

The Use of

"RECOMMENDED BY THE AMERICAN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION"

by Publishers and Book Dealers

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The American Library Association reviews books through several of its media and also from time to time prepares lists of books. The purpose of these reviews and lists is to aid librarians throughout the country in the selection of materials suited to the needs and interests of the users of their libraries. The ALA may, as a result, recommend the acquisition of certain titles for certain types of libraries and specific users. It occasionally may list a title as "not recommended"; however, it does not use terms such as "approved" or "disapproved." The Association is seriously concerned about the phrase, "Recommended by the American Library Association" or a variation of this phrase, as used by some publishers and book dealers. Standing by itself, this phrase has almost no meaning.

GUIDELINES TO THE USE OF ALA REVIEW MEDIA AND LISTS

The Booklist. Books and materials recommended for library purchase are listed in *The Booklist*. Thousands of titles a year are reviewed in this periodical, and any reference to a review in *The Booklist* should state not only that it was so recommended but should also give the date of the issue so that the potential purchaser may readily refer to the full review.

The Subscription Books Bulletin. Published within *The Booklist*, this section reviews reference and subscription books. These reviews are prepared by members of the Reference and Subscription Books Review Committee of the American Library Association. Both books recommended for purchase and those not recommended are reviewed. Permission to quote such reviews is limited and must be obtained from the Office of Rights and Permissions (50 East Huron St., Chicago 60611).

CHOICE. This journal reviews books and other media and evaluates them for college libraries. It may recommend for or against purchase for specific circumstances. As with *The Booklist*, references to a *CHOICE* recommendation should include the date of the issue of the periodical.

Other ALA periodicals. The major divisional journals of ALA (*School Libraries*, *Top of the News*, *RQ*, *Journal of Library Automation*, *Library Resources and Technical Services*, and *College and Research Libraries*) carry book reviews. In nearly all instances these are signed reviews and represent the opinions of the authors of the reviews. A recommendation by a reviewer in a divisional journal is *not* necessarily a recommendation by ALA and should not be referred to as "recommended by ALA."

BOOKS INCLUDED IN ALA LISTS

The ALA lists most frequently referred to are *Patterns in Reading*, *Basic Book Col-*

lection for Elementary Grades, Basic Book Collection for Junior High Schools, Basic Book Collection for High Schools, and the annual "notable books" lists. Books appearing on ALA lists are selected with specific needs in mind. A title on one list might not be suitable for another. While a basic collection is a useful guide to selection for a children's library, for example, not all the books in the collection would be recommended for children. Hence, there is no general "recommendation" of any book.

The annual "notable books" lists present outstanding titles for adults, youth, and children published within a specific year. These are "recommended" titles from a single year's publishing effort; any reference to a title listed on a "notable books" announcement should indicate the year of listing.

USE OF CODES BY PUBLISHERS AND BOOK DEALERS

The Association recognizes that publishers use codes in their catalogs to identify ALA publications or "recommendations" for reason of economy and because of space limitations. The Association urges that the codes be expanded sufficiently to designate the date of the "recommendation" as well as the source. In other words, if *BL* means a *Booklist* recommendation, it should show the date after it, e.g., *BL3-15-69*. The currency of a review is always important. It is preferred that the full title and date of the source of any review be given in the annotation itself rather than that it be coded and cross-referenced to a key.

The Association, however, suggests that codes not be used with catalogs intended for markets other than libraries or schools.

PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS

The American Library Association is always interested in publishing and book distribution programs that improve libraries and increase the use of library materials. However, the ALA does not give its endorsement to specific programs. Catalogs issued by publishers, jobbers, lease-purchase companies, or others suggesting that the entire program is recommended by ALA (perhaps because some or all of the materials may have been favorably reviewed by ALA's media) are misleading and misrepresent the intent of ALA's materials selection tools.

Occasionally consultants are listed by their ALA committee titles. The recommendations of such consultants should not be construed as an ALA endorsement but rather as the personal endorsement of the consultant.

NEW EMORY UNIVERSITY PUBLICATION

Public Library Service to the Disadvantaged, proceedings of an institute sponsored by the Emory University Division of Librarianship, has been published.

The proceedings contain papers by Meredith Bloss, City Librarian, New Haven Free Public Library; Pauline Winnick, Public Library Specialist, Library and Development Branch of the U. S. Office of Education; Mildred Hennessy, Deputy Director of the Queens Borough Public Library; and by other outstanding individuals working with the disadvantaged.

The seventy-four page publication is available for \$3.75 from the University Bookstore, Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia 30322.