check. I am then able to offer the publisher the index on disk, and to tell them that if they want any changes, cuts or additions made to the index, I can easily correct my word-proc file accordingly and print out a fresh version for them.

**Special types of indexes**

When separate subject and author indexes are required for the same text, rather than work through it twice, once to produce each index, I preface each author's name with z—e.g., ZJones, A. B. After sorting, all the z-entries will be together in alphabetical order after the a-y sequence, and the two groups can be saved as separate indexes. Any zebras or zoos are easily transferred to the subject index, and the superfluous z's swiftly deleted.

I use a different method of word-proc-indexing for cumulative, annual indexes where the same headings, even subheadings, are likely to recur. Rather than retype anything, I load the previous index and delete all page references and any subheadings that seem unlikely to be reused. I save the new, page-number-less version under a new name (so that the old file is retained uncorrupted), and as I work on the new index I enter all the new headings, page numbers and subheadings directly in place into this version. I can find the place to type into either by scrolling up or down screen (since it is all already in alphabetical order this is easy, if slow) or by using ESCAPE and SEARCH. This method does not even need alphabetical sorting; the index is already all in order. Alternatively, I can delete as above, print out the headings only, double-spaced; add page numbers and new headings on paper as I work through the new text; and then type them all in on screen. This again achieves minimum typing for a fresh result.

I was quite happy in the old days, working on cards, and resented only that having already once written the whole index contents out on the cards, I must then repeat it all on the typewriter. Getting quickly to the entry I want, typing as little as possible, and seeing the full entry each time exactly as I have built it up, are my three chief technical requirements when producing an index. I find the chief advantage of computer-use to be that I now have to type it all only once, then just rearrange and tinker with it.

Having tried three specific computer-indexing programs, I didn’t like working through so many menus and options for operations, nor retyping each entry repeatedly to add subheadings to it, nor having the screen filled with instructions and options. My semi-technological way, I feel more in touch with the index.

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**Indexing the references**

The last three editors who have approached me asking for an index for an academic book, said ‘...of course, you don’t index the references’. This gave me pause for thought, because I regard indexing of references as essential. Weinberg claims that academic indexes are often poor as the searcher wants 'points of view' not raw information. One of the fastest ways of finding points of view is to look at the authors cited in the references. This gives an idea of the angle from which the author of the paper is going to tackle the subject, but an index is not needed for this. However, the next item frequently searched for is in response to an enquiry such as 'I wonder what they think of X's ideas?'. The only way of finding this out is to be able to look up X in the index: the page reference should point to the area of text in which the author is cited. And the searcher should find X's ideas/theories admired, disparaged, refuted, confirmed or dismissed as irrelevant. It is nice, but not essential, to have a page reference to the journal reference. Thus if this letter were being indexed, the essential index entry would be to the Weinberg which occurs in the text, and not to the one which is at the foot of the letter.

**Reference**


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**18C. authors index-making together**

In a letter to his friend Samuel Barker, on 8 January 1788, Gilbert White, the Selborne naturalist, wrote:

I have been very busy of late; and have at length put my last hand to my Natural History and Antiquities of this parish. However, I am still employed in making an Index; an occupation full as entertaining as that of darning stockings, though by no means so advantageous to society. My work will be well got up, with a good type, and on good paper; and will be embellished with several engravings.

It is remarkable enough that there is now sitting at my elbow an Oxford gentleman (the Rev. R. Churton) who is deeply employed in making an Index also: so that my old parlor is become quite an Index manufactory.