

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 omitted; Obiter dicta.

Indexes praised

ALA Neal-Schuman: *Communicating professionally: a how-to-do-it manual for librarians* (3rd edn), by C. S. Ross and K. Nilsen (2013, 445 pp, \$70). Rev. by Margaret I. Katny, *CILIP Update*, May 2014.

The index is thorough and includes information from sidebars.

Alma Classics: *The testament and other poems*, by François Villon, transl. by Anthony Mortimer (2013, 266 pp, £16.99). Rev. by Margaret M. McGowan, *Times Literary Supplement*, 4 July 2014.

This new translation puts the poems up front; notes supply essential facts, followed by a short account of Villon's life, an overview of some other translations, and a rich index of names and places.

Belknap Press: *The letters of Robert Frost, vol. 1: 1886–1920*, ed. by Donald Sheehy et al (2014, 600 pp, £31.76). Rev. by David Bromwich, *Times Literary Supplement*, 1 August 2014.

A good index and a biographical glossary complete the authority of a book that has been printed with the care and elegance it deserves.

Harvard University Press: *The novel: a biography*, by Michael Schmidt (2014, 1172 pp, £29.95). Rev. by Lindsay Duguid, *Times Literary Supplement*, 1 August 2014.

This well-produced and apparently scholarly book has a good index but no footnotes to provide the sources of its many quotations.

Oxford University Press: *Does spelling matter?*, by Simon Horobin (2013, 288 pp, £20). Rev. by Caroline Petherick, *Editing Matters*, May/June 2014.

The index is divided into two types: word and subject. This helps the book become a handy reference source after first reading.

Rothschild Foundation: *The James A. de Rothschild bequest: printed books and bookbindings*, by Giles Barber (2013, 2 vols, 1,161 pp, £300). Rev. by Anthony Hobson, *Times Literary Supplement*, 4 July 2014.

Barber's attributions generally agree with Michon's, but are supported by an outstanding scholarly achievement, an index of all the tools, rolls and royal armorials used on French eighteenth-century bindings at Waddesdon, a total of over 1,400 arranged in eighteen categories. It has provided the evidence to identify the authors of several unsigned bindings – particularly those by the two Deromes, Douceur and Padeloup – and will continue to be an indispensable tool of future research.

University of Washington Press: *Gandharan Buddhist reliquaries*, by David Jongeward et al (2012, 320 pp, \$75). Rev. by Gerard Fussman, *Arts Asiatiques*, 68, p. 129.

Le livre se compose en effet de trois parties, quasiment indépendantes: un inventaire typologique de reliquaires par D. Jongeward, une présentation des reliquaires du British Museum par E. Errington, et une partie épigraphique, elle-même constituée d'une présentation générale par R. Salomon, et d'un corpus des dédicaces de reliquaires par S. Baums. Le lien est assuré par la maquette et la très belle illustration, que j'imagine dues pour l'essentiel à D. Jongeward, l'utilisation au moins partielle de la terminologie de D. Jongeward par R. Salomon et S. Baums, et par l'index dû à Boyd Holmes, qui pour les inscriptions se limite aux noms propres, m'a-t-il semblé.

[The book indeed comprises three parts, each one practically independent of the other. The first part is a typological inventory by D. Jongeward of reliquaries; the second a presentation by E. Errington of reliquaries at the British Museum; and the third consists of two epigraphical chapters, specifically a general introduction by R. Salomon to epigraphs, and a catalogue by S. Baums of reliquary dedications. The unified structure of the book is realized through its organization, and through its very fine illustrations, the selection of which is likely Jongeward's. It is also owed to the partial use, by Salomon and Baums, of Jongeward's terminology; and to the index by Boyd Holmes – who, it seems to me, has restricted his entries to proper names only. (*Translation by the indexer, ISC member Boyd Holmes.*)]

Indexes omitted

History Press: *Ellerman Lines: Remembering a great British shipping company*, by Ian Collard (2014, 236 pp, £16.99). Rev. by Roy Fenton, *The Mariner's Mirror*, August 2014.

Collard's book does none of this [*advance our knowledge, suggest original research, etc.*]. It is not even well-written, sufficiently proof read, adequately illustrated or even indexed. Its relative inexpensiveness, reflecting the poverty of its compilation and production, is its only redeeming feature.

Viking: *The climb*, by Chris Froome (2014, 448 pp, £20). Rev. by Richard Williams, *The Guardian*, 27 June 2014.

Someone not deterred by its lack of an index has claimed that *The Climb* contains no fewer than 300 references to [Bradley] Wiggins, a statistic that alone indicates the depth of Froome's commitment to a project that amounted to regicide [*that of winning the 100th Tour de France in 2013*].

Viking: *Warsaw boy: a memoir of a wartime childhood*, by Andrew Borowiec (367 pp, £16.99). Rev. by Matthew Parker, *Literary Review*, July 2014.

There are no source notes or index and only a very rudimentary bibliography.

Obiter dicta

Harper: *Updike*, by Adam Begley (2014, 558 pp, £25). Rev. by James Campbell, *Times Literary Supplement*, 13 June 2014.

In *Self-Consciousness* [John] Updike wrote, alluding to the asthma he developed in his thirties: 'To give myself brightness and air, I read Karl Barth and fell in love with other men's wives.'

Begley can hardly be accused of ignoring this theme: the index to his biography has more entries under 'Updike, John Hoyer ... and adultery' than any other topic ('and religion' gets just over half as many). [*This index has 34 page references for 'and adultery', 18 for 'and religion', with no sub-sub-headings; long strings abound.*]

Too many recipes

What do you wish you'd known when you started as a food writer? I started writing in 1960, and I wish I had made an index of all my recipes as I went along so I could easily find a recipe. I still haven't got one as there are too many to file.

Mary Berry, 'The interview', *John Lewis Cook Edition*, autumn 2014

Warm thanks to the contributors to this section:

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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).

Book reviews

Book was there: reading in electronic times. Andrew Piper. Chicago, Ill.: University of Chicago Press, 2012. xiii, 192pp. ISBN 978-0-226-66978-6 (hbk) US\$22.50.

Paper: an elegy. Ian Sansom. London: Fourth Estate, 2012. xxiii, 231pp. ISBN 978-0-00-748026-5 (hbk) £14.99.

The 'death of the book', as Andrew Piper explains towards the end of his wide-ranging essay, is a very old idea. It is also in danger of becoming a rather hackneyed one (three years ago a Google search for the dread phrase retrieved around 11 million matches; today it's over 80 million). Mercifully, both Piper and Ian Sansom, with very different approaches, help to move the debate to more interesting territory, and offer new slants on the role of the printed word in a time when an increasing proportion of written information never reaches physical form.

Piper's position becomes clear early in the preface to *Book was there* – he has come neither to bury books nor to praise them unquestioningly: 'Books will always be there', but 'it is time to put an end to the digital utopias and print eulogies' and to look instead at 'what we have thought books have done for us and what we think digital texts might do differently'. His focus (if that is the right word for such a culturally and historically catholic survey, with such diverse frames of reference) is how the intellectual, internal processes of reading might be affected by the physical, external differences of the devices through which we read. More simply, he aims to 'attempt to understand the relationship between books and screens, to identify some of their fundamental differences and to chart out the continuities that might run between them'.

Each of his chapters looks at a different aspect of the reading process, from how we hold texts to where we read them; how we alter texts – through annotation and amendment – and how we share them with others. The discussion scurries across the continents and the centuries: single paragraphs may happily encompass Aristotle and First World War amputees; a summary of open-source operating systems rubs shoulders with Thomas Carlyle's *On heroes and hero worship*; and there is a particular fondness for illustrative examples from the works of contemporary installation

artists. Along the way there are some thought-provoking analogies: books are essentially vertebral, while digital texts are more like invertebrates. But your reaction to the decision to end each chapter with a vignette from the domestic lives of the author's children may depend on your predisposition to the word cute.

The history of indexing texts does not get much of a look in. There is an early reference to our old friend the 'manicule', the pointing-hand device that began appearing in 12th-century manuscripts and subsequently became a commonplace in printed books; and much later on there is brief mention of the utility of concordances for extracting meaning.

The third chapter – 'Turning the page (roaming, zooming, streaming)' – which looks like it might cover navigating texts, is in fact more about proceeding through them. It will, however, probably still be the one that is of most interest to readers of this journal. The book may not be dead, but here Piper is happy to embrace the 'death of the page'. As he puts it, 'nothing seems more misguided than creating websites that are meant to look like books or books that are meant to look like websites'. And with a relish which many will share, he looks forward to a time when new reading interfaces move more emphatically 'past the boundaries of the page'.

Befitting its subject, Ian Sansom's elegy to *Paper* is of lighter and plainer stuff than *Book was there*; it is also less freighted with theory, and is largely child-free. Rather than a history of paper and paper-making (though there are plenty of nuggets of interest on both, from the mulberry trees of Japan 2,000 years ago to the stationery preferences of 19th-century European novelists), it is instead a pleasantly meandering cultural musing on the role of paper, in all its manifestations, in our lives.

Sansom begins with a list of everyday things made of paper (it's a long list) and then of our day-to-day activities which depend on things made of paper (pretty much all of them). There are some daunting statistics: 'if you live in America you consume, all told, about 750 lbs of paper per year – which is about the weight of seven bags of cement.'

Books, of course, get their own chapter (predominantly about the joys and excesses of book-collecting through the centuries),