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Newsletter of the Adult Services  
Division of OLC  
October 2002

## For Adults Only!

Where did the summer go? It seems like only yesterday that we were all gearing up for summer reading programs.

This second issue of Adult Services Council's *For Adults Only!* highlights Cindy Orr from Cleveland Public Library, recently translated fiction, Ohio libraries websites, a readers' advisory workshop held at Medina, and programs banks.

Have you compiled a booklist that you would like to share with your colleagues? Did you attend an interesting workshop? Did your library have an unbelievably successful program? Please send your articles to me in rich text format along with your library and position.

[dfox@shpl.lib.oh.us](mailto:dfox@shpl.lib.oh.us)

Please print the newsletter to share with staff you may not have access to a computer.

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## Spotlight On: **Cynthia Orr**

*Interview conducted by Gale Lippucci, Adult Services Action Council*

Our featured librarian is Cindy Orr, Collection Development Manager at Cleveland Public Library.

### **Tell us about your career in librarianship.**

I just finished my 30th year in public libraries in Ohio, so it's been a long, and enjoyable journey.

I went straight to library school a week after I finished college. I began my career at the Lakewood Public Library as an assistant department head. I have worked in management, collection development, and reader's advisory work for my entire career. I always tried to keep up with the book related areas even when they weren't my primary job because matching books with readers and readers with books is my first love.

I began my career at a time when Dorothy Fuldheim was to Cleveland what Oprah Winfrey has been to the nation. When Dorothy reviewed a book on TV, the phone would ring off the hook with requests. A good part of my job was spent doing reader's advisory work, though we didn't call it that in the '70s. I learned how to help readers find books by watching and learning from other librarians who recommended books all day long.

Eventually I worked my way up to Deputy Director for Public Service and Collection Development, but I never wanted to be a director. After 14 years at Lakewood, I took a position with the Geauga County Public Library for the chance to be involved in planning and moving into a new building. I thoroughly enjoyed the challenge of taking a library branch and staff from 5,000 to 22,000 square feet.

### **How did you become Collection Development Manager at Cleveland Public Library?**

After 12 years at the Geauga West Library, I saw an advertisement for a position at CPL and it sounded like my ideal job of all time - full time collection management at an institution whose reputation was outstanding. I have been at CPL for about four years now.

Although I love my job and the opportunity it gives me to continue to be involved in the world of books, music, movies, magazines, and electronic resources, the most rewarding thing for me is not so much the involvement with the collections, but that it allows me to spend all day working toward making a difference in people's lives. To me, that's the single most fulfilling thing about being a librarian.

### **What was the inspiration behind BookBrowser.com?**

In 1995 or so, I began to fear that I was losing my professional skills and falling behind the technology, so I bought a PC, hooked up to the Internet and began to explore that new world at home. Instead of traveling the "Information Superhighway," as everyone was calling it at the time, I decided that I would start by having fun, so I signed up for DorothyL, a listserv for mystery lovers.

It was through DorothyL that I met Janet Lawson, who was a library school student at Indiana at the time. She had designed a simple site called BookBrowser as a library school project, and had begun listing series mysteries in the order in which they should be read.

I sent her all the series lists that I had by e-mail. Then we began talking about what a site for avid readers could contain. Since we weren't doing this "officially" for any library, we felt free to try some fun things rather than attempting to be comprehensive and methodical. Typically, we would think of a new feature, Janet would set it up, I would e-mail her content and she would do the pages. Eventually she had to database the site as it became so huge she couldn't keep it up manually. Content can now be added remotely by filling in forms. We always felt free to start up a new area if we thought it would be fun. BookBrowser is still a very quirky site with many gaps.

BookBrowser's popularity took us by surprise, as we were just doing it for fun. But as more and more libraries linked to it, we began to feel a responsibility to keep it going. Many libraries are not as lucky as those in Ohio and can't afford to subscribe to commercial reader's advisory sites.

BookBrowser now gets over 5,000 unique visitors per day, and we have several volunteer reviewers helping us out. Our motto has always been "still having fun." Since we never made any money on the site, we made a pact that if it ever stopped being fun, we would move on. It's still fun, but it's also a terrific time commitment, especially for Janet.

### **Do you have any other projects in the works?**

For the past couple of years I've done a lot of speaking about books, reading, and reader's advisory service. I've also taught classes in RA Services for Kent State's Library School. I recently wrote an article that will be in the *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science* to be published in 2003.

I'd love to have more time to explore the subject of reading for pleasure and how it affects people. Lots of research has been done on reading but in the library field, it's mainly been from the angle of overcoming illiteracy.

The whole area of reader's advisory service is becoming a hot topic as we begin to realize that large numbers of our patrons come to the library to check out a book, yet almost none of us have had a formal course in how to help readers find a good book to read. In many libraries the number one most feared reference question is "Can you help me find a good book to read?"

### Have you read anything interesting lately that you would recommend?

I recently read *Making the List: a Cultural History of the American Bestseller, 1900-1999* by Michael Korda. He is both a well-known editor as well as a best-selling author, so his insights cover both those points of view.

Though it isn't new anymore, I'd recommend *Crooked River Burning* by Mark Winegardner for all Ohioans since it's a big sweeping epic set in Cleveland.

Right now I'm reading *The Mountain of the Women* by Liam Clancy. If you're an Irish music fan like I am, you know of Tommy Makem and the Clancy Brothers, and if you've seen him in person, you know that Liam is a great storyteller. This story of his life from a small Irish village, so old fashioned it was almost medieval, to Greenwich Village in the '50s might also appeal to fans of *Angela's Ashes*.

When left on my own, I read genre fiction--especially mysteries, fantasy, romances, and science fiction. And I'm an avid nonfiction reader as well.

### What do you see as the future trends of readers' advisory?

First, I hope that librarians, libraries, and library schools continue to put time, training, staff, and resources into this area. Children's and young adult librarians have traditionally done a much better job at helping their readers find a book they would like than we adult services librarians have. As a profession, I think we've somehow assumed that reference work is more worthy than reader's advisory work.

Yet, as more and more of our patrons bypass libraries because they think they can help themselves with homework and reference questions using the Internet, it's even more important that we reaffirm Ranganathan's Laws: Every book its reader. Every reader his (*or her*) book. If we aren't willing to do this work, our patrons will go elsewhere for help and we will lose some of our most devoted supporters.

I think that, though there's no substitute for excellent librarians, we also need to use the current technology to help us. So as for future trends, personally I would be thrilled to be involved in building the "Ultimate Book Recommender" someday. There are several commercial electronic sites that approach book recommendations in various ways but nobody quite has it right yet.

The second thing is that I hope that we librarians can see ourselves as people who value story, no matter its form. Paperbacks, audio books, electronic books, movies, and live performances are all just variations on the experience of story. Stories help us to understand others and ourselves. They are also a way for us to share the human experience.

But in this age of information overload, hundreds of channels on the television, tens of thousands of new book titles per year, how does a person find that story experience which is a perfect fit for them? I hope that one of the future trends is that librarians will join with experts in other fields such as psychology, education, and technology to do the research required to refine our techniques for connecting readers with stories they will find fulfilling.

Thank you, Cindy, for sharing your story with us.

## *Novels in Translation*

*By Christine Liebson, Adult Services Librarian, Shaker Heights Public Library*

This selected list of novels recently translated into English is a cross section of styles from writers around the world. Each provides an interesting and different cultural perspective on universal human issues.

**Berberova, Nina    *The Billancourt Tales***

This engaging selection of 13 stories drawn from the author's experience writing in an industrial suburb of Paris forms a microcosm of Russian émigré life. Translated from the Russian by Marian Schwartz.

**Boetius, Henning    *The Phoenix***

Birger Lund rises from the ashes of the Hindenburg, assumes a new identity, and embarks on a personal quest to uncover the truth behind the tragedy. As the son of the last living survivor of the crash, the author reconstructs the magnificent airship and its aura with an intimate authenticity. Translated from the German by John Cullen.

**Dugain, Marc    *The Officers' Ward***

Set during World War I, Adrien Fournier is among the first to be admitted to the ward designated for officers with extreme facial disfigurement. During his long and contemplative recovery he mentors his fellow patients and is a witness to both their courage and despair. Translated from the French by Howard Curtis.

**Enquist, Per Olov    *The Royal Physician's Visit***

This twisted story of an inner adviser's plot to destroy Queen Caroline and her lover reveals the power, cruelty, and madness of the Danish royal court in its struggle for relevance in the age of Enlightenment. Translated from the Swedish by Tiina Nunnally.

**Ibrahim, Sun'Allah    *The Committee***

In the tradition of Kafka, the narrator of this surreal tale is summoned to testify before a governing body known only as "the Committee," and subsequently given a disturbing sentence for ambiguous crimes. Translated from the Arabic by Mary St. Germain and Charlene Constable.

**Klima, Ivan    *No Saints or Angels***

Krystna is absorbed by melancholy as she confronts the guilt and loss from her divorce, her ex-husband's imminent death, and her teenage daughter's vulnerability to the street. Her dreamlike story floats readers through her troubled world and her re-discovery of love with a man 15 years her junior. Translated from the Czech by Gerald Turner.

**Makine, Andrei    *Requiem for a Lost Empire***

A family saga of three generations follows the experiences of a Russian family from the 1920s through the 1980s illustrating the vexes of human nature that persist even amidst revolutionary change. Translated from the French by Geoffrey Strachan.

**Marai, Sandor    *Embers***

In this elegantly dramatic novel, two friends must reconcile the bonds of their friendship with the difficult truth behind their abrupt separation and silence for 40 years and three days. Translated from the Hungarian by Carol Brown Janeway.

**Murakami, Haruki *Sputnik Sweetheart***

Sumiure, an aspiring novelist, Miu, a married businesswoman, and Sumiure's closest friend are caught in a love triangle and each must redefine their identity, concept of love, and ability to adapt to change. Translated from the Japanese by Philip Gabriel.

**Said, Kurban *The Girl from the Golden Horn***

In this East meets West love story, Asiadeh, an exiled Turkish princess must choose between loyalty to tradition and her feelings for a nonbeliever. Translated from the German by Jenia Graman.

***Ulitskaya, Ludmila* *The Funeral Party***

An unusual group of Russian immigrants are brought together by the imminent death of a mutually loved friend. As they reflect on their aspirations and failures, the vignettes of their lives create a moving, but unsentimental mosaic of the human experience. Translated from the Russian by Cathy Porter.

***Vargas Llosa, Mario* *Feast of the Goat***

Urania has returned to Dominican Republic at age 49 but cannot escape the memories of her adolescence in country ruled by the cruelty and terror of Trujillo, the Goat. Translated from the Spanish by Edith Grossman.

## Medina County District Library Holds Readers Advisory Workshop

On April 30, all Adult Services staff of the Medina County District Library met at the Brunswick Branch for a three-hour Readers Advisory workshop. This was the first time all Adult Services staff was able to convene for an afternoon of fiction and fun. Planned by a team of two Adult Services Supervisors and two managers, the workshop showcased staff expertise and brought in one outside speaker.

The afternoon was divided into four sessions. Lynn Wiandt, Seville Branch Manager, presented Fantasy Fiction. Lynn is a true fantasy fanatic and spoke easily about a plethora of books and topics. One thing all staff carried away from Lynn's presentation was this: "In science fiction, the dragons are mechanical. In fantasy, the dragons are real."

Doug Kerr of Christian Book Distributors spoke on inspirational fiction. Staff was "inspired" to broaden their knowledge of this very popular genre.

Elizabeth Nelson, Reference Librarian at the Medina Branch, brought us to laughter and tears when she presented the Romance genre in a way we had never imagined.

Carole Kowell, Adult Department Supervisor at the Brunswick Branch, spent 15 whirlwind minutes on Nonfiction That Reads Like Fiction. Carole highlighted recent nonfiction blockbusters that any fiction fan would enjoy.

Staff members at each branch were invited to create a display featuring an area of the fiction collection. Displays were assembled before the workshop began and everyone enjoyed the creative competition. We all took many marketing ideas back to our branch. The more culinary members of the staff provided abundant snacks. We even had time for a few games. As an icebreaker, staff members were told to bring their favorite book (or one of them), and they were grouped with others whose book resembled theirs in some way. It stretched the meaning of "read-a-likes!" We played a rousing round of Story-ogories, our own version of Scattergories featuring books and authors.

For more information about MCDL's Readers Advisory Workshop, contact Carole Kowell, Brunswick Branch Adult Department Supervisor at (330) 273-4150.

## Ohio Has Great Libraries!

*By Jane Scott, Adult Services Action Council*

### **Clark County Public Library** [www.ccpl.lib.oh.us](http://www.ccpl.lib.oh.us)

Check out the READING ROOM. Features include Forthcoming Books, New at the Library, Booklists, and a Reader's Forum, where you can tell others about your favorite book.

### **Findlay-Hancock County Public Library** [www.findlay.lib.oh.us](http://www.findlay.lib.oh.us)

Click on Adult Services. This site leads you to Bestsellers, Law Forms, EveryRule, and other interesting web sites.

### **Ashtabula County District Library** [www.ashtabula.lib.oh.us](http://www.ashtabula.lib.oh.us)

For great program ideas click on Adult Services.

## Programming Ideas

*By Gail Lippucci, Adult Services Action Council*

If you have programs that you would like to share, please e-mail me at [glippucci@wepl.lib.oh.us](mailto:glippucci@wepl.lib.oh.us) Searching for program ideas for fall? Here are two resources at your fingertips.

### **CAMLS Program Bank**

The bank provides information on such topics as: history, travel, and music.

<http://www.camls.org>

Click on Resources and then on Program Bank.

### **The Greater Cincinnati Library Consortium**

<http://www.gclc-lib.org>

Click on Program Planners for a variety of ideas.