New in the library

The following books have been selected for display from the range of new additions. The ABA invites the public to use the library during normal business hours, but borrowing is not permitted. These notes are indicative of a book's subject, but are not intended as critical comment or review. During January the library may be closed for relocations. To avoid inconvenience telephone (02) 334 7922 or (02) 334 7923.

■ Interpreting Audiences: The Ethnography of Media Consumption

Shaun Moores. London: Sage, 1993. 154pp. ISBN 0 8039 8447 2.

This book offers a comprehensive guide to important new developments in the study of media reception. Reviewing a wide range of work done by qualitative audience researchers over recent years, the author charts the emergence of a critical ethnographic perspective on everyday consumer practices. Moores outlines its various applications in communication and cultural analysis.

Areas of inquiry that are discussed are: the power of media texts to determine the meanings made by their readers; the relationship between media genres and social patterns of taste; the day-to-day setings and dynamic social situations of reception; and the cultural uses and interpretations of communication technologies in the home.

Assessing the theories of Bourdieu, De Certeau and others and drawing on his own investigations of new media technologies in domestic contexts, Moores advances a model of creativity and constraint in everyday life.
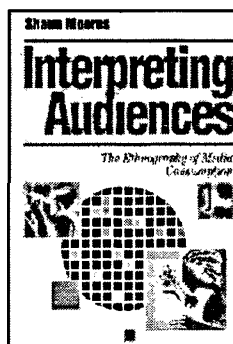
■ The New Telecommunications: A Political Economy of Network Evolution

Robin Mansell. London: Sage Publications, 1993, 260pp. ISBN 0 8039 8536 3.

Telecommunication policies, in theory, have been devised to ensure that the public network enables smaller and larger firms and residential consumers to not only make telephone calls but to also use the more advanced services as they become available.

The move from analog to digital switching and transmission technologies has transformed the technical capacity of telecommunication, enabling the creation of intelligent networks that can do far more than simply convey messages. However, access to the public network provides no guarantee that economic resources and skills will be available to enable users to take advantage of these services. The environment is influenced increasingly by the competitive prospects and priorities of a relatively small number of privileged, oligopolistic firms.

This study examines whether present policies and regulatory institutions can ensure that a broader interpretation of the public interest in network evolution informs the design and implementation of the intelligent network.

The political economy perspective focuses upon how, and by whom, these priorities are being established and the consequences for the accessibility of the electronic communication environment of the 21st century.

Outlining developments in the industry in the late 1980s and 1990s in the USA, the UK, Germany, France and Sweden, the author shows how new technical, institutional and market arrangements are reshaping the terms and conditions of network access, with ultimate effects on participation in the 'networked economy'.

■ Television and Everyday Life

Roger Silvertone. London: Routledge, 1994. 204 pp. ISBN: 0 415 01647 9.

The meaning and potency of television can vary according to our individual circumstances mediated by the social and cultural worlds we inhabit.

Silverstone explores the enigma of television and how it has found its way so profoundly and intimately into the fabric of our everyday lives, unravelling its spatial, emotional and cognitive, temporal and political significance.
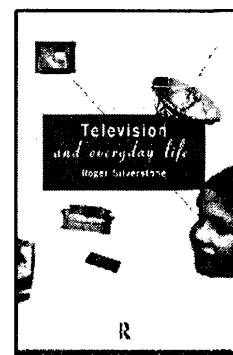
A theory of the medium of television causes it to emerge as fascinating, complex and contradictory and many of the myths which surround it are exploded. This work of media theory in a close reading shows continuities of theme running from an earlier work of Silverstone, but with a more sensitive understanding of the contradictions of television's status in the modern world.

The phrase which runs throughout: 'essential tensions' refers to a dialectic at the heart of social reality. This dialectic is that of the play and place of media in social life. It is a dialectic of freedom and constraint, of activity and passivity, of the public and private and is worked through at the interface of institutional forces and individual actions.

■ 2001: A Report From Australia

**By the Centenary of Federation Advisory Committee. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1994. 117pp.
ISBN 0 644 34962 8.**

The motto of 1901 was 'one people, one destiny'; for 2001 it must be 'many cultures, one Australia'. The celebrations of Australia's centenary of Federation will occur when global winds are eroding local cultures and blurring national identity.
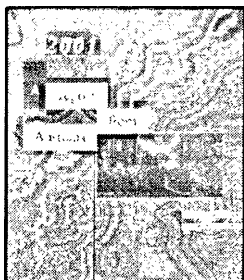
If we are to strengthen the bonds of unity, the authors argue, then in what do we wish to be united? A clear consensus has emerged, of themes of respect for difference, 'fair go', reconciliation, environmental harmony and urging a shared political culture in which people were agreed about the responsibilities of citizenship as well as the rights of citizenship.

The overwhelming conclusion drawn from this report was that people want to take a pride in being 'Australian' and seek the opportunity to be active citizens in a lively civil society.

The Report concludes with a summary of proposals for consideration by Australian Governments, including changing Australia Day to January 1, and in 2001 having a people's festival across Australia involving people within their own communities. Other ideas for Federation anniversary celebrations are also presented.

■ Seeing is Believing: Religion and Television in the 1990s

Barry Gunter and Rachel Viney. London: John Libbey, 1994 (Series: Independent Television Commission Research Monograph), 134pp. ISBN 0 86196 442X.

This publication examines the perceptions and opinions of majority and minority religious groups in the UK about religion and television.
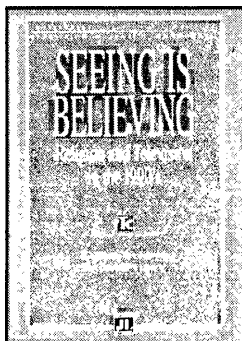
Religious education is at the watershed, with the forces of ideology, technology and competition changing the face of broadcasting on one hand, and on the other, the traditional role of religion in our society changing, with formal religious observance declining. These twin factors of change within broadcasting and within society make it all the more difficult to identify the purpose of religious broadcasting and the nature of its audience.

At the same time events such as the response by some sectors of the Muslim community to *The Satanic Verses* or the ethno-religious war in the former Yugoslavia underline the continuing and pressing need for public fora in which religious dialogue can take place.

Based on extensive qualitative and survey research, it examines the degree of satisfaction with current forms of religious television and explores a range of views about demands for different kinds of religious broadcasting in the future and represents a most comprehensive analysis of public opin-

ion about religious television in the UK.

The research assesses the specific needs and requirements of different sections of the audience and reveals a growing hope among minority religious groups for better access to television air time in the future, and general confirmation of a need for regulation.

■ The Networked Nation

Australian Science and Technology Council. Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service, 1994. 82 pp.
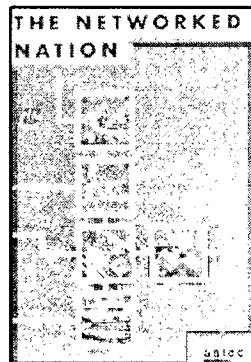
This monograph was prepared in response to the request for a report examining Australia's requirements for national research data networks. Aware of the significant global activity and interest in data network development ASTEC sought extensive advice from research and academic communities. It obtained comprehensive responses from the public through a call for submissions, consultations and the release of draft findings for comment.

This report identifies the benefits of these data networks for universities, government research organisations, education and industry and examines the role of the networks for the wider community. ASTEC was impressed with the contribution that the Australian Academic and Research Network has made to communication and collaboration within the research and higher education communities.

The report urges the Government to build on this strong base. It recommends that a national coordinated approach be adopted to ensure that future requirements are met in a timely manner. ASTEC is keenly aware of the need to balance the requirements of the primary users of these networks—the research and higher education communities—with the role of research data networks for the wider community. ◲