Notes
1. Reed Elsevier’s website may be found at www.reedelsevier.com
2. Taylor and Francis’ website may be found at www.tandf.co.uk
3. Public Library of Science’s website may be found at www.publiclibraryofscience.org
4. American Research Library’s website may be found at www.arl.org
5. For an overview see Marcell and Newton (1994).

References

Also-greats

Hazel K. Bell

I ended my article in the last Indexer issue on ‘The greatest and the worst indexes’ (these being assessed entirely by praise or scorn that had been expressed in The Indexer) by asking for comments, votes and further suggestions on those selections. I have received two letters suggesting other contenders for the ‘greatest’ category. Peter Rooney, whose original idea the list was, advocates Dialogues of Plato translated by Benjamin Jowett, first published by Macmillan in 1892, then by Oxford in 1920, and Random House in 1937. The last-mentioned edition has 1618 pages, of which the index occupies 116. The style is run-on; subentries are arranged in order of essay as printed in the two-volume translation. The page references appear as ‘Protag. 326C’, with the pages divided into sections A, B, C, D, and E from top to bottom.
Rooney supplies an example (without page references):
Writing
the art of, taught in schools (Protagoras)
invented by Theuth (Phaedrus)
injurious to the memory; (ibid)
written compositions apt to be unintelligible;
require the aid of dialectic;
ought to have a serious purpose;
inferior to the thoughts and aspirations of the soul;
the ‘writing of our minds’ (Philebus)

The passages in Phaedrus recite the common claim of the ancients that the invention of writing has led to the deterioration of people’s memories and their power of thought: Homer’s epics were originally recited from memory. Likewise, Socrates never wrote any essays; they were recorded or invented by Plato. The Chinese are said to reject indexes for a similar reason.

Another correspondent points out that Hans Wellisch’s own extensive index to his book The conversion of scripts – its nature, history, and utilization (Wiley, 1978; xviii, 509 pp) has name indexes in Cyrillic, Greek, Hebrew, Arabic, Korean, Chinese and Japanese, in addition to the Roman (or Romanized) names included in the general index of names and subjects. For this index, Wellisch received the first H. W. Wilson Indexing Award, in 1979, with the citation: ‘the index was specially commended for its clarity, precision, and appropriateness in both its intellectual content and its typographic form’.

Christopher Merrett is Director of Administration at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. Email: merrett@nu.ac.za

Hazel K. Bell is a freelance indexer and was editor of The Indexer from 1978 to 1995. Email: hkbell@dial.pipex.com