

British words on tape: good value for most libraries

British words on tape 1991: a directory of spoken word cassettes available in the UK ed. Ardis Voegelin-Carleton, compiler Dorothy Dixon, consultant editor Catherine Pinion. London: Meckler. 161pp. \$45.25 plus handling and delivery, from DA Books & Journals.

After bibliographically droughty decades a number of reliable watering holes have appeared in audiovisual territory. Those who value sound recordings as a remarkably versatile and effective medium for the communication of knowledge and ideas can now draw on, among others:

Bowker's massive *On cassette: a comprehensive bibliography of spoken word audiocassettes* is about to hit the Australian market in its 1991 edition, at \$215 (dist. by D.W. Thorpe). The last (1990) edition contained 1765 pages and 38 500+ titles and gave approaches under title, author, reader/performer and subject. Its physical bulk was due partly to repetition of entry detail in the various indexes — which nevertheless also provided some added convenience in use. Possibly too expensive for smaller libraries. Useful length annotations, prices and a generous sprinkling of ISBN and other helpful code numbers.

Words on tape 1991: a guide to the US and Canadian audio cassette market is, like *British words on tape*, a Meckler publication, and

similar in layout. Earlier editions bore the brave subtitle 'an international guide to the audio cassette market'. The 1991 edition, at \$94.25 plus handling and delivery, from DA Books & Journals together with *BWOT* covers over 35 000 spoken word audio cassettes.

The 1991 edition of *British words on tape*, which is what started me off on these brief comments, appeared in September 1990, and describes itself as the first 'comprehensive' guide in the UK to spoken word audio cassettes. It gives coverage of over 6700 cassettes available for rent or purchase in the UK, with details including author, reader, price, publisher and availability, obtained 'from information provided by the publishers' (where *do* compilers of such publications obtain their stamina?). Cassettes at all levels are included (*The emperor's new clothes*; Roald Dahl's reading of his *The enormous crocodile*; classic novels; lightweight fiction such as Max Brand, Zane Grey and Peter Corris, and numerous more serious productions on e.g. the Arab-Israeli conflict, isotropy of space, keyboarding for the electronic office, languages, drama, poetry, literary criticism, history etc. Production/publications dates are not given (*Audiocassette finder* and especially *On cassette* contain quite a few dates). Some tape/slide publications are included.

It is reassuring to see so much excellent

quality material from Sussex Tapes and Audio Learning is still available, but puzzling as to why some interesting items have apparently been withdrawn e.g. Latham and Ollard's Sussex tape on Samuel Pepys. It is reassuring too, to confirm that Open University is not, as many Australian librarians must have feared, out of the business of producing audio cassettes.

Overall there is not much to choose from in these various publications as far as entry detail, adequacy of indexing and information on producers and distributors are concerned. Large libraries probably need to acquire all of these guides in order to achieve a more 'comprehensive' overview of available cassettes. Even then it is doubtful whether the most industrious compiler can wrinkle out all of the useful productions of say, tertiary campuses.

British words on tape is good value for most libraries. With 97 double-column pages of title entries it is sufficiently compact for the dedicated audiovisual librarian to scan the publication in its entirety to build up, or check on the health of, a broad audio cassette collection.

OK, D.W. Thorpe, how about that next edition of *Australian Audiovisual reference book*?

Bert Cornelius

Macquarie University Library □

World guide to Library, Archive and Information Science Associations

Josephine Riss Fang and Alice H Songe with the assistance of Anna J Fang and Alexandra Herz. IFLA Publications 52/53. München, London, New York, Paris 1990 xxvii+517pp.

Printed on acid-free paper, this Guide is made to last, although by its nature it is out of date before it is printed. ALIA appears with Averill Edwards as President and presumably similar bodies around the world are also frozen in 1989. Some entries for Australia are almost too complete. AACOBs and ALPC are shown in every respect as if they are still active, and only in the last lines do we read that they were dissolved in 1988 when ACLIS was established. However, all this being admitted, there is an enormous amount of useful and still timely information gathered here. The Guide has mirrored a steady growth in national and international activities:

	1973	1976	1980	1990
International associations	33	41	58	76
National associations	285	317	450	511
Journals/newsletters of these bodies	-	256	301	406
Total membership	-	310 000	375 000	536 000

The guide has a 15-page glossary of the acronyms of the associations, which doubles as an index. It also has a general bibliography of information sources on librarianship in developed countries and in the Third World, a listing of Official Journals of Associations (includes *ALJ* but not *inCite*, yet the newsletter of the Association of Welsh Health Librarians — 40 members — rates a mention!), listings of official names and chief officers and a subject index. If you need to contact library and information associations overseas, this is essential reference. □

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