

Indexes reviewed

Edited by Christine Shuttleworth

These extracts from reviews do not pretend to represent a complete survey of all reviews in journals and newspapers. We offer only a selection from quotations that members have sent in. Our reproduction of comments is not a stamp of approval from the Society of Indexers upon the reviewer's assessment of an index.

Extracts are arranged alphabetically under the names of publishers, within the sections: Indexes praised; Two cheers!; Indexes censured; Indexes omitted; Obiter dicta.

Indexes praised

ABC-Clio: *Classic love and romance literature*, by Virginia Brackett (\$75). Rev. on *Bookwatch* website, Jan. 2000.

Thoroughly illustrated, cross-referenced and indexed, *Classic Love and Romance Literature* is highly recommended for academic and public library collections as a superb reference which will encourage the user to seek out and read the originals.

Allen Lane: *The Mitrokhin archive*, by Christopher Andrew and Vassili Mitrokhin (£25). Rev. by Christopher Herdon, *The Tablet*, 13 Nov. 1999.

It is more for the professional than the casual reader, and it demands some background knowledge. But it is well presented, with an excellent index and copious background notes.

Allen Lane: *Twentieth century: the history of the world, 1901 to the present*, by J. M. Roberts (906 pp, £20). Rev. by Peter Clarke, *Sunday Times*, 7 Nov. 1999.

It can be used as a handbook, aided by a 40 page index. For example, if you wanted to know about Iran, you could begin with a couple of pages under the appropriate subhead and pick up the story from there.

Rev. by M. R. D. Foot, *The Spectator*, 1 Jan. 2000.

... it is an easy book in which to find one's way around, with good maps and a useful index. [*Index by SI member and Registered Indexer Patricia Hymans.*]

Blackstaff Press: *Give my head peace*, by The Hole in the Wall Gang (£9.99) and **Hodder & Stoughton:** *Bandit country*, by Tony Harnden (£9.99). Rev. in *The Guardian*, 20 Nov. 1999.

Both books have extensive indexes, and Eason staff [at Eason Booksellers, Belfast] report that local shoppers are buying as many as half a dozen copies at a time.

Blackwell: *The Blackwell companion to modern Irish culture*, by W.J. McCormack (686 pp, £75). Rev. by C.L. Dallat, *Times Literary Supplement*, 1 Oct. 1999.

One of the joys of the work is in the comprehensiveness of the index, where the reader, puzzled by the absence of Lady Gregory or J. M. Synge in their own rights, will find a combined thirty-nine references to them with an additional one each for the former's airman son and the latter's reputedly proselytizing archbishop uncle.

Blackwell Science: *Lecture notes on respiratory medicine* (5th edn), by S. J. Bourke and R. A. L. Brewis (1998, 205 pp, £14.95). Rev. by Marc C. I. Lipman, *Hospital Medicine* 60 (6), June 1999.

Overall the quality of its text, illustrations and indexing make this one of the best books around for its size and price. [*Indexed by SI Vice-President Jill Halliday – and proofread by John Halliday.*]

Bowker-Saur: *Managing the electronic library: a practical guide for information professionals*, ed. by Terry Hanson and Joan Way (1998, 714 pp, £45). Rev. by Lyn McCullagh, *Lasie* 30(1) March 1999.

I found the volume easy to use and enjoyed the sections I read comprehensively. It is more difficult to dip into and quickly find information on a specific topic unless the issue is one that is identified as a major theme. I did however find the index useful in identifying the meaning of acronyms.

Bromedia (Toronto): *Calciyum!* by David and Rachel Broneman (\$19.95). Rev. on *Bookwatch* website, Jan. 2000.

Complete with handy tables and index, *Calciyum!* is the ideal cook-book adventure for the calcium-impaired and those who love them!

BSAVA: *Manual of small animal clinical pathology*, by M. Davidson (1998, 368 pp, £61). Rev. by Kathleen P. Freeman, *Veterinary Journal* 157(217), 1999.

A comprehensive, easy-to-use index concludes the manual. This book is an excellent source of information, and would be a valuable addition to many veterinary libraries.

Burke's Peerage (Genealogical Books) Ltd: *Burke's peerage and baronetage*, ed. by Charles Mosley (2 vols, £295, 3347 pp). Rev. by Hugh Massingberd, *The Spectator*, 28 Aug. 1999.

The most remarkable innovation in the new edition is an index of living people which extends to over 200 pages alone and includes some 100,000 names. If anything could convert me to the wonders of the new technology this would be it.

Cambridge University Press: *The Cambridge history of medieval English literature*, ed. by David Wallace (1999, 1043 pp, £72). Rev. by David Atkinson, *Library Association Record* 101(7), July 1999.

Edited with a view to maintaining a healthy shelf-life, the volume achieves a splendid balance of solid information with exciting scholarly research. It comes with a comprehensive bibliography and indexes, and a chronology of history and literature in England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland and continental Europe. It can be expected to remain an essential guide to the literature of this period.

Fiona Coats (Aviemore, Scotland): *The heart of the Highlands of Scotland*, by Fiona Coats (£5). Rev. by Cameron McNeish, *Great Outdoors*, Feb. 2000.

As well as listing and describing all the better known places and visitor attractions, Fiona has come up with a few I'd never heard of before. She lists telephone numbers where appropriate, offers a good gaelic glossary, a list of tourist attractions just outside the Badenoch and Strathspey area, with phone numbers for enquiries and best of all – an index. So many guidebooks fall down because of a lack of an index but that's the first place you habitually look when you want to find some information.

College of Optometrists: *The College of Optometrists – a history 1980–1998*, by Martin Lynch and Philip Cole (1999, 311 pp). Rev. by Peter Smith, *Optometry Today*, 14 Jan. 2000.

Space precludes a systematic analysis of all 14 chapters, 4 appendices and the useful index. [*Index by SI member Charles Greenwood.*]

Dorling Kindersley: *The American Horticultural Society encyclopedia of gardening*, ed. by Christopher Brickell (1993). Rev. in *Rockford Register Star*, 11 Dec. 1999.

This book includes everything you wanted to know about gardening and more. Appropriate for a novice or experienced gardener, this extensive reference book contains concise accurate information on every aspect of gardening. Photos and illustrations supplement topics. Arranged by plant categories and basic cultural subjects the book is easy to use. The book contains a glossary of horticultural terms and an extensive index.

Fitzroy Dearborn: *Encyclopedia of American poetry: the nineteenth century* (1998, 550 pp, £95). Rev. by J.D. Hendry, *Library Association Record* **101**(4), April 1999.

Its critical essays also carry bibliographies such as 'Lists of Selected Works' and 'Further Reading', together with a comprehensive 'General Index' and a 'Titles and First Line Index'. It is a fine reference book to be in the stock of any good reference library.

Harvill: *Architecture in Britain and Ireland, 600–1500*, by Lucy Archer (£25). Rev. by Nicholas Lezard, *The Guardian*, 18 Dec. 1999.

There's a good index, along with a glossary of terms, so you need never feel ashamed and useless because you do not know what a clerestory is.

Robert L. Iles: *Guidebook to better medical writing*, by Robert L. Iles (1997, vi + 196 pp, \$22.95). Rev. by Linda M. Bonnell, *AMWA Journal* **14** (4), Fall 1999.

... the index is easy to use. ...

IntelliPress Publishing (Palo Alto, CA): *How to expedite your career through publishing*, by Lisa L. Morgan (\$19.95). Rev. on *Bookwatch* website, Jan. 2000.

... further enhanced for the reader with a comprehensive index and glossary. Highly recommended.

Library Association Publishing: *Staying legal: a guide to issues and practice for users and publishers of electronic resources*, ed. by C. J. Armstrong (1999, 266 pp, £49.95). Rev. by Bernard Williams, *Library Association Record* **101**(12), Dec. 1999.

The book comes with a comprehensive index.

Lippincott-Raven/Ardor Scribendi: *Neoplasms with apocrine differentiation*, by Luis Requena, MD, et al. (1998). Rev. by Bernhard Zelger, MD, *Dermatopathology: Practical & Conceptual* **5** (4), Oct.–Dec. 1999.

The book is concluded with a *Glossary* and an extensive *Subject Index*.

Lippincott-Raven: *Yao and Artusio's Anesthesiology. Problem-oriented patient management* (4th edn), ed. by F. F. Yao (1998, 1072 pp, \$75). Rev. by Elizabeth A. M. Frost, *Journal of Neurosurgical Anesthesiology*, **11**(3).

Indexing is accurate.

Manson Publishing: *Self-assessment colour review of equine orthopaedics and rheumatology*, by S. A. May and C. W. McIlwraith (1998, 180 pp, £18.95). Rev. by Chris Whitton, *Veterinary Journal* **158**(38), 1999.

A broad classification at the beginning of the book and a comprehensive index allow the reader to identify specific topics if necessary.

Modern Library: *The last place on earth*, by Roland Huntford (1999). Rev. by Caroline Alexander, *New York Times*, 31 Oct. 1999.

A glance through Huntford's index neatly summarizes his angle. Under 'Scott, Robert Falcon', one finds the following entries: 'continued mistrust of dogs'. . . 'use of ponies'. . . 'Shackleton fixation'. . . 'quarrels and tension with companions'. . . 'sinking of motor sledge'. . . 'lost faith in motor sledges'. . . 'little margin of safety'. . . 'personal crisis'. . . 'forced to admit dogs' superiority to ponies'. . . 'risk in adding fifth man to polar party'. . . 'faulty sledge meters'. . . [sic: perhaps this should have been 'motors?']. . . 'thirst and starvation'. . . 'discovery of defeat'. . . 'loses way'. . . 'collapse as leader'. . . 'last camp and immolation in tent'. . . 'self-justifying message to public'. . . 'as heroic bungler'. [Joel S. Berson, who

submitted this item, comments: 'This is perhaps the highest (implicit) praise that can be given in a book review to a book's index – to cite it as the epitome of the tone and mood of the book.' See also *Obiter dicta* below.]

William Morrow: *A Mediterranean feast*, by Clifford A. Wright. Rev. by John A. Alden, *The Smithsonian*, Jan. 2000.

At first glance, this book seems a jumble of topics, traditions, tastes and techniques. Broad reviews of political and economic history are interspersed with discussions of topics like shipbuilding, irrigation, spices and the Mediterranean grain trade. Recipes for seafood, lamb, pasta and vegetables are scattered throughout the book; recipes from different regions are shuffled together like a deck of cards. But two good indexes – one of general topics, the other of recipes – guide readers through the confusion; the recipes I tested were very good. . .

Oxford University Press: *Oxford handbook of accident and emergency medicine*, by Jonathan Wyatt, Robin N. Illingworth et al. (1999, 782 pp, £18.95). Rev. in *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine* **92**, Oct. 1999.

It is easy to read, has a good index and condenses most subjects into one-page quick-reference summaries.

Pearson Education/Addison Wesley Longman: *The Longman companion to the English Reformation c. 1500–1618*, ed. by Mark Greengrass (£47.99/£16.50). Rev. by Alison Shell, *Church Times*, 13 Aug. 1999.

This is a very user-friendly book. The index, so often a neglected aspect of scholarly works, has been undertaken with particular care, and difficult or technical words are consistently cross-referenced.

Red Crane Books: *Jim Peyton's new cooking from old Mexico*, by Jim Peyton. Rev. in *Bookwatch*, Jan. 2000.

... also enhanced with color photos, a glossary, bibliography, and index.

Routledge: *Standard English: the widening debate*, ed. by Tony Bex and Richard J. Watts (1999, 312 pp, no price given). Rev. by H. G. A. Hughes, *Library Association Record* **101**(9), Sept. 1999.

There are 40 maps and tables. . . and an efficient index.

Thieme: *Biology of the prokaryotes*, ed. by J. W. Lengeler, G. Drews and H. G. Schlegel (1999, DM148, xxvii + 955 pp). Rev. by Thomas A. Lazar, *Trends in Microbiology* **7**(6), June 1999.

... and the book ends with an extensive index.

University of Minnesota Press: *Learning to divide the world: education at empire's end*, by John Willinsky (1998, 304 pp, \$22.95). Rev. by Christopher Merrett, *College & Research Libraries* **60**(4) July 1999.

This book has a good-quality index consisting mainly of personal names and a thorough and extensive bibliography. However, the number of typographical errors is surprisingly high. . .

Wiley-VCH: *World records in chemistry*, ed. by Hans-Jürgen Quadbeck-Seeger (1999, 361 pp, £24.95). Rev. by Ronald Hester, *Chemistry & Industry*, 6 Sept. 1999.

It presents an immense amount of information in an attractive style, and, thanks to a comprehensive contents list and a good index, in a readily retrievable form.

Two cheers!

Aslib/IMI: *Business information at work*, by Michael Lowe (1999, xix + 327 pp, £45). Rev. by Paul Pedley, *Library Association Record* **102**(1), Jan. 2000.

There is a detailed index, but it would have been better also to have an index of business information providers and/or the products covered. At the moment these can be located only by looking for the relevant category (e.g. 'real time data feeds') rather than by individual provider or business information product.

Kyle Cathie: *The chronology of words and phrases: a thousand years in the history of English*, by Linda and Roger Flavell (269 pp, £18.99). Rev. by Paul Dean, *Times Literary Supplement*, 17 Dec. 1999.

It was wise of the Flavells to include an alphabetical index (although unfortunately it covers words only, not proper names), for this is not an etymological book, and information is often loosely attached to historical events.

Libraries Unlimited Inc: *The organization of information*, by Arlene G. Taylor (1999, xiii + 280 pp, \$54/\$42). Rev. by Grace M. Rose, *Library Association Record* 101 (12), Dec. 1999.

The index is detailed, but in places there are so many sub-headings it is easy for the reader to visually lose the alphabetical order of the index.

McFarland & Co: *Plagiarism, copyright violation and other thefts of intellectual property: an annotated bibliography with a lengthy introduction*, by Judy Anderson (1998, 201 pp, £34.20). Rev. by Graham Cornish, *Library Association Record* 101(4), April 1999.

There is an author index and a subject index which seemed quite reasonable although I could find no trace of the famous Williams & Wilkins National Library of Medicine case, although the author appears to discuss other aspects of library copying and photocopying in the bibliography. In that sense the lack of a scope note is a serious deficiency in this work.

O'Reilly (Cambridge, MA): *Java in a nutshell: a desktop quick reference* (2nd ed.), by David Flanagan (1997, 610 pp, \$19.95). Rev. by Michael R. Leach, *Journal of the American Society for Information Science* 49(14), 1998.

Chapter 32 is a comprehensive, alphabetical index of classes, methods, and fields. Users can locate a particular class or interface and determine which package defines it, or a particular method or field and determine which class or classes define it. The concise nature of this index, however, does have a drawback. Since no pagination is given, the user must either flip to the subject index to get the relevant pages, or flip through the reference section, keeping an eye on the headers . . . for the relevant package/class. Both are time consuming . . . The subject index is comprehensive but short on cross-references. This is particularly true of abbreviations which are used throughout the index. For example, information on the Abstract Windowing Toolkit is found under AWT, not 'abstract.' . . . An ordering key would also have been useful. For instance, KEY_ACTION is filed as 'key action' which naturally comes before 'keyboard,' and 'java.beans' comes before 'javac,' which comes before 'java.math.' In one case, the underscore acts as a space; in the other, the period is ignored.

Random House: *Never enough words*, by Jeffrey McQuain (1999, 304pp, \$24.95). Rev. by David R. Hall, *The Freelancer* XXIV(2), Nov./Dec. 1999.

McQuain's contribution to the literature on language will be welcomed by those of us who wish to be careful with English, especially if we deal daily with those who don't care. Its minor flaws (e.g., a term on the cover that promises to be discussed in the text and isn't; an index item that is exactly 100 pages from where indicated) seem well within bounds, and its breadth will reward the lay or professional reader in unexpected ways.

Verso: *The word from Paris*, by John Sturrock (£15). Rev. by Nicholas Lezard, *The Guardian*, 20 Nov. 1999.

So, shockingly expensive as this book is (atypically for Verso, there is an index, albeit a rudimentary one, which may have bumped the price up), you really do need a copy.

Indexes censured

Brandl and Schlesinger (Sydney): *Who's afraid of Leonard Woolf? a case for the sanity of Virginia Woolf*, by [?] Coates (1998). Rev. by Stuart N. Clarke, *Virginia Woolf Bulletin* no. 2, July 1999.

Throughout, there is a considerable number of grammatical and syntactical mistakes, and a remarkable number of errors over

proper names. Egeria is often Etheria; Louie Everest is almost invariably called Louise; the London Library is confused with the British Library; I became almost convinced that Sri Lankar was the correct spelling; and I did spot one Virginia Steven and one Virginia Wolf. How old was Vanessa in 1897 or Leslie Stephen in 1904? Mrs Coates doesn't know. She thinks that Trekkie Parsons (ob. 24 July 1995) is still alive; one can only be glad that she's not able to read what Mrs Coates says about her. Mrs Coates's loathing for Leonard is so great that Virginia only appears in the index under her maiden name, unlike other married women. Owing to an omission therein, the Nicolsons appear to be part of the Morrell family; 'Vita Morrell' has a strange resonance. Stranger still is that the Australia Council (the equivalent of the Arts Council) should have assisted in the production of the book.

Bulzoni (Rome): *Ulisse: archaeologia dell'uomo moderno*, ed. by Piero Boitani and Richard Ambrosini (401 pp, L55,000). Rev. by George Steiner, *Times Literary Supplement*, 15 Oct. 1999.

Given this range, one is left perplexed by the absence of the immensely inventive, if flawed, reprise of the Homeric original in Nikos Kazantzakis. That problematic giant does not even figure in the index.

Chatto & Windus: *Thackeray*, by D. J. Taylor (494 pp, £25). Rev. by John Mullan, *The Guardian*, 30 Oct. 1999.

If the ropey index to Taylor's biography were better it would have under 'Dickens' entries like 'T's attempts to emulate', 'T's comparison of himself with', 'T's envy of', and so on.

W. H. Freeman: *Designing babies*, by Roger Gosden (1999, 260 pp, \$24.95). Rev. by Carl Djerassi, *Nature* 400, 22 July 1999.

The present index is so inadequate that it should be improved or deleted. There are entries for the Nazi party, Shakespeare and Woody Allen, but not for ApoE, BRCA1, PGD or dozens of other highly germane words that are discussed in the text.

Humana Press: *DNA damage and repair, vol. 1: DNA repair in prokaryotes and lower eukaryotes*, ed. by J. A. Nickoloff and M. F. Hoefstra (1997, xiii + 626 pp, \$125). Rev. by Stuart Linn, *Trends in Microbiology* 7(3), March 1999.

There is only very minimal cross-referencing between chapters, so much of the material is difficult to locate, a problem that is exacerbated by a virtually non-existent index.

Lippincott Williams & Wilkins: *Anesthesiology: pocket guide*, by Thomas N. Pajewski (1997, 465 pp, \$29.95). Rev. by Andrew Karlin, *Journal of Neurosurgical Anesthesiology* 11(1), 1999.

This book . . . certainly does contain many facts; however, these facts are neither always readily accessible nor relevant to anesthesiology. For example, I tried to find information on the pediatric dose of ketorolac. It was not in the index under 'Ketorolac,' but could be found under 'Pediatric patient, nonnarcotic analgesics' and under 'Analgesics, nonnarcotic, pediatric patients.' Frankly, it would not have immediately occurred to me to look for ketorolac under either of these headings. Nicardipine is not mentioned in the index at all. There is a page of indications for double lumen intubation (which is not indexed), but no other information on double lumen tubes . . . Tables of estimation of newborn gestational age from physical signs (also not indexed) and normal cerebrospinal fluid values are other data that are of little use to most anesthesiologists. Although promiscuous data inclusion may add utility to a book like this, the exclusion of whole areas of anesthesia practice and poor indexing seriously diminish its worth.

Macmillan: *The letters of Wilkie Collins, vol 1, 1838-1865; vol 2, 1866-1889*, ed. by William Baker and William M. Clarke (600 pp, £95.) Rev. by John Bowen, *Times Literary Supplement*, 1999.

Although an important letter of 1855 declares that 'excepting Falstaff and Dogberry, I think Molière a greater humourist than Shakespeare' and describes *Tom Jones* as 'one of the most tedious books (to me) that I ever read in my life', there are no entries for Fielding, Shakespeare, or *Tom Jones* in the index . . . It is good to have these letters in print, but Collins, who was so thorough and

meticulous in his work and who knew how important the little details were, deserves more care.

Mainstream: *Aleister Crowley: the beast demystified*, by Roger Hutchinson (1998). Rev. by David V. Barrett, *Fortean Times*, July 1999.

It takes a (mercifully) rare skill to make a biography of such a colourful and controversial figure as Aleister Crowley dull, but Roger Hutchinson possesses it . . . As a serious work of biography this book fails on just about every count . . . there is a skimpy 'Index of Personalities', a mere two pages long.

New York Historical Society: *A guide to print, photograph, architecture & ephemera collections at the New York Historical Society*, by Helena Zinkham (1998, 175 pp, \$29.95). Rev. by Gary D. Saretzky, *Mid-Atlantic Archivist* 28(3), summer 1999.

In the back of the book are two indexes, one chronological, showing the data spans of each collection in bar graphs, and the other alphabetical, which includes not only collection level entries but also specific images of subjects mentioned in the collection narratives . . . The alphabetical arrangement of the collection descriptions by collection name, rather than by the broad groups noted above, makes use of the index mandatory, and the index, while it includes over one thousand entries for names and subjects, is of limited usefulness. For example, there is only one entry under 'food' and none for 'restaurants,' surely subjects that must recur frequently in these collections, as indicated by several of the illustrations . . .

Oxford University Press: *The works of John Wilmot Earl of Rochester*, ed. by Harold Love (712 pp, £95). Rev. by Claude Rawson, *Times Literary Supplement*, 17 Sept. 1999.

There has never before been an edition so fully and learnedly annotated and so wisely and thoughtfully conceived. It is therefore a matter of serious regret that it lacks a general index to its 330 pages of text and over 400 pages (including the introductions) of densely packed editorial matter. This severely reduces the book's serviceability. The indexes of titles and first lines often fail to give alternative forms (the consequence of precisely that scribal instability which gives this edition its *raison d'être* and method): thus you will not find 'Timon' unless you look under 'Satyr', although the poem is best known as 'Timon' or 'Timon. A Satyr'. The running titles don't identify individual works, which compounds the difficulties of searching. Some carelessness which should not have been passed by the publisher include a number of cross-references to p 000, and the failure to include a number of poems in the explanatory notes.

Portland Press: *The impact of electronic publishing on the academic community: an international workshop organized by the Academia Europaea and the Werner-Gren Foundation*, ed. by I. Butterworth (1998, xxii + 191 pp, £75). Rev. by Maurice B. Line, *Science, Technology and Innovation* 11(6), Dec. 1998.

The index is rudimentary and very incomplete; for example, preprints are mentioned several times on pp 79–80, but these pages do not appear under 'preprints' in the index. Automatic indexing could have done better! [*Harsh words indeed.*]

Rough Guides: *New England*, by David Fagundes et al. (492 pp, £10.99). Rev. by Anthony Sattin, *Sunday Times*, 17 Oct. 1999.

There are omissions, of course, but my main criticism is of the index, which is woefully inadequate.

Thames and Hudson: *Peoples of the Northwest coast*, by Kenneth M. Ames and Herbert D. G. Maschner (288 pp, £24.95). Rev. by Jonathan Meuli, *Times Literary Supplement*, 1 Oct. 1999.

Although the authors are knowledgeable, the material in the bulk of the book is so badly organized that it is almost useless. Ames and Maschner wish to organize their material thematically, but cannot rise to their own challenge . . . Ames and Maschner clearly lost control of their word-processors shortly after starting this project . . . Cross-referencing is appallingly inadequate, and sometimes just plain wrong, and you cannot solve that problem by turning to the index, for this, too, is hopelessly incomplete . . . Pity the poor

Swedish botanist Eric Hultén, who appears three times: in the index as Hult>n, in the text as Hultein and in the bibliography as Hultn. Ames and Maschner had laudable aims, and somewhere in the book is a great deal of interesting information; it is just very difficult to put it together. They have been badly let down by Thames and Hudson, who should never have permitted such well-informed authors to put their names to such a shabby project.

Times Books: *The Times history of the world*, ed. by Richard Overy (£50). Rev. in *Amnesty*, Sept./Oct. 1999.

The text is of necessity limited and within the confines of space, clear and concise. But human rights rates no mention in the index – nor apartheid.

Viking: *First friends*, by Ronald Blythe (156 pp, £25). Rev. by Frances Partridge, *Spectator*, 1 Jan. 2000.

It is a pity that Ronald Blythe has edited this book so ineptly. It is by no means always clear who 'I' is, the footnotes are poor and the index hopelessly inadequate.

Indexes omitted

Allen Lane The Penguin Press: *Apples: the story of the fruit of temptation*, by Frank Browning (172 pp, £14.99). Rev. by Paul Levy, *Times Literary Supplement*, 10 Sept. 1999.

There is no index, but a first-rate list of references and appendices is included . . .

Rev. by Robert Nowell, *The Tablet*, 11 Sept 1999.

There is, alas, no index, though there is a bibliography . . .

Aslib: *Managing film and video collections*, by Chris Wilkie (1999, 105 pp, £13.50). Rev. by Leonard Will, *Library Association Record* 102(1) Jan. 2000.

There is no index.

Rev. by Ros Cranston, *Managing Information* 6(9), Nov. 1999.

Ironically, the book which emphasises the importance of cataloguing and indexing for aiding access, contains no index itself. However, the brevity of the book and its detailed contents listing ensures that this lack is little felt. [*Not good enough.*]

Bowker-Saur: *Manual of European languages for librarians* (2nd edn), by C. G. Allen (1999, 994 pp, £125). Rev. by Pamela Mayorcas, *Managing Information* 6(3), Sept. 1999.

Such a large work surely deserves a back-of-the-book index. And a thumb index to home in on a particular language would have been immensely helpful.

Deutscher Klassiker Verlag (Frankfurt): *Johann Christian Günther: Werke*, ed. by Reiner Bolhoff (1596 pp, DM185). Rev. by Jeremy Adler, *Times Literary Supplement*, 8 Oct. 1999.

Minor blemishes, like the absence of a title-index, should be put right in the next printing.

Farrar, Straus and Giroux: *Berryman's Shakespeare*, by John Berryman, ed. by John Haffenden (396 pp, \$35). Rev. by Hugh Kenner, *Times Literary Supplement*, 17 Sept. 1999.

And you learn quickly that you'll not find anything a second time unless you make notes, because, inconceivably, there is no index.

Gower: *Management – how to do it*, by John Payne and Shirley Payne. Rev. by John Vincent, *Impact* 2(10), Nov./Dec. 1999.

There is no index – so rechecking any of the 'ideas' is very hard – and no reading list, a shameful omission in an introductory volume.

Lion: *A brief history of end-time*, by Paula Clifford (£6.99). Rev. by Hilary Unwin, *The Reader* 96(3), autumn 1999.

I found this book fascinating and thought-provoking but regretted the absence of an index.

Macmillan: *The promise of sleep*, by William C. Dement and Christopher Vaughan (£16.99). Rev. by Steven Poole, *The Guardian*, 29 Jan. 2000.

Odd, though, that such a fat book should lack an index. You could fall asleep before finding something specific. Oh, maybe that's the point.

Michael Joseph: *Catching cold: 1918's forgotten tragedy and the scientific hunt for the virus that caused it*, by Pete Davies (£12.99). Rev. by Geoffrey Moorhouse, *Daily Telegraph*, 21 Aug 1999.

But even a pseudo-scientific book covering so much ground should have had an index.

Paternoster Press: *A faint streak of humility*, by Michael Seward (468 pp). Rev. by John Pollock, *The Church of England Newspaper*, 28 Aug. 1999.

If only it had an index.

Presses Universitaires de France: *George Sand écrivain: 'Un grand fleuve d'Amérique'*, by Béatrice Didier (1999, 839 pp). Rev. by M.Ct., *Le Monde*, 20 Aug. 1999.

Un index manque cruellement.

Routledge: *Key philosophers in conversation*, ed. by Andrew Pyle (£12.99). Rev. by John Haldane, *The Tablet*, 2 Oct. 99.

Each interview is prefaced with a short biographical note and the first three are each provided with a title summarising their main themes . . . Though highly general, this device should have been maintained throughout. The lack of an index is a much more serious omission. It is very likely that readers might wish to see what different figures have to say about the same issues, but without a detailed contents page or index, that can only be achieved by reading the whole in fairly short order – not something that many will wish to do.

Tempus Publishing: *Images of England: Streatham*, compiled by John W. Brown (128 pp, £9.99). Rev. in *East Surrey Family History Society* 22(4), Dec. 99.

The photographs in this book are all drawn from a single collection, covering a period from just before the First World War to the mid 1930s. They are arranged, in the first section of the book by area, and then alphabetically, street by street. To some extent this mitigates the lack of an index, but this book is packed with snippets of local history and biographical detail which it would be useful to explore in a systematic way.

Virago/W.W. Norton: *The pearly gates of cyberspace*, by Margaret Wertheim (1999, 320 pp, £14.99/\$24.95). Rev. by Owen Gingerich, *Nature* 400, 19 Aug. 1999.

On the other hand, the book needed an editor who could have suppressed such a gratuitous description of Johannes Kepler as 'the weiner [sic] from Weil-der-Stadt', and who could have insisted on an index.

Cecil Woolf (Bloomsbury Heritage Series): *Vanessa Bell: a life of painting*, by Rachel Tranter (1998, \$6.50). Rev. by Sally Zigmund, *Bulletin of the Virginia Woolf Society of Great Britain* no. 3, Jan. 2000.

This slim volume certainly whetted my appetite to explore Vanessa's art far more widely and deeply than its scope allowed. I was therefore a little disappointed by the lack of an index, bibliography, or details of where I might view for myself those paintings that are in the public domain.

Obiter dicta

Richard Cohen: *Rupert Brooke, life, death & myth*, by Nigel Jones (£20). Rev. by Peter Parker, *Daily Telegraph*, 23 Oct. 1999.

Under 'character' in the Index, a handful of admirable traits, including 'animal-lover' and 'self-deprecation', are listed; but these dwindle into insignificance beside the catalogue of defects: 'anti-feminism, anti-Semitism, bitterness, childishness, deception, devousness, disgust with the body, egotism, envy, exhibitionism, hysteria, jealousy, mawkishness, misogyny, narcissism, paranoia, selfishness, snobbery' – and so on. Even 'socialism' is placed in heavily ironic quotation marks, despite the fact that Brooke was an active member of the Fabian Society.

A balanced book

I've been reading with pleasure the new biography of Lord 'Derry' Irvine, the lord chancellor. It's by Dominic Egan, himself a lawyer. I asked Mr Egan if he thought the book was critical, but he assured me it was carefully researched and very fair.

I hope Lord Irvine agrees with him. Take, for instance, this extract from the index, under 'Irvine, other references:' It reads: 'aggressive manner, 82; and alcohol, 242; ambition, 27; arrogance, 46; boastfulness, 27; control, love of, 164; enemies, 81; failure, 15; hypocrisy, 150; inflexibility, 85, insecurity, 245; pomposity, 33; sensitivity to criticism, 155 . . .' etc.

But you can tell this is a balanced book, because the list includes 'generosity and kindness, 91.'

Simon Hoggart, *Diary*, *The Guardian*, 13 Nov. 1999

Hackneyed stunt

I am fascinated that in her review of my book (11 December), *Diana: The Life of a Troubled Princess*, Julie Burchill resorted to a hackneyed stunt by pulling pejorative citations about Diana, Princess of Wales out of the index ('bitterness of', 'immaturity of', 'instability of', 'interests lacked by'). Two can play this game, so let the record show that the index also includes the following entries, which evidently were uncongenial to Burchill's tendentious thesis: 'beauty of', 'charisma of', 'charity work of', 'compassion and empathy of', 'energy of', 'helpfulness of', 'humour of', 'intelligence of'. Burchill is, to put it mildly, a writer with an agenda (quite apart from a book of her own she'd like to keep afloat).

Sally Bedell Smith, letter to *The Spectator*, 15 Jan. 2000

Indexes and skippage

There have been few biographies in the past half-century that have come to fewer than 600 pages . . . For an ordinary newspaper reviewer, for instance, it means that a biography should have a good index to help him skip perhaps half a thousand pages. Biography, especially governance biography, now has to be designed for skippage.

Reed Whittemore, 'The Bio Biz', *Wall Street Journal*, 1 Oct. 1999

Some writers (and indexers) never learn

In Competition No. 2110 you were invited to provide a review of an imaginary book by a writer who, though he may have glanced at the blurb, dedication or index, hasn't read a word of the text . . .

Ian Olson amused by nicely catching the tone of voice of one sort of reviewer: 'The watercolor of Dowdeigh Hall on the cover is not, as she claims, in private hands (purchased by the Gulbenkian in 1998), poor Debra, Lady Dowdeigh is indexed as "Lady Debra Dowdeigh" (will they never learn?) and Danielle, Lord Dowdeigh's fourth wife, transforms into "Daniella" throughout.'

Jaspistos, The Macallan Competition, *The Spectator*, 13 Nov. 1999

[Oh, that sort of reviewer.]

Mendacious index

[John] Cornwell's device is to make his book [*Hitler's Pope*] argumentative rather than descriptive; to turn it, in parts, into a polemic. [Edmund] Morris goes very much further [in *Dutch*, his memoir of Ronald Reagan]. He invents a series of fictional characters who interact with Reagan and comment on him for the years of his life when Morris was not there. It is a sublimely irritating and deceptive device, mendaciously backed up with reference notes to invented diaries and index entries for non-existent people.

Ann Wroe, 'By the Way', *The Tablet*, 16 Oct. 1999

Then as now

Carlyle . . . full of outpourings of self-pity for his lonely, dyspeptic lot, fighting his way through mountains of 'rubbish' – German books on Frederick [the Great] with their unsubstantiated narratives and lack of proper indexes.

Rosemary Ashton, 'Dear old Prophet', *Times Literary Supplement*, 14 Jan. 2000

A common pastime

Norman Lamont's memoirs are not enjoying the same success [as Ann Widdecombe's collected speeches]. Sales at Politico's [Bookshop] last week did not reach double figures. This shortfall may be partly due to a common pastime among the shop's Westminster and Millbank clientele: selective browsing. 'They pick up a book,' staff report, 'look for their name in the index, read the relevant pages and then put it down again.'

The Guardian, 6 Nov. 1999

Bastards brought to book?

I ask him whether he knows how he comes across in [John] Major's astonishingly frank forthcoming memoir. Will we find him in the index under B for 'Bastards'? 'I hadn't thought about it until now.' He pauses, suddenly thoughtful. 'Is it astonishingly frank?'

Ginny Dougary, interview with Michael Portillo, *The Times*, 9 Sept. 1999

Amundsen the animal-lover

As Caroline Alexander notes in her essay 'The Race to the Bottom' (Oct. 31), Roland Huntford's book *The Last Place on Earth* paints sharply contrasting portraits of the Antarctic explorers Roald

Amundsen and Robert Falcon Scott – even in its index Huntford . . . does not allow Scott a single virtue. Both expeditions, for example, sacrificed their animals – the killing of worn-out sled dogs to feed the others was, from the start, a key element of Amundsen's plan – yet Amundsen actually receives the index entry 'animals, love of . . .'.

Ted Klein, letter to the editor, *New York Times*, 12 Dec. 1999

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'I recommend this book both to the experienced medical indexer . . . and to the generalist', *IASC/ SCAD Bulletin*

4. *Indexing newspapers, magazines and other periodicals*, Geraldine Beare (1999)

56 pp., £13.00 (UK), £14.00 (Europe), £15.50/ US\$31.00 (rest of world)

A practical, comprehensive and interesting guide, by the author of the index to the *Strand Magazine*.

5. *Indexing children's books*, K. G. B. Bakewell and Paula L. Williams, with contributions from Elizabeth Wallis and Valerie A. Elliston (due summer 2000)

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