illustrators. Many important illustrators of the nineteenth century worked for children's magazines. Work by artists of the eminence of Arthur Rackham, Walter Crane and Kate Greenaway can be found in quality children's periodicals like *Atalanta* and *Good Words for the Young*, and other artists like Gordon Browne, Harold Millar, Tom Browne and Louis Wain established their reputations through regular work in children's magazines.

Again there is no hard and fast rule about what was indexed and what was not. A few exemplary titles list illustrations by their title and the illustrator, but most do not. It was a feature of the *Boy's Own Paper* to give presentation colour plates with the monthly issue, and these were indexed in its annual volume. The most detailed index to plates appears in the monthly journal *Chatterbox*. In the bound volume for 1880 some 160 illustrations are listed by title: unfortunately the illustrators' names are not supplied. Needless to say, the titles alone are not very helpful, although they do make amusing reading. Two examples I found particularly so were 'Dave, does you want me to wallop you' and 'Salamander asleep in the Squire's wide awake'. A glance down the list of illustrations can set the tone of the periodical most effectively. A strictly religious periodical, the *Little Gleaner*, aptly demonstrates this point in the volume for 1892 with such titles as: 'The tomb of a noted unbeliever', 'Tell me why you took that orange' and 'A lie will burn in the memory'.

There is no doubt that Victorian and Edwardian children's magazines can be used as examples of how not to construct an index, as they are inadequate, inconsistent and idiosyncratic. Nevertheless, it is encouraging that so many periodicals did try to provide access to their contents in some way, and that there does seem to be some correlation between the quality of the journal and the quality of its index.

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**Lies, damned lies, and scholarship**

Roy Porter

For most historians, the phrase 'being on the index' conjures up the image of a poor, persecuted intellectual living in Spain or Italy a couple of centuries back, hounded by the Inquisition, his books consigned to the flames. But every so often 'being on the index' means something very different, or rather depicts a very different form of persecution.

It means being blockaded in one's study in the early hours of the morning, encircled by empty coffee cups, terrorized by publishers' impossible deadlines. By the left hand, a set of increasingly dog-earred proofs, the pages now, by definition, out of order; by the right, a homemade card index, imperfectly alphabetized, its contents cascading out of the shoe-box. In the midst, the edgy author desperately trying to distil the essence of years of research and hundreds of pages of text into the compass of an index which in ten or twenty pages must provide a finding-guide that meets every reader's needs to a T.

It's a game which, try as he might, the scholar can't win. He can hear his cost-conscious publisher demanding: prune! prune! (won't just a name index do?). But he knows how vexed he himself gets when he finds a book with a skim ped index—the kind with entries that run: Gladstone, W. E., 7, 9, 12, 13, 15, 16, . . . 570 (often ending, to cap it all, 'et passim'). Rather than lazy indexes, it's almost preferable to find an author going the whole hog and producing that enormity: the book with no index at all. And yet there can be something equally frustrating about finding the other extreme, the index of the over-elaborate variety which, like an Elizabethan codpiece, promises more than it can perform. How often

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we find too detailed indexes frustratingly leading us to the merest snippet in the text, hardly longer than the index entry itself!

Of course the harrassed author can opt out of the game completely. There are two main ways out. Hire a professional indexer (a band of people at whose capacity for self-mortification I stand in awe); but that eats up several years of royalties. Or—increasingly popular nowadays—put your book on the word-processor in the first place, and thus have it indexed by robot. But machine-made indexes all too often read just like that; and many true historians have been dubious about indexing by outsiders, fearing subversion. Macaulay told his publisher not to give his History to some damned Tory indexer! Certainly what you don’t get with robot or professional indexers are wit and malice; and many an author has used the decent obscurity of the index as a suitable corner for innuendo. The Memoirs of Hariette Wilson, mistress to the Regency aristocracy, contain some nice entries of this kind, as when Hariette indexes her fellow demi-mondaine, Julia Johnstone, as ‘Julia Storer, a girl at Hampton Court, ruined on the staircase’.

Ponder the rationales of indexes and you open a whole can of worms about the ritual magic that underlies the paraphernalia of scholarship. Oddest of all, perhaps, to the Martian anthropologist would be the spattering of books with ‘footnotes’ (now generally found anywhere but at the foot of the page), a chunk of the book which few read, but whose absence or inadequacy is always deemed an abomination. Of course we all curse the unannotated book, whose juicy quotations and bold findings we just have to take on trust or with a giant pinch of salt; just as our blood boils at the feckless footnoter with his string of op. cit.’s and ibid.’s, and casual half-complete references to works it would be a sleuth’s labour to track down.

But referencing elephantiasis is no less of a pest, the piling up of books upon books and articles upon articles behind the modest ‘See also’.

The parade of learning is obviously designed to prove that the author has served his time at the academic coalface. Yet too often however—and rather like the businessman’s fat cigar—the bid to win confidence only sows doubts and offers hostages to fortune. Not least it turns the text into a forest and provides yet more evidence to readers at large that academics don’t write books for people who enjoy reading.

If the apparatus of scholarship is not exactly an Augean stables, too often it does resemble Dickens’ depiction of the Court of Chancery: cumbersome, confusing, dropsical, and simply not very effective at doing its job. Not least, it can all be tremendously wasteful. My bête noire is the fact that each publishing house and every scholarly journal nurtures its own particular house-style for citations. Every time a typescript migrates from one journal to the next looking for a good home, there’s the immense fag of changing single quotes into double quotes, Roman numerals into Arabic, capitals into lower case (and in this process, how many real errors creep in?). Who benefits from it all? It may provide work for some poor devil of a sub-editor, but all too often it just means the author has to burn yet more midnight oil with his Tippex and his temper. It is a piece of conspicuous time-consumption, a left-over from the days when scholars were meant to be leisured and the more dry-as-dust the better. New brooms please!

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Documentation standards

Mary Piggott

During the past year the British Standards Institution has been very active in promoting standardization in the field of documentation, as the following list of publications testifies. (The ISO code shown after the BSI code indicates that the national and international standards are identical. The second price given is the reduced price to BSI subscribing members.)

BS 1749:1985 Recommendations for alphabetical arrangement and the filing order of numbers and symbols. 2nd revision. 13pp. £16.50 (£6.60). This is reviewed in this journal.

BS 4148:1985 (ISO 4.1984) Specification for abbreviation of title words and titles of publications. 5pp. £10.50 (£4.20). This standard supersedes BS 4148: Part 1: 1970, which has been withdrawn. Whereas that edition was in complete agreement with the US standard, this new edition has even wider international application, being the basis on which the International Serials Data System establishes serial title abbreviations. There are, however, few changes from the previous edition, although the text has been rearranged and generally stated more succinctly. Truncation is still the preferred method of abbreviation; now each element of a compound word is to be abbreviated, whether hyphenated or not; and the full stop must follow an...