

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; Indexes censured; Indexes omitted; Obiter dicta.

Indexes praised

Bloodaxe: *Poems 1960–2000*, by Fleur Adcock (2000, 272 pp, £64). Rev. by John David Charles Hilton, www.amazon.co.uk/Poems-1960-2000-Fleur-Adcock/dp/1852245298/ref=sr_1_8_title_1_har?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1372504279&sr=1-8&keywords=fleur+adcock+poetry or <http://tinyurl.com/p9auxgm>, 30 July 2007.

Wonderfully put together by Bloodaxe Books with the alphabetic list at the back which, annoyingly, many Bloodaxe collections lack ...

[The 'alphabetic list' turns out to be an index of titles and first lines.]

Bowman, J. H.: *British librarianship and information work 2006–2010*, ed. by J. H. Bowman (self-published via lulu.com, 2012, 468 pp, £32). Rev. by Tony Durcan, *CILIP Update*, July 2013.

All chapters conclude with excellent and comprehensive notes and references, and the book contains a very detailed index.

Cox, Peter: *The Irish light: a collection of landscape photographs*, published by the author at 3 High St, Killarney (128 pp, €29.95). Rev. by C. J. Laurence, *Books Ireland*, February 2013.

He is a purist and perfectionist, clearly aiming to produce a work of art with every shot, and presenting each with the least possible distractions – captions and page numbers are so pale as to be almost invisible, and for information it's best to turn to the index, which provides ten thumbnails per page, with notes of the location and technical data.

Editions TECHNIP: *Geochemistry of fossil fuels: from conventional to unconventional hydrocarbon Systems*, by Alain-Yves Huc (2013, 254 pp, £50). Rev. by Laura McParland, *Geoscientist*, 23(7), August 2013.

The author has provided a comprehensive index as well as plentiful useful references throughout, which along with the selected additional readings makes this a good reference volume (though one might complain that some of the references are quite old).

Facet: *Emergency planning and response for librarians, archives and museums*, by Emma Dadson (2012, 230 pp, £49.95). Rev. by D. Dixon, *CILIP Update*, June 2013.

It is highly approachable, well indexed and very sound.

Facet: *Information resource description: creating and managing*

metadata, by Philip Hider (2012, 288 pp, £49.95). Rev. by Keith Wilson, *CILIP Update*, August 2013.

I expected a well-referenced and indexed book with extensive bibliography and was not disappointed.

Gill & Macmillan: *Illustrated Weather Eye*, by Brendan McWilliams, compiled by Anne McWilliams (third compilation of an *Irish Times* column, 184 pp, €18.99). Rev. by Michael Harding, *Irish Times*, 24 November 2012.

At the back of the book are a wonderfully concise index and a list of picture credits. [But see an alternative view under 'Indexes censured'.]

Gill & Macmillan: *The plantation of Ulster: British colonisation of the north of Ireland in the seventeenth century*, by Jonathan Bardon (2012, 424 pp, €16.99). Rev. by Lucille Redmond, *Books Ireland*, February 2013.

... one flaw: there is no glossary of personalities, which would be very handy with generations of characters on both sides sharing the same or similar names. The head tends to spin as you zip back and forth between Helen Litton's excellent index and the text. [*Helen Litton is a member of the Irish Group of SI.*]

Hammersmith Books: *The essential carer's guide*, by Mary Jordan (2013, 160 pp, £12.99). Rev. by Sarah Stacey, *Mail on Sunday*, 27 July 2013.

The second edition of this indispensable guide brings together all the information carers need, reflecting the latest changes in UK law and social and health services. The author, who was a carer herself, has worked for the NHS and a dementia charity. Her hands-on experience is evident, the resources are comprehensively detailed, and there's a good index. I wish I'd had this book when I was looking after my parents. [*Index by SI member Laurence Errington.*]

Lexis-Nexis Butterworths: *Electronic evidence* (3rd edn), by Stephen Mason (2010, £175). Rev. by Steven Friel and Emma Quinn, *New Law Journal*, 28 March 2013.

Helpful, however, is the updated index which is now much more comprehensive and user-friendly.

Oxford University Press: *The law of habeas corpus* (3rd edn), by Judith Farbey and R. J. Sharpe with Simon Atrill (2011, 320 pp, £80). Rev. by Phillip Taylor, www.goodreads.com/review/show/200357993, 20 August 2011.

Meticulously footnoted throughout with extensive tables of cases, national legislation, secondary legislation, as well as treaties and conventions (on both sides of the Atlantic) plus a great index, it points the way to literally hundreds of avenues for further research on the evolution and vulnerability of this fundamental right.

Oxford University Press: *Redfern and Hunter on international arbitration* (5th edn), by Nigel Blackaby and Constantine Partasides with Alan Redfern and Martin Hunter (2009, 904 pp, \$195).

Rev. by Jennifer Duperon, <http://aallspectrum.wordpress.com/2010/04/20/book-review-redfern-and-hunter-on-international-arbitration/>

The work has undergone improvements in terms of finding tools and appendixes as well. The most valuable enhancement is a much-improved index, which is roughly twice as long as the previous one. The new index includes more detailed entries and eliminates the need to consult both index and tables to locate information. In comparisons of fourth and fifth editions' indexes, the fifth easily outperformed the previous edition every time. Because the better index has reduced a user's reliance on the tables, the fifth edition retains the most important ones: those of contents, of cases, and of arbitration awards, while omitting the previous edition's tables of statutes, major arbitration conventions, international arbitration rules, civil codes, treaties, and directives/European Regulations/Civil Procedure Rules.

RSC Publishing: *The case of the poisonous socks: tales from chemistry*, by William H. Brock (2011, 362 pp, £19.99). Rev. by Ian Rae, *Chemistry in Australia*, August 2013.

While there is a lot of detail in the text ... Brock also provides a 'further reading' list for each chapter, and the book is rounded out with an excellent, 22-page index.

I. B. Tauris: *The wartime journals*, by Hugh Trevor-Roper (2013, 322pp, US\$35). Rev. by John Banville, *New York Review of Books*, August 15, 2013.

... the decision to include Trevor-Roper's own highly idiosyncratic index in only slightly modified form will be gratefully appreciated by connoisseurs of this much underrated and underdeveloped literary appendage.

A couple of sample entries must suffice: 'Americans: invade Europe, 128–9; spoil Mexico, 175; take their Christmas holidays, 277'; 'fungus, giant, members of SIS likened to, 114.' [*Trevor-Roper's index slightly modified by SI member Christopher Phipps.*]

TFH Publications: *Parrots of the world*, by Joseph Forshaw, illustrated by William T. Cooper (1973, 584 pp, out of print). Rev. by mirasreviews, www.amazon.com, 6 October 2004.

The book is organized by Distributions: Pacific, Afro-Asian, and South American, which are further divided into Family, Sub-family, Genus, and Species. Sub-species are found within the listing for the species. This is also how the birds are listed in the table of contents. The book's two indices provide a more efficient method of locating a particular species, however. There is an English Name index and a Scientific Name index. The author has used the common name from the species' nation of origin whenever possible, so some of the names may be unfamiliar. For example, a rose-breasted cockatoo is a 'galah', an umbrella cockatoo a 'white cockatoo', and what we might call a cherry-headed conure or red-masked parakeet is a 'red-masked conure'. I find it simplest to use the scientific name index.

Indexes censured

Academica Press: *Twenty-first century Ireland: a view from America*, by John P. McCarthy (2012, 243 pp, £34.10). Rev. by John Kirkaldy, *Books Ireland*, February 2013.

Sometimes articles can get overtaken by events. Thus, we are assured that in 2009 Brian Cowen can remain in power [as Taoiseach] till 2012; to be told in a footnote that this obviously did

not happen. Mention of Cowen also highlights another production problem: the index is not very good. He is referred to several times in the text and has played a major part in recent Irish history, but does not rate a reference at the end.

Belknap Press: *Alexander Wilson: the Scot who founded American ornithology*, by Edward H. Burt and William E. Davis (2013, 464 pp, £25). Rev. by Jeremy Mynott, *Times Literary Supplement*, 26 July 2013.

The authors and publishers have done full justice to [the] illustrations in this handsome volume and they are beautifully laid out and reproduced. The associated editorial material, by contrast, is useful but rather scrappy at times, and the publisher's design of the different headings and sections does not always make for easy reference. That problem and the dispersal of the more biographical material in somewhat discontinuous ways through the work could have been partly mitigated by a full and detailed general index, which would have allowed for particular themes or topics to be followed through more readily. But the index is very light on general concepts, and many of the key words that appear first in the Preface and repeatedly thereafter in the text (for example, 'behaviour', 'habitat' or 'species') do not feature as headings in the index.

A. & C. Black: *Wild flowers of Britain and Europe* (Black's Nature Guides), by Margot Spohn and Roland Spohn (2008, 399 pp, £9.99). Rev. by 'Drumhead', www.amazon.co.uk, 2 August 2009.

This is a great little book if you enjoy looking at pictures of wild flowers but don't buy it if you hope to be able to use it to identify any. The book is certainly good on the eye with user friendly layout featuring interesting facts as well as a description of the relevant flower. But that's as good as it gets. The flowers are grouped according to colour but whoever tried to do this was borderline colour blind so basically your mystery flower could be virtually anywhere in the book – tedious to have to trawl through it each time you try to identify a flower. And as for the index ... This was obviously done using a computer as no human could have done such a bad job. For a start there are over 30 entries starting Common ... so when you want to check whether that plant really was Lady's Mantle, silly you, don't look under L for Lady's, look under C for Common. (Does this mean there's an Uncommon Lady's Mantle as well?) Everybody's heard of St John's Wort, haven't they? But you try and find it in the index. Eventually I stumbled upon it under Perforate St John's Wort. Why wasn't it listed under St John's Wort, perforate, like any normal identification book would? The scope of the book is also very limited and there are many common English wild flowers which do not get a mention whereas all sorts of exotica from the Mediterranean make an appearance. So to sum up, if you want a book that looks pretty, buy Black's guide. If you want to buy a book that might help you identify British wild flowers avoid it like a stinging nettle (and, yes, you've guessed it, where is Stinging Nettle listed in the index? Under C for Common ...).

Cambridge University Press: *Oscar Wilde and ancient Greece*, by Iain Ross (2012, 293 pp, £55). Rev. by Joseph Bristow, *Times Literary Supplement*, 21 June 2013.

Despite the perfunctory index, it is Ross's thorough documentation that will ensure that *Oscar Wilde and Ancient Greece* remains a study of lasting interest.

Gill & Macmillan: *Illustrated Weather Eye*, by Brendan McWilliams, compiled by Anne McWilliams (third compilation of an

Irish Times column, 184 pp, €18.99). Rev. by Peter Denman, *Books Ireland*, March 2013.

There is an index, but it is much less detailed than that provided in the preceding collection. [*But for another point of view, see the extract from a review of the same book under 'Indexes praised'.*]

Lilliput Press: *Adventures of a waterboy*, by Mike Scott (272 pp). Rev. by Aubrey Malone, *Books Ireland*, February 2013.

Some of the listings in the index are curious... We find Irene Keogh, for instance, under 'I'. This is a first in my experience, but nonetheless a small price to pay for such a beautifully written book.

Royal Irish Academy: *A history of Ireland in 100 objects*, by Fintan O'Toole (2013, 252 pp, €30). Rev. in *Books Ireland*, April 2012.

... although there is an index, a separate listing of the one hundred objects would have helped. [*Index by SI member (Irish Group) Helen Litton.*]

Indexes omitted

Collins Press: *Abandoned mansions of Ireland II*, by Tarquin Blake (2012, 348 pp, €27.99). Rev. by Hugh Oram, *Books Ireland*, March 2013.

The book has a useful glossary, an explanation of architectural terms and a comprehensive bibliography, but again, no index.

History Press: *The children of Castletown House*, by Sarah Connolly-Carew (2012, 240 pp, £21.99). Rev. by Hugh Oram, *Books Ireland*, March 2013.

While the book has fulsome [*sic*] appendices and notes, an index to text and photographs could have been useful.

National Museum of Scotland: *Mary, Queen of Scots* (exhibition catalogue). (2013) Rev. by Richard Dorment, *Daily Telegraph*, 13 August 2013.

But having gone to endless pains to put the exhibition together, why was the decision taken to scrimp on the catalogue? It is a disgrace. Made on the cheap, badly designed, poorly illustrated and without an index, it amounts to little more than a series of entries that tell the reader nothing more than a photocopied checklist of the objects could have done. The introductory essay by Rosalind F. [*actually Rosalind K.*] Marshall is fine, but once the exhibition closes, nothing of substance will remain. This is happening in museums all over the country. To save a little money now, NMS is short-changing those who can't get to the exhibition or may want to learn about Mary in the future. [*However, the museum's website reveals that a 112-page book titled Mary, Queen of Scots: 'In my end is my beginning' by Rosalind K. Marshall is available from the museum shop at £19.99 hardback, £12.99 paperback. Let us hope it has an index.*]

Olschki: *Catalogo degli incunaboli della Biblioteca Antoniana di Padova*, by Maria Cristina Zanardi (2012, 254 pp). Rev. by G. P. [presumably Giancarlo Petrella], *Almanacco bibliografico*, June 2013.

Il catalogo è inoltre completato da un ricchissimo (e forse eccessivo) apparato di undici indici che ne permettono una più intelligente fruizione: degli autori, dei luoghi di stampa, dei tipografi, dei curatori, cronologico, delle concordanze, delle peculiarità

tipografiche, delle peculiarità manoscritte, delle caratteristiche della legatura, dello stato di conservazione, topografico. Già da questo elenco si intuisce però che manca forse l'indice più importante, quello dei possessori e delle provenienze, il che obbliga lo studioso (o il semplice lettore) a scorrere le oltre duecento schede per recuperare nomi e volti di antichi lettori. Ciò ha impedito, a esempio, di appurare in pochi istanti quali e quanti incunaboli del lascito Trombetta siano ancora presenti nella Biblioteca Antoniana.

In addition, the catalogue concludes with a very rich (perhaps an excessive) apparatus of eleven indexes which allow us to use the catalogue more intelligently: indexes of authors, place of printing, printers, curators, chronology, concordances, typographical features, manuscript features, binding characteristics, state of preservation, topography. But one gets the sense from this list that perhaps the most important index is missing, the index of owners and provenance, which means that the scholar (or even the mere reader) has to go through more than 200 tables to recover the names and storage places of early readers. This has made it difficult, for example, to check quickly which and how many of the incunabula from the Trombetta legacy are still to be found in the Biblioteca Antoniana. (*Translation by Maureen MacGlashan.*)

Quartet: *Growing up in restaurants: the story of eating out in Britain from 55BC to nowadays*, by James Pembroke (2013, 344 pp, £17.50). Rev. by Huon Mallalieu, *Country Life*, 3 July 2013.

Among the many enticing tidbits scattered through the book – which really should have an index – is the fact that 'restaurant' did not originally mean an eating house, but a restorative bouillon provided by a restaurateur.

South Dublin Libraries: *Dublin Fire Brigade and the Irish Revolution*, by Las Fallon (€7.50). Rev. by Kevin Myers, *History Ireland*, May/June 2013.

[refers to lack of further study on British recruitment]. It would, however, have been unfair to ask this of a publication that is intentionally limited in its scope, most evidently so in the lack of an index. This is unfortunate, for it immediately restricts the enthusiasm of both the semi-interested scholar and the casual reader. Yes, an index takes time and costs money; but so do the 45 pages of photocopied reports from the 19th c. that are carried as an appendix and have no clear purpose here.

Wiley-Blackwell: *John Milton: prose: major writings on liberty, politics, religion and education*, ed. by David Loewenstein (2012, 606 pp, £29.99). Rev. by Neil Forsyth, *Times Literary Supplement*, 14 June 2013.

Unfortunately, there is no index.

Yale University Press: *The life and art of Luca Signorelli*, by Tom Henry (2012, 456 pp, £50). Rev. by Charles Hope, *London Review of Books*, 20 December 2012.

The book does not follow the traditional pattern of an introduction, which would normally contain a chronological account of the artist's career, followed by a catalogue of works, because Henry provided the catalogue entries for a 2002 book on Signorelli written with another art historian, Laurence Kanter. One can understand why he didn't wish to produce a new catalogue, but this is a feature of artistic monographs that retains its value, since such books are more often consulted than read from cover to cover. It is particularly unfortunate that neither book includes a topographical index

of works, thus in most cases making rapid consultation impossible. He has tried to incorporate much of the material that one would find in catalogue entries in his text and notes, and has done so skilfully; but it is not the best way of providing such information, and it means that readers primarily interested in an overview of Signorelli's career are often confronted with detailed arguments which may not be of particular interest to them.

Obiter dicta

McFarland & Co.: *The Dostoevsky archive*, by Peter Sekirin (2013, 366 pp, £26.95). Rev. by Peter Conradi, *The Spectator*, 22 June 2013.

Rather oddly, this book's eccentric index gives the enticing entry 'tutoring Tsar's children' with no following page reference. [*But in what other respects is this index eccentric? The reviewer might have told us.*]

Credo Reference [library database]: Individual and multi-volume works. Rev. by Becky Kornegay, Discussion of Library Reference Issues, LIFBREF-L01istserv.kent.edu, June 2013.

At my library we are willing to have reference works in both print and electronic formats, space and expense allowing. If Credo adds a title we already own in print, we don't automatically remove the print copy. If, on the other hand, we buy an individual e-reference book, we do not usually duplicate it in print. An exception would be a major multi-volume work that covers a broad discipline. A recent example is the 8-volume *International Encyclopedia of Political Science* (Sage) that we decided to buy in print even though it is in Credo.

Keep in mind that Credo's e-reference works do not include the sets' indexes, even if the print set has a well-developed, very long index. This is also true of Oxford Reference Online. Even with keyword searching of full text, the index offers unique and useful points of entry. Most useful are the hierarchical indexes, where you're offered a broad topic such as 'food' and then presented with a list of related topics and subtopics. A keyword search on food wouldn't bring in all of those subtopics. Database designers are missing the boat on this one. Gale Virtual Reference does include indexes, with links directly into the text.

Viking: *Ghana must go*, by Taiye Selasi (2013, 318 pp, £14.99). Rev. by Adam Mars-Jones, *London Review of Books*, 4 July 2013.

If Taiye Selasi's debut novel was as fascinating as its acknowledgments pages the book would be a triumph. Acknowledgments in books have gone the way of Oscar acceptance speeches in recent years, with ever more exhaustive tributes – though in the case of a book no prize has yet been awarded. Selasi's list contains more than 150 names, and begins: 'I am so very grateful to God, and (in alphabetical order, from the bottom of my heart) Andrew Wylie ...'. It's an unusual version of alphabetical order that gives Andrew 'the Jackal' Wylie pride of place and the proper proximity to God. (If Wylie was actually a god he would be Anubis, near the top of the list without any fancy footwork.) In fact the tributes here are arranged by alphabetical order of first name or, more eccentrically, title. There's a run of family accolades: 'Dr Juliette Tuakli my beloved mum, Dr Lade Wosornu my brilliant father, Dr Wilburn Williams my dearest dad'. Three parents, and all of them doctors. If there isn't a novel in that then there's no justice – but it isn't this one.

The other end of the alphabetised list feeds into one element of the story that is told here: 'and, above all, the first person I ever

loved, Yetsa Kehinde Adebodunde Olubunmi Tuakli-Wosornu, my extraordinary and eternal journey mate'.

Don't mention the Gulag ...

Yale University Press: *Isaac and Isaiah: the covert punishment of a Cold War heretic*, by David Caute (2013, 336 pp, £25). Rev. by John Gray, *Literary Review*, July 2013.

Viewing Stalin as (in Caute's words) 'a legitimate heir to the work of Lenin', [Isaac] Deutscher always avoided any mention of the Gulag. 'In the index to *Stalin*', Caute notes, 'one draws a blank under "camps", "concentration camps", "labour camps", "forced labour", "Gulag", "penal system", "prisons", "justice", "penal servitude", "courts" ...'.

Don't mention vulgarities ...

Allen Lane/ The Penguin Press: *An uncertain glory: India and its contradictions*, by Jean Drèze and Amartya Sen (2013, 433pp, £20). Rev. by David Gilmour, *Literary Review*, July 2013.

A concern with tackling poverty is the link that unites Drèze and Sen, so readers of this book will not expect to find it a paean to the success of Indian capitalism or the glories of Bollywood, Hindutva or the cricketers' Premier League. In fact none of these vulgarities even features in the index.

Indexing at Aldeburgh

Walking to Aldeburgh one snowy day in search of food, he [Ronald Blythe] passes an elderly man in a tweed overcoat and a cloth cap. This turns out to be E. M. Forster on his way to leave a note enquiring if 'Mr Blythe' would like to 'come in for a drink'. A few hours later Blythe is helping Forster and [Benjamin] Britten compile the index to the former's *Marianne Thornton*.

D. J. Taylor, review of Ronald Blythe, *The time by the sea: Aldeburgh 1955–1948* (Faber & Faber, 2013)

[Marianne Thornton: 1797–1887: a domestic biography was E. M. Forster's biography of his great-aunt.]

An end to indexes?

The one person I wanted to hear from at prime minister's questions was Caroline Lucas, the only Green Party MP. She was wearing a T-shirt marked in bold black lettering 'No More Page Three' – very different from the sober suits and dark dresses worn by most female MPs.

I assumed that she was referring to Page 3 of the *Sun*, though it is possible that she was representing printers who, feeling themselves to be overworked, wish to print fewer pages, starting with page 3 in newspapers, books and magazines. Of course if publishers agreed to this demand, the next thing their workers would want is an end to page 67, or 239 or even whole indexes.

Simon Hoggart, 'Another plane crash for Cameron', *Guardian*, 12 June 2013

Warm thanks to the contributors to this section:

Jane Angus, Ballater
Caroline Barlow
Rohan Bolton, Chalfont St Giles
Liz Cook, Kirkby Stephen
Ian Craine, London

Laurence Errington, Edinburgh
Moyra Forrest, Edinburgh
Kim Harris, Penzance
Linda Haylock, Dunstable
Grace Holmes, Reading
Don Jordan, Mt Waverley, Victoria
Helen Litton, Dublin
Andrew Lopez, New Orleans
Maureen MacGlashan, Largs

Max McMaster, Melbourne Area, Australia
Christopher Phipps, London
Denise Sutherland, Weston Creek, ACT, Australia
Angela Wingfield, Etobicoke, Ontario

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

Book reviews

Reading Augustine in the Reformation: the flexibility of intellectual authority in Europe, 1500–1620. Arnoud S. Q. Visser. Oxford Studies in Historical Theology. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2011. 256 pp. ISBN: 978-0-19-976593-5 (hbk) £55.00.

As Augustine observed in his *On Christian teaching*, numerous study aids to scripture had been created to save the Christian student a lot of bother over a few details. These aids included a list of Hebrew names compiled by Jerome and the chronological tables created by Eusebius. Augustine suggested that one should – ‘to the good of his brethren’ – classify places, animals, plants, trees, stones, metals, ‘and all the other unfamiliar kinds of objects mentioned in scripture’. The Christian student, however, was not restricted to the study of scripture, and Augustine himself tried to facilitate the study of his own works by writing the *Retractationes* (*Reconsiderations* or *Corrections*) in which he listed in chronological order, reviewed, criticized and at times corrected his many books.

During the Middle Ages, Augustine was an author of almost unparalleled authority, and his authority continued during the Renaissance. At around 1500 he was, according to Visser in *Reading Augustine in the Reformation*, ‘one of the most printed authors’ (p. 15) and many user-tools such as editions with commentaries, anthologies, bibliographies, catalogues and indexes were created and widely disseminated. These tools, designed to facilitate access to Augustine’s vast oeuvre, were indeed time-savers for the student, but as the historian Sigfried Giedion once remarked, like all tools and artifacts they are also the ‘outgrowth of fundamental attitudes to the world’. An historical analysis can bring out these attitudes. In the book under review, Arnoud Visser, professor of textual culture in the Renaissance Low Countries at the University of Utrecht, analyses study aids, reference and finding tools to Augustine’s works created during the Reformation because they can tell us how the attitude to Augustine differed between Protestants and Catholics, and thus show the flexibility of his authority during that time. As Visser rightly claims, these tools do not simply ‘facilitate access to Augustine, but filter and frame his interpretation to suit particular confessional agendas’ (p. 10).

That Protestants and Catholics each had their own, distinct agenda in reading and utilizing Augustine is not so much a result of confessionalization as a consequence of the fact that all tools are designed for a certain purpose and embody the values and attitudes of their creators. Therefore, the story told by Visser does not start in the year 1500 in Western Europe, but in 427 in North Africa, in the year that Augustine began to work on his *Retractationes*. This is apparent from the order of the *Retractationes*: Augustine stated that he had chosen chronological order because the reader could ‘find out how I progressed while writing’. For Visser, the

intention for Augustine behind this organizational principle was to show his ‘development of spiritual growth and increasing religious authority’ (p. 20). In an article on the *Retractationes*, Meredith F. Eller observed that while Augustine found 167 places for revision in those works written by him as a layman and priest, in the writings after his elevation to the episcopate he found only 52 places to correct, and in the last 30 treatises there were just 13 such places: ‘This shows very clearly that there is progress in Augustine’s writings in the direction of Catholic orthodoxy. In fact, that was one of his purposes in writing the *Retractationes*’ (Eller). His disciple Possidius had a different apologetic purpose in mind when writing a similar book after Augustine’s death. He compiled a classified bibliography with the title *Indiculus* (diminutive of the Latin *index*), where he grouped Augustine’s work under topical headings such as ‘Against the Pagans’, ‘Against the Manichaeans’ and ‘Against the Arians’.

Visser’s book is divided into three parts, ‘devoted to the production, circulation, and consumption of Augustine’s texts’ (p. 9). The first part, ‘Production’, is dedicated to the printed collected works of Augustine in the 16th century, i.e. the first edition published in 1505–06 by the Basel publisher Johann Amerbach, the *opera omnia* edited by Erasmus (1528–9) and the edition of the theologians of the University of Leuven (1576–7), and he analyses how confessionalized each of these edition projects was. The second part, ‘Circulation’, focuses on study aids such as bibliographies, indexes and anthologies. The last part, ‘Consumption’, attempts to illuminate ‘the diversity of reading practices that can be gleaned from manuscript annotations by individual readers to their copies of Augustine’ (p. 10) as well as examining the use of Augustine’s arguments in public debates.

Reading Augustine in the Reformation is short (139 pages of text), but Visser finds the space for the right balance between abstract discussion and analysis of concrete examples. Of course, his discussion of indexing Augustine (pp. 68–76) could be more comprehensive – the topic deserves a whole monograph – but he succeeds in giving a clear idea of the role of indexes in the debate between Protestants and Catholics. Like the other tools examined, indexes ‘reveal confessional strategies’ (p. 74) and Visser goes on to show how they were used ‘as weapons in the religious war of words’ (p. 74). The selection of index entries – the decision on indexable matter, i.e. what should be included and what not – is an obvious indicator of the indexer’s agenda, as is the wording of the headings. But Visser also shows, in a subchapter entitled ‘Commonplace grid’ (pp. 72–4), that commonplaces – common categories or *topoi* – served as organizational principles for classified indexes: ‘The early modern idea of commonplaces provided a system of storing and retrieving knowledge by organizing them around so-called general places, or *loci communes*’ (p. 73). Many headings and subheadings