Book reviews
edited by Philip Bradley


The USA is the source of this first published index to The Guardian, and it comes complete with American spelling and American terminology. It is to be published annually as well as monthly. As to its claim to provide fast, accurate access to the microfilm and hard copy editions of the daily paper and the Guardian Weekly, I have my doubts. The treatment of each country's political, social and economic conditions is so broad that, for example, for Great Britain, under the subheading International Relations, there are 52 columns of entries for the month of April alone, arranged in date order and then by page number. No attention is paid to the key words of entries. Entries appear to be taken from the headline of the story, and the country to which the story refers may be added in brackets. April was the month of the American bombing of Libya. For Libya, under the subheading International Relations, there are nearly six columns of entries; to find any particular story would require extensive reading through the entries.

Each page is divided into three columns. The coverage is comprehensive. All entries are arranged in one sequence called a subject index, which includes named people, both living and dead. Included are all news items of more than one paragraph; feature articles; editorials; editorial cartoons; commentaries; book reviews; cinema and theatre reviews; obituaries; business and financial news; and articles on British sporting events. Each entry—or citation, as it is called—has a brief annotation amplifying the article headline; date, page and column reference; indication of accompanying illustration; and an indicator of length. British spelling is retained in the annotated headline portion of each entry.

The most critical feature of the index seems to be the choice of subject headings adapted from the New York Times thesaurus for newspapers. As suggested above, these give rise to innumerable columns of entries to enrage future researchers. I am sure that, whatever use this index is put to, it will not help understanding of political, social or economic events. Nor are the cross-references always helpful: there is no reference from Handicapped to Disability or vice versa, and the elaborate network for Guns, Firearms, Handguns, Gun control, shows an American preoccupation. On checking with the Guardian Library in London, I was not surprised to find that they make no use of this index there.

ELIZABETH WALLIS


This is a very simple and straightforward guide to the world of abstracting and indexing—so simple and straightforward, in fact, that it sometimes appears to be aimed at the primary school pupil. It explains what abstracting and indexing 'is' (or, more correctly, are); who uses abstracts and indexes; what abstractors and indexers do; who hires abstractors and indexers; education for abstractors and indexers; contacts and networking; and the future outlook for abstractors and indexers. We learn that full-time abstractors and indexers in North America can expect to earn anything between $12,000 and $50,000 per annum and that the rates for freelancers vary between $8.00 and $15.00 per hour.

There is a useful bibliography (in which Peter Greig's name is misspelt 'Grieg') and useful profiles of the American Society of Indexers, the Indexing and Abstracting Society of Canada and the National Federation of Abstracting and Information Services. These are followed by an extremely valuable chart providing, for 22 abstracting and indexing services, job descriptions for abstractors and indexers together with salary and qualifications required.

When he reviewed the first edition of this work in The Indexer (14 (3) April 1985, 220), our President regretted the absence of an index. The second edition includes an index, which has far too many 'see' references when double entry would have been more helpful and economical—for example:

SDI, see current awareness services
Selective dissemination of information, see current awareness services

instead of
SDI, 5
Selective dissemination of information, 5.
SI might like to produce something similar to this for British indexers. A job for the Training and Accreditation Board?

K. G. B. BAKEWELL

178 terms connected with publishing and computers are explained subjectively, engagingly, sometimes provocatively, by SI's New Zealand member. Sample brief entries:

*blue pencil A device used by editors under pressure from the printing-shop to reduce an index so that it can be fitted into end-papers of a book. Sometimes disastrous.*

*interface* The face presented by a computer to other computers, which tends to be poker-face; see also compatibility.

Longer entries opine entertainingly on invisible colleges; pomp and circumstance; string; language includes 'Invective...not used in this glossary. Gobbledygook...avoided in this glossary. Jargon...surrendered to in this glossary.' Some personal prejudice is shown—under marks, proof-reading we note with surprise, 'it may not be a very good idea for the indexer to proof-read his own compilation'; and under rules, 'Because indexing is an art most rules must be recommendations'. Enthusiasm bubbles through: for Modern English Usage (forthright, clever, humorous and authoritative), Knight ('A book which should be on every indexer's desk'), and Townley and Gee (We need their sense of order, righteousness and deflation); all these are pointed to by many cross-references, as are British Standards and The Indexer—a pity there is no bibliography. Much useful information among the fun.

HAZEL BEIL.


This Index lists, describes and locates the manuscripts of works by 22 major British authors writing between 1700 and 1800, arranged alphabetically by author. The material is held in libraries, record offices and private collections throughout the world, which are listed at the beginning. It is illustrated by a selection of facsimiles. Manuscripts listed include notebooks, diaries, journals, corrected proof sheets and marginalia as well as literary works. Letters and business documents are excluded, but the locations of major collections of these are noted.

There is a lengthy introduction to each author in which the canon of his works is discussed, along with their descent and dispersal, and any recent discoveries. The individual entries are then arranged alphabetically by title, usually within subdivisions to separate different forms. The typical entry contains information identifying the kind of manuscript and the handwriting; gives details of date, variant title, state of completeness, provenance and location; and notes the date and form of first publication, the standard modern edition, articles discussing the manuscript and published facsimiles.

The entry for Robert Burns is one of the longest (100 pp). Mainly concerned with verse, it also lists prose, diaries and notebooks, and marginalia. The work Burns did on collecting traditional Scottish songs raises problems for the scope and content of his canon, which does not separate the collected items from his own compositions. Another problem for his canon is the bawdy poems which could not be published openly during much of the nineteenth century; and a final complication lies in the forgeries of his letters and poems, of which the largest collection is held in the New York Public Library. A facsimile of his poem 'On scaring some waterfowl in Loch Turit, a wild scene among the hills of Oughtertyre' is reproduced very clearly. I am much intrigued by a poem entitled 'On being asked why God had made Miss D- so little and Mrs A- so big' (could this be one of the bawdy poems?).

This work should be of great help to anyone engaged in bibliographical research.

OLIVA JONES


Volume 1 of Ingeatrath Dahlberg's bibliography listed classification schemes and thesauri (reviewed in The Indexer 13 (3) April 1983, 208-9); volume 2 listed reference tools and conferences (reviewed in The Indexer 14 (3) April 1985, 218 with a further note in 15 (1) April 1986, 62-3). Volume 3 concentrates on the theory behind the construction of classification schemes and thesauri and the making of indexes.

MARY PIGGOTT


Books such as this one should be banned. They arrive on a busy man's desk, he takes a five minute break 'just to have a quick look', and an hour later he realizes guiltily what the time is. This is curious, because for the most part the book is exactly what the title says: a fairly comprehensive index of the contents of 'weird' magazines from Ace Mystery to Wyrd, followed by an author index, an index of cover artists and an index of editors. It is reproduced from electric-typescript, and on occasion the typist's fingers have strayed but (as far as I can see after several further hours of browsing) not seriously. The only complaint is that the book is hardly 'user-friendly': I read the four-page 'User's Guide' carefully but I still...
haven’t been able to work out what ‘[*Cad 3, Mar 66]*’, in the Brian Aldiss entry, actually means. In the same entry it took me a while to discover that the cryptic ‘[Vuk]’ by a couple of story-titles was not a critical comment (along the lines of ‘Yuk!’).

Still, as with other reference books, such difficulties will no doubt resolve themselves as I get accustomed to using the book, which is an excellent, valuable and much-needed compilation. There is a Foreword by Peter Haining.

PAUL BARNETT


Two previous editions of the *Macrothesaurus* were published by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in 1972 and 1978, and updating and maintenance since then has been a cooperative activity of international, regional and national organizations, made possible by grants from the International Development Research Centre in Ottawa and the Government of the Netherlands. The continuing aims have been to create a documentary language for processing information in the broad field of economic and social development, while striving for compatibility with sectoral thesauri serving agriculture, industry, labour, education, population science, technology, culture, communication, health and the environment.

The thesaurus is published in English, French and Spanish versions. Translation and extension into other languages is not precluded. The work consists of four parts. Firstly, an alphabetical list of terms, presenting all descriptors and synonyms in alphabetical order of the language of each volume. Each descriptor is accompanied by the other language equivalents (thus effectively promoting use of a trilingual vocabulary), an indication of the subject to which it applies, an explanation of applicability where necessary, and references to synonyms and generic, hierarchical and associated forms.

Then follows the descriptor group display, arranged according to a classification system which conforms to the general framework of economic and social development, and reflects the several aspects with which the specialized agencies of the United Nations are individually concerned.

The last two parts are in the form of indexes. The hierarchical index presents chains of descriptors that can be traced in the thesaurus from generic terms down to the most specific terms. Lastly the KWOC index contains all the significant words that make up the descriptors, with an alphabetical listing of each complete descriptor that contains that key word. Eventually it is hoped that the *Macrothesaurus* will help to form the basis for compiling a common United Nations Thesaurus.

JOYCE LINE


*ASSIA* is a new bibliographical serial launched in 1987 to fill a perceived gap in ‘information provision for social work with large authorities where the need for better indexing and abstracting services was indicated’. The UK Department of Health and Social Security (DHSS) Library would not contest the assertion about lack of information provision for social work since they have been publishing *Social Service Abstracts* since 1977 and it is also available online. The DHSS publication is, however, not as broad-based as *ASSIA*, but it does cover social work and the whole range of personal social services, with particular emphasis on UK literature originating in the UK; the two are probably complementary rather than competitive.

According to the publishers, there are some 40 existing services which touch on the *ASSIA* subject area (e.g. *American Sociological Abstracts and Rural Development Abstracts*), but *ASSIA* has the added value of bringing them all together. Over 500 English language journals from 16 countries are indexed, and such subjects as AIDS, dyslexia, inner city problems, and the social effects of TV are covered. The aim is to include 70% of the journals within 4 months of publication and the remaining 30% within 6 months.

The general layout is similar to *Current Technology Index* and so is the indexing: it is a modified form of the chain indexing system developed by Eric Coates, with a reference from each step in the chain. Where necessary, terms are permuted to ensure that, in most cases, the user will get to the subject heading in one step. There is an informative abstract (maximum of 150 words) following each entry and it is claimed that the combination of an indexing and abstracting sequence is novel and designed to make searching easier for the end user. *ASSIA* also has an author index with the journal reference and the first two terms of the subject headings cited against each entry. The proof of the pudding is in the eating, and the sample pages and the track record of the Library Association in this field suggest that palatable eating is guaranteed.

TOM NORTON


Who’s in and who isn’t? Once you have decided you
must buy a biographical reference work, this is likely to seem an important question. I spent some highly entertaining hours comparing these two works with each other and with *Chambers biographical dictionary* (revised 1964), and their inclusions and omissions proved so widely variable that the ‘in/out’ question isn’t worth asking. If you want a comprehensive biographical dictionary, best to buy them by the half-dozen. You could perhaps get by with three if your budget is limited.

Macmillan (M) claims to be *fully* revised and updated to 1985. Up-to-date it is not. Neither is Longman (L), though admittedly it does not claim to be. Concerning persons still alive—more of whom appear, as one would expect, in L than in M—information tends to peter out around 1980. It seems, for example, from M that Graham Greene’s pen ran dry in 1980, whilst L fails to keep pace with his work two years earlier. The Society of Indexers’ long-standing friend Kurt Vonnegut gave up novel-writing, according to M, in 1976; four major novels in each alternate year since 1979 are ignored. His entry concludes: ‘He was also a prolific essayist.’ Was? Past tense? L does the same sort of thing to Gielgud: puts him into cold storage from 1979.

A clear distinction between authenticated facts and matters which are open to question is something users of reference works should feel able to depend on with confidence. Take the case of Lee Harvey Oswald. M opens a whole can of worms by asserting without qualification that he ‘assassinated . . . Kennedy by shooting him twice’ and generally toeing the Warren Commission’s largely discredited line. L, more wisely, affirms only unquestioned facts, judiciously summarizing the major conflicting theories about Oswald’s possible implication in this sadly memorable event. M is also unduly assertive about the cause of Mozart’s death: ‘he died of inflammatory rheumatic fever’. Biographers have advanced no fewer than nine possible medical causes of death in addition to the ‘heated miliary fever’ entered by the doctor on the death certificate. To these may be added the possibility of willful poisoning, if not by Salieri or perhaps Süssmayr, then more credibly by the jealous husband of Mozart’s pulchritudinous piano pupil, Magdalena Hofdemel.

It is unwise to refer dogmatically to achievements which could at any time be surpassed. L falls into this trap by asserting that Dennis Lillee ‘has taken more test wickets (355) than any other bowler’. By expressing this differently, provision could have been made for Lillee having so soon been pushed into second place by Ian Botham. Matters of this kind should be left to *The Guinness book of records* which is revised annually.

This principle extends far beyond such relative trivialities as sporting records. In these days of stunning historical research techniques and galloping technological innovation, information books on almost every conceivable subject face the danger of being out of date by the time they get into print. This imposes upon compilers of encyclopaedic works, whether biographical or whatever, the need for a softly-softly approach. Information which is accurate today may be long-lasting, even permanent; but compilers must be sensitive to the possibility of impermanence. Where this possibility exists, they must adjust the *manner of presenting* such information. In order to retain the confidence of the user, allowance must be made for the likelihood that some ‘facts’ will lose their currency before a revised edition of the work is published.

With some reservations, therefore, these two publications both contribute to our reference shelves much that is of value. Best to remember, though, that evidence given in court is always sworn to be ‘the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth’; yet no one ever seems to tell quite the same story as anyone else.

J. A. Gordon


This book is in 3 parts. Part 1 is a survey of language families of the world with their various branches and subgroups. Part 2 lists 200 individual languages with a piece of text in the language and script, followed by an English translation and details about where the language is spoken, the number of speakers, and other major features. Part 3 is a country-by-country survey, listing principal languages spoken and the number of speakers. There is an index of languages and language families.

The book is useful for identifying languages, especially those that appear to be similar. For example, it tells you how to distinguish Ukrainian and Belorussian from Russian. It is also a highly enjoyable book to browse through for those who are fascinated by the byways of foreign languages.

TOM NORTON


It often comes as a shock to the middle-aged when words they have been brought up with are no longer acceptable because they are archaic (‘wireless’, ‘to motor’) and when words still extant are awkward to use for fear of misunderstandings (‘gay’, ‘bent’). The words quoted do not appear in Adrian Room’s dictionary, but he gives us 1,300 others to think about. As part of his dedicated research into the history of sense-changes Mr Room has drawn heavily on the *OED* and its examples of recorded usage; the *Bible* (different versions); the *Cursor Mundi*, the medieval poem covering the history, fact and fiction of the then world; Shakespeare and other key writers—and Sir Walter Scott who is given his just due as a major source.

Not only do meanings shift constantly but in different modes: ‘awful’ and ‘horrid’ have weakened, ‘gale’ has strengthened, ‘evening’ and ‘holiday’ have become wider, but ‘cattle’ and ‘corpse’ narrower. There is some fun, too: at different times, girl = boy, bully = sweetheart
and niece = grand-daughter. If we had to speak with (against) our ancestors, we should make a sad (satisfied) mess of it quite (absolutely) often.

There is no 'index', but 'catalogue' once meant a random list, without an alphabetical or thematic framework. 'Gazetteer' (= 17th century journalist's back) turned into a geographical dictionary after a 1699 publication: The gazetteer's or newsmen's interpreter: being a geographical index.

'Naughty' and 'nice' (see also Jane Austen's Henry Tilney) each expand to a column and a half of illuminating comment; but while the reader is enjoying the surprises and respectfully complimenting the editor, a little problem springs to mind: will one's own language be comprehensible in a hundred years' time? Cold hand clutches word-hoard.

BARBARA BRITTON


This book is a history of dictionaries, encyclopaedias and reference materials. But it is much more than that. It is a historical account of man's attempt to record and structure information; it presents a history and theory of how man 'learned to store information beyond the brain'. It examines how mankind has moved from being able to communicate only orally and to store information only in the head, to the evolution and development of technologies for external reference. One theme of particular interest to indexers is the conflict between thematic and alphabetic ordering of information in reference books, with the dominance of alaphabetic ordering where it would sometimes be more logical and helpful to arrange information in some sort of ordered hierarchy or classification.

The range of this book is impressive and is a brilliant synthesis: from the earliest techniques of writing, classifying and recording material, through the invention of the printing press and the development of the encyclopaedia, to the revolution in information technology. Each chapter is short, rarely exceeding 10 pages, yet Dr McArthur appears to be satisfyingly complete and there is no feeling of superficiality.

The book is beautifully produced with many illustrations and quotations. There are wide margins for personal annotations and the price is an unbelievably low £12.50. There is a 12-page index with 3 columns to the page. The notes to the chapters are full and interesting. This book should be read by librarians, indexers and anyone whose business is concerned with the organizing of information.

TOM NORTON


A comprehensive grammar of the English language weighs in at just over five pounds and is the culmination of more than twenty years' work by Randolph Quirk and his collaborators. In a book of this size, an index is clearly of the first importance, and this one was compiled by no less an authority than David Crystal, known to readers of The Indexer for his article on 'Linguistics and indexing' (14 (1) April 1984, 3-7) and his account of indexing the grammar: 'Indexing a reference grammar' (15 (2) Oct. 1986, 67-72).

The index occupies 114 pages and is a word-by-word arrangement with the following types of entries: abbreviations for grammatical categories used in the book; individual words treated within classified lists or which have been discussed; general concepts. References are not to pages but to the section numbers used throughout the book. Major references are shown in italics and an arrow is used for see references. Other conventions are clearly explained in the scope notes which precede the index.

The book is, as one might suspect, a veritable thesaurus of information about every aspect of the English language. I noted down a few points which I had been meaning to check out for some time: the plural of forum (fora or forums?); the recommended usage of 'due to' and 'owing to'; should 'k/K', meaning a thousand, be upper or lower case? All these points were swiftly located via the index and resolved. My confidence in the book, and the index in particular, was greatly strengthened.

TOM NORTON


This edition of The complete plain words has been published on the bicentenary of the foundation of HMSO. The first edition, published in 1954 and based on Gowers' Plain words and The ABC of plain words, was written to help to improve the standard of written English, but it achieved a reputation in Britain which gave it a far greater circulation than was originally envisaged. The reason for this is not far to seek. Much of the written language used in official circles was written in a style which some readers simply could not understand. As the purpose of writing is to convey information it was decided to do something about this, but the book's importance was also seen outside official circles.

The work explains the use of words and grammar and gives many examples of grammatical errors and poor
Again he properly provides his book with both decent general index (14 pages, for xii + 283 pages of text) and full and most gracious acknowledgement/tribute to his indexer, Oula Jones—this must be the pattern and exemplar for all time of the author/indexer relationship.

For the rest of the book—its scope, wit, trenchancy, and opinions may well be gauged from sample index entries:

art: and affirmation / definition of / inexhaustible / and morality / political censorship / and truth censorship, political corruption in high places dogs, vicious empathy, lack of evil: combatting / explaining Fallacy of the Altered Standpoint freedom / for animals / economic / and fanaticism generosity, vanishing health, enforcing mediocritv, cultivation of morality: in art / atrophied / and humanity / and promises / within tyranny music, forbidden

Nanny State

HAZEL BELL


Advice from an author and publisher's consultant about the process and problems of publishing for authors. Indexes are briefly mentioned only in relation to payment for their compilation: nothing on the reasons for, methods of, or whose proper responsibility should be that compilation. The list of useful organizations does not include S1, nor does the glossary include Index. Strangely indexed itself: separate main headings for Typescript, acceptance of/Typescript, delivery of/Typescript, preparation of/Typescript, submission of; with similar catalogues under Authors, Contracts, and Publishers; and the odd entries:

Society of Authors, The, passim, 175–6 Writers' Guild of Great Britain, The, passim, 176–7

—This author needed a guide to indexing.

HAZEL BELL


Penguins are so much a way of life for so many people that it seems hard to believe there was a pre-Penguin period in the history of the book. This delightful account of Penguin Books' first years balances dignity with flippancy and achieves a text worthy of its cover; the cover being in original Penguin format, and colour-
coded yellow for 'Miscellaneous'. The style of the book mingles quality of research with common-touch language. Sir Allen Lane would surely have bought the rights to later editions.

Penguins have ranged so widely in content, style and targeted readership that they provide a social history in microcosm of British life in the mid-twentieth century: Penguin Hansard, Puffins for children and young-at-hearts, academic textbooks, the Forces Book Club, The Things We See Series (at the suggestion of the Council of Industrial Design)—and lots more! Due credit is given to the predecessors of the Penguin, and Insel-Verlag in particular highlighted for its imprints.

'Chronological Events' (1837-1985) forms a useful appendix. Further interest is encouraged by information on the Penguin Collection in Edinburgh University Library, on the Penguin Collectors' Society, and in the bibliography. Illustrations are apposite and fun to boot. Alas, there is no index . . . but the good news is that one is promised in any reprint/future edition.

MOYRA FORREST


Volume 1 of this directory commences with a guide to the use of the work, followed by three helpful checklists—planning training programmes, what to do on the day of the meeting, and how to evaluate the training programme. After these come a list of film distributors, producers and sponsors with addresses and telephone numbers; a list of abbreviations used in the directory with their meanings; and two indexes, the first providing access under title, with cross-references from significant individuals, to about 1,250 films, videos, audio-visual training packages and filmstrips dealing with a broad range of subjects in the industrial, commercial and public service field with the emphasis on management and supervisory training, and the second providing access under subject. Volume 2 contains detailed reviews of some 280 of the titles listed in volume 1, the reviews having been specially commissioned and sometimes being very critical.

In the title index, film and series titles are given in capital letters, while cross-references and comments on scope are given in lower-case. The layout would be improved by indenting the second and subsequent lines of continuations. A few examples are given below.

ACCIDENTS NEED NOT HAPPEN Common hazards which cause accidents

ACE OF DIAMONDS Use of diamonds in industry

ACTS & OMISSIONS Safety training

Adair, Dr. John

see LEADERSHIP

and LEADERSHIP MATTERS

An asterisk (*) in front of a title indicates that a review appears in volume 2.

Each title entry refers to one of 28 subject headings under which full details of each film, video or training package are given. These subject headings are very broad, with a few subdivisions (e.g. Finance: Accountancy; Finance: Banking; Finance: Insurance; Industrial Relations; Management: General; Management: Supervisors; Management: Techniques; Marketing: Advertising). A specific index would be helpful; a trainer can presumably be expected to know that films on quality circles and critical path analysis will be listed under 'Management: Techniques' but he might expect to find a film on pollution control under 'Environment' rather than as part of a series on 'Managing Discontinuity' under 'Management: General'.

The indexer will not learn much from the subject headings used here, but it is an extremely useful work of reference which should be found in any library worthy of the name.

K. G. B. BAKEWELL

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Publications received and publications noted


A guide to the modern literary manuscripts collection in the special collections of the Washington University Libraries. St. Louis, MO: Washington University Libraries, 1985. 115 pp. 28 cm. Illus, index. (Pbk). This contains a list of 76 authors whose works are included in the collections.