The International Journal of Indexing

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THE INDEXER

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Full-length articles are normally subject to peer review. The views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of the Society of Indexers or of any of the other signatories to the International Agreement, nor do we guarantee the claims of advertisers.

The Indexer is on the website (theindexer.org) or may be obtained from the Executive Editor (address above). The whole review, plus full publication details (publication, volume, issue, page, date, name of reviewer if known), must be sent. For legal reasons, unsupported extracts cannot be accepted, although the passage to be quoted may be indicated. Copyright permission is not required.

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Notes for Contributors

Articles are welcomed on all aspects of indexing and related matters and their application to the analysis, organization and accessibility of recorded knowledge and ideas. Detailed information for contributors is on the website (theindexer.org) or may be obtained from the Production Editor (address above).

1. Full-length articles (normally not exceeding around 3000 words) and shorter items (1000 words or less) should initially be submitted to the Executive Editor (address above).

2. To facilitate anonymous refereeing, author details and biographical information should be included on a separate sheet of any items submitted as hard copy only.

3. The name/date (Harvard) system of references should be used.

4. Contributors are responsible for obtaining permission to reproduce any third-party copyright material used in their articles. Permission is not required for short quotations from reviews or articles.

5. Items for inclusion in Indexes reviewed should be sent to Christine Shuttleworth (address above). The whole review, plus full publication details (publication, volume, issue, page, date, name of reviewer if known), must be sent. For legal reasons, unsupported extracts cannot be accepted, although the passage to be quoted may be indicated. Copyright permission is not required.

6. Information for inclusion in Around the world should be sent to Glenda Browne (address above).

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Full page: £175  Half-page: £100  Quarter-page: £70  Eighth-page: £50  Inserts by arrangement.
Editorial

It was with a good deal of uncertainty that I took over from Christine Shuttleworth as Executive Editor of The Indexer, an uncertainty inspired not only by the fact that I already had more than enough to do in my so-called retirement, but also by the knowledge that I had a hard act to follow and that, so far as I was aware, I had few of the relevant skills. Four months later, with my first issue in production and thoughts already moving toward the October 2005 issue, I would still describe myself as a reluctant recruit to the editorial ranks, but with perhaps slightly less of a sense that it would all be beyond me.

The principal qualification I saw myself as bringing to the task was an addiction to The Indexer. Apart from Sidelights it is the one serial publication which, as I have travelled the world, I have carefully stored, issue in, issue out, in such a way that I might actually be able to find it. I must confess that at the beginning, I was better at storing than at reading it: as one new indexer said to me two or three years ago, ‘I receive it gratefully in the hope that one day I may aspire to actually understanding what they’re on about’. In a journal which prides itself on its scholarly standards, which seeks to cover the full range of material of interest to professional indexers and those interested in indexing matters, and which aims to keep fully abreast of technological developments which bring joy and torment to indexers in equal measure, it is probably inevitable that not everybody, all of the time, will be either interested in or find particularly relevant everything that appears in the journal. My aim, like that of my predecessors, will be to achieve a range of content such as to have something to tempt everyone whatever their specific area of interest or level of experience; to continue to make it the sort of journal which, as Professor Bella Hass Weinberg has said, ‘should find a place in all library science collections and in the personal collections of professional indexers and indexing researchers and educators . . . a lively forum on highly specific questions representing a concern for good indexing’.

I have no radical plans to change the style of the journal as it has developed over the years. Changes are likely to be evolutionary and the result of discussions with colleagues, in particular members of the Editorial Board, whom I look forward to meeting in force at the Board’s next meeting, scheduled for 8 July, at the start of the SI Annual Conference in Exeter. Please do let me or your corresponding member know if there are any points you think we should be considering at that meeting.

Even in this issue, there are some signs of evolution. For example, when I was asked whether I would like a review of index-related software for the Reviews section, it was immediately obvious that the time had come to split the reviews section in two, keeping the traditional book reviews, but also including as a separate section more reviews of internet material, hardware and software of special interest to indexers. In this issue we have, under the new rubric, reviews of i-TORQUE and DEXter. Nancy Mulvany and I would welcome suggestions for inclusion in this section, or offers to review. And, reflecting the evident and growing interest in tools to assist embedded indexing in Word, I already have a number of items on the subject promised for the October issue.

As it happens, I am one of those indexers who see the advent of automatic indexing as an opportunity, not a threat, and as automated searching becomes ever more sophisticated, I am convinced that the future, for both indexer and search after information, lies in finding some way of harnessing the best of both worlds. It seems to be generally acknowledged in the IT industry that even the best of search engines will only do 80 per cent of the job and that the human skills of a professional indexer are needed to sort out the rest. And as more and more software becomes available to help us in the process – even the dread Word tool – so it should become easier for us to make a full contribution. For my own part, I have just embarked with some excitement on the indexing of a volume, regularly updated, which appears sometimes in a hard copy version, sometimes in an electronic version, sometimes both. For the first time I am doing true embedded indexing, but I am also, simultaneously, producing locators for use in the hard copy version. The double task will take longer but not much longer than doing a single traditional index, and the double index will be easily updatable. In anticipation of those who will say, ‘but you really can’t have the same index serving both purposes’, my answer is that that is what I have been asked for. I shall be interested to see what, if any, reciprocating effect working simultaneously in the two environments produces. Will my approach to the traditional index be changed (as to some extent it has been by working on CUP XML-generated PDF files, a sort of halfway house)? And the still bigger question I have is to what extent cognitive processes generally are changing as a result of early exposure to the discipline of the computer: what a thought, that everything we do may be being steadily reduced to that simple concept of ‘on/off’, ‘yes/no’. A binary straitjacket or a binary liberation?

There are a number of articles in this issue that describe the use of the computer to help in the generation of indexes or index-type search tools. Jim Irvine (HarperCollins/Times Comprehensive Atlas of the World), Mark Scott (Sweet & Maxwell) and Ann Cameron (Scottish Screen Archive) write about the problems they have had to tackle in making place names, the law and the moving image accessible in all their complexity to the searcher after information. Frances Lennie describes the history and development of CINDEX, a dedicated indexing program familiar to many of us. And John Richardson writes about ‘Indexing Roman Imperialism’ and the contribution a disciplined analysis of the use of words can make to the rewriting of history.

But all is not lost for those of us – and we are still many to judge by the amount of correspondence relating to The Indexer I still need to commit to the care of post offices across the world – who enjoy and attach importance to indexing as we think it once was. I am grateful to Hazel Bell and Oula Jones for the two items covering correspondence.
with Bernard Levin (see the October 2004 issue of The Indexer for Oula’s obituary of him). I find that last letter of his to Oula moving beyond words.

I said at the beginning of this editorial that, four months on, I had slightly less of the feeling that it would all be beyond me. And for that I have to thank above all the remarkable support I have had from my predecessor – never interfering but always there to answer a call for help or gently warn against a possible foolishness, and from my production editor, who does much the same. This, perhaps, I could have expected. But what astounded me was the way in which colleagues around the world (many of them previously unknown to me) leapt into the breach when I found myself, three weeks away from copy deadline, suddenly without two key contributions. Who would have thought that, from a standing start, within 12 hours of sending out an appeal for book reviews I would have had enough promised to make a very respectable showing. Or that, following the sad and unexpected death of Christie Theron (Around the World editor: see the obituary on page 148), Glenda Browne would, in no time at all, have picked up the reins and produced what I think is a particularly rich ATW. (I would like to draw particular attention to the section on the China Society of Indexers, and to congratulate them on what seems to have been an action-packed indexing year.)

So as my first issue of The Indexer as editor goes to press, I find that a job that filled me with apprehension has actually been a wonderful opening to a whole new network of friends, and I have more than ever been confirmed in my appreciation of the way in which, by making indexing my second career, I opted into a truly international professional community, working together to advance our common interests. Perhaps I was right to say yes.

And one final word. The Indexer is for you, the present readers, and also for those readers I would like to attract. It depends on you to keep it a lively forum! So please let me or your corresponding member know what you like, don’t like or would like. And don’t forget that the journal depends on getting lots of articles of the right quality, so if you have something or someone in mind, let me know: and do think laterally. Indexing is about the organizing of material in such a way that the searcher can easily retrieve it. That gives lots of scope.

The October issue is to be guest-edited by the ‘Yellow Spots’, the SI’s collective noun for indexers attending their first SI Conference: any suggestions for contributions to Paula Peebles (paula@p-space.co.uk).

Maureen MacGlashan

**SOCIETY OF INDEXERS CONFERENCE 2005**

Connections: Working in the Present – Learning from the Past
8–10 July 2005 University of Exeter

Come to Glorious Devon! Exeter, the regional capital, is a small city with Roman origins, a wonderful cathedral and medieval Guildhall. It was a prosperous port from the 16th century onwards, with some 1,600 listed buildings and a delightful riverside walk, and is easy to get to. The university, just north of the city centre, is set in lovely mature grounds, with a renowned Sculpture Walk. The buildings range from handsome early Victorian to the brand new halls of residence. All rooms are en-suite with double beds, and the dining and bar facilities have views to die for! There are good rail and road connections to Exeter, and you can now fly from Belfast, Dublin, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool and Newcastle.

This year’s programme will focus on problems in practical indexing, from gardening to images, with interesting speakers, and workshops and sessions for beginners and specialists on many aspects of our work. There will be a chance to visit the Cathedral Library and time to enjoy the company of old friends and to make new ones. If you haven’t been to a conference before, come to this one!

Rooms are available for extra nights before or after the conference, so why not take the opportunity to stay longer and explore further.

Booking form and the draft programme are now available on the SI website: [www.indexers.org.uk](http://www.indexers.org.uk) or from:

Geraldine Beare: tel. 01935 817112, giwriter@beeb.net

or

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For booking queries, contact Sue Lightfoot: slightfoot@macace.net

Maureen MacGlashan
Creating indexes for world atlases at HarperCollins Publishers

Jim Irvine

This paper describes the methods used in-house by HarperCollins Publishers to create indexes for some of the most prestigious world atlases available today. The 14-stage process described has been developed by HarperCollins, and uses a mix of non-specialist software packages and applications developed in-house.

HarperCollins Publishers (HCP) General Reference division creates and publishes the Collins and Times ranges of world atlases and maps. Our flagship product is the *Times Comprehensive Atlas of the World*, 11th edition, published in October 2003. This is a huge book, weighing 5.5 kg and containing 56 pages of preliminary thematic content, 249 pages of full colour reference maps and 217 pages of index containing over 200,000 entries. This article focuses on the characteristics of this and other HCP atlas indexes, and how they are created.

The characteristics of world atlas indexes

Most world atlas indexes share certain characteristics that distinguish them in terms of form and function from those found in other reference works.

- The primary function of an atlas index is to help the user locate places on the map pages. Each index entry therefore directs the user to a single map page which best shows the place in context, regardless of how many map pages the place actually appears on.
- A secondary function is to inform the user about places by providing information beyond that which can be gleaned from viewing it on a map. For example administrative qualifiers placing the feature into its political context, latitude/longitude coordinates, and geographical descriptors indicating the type of feature are often included. This leads to the index sections of many world atlases being more accurately described as index/gazetteers, reflecting this dual purpose. Indeed many users get the information they require directly from the index, without having to refer to the maps at all.
- Well-known English alternative place names are generally shown in brackets after the local name on world atlas maps, for example Torino (Turin). These alternative names appear as cross-references for additional alternative names which do not appear on the map, but nevertheless assist the user to locate the correct place. These include alternative spellings, former/historic names and so on. World atlas indexes may therefore contain more names than the maps they refer to. The 11th edition of the *Times Comprehensive Atlas of the World* contains over 10,000 of these index-only cross-references.

The process by which HCP creates world atlas indexes reflects these characteristics, and is described below. It attempts to automate as much of the process as possible while at the same time maintaining a high degree of flexibility.

Overview of technology used by HCP

Digital technology is used to create all maps and indexes. A suite of cartographic databases is maintained using specialist Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software, including a master place names database which underpins the index creation process. In the databases each town or physical feature is uniquely identified by an automatically generated ID number. The uniqueness enforced by this ID is key to the indexing process, as many names occur more than once in any world atlas. For example, there are 32 places in the *Times Comprehensive Atlas of the World* called San Pedro. To index each of these correctly we need to be able to distinguish effectively between them.

The master place names database includes several pieces of information required for indexing, including:

- separate map and index name forms for all features, allowing names to be permuted (such as ‘Everest, Mount’) in indexes
- alternative name forms
- administrative qualifiers, that is, the country, administrative division and if appropriate the island the place falls within
- a descriptor or type for all physical features: mountain, hill, river, salt flat and so on
- latitude/longitude coordinates.

Accented characters are represented by numeric codes attached to the character, the whole being enclosed in angled brackets. For example, code 03 represents a grave accent, so è becomes `<03e>` as in Gen<03e>ve for Genève.

Data is extracted from these cartographic databases and processed using complex map creation software to produce a huge variety of different types of map. Indexes to these maps are created and stored using standard database software from Oracle, supplemented at particular points of the process by software written in-house to accomplish specific tasks.
The index creation process

The index creation process comprises a series of stages as described below.

Stage 1: Set up Oracle table and screen

A new product index table is created in Oracle for each atlas index, together with an interactive screen to allow individual index entries to be manually edited. This contains fields for each element that might be required in the final index, together with a number of non-printing fields called flags. These are used later in the process to control which elements are actually included in each index entry.

Stage 2: Which places are on each atlas page

To index an atlas we must know which names appear on each map. Map pages are held as Adobe Illustrator files. In-house software is run against these pages to extract a list of names with their unique ID numbers for each page. These ID numbers and the map names together with the relevant page numbers are then loaded into the product index table. Bracketed names are loaded separately with a flag set to indicate that these records should generate cross-references.

Stage 3: Create full index entries

The remaining fields in the product index table are then populated for each entry, including the index version of the name. Software is used to pull the information in from the master place names database, joining on the unique ID to ensure the correct links are made.

Stage 4: Index-only cross-references

If the atlas in question is to include index-only cross-references, these are then copied into the product index table from the master place names database. Generally a selection is made based on the categorization of each alternative name, and the appropriate entries are copied across, again joining on the unique ID. The flag that indicates that these are cross-reference entries is also set.

Stage 5: Create list of alternative names under main entries

Besides appearing as cross-references, a list of alternative names is also included under the main entry in many of our indexes. These are created automatically via software, with the list of alternative names held as a single string in the product index table, attached to the relevant main entry.

For example, the following two cross-references

| Den Haag Neth. | see ‘s-Gravenhage |
| The Hague Neth. | see ‘s-Gravenhage |

result in the following main entry, with both alternatives classified and listed below:

59 F4 ‘s-Gravenhage Neth. 52° 04’ N 4° 18’ E
alt. Den Haag, conv. The Hague

Stage 6: Create alphanumeric grid references

Next alphanumeric grid references are created for each entry. The spatial referencing system on each map generally follows the graticule. This gives a curved grid, the exact shape depending on the map projection used. The letter and number labels referencing each feature to a particular cell can therefore be calculated arithmetically from the coordinates of the features themselves. This is achieved using in-house software which requires the maximum and minimum latitude and longitude and degree interval between graticule lines to be entered for each page.

Stage 7: Check for missing elements and other data problems

To ensure all relevant fields in the product index table are now complete, a series of checks are carried out. These include:

- A simple check for missing data.
- A check for orphaned cross-references, that is, cross-references referring to main entries that do not exist.
- Duplicate index entries.
- A check for discrepancies between the map names copied from the final map pages and the index names copied in from the master place names database. The master database is constantly updated, and this traps any names that have changed during the time lag between initial map creation and indexing.

Stage 8: Descriptors for physical features

All physical features in the master place names database have a descriptor indicating their type. These are copied into the product index table during stage 3 above. Descriptors are not included where the type of the feature is implicit in its name, however. A software update based on a series of rules automatically sets a flag for each entry to indicate whether the descriptor should be included or not. For example the entry

102 N4 Washington, Mount mt. NH U.S.A. 44° 18’ N 71° 18’ W

unnecessarily includes the descriptor ‘mt.’. In this instance the flag would be set to ‘No’, resulting in the following final index entry.

102 N4 Washington, Mount NH U.S.A. 44° 18’ N 71° 18’ W

Occasionally a physical feature that would otherwise have its descriptor suppressed shares a name with a town. In these cases the automatically generated flag must be overridden to re-include the descriptor in order to distinguish which is which. An example is Thunder Bay, where the final index entries look like this:

96 A3 Thunder Bay b. Ont. Can.
96 A3 Thunder Bay Ont. Can. 48° 26’ N 89° 15’ W

Software is run against the Oracle index table to list these instances, and the Include descriptor flag is set manually.
**Stage 9: Include administrative divisions**

In a similar fashion, a flag is set in the product index table to indicate which entries should include an administrative division. Generally there are two cases where this occurs.

First there are normally some countries where first-order administrative divisions are included for all towns. In the *Times Comprehensive Atlas of the World* this includes Australia, Canada, China, India, the United Kingdom and the United States of America.

Second, administrative divisions may be used to distinguish between places of the same name and type in the same country. For example:

- 87 E5 Fagwir Jonglei Sudan 9° 07' N 30° 45' E
- 87 E5 Fagwir Wahda Sudan 9° 32' N 30° 24' E

In both cases the Include admin flag is set automatically using software.

**Stage 10: Include coordinates.**

A flag is also used to indicate which entries should include latitude and longitude coordinates. In the *Times Comprehensive Atlas of the World* this includes all towns and certain types of physical feature. Again this flag is set automatically through software.

**Stage 11: Overlapping**

Complete and final index entries now exist for all named features, with multiple entries for features that appear on more than one map page. The final yes/no flag is used to indicate which of these multiple entries should be included in the index. The general rule is that each feature should be indexed to the map page that shows it best in context. This is normally, though not necessarily, the largest-scale map it appears on. In order to get the best result our Cartographic Editors examine each page and generate a set of rules indicating which of the names appearing on that page should be indexed to it, and which should not. Example rules for say page 64 could be to include all names in India not already indexed to page 62 and all names in Pakistan south of 30 degrees north.

Setting the overlapping flag to implement these rules is one of the most complex tasks in index creation. Each page is done individually, with each rule applied via a software update against the product index table. Once the flag is set for all entries, two checks are carried out to ensure that each place is indexed once and once only. These take the form of two queries run against the product index table, using the Unique ID to identify multiple entries for the same place. The following are listed out.

- all places that are selected for inclusion in the index more than once
- all places that exist at least once in the index, but are never selected for inclusion.

The anomalies highlighted by these lists can then be fixed via software or by manually editing the overlap flag for individual entries. The checks are then run again to ensure the relevant fixes have been made. For a large atlas this may be an iterative process, with several checking and fixing stages carried out until all names on the maps are included in the index once and once only.

The deselected entries remain in the product index table as a record of exactly which names appear on each map.

**Stage 12: Alpha sort**

For alpha sorting, a third version of each name is automatically created which strips out all non a–z characters, expands ‘St’ to saint and converts all letters to lower case. This also removes the codes used for accented characters. The following examples illustrate:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index name</th>
<th>Sort version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North Queensferry</td>
<td>northqueensferry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Munich</td>
<td>munchen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St-Agnant</td>
<td>saintagnant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ste-Alv&lt;03e&gt;re</td>
<td>saintalverre</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Several place names worldwide contain numbers. If required the sort version of these names can be edited manually to ensure they alpha sort correctly. For example the policy in the *Times Comprehensive Atlas of the World* is for numbers to sort before letters, so that names beginning with numbers have their own section at the top of the index, and the mountain K2 is the first entry under ‘K’. Examples of the sort names given to these entries are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Index name</th>
<th>Sort version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 October City</td>
<td>aaaaaoctobercity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K2</td>
<td>K-aaa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The hyphen included in the sort name for K2 ensures that this entry comes before the entry for ‘Ka’, a settlement in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The next task is to actually put the entries into the correct order. A software program sorts all entries by the sort name, then country, then descriptor, then administrative division and finally by the alphanumeric grid reference. The program updates a number field for each entry in the product index table indicating its position in the sort. This number field starts at 5 and increments by 5 each time, allowing for subsequent insertion of additional index entries into their correct position in the sorted index. This is however a rare occurrence.

Sections of the index are then checked to ensure that the alpha sort is correct. Generally the top and bottom 100 entries are scanned, together with a few sections from elsewhere.

**Stage 13: Extract tagged text to flow into index pages**

The alpha sorted index is then combined with Quark XPress tags to control typesetting, and extracted to a text file. The various yes/no flags control what is included for each entry, and the cross-reference flag ensures that these entries are structured correctly. A search and replace is carried out on this file to substitute accent codes with real accented characters in the appropriate font. The final text file is then
flowed into Quark XPress, resulting in a first-cut properly typeset index.

Stage 14: Final editing

Final editing of the index is carried out in Quark XPress. This includes:

• Addition of running heads on each page.
• Addition of alpha breaks.
• Tops and tails of each column are checked and edited to ensure that individual entries do not span columns.
• Entries spanning more than one line are checked and edited to ensure that line breaks occur appropriately.
• Automatic inclusion of non-breaking spaces in multi-word place names and coordinate strings reduces the number of entries that need to be edited.

It is also possible at this stage to fine-tune the typesetting of the index to ensure it fits the available pages. Proofs of the completed index are then printed out and checked. The robust nature of the creation process together with the checks carried out throughout mean that we can be confident the content of the index is correct.

Benefits of this approach

The method has been fine-tuned over several years, and brings many benefits, including:

• Increased efficiency. The high level of automation significantly reduces the total time required to create an index over traditional manual methods.
• Automatic checking. Many routine content checks can be performed automatically through software: for example searching for orphaned cross-references, overlap checks and ensuring all duplicate names in the same country include administrative divisions.
• Facilitates reuse. Maintaining all occurrences of all names in the product index table makes it easy to reuse this name set in the future. For example this might be to construct an index for a new atlas that reuses a selection of pages from existing atlases; or it might be to ensure that exactly the same name set appears on a completely new map or atlas page.
• Facilitates atlas revision. During creation of a new edition, the names held in the product index table can be compared against the names currently held in the master place names database to highlight names that have changed in the interim.
• Facilitates foreign language translation. As the index for an atlas is held digitally, all names can be extracted into popular word processing or spreadsheet applications for co-publishing partners in foreign markets to add translated name forms. The index file can then be automatically translated and re alpha sorted, and so on. We have also developed software in-house that automatically translates names on the maps in Illustrator, again based on the translated names file.

Conclusion

Indexes are necessarily created towards the end of each project, with delivery deadlines looming. It is important therefore that the methods and technology used are robust. The approach described above has been used to create indexes for some of the most prestigious world atlases available today, passing all tests with flying colours. However, as technology develops and we continue to look for ways to improve our atlas production flowline, it is certain that the process described above will evolve and adapt in the future.

References


Jim Irvine has worked for HarperCollins cartographic operation for 15 years, initially as part of the team responsible for the introduction of digital technology into the map creation process, and most recently as Head of Digital Resources and the Collins Newsroom. He is a geography graduate from the University of Edinburgh and also holds a postgraduate diploma in digital mapping from the University of Glasgow.

Throughout his time at HarperCollins Jim and his team have been directly involved in developing indexing processes for a variety of maps and atlases. Email: jim.irvine@harpercollins.co.uk.
Indexing the law: a controlled vocabulary

Mark Scott

Recent years have seen a proliferation of sources of information available to the lawyer. This article describes one publisher’s efforts to provide a more effective means of accessing information across the range of media available. It outlines the development of a controlled vocabulary and its application to both electronic and printed indexes.

Background

Sweet & Maxwell is a leading provider of information and solutions to the legal and professional markets in the UK and Ireland. It has a history of over 200 years in legal publishing, providing legal information to lawyers, academics and students. Legal information comes in many forms, the characteristic weighty textbooks being only one. Material relevant to the legal market includes virtually all the paper emanating from government, ‘primary sources’ which are the texts of legislation and the transcripts of court judgments, and ‘secondary sources’ which include commentary, textbooks and journals. The legal professional relies on having access to this wide body of information at all times in a world where knowledge and understanding of the latest case not only provides an advantage but may also avoid a claim of professional negligence.

Alongside information sourced externally, all law firms produce a large quantity of information internally. Every working day, news bulletins, reusable forms of contract and detailed analyses of legal developments are being produced within law firms, with some of the larger firms taking the further step of publishing internally produced material commercially. The value in the information produced within law firms is perhaps best demonstrated by the relatively long history of knowledge management in the legal sector. More commonly referred to as know-how, conscious efforts in this direction have been made since the 1960s.

In common with most other areas of information provision, the most important development in recent years has been the increase in electronic sources. In particular the provision of primary materials (cases and legislation) has become largely an electronic business. Printed work however remains important – a solicitor’s office would not be the same without a few leather-bound volumes on the shelves.

The provision of primary material over the Internet has also resulted in the availability of information at no charge. Nearly everything produced by the European Union is available free at http://europa.eu.int, new UK legislation is available at http://www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk, and the courts themselves provide access to an increasing volume of case law. The British and Irish Legal Information Institute brings many of these sources together at http://www.bailii.org. Publishers, therefore, have to place increasing emphasis on adding value to this information. A key component in this is providing assistance in effective and efficient retrieval.

Benefiting from a controlled vocabulary

Sweet & Maxwell has identified the application of a controlled vocabulary as an important means by which information retrieval may be enhanced. The merits and possible weaknesses of controlled vocabularies have been widely discussed (for a useful summary of the relative strengths and weaknesses of natural language and controlled language see Aitchison, Gilchrist and Bawden, 2000: 5–7), but I will outline a couple of factors that I believe are of particular relevance to legal materials.

Very few of a lawyer’s information needs will be met by reference to just one source. A typical query may start with reference to a textbook, followed by a check on recent case law or legislation, and finally with recourse to up-to-date commentary in a journal. The implementation of a controlled vocabulary across all of these sources allows a single query to be formulated, thereby reducing the work that has to be done by the researcher. As well as involving a number of sources, information requirements have to be met across a range of media. Although the advantages to be gained from this approach become more obscure when viewing individual sources in isolation, particularly traditional paper sources, the greatest benefits arise when the entire collection has been indexed consistently. What is created is, in effect, an encyclopaedia of English law. All of the content indexed in accordance with the controlled vocabulary becomes accessible by means of each and every concept described in the vocabulary.

One difficulty that has been associated with the use of controlled vocabularies in indexing has been the desirability of using the language used by the author of any item. This has been identified as being particularly important for legal materials.

Law and legal principles can be expressed only in words . . . Therefore vocabulary is of special importance to lawyers . . . It follows that the subject index to a law book must contain the lawyers’ own terms, as they use them, with the minimum of constructive intervention from the indexer. (Moys, 1992)

The ideal situation is achieved where the language of the author and the language of a controlled vocabulary coincide. With a properly selected controlled vocabulary that will be the case more often than not. Where differences arise, it is as a result of there being more than one way of expressing a particular concept, thus returning us to one of the principal benefits of a controlled vocabulary, the control of synonyms. A controlled vocabulary can define terms precisely, and its
proper application by skilled and knowledgeable indexers will minimize the danger of the misinterpretation of any concept expressed.

**Thesaurus and taxonomy**

The development of Sweet & Maxwell’s Legal Taxonomy began with the creation of the Legal Journals Index by Legal Information Resources in 1986. This took the form of a rotated keyword index, and to produce it consistently a thesaurus was created (for further detail see Smith, 1987 and Miskin, 2002: 21). Following the acquisition of Legal Information Resources by Sweet & Maxwell, the Legal Thesaurus came to be used in other products. The most notable was *Current Law*, a monthly publication producing summaries of legislation and case law, and by extension its electronic equivalent *Current Legal Information*.

Once the potential benefits of a wider application of the Thesaurus had been identified, the decision was taken to redevelop it. This was deemed necessary to ensure that the needs of all Sweet & Maxwell’s content could be met. Partly as a result of the Thesaurus’s evolution to meet the needs of journal indexing, large areas of law were either not covered or not covered in sufficient detail to meet the requirements of books or primary sources. With a need to introduce so many new terms identified, a restructuring was also required. It was clear that without the adoption of a standard structure it would become increasingly difficult to navigate.

The redevelopment of the Legal Thesaurus also involved its renaming as the Legal Taxonomy to distinguish the old from the new. Although it is described as a taxonomy it does in fact contain the thesaural relationships of equivalence and association alongside the polyhierarchical taxonomic structure.

In creating any controlled vocabulary, the first thing to bear in mind is its purpose. The stated aim of providing a controlled means of indexing all of Sweet & Maxwell’s content is clearly the starting point, but it is necessary to look closer than that. The company provides legal information emanating from a number of different jurisdictions, each of which has a legal system composed of different institutions and often built upon different legal concepts. The core of Sweet & Maxwell’s business is English law, and it is English law that forms the core of the Legal Taxonomy. Naturally European law forms an integral part of most legal practice today, and is reflected in the Taxonomy. More difficulties arise with the need to reflect Scots and Irish law. A multilingual solution does not provide the answer. Although many of the differences between legal terms used in the different jurisdictions are purely linguistic, many are substantive, and very fine differences in meaning can make a crucial difference in the legal arena. It has therefore been necessary to enter separate terms for Scots and Irish purposes; this can lead to some difficulties with the structure of the Taxonomy which remains solidly English law-based. This is a fundamental characteristic of the Taxonomy which is not amenable to compromise.

Another fundamental characteristic of the Taxonomy is its size. The Taxonomy had to cover the subject matter of the whole of Sweet & Maxwell’s product offering, legal information in the UK and Ireland, and at a level of detail sufficient to index all of that content, as detailed as the index for the most specialist work in any particular subject area. There are many ideas about the optimum depth and breadth of a taxonomy, but with 111 top terms the Taxonomy far exceeds them all. The tendency of the legal sphere to divide itself into specialisms has brought this about. However it also serves to mitigate the impact of the exceptional size, since most users will only work within a discrete number of areas within the Taxonomy, and the only users who will have to be able to operate around the Taxonomy as a whole will be information professionals of one sort or another, whether law firm librarians, indexers working for Sweet & Maxwell or taxonomy developers.

The top terms chosen reflect the common divisions of the profession into practice areas. Many of these are obvious, and it is difficult to imagine any structured description of law that does not have headings such as Administrative law or Employment. Other decisions are less easy to make, and their selection was informed by customer research as well as the experience gained in over ten years of development of the Legal Thesaurus.

One of the most notable changes to the structure was the adoption of a polyhierarchical as opposed to a monohierarchical system. Since the same legal concepts such as ‘Public interest’ and ‘Reasonableness’ are pertinent to many practice areas, it was necessary to have terms occurring more than once in the taxonomy structure. The lack of this flexibility in the old scheme had led to many terms only being accessible to those users familiar with the structure. It was perfectly possible that a conceptually valid hierarchical route to a particular term would lead to a dead end.

Another consequence of the diverse relevance of many terms in different areas of law was the adoption of a partially faceted scheme. Such facets as ‘Persons’ or ‘Place’ are not unusual, and occur frequently where a faceted approach has been adopted. Some of the more particularly legal facets such as ‘Courts’ and ‘Liabilities’ are a feature of the particular subject matter involved. The repetition of these facets under many top terms allows for a higher level of standardization, and again serves to mitigate the impact of the division of the Taxonomy into so many top terms. With the structure below them becoming more predictable by the use of facets, a more consistent approach may be adopted by the user.

As mentioned above, equivalence and association are contained within the Taxonomy. The importance of equivalence relationships cannot be overstated. The inclusion of synonyms in controlled vocabularies performs the same function as the cross-reference in a print index, providing the user with multiple entry points and avoiding needless repetition. A useful side-effect of the diversity of the Legal Taxonomy’s applications is that each different discipline informs the creation of new equivalence relationships within the Taxonomy, and they in turn inform each new application.

Associative relationships are particularly useful in the context of the semi-faceted approach that has been adopted. The level of detail and resulting number of terms have meant that any assistance to the user of the Legal Taxonomy
becomes more valuable, and navigating between facets by means of association provides such a tool, whether between persons and activities (‘Childminders’ and ‘Childcare’) or entities and their attributes (‘Aircraft’ and ‘Airworthiness’).

An aid to users is the inclusion of detailed Scope notes providing definitions and usage instructions. Particularly helpful in a legal context is the inclusion of references to statutes. The term ‘Aggravated vehicle taking’ refers to the user to the Theft Act 1968 s.12A, a useful shorthand means of giving an exact definition.

Further details on the structure of the Legal Taxonomy are available at www.sweetandmaxwell.co.uk/online/taxonomy/index.html.

Application to data

The first decision to make is the level at which the information at hand is to be indexed. With such different types of document this decision needs to be taken a number of times, considering the structure and contents of all the material. The level chosen is the level at which an item has an individual relevance. It must have the potential to stand alone as the answer to a query. So an Act of Parliament is broken down to its sections, a textbook to its paragraphs, whereas a court judgment is considered as a whole.

To each individual document a keyword string is attached. This will contain as many terms as are necessary to fully describe the contents of the document. As well as keywords, one or more subject headings are assigned to documents. The subject headings correspond to the top terms of the Taxonomy, and allow much greater precision in describing concepts by the qualification of keywords. One potential problem arising from a polyhierarchical system is that, although a term may mean the same thing with each occurrence, it may imply a different context depending on where it occurs. For example a ‘Stay of proceedings’ is the same thing whenever it occurs, but knowing whether the proceedings that have been stayed are civil or criminal is clearly going to be useful. This can be reflected by the use of the subject heading ‘Civil procedure’ or ‘Criminal procedure’.

Where the document is part of a print product, the keyword string may be utilized in the creation of a back of book index (see the example below). Each keyword in the string can form a main entry, with each of the other keywords providing the next-level terms as appropriate. Where necessary, a further text entry can provide extra detail. The general rule is that each main entry must be a keyword from the Legal Taxonomy and, where possible, the sub-entries will also be taxonomic keywords.

Example

Keyword string: Duty of care; Solicitors

Index entries:
  duty of care
  solicitors
  scope of duty
  solicitors
  duty of care
  scope of duty

Exceptions of course have to be made. The needs of a particular text cannot be ignored, and aspects of a book are often reflected in index terms that are not, strictly speaking, dealing with the concepts expressed. A law book will have references to the titles of legislation and other such documents. Also the meaning of a particular word or phrase may be discussed which falls outside the scope of the Taxonomy. As long as the user is made aware that these exceptions exist, any impact to the wider scheme is minimized.

In electronic products the key to the utilization of any indexing is the user interface. It is vital that any interface developed for use alongside a taxonomy makes full use of the features provided by the taxonomy. Allowing searches to define keywords or subject headings and automatically accounting for synonyms and narrower terms are clearly key features of any interface. But searching is not the only application. More of the benefits of a taxonomy may be demonstrated through the use of browsing. The mechanisms by which a user may navigate around a hierarchical structure are increasingly familiar to everyone using online services, and it is the responsibility of the taxonomy itself to ensure that the routes taken through a subject are intuitive. Again it is worth considering the target audience for a taxonomy implementation. The natural route through a subject will not be the same for the specialist and the lay person. Consequently the Legal Taxonomy is designed to be navigable by persons with legal knowledge, but more than that, it is the perspective a legally trained person has of the law that must inform the shape of the taxonomy.

The beauty of electronic applications as opposed to paper-based examples is the flexibility that is available. For example, the extent to which users should be made aware of associative relationships and definitions within the Taxonomy may well vary between applications and between users. The searching, or browsing, experience can be tailored to particular data sets and particular levels of user knowledge and experience.

Further advantages

There are advantages to be gained beyond those of adding value to the customer offering. Keywords need only be created once for each item, although some work will always be required to tailor keywords to the needs of a particular product index. Much of the effort, and therefore cost, is saved. Further, it is not only customer access to Sweet & Maxwell data that is improved. The use of a comprehensive taxonomy allows product developers to have access to the company’s internal repository of documents, providing opportunities to build new products, collecting material together on the basis of what it is about. Furthermore, an additional tool is made available for updating existing products: consistent indexing eases the addition of new primary references to existing secondary sources.

As mentioned above, an increasingly important information source in the legal world is the internal documentation of law firms. The Legal Taxonomy provides a standard by which both internal and external information can be described and accessed in the same way. For many years the Legal Thesaurus was used in law firms to organize
document collections, sometimes for ordering books on shelves and in other applications as part of a knowledge management initiative. In light of this existing acceptance, the development of the Legal Taxonomy provides further opportunities for integration. The development of a more detailed scheme matches the needs of specialist law firm knowledge management schemes, where very fine levels of granularity are required. The advantages are clear for legal knowledge managers of having part of the structure of a knowledge management system looked after for them, and having a large quantity of relevant data already indexed accordingly. Very few UK law firms can call upon the internal resource to create and manage a taxonomy. Making a taxonomy available as a stand-alone piece of software or as individual files that can be integrated into a knowledge management system allows a large investment of time and effort to be avoided.

Conclusion

In a world of ever more diverse sources of information, any technique that makes retrieval of information easier has to be welcomed. A controlled vocabulary provides one such technique, which can be applied to a wide range of sources across a range of media. Ensuring that a controlled vocabulary contains the level of detail needed means that a lot of work is required to establish the vocabulary in the first place, but this effort is outweighed by the benefits in terms of consistency and accessibility across the whole range of data to which it is applied.

References


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**Indexing the medical sciences**

*Doreen Blake, Michèle Clarke, Anne McCarthy and June Morrison*


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Guidance on the pitfalls and possibilities in medical indexing, including a good selection of interesting and specific examples. The text of the previous edition has been extensively rewritten, and advice is given on a wide range of topics, including:

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A very practical book, with a wealth of friendly commonsense advice... much encouragement to those with less experience. (The Indexer)

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After the death of Bernard Levin in 2004, obituaries hailed him as a ‘great journalist’, making much reference to his contributions to The Times and the The Spectator. Levin was also a contributor to The Indexer, and corresponded with the journal’s editor.

He first appeared in this journal in 1977, when an article of his from The Times (17 December 1976), titled ‘A haunting, I promise, for those who refuse to tell who’s who and what’s what’ (‘those’ being ‘publishers and authors who put forth their works without an index’) was reproduced in full (The Indexer, 10(3) (April 1977): 139–41).

My first letter to him, as then editor of The Indexer, was sent on 12 July 1978:

Dear Mr Levin,

First, may I thank you for so much enjoyment derived over the years from reading your columns, both theatrical and now general in The Times – always superb, whether serious, disturbing or comic, often cut out and passed on to friends.

I know you have joined the Society of Indexers, after writing the lovely piece we reproduced in The Indexer in April 1977. Could I now ask your permission to reproduce there, as a brief filler, the first two paragraphs from your article in The Times of 11 July, ‘London pride . . .’, concerning the use of the term ‘books’ to denote pornography?

I hope it is not troubling you too much, if I add that I have been trying to trace, also to mention it in The Indexer, a journal devoted to the meanings of words which I think you wrote about some time ago. I thought the name was VERBATIM, but my local library cannot trace any journal of that name. Could you tell me if this is right, and if the journal is still available?

Yours sincerely,

Hazel Bell (Mrs)

He replied:

19th July 1978

Dear Mrs. Bell,

Thank you for your letter and your most kind words. By all means use the two paragraphs; strictly speaking, you should also get the permission of The Times but for what is in fact only a quotation I do not think that you need bother. But it should, of course, be attributed to The Times as well as to me.

The magazine was indeed called VERBATIM and it is published in America at the following address – Post Office Box 668, Essex, Connecticut, 06425.

Yours sincerely

Bernard Levin

The two paragraphs appeared in The Indexer 11 (October 1978): 109, observing and deploring:

. . . when nowadays one sees, above a shop window, the word ‘Books’, unaccompanied either by the name of the bookseller or by an indication of the nature of the books sold, it is probable that what the shop is selling is pornography, mostly in the form of magazines . . .

Bernard Levin, The Times, 11th July

Next in my file appears a letter from him dated 17 April 1979:

Dear Miss Bell,

Thank you very much for your letter. I am most flattered that you wish to make use of my index in this fashion, and am entirely happy for you to do so.

Yours sincerely

Bernard Levin

On 17 Oct 1979 I wrote:

Dear Mr Levin,

Thank you for your letter of 17 April, giving us permission to quote in The Indexer your index to The pendulum years: Britain and the sixties.

I enclose a copy of an account of a talk given to us last year by R. C. Latham on indexing Pepys. I should like in this article to quote from your enthusiastic article on the Bell edition of the Diaries of Pepys, in The Times in 1976. I have quoted it twice; on page 1 and at the end. May I have your permission to do this? And do you have the exact date of this article? – I kept it in my own Pepys copy, but undated.

How we miss your regular column in The Times!

With apologies for troubling you again,

Yours sincerely,

Hazel Bell

The extracts from Levin’s index appeared under the heading ‘Bias in indexing’ in The Indexer, 12 (April 1980): 54, filling a column. Levin’s comments on Latham’s index to Pepys were quoted in ‘Indexing Pepys’ Diary’, The Indexer, 12: 34–35. And The Indexer, 13 (April 1983), ‘Indexes reviewed’ includes two extracts from reviews by Levin, both from the Observer. Under ‘Indexes praised’, he writes of John Murray’s Bernard Shaw and Alfred Douglas: a correspondence: ‘There is also an outstanding index, truly a model of its kind, though its compiler is not so much as named, let alone thanked, in the acknowledgements.’ Under ‘Indexes censured’, Philip Snow’s Stranger and brother: a portrait of C. P. Snow fares less well: ‘Macmillan’s should look to their editing . . . And the index is useless.’

A reply from Levin to my next letter to him is dated 30 August 1983:

Dear Miss Bell,

Thank you very much for your letter and Oula’s delightful note.
Of course you may use it.
Yours sincerely,
Bernard Levin

Levin's gracious tribute to Oula Jones as indexer in the acknowledgements of his Conducted tour was reproduced in The Indexer, 13 (October 1983): 52 under the heading 'Kind words indeed', and in the same issue (page 259) there was the following item, supplied by Oula:

**Floral emendations**

Indexer – on very hot day – typing up 14 pp index, is interrupted by call from publisher announcing complete repagination of page proofs . . . however, 1500 amended entries later, feelings much soothed by arrival of superb basket of flowers from West End florist. The thoughtful author? Bernard Levin, of course, member of SI and champion of the index. (Next time, Bernard, just send a microcomputer, with instructions.)

I wrote with another request:

24 October 83
Dear Mr Levin,

We are considering having in The Indexer a symposium of the views of authors of indexes to their own works (not compiled by themselves): how they feel on seeing the book broken down in this way, whether they feel the index adds to the book in any way, whether it is as they would have expected it to be, and so on. We would be most grateful if you would contribute your own views and reactions. However, we do not offer payment to our contributors, as ours is almost a voluntary society, so perhaps you may regard this as an impertinent request. If so, my apologies.

The new issue of The Indexer is out this week, including Oula's note about your 'floral emendations', and quoting your reviews of Man of Wars, Quest for the golden hare, and the index to the Bell edition of Pepys' diary. How frequently your name graces our pages!
Yours sincerely,

He telephoned in reply to my request for a contribution to our proposed symposium, agreeing to write it, and asking when I wanted it by, and how long it should be. He phoned again on 26 January 1984 to be reminded. On 8 February I received:

Dear Miss Bell,
Here is something for your journal as requested. I hope you think it suitable, but please do not hesitate to say if it is not.
Yours sincerely,
Bernard Levin

I replied on 17 February:

Dear Mr Levin,
Thank you so very much for your lovely article on your attitude to indexes. It is delightful; I've sent a copy to Oula, wondering if she wants to add anything. The only problem now is that the other contributions to our proposed symposium are all so thin that I'm not sure whether to include yours with the rest, or print it as a separate thing altogether!

One way or another, it will be in our October 1984 issue; the April issue has now all gone to press.
With many thanks again,
Yours sincerely,

The article appeared as the first item in 'Authors' attitudes to indexes', The Indexer, 14 (October 1984): 85–6. It began:

I indexed my first book (very badly) because I wanted to know what this strange but to me intriguing job required. I finished it with a mighty vow to the effect that I would rather be dead than do it again.

and included:

I have been fascinated to see how my indexer has worked herself into my mind so that she can see the book through my eyes and give me the extra element, which consists of themes, concepts, principles, attitudes . . . The ultimate test of an index to a book that is composed of the author's feelings . . . is: could the reader construct the author's outlook . . . from the index alone? I think, in the case of my books and my indexer, the answer is yes.

Oula Jones, the indexer in question, commented on this in a Letter to the Editor, Vol. 14, page 211:

Indexing Bernard Levin is both terrible and delightful, in equal measure. Delightful because I know he's as concerned about the minutiae as I am (do you enter Diana and Duff Cooper under their noble titles?); because he's On My Side (though even he can't prevent publishers repaginating after the index is finished); and because he observes the courtesies of life in scrupulously acknowledging my work every time and sending me a copy suitably inscribed: but terrible because he reads the index manuscript with his horrid penetrating gaze and picks up all my little slovenlinesses – initials where full names should be, titles of nobility avoided, over-abbreviated entries, as well as my (I hope) occasional appalling mistakes (I've just confused Vladimir Ashkenazy with Stefan Askenase and invented a poet called William Herrick, but then I've Been Ill . . . ) The fact that despite all this he kindly refers to me as infallible I find terrible too.

Oula Jones
London W3

The Indexer, 14 (April 1984) included in 'Indexes reviewed' part of Levin's comments in the Observer on Peter Heyworth's Otto Klemperer: his life and times: 'There is an outstanding index, its compiler – Frederick Smyth – for once acknowledged: O si sic omnes'.

In the same issue of The Indexer I reviewed Levin's collection of journal articles, The way we live now (Vol. 14: 279–80), under the heading, 'And a good book, too', beginning:

Bernard Levin is the undoubted literary champion of the cause of indexing, and has written many doughty words on our behalf. He must forgive us, then, if we take his vaunted sentiments to their extremes and regard his latest book merely as an adjunct to its index . . .

After all, though, indexers may with equal pleasure approach the book from the front, finding on its first page the most graceful acknowledgment: 'The index is again the work of Oula Jones, of the Society of Indexers, who has brought to what is always an exacting task, and too frequently a thankless one, all her skill, patience and good humour.' To quote the author on the subject of acknowledgements – 'O si sic omnes'!
He sent this response, a handwritten letter:

November 12th 1985
Dear Mrs Bell
Thank you very much for those kind and charming words in your review of Oula’s Index (a capital letter, of course, for so noble a thing). What I would do without her I cannot imagine, though it would certainly not include doing my own.

Thank you again,
With all good wishes
Yours sincerely
Bernard Levin

On 23 December 1985 Levin wrote in The Times, ‘Enter the lists for this noble minority’, including, ‘Indexing . . . is an appalling and prolonged labour . . . a very high level of technical skill . . .’. This article was recorded and profusely quoted in The Indexer, 15(1) (April 1986): 8:

Apotheosis of the indexer
‘The undoubted literary champion of the cause of indexing’, we dubbed Bernard Levin in our last issue (The Indexer 14 (4), 279), and again he wields his mighty pen splendidly on our behalf in The Times of 23 December 1985, under the heading, ‘Enter the lists for this noble minority’. In a full article he addresses himself to questions of the difficulty of indexing (‘it is an appalling and prolonged labour (no wonder Hercules published his autobiography without one)’); the qualities demanded; the SI Register; rates of payment (‘the truly shockingly low level of payment that this very remarkable and responsible work commands’); publishers’ attitudes; quality and absence of indexes. In conclusion, ‘This is a plea for an admirable profession, equipped with real skills, to be accorded both the respect and the reward that it deserves . . .’. Thank you, Mr. Levin, for gladdening our hearts with such a Christmas present.

Levin’s In these times was reviewed in The Indexer, 15: 190:

The fourth anthology of Levin’s journalism, selected from articles published in The Times and The Observer since 1984, includes (‘Easy as a, b, d’) the acclamation of indexing and indexers whose original publication gave all Times-reading indexers a joyful and triumphant Christmas (see The Indexer 15 (1) April 1986, 8) and his contribution to our symposium of authors’ attitudes to indexing (The Indexer 14 (2) Oct. 1984, 85–6) – something over six pages to boost our egos and our image. 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.

The April 1987 issue of The Indexer included an article by John Vickers, ‘Index, how not to’ (pages 163–166). Levin sent a letter to the editor of The Indexer in response to this. I replied:

13 August 1987
Dear Mr Levin,
Thank you very much for your letter about authors’ responsibilities for indexes, which I shall be delighted to include in the October issue of The Indexer.

We have yet another reference to yourself and Oula elsewhere in this issue, at the end of an article on ‘The business side of indexing’: I enclose that passage. I think we may account this The Indexer’s very own soap opera! Yours sincerely,

This passage was in ‘The business side of indexing’ by Elizabeth Wallis (The Indexer, 15 (October 1987): 209):

the likelihood is that you will never meet any of those you do business with. There are, of course, exceptions. The rapport, for example, between author Bernard Levin and indexer Oula Jones has been remarkably constant, and there are few authors with such high regard for indexing and understanding of the intricacies of the art.

Levin’s letter to the editor was published in The Indexer, 15 (October 1987), page 238:

Authors and indexes
May I enter a tiny demurrer to Mr. John Vickers’ comprehensive demolition of a dreadful index, published in your April 1987 issue under the heading ‘Index, how not to’?

Mr Vickers rightly castigates the hopelessly inadequate indexer and – again rightly – lays the principal blame on the publishers. But he entirely absolves his friend, the author of the maltreated book.

That won’t quite do. He says that the author ‘got no sight of the index until he saw it in all its full horror in the printed volume’. Why not? Why didn’t he insist, and go on insisting, that it should be submitted to him before it was printed? Why do such authors suppose that this is a, b, d responsibility of the author, and not their publishers? As my readers know (to say nothing of yours), my own beloved indexer is without fault or flaw, yet I go through her work with a powerful magnifying-glass, and she is plainly glad that I do.

This authorial willingness to be left out of the picture is widespread; I cannot count the number of fellow-authors who have complained in my hearing about, say, a rotten jacket for their books. When I ask why they did not demand to see the jacket in all its stages, from the first sketch, it almost invariably transpires that it never occurred to them to ask, whereupon I have a struggle to refrain from telling them that they have no one to blame but themselves. When I wrote my first book, some seventeen years ago, I announced that I was going to interfere in every stage of the publication, right down to the typeface it was set in, and I have done so ever since. And surely if a book includes an index, a self-respecting author should be as jealous of its quality as of his own. Incidentally, I have found that the more involvement I demand in the publication of my books, the more my publishers like it.

Bernard Levin
London, WI

The Society of Indexers’ Annual General Meeting 1989 was held on 9 November. The newspapers were full of the unexpected opening of the Berlin Wall. The following day, the 10th, The Times published a quarter-page article by Levin, ‘Don’t come to me for a reference’, denouncing the ‘full, almost heroic awfulness’ of the index to Ian Ker’s biography of Cardinal John Henry Newman. The article was accompanied by a large cartoon showing a finger labelled ‘Index’ severely pointing the way of disgrace to a humble book-carrying scholar, and three-line subheading, ‘Bernard Levin finds Cardinal Newman lost without trace in the index of his latest biography’. The text read, in part:
Indexing is a highly skilled science . . . There is a highly professional body, the Society of Indexers. . . . If you wish to be sure that your book is in properly expert hands, you must go to the custodian of the Register . . . the noble and meaningful heading ‘Index’ . . .

While acclaiming the text of the Newman biography as wholly admirable, Levin gave detailed criticism of the index: paragraphs of undifferentiated page numbers, subheadings ‘as ridiculous as they are otiose . . . listed only in the order in which they appear in the book’. His gravest censure was reserved for the person at Oxford University Press, publisher of this work, who passed the index for press.

I wrote to him about this:

16 Nov. 1989
Dear Mr Levin,
What a wonderful article on indexing you wrote in The Times last week! I am sure you know how delighted members of our Society are with it.
May I ask your permission, please, to quote from it in The Indexer as in the enclosed piece?

I received in reply:

The Times
23rd November 1989
Dear Miss Bell,
Thank you very much for your kind letter. Mr. Levin is away from the office at the moment, but he would be happy for you to quote from the column in The Indexer. He also wanted you to know that he had originally intended that the column should run on the day of your conference, and was most frustrated when news from Germany squeezed it out! Thank you again for writing. Yours sincerely,
[Catherine M Tye]
Secretary to Bernard Levin

In the April 1990 issue of The Indexer, I wrote an article summarizing and quoting all Levin’s efforts and essays on our behalf to date (‘Thundering about indexing’, 17: 45). It began:

How pleasant to know Mr Levin. And to read his witty, penetrating articles, and to have him as a champion.

I wrote to him again on 19 January 1991:

Dear Mr Levin,
The Indexer has done very well out of your diatribe against the Newman biography index! We had a page on it and the following Times correspondence in April 1990 (I assume you noticed that – page 45). For our April 1991 issue we have a review of the revised index; I enclose a proof copy of our review. Now that your original article is out in hard-back, we would like to take yet another bite at the cherry and add a postscript to our review, as enclosed. Will you give us permission to print this, please?
Yours sincerely,
Hazel Bell

I sent him John Vickers’ article on the revised index to the biography of Newman that had been so castigated by Levin, ‘Could still do better: the revised index to the Newman biography’. Levin replied:

The Times
22nd January 1991
Dear Miss Bell,
Thank you very much for your most kind comments and for letting me see Dr. Vickers’ article. Naturally, I am delighted to give you permission.
With all good wishes,
Yours sincerely,
Bernard Levin

Vickers’ article appeared in the April 1991 Indexer, pages 189–90. Following this article, on page 190, appeared:

Post script: Bernard Levin’s original Times article, retitled ‘The index finger points’, is reprinted in his latest (sixth) volume of journalism, Now read on (Cape, 1990). Its four still-stirring pages have, among others, the following index entries:

- Indexers, Registered 156, 157
- Indexes: bad 157–9; good 156; strings, undifferentiated 157–8
- Indexing, skilled 156
- Oxford University Press, appalling scandal of 57, 158, 159
- Society of Indexers 156, 157, 159

The acknowledgements include another gracious tribute to the indexer.

On 12 August 1991, I received this, handwritten from him (such thick paper, almost card, but letter-size!):

Dear Mrs Bell
Thank you for your letter; of course you may use my references. But surely you can’t mean (p. 123) ‘a whole complicated strata’; the singular ‘a’ cannot govern the plural ‘strata’. Tut!
Yours sincerely
Bernard Levin

Mea culpa! I hang my head. (I had sent him for approval the passages in my then forthcoming Indexing biographies and other stories of human lives that referred to or quoted him. On one of those pages, he must have spotted the sentence that finally appeared in print as: ‘Robert Latham evolved a whole complicated stratification to cope with Samuel Pepys himself in the index to the diary’.)

1.10.91
Dear Mr Levin,
Once again I am quoting your splendid article on indexing from The Times in print – a highly cited article by now. I have begun almost to assume your kind permission, but think you may like to know of this attempt at a counter-blast. I am sending it as an open letter to The Author, as well as intending it for either a review article or the next editorial of The Indexer.
Yours sincerely,
Hazel Bell

He replied:

The Times
3rd October 1991
Dear Mrs Bell, [handwritten]
Thank you very much for letting me see what you want to print, and of course you are most welcome to do so.

With all good wishes,
Yours sincerely [handwritten]
Bernard Levin

I think this must refer to a short article of mine in The Indexer, 18: 29–30, ‘An author’s guide to disparaging indexing’, reviewing (and denouncing) Michael Legat’s *An author’s guide to publishing*. This concluded by quoting from Levin’s article, ‘Don’t come to me for a reference’:

One of the delusions which writers entertain is that if you can write a book you can also index it. Delusion indeed . . . From 5 November 1991 I have notes of a phone call from Levin, asking to know of the earliest indexes for the article he was proposing to write, and speaking vehemently of the ‘splendid translation’ of Montaigne with a ‘terrible index of names only and only page numbers’. The 1600 translation by John Florio had had ‘an admirable index’, he said, including subject indexing.

I sent him *The Indexer* with Hans Wellisch’s article on herbals, and later (16 November) faxed him this additionally:

Dear Mr Levin,

I am sending you a passage on earliest printed subject indexing from Hans Wellisch’s new book, *Indexing from A to Z*. I am so sorry not to have thought of these when you asked me about the subject earlier.

Yours sincerely,
Hazel Bell

He replied:

Dear Mrs Bell [handwritten]

I don’t know whether these two copies were precious file copies or superfluous, so I am sending them back to you anyway.

Stand by for fireworks!

Yours sincerely [handwritten]
Bernard Levin

This was sent three days before *The Times* published, on 28 November 1991, an article by Levin, ‘Why Montaigne matters’, regarding a newly published volume, *Essays of Montaigne* translated by M. A. Screech. The article proved to be a fine fourth paean of Levin’s to indexing and cry of distress at its depreciation.

The first two columns praise alike Montaigne, his essays, and Dr M. A. Screech, translator of this volume of the essays, which Levin welcomes.

And then I turned to the index. I have made so much uproar about inadequate indexes that you might think publishers would by now always provide proper ones, if only to ensure they are not pelted with ordure from the hand of Levin, the Indexer’s Champion. Well, I give notice that I have just signed a new contract with my ordure-merchant, who assures me that his stocks are sufficient to last well into the next century . . . Screech’s ‘index’ is an abomination . . . it is nothing but a list of proper names . . . nothing but a string of undifferentiated page-numbers . . . and it continues in Levin’s full fine fettle.

I wrote to him on 20 December:

Dear Mr Levin,

It has taken time some time to write up your wonderful latest article on indexing in *The Times*; although you may have good stocks of ordure in reserve, I have exhausted my approaches to writing you up! I have scrapped two attempts, and produced now this straight history of your penmanship in our behalf. Do I have your permission to print this, please, and to quote the whole article from ‘And then I turned to the index’?

I enclose also another write-up about a strange new method of achieving disaster in indexing, which may interest you.

With very many thanks for all your splendid championship of indexing.

Yours sincerely,
Hazel Bell

My write-up of his article was ‘Levin writes again’, in *The Indexer*, 18(1) (April 1992): 41–2. It began

There are anthologies of articles on indexing, and there are collections of newspaper articles of single journalists. We look forward to the glorious appearance of the collected articles in *The Times* of Bernard Levin on indexes.

pointing out: ‘Since [1977] each volume index of *The Indexer* has included an entry, LEVIN, BERNARD, with attendant subheadings’, and ending, after recounting the tale of a terrible mess of an index that an editor had boasted in *The Times* letters page of producing by computer:

This seems to prove once again that blind reliance upon computers can produce only a travesty of an index, while correct choice and form of entry, and proper subject indexing, require full human intelligence and skill – as Bernard Levin was saying so eloquently when we came in.

23 Dec 91 [handwritten from him]

Dear Mrs Bell,

Thank you very much for your most charming words. I am, of course, happy to be thus immortalised – indeed honoured.

Did you see the reply from Allen Lane in the letters of *The Times*? The man must be crazy – we are all in favour of ample indexes, but 150 pages?!?

Anyway, be sure that I shall continue to uphold the noble cause of indexing.

With all good wishes, and the compliments of the season,
Yours sincerely,
Bernard Levin

P.S. (I imagine you took photocopies of the enclosed, but just in case . . . )

I think the ‘write-up about a strange new method of achieving disaster in indexing’ must have been my ‘Distortion and mutilation – it can happen to us’, which appeared in *The Indexer*, 18 (April 1992): 40–1. It concerned Douglas Matthews’ index to *Dickens* by Peter Ackroyd, which for the paperback edition of 1991 appeared to have been reset or run though a computer program that most
unintelligently and disastrously rearranged many of its
subheadings.

9 April 1992
Dear Mr Levin,

As The Indexer is despatched to members of the Society of
Indexers direct from our printers, I am never able to put
in a note directing your attention to the pages which regu-
larly seem to feature you. However, the April issue will be
out next week, and you will find the write-up of your
sequence of articles on indexing in The Times on pp 41–2.

I am enclosing meanwhile a copy of the other journal I
edit, Learned Publishing, which refers to your lovely
article in LOGOS on page 114.

My booklet on indexing biographies is also out now,
including as usual references to your writings.

With best wishes,
Yours sincerely,

Hazel Bell

Learned Publishing reviewed LOGOS in its April 1992 issue
(5: 114–115), particularly praising Levin’s article, ‘Author
(British) meets librarian (American)’. This was Levin’s
response:

13th April 1992
Dear Mrs Bell [handwritten]

Thank you very much indeed for your most kind words;
The Indexer did indeed appear today. You are too kind.
Yours sincerely [handwritten]
Bernard Levin

I sent him a copy of Indexing biographies and other stories of
human lives on its first publication in 1992, and received this
letter:

Dear Mrs. Bell,

Many thanks for the copy of your booklet, which I will
keep safe for Mr. Levin to study when he returns from his
long trip abroad. Now I begin to understand why a good
index is such a work of art!

Yours sincerely,
Catherine M Tye
Secretary to Bernard Levin.

On this, handwritten and ringed in red, Levin wrote:

14 Nov 94
Dear Hazel

Nihil obstat.
Yours
Bernard

Indexing biographies and other stories of human lives by Hazel K. Bell
£17.50 (£20.00 overseas); £15.00 (£17.50 overseas) for members of indexing societies

Books dealing with human lives – be they history, biography, autobiography (including diaries), letters or fiction – can be difficult to index.

Precisely defined concepts from a thesaurus cannot be used, and the indexer often has to make subjective judgements as to the choice
of language for index entries. What better guide to the genre than Hazel Bell, who has written extensively on this subject and is herself
an experienced indexer of biographies?

Nearly three times the length of the first edition, Indexing Biographies has a new section on letters and fuller treatment of many other
topics, with extra examples from recent indexes. Display boxes throughout the book give references to relevant articles from The Indexer.

New to this edition is an appendix, ‘Using the Internet’ by Noeline Bridge. There is, of course, a comprehensive index.

The indexing world should be pleased to welcome a new edition of Hazel Bell’s classic book . . . [Her] approach to narrative
indexing is flexible, subtle, interpretive and respectful, qualities to which all indexers should aspire. (The Indexer, Oct. 2004)

What they said about previous editions
A joy to read and enjoyable to use . . . both invaluable and delightful. (American Society of Indexers Newsletter)
Useful for indexers of academic books in many disciplines . . . It is recommended for every indexer’s library. (Australian Society of
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Yours sincerely,

Catherine M Tye
Secretary to Bernard Levin.

The Times
7th July 1992

Dear Mrs. Bell,

Thank you very much for your generous words of support.
Mr. Levin is again enjoying an extended trip abroad, but
you may be encouraged to know that he has received
a large number of letters in support of this particular
article. Your support will of course be especially
appreciated.

Thank you again for writing.
Yours sincerely,
Catherine M Tye
Secretary to Bernard Levin.

Finally, I wrote:

14 Nov 94

Dear Mr Levin,

The University of Chicago Center for Continuing Studies
has requested our permission to photocopy for one-term
use for 20 class sets for an educational course, ‘Introduc-
tion to Editing’, a selection of items that have appeared in
The Indexer. These include your own contributions:

‘Authors’ attitudes to Indexes’, Oct. 1984, pp 85–6
Letter, Oct. 1987, p 238

Please let me know as soon as possible if you have any
objection to this.

With best wishes,
Yours sincerely,

Hazel Bell

On this, handwritten and ringed in red, Levin wrote:

Dear Hazel

Nihil obstat.
Yours
Bernard
‘The precious work’: from the correspondence between Oula Jones and Bernard Levin, 1981–1999

In 1981, an editor at Jonathan Cape commissioned Oula Jones to index Conducted tour by Bernard Levin. Bernard was pleased to allow all his subsequent books to be indexed by Oula, and a friendship sprang up between author and indexer resulting in a correspondence of almost 20 years. Here are a few extracts from it.

The first letter

3 June 1981
Dear Mrs Jones
Thank you very much indeed for your perfectly splendid index – comprehensive, meticulous and understanding. I could not be more pleased.
I have made a few notes, attached, none of very great significance. If you cannot read my dreadful handwriting (and few can, certainly not including me), please ring me; I'll be out all morning, but in after lunch.
Of course you shall have a copy, properly inscribed; and your name will, no less of course, appear at the head of the Index.*
Finally, I have another book in the pipeline after this one, to be published in the Spring of next year under the title of Speaking Up. It’s a second selection of my journalism, and if you are free at the appropriate time (not yet certain – it won’t go to the printers for some time yet) I would be very happy to think you would index that too.
Again, many, many thanks for your work. And so speedy, too!
Yours sincerely
Bernard Levin

* Sadly, even Bernard couldn’t manage that.

Some years later . . .

29 April 1986
Dear Oula
Have I not got enough trouble from importunate creditors, lawyers bearing writs, plumbers who do not keep their appointments, doctors who shake their heads gravely as soon as they catch sight of me, publishers who think I have nothing better to do than to write books for them, mad neighbours, bores at parties, bad dreams and discarded mistresses? Must I now add neurotic Indexers to my tribulations? How many times have I got to tell you that you are The Greatest Indexer in the World before you will believe it? Do you imagine I would go away with a light heart without reading my Index if it were in any other hands?
Very well. If you can do the Index in a week (now you’re on your mettle), there will be no problem. If you can’t (or won’t, you crosspatch) . . . my secretary will be holding the fort at Wapping. My direct line is . . . ; she won’t be in all the time while I’m away, and probably not before about 11.30, but you’ll get her sooner or later, and she will make the necessary arrangements to get The Precious Work from you and get it into my hands. Then, provided you have remembered to make a copy, we can do it all by telephone.
I am assured by experts in these matters that excellent indexing can now be done by a computer. Watch it.
Love
Bernard

Later still . . .

31 January 1989
Dear Madam
I am quite at a loss to understand your letter of recent date. You seem to be suggesting that there is a doubt in your mind as to whether – not when, but whether – you will be indexing my latest masterpiece. Let me remind you of what you were, and what doing, when I snatched you from the gutter and set your feet on the path of success and fortune, by entrusting (against the advice of many friends) my precious book to your hands. As I recall, you had had no commission for some 17 years, and that had been a work entitled How to Care for your Dog. And what has happened since then? I have made you the most famous indexer in the world: people, I gather, pluck a hair from the lavish mink coat that my work has enabled you to buy, just to be able to say that they have a hair from the coat of the woman who indexes Bernard Levin. Authors and publishers jostle and fight for your indexorial services. No glittering party in or for fifty miles around Edinburgh is complete without you, and at every such gathering you are the centre of attention, as the crowd presses round to ask, over and over again, the question that occupies their waking and sleeping hours: ‘What is he like, and what is it like working for him, in however humble a capacity?’.
And now, it seems, you are not certain whether you can bend your talents, such as they are, to the task of littering the end of my new book with errors of every kind. Well, so be it, but let me remind you that that which the Lord giveth, the Lord is in a very good position to take away. With one snap of my fingers – ‘snap!’ just like that – I could ensure that the only books you will ever index again will be ones with titles like 1001 Mother-in-law jokes or You, too, can make a quiche.
For your information, my new book will be delivered to my publishers in about ten days time. Be so kind as to strike through every page in your diary from now till further notice.

But stay! I have just noticed at the top of your letter, an indication that it was written on Burns Nicht, whatever that may be. I assume, therefore – who wouldn’t? – that you were the worse for liquor when you wrote it. I am therefore willing to overlook your comments altogether, on receipt of a suitable apology for alarming me, signed by an ordained clergyman, or Justice of the Peace, certifying that on this occasion, at least, you were sober and in your right mind.

Love
Bernard

The last letter
19 April 1999
Very dearest Oula
Thank you for all the wonderful work and the jolly times we have had. Alas I am not able to work any more . . . ‘Enough Said’ is truly the last, but I have had wonderful times, and musn’t grumble.

Of course you can use any word or words [of mine for your piece].
Very much love
Bernard

From The Englishman and military chronicle, Calcutta
13:03:1851
We have received a copy of Mr T. C. Fenwick’s Index to the Criminal Law of the Presidency of Fort William. Those who are already in possession of Mr Fenwick’s Index to Civil Law will gladly avail themselves of the aid of the publication before us, which will be found full and complete, and we are assured that it is very accurate. We have long been disposed to join that grateful gentleman who always puts up a special prayer for dictionary and index makers. It is indeed the only reward which the latter obtain, for their severe toil rarely meets with a sufficient pecuniary recompense, and their names are forgotten even by those who profit from their labours.

20:03:1851
Another index! We have to thank Mr James Small, author of numerous mercantile tables, for an Index to the Acts passed by the Legislative Council of India, which will be very useful to all who have occasion to consult that remarkable exposition of Legislative wisdom. Nobody knows the difficulty of making a good Index until he has tried, even an Index to the titles of books cannot be satisfactorily made by all the librarians of the British Museum. The labour of such work is very great and rarely remunerative. In this instance we observe that the local government has subscribed liberally, therefore it is hoped that Mr Small will be compensated for the time he has bestowed on the work.

Contributed by Derek Copson, email: Derekcopson@aol.com

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History and development of CINDEX™

Frances S. Lennie

In the April 2004 issue of The Indexer, Geraldine Beare interviewed Drusilla Calvert about the history and development of MACREX. Later that year I was asked by Maureen MacGlashan, as incoming Executive Editor of the journal, to write something similar about CINDEX™. Although it is not in interview format I hope I have matched the order, coverage, and spirit of that earlier interview.

Background

The story of CINDEX™ begins in October 1984 with the confluence of two events: acquisition of a Digital Rainbow PC by my husband, Peter, and the arrival of the largest indexing project of my indexing career at that time.¹

My initial thought had been to investigate and purchase software for use with our newly acquired computer. Up until this point I had been using indexing cards and a typist to prepare the final index typescript for the client. I have learnt since that many indexers were allowed to submit their sorted and edited cards to their clients; alas not with mine.

My initial inquiries through the American Society of Indexers (ASI) were promising. There were two programs available, but on closer inspection I was not sure that they suited my work needs. MACREX did not surface in my inquiries at that time, and I believe was not available in the United States until we were well under way with what eventually developed into CINDEX. With the optimism of all programmers Peter decided that he could write a program that would do exactly what I needed. But first I had to define for him what makes an index work (the rules), and second, analyze my thought process as I indexed and the way in which I formed entries (the process). The former were already established in BS 3700—still, in my view, the most concise, elegant, and useful set of standards for book indexing—and The Chicago Manual of Style (13th. edn.) provided further authority on style and format.

Analyzing the manual indexing process for translation to the computer was interesting. While one needed to allow for existing habits one also had to recognize that slavishly following them was not always the most efficient use of the computer. From the outset I wanted to be able to see entries in alphabetic order as well as in the order I wrote them, as well as being able to isolate disparate elements of the index while keeping all records in a single document: luxuries unavailable when indexing with paper index cards. One element of the manual indexing process that was retained in the program is the 3” x 5” electronic card metaphor with which entries are added and edited in CINDEX.

The prototype was programmed in Dbase II and then ported to Dbase III. I do not remember now how many indexes I compiled with the prototype because every day seemed to bring change and new features. ‘Just try this out,’ seemed to be a constant refrain. I do recall, however, that every time I sat down at the machine to index I would invariably find Peter hovering behind me watching with great interest how I interacted with the program and asking ‘Why did you do that?’ or ‘Why don’t you do this?’

In our own ways we both persevered, even though I would bet that I probably threatened to return to my paper card system on more than one occasion, and eventually we thought we had achieved something reasonably useful. In early 1986 Peter completely rewrote the program in the C programming language.

Around the same time, two ASI members were starting to write about indexing software: Linda K. Fetters in her ‘Electronic shoebox’ column in Key Words, ASI’s bi-monthly newsletter, and Charles Anderson, a frequent contributor to library journals. We sent out review copies of the newly named CINDEX software, Indexing Research was established to handle sales and support, and the rest, as they say, is history.

The DOS years

CINDEX for DOS was launched to the public in September 1986. I distinctly remember the excitement on receiving the very first order for the program, and am happy to report that our charter user is still indexing, but now with CINDEX for Windows. As with most early versions of programs, updates and upgrades followed in fairly rapid succession, either to correct bugs or to add features that suddenly become in demand once the product is exposed to a wider user base. When first released, CINDEX for DOS was limited to 65,534 entries in any one index document, more than enough for most indexing assignments. A need for greater capacity, especially in networked environments, led to the release in early 1991 of an Extended Edition of the program, allowing index documents to hold up to 4 million entries each and providing network capabilities.

Between its initial release in 1986 and the final release (version 6.1) in 1997, CINDEX for DOS underwent 17 updates or upgrades. In the years since the last release most of the DOS users have moved to the Windows platform, and support for the DOS product is no longer offered.

Moving to Macintosh

Early in the 1990s we purchased a Macintosh Classic machine and tentatively began to program a version of CINDEX, utilizing the very different viewing opportunities that the operating system allowed. Progress was slow and we
were not sure that there was, or would be, any sizeable market for it. As our appreciation of the Macintosh platform grew we decided to forge ahead and in November 1996 (ten years after the debut of CINDEX for DOS) CINDEX for Macintosh was launched. There has been considerable interest in this product and it now accounts for approximately 20 percent of sales. With the upcoming release of a new version of CINDEX for Macintosh that will run on OS X as a native application it is expected that this percentage will grow.

Waiting for Windows

With the experience gained in programming for the Macintosh environment it was time to move to the Windows platform. In November 1997 CINDEX for Windows was released, to run on the Windows 95 operating system. It was, and still is, available in two editions: Standard and Publishers. There is no limitation on the size of index documents in either edition, while the Publishers’ Edition provides additional features and administrative options for use in multi-user networked environments. Subsequent updates and one major upgrade have kept CINDEX current with all intervening Windows operating systems up through Windows XP. The program is remarkably stable, perhaps best exemplified by the fact that no update has been released since February 2002; this last release explicitly addressed some internal handling issues related to Windows XP.

CINDEX’s user base

Individual users make up the majority of license holders, but over the years CINDEX has been adopted by increasing numbers of publishers, institutions, government agencies and corporations.

At some point in the early 1990s a Student version of CINDEX (first for DOS and now available for Windows and Macintosh) was released, and it has proved very popular. This version is full-featured except for spell-checking, which was introduced in 1991, and index files are limited to 500 records each. Initially provided for students of the USDA Basic Indexing course5 (although students do not have to prove evidence of being registered for any course), it has proved to be a useful motivator. Modestly priced, it allows beginning indexers to hone their computer and indexing skills, possibly doing data input for established indexers, prior to their first job which guarantees them income enough to cover the cost of the full program.

Over the years CINDEX users have continually provided ideas for new features. Informally, but optimistically known as the ‘Wish List,’ suggestions for new features are continually reviewed. Sometimes a suggested feature already exists, albeit perhaps as a two-step rather than a one-step process, and the user is gently guided to the new discovery.

Support

Right from day one, supporting users of CINDEX was a key ingredient in its success: reliability and flexibility are the primary characteristics of any program’s success! In the early days users often needed educating in the operation of DOS as well as CINDEX, often the first computer program they had ever used. Today, users have a greater familiarity and comfort with the Macintosh and Windows systems, and their queries tend to be about the ‘best’ way to achieve a desired outcome. Discussing alternative approaches with users is always informative, and I’ve personally had the pleasure of meeting many interesting indexers along the way.

As CINDEX reached indexers outside North America, local sales and support of the program were handled by agents in Britain and Australia, but as the Internet and email increasingly became part of everyday life, Indexing Research began to handle all overseas sales and support first from its Rochester, NY, office and now from its New York City location. Basic support is provided by FAQs on Indexing Research’s website (www.indexres.com), and demonstration copies of the program can be freely downloaded along with PDFs of the User’s Guide. Free updates to keep users current are also available for download. Indexing Research still provides telephone support during normal business hours, but most find it more convenient to make contact by email.

Since the mid-1990s Indexing Research has been converting electronic indexes7 to a format that can be used in CINDEX (or in MACREX and SKY), as well as providing a scanning service (or keyboarding depending on the format and quality of the material) for indexes that only exist on paper. The latter service is usually utilized by institutions wishing to pull together indexes to their past publications: the largest we have done to date have been for 75 years of indexes to a history journal as well as the same number of years for an enzymology journal (not combined, I hasten to add!).

In addition to providing answers to day-to-day inquiries, it is in everyone’s best interests to have a highly knowledgeable group of users. Therefore, Indexing Research offers group workshops and tutorials, one-on-one sessions in its New York offices, and gives demonstrations at meetings of ASI and its chapters, as well as regularly attending indexing meetings overseas. The very first public demonstrations of CINDEX were in New York City in 1987 and 1988, although the home office was then located in Rochester, NY, some 340 miles to the north-west.

One-size-fits-all versus customization

Flexibility of use has always been a primary aim in CINDEX’s design. It is important that people can adapt the program to match their needs and usage rather than vice versa. This also allows Indexing Research to provide sound support for a single product rather than many different iterations. On occasion, however, customization work of the Publishers’ Edition has been undertaken for a few corporate clients, on the understanding that any work undertaken on their behalf would, after an agreed period of time, be incorporated in a future release. The most recent work of this type has been the development of an Application Programming Interface (API) which allows the client to integrate the
Publishers’ Edition of CINDEX with other software applications.

At the same time that the Extended Edition of the DOS program was released, Indexing Research entered into a relationship with Leverage Technologies, Inc., a company specializing in programming for pre-press publishing operations. Leverage Technologies has expertise in multi-user networked environments, and provides keen insight on corporate marketplace needs. Leverage Technologies now exclusively markets and supports the Publishers’ Edition of CINDEX for Windows to corporate users, as well as providing off-the-shelf and customized add-ons for individual users.

The next chapter

With publishers’ eyes always on the bottom line, there is great interest in embedding index entries into the originating text in order to conduct indexing at an earlier stage of the publishing process, or for works that will be constantly updated and revised. With the advent of CINDEX version 1.5 in November 1999 (for both Windows and Macintosh), users are able to embed index entries into RTF (Rich Text Format) documents, and have the index subsequently generated and formatted (with appropriate page numbers) directly from the application in which the document resides.

With a plethora of page layout, design, and other publishing products being used in the marketplace it is hard to have any one indexing software satisfy all possible needs. There is always an undercurrent of murmurs about the ‘right tools’ for the job in hand, but this undoubtedly means indexers will have to acquire skills in several different applications rather than depend on any one product to meet diverse needs. The one constant, however, in all of this is the understanding and development by the indexer of essential indexing skills—and that does not necessarily come about courtesy of the computer.

Dear Mary...

Q. I have written a memoir which will be published in September. I do not expect a huge audience, but there will certainly be a degree of interest shown in Scotland and by the sort of people who buy books in John Sandoe and Heywood Hill. My worry is that quite a few potential purchasers may just browse the index for their own name, read the references, then put it down again without bothering to buy it. I could dispense with an index but I myself resent a memoir without one, so how do I get round this, Mary?
Name and address withheld

A. Point out this pitfall to your publishers. No doubt they will be happy to supply the memoir shrinkwrapped in the manner of luxurious photographic tomes and ask booksellers to keep the seals intact.

From ‘Your problems solved’, Mary Killen, Spectator.co.uk

Notes
1 Hazel Bell has also written about the beginnings of CINDEX in her ‘Index makers of today’ column in The Indexer, 19(4), October 1995.
2 Foxon-Maddocks Associates’ Index Preparation System (IPS) and Micro Indexing System (MIS) from Compugamma, Inc.
3 Two Macintosh indexing programs have appeared and subsequently disappeared on the scene: In>Sort for Macintosh from Kensa Software, and HyperIndex from André De Tienne.
4 At press time the new version for Macintosh OS X should have just been released.
5 The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) runs many correspondence courses, originally targeted at people in the vast, isolated rural areas of the United States.
6 Geoffrey Jones and Gary Hall acted as agents for CINDEX at different times in the United Kingdom; Garry Cousins in Australia.
7 Initially we also offered a DOS program called CINVERT™, but did not update it when we moved CINDEX to the Windows platform. Users needing conversions generally found our conversion service more cost- and time-effective.
8 Leverage Technologies, Inc., Cleveland, Ohio, USA (www.LevTechInc.com).

Trained as a teacher, Frances Lennie began her indexing career in England in 1977, originally specializing in medical texts. In 1982 she relocated permanently to the United States, where she continues indexing to this day in a variety of disciplines and media, as well as overseeing the development and marketing of CINDEX™. She also teaches an indexing course through the School of Continuing and Professional Studies of New York University, speaks regularly at indexing meetings in the United States and overseas, conducts tutorials for CINDEX users, contributes articles for The Indexer and Key Words, and currently serves as Immediate Past President of the American Society of Indexers (ASI). Since 1998 Frances and her husband have lived in the ‘Village’ in New York City. Email: flennie@indexres.com

Erratum

A final paragraph was unfortunately omitted from Hazel K. Bell’s article on Lemony Snicket in The Indexer, 24(2) (October 2004). With the sincere apologies of the editors, the concluding paragraph is reproduced below:

All very amusing. But should indexers worry about this? Lemony Snicket. The unauthorized autobiography is a children’s book. Is this the impression of indexes that we want children to get?
The sheer size and longevity of the Roman Empire have long fascinated historians, and made the study of its origins and development a matter of continuing interest. In the final two decades of the third century BC the city of Rome, already the hegemonic leader of a network of alliances which encompassed the whole of Italy south of the Po valley, expelled from Italy the Carthaginian commander, Hannibal, and following his defeat in his home territory of north Africa in 202 BC, emerged as the most powerful state in the Mediterranean basin.

The expansion of Roman power in those 20 years, and into both the eastern and western Mediterranean in the period that followed, led the Greek historian Polybius in the later second century to ask in the preamble to his history of the time, who there was who was so worthless or lazy as not to want to discover how and under what type of government almost the whole of the inhabited world was overmastered in less than 53 years by one power, the Romans, something which had never been seen before (Polybius 1.1.5).

By the end of the first century BC the Roman republic, torn apart by civil wars between its military commanders, had been transformed into a monarchy under the first emperor, Augustus, whose control extended from the Iberian peninsula in the west to Syria in the east, and from the English Channel to the Sahara, with a European frontier which ran the length of the Rhine and the Danube. This was the empire which was to continue, in varying forms but essentially the same extent, for the next four centuries.

Historical explanations

For most of the 20th century the predominant explanation of this remarkable phenomenon was that of the great German historian, Theodor Mommsen, who in his Römische Geschichte, which appeared in several editions from the late 19th century onwards, outlined an account of what came to be known as ‘defensive imperialism’: that the Romans through the Republican period expanded their control in response to perceived threats from other powers, rather than as a concerted policy of gaining territory for themselves (Mommsen, 1912–19: 1.699).

The reason for this account lay in an attempt to explain the apparent reluctance of the Roman senate to establish a permanent military presence following successful wars, especially in Greece and the eastern Mediterranean through the second century BC. Mommsen believed that the establishment of a territorial empire came about only as a result of the failure of the Romans to guarantee what they saw as their own security by other means.

In 1979 William Harris, of Columbia University, published a seminal book (Harris, 1979) in which he argued that Rome was in fact a fundamentally aggressive and militaristic state, always keen to expand its empire, and that it annexed territory as a matter of course, unless special reasons persuaded the senate to depart from their normal policy on a particular occasion. This has now become the new orthodoxy.

My early research

My own interest in this debate came from work that I undertook from the late 1960s onwards on the Roman experience in the Iberian peninsula (Richardson, 1986, 1996). Neither Mommsen nor Harris seemed to me to provide a satisfactory account of the growth and change of Roman imperial power. While Harris’s picture of Rome as a state designed to undertake warfare, and always prepared to do so, was more consistent with the evidence for the period than Mommsen’s (or at least that of Mommsen’s followers), his belief that the basic policy of the senate was one of annexation of territory did not seem to account for the slow development of the structures of empire, such as taxation and administration, which emerged only gradually and as the result of a series of ad hoc decisions taken by individual commanders on the ground.

In particular, I could find no evidence that the senate, as the central governing body of the republic, ever took a decision to annex territory, although they regularly decided to prosecute wars in areas round the Mediterranean. At one level this may seem to be a purely semantic distinction, but it is just such variations in linguistic style that might be expected to mark differences of understanding among those who use them as to the nature of what they were doing as the empire grew.

The language the Romans used

A preliminary examination of the language the Romans employed to talk about the mechanisms of imperial expansion from the late third and second centuries BC down to the second century AD showed that the vocabulary was based on the structures of the city-state and its magistrates.
(Richardson, 1991). In particular the word *imperium*, whence our words ‘empire’ and ‘imperial’, means in the mid-republic ‘power’, either that given to an annually elected magistrate (particularly the two consuls, who had supreme command of the armies as well as being the foremost civil executives, and the praetors, who also undertook military and legal responsibilities) or to promagistrates, who were empowered to act as magistrates, usually after serving in magisterial office.

*Imperium* is also used of the power of the Roman people as a whole, so that the phrase ‘the power of the Roman people’ (*imperium populi Romani*) often represents the activity or even the entity of the Roman state. Similarly the word *provincia*, whence our word ‘province’, is used at the beginning of our period almost exclusively for the task assigned to a magistrate or promagistrate who holds *imperium*: this might be a military command (often defined geographically, such as ‘the province of Macedonia’ or ‘the province of Nearer Spain’) or some other function (such as the ‘urban province’, which comprised the jurisdiction of the praetor in civil cases in the city of Rome).

While this range of meanings for *imperium* and *provincia* continue through the period I examined, it became clear that other senses accrued to these two words, and that in particular *imperium* came to be used to refer to the physical, territorial entity that we would call the Roman Empire, that is, a land mass with extension and boundaries. This widening of the semantic range of the word seemed to me to reflect a shift in the Roman attitude to their imperial activity, which both Mommsen and Harris had not adequately taken account of in their explanations of Roman imperialism: a change from seeing their aim as exercising power over others in order to get them to do what the Romans wanted, to the acquisition, control and governance of territories around the Mediterranean as an end in itself. My more detailed research has since then consisted in attempting to determine whether the shifts in attitude that I believed I was noticing were actually capable of being documented in an examination of the meanings of these words and the contexts of their use throughout the period.

### Spoken and written language

At this point I was faced with the problem that confronts anyone who works on the history of the ancient classical world. Although the Greeks and Romans have left a substantial amount of literature, virtually none of it can be reckoned as representative of the spoken language of the people of antiquity. The poems, plays, speeches, histories and philosophical and technical writings of the ancients are decidedly literary, and were written by and for the educated upper classes; and in a different way, the surviving inscriptions from the period, mostly commemorative or official, are also distinctly limited in linguistic scope.

For an investigation such as I wished to undertake, however, this was less of a problem than for other pieces of linguistic analysis, because the people whose attitudes I was trying to determine were precisely the educated upper classes who shaped the policies of the city of Rome. I needed to analyse and track the notions that underlay the patterns of meaning of these people in their usage of such words as *imperium* and *provincia*. It is true that, even in terms of the literary output of the Latin-speaking (and to a lesser extent the Greek-speaking) upper classes of the period, we have only a tiny amount of what we know to have been produced, and that that tiny amount was actually written by a few individuals; but an analysis sensitive to these inevitable limitations should none the less be able to show changes in underlying notions across a period of three or four centuries.

### The research

To carry out this analysis I had to examine every available use of the words with which I was concerned in surviving texts across the period. Even half a century ago, such a task would have meant a lifetime’s project for a sizeable team of scholars; but the development of electronic texts and of computer-based databases and spreadsheets has made such a project feasible to an individual over a relatively short time span.

Classical texts, which have been the object of intense scholarly work over the past five centuries and which comprise a corpus that by its very nature is closed (no new works will ever be added, and relatively few new additions discovered), have generated much interest from an early stage in those interested in working on the analysis of corpora of literary writings by electronic methods. For Greek texts, I use the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*, produced by the University of California, a project begun in 1972 and which now includes virtually the whole of Greek literature from the Homeric epics of the eighth century BC down to the beginning of the seventh century AD; and for Latin texts, the collection produced by the Packard Humanities Institute, which contains all the main Latin texts of the period with which I am concerned.

On two compact disks, therefore, I have all the ancient literary texts I need for my analysis. I use a reader program called *Musaios*, written and developed by Darl J. Dumont and Randall M. Smith in Los Angeles, which allows both simple and Boolean searches of both disks. These enable me to locate all the passages using the words in which I am interested, and to transfer them to a Word file. I then cut and paste the passage onto a database (for which I use *Idealist*, produced in the early 1990s by Blackwell Scientific, and which has served me well for many projects over the past 15 years). The database also contains the author, name of work and reference for each passage, as well as a preliminary comment on the content and the meaning and context of the key word. I then transfer the data I have accumulated onto to Excel spreadsheets, to aid analysis of the patterns of usage.

In effect, what I have been doing is to produce a specialized lexicon, with comments on the usage and context of every occasion on which the word concerned is used. My database now covers 2665 passages in which the word *imperium* was used, from the comic playwright Plautus at the end of the third century BC down to the satirist Juvenal, writing c. AD 125; and 2115 passages using the word *provincia*, across the same period. My hope is that this will
allow an 'indexing' of the change in attitude that I had previously identified in outline, from an imperialism centred on the control of other states and peoples to one based on a territorial empire.

Early results

So far the results have been promising: it is notable that the phrase that is most commonly thought of as naming the Roman Empire, *imperium Romanum*, does not occur at all in surviving Latin until the very end of the republican period, in the 40s BC, and the earliest examples of *imperium* in a territorial sense seem to belong to the latter half of the reign of the first emperor, Augustus, in the first years of the Christian era. Similarly *provincia*, while retaining its primary meaning of a responsibility of a magistrate or promagistrate, also acquires the sense of a territory organized by the Romans and under their exclusive control in the reign of the second emperor, Tiberius, in the early 30s AD.

These data, alongside an investigation of the administrative and organizational structures of the emerging empire, form the basis of the book I am currently in the process of writing. Because they include all the occasions on which these words are used, not just those on which the authors concerned are developing or expounding their own views on imperialism or the empire, they provide access to the background patterns of thought of those who directly or indirectly were engaged with the processes that led to establishment of the largest and most long-lived political entity of antiquity, and help to answer the question that lies at the root of my current research: what did the Romans think they were doing while they were constructing the Roman Empire?

The answer, not surprisingly, turns out to be more complex and more differentiated than the question, but that is the nature of history. And that result, at least, would not have surprised Polybius, who asked his question at the beginning of his history in the mid-second century BC. His answer took a further 40 books to write. I shall be briefer.

Bibliography


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For 24 years MACREX has been under continuous development, and as a result is the program preferred by prestigious professional indexers worldwide. An online discussion group allows MACREX users from around the world to compare notes, seek suggestions, and receive advice, while giving us the opportunity to assess users' priorities for enhancements and modifications to the program. Workshops given regularly in the UK, USA, and Australia further encourage user input into the enrichment of MACREX.

**MONITOR PROGRESS:** MACREX records time taken indexing, entries per page, references per entry, etc.

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Capturing moving images online

Ann Cameron

‘Archive Live’, the online catalogue from Scottish Screen Archive, brings the film and video material in Scotland’s National Moving Image Collection to life on the web. Designed to service the general public and the commercial programme maker, the catalogue is an essential reference tool, offering detailed information about moving images from 1895 to the present day. This article describes the planning and decision-making processes involved in actually getting the catalogue online, and provides a look at cataloguing and indexing practice in a film archive.

Moving images offer a unique glimpse into the past, recording people, places and ways of life very different from those of today. It is the responsibility of the Scottish Screen Archive to locate, preserve, and ultimately provide access to, this diverse record of Scottish life. The Archive recently launched its access catalogue online, opening up information about titles in the collection to everyone.

Background

The collection spans a wide range of mostly non-fiction content, ranging across topical, documentary, educational, promotional, industrial and amateur material, including significant broadcast and Gaelic language production. There is an archive of written materials concerning the history of Scottish film production and cinema exhibition as well as a collection of related photographs, oral history, ephemera and publicity material.

Since its inception in 1976, the Archive has needed to view and appraise the huge volume of donated material. The appointment of the first professional librarian in 1990 facilitated the replacement of old card catalogues with detailed computerized records. This led to speedier, improved access to information. In 1999, funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund enabled three full-time cataloguers, working alongside technical and administrative staff, to identify, catalogue and process a backlog of about 13,000 cans of film. The culmination of this two and half year project meant that, with most of the collection documented, it was possible to plan for greater access.

Archive staff, particularly those working in access and enquiry provision, were consulted on what information it would be useful and appropriate to prepare for online publication of the catalogue. The decision was taken to concentrate on those titles that were preserved and copied onto a viewing format, be that film and/or broadcast standard video. A clear idea of what fields we would include in the web catalogue came out of these internal meetings, informed by issues such as data protection, copyright and whether the information would actually be relevant.

Cataloguing and indexing issues

For practical reasons, cataloguing practice was not changed significantly; rather, records were enhanced for web publication. Selected title records, currently representing around one-fifth of total holdings, were flagged for web publication on the main database. The Archive catalogue conforms to the cataloguing rules set out by FIAF (the International Federation of Film Archives). Titles are described in terms of:

- acquisition details (i.e. collection level)
- technical details (such as gauge/format, stock, footage, number of cans, physical and image condition)
- accessibility (master or copy, location of viewing material, copyright details)
- content (full shot-list, indexing for subject, place, personality and organization, genre terms, full cast and credits listing, links to additional and related material such as paper archive records, websites, articles, books and still images – paper-based or electronic).

New personality and organization indexes were created for titles to be published online. These conform to the National Council on Archives Rules for the construction of personal, place and corporate names.

The web catalogue offers the opportunity to browse by broad subject heading or by place. The user can also search for place or subject within the Detailed Search form, combining these criteria with a date range or restricting the results to titles currently on tape, for example. At the moment, the Detailed Search allows basic keyword searching across the text fields of the database, including personality and organization indexes (and could be improved in the future with chances to limit the search, for example using Boolean logic).

There was some concern over presenting the subject index online, as this had been developed in-house to satisfy the unique needs of researchers and to capture the content of the films. Originally based on Sears Subject Headings, terms were also added to satisfy user needs. For example, there are specific index terms for events such as ‘Inaugurations and openings’, ‘Gala days and gala weeks’, ‘Peat and peat cutting’ and ‘Salmon fishing’. Emotions, attitudes and behaviour are evident in many of the films, and we have tried to capture this very broadly with an index term.

However, the cataloguer must not stamp his or her own interpretation into the shot-list of a film, and the catalogue remains an objective description which people can come to, approaching films with an open mind.
Recently, the film collection of the Orcadian Margaret Tait offered new challenges. Describing much of her own work as ‘film poetry’, Tait refused to be pigeonholed into a genre or type of film-making. The principles of cataloguing and indexing were applied but did not quite ‘fit’. With her more artistic and fictional work, the catalogue described the films in Margaret’s own words where possible, and used background information such as reviews and comments from other people, to enhance understanding. Indexing was minimal – with fictional work, we rely on genre terms and background material such as reviews, articles and interviews rather than trying to ‘categorise’. It is uncommon to come across such a collection, and it seemed our indexing practice was inadequate. However, the Scottish Cine Biography of Tait, provided in the ‘Browse’ section of the website, provides the chance to read a short introduction to the film maker and her work, with associated films in a clickable list below. In this way, the website offers another ‘way in’ to the Archive’s collections.

Moving from an in-house customized database to a catalogue that was going to be published for all to see obviously had implications for interoperability. Consultation over indexing practice among members of the Film Archive Forum was carried out (this represents all of the public sector film and television archives that care for the UK’s moving image heritage). Because of the timescale, staff resources available and the lack of a common standard amongst the archives involved, it was impractical to move to a new standard such as UNESCO Thesaurus or Library of Congress subject headings.

Web development

The Archive benefited from having a clear idea of what we wanted from an online catalogue prior to consulting web designers. The functional working database of the Archive with administrative and technical detail would be stripped down into a user-friendly, enhanced online access catalogue with supporting contextual and image content.

The website was developed using Scottish Screen’s current provider, Screenbase Media Ltd. An online business plan, site architecture, content specification, design specification and technical specification were agreed upon. Colleagues from New Media and Marketing were invaluable in helping with areas outside the immediate concerns of catalogue data, such as setting up the e-commerce facility, the practicalities of hosting selected moving image clips on a separate server and branding ideas.

The online business plan addressed the objectives for the site and agreed on success measures. User groups were assessed, broadly falling into non-commercial or commercial. They ranged across the television industry, commercial/independent production companies, the general public, education/community and reminiscence use, museum/exhibition (non-theatrical) customers and those requiring material for a film festival/screening. There was also a need to reach out to those people who were not aware of the work of the Archive. Success would be measured in terms of visitor numbers on the site, increased enquiries generated as a direct result of the website, increased sale of pre-packaged and made-to-order videotapes, and expansion of the catalogue itself. Further marketing initiatives would be developed soon after the launch event and when statistics had been analysed.

The site architecture was drawn up, offering a graphic representation of pages on the site. A detailed content specification outlining where information would be located and the reasoning behind it was produced. The creative brief dictated the ‘look and feel’ of the site. This had to complement the current Scottish Screen design, yet offer search functionality and a fresh identity centred around a catalogue. Two main user communities were addressed on the home page: the interested browser coming to the archive for personal and recreational use, and the experienced researcher working in the media industries. There was some discussion over the branding and domain name for the site, with ‘Archive Live’ and ‘Scottish Screen Archive Access Catalogue’ being identified as appropriate. An important concept for the site was that it had to be visually exciting, capturing the diversity of moving images in the Archive and not simply a textual reference tool.

The functional specification proved the biggest challenge, as it detailed exactly how the site would work. A comprehensive listing of fields to be published was agreed, and certain modifications and additions were made to the existing catalogue – mainly involving the creation of relational files and text ‘flags’ creating a user-friendly interpretation of information documented on the full catalogue. The data for the web catalogue would be uploaded from the Archive directly to the web developer’s server and imported into its version of the database. This resulted in a customized solution delivering an online catalogue with easy to navigate contextual links to biographies of Scottish exhibitors and film makers, production companies and institutions as well as an online ordering and payment facility for certain video titles. The detailed search form was designed to service the demands of researchers and those with an idea of what they were looking for, with the option to perform searches across single or combined fields. The browse option guides less experienced users to various ways into the catalogue, with a ‘topics’, ‘places’, ‘subjects’, ‘videos for sale’ and ‘all titles’ listing offered. In addition, still image files and Quicktime moving image clips were built into the functionality of the site so that potentially every title can have a picture and a clip featured on its catalogue record.

Launch

A launch event was held at the National Library of Scotland to publicize the new website. The Minister for Culture, Frank McAveety, was principal speaker, and Scottish Screen’s Chief Executive and Archive Curator spoke of the new possibilities this new resource offered to the widest range of people in Scotland and beyond. Cameron Stout, winner of Big Brother 4, and his brother, BAFTA Award-winning television presenter Julyan Sinclair, gave their personal illustration of how film in the archive evoked memories of their childhood on Orkney, and offered a unique and immediate form of historical record. A demonstration of the catalogue was offered, as was the chance to
Cameron: Capturing moving images online

explore the site on computer and network with various colleagues. Press coverage of the event was comprehensive, with pieces on the STV and BBC news as well as numerous national and regional newspaper stories.

The experience of putting the Archive’s accessible collection online has been incredibly satisfying. Many of the detailed records can now be explored all over the world at any time, and the collection of published titles grows week by week. People can read detailed shot-lists describing the content of a title, explore lists of related films by selected Scottish film makers and production companies, and arrange to view or purchase footage. The website has enabled people to do their own research. Films of Clyde steamships and shipyards, flickering images from the late 19th century featuring Queen Victoria at Balmoral, early experiments in X-ray photography, footage of ‘Nessie’ and the evacuation of St Kilda in 1930 are just some of the subjects featured.

The Detailed Search form has room for development and there are plans to incorporate more advanced options for limiting results retrieved, particularly on the ‘any text’ and ‘any people text’ fields. Feedback from customers has been positive, with comments made on the level of detail and ‘any people text’ fields. Feedback from customers has been positive, with comments made on the level of detail offered. One welcome development for the catalogue has been the additional and contextual information received from users, often helping to pinpoint dates and aid identification of images.

A positive effect of the online catalogue has been the increase in requests for specific titles for personal use, rather than lots of orders for pre-packaged video titles available to buy online. Whether it is the Riding of the Marches in the Borders, a family Christmas celebration, a whisky advert from 1897 or amateur footage of the Beatles playing the Caird Hall in Dundee, people are finding something that relates to their lives and experience. Commercial users are also using the site as an effective research tool and finding easy to access footage to edit into a television programme without having to wait for Archive staff to query the catalogue on their behalf.

User statistics underline the popularity of the site. We have started e-mailing registered users with news and information, and have increased the number of moving image clips available to watch online (about 10 per cent of the 2257 titles have a clip now). Better links will also be made to information gateways and websites concerned with reflecting the richness and diversity of Scotland’s culture.

This is a revised version of an article which originally appeared in Catalogue & Index, No 151, Spring 2004.

Ann Cameron worked at Manchester Metropolitan University Library on the Library Association’s graduate trainee scheme and in a number of summer jobs in the public and school library sectors before becoming a full-time cataloguer at Scottish Screen Archive in 1999. Since becoming chartered, she has worked as librarian there and manages the Archive’s cataloguing work. She also led the development of the Archive’s online access catalogue, launched in October 2003. Email: ann.cameron@scottishscreen.com

Indexing children’s books
by K. G. B. Bakewell and Paula L. Williams, with contributions from Elizabeth Wallis and Valerie Elliston

Society of Indexers Occasional Papers on Indexing, No. 5, 2000, 66 pp., ISBN 1 871577-21-7. £13.00 (£15.50 overseas); £12.00 (£14.50 overseas) for members of indexing societies

Although index use is of sufficient importance to merit a place in the UK National Curriculum from Key Stage 1 onwards, the indexes to many otherwise excellent children’s information books are characterized by omissions, inconsistencies and inadequacies – so much so that the search effort becomes so tiresome and children simply give up.

This thought-provoking publication, which is based on research with children, teachers, parents, librarians, publishers and indexers, helps to remedy the situation by explaining why carefully constructed indexes are so important for children’s books, and how they differ from those for adults. Highlighting the essential features that should be included in indexes to all books for children, it includes many ideas for making indexes as child-friendly as possible and examples of both good and bad practice, together with a list of key recommendations. Anyone involved with publishing and indexing children’s books should make sure they have a copy of this book on their shelves.

Written in clear, jargon-free language . . . a thoroughly useful book. (Newsletter of the Education Librarians Group)

The Occasional Papers on Indexing provide more detail than can be accommodated in general textbooks on indexing and are written by practitioners who bring specialist experience and expertise to their subjects. The series aims to contribute to raising standards of indexing, and to stimulate indexers to think more deeply about indexing principles and working methods.

To order this and other SI publications, visit www.indexers.org.uk for a downloadable order form or contact: Sales Administrator, Society of Indexers, Blades Enterprise Centre, John Street, Sheffield S2 4SU, UK Tel: +44 (0)114 292 2350 Fax: +44 (0)114 292 2351 email: admin@indexers.org.uk
I have taken over this column after the sudden death of Christie Theron (see the obituary on page 148). I met Christie at the SI conference at Cheltenham. He was enthusiastic about books and England and indexing, and delighted with a visit he had just made to Hay-on-Wye, the second-hand bookshop town. It had been one of our favourite spots too. A review of his ‘Around the world’ columns also highlights his love of cricket and rugby. The sympathy of the international indexing community goes to his family and colleagues in South Africa.

As you will see, we continue to experiment with how best to organize this material. We want to concentrate on providing information that is not readily available elsewhere, in particular on the various societies’ websites, so conferences are mentioned only briefly at the very end of the Societies section, under a separate heading. We also want to try to convey a sense of what each of the societies is doing, what they see as the high points of the last 6 to 12 months, what their plans are for the future, and also where the similarities and differences are, and what tips we might pick up from one another. So my idea is to have two sections, ‘From the societies’ and ‘Other news’. (Actually there is no other news this issue, but perhaps next time.)

From the societies

**ASI**

A new online course, ‘Indexing: theory and application’ is being offered by the University of California (Berkeley). This and other training opportunities in the United States are listed on Janet Perlman’s recently updated website (www.sw-indexing.com/6-resources.html).

The South Central Chapter of ASI held its autumn meeting in San Antonio, Texas on 30 October 2004. Their program was a six-hour seminar entitled ‘Facing the text’ presented by Do Mi Stauber, based on her latest book. The hotel they met at was a few blocks from the famous Alamo Mission where Texas began its fight for independence from Mexico.

The Washington, DC Chapter of ASI has held a number of outreach programmes co-hosted by local organizations. They included local Taxonomy Tuesdays, indexing pictures using the thesaurus for graphic materials, held at the Library of Congress, and AARP information resources on the Internet, which they learned about the AgeLine database and the Internet Resources on Aging collection. They also held a booth at the Fall for the Book Festival in Fairfax, Va. The May program will be held at the Textile Museum to learn about its database program.

In addition to such organization-based programmes, the chapter has a number of initiatives in place to help new members feel welcome: conference mentors for new members at the ASI national conference; a column welcoming new members for each newsletter issue; and an official welcome person (Cathy Dettmar) at chapter programmes. And last fall the chapter offered Barbara DeGennaro’s excellent and very popular programme, Getting started in indexing, along with Becky Hornyak’s comprehensive overview of peer review methods.

On October 23, 2004 the Twin Cities Chapter of ASI hosted a ‘Basic web design for literary freelancers’ workshop presented by member Maria Fracchia. Workshop participants were introduced to basic design concepts and warned of common pitfalls, including the use of graphics that cannot be displayed properly on all platforms.

The Western New York Chapter of ASI has been making an effort to include indexing students from local universities at chapter meetings. In the fall of 2003, they met with indexing students at Syracuse University, while at their fall 2004 meeting they met with indexing students from the Department of Library and Information Science School of Informatics at the State University of New York at Buffalo. Professor Abbas and eight students traveled from Buffalo to meet with the group in Skaneateles, NY. In the photo Chapter President Peg Mauer is on the far right (in ASI polo shirt) and Professor Abbas is to her right (in the middle row) wearing glasses and a black top.

Heather Hedden (heather@hedden.net) has proposed the revitalization of the Web Indexing SIG, with possible creation of a website, database and mailing list.

**ANZSI**

The Australian Society of Indexers (AusSI) has now become the Australian and New Zealand Society of Indexers (ANZSI). In July, the Auckland and Wellington branches of the Local Publishers Forum assisted in bringing AusSI member Max McMaster to both cities to run indexing courses.

Participants at meetings with Max agreed to form one New Zealand branch of AusSI, and this was approved by the AusSI National Committee. Current activities include organizing an indexing course in Nelson in February; a
media launch and release of the Freelancer Register to publishers in Wellington in March; and developing the mentoring scheme.

The Victorian branch of ANZSI has started a mentoring programme in which books without indexes are indexed by beginner indexers under supervision, and then made available for purchase. The ACT branch is planning to introduce a similar scheme this year, and the New Zealand branch is also considering the idea.

In May the Victorian branch of ANZSI toured the archival collection of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons, examining surgical instruments, paintings, diaries and the Cowlishaw Collection of historical medical books. Their next tour was to the State Coal Mine at Wonthaggi, along with members of local historical societies. A book on the mine had been the subject of a DIY indexing (mentoring) project, and the ‘best fit’ index from all the participants (put together by John Simkin) was presented to the mine.

The big project of the NSW Branch of ANZSI for 2004 was project management of the redesign of the ANZSI website. This has involved examination of content as well as the structure of the site. Feedback has been gathered through a survey of ANZSI members and focus groups with potential users of the site (such as editors). The project has run under the leadership of Caroline Colton with technical expertise from Helen Skewes.

ASAIB


CSI

The Second National Congress of the China Society of Indexers was held in Nanjing, Jiangsu Province of China in November 2003. Professor Xu Zhong, Vice-President of Fudan University, was elected President, and the Secretariat has relocated from the East China Normal University to Fudan University.

The Annual Conference of the China Society of Indexers for 2004 was held in Xiamen, Fujian Province of China in November 2004. The theme was ‘Indexes should be geared to the society, to the people, and to the life’. More than 70 delegates attended the conference, and they enthusiastically discussed and exchanged views on their experiences of indexing.

The CSI’s 2005 Annual Conference will be held in Fudan University, Shanghai, China, in October 2005. Delegates from overseas societies are warmly welcomed to attend this conference. See their website (www.cnindex.fudan.edu.cn) for pictures of their 2004 conference and details of future events. You can get a translation of the text, section by section, from http://babelfish.altavista.com.

The CSI’s journal was launched in 2003 with Professor Zhang Qiyu as Chief Editor. The journal includes the columns ‘Index and database forum’, ‘Research on indexes and databases’, ‘Research on the retrieval tools for Internet information’, ‘Research on index language’, ‘Introduction to indexes and databases’, and ‘The databases in our daily life’.

German Network of Indexers (DNI)

The German Network of Indexers (DNI), which got off the ground last summer, had a successful debut meeting at last year’s Frankfurt Book Fair in October. Since then, membership has risen to ten. The first e-newsletter was sent in March. More contents have been added to the website (www.d-indexer.org), especially to the bibliography page which now consists of more than 60 entries, including articles about the 16th-century indexer Conrad Gessner and Alexander von Humboldt’s views on indexing.

IASC/SCAD

The IASC/SCAD Calgary conference included sessions by Nancy Mulvany, Gale Rhodes and Fred Brown as well as a seminar on ‘Intermediate/advanced indexing’ by Kari Kells, based on participants’ different approaches to indexing the same document. The indexes and handouts are available at Kari’s website (www.indexw.com/IASC/). Membership continues to grow, with 137 members as of January 2005. Concentrations are in the west (British Columbia and Alberta) and in Central Canada (Ontario) and Quebec, with only handfuls of members elsewhere. There are 12 members living in the United States, many of whom have dual membership of ASI and IASC/SCAD.

The British Columbia and Central Canada groups have been active with meetings and fostering local contacts, indexer to indexer as well as with interested outsiders. A BC member spoke to an editors’ meeting regarding the indexing process. The Central Canada group has found an affordable meeting room in Toronto – they had been meeting in restaurants, with all the attendant interruptions – and plan to schedule four meetings a year.

Netherlands Indexing Network (NIN)

The NIN is happy to announce the launch of the Netherlands Indexing Network (NIN) (www.indexers.nl). This is an independent and informal network of indexers. Any indexer, or would-be indexer, living in the Netherlands or working in the Dutch language is most welcome to join, by sending an email message to: info@indexers.nl.

SI

Following a wide-ranging review carried out in 2003, SI has seen considerable changes in its organizational structure. To help reduce the workload on volunteers and run the society more professionally, administrative functions are being centralized as far as possible in the Sheffield office. A small Executive Board has replaced the rather unwieldy Council, thus facilitating more efficient policy making. And through
the establishment of a new body, the Consultative Council, the grass-roots membership now has a formal channel through which it can be involved in the policy-making process. The new arrangements are still bedding down.

Another new development for SI is the first issue of its directory (Indexers Available) in CD-ROM format. Users without ready access to the online version on the SI website can now benefit from a range of additional features compared with the previous printed version, including more extensive information on commissioning indexes and a selection of reviewers’ comments on indexes both good and bad.

Iain Brown, who took over as SI Webmaster at the beginning of 2005, has been developing a content management system (CMS) to run the SI website. Roll-out is scheduled for mid-year.

Otherwise things have continued much as usual, with a wide range of workshops, a good flow of new indexers qualifying for accreditation under either SI’s own training programme or other approved means, and local group meetings. The key event on the horizon is the celebration in 2007 of the 50th anniversary of the founding of SI.

Conferences

ANZSI (March; Melbourne), ASI (May; Pasadena, California), China Society of Indexers (October; Shanghai), SI (July; Exeter, Devon) and ASAIB (July; Durban, KwaZulu-Natal) are all running conferences this year. Details are on the societies’ websites. IASC/SCAD and ASI are planning a joint conference in Toronto in 2006.

Across the boundaries

For many years SI has run a correspondence training course, now available on CD-ROM with accompanying booklets. ASI is planning to lease the course and create an American version, while IASC/SCAD is considering a scheme whereby members would buy the course from SI, although the record of their achievement would be kept in Canada. Some issues still to be resolved are whether successful completion of the course would lead to ‘accreditation’ status, what should be done about the country-specific aspects of the course (such as taxation law, and use of the British standard) and whether there would be local support for students taking the course (IASC/SCAD Bulletin, Summer 2004: 14–15).

The proposal by Janet Shuter (SI) for an international good practice website has been turned into reality with the launch of an initial site at www.aboutindexing.info. To promote its use by developers internationally, the aboutindexing.info website uses a WikiWikiWeb, that is, an ‘open-editing’ system where the emphasis is on collaboration on documents rather than the simple browsing or viewing of them.

The detailed proposal for a good practice resource is on the site. Anyone is welcome to add comments to the site itself, but people interested in helping with development might like to email Janet (shuter@cix.co.uk).

And finally

Thanks to Qin Banglian, Seth Maislin, Tords Flath, Jane Coulter, Noeline Bridge, and Madely du Preez for contributions to this column. Thanks also to people who sent information to these corresponding members. Apologies for material I have had to cut severely for space reasons.

If you know of any interesting indexing events which you think might be included in a future issue, please send details to your corresponding member (details on the inside front cover of The Indexer) or directly to me at world@theindexer.org. It would be particularly helpful to have material for ‘Other news’ (that is, non-society news).

The policemen of literature

In his column in the Boston Globe of 21 October 2004, Alex Bream wrote:

A reader writes: “It may be time for a witty column on ‘Whatever Happened to the Index?’ I love Jim [James] Carroll dearly, but his publisher has cashiered the index for his newest book, ‘Crusade: Chronicles of an Unjust War,’ leaving those who might want to rely upon his words searching through the entire book for the desired point.”

Indexes, subject of. They might be called the policemen of literature; they never seem to be around when you need them. (Although Carroll said in an interview he didn’t think “Crusade,” a collection of columns, needed an index.) My Bible doesn’t come with an index, which would come in handy when trying to untangle the two Lazarus stories, or for that matter the various Simons and Marys. “Common Ground,” J. Anthony Lukas’s biblical account of Boston’s racial politics in the 1960s and 1970s, was published without an index, much to the chagrin of many locals mentioned therein.

There are books no one would dream of reading, but a quick trip through the index would be quite rewarding. The classic example is “The Andy Warhol Diaries” for which both Spy and Fame magazines published pullout indexes in 1989. Spy’s is better remembered, perhaps for entries such as these: “Beaty, Warren . . . called disgusting by Jacqueline Onassis for mysterious act in hallway;” or “Nureyev, Rudolf . . . awful dancing of.”

I assumed that a trawl of the reviews of Carroll’s book would produce a clutch of complaints about the lack of an index. Not at all: not a single mention of the problem mentioned by Bream’s reader. But if it is true (Dolhenty Archive 22 October 2004 at http://radicalacademy.com/bookreviewcarroll.htm) that

This is a book not to be read in one sitting, but to be read in fits and spurts. Publications of this type, reprints of essays without a logical common thread binding them all together, can be difficult to handle all at one time.

Perhaps an index would indeed have helped.

MM
Audrey Judkins

Many society members will be aware of the death, in October 2004, of Audrey Judkins. Many will have known her and will have personal memories of her quiet, kind and practical character, but because of her modesty, few will be aware of all her achievements.

While bringing up a family in Hartlepool she worked as a bursar in a large comprehensive school. She studied with the Open University and, in 1988, gained a BA before taking courses in indexing. She was accredited by the SI and qualified with BIPT which provided her with a broad-based and thorough training.

History was Audrey’s main interest but her choice of specialist subjects included management and business, social sciences and ecology. Her academic understanding enabled her to compile indexes to titles such as *Accounts demystified* and *Business policy*, while her practical skills made her an invaluable member of the North East group for which she was treasurer. Her contribution to the very successful 1998 Tynemouth conference is recalled fondly by fellow organizers, Liz Cook and Drusilla Calvert.

In 1999 Audrey moved to Alton in Hampshire to be near her son, Martin, and his young family. Since she had had a long interest in the life and work of Jane Austen, it was a happy coincidence that her new home was only a mile from Chawton, famed as the Austen family’s village. Audrey volunteered to work in the library (originally the kitchen of Jane’s cottage), which gave her yet another opportunity for intellectual nourishment as well as providing a service for current and future researchers. Her remit was to bring together the information contained in the numerous books and journals by or about Jane into one single index using a complex classification system designed by the curator. In the article ‘Below stairs’ in *Sidelights* (Winter 2002), Audrey describes the demands and rewards of this enormous task and the pleasure she derived from meeting other Austen aficionados from places as far away as China and America.

Her knowledge and experience as an indexer of historical works made her the perfect choice to write an article for the reference starting points series in *Sidelights* (Winter 2001). In this she relates with obvious delight the story of finding an original 1879 copy of Wheatley’s *What is an index?* in a Hay-on-Wye bookshop. This volume has subsequently been reissued by the SI.

Audrey’s other achievements and interests were varied. As a young woman she was a top road racing cyclist, and after retirement became an enthusiastic swimmer, clocking up over one million lengths. She was very active in the St John Ambulance Brigade. She led a team which won the National final of their first aid competition in 1963 and spent many hours performing voluntary duties at various public events before becoming Area President for Durham. After retiring, she became an Officer Sister of the Order of St John of Jerusalem. In Alton she taught reading to primary school children and took an interest in her son’s flying career, often following Martin on gliding trips from Lasham airfield around the local countryside.

The Hampshire group, which Audrey founded following the 2001 Cambridge conference, will miss her company and gentle style of leadership.

Elizabeth Ball

Christie Theron

It was with great sadness we received the news of Christie Theron’s passing away on Sunday, 2 January 2005. Christie had been a lecturer in the Department of Information Science at the University of South Africa since 1979. As a long-term member of LIASA (the Library and Information Association of South Africa), he was committed to its vision and willingly served on the Representative Council as Chairman of the Research, Education and Training Interest Group (RETIG) for the 2002–04 term.

Christie had been a member of the Executive Committee of ASAIB (the Association of Southern African Indexers and Bibliographers) for the past five years. He was also responsible for the *Indexer’s ‘Around the world’* column. His loyalty, enthusiasm and sense of humour will certainly be missed.

Christie had a passion for book collecting, information technology and philosophy. At the time of his death, he was writing a thesis on ‘Separate personal book collections in urban public and university libraries in South Africa’. He was especially interested in Africana and Afrikaans literature, and has built up an extensive personal book collection over the years.

Marlene Burger, ASAIB Chairperson

Frank Merrett

It is with great sadness that we announce the sudden death on 12 March 2005 of Dr Frank Merrett. Frank played an important part in the life of SI, most notably as Treasurer, a post from which he had only recently retired. He was the *Indexer* subscriptions manager, a post he still held at the time of his death. He was also heavily involved in organizing the 2002 SI conference in Cheltenham. In everything he did Frank showed both enthusiasm and determination, and we have much to thank him for.

A full obituary will be provided in the October 2005 issue.

Maureen MacGlashan
The Indexer thirty years ago

Hazel K. Bell

The April 1975 issue of The Indexer, Volume 9, No. 3, consisted of 40 pages. K. Boodson opened it with seven pages on ‘Indexing a bibliographical guide’: to wit, a collection of over 4000 abstracts from the literature on non-ferrous metals, for which he had been awarded the Wheatley Medal for 1973.

This issue was much concerned with the Wheatley. An ‘open letter’ from J. F. W. Bryon had been published in New Library World, and was reprinted here, with a half-page introduction (presumably by the editor, L. M. Harrod) commenting:

It is believed that this is a matter of concern to all serious book and periodical indexers. . . . Whether the conditions of making the present award should be altered considerably, or an additional award offered for another aspect of indexing . . . are what has to be decided.

Bryon claimed to be the ‘initiator of the concept of making an annual award to encourage the better indexing of books’, and considered the making eligible of separately published indexes ‘at best distortion and at worst abandonment of the original concept’. He further suggested that it would be preferable to make the award to the publisher, ‘to make appropriate use of its receipt for publicity purposes, and so, possibly, stimulate rivals to emulation’, rather than rewarding the indexer ‘for the quality of his or her work’.

Following publication of this letter, a public meeting on the subject, ‘Awards for Indexes’, had been held to discuss the issues, with a panel comprising Bryon, an indexer, a librarian and a publisher. Bryon spoke first, restating his case at greater length. He also suggested the publication by SI of a booklet giving the criteria for a good book index, incorporating excerpts from British Standard 3700:1064, to be followed perhaps by ‘a Which-type survey of recent books, indicating the quality of book-indexing in Britain, and comparing the performance of publishers in a “league table”’ – and ‘This might in turn be the spearhead of a crusade for better indexes in books . . . ’. He suggested three slogans:

A good index makes a good book better
No subject book without an index
An index finds a book’s good qualities

Bryon also advocated acknowledgement of indexers in books.

K. G. B. Bakewell reported a joint meeting of SI and the LA’s Cataloguing and Indexing Group at which ‘some disquiet about the Wheatley Medal’ had been revealed; one cause for this being the exclusion of ‘certain kinds of index, such as indexes in the areas of science and technology and indexes compiled by a corporate body rather than an individual’ from eligibility for the award. He himself had successfully proposed ‘that every index published in Britain should be eligible for the Wheatley Medal’.

I. D. Shelley, speaking as a librarian, considered ‘the criteria which the Panel have provided for evaluation of indexes have obviously been drawn up with very special care . . . . But the application of these criteria to the books in any field would be an immensely time-consuming task.’

Michael Wace, putting forward ‘the point of view of a publisher’, thought that a degree of specialization should be introduced, with an award for the best index to a children’s book, one for adult books in the humanities and another for the sciences.

Several letters were printed commenting on the Symposium on selective indexing in the previous Indexer, with a further contribution by Peter Greig. Oliver Stallybrass, acerbic as ever, wrote, ‘The layout of Mr. Borchard’s dual-purpose index, admired by Mr. Collison, seems to me “very carefully designed” for maximum waste of space.’ He also advocated the use of passim; the journal’s Hon. Ed. could not forbear to denounce this in four stern paragraphs in square brackets.

Kebreab W. Giorgis provided over two pages on ‘Entry word in Ethiopian names’.

Several official bodies in the information science world were featured in this issue. Fred Blum wrote three pages on ANSI (American National Standards Institute) Committee Z39; Michael Bardwell, two on Documentation Standards at BSI; and Toni Carbo Bearman, one on the National Federation of Abstracting and Indexing Services. There were reports of activities of Cranfield Conference on Mechanised Information Storage and Retrieval Systems; the International Standards Organization Subcommittee on Documentation Terminology; and NATO’s Advisory Group for Aerospace Research & Development. The publication was announced of a cumulative index to LISA (Library and Information Science Abstracts), 1969–73, and Unesco: IBE’s education thesaurus. The American Society of Indexers had produced a guideline to specifications for printed indexes, which was reproduced in full.

‘Personalia’ reported several books by SI members. President G. Norman Knight had had his fifth book published: King, Queen and Knight: A chess anthology; John L. Thornton, a Vice-President, was co-editor of and contributor to The Royal Hospital of Saint Bartholomew, 1123–1973; and Margaret Anderson, with her husband, had written a book on the spas of Britain, Vanishing Spas. L. M. Harrod had completed the updating of the third edition of his Librarian’s Glossary . . . And Reference Book.

‘Extracts from reviews’ ran to four pages, mostly submitted by Bruce Harling. Five books were reviewed.
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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 readers 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.

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

Indexes praised


Credit must also go to the publisher who, very wisely, has not stinted in providing excellent additional features – lavish illustrations, maps, important appendices, a stunning index and, in my favourite, an annotated bibliography full of insightful but often dryly wicked remarks . . . This is, surely, an award-winning work, and one that not just professional naval historians will want to possess. [Index by SI member John Noble.]


This book will be indispensable to Hardy scholars; the editor has done an excellent job, the notes are helpful and exhaustive. But I don’t believe you need to be a Hardy buff to value it. Well-indexed, done an excellent job, the notes are helpful and exhaustive. But I... [Index by SI member John Noble.]


There is added an interesting index of the sources for the quotations, author by author.


A good index completes the book.


The best thing we can say about the index to a poetry anthology is that it’s reliable. But the index to Being Alive does more than that; it quietly advertises one of the mysteries of late 20th-century poetry – by putting, after the name of the contributor Rosemary Tonks, ’b. London, 1932: disappeared 1970s’.


It is always instructive when getting the measure of a new book to inspect the index first. This is both to get a sense of the author’s emphases and interests and because a careful and well made index betokens thoroughness, clarity and originality. One would expect the latter qualities from Eric de Bellaigue, an elegant, incisive and often heterodox chronicler of the massive changes that have overtaken the British publishing business in the last forty years. And characteristically his index throws up some surprises: that Stephen King receives more entries than Peter Mayer is intriguing, and it suggests a pleasing sense of historical perspective to discover the Bodleian Head has as many entries as Bloomsbury Publishing. It is somehow satisfying to see that Salman Rushdie has more entries than Robert Maxwell, while the two most-cited individual publishers are Michael Joseph and Richard Charkin, prompting thoughts of a most interesting partnership. The index is indeed well-constructed and thorough and in its dry, spare style conveys exactly the essence and the outlook of this most welcome book. [Index by the author.]


The abbreviations list is thorough and the index of websites excellent, giving page references and URLs for quick location. Essential for a source citing websites, practical tips are included, such as using site maps and search facilities on each website if a particular page cannot be found.


Minutes of town council sessions are a rich source for almost every aspect of government and daily life in the sixteenth century. Although these records have survived for many German cities from the late medieval period onwards, there is hardly a printed index to this important source of information. The Municipal Archives in Cologne deserve praise for a six-volume edition of abstracts from the minutes of proceedings and decisions taken by the aldermen in one of Germany’s largest and most important imperial cities. The first volume in this series appeared in 1989 – see SCJ 20 (1989): 360–61. It took more than fourteen years before the final volume (including indexes) of this invaluable series of town records could appear. Both editors are to be thanked not only for their painstaking work, but also for their perseverance. It would have been difficult to use the five volumes without such an index. Now we finally have what the community of early modern scholars have been waiting for, namely a reliable index to persons, places, and subjects. Thus it is easy, for example, to trace the careers of town council members and local officials. The subject index proves that not only highly important political and judicial matters were discussed in the sessions of the town council, but also poultry, head money, the diet of prisoners, and other more trivial issues were also...
a matter of concern to the magistrates. The subject index is a real bonanza for those who look for references that are hard to find in other records. Moreover, medical historians too will find access to documents relating not only to disease management in times of plague but also to pertinent issues, such as stench in the streets, cripples, corpses, and so forth. [Oh, good.]


One of the most entertaining parts of this always entertaining book is its index: ‘Facial hair, the musical influence of’ is sandwiched between ‘Face, vibrating’ and ‘Faith, the mystery of, obliterated’. But, as befits a traditionalist, even one as angry and eccentric as Bywater, ‘God’ has the highest number of entries, followed by ‘Men’, ‘Man’, ‘Women’, ‘Love’. Then come ‘American’ and ‘Dogs’, which last category includes such entries as ‘enforcing democracy’, ‘pink fluffy, urgent need for’, and ‘vomit, role in men’s clothing’. The index will show you Bywater’s enormous range of interests, humour, and opinions: it doesn’t quite reveal his style, which can deal, straight-faced and scholarly, with the character of Noddy just as it can with the loss of God.


More than 100 terms are arranged alphabetically, supported by an index which picks out key references and alternative ways of referring to the same or similar concepts.


Howgego has obviously been at work for many years on this project with its useful and many cross-references, its bibliography for every article, its indexes of persons and (a poetical work in its own right) of ships. The result is a marvellously rich, punctiliously researched, ambitiously wide-reaching reference work, unrivalled in accuracy and scope.


For starters, even though it is bulky, this book is in many ways very cook-friendly. A glossary includes many recently discovered ingredients, and the index is extensive and arranged sensibly. If I should happen to find that I have, say, some leftover leeks, I can easily find a nice handful of recipes, from the simple to the complex, to fit the bill. [But see a different view of the index under ‘Indexes censured’.]


Nicely produced and a first-rate index, which a book of this nature demands. [The book won the Boardman Tasker Award for Mountaineering Literature.]


The final pages feature an invaluable index, cross-referenced firstly by activity and secondly by organisation.


It is extensively indexed, a help to the trainee on any surgical ward round to refer to the book, as and when necessary.


The index is very good, and makes an already useful book even more so (especially as the chapter titles aren’t always helpful).


Finally, and to please all readers, there are plentiful and legible on-page illustrations, including various maps and facsimile reproductions of documents, and a useful index.


The endnotes, bibliography and indices [sic] are compact and helpful.


The index is comprehensive and very useful, as is the excellent list of organisations to help parents, which includes phone numbers and websites.


. . . the text, notes, and indices [sic] of In Lamentationes Sanctissimi Ieremiae Prophetiae are superbly set out to provide another fine volume in this important series [Sixteenth Century Essays and Studies], [Indexing and ‘setting out’ by ASI member Paula Presley.]


If a book has an index, I turn to it straight away to find topics of interest and then read the relevant pages. After this, I peruse all the pages from ‘A’ to ‘Z’ as this reveals the author’s prejudices, priorities and competence. A good index is a fast track to the heart of a book and that of its author, Samuel Walker’s Three Mile Island has an excellent index.

Weidenfeld & Nicolson: Harold Nicolson: Diaries and Letters...
As editor, Nigel Nicolson could not have served his father better. There’s a full and helpful index. Footnotes appear, where needed, on the same page as the text.


Thomas has researched in all the available Spanish and Latin American archives. He seems to have read all the sources. The index is a masterpiece. [Index by SI member Douglas Matthews.]

Two cheers!


This major work of reference [The library...lacks a good general index. There is a valuable index of references to Swift’s writings and correspondence, and an index of printers perversely arranged by town of publication rather than by name. Both supply page-references. On the other hand, the indexes of authors and subjects give no page-references and function merely as inert lists, of interest, but of limited use. The authors are given by nationality, rather than in a single inclusive index, an impediment to efficient searching. It is difficult to see why printers of volumes Swift owned should be better indexed than the authors he read. Nevertheless, these volumes are an indispensable contribution.

It would appear that indexing, and user-friendly formatting of reference material, are not the strong suit of the publisher. The first three volumes of The Correspondence [...] are unindexed, though a cumulative index will presumably appear in the fourth volume.


... overall production qualities are excellent, including a substantial and well organised index. A separate illustrations index could have been useful.


Succinct and compact, the index to Geiger’s work (comprising four full pages) lacks headings for a number of concepts given considerable attention throughout the work itself: brand name, elitism, genomics, inflation, interdisciplinary studies, jackpot patenting, political correctness, ‘sticker price,’ student loan culture, testing industry. These are topics the serious reader may wish to return to but the index makes that nearly impossible. Index entries for several important subjects, e.g., ‘privatization’ and ‘entrepreneurship,’ are very sparse although the book is filled with discussions of these topics. A valuable figure referenced numerous times, ‘Feedback Loop for Qualitative Competition among Selective Institutions’ [page 82], is not indexed, though it can be easily located from the table of contents. Geiger’s main index entries have only a few subheadings that seem to be arranged in no particular order. However, because of their very small number, it is not troublesome to scan them quickly for an item of interest. On the plus side, some endnotes are indexed by both author and subject.

Indexes censured


The index is a bad joke (try looking up ‘happiness’ or ‘Gainsborough’). Is it meant to be a parody?


I enjoyed Mackie’s account of the North Sea oil industry. But I would have enjoyed it a lot more if it had included a decent index (something that publishers seem increasingly reluctant to include). The book would also have benefited from a glossary of technical terms and maybe a map or two. They would have added hugely to the usefulness of what is a loosely written but very readable history [of the industry] that saved Britain’s (and certainly Thatcher’s) bacon in the storm-tossed 1980s.


Despite a very useful bibliography (and an almost useless index) at the end, the work of two editors might have been more justified had a little more effort been expended to smooth out the wrinkles presented by multiple citations and redundancies.

While, with a solid introduction, a full index, and attention to the flow of the essays to justify the book form, this volume might and should have been very interesting to scholars in general, as it stands, it will probably be of more limited use – as a collection of papers for specialists already in the know.


Dense with information as the appendices are, it would not be easy to use [this book] as a reference book. The index is short and quirky. (Who is going to look for the brief copyright window under ‘B’?)


One small problem – the book’s index leaves much to be desired. Before I started reading, I checked the index for some favourite groups such as the Mamas and the Papas and the Byrds, but neither was listed. While going through the book, however, I saw references to both groups. Some further spot checking also indicated that certain mentions in the text of the Beach Boys and the Who were not noted in the index. I have a strong suspicion that this is also true for other performers. But this is a quibble. In sum, this book is an informative stroll down the road of Rock history that fans will find entertaining.

There are other eyebrow-raisers here, too. At least twice, there’s the gaffe of the Church of England having an Archbishop’s Council when, as everyone in the land knows, it’s an Archbishops’ Council (the apostrophe after the s). Then, in the index, the Queen is said to be HRH. Oh dear.


(I have a quibble with the index of this book. Quick Cassoulet isn’t listed under ‘Cassoulet,’ but you can find it as ‘Quick Cassoulet’ and under ‘Beans,’ ‘Chicken’ and ‘Turkey.’)


... this ambitious work would have benefited from a firmer hand... cross-referencing is patchy and the index inadequate.


On the minus side, Kirp provides no consolidated bibliography or list of references – a considerable disservice to researchers. The endnote apparatus is frustrating, with numerous instances of incomplete citations. What is one to make of endnote 38 to chapter 10, with its maddeningly uninformative reference ‘Marginson, “Going Global”’, especially if the reader has not been consulting all the endnotes? A backward search through the earlier endnotes to chapter 10 does not immediately produce the Marginson citation even though it is actually quite nearby. Why? Because the full citation is buried within a long comment in endnote 36. The index, rich in personal names, is of no help: it does not list Marginson... The index, eleven pages in length, more generous than in many other academic works, suffers from very serious deficiencies that mark the work of an amateur indexer. Several major topics, e.g., economic issues, higher education, marketplace, are overbroad, duplicate the book’s main topics, and carry far too many locators that should have been properly subdivided. Marketplace comprises but a single, unsubdivided entry running to three-quarters of a column. Economic issues, about two-thirds of a column, is similarly arranged. Both entries are cumbersome and time-consuming to use: their subentries are merely entered according to their page number sequences, and thus are next to useless. These arrangements defy the most elementary principle of arranging large numbers of subentries: to be serviceable, they must be alphabetized by subtopic, not sequenced by page number. In one instance, a locator purports to point to a page referring to the magazine U.S. News and World Report, but the magazine actually discussed on that page is Time. Yet Time magazine itself has no index entry. Although the index contains a great many personal names, there is no entry for Rupert Murdoch, the well-known publishing magnate, and none for James Neal, Columbia’s University Librarian and Vice President for Information Services. Neal’s highly cogent comment on Columbia’s failed Fathom project is buried in an endnote on page 295, accessible only under Fathom, not under Neal. Several personal name entries lack their full complement of locators.


Reichl’s faith in this book is evident in some of the hyperbole around the recipes. You’ll find ‘the world’s best sticky bun recipe,’ ‘the best mac and cheese on the planet’ and the ‘ultimate chocolate birthday cake’ among the dishes here. (But you might have to search harder than you’d like; the index has some odd quirks. You won’t, for instance, find that sticky bun recipe under ‘sticky,’ ‘bun,’ or ‘pecan,’ but rather at ‘breads – buns, pecan currant sticky.’)


Another gripe is that the index is patchy and – surprisingly for a book that draws some controversial conclusions – there are no footnotes.


The citations giving the origin and development of many proverbs are excellent and very useful. I was less convinced by the Thematic Index at the back of the book, as I could not imagine an occasion where I would want to trace a quotation in this way, and the headings seemed rather strange, as if someone had had the idea that such an index would be useful and then had to strain to find appropriate entries.


I and several colleagues felt the index would be difficult to use by undergraduates or other users who have not yet acquired a reasonable knowledge of periodontal terminology. There is, for instance, no direct lead to ‘Risk Factors’, although all are well described and discussed under various headings.

Indexes omitted


Although there is no index or appendices, the clear structure of the book means that this is not a big problem. [Be that as it may, these are strange omissions for a book published by the American Library Association and aimed at would-be information professionals.]


An index is badly needed.


Kathy Watson has achieved the rare combination of sensitive, meticulous research with readability. The only omissions are a bibliography and index.
Brookes’s citations raise a sore point. This book has no references, bibliography or index to support its lively narrative: Bloomsbury should be ashamed.


Brookes, who worked in the Galton lab before becoming a biographer, has tapped into a vast archive of Galtoniana, although I can’t understand how his editors allowed him to get away without a single reference or even an index.


... Damian Thompson ... is a gentle editor. An incident mentioned by one contributor is enlarged on by another. But he should have insisted on an index.


Every now and again – thankfully rarely – a book appears that can only be described as ... ‘unreliable’.

On purchasing this book, one immediate disappointment for a publication of this type becomes apparent: the lack of an index. When will publishers realise that books that give the appearance of an authoritative reference work are emasculated by the absence of the ability to use it, that is, an index? But in making my own index the book’s many errors became apparent – and perhaps it was wise not to include one after all ... It all adds up to a lack of reliability, and perhaps, as has been suggested elsewhere, reflects a wish to hurry up the publication. I find it frustrating – and disappointing, because its publication would otherwise yield 11 mentions for Mary Wollstonecraft but not one for Virginia Woolf? Why is there no index at all for the first volume?


Naughtie, well-known for his broadcasts on the Today and other programmes and a distinguished former lobby correspondent of the Guardian, mainly deserts a chronological approach for a series of essays on Blair. The book is thus circular rather than linear, and there is a good deal of repetition, which is inevitably irritating. Additional minor irritations are the absence of source notes and an index.


It has no index.


I must, however, take the author to task for his omission of an index. I found myself composing my own as I went along ...


Another little quirk, a more harmless version of Marr’s front-page folly [his unconventional redesign of The Independent’s front page], is to abandon the use of an index. It is not an oversight or due to time or cost pressure, but a deliberate omission. Why? Because he wants readers to treat it as a ‘reflective and relaxed book’ rather than a reference source. In fact, it makes it irritating and frustrating.


I could quibble more. The book lacks an index because he wants the text to be ‘reflective and relaxed’ – it is – and not a reference source. But if he does not want young journalists thumbing his pages for tips, why include mini-chapters such as ‘How to be a columnnist’? As a technical description of techniques for turning the porridge of opinion into 1000 palatable words, the section is very good. For that reason, I am sure, it will become a set text for journalism courses. Yet that sits oddly with Marr’s motives for dispensing with an index.


I think Marr and his publishers made a mistake by not including an index (the sheer number of names justifies one) but that’s a minor complaint. [But one voiced by several reviewers!]

Indexes reviewed


No doubt to the horror of any professional historian, Ross doesn’t bother to verify his assertions or check his sources – and doesn’t really care. Moreover the lack of any index means that Desire Lines will only really be at home stuffed into the car’s glove compartment.


Another little quirk, a more harmless version of Marr’s front-page folly [his unconventional redesign of The Independent’s front page], is to abandon the use of an index. It is not an oversight or due to time or cost pressure, but a deliberate omission. Why? Because he wants readers to treat it as a ‘reflective and relaxed book’ rather than a reference source. In fact, it makes it irritating and frustrating.


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I think Marr and his publishers made a mistake by not including an index (the sheer number of names justifies one) but that’s a minor complaint. [But one voiced by several reviewers!]

Apart from its infuriating lack of an index, it’s one of the best books about journalism I’ve read . . . Finally, and crucially, what is Marr playing at by not having an index? He says it is a ‘deliberate omission’, because he wants people to enjoy a ‘reflective read’ rather than use My Trade as a reference book. Oh, for heaven’s sake, Andrew! Surely the first task of a journalist is to make things easy for the reader. The lack of an index does the opposite. So come on, Marr, in what I hope will be numerous later and updated editions, give us that index. [Roger Alton is editor of The Observer.]


However, I have two serious complaints. First, there are a staggering number of typographical mistakes. The text has obviously ever bin sub-edited by a humane, only by some miserable computer spell-check programme. But most of the text is intelligible. The other sadness is the lack of an index, which makes it difficult to use the book as the work of reference that it ought to be.


There is no index, so it would be difficult to use the book for reference.


Points off however for neglecting to provide an index. [Oula Jones, who sent this item, writes, ‘I couldn’t believe my eyes when I picked up this book, which goes with a very high-profile TV series.’]


We like that more than 30 percent of the book’s photos never appeared in the magazine and that an outside writer was hired to put it together so the book is not a re-tread of recent cover issues. But it needs details on where to buy the stuff pictured, or at least an index in the back of the book.


The single bad thing about it is that it doesn’t contain an index. Then again, that’s a good thing, because it means you have to read all of it.


But the book could have done with an index. Perhaps the publishers thought that no one would want to revisit it or seek out a particular reference; but that is precisely one of the pleasures of a volume such as this.

Obiter dicta

What do Alexander the Great, Julius Caesar, Genghis Khan, Napoleon, Mussolini and Hitler have in common? . . . All are reputed to have suffered from ailurophobia – the fear of cats . . . frankly, there aren’t enough hours in my life to trawl through tomes on much-examined historical figures. Someone who has looked into the matter is Katharine MacDonogh, author of Reing Cat and Dogs: A History of Pets at Court Since the Renaissance (St Martin’s Press, 1999). She writes, ‘No record exists of Napoleon either liking or disliking cats’, and I believe her, because the book is extensively indexed, and MacDonogh is, in fact, a historian, rather than someone who just happens to like cats a great deal.


Bernard Levin, who has died at the age of 75 . . . was also a fervent believer in indexes, without which a book is as much use as stockings sans suspenders. His indexer was Oula Jones, based in Portobello, who, he hoped, ‘rubbed her hands with glee’ when told that a new book of his was on its way. Alas, no more.


Adam Smith’s book The Wealth of Nations is a treasure trove; he really is the economist for all ages. Take any topic and he has shrewd insights. The index alone shows his qualities: Potatoes, why women who eat them are more handsome; Smuggling – tempting but ruinous; The fur trade – why Scottish beavers are extinct; Lawyers – the enormity of their fees; Wine – cheapness enhances sobriety; Scotland – pernicious tendencies explained; Idleness . . . see lawyers; Lotteries – for losers.

Leafing through the Kirkcaldy sage again this week, his advice on the proposed new M6 toll leaps out. Here it is in the index: ‘Why government ought not to have the management of turnpikes.’ His theme is that taxation travel will just be too tempting for the politicians.

John Blundell, The Scotsman, 12 July 2004

. . . I turn to the index – which, as everyone knows, is the only part of books by politicians anyone ever reads with interest – of John Redwood’s Singing the Blues: The Once and Future Conservaties . . . ‘Major, John,’ begins a hefty section, ‘characteristic equivocation of, 118; and difficulties with election promises, 120; discourages sensible debate in Cabinet, 131; and Europe, 22, 152, 283, 285, 295; and ERM, 98, 110–111, 124, 286; foolish decisions of, 133; lets down people, 138; makes claims in memoirs, 125; makes right decision to resign, 140–41 . . . takes wrong course of action over Maastricht, 127.’ Oh dear. Honi soit qui mal y pense, pointy ears. When we turn to the index of Mr Major’s autobiography, what do we find? ‘Redwood, John: Citizen’s Charter, 258; assumed to be disloyal, 342 . . .’

The Questing Vole, The Spectator, 16 October 2004

The index to Roy Porter’s masterly [London: a social history] (Hamish Hamilton, 1994), is no doubt technically competent in the ‘dry’ sense but signally fails, at least for this reviewer, to reflect the richness of the text and serves its purpose poorly in consequence. The book would have benefited from exactly the kind of detailed and interpretive index that Bell considers appropriate for ‘softer’ texts.

John Edmondson, review of Hazel Bell’s Indexing Biographies, LOGOS, 15(3).

Indexing my book. Fun, discovery of, in unexpected places. I had expected it to be drudgery but quite the reverse: I approach it with delight each morning, a bit like going through old photos. (Attractiveness, discovery of one’s own previous, bitter-sweet sensations upon.) Gradually the picture builds up.

Perhaps that’s how we really think. We don’t do the index in order to navigate the text; we have to write the text so that we can compile the index. Our last thoughts are not eschatology, but rather than someone who just happens to like cats a great deal.
in alphabetical order, with cross-references.

Michael Bywater, ‘Putting life in (alphabetical) order’, Independent on Sunday, 1 August 2004.

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The Clindex revisited


A random index scan of My Life yields famous names stacked between policy references, a place where only the most important get a page number. A single perusal can span the globe: What begins with Arafat, Yasser, goes to Bandar, Prince; Gore, Albert, Jr.; Imus, Don; Mandela, Nelson; Mitterrand, Francois; Starr, Kenneth; Streisand, Barbara.

Even Teresa, Mother.

References to the Clintons outnumber all others (i.e. ‘Clinton relationship, mutual love in’), but an array of other characters appears, too. A reference is a nod to a person’s importance in the Washington universe (NBC’s Tim Russert is listed), while an omission can be seen as a slight. (What? No Chris Matthews from Hardball?)

In the capital’s bookstores, people are searching for themselves – and not in the existential sense. ‘People at cocktail parties may not talk about looking for their names, but you can bet that’s what they talk about when they go home,’ says former White House chief of staff Leon Panetta (pages 459–62, 488, 535, etc.).

The index of Clinton’s My Life is 38 pages of status anxiety. Panetta considers the index-scan a must.

‘To be honest,’ says Panetta, ‘when I get the book, I’ll do the same thing.’

Some names that appear in the book – Clinton’s pre-Hillary girlfriends, for example – are not referenced in the index. But in general, the list is relentless. Of all the sections of the book, it could be the most heavily read . . .

To some, the index has disappointed: Those who thumb to a particular page seeking praise or censure instead may just find a clinical report, no emotions attached, a simple recounting of a name and a job.

Washington lawyer Plato Cacheris was not surprised he wasn’t mentioned in the book – as one of Monica Lewinsky’s attorneys, he didn’t expect to be – but he took umbrage on behalf of Bob Bennett, one of Clinton’s lawyers in the impeachment scandal. In Clinton’s book, two references to Bennett mention him without editorial comment; a third reference in the index actually leads to a different Bob Bennett, one of Clinton’s attorneys, he didn’t expect to be – but he took umbrage on behalf of Bob Bennett, one of Clinton’s lawyers in the impeachment scandal. In Clinton’s book, two references to Bennett mention him without editorial comment; a third reference in the index actually leads to a different Bob Bennett, a Republican senator from Utah.


So here’s some advice for public figures who would like their books to be read on publication, rather than just toted and cited. Remember to forget a proper index. Future scholars and students will curse you, with good reason. But your central arguments will run a lower risk of being drowned out by the sound of a legion of page-riffling pundits as they look up – let us say – ‘Lewinsky, Monica’, and take it from there. My Life, by the way, contains a truly magnificent index: 38 exemplary pages, with all the major topics minutely subdivided as well.


The hottest index right now is, of course, the ‘Clindex,’ the list of names at the back of My Life, by Bill Clinton. But beware: plenty of names in the book are not in the index. In a 957-page tome, which few in Washington will read word-for-word, that’s almost as bad as not being mentioned at all . . .

It turns out that the production schedule for My Life was so rushed that the index was cobbled together in just a few days.


For less ideologically goaded readers, it was an act of heroic honesty on Knopf’s part – and just plain heroism, given Clinton’s last-minute delivery – to provide this book with an index. Decades from now, all those fading thumbprints alongside ‘Flowers, Gennifer’ and ‘Lewinsky, Monica’ will be of use in authenticating first editions, and only true sentimentalists will leave a similar smudge next to ‘Dole, Bob, 1996 election and.’


The Indexer Vol. 24 No. 3 April 2005
Book reviews
Edited by Maureen MacGlashan and Nancy Mulvany

Indexing


This collection of essays is an essential addition to the library of taxonomists and indexers interested in enlarging their work to include thesauri. Bringing together many of the major theorists and practitioners, the editors have provided a wide view of thesauri and their importance in contemporary search activities. This is truly a resource book: the essays cover many important aspects of thesaurus construction, and list a truly amazing amount of further resources on every aspect. It’s a great starting point from which the interested reader can carry on.

Jean Aitchison and Stella Dextre Clarke summarize the history of thesauri, allowing the reader to realize just how much of a foundation was laid 50 years ago. Ms Aitchison’s Thesaurus construction and use: a practical manual has been a standard on bookshelves for years, and many have valued her practical advice many times in their own work. She and Ms Clarke cover the major developments and ideas since the first unpublished information retrieval thesaurus and bring the concept quickly up-to-date by discussing ontologies and the needs for new standards.

Alan R. Thomas develops a self-teaching guide for new thesaurus designer wannabes. His ‘Teach yourself thesaurus’ piece not only breaks down a process for learning the art and craft, but gives a list of resources for reading and analysis that covers each learning phase. James R. Shearer follows this with ‘A practical exercise in building a thesaurus’. The use of a real example is invaluable for learning construction and raising the issues that come with categorization in any human endeavor. I have to admit, my arrangement of Shearer’s example did not resemble his, and I spent time thinking through the reasons for that result. People take differing approaches to categorization, and the environment you work in can frame the categories you choose. It’s a great exercise to work this example without peeking and compare your results.

As if guessing that I would be examining the issues that resulted from Shearer’s example and my own interpretation, Marianne Lukke Nielsen’s ‘Thesaurus construction: key issues and selected readings’ follows Shearer. Nielsen discusses issues such as the differences between classical thesauri and searching thesauri, the approaches used by corporate taxonomies, problems in work process, user-centered approaches, term collection issues, organizational concepts, and automatic thesaurus construction. An extensive list of references and readings is summarized.

Leonard Will’s ‘Thesaurus consultancy’ should be mandatory reading before working on a first contract as a taxonomist. His discussion of the role, benefits and expectations of working with a consultant or as a consultant are clear, and will help the potential contractor to redefine the contract and understand potential issues.

Leslie Ann Owens and Pauline Atherton Cochrane then discuss how to analyze the effectiveness of a thesaurus in use. Studies to evaluate the value of thesauri have a long history of their own, and these efforts are summarized for the reader. Formative, observational, constructive, and comparative methods of evaluation are defined, and sample forms and questions from the study are provided.

Continuing the theme of real-world value, Jane Greenberg describes the role of user education in ‘User comprehension and searching with information retrieval thesauri’. Her studies indicate a rise in valid retrieval rates after students have a short introduction to thesauri components and their use in searching in highly controlled databases. Thesauri are not the simplest method of search available, but her study finds students are more open to using this method once they understand the concepts and benefits. The thesaurus interface is an important component: it must allow interaction in the process.

But the latest, hottest use of thesauri is occurring on the Wild West of the web. Eric H. Johnson discusses the drawbacks of web searching in browsers and the need for a web services thesaurus application. He describes how XML thesaurus protocols could facilitate the user’s search experience, the kind of functionality such an application would need, and the possibilities of cross-thesauri searching through a UDDI registry. He also describes additional benefits of a web services application, such as expanding queries and populating concept spaces with suggested search terms.

Melissa Riesland follows with an overview of the software packages available for constructing thesauri. She begins by defining classification, notation and controlled vocabularies, and walks through the importance of relationships, trees, networks and structures. She gives the reader a good understanding of the continuum of vocabulary structures, ending at XML topic maps. Her software survey and assessment of features and user needs is an invaluable checklist.

Patrice Landry summarizes the efforts to establish a true ‘Global Village Library’ and details the history of the MACS Project. MACS is an effort to provide multilingual search access to databases by linking or mapping subject heading languages across domains in four languages. Landry outlines a brief history of multilingual projects, lays out the standards involved, and discusses the use of ‘linguistic proximity’ as the goal for users’ searches. MACS Link Management Interface has been tested on several smaller domains, and major work continues to link further knowledge domains. Other projects involving multilingual subject heading languages are outlined as well.

The final piece is an interview with Dr Amy Warner on the status of the NISO standard Z39.19 Guidelines for the Construction, Format, and Management of Monolingual Thesauri. The interview was conducted in June 2003, and describes the goals that the revision team had for the next version of the standard. That revision is available in PDF form at www.niso.org/standards/resources/z3919.pdf?CFID=5528173&CFTOKEN=27515538

The only disappointments in the book are that it can’t cover every issue in thesaurus design. The breadth of the essay coverage is very good, and the volume brings up all the major issues in the field. Some of us would like a bit more on specific topics, such as cross-linking multiple thesauri, but the references direct us to more information. And the index is a bit weak structurally but perfectly adequate; the reviewer is an indexer, and we must always take ourselves with a grain of salt. Overall, the collection is a valuable introduction to thesaurus construction and appreciation, and does a good job of covering many of the issues, standards, benefits and processes of thesaurus and controlled vocabulary use. The sheer
amount of bibliographic resources in the book ensures that whatever gaps the authors may have left will be filled by following the paths laid out in the references.

Jan C. Wright, indexer, taxonomist, and controller of wild vocabularies

Information searching and retrieval


It is over eight years since I last worked full-time as a librarian. Although I do still return to the fray occasionally, temping or doing contract work, my primary occupation now is as a freelance indexer – mostly of books or other print materials, but I have also ventured into website indexing, dabbled in indexing of other electronic texts, and generally tried to stay on the track of emerging ideas and new developments in ways of getting information from electronic resources.

Anyone who has followed a similar trail will know that it is fairly easy to pick up a basic understanding of metadata as a tool for resource description and subject indexing. Going beyond that, though, in breadth or in depth, can be time-consuming. In my case, there were certainly plenty of gaps in the understanding, and some near-bottomless chasms of ignorance about metadata’s other uses, in and outwith the LIS community.

David Haynes’ book offers plenty of material to help fill those gaps. Its aims are summarized as ‘describing recent progress in metadata standards and applications and focusing on the concepts behind metadata’. The book’s target audience is ‘information professionals who want to develop their knowledge and skills in order to manage metadata effectively, and managers who are faced with strategic decisions about adoption of IT applications that use metadata’.

Haynes first looks at the historical background of the term, and concepts associated with it. He then puts forward his own approach: in place of the usual ‘data about data’, he defines metadata as ‘data that describes the content, format or attributes of a data record or information resource’, applicable to structured or unstructured information, in print or electronic form, and stored either in the resource or in a separate database. Subsequently, he outlines a five-point model of metadata’s purposes: resource description, information retrieval, management of information resources, documenting ownership and authenticity of digital resources, and interoperability.

Two chapters then deal with metadata in general, the first looking at ways of defining, expressing and storing it. Mark-up languages such as XML, with its tags, schemas and Document Type Definitions, embed metadata in the document it refers to; databases of metadata store it separately. Haynes then reviews various contexts in which metadata is used: word processing, cataloguing, records management, e-commerce and content management.

Next, he considers some of the data modelling systems underlying metadata standards. Almost all of those covered were new to me, apart from the Resource Description Framework (to which Haynes supplies the most comprehensible introduction I’ve yet come across). The others discussed are the ABC Ontology, Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records, the Indexes metadata framework, and the Open Archival Information Standard. This chapter ends with a review of metadata standards themselves: Dublin Core and its extensions/derivatives, MARC, ISAD (International Standard Archival Description), ONIX, and standards for multimedia and educational resources.

Haynes then revisits his model of purposes. Each of the five has a chapter devoted to it, providing both an outline of current developments and an introduction to relevant concepts in each of the specific areas. These are followed by a chapter on managing metadata. The five-point model returns again in ‘Looking forward – the future’, this time as a framework for consideration of trends and possible developments in each of the five areas. Finally, he looks at trends in metadata management, speculates on the durability of metadata, and makes some predictions about what the future may hold for it and those who work with it.

The book is chock-a-block with information, on virtually every aspect of metadata. The one omission I can identify is faceted metadata classification: there is no mention of it or its associated language, XFML. Slightly surprising was the absence of any reference to topic maps in the discussion of metadata’s durability and future development. Topic maps share at least two of metadata’s purposes – resource description and information retrieval – but it is not yet clear whether they will compete with metadata in those arenas, or complement it in some way. A discussion of the possibilities could have made interesting reading.

The text is well organized and well presented, each chapter beginning with an overview of its content and ending with a summary, plus a list of references and further reading. A glossary would have been a useful addition, particularly as the index does not immediately identify where definitions of terms can be found.

The index has other weaknesses, too. Its coverage of the text is patchy: ‘artificial intelligence’ refers only to page 98, for example, ignoring the interesting comment on page 176 about the role of AI in future systems; ‘controlled vocabularies’ refers to a major discussion on pages 152–4, but not to the point made on page 138 about their importance to interoperability. Nor can it be depended on to collocate those references which have been indexed. The entry for ‘automatic indexing’ has two references more than the inverted form ‘indexing, automatic’; the page referenced at ‘multimedia, intellectual property rights’ does not appear in the entry for ‘intellectual property rights’; and the same is true of the entries for ‘semantic interoperability’ and ‘interoperability’. Cross-referencing is not always adequately done: there is nothing, for example, to show that information about ‘controlled vocabularies’ may also be found under headings such as ‘thesauri’, ‘taxonomies’ and ‘synonyms’. Finally, the two entries and one cross-reference covering the subject of records retention are badly in need of sorting out.

If all that sounds like nit-picking, it is not; it is groundwork for a point I think important to make. LIS professionals know that a poor index limits the usability of a book for reference purposes. We also claim, as one of our core skills, expertise in organizing information for retrieval. Yet here we have a professional publication, about a new technique in information management and retrieval, in which the traditional, built-in tool of retrieval has not been made to function as it should.

That the defect blights an otherwise excellent book is disappointing. What bothers me even more, though, is this: if we do not, in our own professional literature, demonstrate the ability to make old methods work, what kind of message does that send about our abilities to cope with the new?

Linda Sutherland, freelance indexer and librarian

This review is reprinted, with permission, from elucidate, 1(5), Sept/Oct 2004 (www.ukielg.org.uk).

Information retrieval design: principles and options for information description, organization, display, and access in information retrieval databases, digital libraries, catalogs, and indexes. James D. Anderson and José Pérez-Barceló. St.
Book reviews

Petersburg, FL: Ometeca Institute, 2005, xiv, 617 pp., index. ISBN: 1-9763547-0-5 (pbk, $60.00); 1-9763547-1-3 (hbk, $80.00); 1-9763547-2-1 (ebook, $29.95)

Don’t let the boring title or the considerable heft of this volume warn you off, or the fact that it is billed as a textbook and database manual. This book provides a fascinating discussion of the principles of information access for both novice and more experienced audiences. Perhaps the last word in the title should come first, for indexing is at the heart of this book: its original title was Indexing for information retrieval: the design of indexes for textual databases.

The book is organized around 20 key issues in information (or ‘message’) retrieval, and is based on James Anderson’s (the lead author) 25 years of teaching, designing and evaluating databases, and doing committee work for the US National Information Standards Organization (NISO). It is gracefully written, insightful, and not without touches of humour. The book provides a comprehensive and thorough analysis of what Anderson defines as its crux, the ‘retieval of messages’. By choosing to focus on what he calls messages, Anderson avoids linguistic quibbles over terms such as data, information and knowledge. Messages encompass all of these. A message, we are told, is potential information for a user, ‘encoded in a text, which is recorded on a medium, which together with the text constitutes a document’.

Anderson and his co-author, José Pérez-Carballeiro (who focused on the automatic indexing and interface design sections) seek to describe information retrieval databases, what they must/should include, how they work, and the options available in their design. They methodically and lucidly lead us through all the in and outs of indexing, display and interface. Following are some of the most important topics discussed, each of which commands a chapter: display media, documentary units, indexable matter, analysis and indexing methods, exhaustivity, specificity, displayed vs. non-displayed indexes, syntax, vocabulary management, surrogation, locators, arrangement of displayed indexes, and size of displayed indexes.

For each topic, Anderson discusses historical background, as well as pertinent research studies and theory, and provides copious examples drawn from real books and databases, along with an abundance of illustrations of model indexes and web pages. He gives a good sense of the debates that go on in the world of information science research, including controversies concerning alphanumeric sorting, human vs. automatic indexing, Boolean vs. weighted retrieval, and vocabulary control. He deplores the lack of standards for alphanumeric arrangement, and of rules for indexing, while acknowledging the absence of a solid research base in these areas.

Chapter 8, one of the longest in the book, goes deeply into indexing theory. Anderson draws on, inter alia, Wittgenstein’s writings, queer theory, gender studies and more in his analysis, relating indexing to larger philosophical, social and cultural issues (as he also does with cataloging and classification). This chapter compares human and computer indexing, finding the results about equal (although again, research findings are inconclusive). Anderson believes that while automatic indexing works, and human indexing is not always economically feasible, human indexing is better than automatic at capturing qualitative and nonexplicit messages.

Anderson closes each chapter by applying the principles he has just laid out to ‘three prominent types of IR [information retrieval] databases’: a book (actually this book, which counts as a database by virtue of its two indexes – the table of contents and the one at the back); a scholarly indexing and abstracting database; and a full-text electronic encyclopedia.

The book is a marvel of organization abetted by clever typographical layout. Each topic and subtopic is numbered; each paragraph is numbered; and printed directly above the paragraphs is a brief annotation (which is identical to the index entry/entries in the back of the book). The paragraph, not the page, is the documentary unit for indexing – locators in the index refer to chapter and paragraph number, such as 12.149 (except for a few that refer to entire sections or chapters). Anderson strongly recommends that paragraph rather than page referencing be more widely adopted. The index to this book, prepared by a human being using NEPHIS (Nested Phrase Indexing System), an ad hoc string system developed by Timothy Craven in 1986, is excellent. The book also includes a full bibliography and a good glossary.

Unlike most dry-as-dust manuals and textbooks, this book often has the flavour of a personal statement by Professor Anderson, who draws on his deep knowledge and obvious love of the information retrieval field, writes freely yet cogently about these issues, and often chooses illustrative examples that reflect his long-time support of gay and lesbian rights. The book comes off rather like a good (long) conversation with a knowledgeable and informative colleague. I recommend it highly.

Clare Imholtz, librarian and freelance indexer

Reference works


When the original Dictionary of National Biography (DNB) first appeared it marked an intellectual achievement on a par with the publication of Diderot and d’Alembert’s great Encyclopédie, and together with its supplements has proved an indispensable work of reference. Now, more than a hundred years later, we celebrate a new version which is at the same time a revision, a cumulation and an update. It has already received a variety of notices, generally admiring, though inevitably there is controversy about its merits, including a continuing correspondence in the Times Literary Supplement. A short review can do little more than nibble at the edges of such a monument of scholarship. I adopt an indexer’s view, which should be narrowly focused on particular aspects: form, structure and arrangement; reference value as an authority; and the work’s recognition of individual indexers.

Before all else, though, this is a handsome and pleasing piece of book production, clearly printed in two columns, in volumes that sit well if not in the hand at least on the desk. For the first time it includes portrait illustrations, not for all the subjects, but profuse enough to add a significant pictorial dimension to the work.

The original DNB with its supplements should need little explanation to indexers of all kinds, and this new version follows essentially the same plan: an alphabetical series of narrative accounts of notable British individuals, no longer living (the cut-off date now being 31 December 2000), but covering all periods of history.

Great reference works often open with an Introduction, too often overlooked, but the preliminary matter to the Oxford DNB (as we must now call it) repays careful reading for its explanations on methodology, scope and authority. Clearly acknowledging the basic soundness of the original, it outlines the innovations and changes. Apart from the illustrations, these include naming the contributor at the end of each article, and (to me rather a curious
feature) 'wealth at death'. There is also now a small number of articles about families and groups, an innovation I find potentially useful, including as it does entries for 'the Grey family' and 'the Tolpuddle Martyrs'. The Introduction states that in scope the DNB is 'not merely a roll-call of the great and the good but also a gallimaufry of the eccentric and the bad'. So we find entries for 'Cooper, Thomas Frederick [Tommy] (1921–1984), comedian' and for 'Christie, John Reginald Halliday (1899–1953), murderer'. Nationality is a defining condition for entry, but the Introduction confesses to problems of definition and claims a flexible policy. Thus, quite rightly, 'Conrad, Joseph [formerly Joezef Teodor Konrad Korzeniowski] (1857–1924), master mariner and author', but also, perhaps more surprisingly, 'Lozikey (c.1845–1919), Ndebele queen of Bulawayo', 'Abbas Halmi II (1874–1944), last khedive of Egypt', and 'Omai (c.1753–c.1780), first Tahitian to visit England'. The old imperial umbrella continues to offer shade. However, the contents remain predominantly a gallery of significant Britons.

Following the Introduction, a Guide to Articles describes the arrangement: alphabetical of course, though this receives due explanation and illustration. Then, entries are 'generally . . . under the final word of the surname', so 'Bannerman, Sir Henry Campbell'. This is rather at variance with the usual convention for conjoint names and even with the style of many entries in the original and its supplements. However, there can be no hard-and-fast rule about this, except the sovereign one of consistency within the work itself. Similarly, like the original DNB, peers are entered under family or surname, with a cross-reference from the title.

The reference value to indexers is incalculable. As an authority for identification and for accuracy of names and spellings, dates and other factual matters, it is one of the first sources we consult for British figures. The new version has enriched this source by increasing the number of people included from 29,333 to 54,922 (the number of women increasing from 1758 to 5627). This total breaks down into 49,705 individuals and 408 family or group articles. The editors have taken the opportunity to capture a number of people omitted from the original, so we now find 'Hopkins, Gerard Manley, (1844–1889, poet', and 'Beeton, Isabella Mary (1836–1863), writer on household management and journalist', both absent from the old DNB but achieving celebrity after its publication. Old articles have been subject to revision and improvement. I was keen to see whether a small error I had noticed and marked in the original had been picked up, where the two William Lowthers had been labelled second and third ears of Lonsdale. Indeed it had: they now appear correctly as first and second ears. Confidence is restored. Revised forms of names are used, thus it is Boudicca, with a cross-reference from the old form of Boadicea, as used in the old DNB.

Of special interest to Society members will be the coverage of former indexers. I naturally turned to find 'Wheatley, Henry Benjamin (1838–1917, bibliographer and editor', which gives due notice to his indexing endeavours and to the medal named in his honour. This is a new entry, contributed by J. D. Lee. Another new one is 'Carey, Gordon Vero (1886–1969), indexer and headmaster' (surely a fair order of importance). I read this elegant and informative piece by Geraldine Beare with great enjoyment, learning, among other things, that Carey was a rugby blue and took the first kick-off at Twickenham in 1909; also that he died in the small local hospital in the town where I now live, a mere stone’s throw from the home of another eminent indexer, James Thornton (not included, alas). Geraldine Beare also contributes the entries on Gerald Duckworth, William Dugdale and Gilfred Norman Knight. Under 'Beer, Esmond Samuel de (1895–1990)' we read of his definitive edition of the John Evelyn Diary that, 'the whole [is] made accessible by a large and exemplary index'. That heading further demonstrates the arrangement: elsewhere he would be expected to appear (as in Who’s Who) under ‘de Beer’. De la Mare is similarly treated, appearing under ‘Mare, Walter John de la (1873–1956)’, not, I confess, the first place I would look, but at least consistent, and buttressed by a cross-reference.

At 60 volumes, this is not a work that many of us will be popping to the local bookshop to purchase, and if we do we should remember to take a wheelbarrow, but it will be a magnetic draw in whatever libraries we consult: a dependable and magnificent reference work on which we can all rely. But there is also an online version, updated three times a year, offering sophisticated search facilities, such as people by place, period, occupation, religious affiliation, a references search, a portraits search and a contributor search. (The Introduction to the online version can be found at www.oup.com/oxforddnb/info/dictionary/intro/onlineintro/.)

Douglas Matthews, former Librarian, the London Library, and freelance indexer

The devil’s dictionary. Ambrose Bierce. London: Folio Society, 2003. xviii, 365 pp., 26 ornamental initial letters illustrated by Peter Forster: £18.95 (The dictionary may also be found on the American Literary Classics Website at www.americanliterature.com/DD/DDINDEX.HTM)

Ambrose Bierce is less well known in this country than he deserves. His short stories, notably ‘An occurrence at Owl Creek Bridge’, are occasionally anthologized, and there are tantalizing references to The devil’s dictionary. It seems almost to have the status of a cult book. It was a great favourite of Frank Muir who relished its quirikiness and word play. Now the Folio Society has issued an edition with an appreciative introduction by Miles Kington and illustrations by Peter Forster. It is a characteristic Folio Society publication, carefully printed and bound in buckram with the trade mark marbled paper sides and gold-tooled spine, in a slipcase and small enough to pop into a handbag.

Bierce was born in Ohio in 1842 and served in the American Civil War, in which he suffered a serious wound. After the war he became a journalist in California, married and moved to England where he lived from 1872 to 1875 before returning to the United States to resume his writing. In 1913 he went to Mexico at the time of Pancho Villa’s revolution and is there presumed to have ended his life, though how and where remains a mystery.

The devil’s dictionary began life as a series of articles in a San Francisco weekly paper, and first appeared, in book form as The cynic’s word book. Since then it has been reprinted many times, as well as constituting a volume in Bierce’s 12-volume Collected works (1909–12).

We do not often read dictionaries for entertainment. They are functional works. Yule and Burrell’s Hobson-Jobson can be opened for enjoyment, but it remains first and foremost a reference work, and much of the pleasure comes from the exotic words rather than the definitions. Samuel Johnson’s Dictionary of the English language is the great exception, though Johnson’s declared aim was to attempt to fix the language. Still, who can resist the appeal of some of his definitions?

* oats – ‘a grain, which in England is generally given to horses, but in Scotland supports the people’. patriots – ‘the last refuge of a scoundrel’. cynic – ‘a philosopher of the snarling or currit sort’.

These, of course, are hardly definitions at all, but self-indulgent expressions of prejudice or put-downs. Modern lexicographers
would hardly dare violate the scientific practices of their profession, though *Chambers twentieth century dictionary* offers a couple of gems:

- *Jaywalker* – ‘a careless pedestrian whom motorists are expected to avoid running down’.
- *Middle-aged* – ‘between youth and old age, variously reckoned to suit the reckoner’.

*The devil’s dictionary* surpasses all these. It is very selective in the words it lists, but is a true dictionary in that it gives definitions, occasional etymologies, and frequent illustrations, often invented by the author. They best speak for themselves, as with this little sequence of short entries:

- **Kill,** *v.t.* To create a vacancy without nominating a successor.
- **Kilt,** *n.* A costume sometimes worn by Scotchmen in America and Americans in Scotland.
- **Kiss,** *n.* A word invented by the poets as a rhyme for ‘bliss’.

Sandwiched between them is a long disquisition on King’s Evil, which is practically a history of the scrofula and its supposed treatment by royal touch, and gives an unexpectedly serious tone to the work. However, mostly the definitions are sardonic, curmudgeonly, world-weary, cynical, eccentric, unconventional, rational in a topsy-turvy way, thought-provoking and nearly always very comical. A few more examples will illustrate the character of the work:

- **Conservative,** *n.* A statesman who is enamored of existing evils, as distinguished from the Liberal, who wishes to replace them with others.
- **Erudition,** *n.* Dust shaken out of a book into an empty skull.
- **Hope,** *n.* Desire and expectation rolled into one.
- **Pray,** *v.* To ask that the laws of the universe be annulled in behalf of a single petitioner confessedly unworthy.
- **Price,** *n.* Value, plus a reasonable sum for the wear and tear of conscience in demanding it.
- **Twice,** *adv.* Once too often.

I have heard that the hardest test for any lexicographer is the treatment of the common particles (words such as ‘by’, ‘in’ and other similar prepositions, conjunctions and the like). Bierce makes no attempt at these, but does go to town on some individual letters. His account of ‘J’ achieves a kind of surrealism, but perfectly illustrates his literary fluency, his learning and his penchant for the morbid:

- **J** is a consonant in English, but some nations use it as a vowel – than which nothing could be more absurd. Its original form, which has been but slightly modified, was that of the tail of a subdued dog, and it was not a letter but a character, standing for a Latin verb, *jacere*, ‘to throw’, because when a stone is thrown at a dog the dog’s tail assumes that shape. This is the origin of the letter, as expounded by the renowned Dr Jocol Bumer, of the University of Belgrade, who established his conclusions on the subject in a work of three quarto volumes and committed suicide on being reminded that the j in the Roman alphabet had originally no curl.

So now we know. But finally, a peep at what Bierce himself says about a Johnsonian word:

- **Patriotism,** *n.* Combustible rubbish ready to the torch of anyone ambitious to illuminate his name. In Dr Johnson’s famous dictionary patriotism is defined as the last refuge of a scoundrel. With all due respect to an enlightened but inferior lexicographer I beg to submit that it is the first.

This has long been one of my favourite books. Put in a thumb anywhere and it will come out with a juicy, refreshing plum, generally on the tart side, but always full of flavour and satisfying. If you give one for a present be sure to buy a second for yourself, because you will never want to give it up.

Douglas Matthews, former Librarian, the London Library, and freelance indexer

**English language and reading**


The author of *The Cambridge guide to English usage*, Pam Peters, is the Director of the Dictionary Research Centre and of the Graduate Program in Editing and Publishing at Macquarie University (Sydney, NSW), and wrote six chapters of the *Style manual* (John Wiley Australia, 2002). Consultants for this book included David Crystal, whose book *The stories of English* was reviewed in the last issue of *The Indexer*.

The *Guide* contains a mixture of topics (for example, indexing) as well as discussions of specific words or parts of words (e.g. ‘Croatica’, ‘cross-’, ‘crumby or crummy’, and ‘etc.-/etc’). The discussion is based on statistics from databases (corpora) of written and spoken English.

In addition to the alphabetic section, the book contains nine appendices including a perpetual calendar, proofreading marks, and formats for letters, memos and e-mail.

Because the book is based on statistics from English usage recorded in the corpora, it is descriptive (telling us what happens) rather than prescriptive (telling us what we should do). One of the strengths of the book is its explanations that enable us to better understand our own usage of English. For example, I have trouble differentiating ‘lose’ and ‘loose’, and Peters explains that lose is a ‘spelling headache’ because there are no spelling analogies for it except ‘whose’.

**International Englishes**

British usage has come from the British National Corpus (BNC), and American English from the Cambridge International Corpus (CACE). Smaller databases exist for Australian, New Zealand and Canadian English. South African English is more complicated, as it is made up of Afrikaans English, Black South African English, South African Indian English and the English of the British community in South Africa. In addition to data from the corpora, a range of dictionaries, grammars and style guides were researched, and survey data is included.

The only area in which Peters veers towards the prescriptive is in boxed recommendations in which she suggests the best usage for international audiences. For example, she recommends ‘pediatrics’ rather than ‘paediatrics’ because its use is more widespread around the world (Americans, Canadians and Australian doctors prefer ‘pediatrics’, while Australian writers and the British prefer ‘paediatrics’). ‘Catalogue’ is preferred to ‘catalog’ as it is well established in both American and British English and is more linguistically regular as a base for the verb forms ‘catalogued’ and ‘cataloguing’. (*Catalog* is widely used in American libraries, but in other fields ‘catalogue’ is used. The two forms
Indexing

There is half a page on indexing, starting with the need for an index ‘for almost any nonfiction book whose material is not already presented in alphabetical order’. The Guide itself is arranged alphabetically and does not have an index. This almost works, but there are not quite enough cross-references within the text. For example, there is no reference from ‘conjunctions and conjuncts’ to ‘zero conjunction’, and there is no direct reference from ‘indexing’ to the entry ‘Mac or Mc’, where there is a substantial section on ‘Indexing names with Mac and Mc’ (there is an indirect chain via ‘alphabetical order’). There is also no reference from ‘titles to ‘names’ (which has a section ‘Titles and names’), although again there is a circuitous route via the entry ‘forms of address’.

Pam Peters briefly mentions the location and type size of index, the use of specialized indexes (such as of names) and the selection of index terms. She describes index entries being set ‘broken off’ or ‘run in’ (American) or ‘run on’ (British). I have never heard the phrase ‘broken off’, and it is not in the indexes to Mulvaney’s Indexing books (which uses ‘indented style’) or Wellisch’s Indexing from A to Z (first edition) which has a reference ‘indented style of subheadings see line-by-line style’). The AS/NZS 999:1999 standard (based on ISO 999:1996) has the heading ‘Set-out (indented) style versus run-on (paragraph) style for layout’.

There is also content relevant to indexers under ‘numbers and number style’, where the content on spans of numbers seems to be derived from style guides rather than the database, and under ‘alphabetical order’ (or should that be alphabetic? – See ‘-ic/ical’).

The five-page bibliography does not include the three current standard indexing textbooks, but does include Indexing the art of by G Norman Knight (1979), which is now out of print. The URL of one of the societies of indexers’ websites would have been a useful addition.

Plurals

A good example of the background given in the discussion of language choices is the plural form of ‘thesaurus’. The section headed ‘thesaurus’ notes that database evidence shows that British writers prefer ‘thesauri’ while American writers prefer ‘thesauruses’. There is a reference from ‘thesaurus’ to the more general ‘-us’ section, which points out that there are four categories of words ending in ‘us’:

- Latin plural ending in ‘i’ (e.g. fungus/fungi)
- Latin plural the same as the singular (e.g. apparatus/apparatus) – in this case the English plural uses ‘es’ to avoid ambiguity
- Latin plural ending in ‘ra’ (e.g. opus/opera)
- non-Latin nouns which need not take a Latin plural, although some do (e.g. thesaurus/thesauri/thesauruses).

Should you buy it?

Does an indexer need this book? If you work on multi-authored works without centralized editorial control, and need to make stylistic decisions about word forms (particularly hyphenation), you will find this book useful. The distinctions between usage in different countries could also be relevant.

There are also many topics of general interest including dating systems, inclusive language/political correctness, report writing, and emoticons (including Asian emoticons, which work in the vertical plane, such as ( ^_^ ) as a smiley and ( Y_Y ) for crying).

I have found this book useful and stimulating, and I think most indexers will enjoy dipping into it for its background information on the way the English language works, and will find it enhances their use of language within indexes.

Glenda Browne, indexer, writer and teacher


Hastily on the heels of Lynne Truss’s success story of last year, Eats, shoots and leaves, comes journalist and broadcaster John Humphrys’ Lost for words: the mangling and manipulating of the English language, an ardently denunciation of clichés that arguably manages to get two into its own title. This, of course, not entirely fair: the need for a snappy title and some neat alliteration must have been irresistible, particularly for a journalist; and Humphrys’ book ranges beyond cliché to cover a spectrum of modern-day grammatical solecisms. But it is clearly a rushed and opportunistic production that at best – to risk another hackneyed phrase – is a missed opportunity.

The development of English (or rather Englishes), the characteristic capacity of the language to absorb and assimilate foreign interlopers and necessary neologisms, and the constant evolution of its rules and usages to serve and reflect changing needs and different, increasingly global, functions, are all subjects of fascinating importance, worthy of careful study. See, not least, Christine Shuttleworth’s review of David Crystal’s The stories of English in The Indexer (24(2): 114–115). Occasionally Humphrys offers the glimmerings of such analysis, as in a section loosely covering the ethical obfuscations that result from euphemistic expression, where he argues (not altogether conclusively) that the replacement of ‘abortion’ with ‘termination’ focuses attention on the mere ending of a process, and allows one to distance oneself from any thoughts of the foetus. But such instances of thought provocation are all too rare. Perhaps we shouldn’t be surprised: early on Humphrys asserts – in an astonishing phrase for a book studying the use of language – that ‘Language is always on the wing. It cannot be examined or analysed to see whether it works.’ This will come as news to David Crystal, who gets the tiniest of mentions, complete with a characteristic Humphrys anti-intellectual jibe. This side-stepping of analysis allows Humphrys to concentrate on a coy but excluding concept of ‘our common language’ – by which he seems to mean English as it is written by people who think like John Humphrys – that is as simplified and specious as that other favourite of his, ‘common sense’.

Too often Humphrys’ argument fails to distinguish between long-term trends in the development (or decline, as he would have it) of English and the most ephemeral or transient of British and American teenage usages. Anyone reading his book in five years’ time will struggle to know what he’s talking about when he rails against the phonetically rendered contraction ‘innit’ or the over-extracted exclamation ‘whatever’. But the blackest of Humphrys’ bêtes noires are management jargon and double-speak and their ineluctable spread into all areas of government and the civil service. So much of the book is little more than a catalogue of quotations from official and corporate reports and pronouncements, ranging from the infelicitous to the impenetrable. More fun, though – and as much meaning – could be had from flicking through the fortnightly rubric in Private Eye ‘Pseudos Corporate’.

Unfortunately it is hard to escape the idea that Humphrys is part of the malaise that he is charting. His relentless journalese is all so inelegant; anyone who has ever switched off the Today programme in exasperation will be wearily familiar with the constant carping, why-oh-whyness of his tone. It needn’t be this way: the writers and...
academics who formed the Society for Pure English, active in the first half of the twentieth century, demonstrated in their tracts on grammar, pronunciation and etymology that one could be a purist without being dogmatic. Humphrys' volume bears very unhappy comparison with the work of a true prose stylist on the subject, such as the Society's co-founder Logan Pearsall Smith.

For all its lightness of analysis, Lost for words is not even that amusing, despite Rod Liddle's dust-jacket assertion that 'Humphrys is passionate about language – and very funny too', which may be repayment from Humphrys' 'friend and former editor' for the claim in the book that Liddle is 'one of the most promising writers of his generation'. The only passage that raised a wry smile on my reading reached Humphrys third-hand, via that friend to indexers Bernard Levin: the translation by the euphemism-puncturing writer Marghanita Laski of "simple, inexpensive gowns for the fuller figure" into "nasty, cheap dresses for fat old women".

Oh, and one final thing: the book doesn't have an index.

Christopher Phipps, librarian


Writing a book review is like making love to a beautiful woman. I won't try to justify the comparison, but Swiss Toni would no doubt be able to do so. He is the smooth-talking car salesman from the BBC's Fast Show, who applies this concept to everything from selling a car to making a cup of coffee. If he wished for some variety in his conversation, he could do no better than to study this superb collection of catchphrases, clichés, euphemisms, nannynisms, format phrases (see below), idioms, quotations, sayings, slogans and stock phrases compiled by Nigel Rees, the well-known broadcaster and writer of more than 50 books on the popular aspects of the English language.

Mr Rees knows his onions. But even a book of 6,000 phrases has its omissions. I found accident waiting to happen, but not walking disaster area; end of an era, but not blessed release or it's what he/ she would have wanted; bells and smells, but not happy-clappy; dream on, but not in your dreams or you wish. A number of other familiar phrases, such as tell me about it and (he/she) scrubs up well (looks (he/she) scrubs up well) (everything used to be an situation) (everything used to be an ongoing situation), experience (a marketing cliché – could it possibly be based on the band name, the Jimi Hendrix Experience?) syndrome and solution. Private Eye keeps a heady eye (another phrase not in this book) on such trends and currently has two columns, ‘Solutions’ (suitcases are advertised as ‘Samsonite travel solutions’) and ‘The Neophiliacs’ – ‘navy is the new black’, ‘comedy is the new rock ’n’ roll’, ‘60 is the new 40’, and so on.

Samuel Johnson is quoted on the book's dust jacket as follows: 'A great part of their [the common people’s] language is proverbial. If anything rocks at all, they say it rocks like a cradle; and in this way they go on.’ And how true those words are, even today.

Christine Shuttleworth, freelance indexer and translator


This is a volume devoted to the question of form in poetry, aiming to define the range of formal possibilities available to poets today. Eighty-five modern writers each contribute a poem together with an essay on its composition and form; there is also an 18-page glossary describing and illustrating 29 different literary forms, from acrostic to word golf. Among the 85 poems, the editor states, ‘you will find villanelles, pantoums, prose poems, sonnets, songs, narratives, commentaries, rhymed poems, free verse, a poem in the form of a musical fugue, a poem in the form of baseball lineups, a poem in the form of an index to a non-existent book, a poem based on a principle of alliteration, and a sonnet containing fewer than 14 words’.

Yes – a poem in the form of an index. An Indexer article of 1994 proposed, ‘The indexer uses language in a creative way, not unlike a poet. … The indexer, like the poet, focuses intensely on his subject in order to present a concept in an index. … using language in a condensed form is a skill common to the indexer and the poet.’2 Paul Violi, adjunct professor at New York University, in his contribution to this volume, a poem entitled ‘Index’, illustrates these features, and besides, as he explains in his accompanying essay:

fact to be found here as (to) discuss Ugandan affairs – there is some cross-referencing, but often tracking down the particular version of the expression you want is a matter of guesswork.

Politics provides terms such as spin doctor, expletive deleted and economical with the truth. The remark you might think that; I couldn’t possibly comment originated from Michael Dobbs’s TV dramas House of Cards and To Play the King but, Rees tells us, was subsequently self-consciously poached by real-life politicians, adding to its popularity.

Some phrases seem to come from we know not where. Are you a fashion victim? Who first said or wrote been there, done that, bought the T-shirt or declared that another person was a few sandwiches short of a picnic? This latter expression is given here as a few vouchers short of a pop-up toaster, and variants of this and many other phrases are recorded in discursive and entertaining entries. It’s past its sell-by date, first recorded in 1973, has long been past its own sell-by date and has been superseded by it’s so last week (it’s so last century was popular for a brief few weeks in January 2000).

The word ‘cliché’ bears its ugly head. One type is what Rees calls the format phrase, where the blanks are filled in according to need, such as –gate to denote a political or royal scandal (originating in the Watergate affair, but becoming increasingly meaningless), happiness is – (whatever you choose), or – from Hell (something really ghastly, such as the office party from Hell). Then there are all-purpose nouns such as situation (everything used to be an ongoing situation), experience (a marketing cliché – could it possibly be based on the band name, the Jimi Hendrix Experience?), syndrome and solution. Private Eye keeps a heady eye (another phrase not in this book) on such trends and currently has two columns, ‘Solutions’ (suitcases are advertised as ‘Samsonite travel solutions’) and ‘The Neophiliacs’ – ‘navy is the new black’, ‘comedy is the new rock ’n’ roll’, ‘60 is the new 40’, and so on.

Samuel Johnson is quoted on the book’s dust jacket as follows: ‘A great part of their [the common people’s] language is proverbial. If anything rocks at all, they say it rocks like a cradle; and in this way they go on.’ And how true those words are, even today.

Christine Shuttleworth, freelance indexer and translator


This is a volume devoted to the question of form in poetry, aiming to define the range of formal possibilities available to poets today. Eighty-five modern writers each contribute a poem together with an essay on its composition and form; there is also an 18-page glossary describing and illustrating 29 different literary forms, from acrostic to word golf. Among the 85 poems, the editor states, ‘you will find villanelles, pantoums, prose poems, sonnets, songs, narratives, commentaries, rhymed poems, free verse, a poem in the form of a musical fugue, a poem in the form of baseball lineups, a poem in the form of an index to a non-existent book, a poem based on a principle of alliteration, and a sonnet containing fewer than 14 words’.

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... an index, with its fragmentary lines, suggested a way to catch both the quick, haphazard changes a character [who was not quite the master of his fate] would endure and his increasingly scrambled perception of them. As I assembled the poem it began to resemble a chronology ... and gave the static index, which was developing imagistically, a linear movement as well ... I'd set-off and continue to play-off an 'argument' between the neutral if not deadpan tone and the wild particulars of the life it describes.

‘Index’ itself, 59 lines long, in authentic index format, resembles the short story by J. B. Ballard, titled ‘The index’, which likewise wryly presents the perplexing narrative of a life laid out as an index.3 So now indexes (albeit to imaginary books) have appeared in two distinct literary forms.

These are some enticing entries from Violi’s poem, illustrating his claims above:

Hudney, Sutej ...
Enters academy, honors 84
Arrest and bewilderment 85
Marriage 95
Weakness of character, inconstancy 101
First signs of illness, advocacy of celibacy 106, 107
Advocates abolishment of celibacy 110
Consequences of fame, violent rows, professional disputes 118, 119
Disavows all his work 120
Bigamy, scandals, illness, admittance of being ‘easily crazed, like snow’ 128
Arrested for selling sacks of wind to gullible peasants 146
Imprisonment and bewilderment 147
Last words 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190

The presentation of items in this volume is not well organized. The contents list gives only the names of poets contributing; the poems’ titles are nowhere listed. Shamefully, the book lacks an actual index. The glossary includes many fascinating examples of literary forms by various writers – Auden, Eliot, Herbert, Pasternak – none traceable, alas.

Notes
1 For an example not of a poem in the form of a index but of an index which turns out a poem, see Indexes Reviewed, Hordern House Rare Books: The encyclopedia of exploration, p. 150.

Hazel K. Bell, freelance indexer

Other subjects

The unsung sixties recounts the development of 36 social organizations founded in Britain in the 1960s. Each of them has a chapter to itself, in a standard format: about ten pages on the development of the organization, followed by five or six on the biography of the founders, told by the founders themselves in first-person narrative. The name of each founder appears at the head of the relevant chapter, as if that of the author.

There is a 21-page index of names only, printed in a single column with no indents – although plenty of the organizations’ names run over to a second line. Only single page references are given: there are no page runs; and references are given only when the name appears on the page cited, and in exactly the form cited. Thus we have separate entries for organizations’ names with or without their acronyms in brackets following them, and for places beginning St with or without a full stop. The whole chapter devoted to each organization is shown as referred to only on the page where the name occurs, usually just the first page with the chapter title; the founders’ names, too, appear in the index cited only on the first page of the chapter, but not on the pages where they recount their biographies, as there they are designated only ‘I’. So these entries, for example, given thus in the index:

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 394, 484
Blackler, Rosamunde 64
Brandon, David 35
Centrepoint 35, 67, 475
Crisis 42, 52, 53, 476
GALS (Girls Alone in London Service) 64
Radford, Jim x, 24
Shearman, Bill 52
Ware, Eileen 19

should in fact be expanded to:

Advisory Centre for Education (ACE) 394–409, 484
Blackler, Rosamunde 64, 71–80
Brandon, David 35, 44–57
Centrepoint 35–51, 67, 475
Crisis 42, 52–63, 476
GALS (Girls Alone in London Service) 64–80
Radford, Jim x, 9–18, 24
Shearman, Bill 52, 57–63
Ware, Eileen 19, 29–34

The selection of entries below shows duplicate entries for the same subject with differing page references – sometimes far separated alphabetically – and misuse of see and see also (as well as no indication of the whole page runs):

Advisory Service for Squatters (ASS) 475
Campaign Against Racial Discrimination x
Campaign Against Racial Discrimination (CARD) 169
Campaign for Homosexual Equality xi
Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE) 230, 479
Community Transport 144
Community Transport (CT) 477
Friend [sic] 234; Society of 372
Hoodless, Elisabeth 435
Hoodless, Liz 416 [yes, they do appear to be the same woman]
Indian Workers Association 171. See Southall Indian Workers Association
Joseph, Keith 360, 363
Joseph, Sir Keith 310, 311 [yes . . .]
Mountbatten Report 112
Mountbatten Report 202
National Association for the Welfare of Children in Hospital 321; Leicester Branch 325
NAWCH 325, 364. See National Association for the Welfare of Children in Hospital
OCRI 180. See Oxford Committee for Racial Integration (OCRI)
O’Malley 160
O’Malley, John and Jan 166
The Society of Indexers has published limited edition facsimile reprints of two indexing classics that encapsulate with wit and humour the very spirit in which indexers still work.

**Wheatley, H. B.** *What is an index? A few notes on indexes and indexers.*
First published 1879 by Longmans, Green & Co. for the Index Society. Facsimile edn. Society of Indexers, 2002, 132 pp. £15.00 (£17.00 overseas)* for members of indexing societies.

**Wheatley, H. B.** *How to make an index.*
First published 1902 by Elliott Stock. Facsimile edn. Society of Indexers, 2002, 236 pp. £18.00 (£20.00 overseas)* for members of indexing societies.

* Both books for £30.00 (£34.00 overseas)

To order these and other SI publications, visit www.indexers.org.uk for a downloadable order form or contact: Sales Administrator, Society of Indexers, Blades Enterprise Centre, John Street, Sheffield S2 4SU, UK. Tel: +44 (0)114 292 2350 Fax: +44 (0)114 292 2351 email: admin@indexers.org.uk

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However, there are some signs of human intervention in this index. One can see how a computer would first have arranged the following three entries, but presumably ‘Family’ was added to ‘Service Unit’ after the computer had done its work, but without anyone thinking to put the revised entry in its proper place.

Serota, Baroness 363
Family Service Unit 120
Sexual Offences Act 1967 233

But this group:
Labour Party 31, 117, . . . [a full line of page numbers]
New Labour 143
Laing, RD 187

is more baffling: perhaps the second entry was intended to be a subheading, and some disaster befell its semi-colon?

Harold Evans 399

appears *sic*, in the H section, between Harding, Dr and Harris, Rufus. As he is referred to as Harry Evans at the foot of page 399, to become Harold Evans in the top line of page 400, there has clearly been some sort of editorial intervention here too.

But then, if a human being was making amendments to this index, why stop at these?

The unsung sixties' full page of acknowledgements offers appreciation of ‘invaluable reading and copy-editing’ and of the ‘enthusiasm’ of the publisher, but makes no mention of an indexer.

This index is, surely, a terrible example of the dangers of relying on a computer to do the indexing automatically, barely checking the result, and being left with a job that appears almost untouched by human mind.

Hazel K. Bell, freelance indexer

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**Publications received and publications noted**


Software, hardware and the web: reviews

Edited by Maureen MacGlashan and Nancy Mulvany

i-TORQUE

i-TORQUE. ISSN 1542-6467. 2003–: Subscription $36.00 for six issues (trial subscription $9.00 for two issues) at http://www.i-torque.us.

i-TORQUE, the journal for ‘information about the indexing, information delivery, and publishing industries’, is now into its third year of publication. I have to confess, though, that until asked to write this review, I had not made time to take a close look at what it offers. My comments here derive therefore, not from reading all of the issues to date, but from a sample (numbers 3, 4, 5, 19, 20 and 21) supplied by the publisher, plus information from the journal’s website at http://www.i-torque.us. The latter includes a list of the contents of all issues, and an index to those published in 2003.

Issues of i-TORQUE are not available in hard copy, only as password-protected PDF files. These are emailed to subscribers on publication; non-subscribers can purchase back numbers in the same format via the website. Reading and printing requires the latest version of Adobe Reader (formerly Acrobat Reader) software (currently version 7).

Each issue I have seen comprises 15–17 pages (10” x 7.5”). Content is divided into sections, listed in a sidebar on the first page, and each issue begins with a feature article or interview. Subsequent pages regularly include software reviews, and a ‘Links’ section, the latter mainly given over to brief reviews of useful or interesting websites, but occasionally commenting on print publications as well. Sections appearing irregularly are ‘Letters’, ‘In the News’, ‘Q & A’, ‘Taking care of business’, and ‘Legal beagle’, a commentary on (usually American) law and lawsuits relevant to information work.

As a rough-and-ready method of evaluation, I rated each section in each of the six issues as I read, using a simple three-point scale. Subjective though the assessment necessarily is, the results are clear-cut enough to provide a reasonable guide to the merits of the journal.

In round figures, I found 65 per cent of the sections interesting and/or useful. Notably, all six feature articles or interviews came into this category. Twenty-one per cent of sections were less interesting. Sometimes this was because the topics were already familiar to me; sometimes they just were not central to my individual concerns; and sometimes the discussion was of no more than academic interest to practitioners outside the United States. Fourteen per cent rated zero on my scale; some of these covered matters unlikely ever to be within my competence, while others gave me no information I did not already have from other sources.

The journal’s focus is on practical aspects of indexing work, and few indexers will be surprised to learn that two themes recur frequently. One is indexing for electronic publishing, the other is the earning potential of indexers. Such concerns have not been allowed total dominance, however. Features in the first 20 issues of i-TORQUE also cover US book production statistics, The Chicago manual of style, equipment for small offices, Do Mi Stauber’s Facing the text, and indexing of children’s books. Several issues carry interviews in place of articles, and if the ones I have read (given by Jan Wright and Barbara DeGennaro) are typical, these are equally interesting and informative.

During 2003–04 i-TORQUE was published ten times each year, but from 2005 the frequency will drop to six per year. In issue 21 (Jan./Feb. 2005) editor and publisher Nancy Mulvany cites as reasons the level of subscription income, scheduling difficulties, and lower than anticipated reader participation.

Implicitly, all of these point to a single difficulty faced by many indexers: earning an adequate income from indexing while maintaining a sensible balance between work and other activities leaves little time for reading and thinking about matters of wider professional concern, let alone for preparation of contributions to the professional literature. It is vital, therefore, that a new publication provide value for time, as well as for money, if it is to gain – and hold – the readership required for success.

i-TORQUE, easily read, consistently informative and relatively inexpensive, earns its keep on both counts.

Linda Sutherland, freelance indexer and librarian

DEXter

DEXter: an aid to embedded indexing in Word. The Editorium (http://www.editorium.com/dexter.htm). Registration costs: $US199.95 for one user and $US129.95 each for 50 users or more.

Introduction

DEXter is an MS-Word template from The Editorium (www.editorium.com/dexter.htm) which contains macros to assist users in creating an embedded index in Word documents. All the indexer has to do is go through the document highlighting blocks of text and pressing key combinations. At the final stage the familiar Word indexing codes are embedded into the document.

What distinguishes Dexter from the simple home-made macros that many indexers already use is that it sets up a second Word file – called the ‘index document’ – which contains a table showing all of the index entries. Changes made to the index document are then carried back into the original when the Word indexing codes are embedded. This means that index entries can be sorted, reviewed, edited and deleted on the fly, giving Dexter much of the functionality of a dedicated indexing program.

Obtaining and installing the program

DEXter can be downloaded from The Editorium site and used free for 45 days. It is available for versions of Word from 97 through to 2003 (2004 on the Macintosh). Registration costs (in US dollars) vary between $US199.95 for one user and $US129.95 each for 50 users or more. The package includes the template, installation instructions, program documentation (as a Word document), some editable text files containing lists of stop words, and a keyboard template to print and place above the function key set on the keyboard. Installation instructions were clear and easy to follow.

I had some trouble initially getting the program to work, probably because of personalized settings on my own PC. Installation on another PC went without a hitch. The author, Jack M. Lyon, was readily contactable via email and ready to help with suggestions and even by rewriting the macros.
Installing the template adds two entries to the Word menu bar; DEXter and DEXter Tools. These can be hidden at any time by turning off the DEXter selection in Tools/Templates and Add-Ins. The menus are rather long and complex, and would benefit by the use of sub-menus to group related items like the highlight colour choices. Most of the menu entries are duplicated by shortcut keys, so as aids to memory I would like to see references to the keyboard shortcuts in the menu; e.g. Delete Entry – Shift+F3. (The author has indicated that these options are not available with current versions of Word.)

**Starting up**

Once the source document to index is open in Word the user selects ‘Create Index Document’ from the DEXter menu. An index document is created with a table containing a single row of headers. This document is used to store the heading and subheading text, a reference to the bookmarked section of the document, and indications of whether this is a cross-reference and if so where to.

To add entries to the table from the document being indexed, the user selects the word, phrase or paragraph to be indexed and presses one of five function keys. This will jump the screen to the index document. F5 adds a blank row where users can type their own heading and subheading; F9 uses the selected text as the heading and FI0 transposes the text – so that ‘Edith Harrington’, say, will be entered as ‘Harrington, Edith’. F11 adds text from the clipboard and F12 adds and transposes text from the clipboard. When an entry is made, the corresponding section of the source document is highlighted. If a section is part of an area that has been highlighted already, then a different coloured highlight is used. For long passages the user can set a special bookmark at the beginning and press a function key at the end to ‘close’ this section automatically.

Within the table itself the user can create new entries by duplicating or transposing existing entries, including swapping initial capitals if necessary. Obviously new entries need to be linked back to appropriate sections in the source document; this can be done by selecting the relevant area in the source document before moving to the index document.

These actions are also carried out via individual function keys. For older indexers, learning to use DEXter will probably bring back memories of learning to use WordPerfect for DOS and its numerous function key shortcuts.

Instructions for using DEXter are set out clearly in the documentation, though I would have liked to see a clear distinction made between actions done in the source document and actions done in the index document.

**Modifying an index**

Once the entries are in, there are many things that can be done with the index table. The table can be sorted at any time into heading, page or entry order with a single keystroke. Entries can be manually edited, and a new entry which acts as a cross-reference to an existing entry can be added by selecting the existing entry and pressing Ctrl-F11. You can jump directly from an index entry to the relevant portion of the source document. An entry can be re-allocated to a different portion of the source document by selecting the new range in the document, moving to the index document, putting the cursor in that row, and pressing Alt-Insert. Various other options allow the user to format text, rearrange the words in an entry or adjust the capitalization.

**Finalizing an index**

Once the table is complete, Word indexing mark-up can be added to the source document by selecting ‘Process Index’ from the menu. The appropriate entries are embedded in the correct places in the Word document, which can then be further processed by the user or sent off to a publisher in that form. It is also possible to go back the other way and make a DEXter table from an already marked-up document, so a document that was indexed at some time in the past can be brought into DEXter for modifications.

**Pros and cons**

DEXter is a marvellous piece of work and highly recommended for full or part-time indexers who find themselves faced with Word documents. There is a steep learning curve but I would expect that after a day’s training the program would begin to pay for itself with saved time and reduced frustration. With a program of this kind its full potential will only emerge as it develops a core of trained users who can help direct its further development. If the author remains as responsive to his users then it should have a great future.

I have listed some minor quibbles with DEXter above. Another is the need to constantly jump back and forth between the source document and the indexing document. Perhaps an option could be given to automatically ‘snap back’ to the source document after a short period of time? It would be great, too, if the table could somehow be made to ‘look’ more like a real index in its layout. But these are minor points, and, again, may not even be possible in current versions of Word.

A more general concern is that the provision of tools to aid embedded indexing in Word will encourage publishers and authors to assume that embedded indexing is the best approach and that Word is the best format, neither of which is necessarily true.

I suspect that embedded indexing still has a long way to go, both from the publisher’s perspective and from the indexer’s. Dual screens, for instance (which DEXter supports), would be extremely useful. But under the current state of the art, DEXter goes a long way towards simplifying a job which is both tedious and difficult.

My thanks to Jack M. Lyon for his response to an earlier draft of this article.

*Jon Jermy, freelance indexer, computer trainer and consultant*

**Material received and noted**

**WordEmbed v2.0** Software to embed indexes from indexing programs into MS Word 2003 fully automatically. www.WordEmbed.jalamb.com £64.62/€80/US$110
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