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entius Carolstadius. Kapitlet erbjuder inte bara en presentation av barn- och ungdomslitteraturfältet utan även en betydande inblick i den småskaliga, regionala kulturöverföringen. Många barn- och ungdomsförfattare verkade som bokhandlare och folkskollärare vilka distribuerade litteratur och skrev för olika tidskrifter.

Helene Blomqvist avslutar volymen med ett kapitel ägnat åt Tage Aurell. Här ges en övergripande bild av författarskapet med textnära nedslag i Aurells verk. Kapitlet upprepar i mångt och mycket den samlade bilden av den säreget korthuggna mässterberättaren, men visar också vad *En värmländsk litteraturhistoria* hade kunnat vara om den hade tagit läsaren vid handen i högre grad.

*En värmländsk litteraturhistoria*, del 1, är ett vackert och uppslagsrikt verk med litteraturvetenskaplig relevans och tagna var för sig håller kapitlen hög kvalitet. Invändningarna rör i huvudsak de i sig genomtänkta och högt ställda, men alltför vitt famnande, ambitionerna som i verkställandet tyvärr ger upphov till en väl spretig helhet. Denna spretighet förtar emellertid inte det berömvärda i projektet som sådant eller de enskilda forskningsinsatserna.

Linus Ljungström

*Forbidden Literature. Case studies on censorship.* Erik Erlanson, Jon Helgason, Peter Henning & Linnéa Lindsköld (eds). Nordic Academic Press. Lund 2020.

When it is in the hands of the authorities, literary censorship and other types of official censorial intervention could be considered a threat to democracy. At the same time, it has often been regarded a necessary form of intervention in order to protect those members of society deemed especially vulnerable, i.e., easily influenced by textual material that is considered harmful to them. Today, most likely, we primarily associate state censorship with a way of protecting children from disturbing material or preventing the publication of material that could be considered hateful of or discriminatory against certain ethnic or religious groups. Thus, most of us have no or few issues with today's censorship. However, societal norms shift over time, and it is not too long ago that the groups deemed in need of protection by society were extended to also include women and, generally, less-educated

members of society. Hence, when we read modern editions of works published relatively recently, we should consider the possibility that they may have been self-censored by the authors as a way of avoiding legal action, or that certain parts may have been deleted by the censor.

This is one reason why this new volume on censorship and forbidden literature is most welcome. It contains eleven articles on the topic, and it is thematically divided into three parts. Part I, "Literature in Court", comprises four articles, Part II, "Contingencies of Censorship", three articles, and Part III, "Censorship and Politics", another four articles. Thus, there are a total of eleven articles, all written in English and all dealing with different aspects of censorship and forbidden literature.

In the acknowledgements section, the volume is presented as stemming from the preliminary studies for an ongoing research project entitled "The Welfare Regime of Literature: The Function of Literature in Sweden, 1937–1976", financed by the Swedish Research Council. Nevertheless, many of the articles have not been confined to either this time period or Sweden only, but cover events from the 16<sup>th</sup> century and well into the 21<sup>st</sup>, in countries such as Sweden, Denmark, England, Finland and Romania, albeit with a main focus on Sweden.

For reasons of space, only five articles will be reviewed below. The first two are found in Part I, the third in Part II and the last two in Part III. The selection or deselection of articles has nothing to do with their academic quality.

In his article "Only a bullet through the heart can stop a lesbian vampire: Emmy Carell's novel *Kan Mend undveres?* (1921)" (27–43), Dag Heede discusses the fate of the Danish author's confessional novel, whose title translates as "can we do without men?" After introducing the novel as the first-ever Danish novel on lesbian love facing a public ban, Heede provides a historical overview of the situation in Denmark at the time of publication. He explains that homosexuality was generally considered to exist only in male-male relationships, and that "sexuality between adult, consenting males had in reality been decriminalized before the First World War, although the laws were not specifically rewritten until the 1930s" (28). However, "[t]o depict homosexuality without explicitly, unambiguously condemning it was to play with fire" (ibid.). Heede continues: "From the very beginning, Danish homosexual literature had been in conflict with the law. The critic and writer Cle-

mens Petersen (1834–1918) had to flee to the US after a homosexual affair in 1869, and in 1889 the young writer Joakim Reinhard (1858–1925) followed in his footsteps” (28–29). Heede mentions Martin Kok as yet another author involved in a homosexual scandal, forcing him to assume another pen name. Herman Bang is then brought up as “the first widely known homosexual person in the Nordic countries” (29), and as an author subjected to censorship. As the degenerate main character in his 1880 novel *Haabløse slægter* [hopeless families] refuses to conform to conventional gender norms and does not die, but survives at the end, the novel “thus challenges the norms of both heteronormativity and heteronarrativity” (29). This is one of the reasons for its being censored, argues Heede, as one way to avoid censorship was to have immoral characters die.

The analysis of the reasons for banning Bang’s novel is both convincing and illuminating. However, there appears to be a slight confusion of sorts, as, in the discussion on homosexuality, literature and censorship, biographical facts about the authors’ sexual disposition seem to be intermingled with literary qualities in a partly confusing way. This is seen in the way the sexual orientation of the authors is brought up in the discussion of homosexual literature. For instance, as examples of “homosexual literature [having] been in conflict with the law” (above), those provided by Heede have little to do with literature. Petersen and Reinhard having to flee because of a homosexual affair, for instance, are in no way examples of literary censorship, nor of “homosexual literature” and “the law”. Indeed, the sexual orientation of the author would have fallen under quite different laws. Moreover, when turning to Bang, Heede correctly explains the literary reasons for censorship having taken place, but when Bang is introduced as “the first widely known homosexual person in the Nordic countries”, one fails to see the relevance of his sexual orientation to the censoring of his novel. This raises some questions for the readers: does one need to be a homosexual to write about homosexuality? Is the author’s sexual disposition in itself grounds for literary censorship, regardless of the work’s literary qualities? If the latter is Heede’s point, it would make for a very interesting discussion, as it would indicate that the real reasons for censoring a literary work may have gone beyond the letter of the law.

Heede goes on to contextualize Carrel’s novel, and what then follows is an interesting background

to *Kan Mænd undværes?* where Heede claims that the story is most likely based on Carell’s affair with a famous Swedish actress, Maja (Maria) Cassell. Heede points out the many similarities between the book and the known biographical data of Carrel’s affair. He describes the novel as being “– almost – all about sex” (31), but also explains that on a later occasion, Carell claimed that the book was to be seen as “a warning tale” for those that may feel tempted to engage in lesbian relationships. This, claims Heede, is not how one reads the novel, however, as it is full of intimate and pleasurable lesbian depictions, which is the reason for the book’s being charged with immorality. The plot revolves around the two characters Esther and Maja, and Maja’s sexual prowess is often referred to with allusions to vampires, Esther referring to Maja as “[t]he most wonderful vampire on earth” (32).

On the publication of *Kan Mænd undværes?* Heede accounts for the reactions in the media, where many speculated about the book’s connection to Carell’s affair with Cassell. Heede now shows he has done impressive research on the true nature of the affair between Carell and Cassell, making a strong case for the likelihood of a lesbian relationship having taken place between the two, and having inspired the novel. Questions are asked about the love letters in the novel and the probability of their being real letters from the affair. Possibly, one might suggest here that Heede’s focus could rather have been on the effects of the perceived threat to society as a result of the speculations themselves, as there was evidently no proof of homosexuality. Maybe focussing on whether or not the speculations were true is not particularly relevant. Instead, further investigating the connection between the perceived threat of the speculations and the ensuing censorial intervention would, most likely, have shed more light on the mechanics of censorship.

Heede goes on to compare the book to Carrel’s second novel, *Hugo fra Paris* [Hugo from Paris] (1921), pointing out that both novels describe women experiencing lesbian love, then renouncing it. In the first novel, this is done by Esther, and in the second, it is Heede’s alter ego Ursula who does so. One difference is that in the first novel, both Esther and the lesbian vampire Maja survive at the end. In the second, Ursula, bankrupt and deceived by the immoral womanizer Hugo, commits suicide, whereas Hugo lives on. As the two novels are very similar in their detailed depiction of lesbian sexu-

ality, Heede asks why only *Kan Mænd undværes?* was censored, reaching the convincing conclusion that the answer is to be found in the endings. In *Hugo fra Paris*, the main character Hugo – a selfish womanizer – survives, as does Maja in *Kan Mænd undværes?*, but, as Heede concludes, “perhaps it is easier to accept the survival of selfish male womanizers than that of a lesbian vampire” (39–40).

Heede’s article is written in clear English that reads well. As a biographical account of Carell’s life, the article is both interesting and enlightening, covering many different aspects of Carrel and her works. The article also contributes to a general understanding of censorship in Denmark a hundred years ago, demonstrating how censorial power is exercised not only by politicians and lawmakers, but by other agents of power as well, such as journalists, doctors, moralists and lawyers, whose intervention may affect a work’s reception. For instance, the success of *Kan Mænd undværes?* and the media coverage it received are put forward by Heede as logical reasons for the authorities banning the book. This is an important insight, if one wishes to understand the intricate and wide-ranging mechanics of censorship.

The literary analysis is also extensive and instructive. It is logical for the relationships between the characters and their connection to the author to be brought up, as the novel has autobiographical traits. Possibly, however, as the focus of *Forbidden Literature* is advertised as “case studies on censorship”, the article could have benefited from focussing less on a general literary analysis and the connection between the biographical aspects of the author and her works, as these extensive passages, albeit interesting, are not always made relevant to the topic of censorship. Then again, with a clearer statement of thesis at the beginning, maybe this perceived deviation could have been made more relevant.

As it now is, the occasional intermingling of biographical data and the reasons for literary censorship appearing at the start of the article risk providing a slightly skewed image of how literary censorship works. This feeling is also partly reinforced by the relatively great biographical focus on Carell’s sexual leanings that follows.

Nevertheless, as stated in the foreword to this volume, Heede’s article sheds light on many interesting aspects of censorship, such as “the often arbitrarily drawn line between moral and immoral literature” (18). Understanding this arbitrariness also leads to important insights into the problems

facing both authors and editors in trying to make decisions about what to write and not, and how to do so. After all, probably the most common form of censorship is the kind we never see, that exercised by the authors and editors themselves, prior to publication.

Yet another article under the heading “Literature in Court” can be found in “The case against *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*: The 1959 Obscene Publications Act as a New Critical Reader” (45–63), where Claus Schatz-Jakobsen has chosen to analyse “the trial and acquittal of D.H. Lawrence’s novel *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*”, from 1928. The 1960 trial, where Penguin Books was the defendant, was a logical consequence of the new Obscene Publications act of the previous year. Schatz-Jakobsen formulates his research question thus:

[m]y research question concerns the extent to which the 1959 Act’s New Critical-sounding emphasis on ‘the dominant effect of the work’, especially as it was applied and interpreted during the trial, could be used to draw failsafe distinctions between pornography and serious literature, which will include weighting its potentialities against its limitations and shortcomings. (47)

Schatz-Jakobsen sets out to perform “a hermeneutic reading and explication of text” but adds that there will also be “occasion to glance at the sociological and material aspects of book publishing” (45). For instance, the article describes how the greatest obstacle to the first British publication of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* in 1928 was booksellers refusing to sell it and, in America, customs officers confiscating copies of it. Thus, the article takes on many different aspects of the subject, all relevant to an understanding of the mechanics of censorship.

The author starts out by mapping the historical landscape of British censorship, raising the main differences between the Obscene Publications Acts of 1857 and 1959. Whereas the former focussed solely on the surmised detrimental moral effect on the readers of an allegedly obscene book, the latter opened up for the possibility of focussing on the book’s literary value as well, through an assessment not only of selected passages but through an analysis of the *entire* book. This shift of focus, from the effect on the readers to the literary qualities of a book, argues Schatz-Jakobsen, was to become the key turning point not only for the publication of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover*, but also for future publications, leading to greater authorial freedom.

Schatz-Jakobsen points out that the 1959 Obscene Publications Act must be seen not as “an isolated piece of legislation” (46) but rather as connected to the new mode of literary analysis which flourished at [the time]: the New Criticism” (46–47). He convincingly argues that as classics like *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* could be sold as cheap pocketbooks by 1960, it simply posed a social threat to those who believed that the masses had to be protected from [read: prevented from gaining access to] certain types of literature. In short, literature was not for all, only for some. He concludes that this insight, hinting at so many other issues than purely literary ones being at stake, was central to the prosecution losing the trial.

Schatz-Jakobsen’s article is both well written and convincing, with references to numerous relevant sources. It has a clear and logical structure, and spans many more aspects than can be brought up here, showing an important and impressive understanding of how the mechanics of censorship go far beyond the mere literary aspects, to include both sociological and material concerns. The article informatively describes the many different powers and interests at play when a book is suppressed or censored. It also provides a detailed account of the court proceedings in the *Lady Chatterley* trial, which is an efficient way to explain the arguments and the reasoning from both sides, and which clearly illustrates the important part played by New Criticism to the outcome of the trial.

The historical background to the first refusal of *Lady Chatterley’s Lover* is detailed, as are the reasons behind the Obscene Publications Act of 1857, showing that the author is well acquainted with the history of British censorship and the sociological reasons behind it.

Nonetheless, perhaps the most interesting point is made at the end of the article. In opposition to claims made in one of his most central sources, John Sutherland’s *Offensive Literature* (1983), about parliaments or court rooms not being the right places to analyse literature, Schatz-Jakobsen points out that this is not the case in the *Lady Chatterley* trial:

[a]t no other time in legal history have law and literature so converged for their mutual benefit, and probably at no other time has a court room sounded more like a lecture hall in a literary academy, ringing with informed discussion and the rigorous application of the most fundamental principles for the analysis of literature [– –]. In

the balance hung nothing less than the democratization and full accessibility of literature. (60)

Thus, Schatz-Jakobsen also demonstrates how literature is never an isolated cultural phenomenon. It is always closely intertwined with issues of a “cultural, social, educational [and] economic” (59) character. It is as much *about* these phenomena as part of them.

In the second part of this volume, “Contingencies of Censorship”, Kenneth Lindegren’s article “Some aesthetic side effects of copyright” (129–145), discusses how the gradually stricter copyright laws – an attempt at protecting the authors’ rights to their own works – need to be balanced against the desire “to encourage creativity, science, and democracy” (129). Lindegren demonstrates how our modern copyright laws restrain authors’ artistic freedom when their works are inspired by previous works, by other authors: At the same time, he argues, they open up new creative possibilities.

Focussing on how works include fictional characters initially created by other authors, an activity Lindegren terms “sequels”, he exemplifies the effect of contemporary copyright laws on authors of sequels. His conclusion is that as long as the sequel is a parody or in other ways critically comments on the original work, it can avoid copyright lawsuits, whereas a sequel that clearly imitates the original, where there are too many parallels between the original and the sequel, are considered an infringement of copyrights.

However, Lindegren “argue[s] that copyrights also have aesthetically productive side effects” (130). In short, when prevented from making use of certain literary activities, authors are forced to invent and make use of new ones, thus further developing the writing craft, in the form of “new sub-genres and new types of authorship” (130).

From here, Lindegren discusses the status of characters, mentioning that the inclusion of fictional characters from other works into one’s own is not new, and that this practice highlights the question of who *owns* fictional characters. As the authors of the modern novel stopped using traditional characters found in “history, legend or classical literature” (132) and instead started to create their own, someone else using them could then be considered guilty of stealing. This led to a situation where one could talk about real and fake characters.

After this, the article proceeds to discuss the different challenges that different types of authors en-

counter. Lindegren distinguishes between unauthorized and authorized sequels, showing how the aim of unauthorized sequels is often to parody the original, or expose weaknesses, which leads to a degree of artistic freedom. However, the artistic freedom for the authors of authorized sequels, such as David Lagercrantz's continuation of Stieg Larsson's Millennium series, is very limited, he argues, as the aim there is to imitate the original author. Lindegren then states that authorized authors have a lot in common with what he terms "the new ghostwriter", where the author writes an autobiography for a famous person, trying to play down their own personality and style in order to let the celebrity's stand out. The reader is to be made to feel that it is the celebrity speaking, not the ghostwriter.

Whereas Lindegren's article does not primarily deal with what we normally associate with the term censorship, there is a connection to forbidden literature, the main title of this book, and the article provides some very interesting insights. For instance, the discussion on real and fake characters and whether or not one can claim ownership of one's characters is both interesting and enlightening, as is the discussion on how legal obstacles may actually spur new artistic expressions. Furthermore, the passage on authorized and unauthorized sequels conveys important insights into how the author's challenges may differ significantly depending on the genre in which they write. Thus, both the concept of character and the concept of author are problematized and developed.

As Lindegren brings up some recent phenomena, such as authorized sequels and the new ghostwriter, perhaps it would also have been interesting to see a discussion of how Lindegren views another recent phenomenon, namely fan fiction. Admittedly, fan fiction is not normally published via established publishers, and the aim of fan-fiction writers is seldom to make money on someone else's idea. Precisely therefore, however, a discussion of how original characters are used in fan fiction and how to regard this phenomenon in relation to the discussion of ownership and authorship in this article could have developed the topic even further. Possibly, some concluding remarks at the end would also have made Lindegren's main points emerge a little more clearly. An even clearer connection made to the topic of forbidden literature would also have been beneficial.

In conclusion, however, Lindegren has done a commendable job, using very pedagogical and clear

examples to illustrate his points. This article should be of value to anyone interested in the concept of copyright, character, originality or the challenges facing authors in different genres.

In the third part, "Censorship and Politics", we find Kristin Johansson's article "Poison, literary vermin, and misguided youths: Descriptions of immoral reading in early twentieth-century Sweden" (169–185), which focuses on Sweden at the time of transformational change around the start of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when authors such as August Strindberg, Ellen Key and Hjalmar Söderberg challenged traditional morality norms. In order to counter the perceived threat that such authors posed to a stable and healthy society, morality groups were formed all over Europe. Analysing the publications of one of these groups, the Swedish Association for Moral Culture, formed in 1909, Johansson's aim is to study the supposed effects on the reader from reading immoral literature. This is done through an analysis of the language-as-discourse used to attack literature perceived as a threat. Moreover, her aim is "to chart how the discourse of reading was shaped by the condemnation of immoral content, and how harsh rhetoric could be used in disciplining readers in a Foucauldian sense" (171). In addition, Johansson attempts to analyse "views on reading and morality in relation to their historical and cultural context" (ibid.) [...] and to show that the view of reading at this time was very different from today's view of reading as "something inherently good" (ibid.). An important point made by Johansson is that the study will serve "as an example of how social control can be exercised through the regulation of the discourse of reading" (ibid.).

After a brief historical overview, Johansson sets out to describe the Swedish Association for Moral Culture, a name which the group adopted in 1910. The nationalistic association published 76 booklets. These make up the source material for Johansson's study, which is carried out thematically, and compared with other studies.

The material is divided into three main themes, and the first theme, "unhealthy reading", is especially interesting, as it clearly demonstrates how medical language is often used, often metaphorically, in order to persuade the reader of the seriousness of the situation. The authors of the various articles in the material are often medical professors playing on people's fear of illness through contagion, connections being made between sexuality, bad health and bad morals.

The second theme is “analogies of war”, and Johansson demonstrates how there are many allusions to war, and many military terms used, in the articles published over the years. The logic, she claims convincingly, was that bad literature led to social degradation, making Sweden vulnerable in times of war.

The third theme, “youths [*sic.*] and mothers”, shows a connection made between bad literature and the need to protect not only young boys (youths) but also girls from such poor influences, especially since these influences on young people not only affected the present but also the future.

In her conclusion, Johansson rightly explains that her material allows her to discern the ideals on which society was to be formed, and how the various agents regarded the effect of reading immoral literature. Moreover, Johansson argues that her study of the Swedish Association for Moral Culture can be used as an example of how literature is often seen as having power, and how it is used as a disciplinary tool in societal debate. Through the three argumentative themes exposed in Johansson’s study, the aim of the association was, to put it bluntly, “to govern and civilize readers into choosing literature aligned with its own values and ideologies” (183).

Johansson makes a convincing case in her analysis of the publications of the Swedish Association for Moral Culture. She provides the relevant background, and her conclusions are logical and based on illustrative examples. By placing her study in relation to similar studies, she positions herself as yet another authority in the field. Although not a new insight, her explanation why society regards bad literature as potentially dangerous to social stability is important, if one is to understand the power structures in society, and the reasons for social actions.

Possibly, as Johansson mentions Foucault at the start, and her analysis is in line with his theories, it would have been beneficial to both define these theories on social power structures and to show their relevance to this study, as this could have made her case even stronger. Admittedly, however, she does quite well without actively incorporating them.

Two especially interesting findings are brought up in Johansson’s article. One is the way the medical profession was used to frighten readers into doing the desired thing, with medical professors having a natural platform of power from which to convince the readers to abstain from reading immoral

literature. The other is the way the First World War was brought into the discourse as a way to persuade readers to take the right path. In both cases, Johansson shows a danger lurking in the background. In the first case, bad literature is a poison or a contagious disease, and in the other, bad literature is a foreign enemy, threatening to invade one’s country. Naturally, given the state of the world at the time, these were clever and effective tools of persuasion, and the readers of Johansson’s article may now ask themselves what are today’s most effective fears on which to play in order to spur one’s readers in the desired direction, regardless of what that direction may be. Thus, the article is an interesting contribution not only to those interested in the reasons for censorship but also in the way social power structures work.

This leads us to the last article to be reviewed: Ilona Savolainen’s “Protecting books from readers: Children in Finnish public libraries, 1930–1959” (209–226). Savolainen studies “the contradictory goals of children’s library services in Finland in 1930–1959” (209). Her material consists of childhood recollections of visits to the library, and she compares them to “inspection reports by the State Library Bureau in the same period” (211). Both types of material concern the same three libraries, found in Kokkola, Lahti and Oulu, and Savolainen’s aim is to compare the official goals for the children’s sections of said libraries with the way these libraries were perceived by the informants. She also wants to see to what extent the policy aims for children’s libraries were successful in the eyes of the children who visited them.

The childhood recollections stem from “two large collections of library memories, ‘Library tradition [*sic.*]’ (Kirjastoperinne, 1984–5) and ‘The Library in my [*sic.*] Life’ (Kirjasto elämässäni, 2000), collected by the Finnish Literature Society” (213). Altogether, this resulted in nine different informants for Savolainen’s study. The childhood recollections and the official reports were compared, and common themes were identified and examined in the study.

Savolainen starts out by discussing the history of children’s libraries in Finland, and how they were late in coming, and often presented visiting children with more obstacles than adults had to face. Yet, the Finnish authorities were instrumental in making a change in favour of children’s libraries. “The State Bureau strongly encouraged public libraries to provide children with the chance to read

and lend [*sic.*]. The public library was an emancipating force in children's lives – especially for lower-class children” (211).

Savolainen mentions that during official library inspections between 1930 and 1959, the libraries in the study were generally criticized for having too few children's books, and for being dilapidated and uninviting. Sometimes opening hours were extremely limited as well. Nothing much seems to have happened in terms of improvement during the studied period. Referring to the interviewed library visitors, Savolainen states that they encountered many obstacles, such as not understanding the library cards, having to be quiet and, very often, fearing the stern librarian.

In her conclusion, Savolainen first states that all the informants “eventually fall in love with the library system. Two felt at home from the beginning, six had mixed feelings in their childhood, and only one had to wait until adulthood to see his way to the possibilities the library had to offer” (224). One thing the official library reports seem to have missed completely, according to Savolainen, was the “the most common problem the children faced in the libraries: the scary librarian with her humiliating attitude” (224). Savolainen, concludes: “A lesson to be learnt is that setting out a service for someone does not mean it is truly available to him or her. Literature can also be forbidden simply by making people feel they are in the wrong place” (225).

Savolainen's study is clearly structured, and it is based on official reports from three libraries and childhood recollections comprising nine library users and their experiences. Thus, it is unavoidable that the nature of much of the material is primarily of anecdotal value. This is also something Savolainen partly touches on at an early stage. In her conclusion, she states that even if all the library users in the study eventually came to embrace the library system, her material is

extremely skewed. The method of collection eliminated almost all stories with unhappy conclusions, since it is very rare for people to take the time to write about something that is insignificant to them. Therefore, it is possible – and even probable – that not all children coped with the confusing rules and humiliating practices in libraries. (224)

Possibly, this fact, and this way of reasoning, runs the risk of further reducing the general validity of Savolainen's material, and the conclusions drawn.

With this said, however, Savolainen has conducted a very interesting study, challenging the boundaries of what may or may not qualify as censorship, while also providing an informative and insightful rendering of Finnish library history. Especially interesting are the discussions on how place, the way libraries are built, has the ability to exercise censorial power, and how the extent to which librarians have power over children may affect both the children's library experiences and, as a result, even their long-time learning. The librarian as a gatekeeper to imagination and knowledge is something the inspectors of these three libraries apparently missed, whereas this was clear to the children in the study, which gives food for thought.

Savolainen's conclusion that the children's library departments were not actually places for children, as experienced by the library users in the study, is an important insight one can only hope will be shared by those in charge of children's libraries today.

As a *general assessment*, one of the strengths of this volume is that the articles, all in English, cover very different topics and make it clear just how widely the concept of censorship can be understood. Some of the articles, such as Savolainen's and Lindegren's, above, could be said to challenge our conception of what censorship is, possibly pushing the boundaries further. As the articles also cover different periods and different countries, they are likely to interest a wide readership.

Yet another strength lies in the articles being written by scholars from different academic fields, covering everything from Economic History and Literature to Library and Information Science and Childhood Studies, to name a few. This paves the way for approaching the topic from very different angles.

When reading the texts, one is often struck by how spoiled we are when it comes to the command of English displayed by scholars in this part of the world. However, this general awareness may sometimes lead to overconfidence, and could be the reason for some unnecessary confusion for the reader, confusion that might have been avoided had all these texts been scrutinized by a native eye.

In conclusion, this volume is a significant contribution to our understanding of censorship, the forms it can take, the powers behind it, and its effect on society as a whole.

*Lars Liljegren*