

THE SOURCE

The write side of the law

Writing can be a bit of a minefield. You can so easily detonate a defamation suit. Treading harder could mean a blasphemy charge blowing up. You could be caught on the barbs of the Income Tax Assessment Act, or be clobbered by the Copyright Act.

Just how extensive the minefield really is emerges with great clarity from Colin Golvan and Michael McDonald's excellent *Writers and the law*, which was published last year by the Law Book Company. This thorough work seems to cover everything from your first contract to write your new *Thorn birds*, *Mad Max*, *Emerald City*, *Blue Hills* or *Dallas*.

Each type of contract is discussed in considerable detail, but readably and with interesting examples. Special attention is rightly given to standard agreements prepared by the Australian Society of Authors and the Australian Writers' Guild, which are good targets for the writer to aim at. Copyright looms large, not unexpectedly, with a lengthy dis-

ussion of significant cases. The importance of the letter C in a circle (which I notice some of the items sent to the Source sometimes lack) is rightly stressed. The protection of confidential information (the subject of a recent, lengthy, and not-yet-dead case not unrelated to the British Secret Service) also comes in for attention — together with moral rights, agents (know what to expect for your 10%), obscenity and the dreaded defamation. The fiscal fiend weighs in, in a smallish way, at chapter 12, and the work is rounded off by the text of the aforementioned standard agreements, names and addresses of relevant, mainly Australian organisations and a reasonable index.

If you write, read it. As David Williamson writes in his Foreword, this book may help to save you from 'at least the closest and most visible of the shark's jaws'. It certainly shows you where the deep water is. Colin Golvan and Michael McDonald's *Writers and the law* was published last year by the Law Book Company. It costs \$29.50. (ISBN 0 455 207119)

You can bank on the Westdeutsche Landesbank

In fact you can sink your funds into Security Pacific, stay solvent with the Chemical Bank, or think up your own slogan for the Banque Worms. Such are some of the exotica now firmly acclimatised since deregulation of the banking industry in Australia.

Now there is a splendidly-conceived new directory to cover the many manifestations of financial circles in Australia. Entitled prosaically but accurately *Australian finance directory*, this work, which promises to be annual, covers banks operating or merely represented in Australia, stock brokers, finance companies, credit unions, economic services, consultants and virtually any organisation which comes within cooee of filthy lucre.

Where they are, who controls them, when they started up, how much they are worth, what they do. The 1986 edition, which I have seen, is excellent, although I would put in a plea for an index in the next edition.

A good index is always a sound investment. *Australian finance directory* was published for the first time last year by Information Australia, 45 Flinders Lane, Melbourne, Vic 3000, phone (03) 654 2800. (ISSN 0818-6715)

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A few of my favourite things

Full marks to Joanna Richardson and James Henri for dogged persistence. Earlier this year the third edition of their very useful *L.I.S.T.* appeared.

L.I.S.T., as its subtitle explains, is a 'list of acronyms and initialisms in information studies' and is an old favourite of acronym sufferers. The earlier editions were compiled 'primarily with the needs of distance students in mind' but quickly found a wider audience. There is excellent coverage of Australian terms, as one would expect from a home grown product, but 'every effort has been made to include major foreign terms' as well. Just the thing for your favourite YUMNEI (Young, upwardly mobile, new and energetic librarian — I don't believe it).

Joanna Richardson and James Henri's *L.I.S.T.*, 3rd ed., was pubd earlier this yr by the CLS at RMIHE, PO Box 588, Wagga NSW 2650 as its Occ. Monog. no. 1. It costs \$9.00. (ISBN 0 909561 94 X; ISSN 0815-0400)

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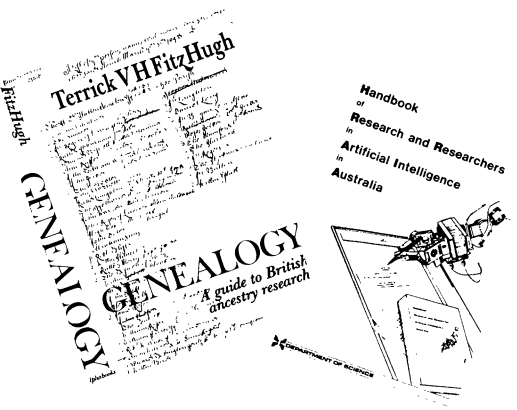
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Karst of thousands

Geographical terms likely to be encountered by secondary school students are the subject of a modest, but well-produced little book from Brooks Waterloo. Don't let the title of W. E. Rousham and R. R. Keith's *Geography dictionary for Australian schools* put you off unduly.

It will prove useful for anyone interested and reading at all widely in physical and human geography, and its Australian slant is to be welcomed. Some may quibble about various inclusions and exclusions — the shadoaf, but not Archimedes' screw, for example, and Mitchell Grass but not alfalfa or lucerne — where to start and where to finish must have posed the compilers some exquisite problems. There are very clear diagrams — 59 of them — of gorges, geysers, berms, creep and the like.

This good first effort, is reasonably priced at \$5.50. W. E. Rousham and R. R. Keith's *Geography dictionary for schools* was published last year by Brooks Waterloo. (ISBN 0 86440 019 5)

Hell's guide to bibliographies is classic 'Source' material — she has actually scrutinised the bibliographies she describes ... so we know there are no bibliographical phantoms here.

Rooting around

What is a Great Beast? Would you recognise Secretary Hand if you stumbled over it? What on earth is a knocknobbler, and what would the RSPCA think of him or her? Such are the curiosities which you may encounter if you delve into British ancestry, with its rich vocabulary which would normally send you tottering towards the *OED*.

Joining the ranks of specialist works for the genealogist is Terrick V. H. FitzHugh's *Dictionary of genealogy*, which was published in 1985 by Alphabooks. In 308 pages FitzHugh explains, in a mercifully straightforward way, over a thousand terms which the genealogist may encounter. He also describes the whole range of historical records likely to be of interest, with illustrations of Census records, estate accounts, marriage registers, churchwardens' accounts, banns books and so on. There are many other helpful features, such as a perpetual calendar and a table of regnal years, and there are useful hints, and addresses to write to, almost everywhere.

Terrick V. H. FitzHugh's *Dictionary of genealogy: a guide to British ancestry research* was published in 1985 by Alphabooks, Sherborne, Dorset. It is distributed locally by Harper and Row, who kindly provided a review copy. It costs \$35. (ISBN 0 906670 38 1). The American edition, for the record, was published by Barnes and Noble. (ISBN 0 389 20565 6)

THE SOURCE looks at books, journals, directories and a variety of odds'n sods of interest to the library world

Artificial experts

In 1986 the Australian Department of Science conducted an extensive survey of people studying artificial intelligence (AI) in Australia. For the purpose of the study, AI covered 'knowledge based computing systems, machine intelligence and developments frequently described as fifth generation computing'. Robotics, pattern and speech recognition are all under this intriguing umbrella, which is of more than passing interest to librarians as enthusiastic users of innovative technology.

The Department has now published some of the fruits of its survey in the form of a *Handbook of research and researchers in artificial intelligence in Australia*. This contains factual information about respondents who are engaged in Australian research into AI, and a discursive overview of the research community, its current state and possible future directions. There emerges a truly fascinating picture of research in progress: Boltzmann machines, automatic theorem proving, leather sorting machines and an expert system to analyse water penetration through window frames — these are just a few typical applications. Work is progressing on a 1987 survey which will no doubt unearth even more intriguing researchers.

Handbook of research and researchers in artificial intelligence in Australia was prepared by (wait for it) the Sectoral Programs B Section, Sectoral Policy and Programs Branch, Scientific Development Division, Department of Science, PO Box 65, Belconnen, ACT 2616. (If it has an ISBN, I wasn't intelligent enough to find it)

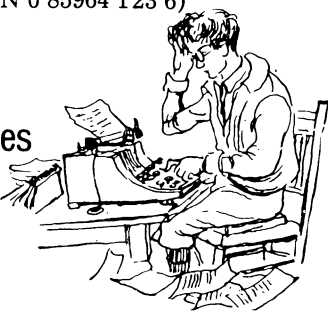
Bibliographies unlimited

An annotated guide to current national bibliographies is classic *Source* material, and quickly slid down the table to your humble compiler at a recent Editorial Board meeting. In 407 closely-printed pages Barbara L. Bell introduces national bibliographies or 'suitable substitutes' for 160 countries from Afghanistan to Zaire.

The compiler provides very full notes on scope and coverage, arrangement, promptness (often a sore point), availability, and an indication of current legal deposit laws in the country involved. Bell has actually scrutinised the bibliographies she describes, which has not been an easy feat, so we know there are no bibliographical phantoms here. And her comments are penetrating and in some cases highly critical, especially where titles do not measure up to the International Conference on National Bibliographies (Paris, 1977) recommendations. This work is an important source for reference workers as well as in the acquisition process, by indentifying regional as well as national bibliographies of the world.

Barbara L. Bell's *An annotated guide to current national bibliographies* was published last year by Chadwyck-Healey, Cambridge. It costs £42.00. (ISBN 0 85964 123 6)

by David J. Jones




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The National Committee of the Special Libraries Section of the Library Association of Australia has made a grant to the Organising Committee of the Second Asian-Pacific Special and Law Librarians' Conference. The funds are to be used to assist librarians in special libraries to attend the conference. The National Committee is concerned that many special librarians may be unable to attend as a result of the high travel costs involved. Grants of up to \$250 will be available and requests for assistance should be made to the Conference Convener (c/-ICMS, PO Box 29, Parkville, Vic 3052).

Applicants must be members of the Special Libraries Section and should state their LAA Membership Number.