

**Skidmore, Gail and Spahn, Theodore Jurgen. From Radical Left to Extreme Right: A Bibliography of Current Periodicals of Protest, Controversy, Advocacy, or Dissent, with Dispassionate Content-Summaries to Guide Librarians and Other Educators. 3rd ed. Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1987. 503 pp. US\$59.50 cloth ISBN 0-8108-1967-8 (Review copy supplied by James Bennett Library Services)**

The lengthy subtitle provides an excellent description of this work. The summary for a periodical typically includes its address, editor, cost, date of first publication, publication frequency, circulation, format and where it is indexed. The content-summaries are usually based on several issues, for which dates are given. Categories of periodicals include Marxist-socialist left, radical professional, liberal, labour, human rights, humanist, disabled rights, ethnic, feminist, gay, prisons, peace, environmental, conservative, anti-communist and race supremacist. Also included are lists of periodicals not reviewed (some of which were reviewed in an earlier edition) and several indexes.

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This bibliography is a useful sourcebook, but does not live up to its potential. The content-summaries are based on the examination of at most several issues, and occasionally only one issue, of each periodical. The issues summarized are not up-to-date, usually of 1981 or thereabouts. A greater problem is that the summaries do not provide any feeling for the importance of any given periodical, nor its relation to its overall field. This seems to be a consequence of the fourteen reviewers' lack of immersion in the areas covered, and their attempt to be "unbiased". A more useful interpretation could have been provided by regular readers of the periodicals.

The selection also fails to live up to the claim of the compilers to have included most of the important political periodicals. I subscribe to dozens of "political periodicals" (because they are seldom in nearby libraries), yet of those I would consider the more important, fewer than half are listed in the bibliography and most of these are not even mentioned. Missing, for example, are essential or delightful magazines such as *Critique: A Journal of Conspiracies and Metaphysics*, *The Ecologist*, *Index on Censorship*, *New Internationalist*, *Processed World* and *Whole Earth Review*. The coverage of periodicals from outside the United States is especially poor. The only Australian item listed is *Perseverance*.

There is certainly a need for more periodicals of protest, controversy, advocacy and dissent to be included in libraries. Furthermore, many of them are quite inexpensive. This book can be of value to librarians in selecting titles if it is combined with consultation with readers familiar with the areas covered who can offer advice about the more valuable periodicals for any given library to obtain.

Brian Martin  
University of Wollongong