw the new charges as 'a powerful deterrent', and 'likely to affect applicants such as individuals or small businesses who wish to peruse their tax files, or seek Government information on tax, industry policy, and assistance measures'. The *Canberra Times* said (20 June 1985):

It is unlikely that the fees will raise more than \$100,000. The real savings will be from fewer requests, something probably anticipated in the Department of Finance order for an average 50% reduction in staff allocations for FOI matters. Moreover, the Government has suspended publicity programs, designed to let citizens know about their rights under FOI — which is disgraceful. The changed fees and new charging procedures are fundamentally hostile to the idea that citizens have a right to know what the Government knows about them and to know what the Government is doing . . . FOI will not go away, however much the Government would now seem to wish it. But it has had a blow, one that should be closely examined by the Senate, both in considering the new regulations in August and in its examination of the first four years of the Act later this year. Now is not the time for working out restrictions on public knowledge of and participation in government: it is a time for extending it.

John Cook
27 June 1985

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