

## Australian legal words and phrases 1900-1993

Jacqui Elliott, the High Court Librarian, is critical of this new Butterworths publication

This impressive work is a three volume set which 'contains over 100 000 words and phrases from case law and legislation' (Publisher's Note). The note goes on to state that 'Although the actual definition is not included, the context is noted together with the statute and/or judgment from which the word or phrase was derived'.

Let me say at the outset that this is a most ambitious work. When the title was announced it sounded as if it would fill a gap in Australian legal bibliography. The reality is unfortunately that this publication is expensive, bulky, and of rather limited use.

The expense is doubtless related to the fact that it is in three volumes. The decision by the publishers to include every term in

every statute has resulted in lists of words like 'Board' 'Director' 'Registrar' and 'Commission' taking up five or ten pages each. These pages are in effect padding. Definitions of such general words are usually only significant within the context of specific acts. Their omission would not detract from the work.

It is clearly useful to have a book that refers the user to statutes that define phrases like 'trade practices'. The main weakness of *Australian Legal Words and Phrases*, however, is that the user, once the reference is obtained, cannot be sure that the word or phrase once located is actually defined. One is left with a suspicion that there are many blind references.

The feeling of incompleteness persists with those words and phrases which have case references.

Take, for example, the phrase from s.92 of the Constitution, 'trade, commerce and intercourse among the States'. There are four entries listed, each giving the source followed by a different case name. The first case is *Bierston v. Higgins* [1962] ALR 54. Surely this phrase was judicially considered before 1962?

Reference works need to state their limitations but then to be exhaustive within those stated constraints. This work is a bold attempt by the publishers to fill a gap in Australian legal bibliography. It is disappointing. What we need in Australia is a work equivalent to *Strud's Judicial Dictionary of Words and Phrases* but that is another project altogether. Published by Butterworths in late 1993 and costing \$325.00. (ISSN 10397604). ■

## Modern Library Technology and Reference Services

Virginia Wurth reviews Samuel Huang's new book in Haworth's *Reference Librarian Series*

With an imposing cover title and such alluring chapter headings as 'Confessions of a Reference Technophile', this book was off to a promising start with this long-time technoholic.

In the first few chapters it introduces the reader to basic reference services using all aspects of computer technology, including OPACs, CD-ROMs, online searching, bulletin boards and the Internet. Subsequent

chapters deal with training of library staff in the use of library technology, using library technology in the teaching of university curricula and examination of the academic librarian's role as an information provider.

The book closes with an excellent article by Kleiner speculating on the advent of the electronic library and the future of traditional libraries, making the point that as information technology provides the means to access

anything, anywhere, anytime, libraries are becoming more centralised while the users become decentralised. Kleiner, encourages us to consider how we will react to this trend and to prepare for an increasingly technological future.

For those involved in academic libraries and dealing with information technology at management level, this book is for you. It will give you a basic understanding of the current reference services theory surrounding library technologies, and it will also provide several useful and practical management models which have been tried and tested in other academic libraries. This would be an especially useful text if you were considering installing a new electronic service or upgrading any of your computer facilities.

I didn't find the models offered as relevant for the smaller school or special libraries, however public librarians will no doubt get much from the multi-layered, large-scale approach to the subject.

*Modern Library Technology and Reference Services*, edited by Samuel T Huang, has been published simultaneously in New York in 1993 by Haworth as *The Reference Librarian* No. 39. 139 pp. US\$24.95 (hb), US\$19.95 (soft). ISBN 0-56024-458-5. (Review copy supplied by The Haworth Press Inc.) ■

## ALIA/Thorpe's Sourcebooks

The success of Barbara Brady's *Australian Sourcebooks: Social Sciences* has encouraged the ALIA Press Board and DW Thorpe to develop an *Australian Reference Series* to publish a range of key reference tools.

### Series Editor

ALIA Press seeks a dynamic and energetic Series Editor to develop the Australian Reference Series as the source of reference information for Australian libraries, information services and researchers. The successful applicant will be well informed about Australian information sources and reference needs, have a wide range of contacts with potential authors and the ability to identify potential books and see them through to finished manuscript. Thorpe's editorial and publishing staff will then take the books into publication. If you would like to discuss this opportunity, please contact Alex Byrne by telephone on (089) 466 192 or fax on (089) 441 317, email [alex@library.ntu.edu.au](mailto:alex@library.ntu.edu.au) or mail to PO Box 41246, Casuarina NT 0812 by 31 March 1994.

### Authors & Manuscripts

Authors with manuscripts or ideas suitable for publication in the Australian Reference Series are also invited to contact Alex Byrne.