

spective," provides an excellent model for developing a literature collection. Although the article is about Australian literature, it should be read by anyone charged with building a collection of literature, regardless of its source. It is also an excellent guide to current sources on Australian literature.

Several articles also provide information on Australian collections outside Australia. Two articles describe Australian collections in Great Britain: one is about the British Library and the other treats materials supporting Australian studies in other British libraries. Unfortunately, there is no similar article on Australian collections in American libraries.

There are some major weaknesses in the volume. As Brown's article states, "The Australian publishing output represents only a small percentage (almost certainly less than 5%) of the world's annual English-language publishing output." Missing from this volume is a rationale for why American libraries should spend their limited resources on this five percent. Also, an article providing a current summary of Australian research and scholarship would have been a useful addition. There is too much emphasis on Australian literature — an important area of interest to American libraries but by no means the only one. There is also a significant overlap among the articles. For example, the publication *Australian Government Publications* is mentioned in five separate essays, none of which gives a totally accurate description of it.

The major drawback of the work for American librarians (with the notable exception of the Atkinson article) is the lack of evaluative guidance for selection. Knowledge of the selection sources is valuable but by itself does not provide the information on how to build a collection. The book's aim is to "encourage dialogue among those libraries around the world which seek to collect publications from and about Australia." This is an admirable goal but not enough to justify the purchase of this book (with its \$80 price) for other than library science collections, libraries wishing to build Australian collections, and the largest

research libraries.—William Z. Schenck, *Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.*

Crawford, Walt. *The Online Catalog Book: Essays and Examples.* New York: G. K. Hall, 1992. 560p. alk. paper, \$35 (ISBN 0-8161-1995-3), \$50 (ISBN 0-8161-1996-1).

This volume begins with eleven essays by Walt Crawford on the elements of online catalog design. For libraries of all types, these essays cover the full range of issues raised by this topic. They are complemented, and challenged, by a series of thirty-two presentations of various electronic catalogs prepared by their developers and/or users. A more readable, complete treatment of the current state of online catalogs is difficult to imagine.

Crawford, a senior analyst at the Research Libraries Group, is a highly respected author in the field of library technology. His purpose in writing and compiling *The Online Catalog Book* is "to discuss current issues in catalog design and to offer existing catalogs as sources of ideas for new and revised catalogs." Many of the ideas presented in the essays cover topics he has addressed before in writings and conference presentations, but they are brought together here in one volume and updated. The more traditional design aspects of online catalogs are covered well, and several of the chapters are quite forward-looking, addressing such issues as the implications of remote use, the integration of document delivery services, and the addition of local databases, community information, full text, gateways and images to the catalog. Two related and important themes emerge in the series of essays: the appropriateness of designing catalogs from the user's perspective, and the lack of a single answer about how to do it best. Crawford notes, "... by now, it should be clear that this book won't say, 'Good online catalogs look like this and work like that.'" His biases are always noted and are quite clear. Readers are urged to become familiar with the literature and to draw their own conclusions based on careful review of research, experience and real examples, and library users' needs.

Over half the book is devoted to providing examples of real online catalogs. Contributions were sought from all possible systems; guidelines were provided for the content and format of the submissions. The thirty-two responses received cover systems from integrated library system vendors such as DRA, Innovative Interfaces, and Dynix; locally developed systems such as those at University of California, Dartmouth, and University of Texas; and smaller CD-ROM-based systems such as Marcive, Follett Software, and Winnebago. Libraries whose catalogs are featured include academic, public, school, and special. Each contribution is twelve to fourteen pages in length, usually containing three to five pages of text, and twenty to thirty screens. The focus is on the user interface in conducting several sample searches or alternatives prescribed by Crawford.

There is real value in being able to view and understand how users of all these different catalogs interact with the catalog. The range of catalogs represented exceeds what would be possible by sampling catalogs available on the Internet. The collection, in conjunction with the essays, makes it easy to compare and contrast approaches to catalog design. The text adds to the understanding of how, and sometimes why, the catalog works. Every library will have to give thought in the future to a new online catalog, whether it be its first, a replacement for or a rethinking of an existing one, or an enhanced catalog with a broader scope. The *Online Catalog Book* makes it possible to sample broadly the efforts of many libraries and vendors and to put into context the wide-ranging design questions that must be addressed.—Flo Wilson, *Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee.*

Russian Libraries in Transition: An Anthology of Glasnost Literature. Ed. by Dennis Kimmage. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland, 1992. 214p. \$32.50 (ISBN 0-89950-718-2).

For decades, the Soviet library world was under the ironclad control of the Communist Party. Through a highly cen-

tralized network extending to the local library, the Party exercised complete control over collection policies, processing, and reader services. Even books published under a previous Soviet regime were often ordered removed from the shelves because a later ruler's method and ideological stance were different from his predecessor's. The well-known example of the mandatory excision of the article on Lavrenti Beria and its replacement by one on the Bering Sea in the *Great Soviet Encyclopedia* epitomizes the type of complete control the party exercised over libraries and librarians.

Ironically, although the library was abstractly regarded as an important part of Communist propaganda and ideology, librarians and library facilities were not. Library buildings were not well maintained, inadequate space and working conditions were a common complaint, library education was heavy on ideology and light on other content, and librarians were poorly paid and poorly treated.

With the advent of Gorbachev's policy of *glasnost*, or openness, previously muted voices in the library world have been raised against the corrosive effects of party control over libraries and librarians. As more people have spoken and written without repression about the terrible conditions, inadequate support, and mindless censorship and as more deficiencies in library policies and facilities have been uncovered, dissident opinions have begun to be published in mainstream library periodicals and non-Party library associations have been formed.

It is the excitement of this period of change that Dennis Kimmage has captured so well in this anthology of library *glasnost* literature. As he writes, "The selections in this anthology reflect an important part of a spiritual rebirth that we can all share, that presents not only librarians but Americans from all walks of life with an extraordinary opportunity for meaningful interaction and cross-cultural influence."

The anthology consists of Soviet newspaper and journal articles arranged in three parts. Each is preceded by a brief essay, written by Kimmage, that serves