

# Letters

## Copyright Act

I THINK the articles on the Copyright Act in *Incite* no18 (17 October) are fine: succinct, clear and informative. But, as far as I can see, point 8 in Allan Horton's article should be revised as follows:

8 Libraries in educational institutions will be able to make a copy or copies of the whole or part of a periodical article to place it in the collection (Reserve). But cannot copy more than one article in a serial issue at any one time unless the articles relate to the same subject matter. (Section 53B (1), (3) and (4)).

They may copy 'a reasonable portion' of a book one or more times. They may also copy a number of parts of a book, or the whole of a book, but can only do this if they cannot buy the book new in a reasonable time at an ordinary commercial price. (Section 53B (2), (3) and (5)).

Note however that for each copy made under this section a detailed record in specified form must be made. This record includes the ISSN or ISBN if it is included in the document being copied. Records of such copying must be kept *in author order*. (Sections 53B (6), (7) and 203D (2)).

Spencer Routh  
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## Buy the Index

INOTE with interest and concern your report entitled 'Index gets reprieve' in your issue of 17 October.

The sad financial state of the *Index to Australian book reviews* was brought to the attention of AACOBS at its meeting on 25 August of this year, and no effort was spared to wring out of each Council member present a reasonable quantity of tears and a solemn vow to resolve that something must be done at once.

The Chairman of Standing Committee was instructed to write forthwith to this and that person and it was firmly resolved that the *Index* must be saved. How? – well, of course when it comes to practical issues those who cry the most tears suddenly either vanish or start weeping for themselves. Pay for the *Index*? Why, what do we have an Australia Council for? Use the *Index*? Why, I don't read books, so why bother about book reviews.

A census was *not* taken of how many institutions represented at that AACOBS meeting were subscribers to the *Index*. I do know, per chance, that all Australian state and university libraries are subscribers – all 25 of them. How many CAE libraries, public libraries and secondary school libraries take the *Index*? Very few indeed.

AACOBS was advised in sorrowful tones that outside SA very few subscriptions are being placed; of some 300 copies printed, 80 are being given away.

Is that the way a leading reference tool should be treated? Why can the *Index* not be based on a sound commercial footing and be sold at a rate to recover costs? It is cheap and unprofessional to throw mud at the SA Government because it believes that in a climate of an economic recession this par-

ticular contribution by the State Library of SA could well be made to be self supporting.

And indeed it could. When pressed a little at the AACOBS meeting the Acting State Librarian of SA admitted that almost nothing had been done to examine critically the best means of reducing production costs, and less to promote sales.

It seems incredible to me that we cannot within a week find 500 subscriptions for this excellent Australian reference work which is available at the give away price of \$12 per year. Are there reference services in our public libraries and school libraries? If we listen to some pious believers these types of libraries are the backbone and the flesh of Australian library and information services, the very places where John Citizen is able to find out about everything. Sadly enough, I know that he cannot!

I would have thought that Australian public libraries should in the first instance be able to provide reference services related to Australia, and that school libraries would use Australian reference sources as primary examples to teach the use of bibliographic services. This would seem to me to make more sense than bringing them up on British or North American reference tools. But this does not appear to be the view of the public and school library lobby.

I don't affect to be more Australian than others nor do I suffer from a yen to have to make up for the years I have not lived in Australia. I simply believe that the man in the street is relatively more concerned with the world around him and that the secondary school student is better able to comprehend what he can experience directly. That is why Australian reference works are relatively more important than others at the public and school library level.

If the *Index to Australian book reviews*, 'a major contribution to Australian writing in all fields of the humanities and the social sciences' is to survive and perhaps to improve, it will do so only if it is bought by those who serve the allegedly general public. It is high time we stopped putting our light under a bushel. The *Index* and a number of other Australian reference tools are as good as any compiled for home consumption in other countries.

We are indebted to the State Library of SA for having looked after this baby for so long. It is high time that public and school libraries recognised their responsibilities and bought this *Index* in order to provide reference reviews on Australian topics to their undeniably Australian clientele. *D. H. Borchardt*  
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## 'Medics' vs students

I WOULD like to reply to Patricia Nakouz's letter in *Incite* (no16, September 19) regarding approaches made to Victorian medical librarians from students of librarianship in colleges of advanced education.

One may appreciate the articulations bemoaning the pressure under which hospital librarians do work but, indeed, I should say that the vast majority of other librarians, be they in public, school, academic or special libraries, are also subjected to a great deal of pressure due to the increasing demands made upon them. This is often coupled with seriously insufficient resources to properly meet them – I speak from considerable first hand knowledge and experience.

However, it seems short sighted to find certain librarians wishing to rather rudely rebuff their future professional peers on the basis of some inquisitive correspondence – it

wasn't as if hordes were received knocking the doors down – when, if they really didn't feel they could help, a polite 'no' would do.

It intrigues me as to why criticism was specifically levelled at the colleges of advanced education sector. Surely similar sentiments might equally apply to any students of technical colleges and of universities without the necessity of identifying any types of institutions. Nevertheless, in my experience all co-ordinators, lecturers and tutors of our educational programs have taken pains to emphasise the use of responsible and tactful approaches when making contact with persons/organisations in the course of our studies.

Further, it is my understanding that certain medical librarians in Sydney were not overly impressed with the sentiments contained in Patricia Nakouz's letter. In fact, despite other commitments, several of these people have been kind enough to go out of their way to assist myself and other students in whatever manner possible with research projects and the like – both parties find it to be an enjoyable and enriching experience helped with close guidance by our supervisors.

Frankly, it is disappointing to find such banal attitudes all too often cropping up among those who claim to be professionals. People who are genuinely committed to promulgating the library and information sciences and want to see these attain professional status in every sense are those who are instituting openness, co-operation, and service: not a self righteous almost dog in the manger mentality.

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THE staff of the Department of Librarianship at Ballarat CAE has discussed the Medical Librarians' Group letter in *Incite* of 19 September 1980.

We are very conscious of our responsibility to ensure that students do not approach librarians with inappropriate or excessive questionnaires or requests for information. In all units taught here, lecturers stress that no letters should be written or approaches made without staff approval and endorsement.

In some cases, however, some students (showing either initiative or perversity) do send off unauthorised letters. Naturally we feel that it is unfortunate that this occurs, and appreciate the understandable concern of the librarians who receive them.

We would suggest that, rather than feel under pressure to produce a full answer, the librarians may prefer to reply (through me) with a random collection of reader-education handouts which we will then gratefully incorporate in our library collection.

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## TAFE/UCLS

I REFER to the letter in *Incite* of 19 September 1980. I, too, will be most interested to read the opinions of TAFE librarians around the country on this matter.

I retain my own view that the case for fragmentation is still not proven and that faults on the part of UCLS have still to be identified. I do not believe that TAFE Librarians have a unique role, but I do believe that they share some fundamental common ground with the colleges and universities.

C.F. Cayless  
President, UCLS