

LAWS & LIBRARIANSHIP

The LAA recently received complaints from 2 members about a broadcast by Sydney radio personality John Laws in which he made reference to educational standards for librarianship.

The Acting Executive Director wrote to Mr Laws explaining the requirements for entry into Librarianship. A copy of this letter and Mr Laws' reply are reproduced below, without comment.

October 30, 1985.

Mr. J. Laws,
C/- Radio 2GB,
364 Sussex Street,
SYDNEY NSW 2000

Dear Mr Laws,
I have recently been contacted by a member of The Library Association of Australia concerning a reference which you made to the education of librarians on your programme on 2GB on Monday October 28, 1985.

The topic under discussion apparently concerned the decision by the Parramatta City Library to remove certain childrens' books from its shelves. In the course of the discussion I understand that you stated on more than one occasion that students undertaking a degree in Librarianship require an aggregate mark of *only* 275 in the Higher School Certificate and that as Librarians are not Child Psychologists they are not competent to judge the standard of childrens' literature. The member who contacted the LAA was offended by these remarks which, she felt, belittled the intelligence, qualifications and professional competence of Librarians.

As I did not hear this programme myself I do not wish to debate the accuracy of our member's perception of your remarks, however, in the interests of furthering your knowledge of Librarianship I would like to provide you with some additional information about the profession.

Whilst it is true that the minimum entry requirements for students entering the three year Bachelor of Arts (Library Science) Degree at Kuring-gai College of Advanced Education in 1985 was an aggregate mark of 275 in the Higher School Certificate, this requirement fluctuates somewhat from year to year and is not significantly different to the entry requirement for Arts Degree Courses at other tertiary institutions. Indeed, most Child Psychologists would have commenced their tertiary education with a BA degree with a similar standard of entry. Obviously the figure of 275 represents a *minimum* entry requirement and as admission to the Bachelor of Arts (Library Science) Degree is quite competitive, it is most likely that the majority of students accepted into the course possess HSC aggregates which are substantially higher than the minimum entry requirement.

The 3 year Kuring-gai Library Degree is not however the only course available in Librarianship. Many Librarians undertake a postgraduate Diploma in Librarianship at a University or CAE having first obtained a degree in another discipline. Graduates from a wide variety of disciplines enter post-graduate librarianship courses including Arts, Science, Commerce, Pharmacy and Engineering. Competition for places in postgraduate Library Diplomas is fierce, and many institutions accept students only after interviewing prospective candidates.

The Library Association of Australia maintains strict standards within library courses through a programme of inspection and accreditation. Graduate Librarians are well educated and highly skilled professionals whose performance in their chosen field is comparable with that of any other professional group.

I hope that this information has been of assistance. I have enclosed a pamphlet which explains in more detail the requirements of the various courses in librarianship which are available in NSW and the ACT. Should you require any further information about the profession the LAA will be happy to assist you.

Yours sincerely,

Sue Phillips,
ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR.

ENC.

11th October 1985

Sue Phillips
376 Jones St
Ultimo 2007

Dear Sue
Thank you very much for your letter and your kind wishes and thoughts. I appreciate you taking the time and trouble to write to me and hope that the programme continues to entertain you.

If you ever have an opportunity to ring me on my programme, I would be delighted to talk to you.

Thanking you again.

Yours sincerely,

JOHN LAWS C.B.E.



LIBRARIES: After 1984

Proceedings of the LAA/NZLA Conference, Brisbane 1984.
Sydney: Library Association of Australia, 1985. 569pp
ISBN 0 86804 034 7.

The theme of the conference presented an opportunity to become familiar with the latest developments in many aspects of librarianship. This was the first joint LAA/NZLA Conference to be held in Australia and in many cases themes were explored by speakers from both countries.

Price: \$70 to non-members
\$55 to LAA members

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LAA House,
376 Jones Street, Ultimo
NSW 2007

NEW

NEW INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES AND LIBRARIES

Proceedings Advanced Research Workshop by the European cultural Foundation, Luxembourg, Nov. 1984. To assess the Impact of New Information Technologies on Library Management, Resources and Co-operation in Europe and Nth America.

Representatives from 17 European and North American nations, together with some from International Library and Information bodies, took part in a workshop held in Luxembourg in November 1984.

The following spearpoint projects are extensively discussed:

- The Linked Systems Project developed by the Research Libraries group, the Library of Congress and the Washington Library Network, which makes feasible queries that cross the lines between dissimilar computer systems.
- The relevance of European Community initiatives such as the APOLLO project (Article Procurement with Online Local Ordering) and the programme for electronic document DOCDEL for the library community
- The Digital Optical Disc Project of the Library of Congress.

A special session paid due attention to the Industry Library liaison by means of a presentation on ESPRIT the European Programme for Research and Development in Information Technologies and a presentation on the needs and means for co-operation between new information technology industries and universities.

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