

Libraries are not just about books

by Terence Blacker

- 1 Good news. A marvellous, heart-warming campaign has just been launched that involves government and business, public services and private business, with support from the great and the good at Westminster, in local government and within the arts. With all the right, inspirational words and phrases - "vision", "creative", "partnership", "makeover", "service", "consumers" - a campaign called Love Libraries is under way. Authors have spoken up. "Marketing mentors" are to be involved.
- 2 By coincidence, I happened to be visiting a library in Northern Ireland on the day the plan to redesign and promote libraries was launched, but it was one whose problems and achievements put the warm words from London into sharp perspective. To judge by the events of this week, it faces challenges that will not benefit from "visionary transformations".
- 3 The library is open during the evenings, and on Tuesday night, a small group of children set off a fire hydrant in the lobby. Another group had to be rescued from the lift having jumped up and down in it. There were police warnings. Two of the young regulars, Scott and Andrew, were banned for two months.
- 4 The next day, an author visited. I met a group of children who regularly came to the library after school. One had problems reading, but had discovered a series I had written for slightly younger readers than her and had read them all. Another, also with literacy problems, had typed out the blurbs of some of my books and

illustrated them for my visit. We talked about stories, theirs and mine, and they were interested and enthusiastic.

- 5 Awkwardly for those who like a clean and easy division between problems and achievements, between bad kids and good, the two groups of children are essentially one. If it had not been for the unfortunate incident of the fire hydrant, Scott and Andrew would have been talking about books, too.
- 6 Here is the way it works in libraries like the one I visited. Situated near to a council housing estate, it is a regular refuge after school for children, aged from seven or eight upwards, whose parents are out or unavailable. It is warm and light; it has computers, books. With the help of conscientious and heroically patient librarians, the children receive encouragement and interest that they get neither at home nor at school and, largely through their own free will and enthusiasm, often develop an interest in books and the world of possibility and escape that they contain.
- 7 In a better world, there would be no need for librarians to fulfill this function, but the fact is that, in many places, they do. There is a danger that, as we learn to love libraries, these rather more needy and demanding consumers, who elsewhere tend to get ignored, forgotten and excluded, may be regarded by the marketing mentors as rather too problematic to fit in with their visionary transformations. Yet it is in places like that library in Northern Ireland where, in spite of lift problems and fire hydrant violations, libraries are fulfilling their most vital and important function.

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Tekst 8 Libraries are not just about books

- “but it ... sharp perspective” (paragraph 2)
- 1p **30** What becomes clear from this remark?
According to the writer, the Love Libraries campaign
- A could be the starting point that leads to the radical improvement of libraries.
 - B is bound to neglect those libraries that are situated far from London.
 - C may have been set up too late to make a difference to libraries.
 - D will hardly make a change for the better to the situation some libraries are in.
- “an author visited” (alineea 4)
- 1p **31** Welke auteur wordt hier bedoeld?
- 1p **32** What becomes clear from paragraph 6?
Libraries
- A are mainly used for extra-curricular lessons.
 - B can provide a safe place for less-privileged children.
 - C have to be built near the city centre.
 - D should only employ professional personnel.

Een schrijver kan op verschillende manieren zijn/haar standpunten kracht bij zetten, zoals door:

- 1 de mening van externe deskundigen aan te halen
 - 2 persoonlijke ervaringen met het onderwerp naar voren te brengen
 - 3 te waarschuwen voor de gevolgen van een bepaald plan
- 2p **33** Geef voor elk van de bovenstaande manieren aan of de schrijver deze in dit artikel wel of niet gebruikt.
Noteer het nummer van elke manier, gevolgd door “wel” of “niet”.

Bronvermelding

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