

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 Indexer* upon the reviewer's assessment of an index. Extracts are arranged alphabetically under the names of publishers, within the sections: Indexes praised; Two cheers!; Indexes censured; Indexes omitted; Obiter dicta.

Indexes praised

Australian Library and Information Association: *Uniting a profession: the Australian Institute of Librarians 1937–1949*, by Jean P. Whyte and David J. Jones (2007, 279 pp, A\$42.50). Rev. by Anne Hazell, *Australasian Public Libraries and Information Services*, 20(4), December 2007.

Uniting a profession has numerous photographs, eleven informative appendices, and a thorough index. These are all commendable. [Index by ANZSI member Sherrey Quinn.]

Bantam: *The scent trail: a journey of the senses*, by Celia Lyttelton (2007, 320 pp, £15). Rev. by Mary Furness, *Times Literary Supplement*, 16 November 2007.

Her book could . . . well be used as a reference work by the enthusiast, as it contains a useful glossary, bibliography and index.

Beaumaris and Citizens Association: *Beaumaris Newsletter index January-June 1953*, vol. 7 (2007, 25 pp). Rev. in *Royal Historical Society Newsletter of Victoria*, no. 252, November/December 2007.

This is an index of the journal of the Beaumaris and Citizens Association at the time before the massive suburbanisation of this area from the 1960s. It is a model of index presentation and a valuable reference tool for the papers themselves that are held by the State Library with microfilm in local and other sites.

Facet Publishing: *Essential law for information professionals* (2nd edn, 2006, 278 pp, £34.95). Rev. by Mike Freeman, *New Library World*, 108(11/12), 2007.

. . . this is a helpful, clearly written and well-indexed book, which will be of considerable value to LIS practitioners and students. It is good to see CILIP and Facet Publishing responding so well to the current and pressing needs of practitioners with this well targeted and readable book. It is thoroughly recommended.

Facet Publishing: *Ethics, accountability and recordkeeping in a dangerous world*, by Richard J. Cox (2006, 298 pp, £44.95). Rev. by Mike Freeman, *New Library World*, 190(1/2).

The book has a good Reference List and is well indexed, well laid out and readable. [But see a different view of the index under 'Indexes censured'.]

Facts on File: *The Facts on File companion to the American novel*,

by Abby H. P. Werlock (2006, 1,520 pp, £124.50). Rev. by Joseph Thomas, *Booklist* (date not available).

Although some topics – feminism, the Jewish American novel, and science fiction, among others – are not represented in the topical essays, they are amply referenced within entries, with access provided by an in-depth index. The index helps make up for the lack of a complete list of entries, something that others in this series also need. In many cases, the index provides excellent research assistance; for instance, the index entries on themes, such as African-American middle class, immigrant experience, and miscegenation, lead to many specific novels and authors. Cross-references in the index would be helpful. [Suzanne Peake, who compiled the index, comments: 'These must have been removed by the publisher'.]

Neal-Schuman Publishers: *Making the writing and research connection with the I-search process: a how-to-do-it manual* (2nd edn), by Julie I. Tallman and Marilyn Z. Joyce (2006, 167 pp + CD-ROM, A\$55.00). Rev. by Lyn Linning, *Australian Library Journal*, 56(2), May 2007.

The table of contents and index are comprehensive and well set out.

Pantheon Books: *The Landmark Herodotus: the histories*, tr. by Andrea L. Purvis, ed. by Robert B. Strassler (2007, 1,024 pp, \$45). Rev. by Brooke McLane, 'What are you reading?', *Laurence Journal-World*, 30 December 2007.

I'm reading *The Landmark Herodotus*. It's a translation of an ancient Greek historian, and this edition contains maps and other references combined with an incredible index.

Portrait: *Dublin: a view from the ground*, by Neil Hegarty (368 pp, €29.95, £20). Rev. in *Books Ireland*, December 2007.

A 'further reading' piece is in chatty narrative form which is never helpful when you want to look up a book, but there's a good index.

Royal Dublin Society: *It's part of what we are: some Irish contributors to the development of the chemical and physical sciences*, vols 1 and 2, by Charles Mollan (2007, 1,815 pp, £35). Rev. in *Books Ireland*, December 2007.

The contents list, both alphabetic and chronologic, is provided for both volumes in volume 1, while volume 2 only has its own. Conversely, volume 2 provides the magnificent bibliography and index.

Springer-Praxis: *Quirky sides of scientists*, by David R. Topper (2008, 210 pp, £24.50). Rev. by Colin Knappitt, *Astronomy Now*, February 2008.

If you enjoy a well indexed and cross-referenced work of scholarship . . . then I warmly commend this book.

Ulster Historical Foundation: *Overlooking the river Mourne: four centuries of family farms in Edymore and Cavanalee in county Tyrone*, by Michael Cox (2006, 174 pp, £11.99). Rev. in *Books Ireland*, October 2007.

But the book does conclude on a splendid note, with no fewer than twelve appendices and an excellent index.

Viking: *A voyage round John Mortimer: the authorized biography*, by Valerie Grove (2007, 542 pp, £25). Rev. by Brenda Maddox, *Times Literary Supplement*, 14 December 2007.

The jokes . . . are good and the index impeccable, but the book is too long and the life too unreflectively messy.

Two cheers

American Library Association: *Copyright law for librarians and educators: creative strategies and practical solutions* (2nd edn), by Kenneth D Crews. (2006, 141 pp, US\$45.00). Rev. by Paul Jackson, *Australian Library Journal*, 56(2), May 2007.

I do not feel this work, as a specialised guide, really helps librarians and educators in learning what they may do, or how they may do it, or under what circumstances. To say it another way, a special book for a specialist should tell us quickly what we could do, when and how, not what to avoid or be a treatise on copyright. It does have an excellent index and a survey of the copyright literature in a large bibliography.

Indexes censured

Basic Books: *Animal architects*, by James R. Gould and Carol Grant Gould (2007, 323 pp, £15.99). Rev. by Donald Michie, *Spectator*, 19 May 2007.

The most annoying fault of *Animal architects* is its wholly inadequate index. Serious readers may even be driven to construct their own. But the charm and humour with which the authors write and their close attention to verified fact redeem the faults of one of the best popular science books of recent years. [*Which an index could have made even better.*]

Blackhall: *Know your rights: a simple guide to social and civic entitlements in Ireland*, by Andrew McCann (2007, 361 pp, €19.95). Rev. in *Books Ireland*, September 2007.

The index is a bit feeble . . .

Chandos Publishing: *Building a successful archival programme: a practical approach*, by Marisol Ramos and Alma C. Ortega (2006, 184 pp, £39.95). Rev. by Bob Pymm, *Australian Library Journal*, 56(2), May 2007.

The size of the book limits opportunities for detailed discussion but at the same time does mean that it is very accessible to busy professionals (although the index is a little sparse).

Continuum: *A new history of jazz*, by Alyn Shipton (2007, 784 pp, £19.99). Rev. by William Palmer, *Literary Review*, December 2007/January 2008.

The only major fault, especially for such a valuable work, is an index that is full of errors and omissions.

Dee: *Selected letters*, by Aldous Huxley, ed. by James Sexton (2007, 497 pp, \$35.) Rev. by Jeremy Treglown, *Times Literary Supplement*, 18 January 2008.

The popular novelist and literary journalist Naomi Royde-Smith makes unheralded (and at first unindexed) appearances in letters from 1922 on and is herself among Huxley's correspondents from

1926. Not until 1931, though, half-way through the book, does the editor suddenly vouchsafe to us who she was.

Facet Publishing: *Ethics, accountability and recordkeeping in a dangerous world*, by Richard J. Cox (2006, 298 pp, £44.95). Rev. by Gillian Oliver, *Australian Library Journal*, 56(2), May 2007.

The format of the book has resulted in some repetition. For instance, the Association of Records Managers and Administrators (ARMA) and the Society of American Archivists codes of ethics are discussed in two essays. Unfortunately, the index refers to only one of those discussions. The index includes some authors cited, but not all of them. It would have been useful to mention the criteria for inclusion.

Facet Publishing: *Training library staff and volunteers to provide extraordinary library service*, ed. by Julie Todaro and Mark L. Smith (2006, 168 pp, £39.95). Rev. by Diana Dixon, *Library & Information Update*, 7(1–2), January/February 2008.

Sadly, an inadequate index lets the publication down. Dealing with telephone queries is treated in some detail, yet there is no mention of this in the index and a number of other topics are also omitted.

Little Red Hen: *Poems 1957–2006*, by Sydney Bernard Smith (2007, 252 pp, €15). Rev. in *Books Ireland*, September 2007.

The index does not provide page numbers. [*So is it really an index?*]

Palgrave Macmillan: *A directory of Shakespeare in performance 1970–2005, Vol 1: Great Britain*, by John O'Connor and Katharine Goodland (2007, 1,760 pp, £125). Rev. by Heather Neill, *Around the Globe* (magazine of Shakespeare's Globe), 13, Autumn 2007.

Despite the pleasures of dictionary-surfing and the undoubted usefulness of this volume in certain circumstance, there are definite shortcomings. The layout is strange, with a blank half page occurring sometimes between entries about the same play, but the *Merchant* section ending with three lines and the top of a page just above the first entry for *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Too often an actor's name appears incorrectly – Antony Sher and Desmond Barrit are mis-spelt – and there is a sprinkling of annoying typographical errors such as 'siver' for silver (813) and 'marbe' for marble (823). The Indexes are wrongly titled, with lists of reviewers appearing under Companies and vice versa. And how, one wonders, did Ed Stoppard, playing Lorenzo at Chichester on 2004 become transformed into Edition Stoppard? [*Easy enough to guess – global search and replace!*]

Much as I love to have a solid directory in book form, there is a good case here for transferring the lot to a website, correcting mistakes and providing links to other sources, such as Theatre Record and theatre websites.

Tauris: *The triumph of military Zionism: nationalism and the origins of the Israeli Right*, by Colin Shindler (2005, 272 pp, £39.50). Rev. by Geoffrey Wheatcroft, *Times Literary Supplement*, 22 February 2008.

I. B. Tauris has made a name for books which are nicely turned out as well as worth reading, but *The Triumph of Military Zionism* is a mess, clumsily designed, with an inadequate index, and some passages where the typesetting is so wayward that the reader has to be his own textual critic and infer the sense. A paperback putting right as much of this as possible would be no more than the book's due.

University of Western Australia Press: *Aboriginal health workers –*

primary health care at the margins, by Bill Genet with Sharon Bushby et al. (2006, 240 pp.) Rev. by Priscilla Robinson, *Australia and New Zealand Journal of Public Health*, 31(3), 2007.

The index is a little brief.

Indexes omitted

Ashgate: *Health, rights and globalisation*, ed. by Belinda Bennett (2006, 421 pp, \$225), Rev. by Colin D. Butler, *Health Promotion Journal of Australia*, 18(2), 2007.

This book has a name index, but no topic index. This is a shame.

Blackhall: *The annotated Mental Health Acts*, by Harry Kennedy (2007, 190 pp + CD, €70). Rev. in *Books Ireland*, September 2007.

Though there's no index, there are lists of statutes and cases with page numbers.

Boydell Press: *The entring book of Roger Morrice (1677–1691)*, ed. by Mark Goldie et al (2007, 6-volume set, 3,352 pp, £550). Rev. by Julian Hoppit, *Times Literary Supplement*, 15 February 2008.

I have just two gripes. First, Morrice's own 60,000-word index is not reproduced; nor is one compiled by the editors. Quite why is not adequately explained. Searches can be done using the CD, but this is a bit hit-and-miss. Second, the decision to keep footnoting in the main text to a minimum means that it is best also to have open both the first and the final volumes alongside the volume of text being read. This is cumbersome and, in the absence of an index, the scattering of biographical information, some in footnotes to the text, some in the final volume, is irritating.

[Mark Goldie's reply appeared in the *Times Literary Supplement*, 22 February 2008:]

Julian Hoppit . . . rightly notices the absence of an index, but implies that none was intended. In fact, an index volume, prepared by Alasdair Hawkyard, will be published later this year. I am glad Professor Hoppit drew attention to Morrice's own index, created in the 1690s. It would have been good to publish this also, especially given the growing scholarly interest in the organization of knowledge in past time. But, at 60,000 words on top of the million words of *The Entering Book*, it was a bridge too far. It can be read where the manuscript lies, in Dr Williams's Library in Gordon Square, London.

Columbia University Press: *Kitchen mysteries*, by Hervé This (2007, 210 pp, £13.50). Rev. by Len Fisher, *Times Higher Education Supplement*, 16 November 2007.

His passion comes through on every page, but it swamps the nuggets of concrete information. Nor will the reader find directions to that information in the index. There isn't one.

Doubleday: *Homo politicus*, by Dana Milbank (2007, 276 pp, \$26). Rev. by Janet Maslin, *New York Times*, 20 December 2007.

Incidentally, should anyone wonder exactly whose names are in here, Mr Milbank has spitefully published his book without an index. 'The author regrets the inconvenience,' he maintains.

Fourth Estate: *Miracles of life*, by J. G. Ballard (2008, 288 pp, £14.99). Rev. by Robert McCrum, *Observer*, 10 February 2008.

Vanity is the curse of successful writers, but *Miracles of Life* is

impressively free from all kinds of show (no name-dropping; no index; scarcely any photographs).

Getty Publications: *Tunisian mosaics: treasures from Roman Africa*, by Aïcha Ben Abed Ben Khader, tr. from the French by Sharon Grevet (2006, 146 pp, \$29.95). Rev. by Will Wootton, *Bryn Mawr Classical Review*, 12 November 2007.

It is a shame that there is no index but, that said, *Tunisian Mosaics* goes beyond being merely an adjunct to the exhibition and, I believe, will have a broad audience and long shelf-life.

Hodder & Stoughton: *Who runs Britain?* by Robert Peston (2008, 352 pp, £20). Rev. by Robert Murphy, *Metro* (Edinburgh), 27 February 2008.

Peston never answers his own question with any conviction and the lack of index or citations make even its contents only half-useful.

Institute of Public Administration: *Ireland 2022: towards one hundred years of self-government*, ed. by Mark Callanan (359 pp, €35). Rev. in *Books Ireland*, December 2007.

There's a single bibliography, but curiously no index.

Liberties: *Comrades: inside the war of independence*, by Annie Ryan (2007, 279 pp, €14.99/£9.99). Rev. in *Books Ireland*, September 2007.

A couple of requests to the publisher, please for the next edition (which I hope there will be) provide an index! The bibliography also needs sorting out; it has been thrown together in any old order. This important book deserves both.

Macmillan: *The Himmler brothers*, by Katrin Himmler, tr. from German by Michael Mitchell (2007, 333 pp, \$32.95). Rev. by James Grieve, *Canberra Times*, 9 February 2008.

The book's most signal lack is of an index. On every page of the text are proper names which one knows recur on many other pages; but without an index, how is the well-intending reader to find them, so as [to] collate, cross-reference and compare the data? Can one imagine that a respectable German publisher, Fischer Verlag, would produce a work of socio-political history so incapacitated? Or is this rather the philistinism or penny-pinching of British publishing at work? Whatever the case, it surely is a grand way of irritating your readers by impairing their grasp of the narrative and discussion.

Politico's: *Reinventing the state: social liberalism for the 21st century*, ed. by Duncan Brack, Richard S. Grayson and David Howarth (2007, 288 pp, £14.99). Rev. by Alan Beith, *Liberal Democrat News*, 978, 11 January 2008.

The book would have been better with an index, but it is a good and stimulating read.

Quay Books: *Patient care in cardiac surgery*, by Chris Aps (2007, 178 pp, £24.99). Rev. by Tim Batchelor, *British Journal of Hospital Medicine*, 68(9), September 2007.

The book would also benefit from an index and some key references.

SCM Press: *You've got to have a dream: the message of the musical*, by Ian Bradley (2004, 245 pp, £16.99). Rev. by Ken Bakewell, *Christian Librarian*, 39, Winter 2007.

I found this a fascinating book but it has one serious fault: there is

no index. Ian Bradley tells me that he wanted an index but the publisher did not. Clearly the Society of Indexers still has some missionary work to do.

Springer-Praxis: *Space exploration 2008*, by David M. Harland, Brian Harvey et al. (2008, 184 pp, £19.50). Rev. by Nick Quinn, *Astronomy Now*, February 2008.

There are useful references to books and websites, but no index. To find details . . . one needs to flick through the chapters.

Obiter dicta

Michael O'Mara: *Anything goes*, by John Barrowman and Carole E. Barrowman (2008, 256 pp, £18.99). Rev. by Philip Hensher, *Daily Telegraph*, 2 February 2008.

. . . the index is hilariously overdone, summarizing the showbiz doings in a level of detail much more appropriate to, say, a history of Belarus. Underneath the surface, this is a man who takes himself very seriously. But the surface will do for most of us.

Oxford University Press: *Walking the streets of eighteenth-century London: John Gay's Trivia (1716)*, ed. by Clare Brant and Susan E. Whyman (2007, 256 pp, £50). Rev. by Henry Power, *Times Literary Supplement*, 23 November 2007.

In Seneca's famous phrase, the *Georgics* were written 'not to teach farmers, but to delight readers'; and *Trivia* too is emphatically a work of imaginative literature. Gay stresses the point by appending a spectacularly useless mock-index, with entries such as 'Saturday, by what observations to know it'; 'Street, how to cross it'; and 'Cheese not lov'd by the Author'.

Henry VIII's index

. . . a feature of Henry's bible is a seventeen-page alphabetical 'Tabula Historiarum', an index not only of names and events, but of topics and categories of instruction. Considering the unique form of the 1535 text, this was clearly original, and might repay examination as reflecting specific regal or English concerns.

Arthur Freeman, 'To guard His words: the selectivity, conservatism and startlingly personal nature of a bible designed by Henry VIII', *Times Literary Supplement*, 14 December 2007.

The logical French

It may be significant that the French, who have never quite seen the point of biography, have also only recently discovered the index [rediscovered, surely]. A French author, traditionally, has expected his or her book to be read in the order, and according to the logical arrangement, in which it was written, and has instinctively resented the idea, implicit in an index, that readers might simply use it as a tool – might come to it for all sorts of different purposes.

P. N. Furbank, 'A craft, not an art: the modest but practical uses of biography', *Times Literary Supplement*, 15 January 1999.

The pitfalls of music indexing

[Mario] Vincenzo is to be heartily congratulated – even if he presents a nightmare to record indexers for, thanks to the cata-

logues of Messrs Köchel and Kindermann, both Mozart's and Busoni's works are identified by K numbers.

Jeremy Nicholas on 'Mozart/Busoni Complete Transcriptions for Solo Piano', *Gramophone*, February 2007.

Doing the job properly?

The table was barely visible beneath a thick typescript and an array of open shoeboxes filled with little cards. He picked a stray one off his chair in order to sit down. In a tiny version of her handwriting it read, Slater, Montagu and gave a list of page numbers.

She took it from him with a muted, 'I knew I hadn't lost that,' and tucked it into one of the boxes then poured him a mug of tea. 'Is it very tarry?' she asked.

It was tepid. 'It's fine,' he assured her. 'It'll wake me up.'

She sat across from him and ferreted out a packet of ginger-nuts from under the pages of typescript she had already turned. 'Indexing,' she explained. 'It means I can work from home and save paying someone else to be here.'

'Oh. I see. Interesting.'

'Not very. Dull books are easier on the whole. If they send one that threatens to be interesting I have to read it backwards to avoid getting too drawn in to do the job properly. I should computerise but I can't face it.'

Patrick Gale, *Notes from an Exhibition*, Harper Perennial, 2008

[*Sounds like a pretty hopeless indexer, and she can't even make a decent cup of tea!*]

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Contributions of review extracts welcomed by the editor of this section, Christine Shuttleworth (please see inside front cover for further details).