

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

Amberley: *Through Spain with Wellington: the letters of Lieutenant Peter Le Mesurier of the 'Fighting Ninth'*, ed. by Adrian Greenwood (2016, 272 pp, £20). Rev. by Allan Mallinson, *Times Literary Supplement*, 22 April 2016.

These hitherto unpublished letters – touching, intelligent, full of domestic and military detail – are well edited, annotated and indexed by Adrian Greenwood, who was found dead at his home earlier this month, in which connection a man has been arrested. [On 3 July 2016 a man appeared at Oxford Crown Court accused of the murder of Adrian Greenwood. He pleaded not guilty and will face trial on 3 October.]

American Library Association/ALA Editions: *The handbook for storytellers*, by Judy Freeman and Caroline Feller Bauer (2015, 394 pp, \$65). Rev. by Helen Dunford, *Australian Library Journal*, 2016, 65(1).

Aspiring storytellers, no matter their level of experience and competence, will draw considerable value from this book. It will become an indispensable reference which school and public librarians and teachers will refer to on a daily basis to strengthen programmes and curricula. It contains everything needed, and is indexed by subject, by title and by author, to aid in finding half-remembered stories.

Bloomsbury: *Hotel*, by Joanna Walsh (2015, 176 pp, £9.99). Rev. by Jonathan Ellis, *Times Literary Supplement*, 18 March 2016.

Woody Allen, Anne Carson, Salvador Dalí, E. M. Forster, Greta Garbo, Roy Lichtenstein, Katherine Mansfield, Sylvia Plath, Elvis Presley and Mae West all make at least one guest appearance in the fabulously eclectic index that is difficult not to read like a dream hotel register.

Bloomsbury: *The lost detective: becoming Dashiell Hammett*, by Nathan Ward (2015, 240 pp, \$35Aus). Rev. by Sue Turnbull, *The Age*, 12 March 2016.

... this slim book, with its admirable footnotes, bibliography and useful index...

Facet: *Information resource description: creating and managing metadata*, by Philip Hider (2012, 288 pp, £49.95). Rev. by Peter G. Underwood, *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, 2014, 46(1).

Each chapter contains copious reference lists, and there are additional lists of standards and further reading. As might be expected, there is also an excellent index.

Facet: *Records management and information culture: tackling the people problem*, by Gillian Oliver and Fiorella Foscarini (2014, 178 pp, Aus\$49.95). Rev. by Ian McCallum, *Australian Library Journal*, 2015, 64(1).

And to round it out, the index is one of the best this reviewer has seen. Comprehensive, precise and in-context (13 references to DIRKS – State Records NSW Design and Implementation of Recordkeeping Systems, and 20 to ISO15489 – the international standard for records and records management), it gives the book a dual role as a reference source.

Hatfield Local History Society: *Hatfield and its people: cumulative index to Parts 1-12*, by Hazel Bell (2015, 70 pp, £4). Rev. by Jack Kampmeier, newsletter of the Hatfield Local History Society, <http://www.hatfieldhistory.uk/new%20publications.html>

An impressive set of booklets was published in the 1960s by the Hatfield Branch of the Workers' Educational Association under the overall title *Hatfield and its people*. These slim volumes, comprising 12 parts, describe different aspects of the history of Hatfield. The painstaking research by their authors makes them an essential reference for anyone studying Hatfield history. As originally issued, their usefulness was hampered by the lack of other than rudimentary indexes.

A re-issue of the series by the Hatfield Local History Society was made in 2014, clearing a few minor errors and, more importantly, adding an index to each volume and issuing a cumulative index for the whole series. An index adds immeasurably to the usefulness of a document, more so when several documents are involved. Consider, for example, the role of barley in the history of Hatfield. Vol. 3 relates it to brewing, and Vol. 11 brings in the families involved. Vol. 9 relates barley to farming practice. The place of barley in the diet is considered in Vol. 12 while Vol. 5 describes the transport of barley. Without indexes, putting together a coherent picture becomes very time-consuming.

We owe the existence of these indexes to Hazel Bell. She single-handedly combed through each of the volumes in this series to compile each individual index, and then combined all into a cumulative index. Judgment was required at each step as to how detailed to make the index. An index by its nature is impersonal, and one cannot stamp one's personality on it. Nevertheless, we owe a great debt of gratitude to Hazel for completing these indexes to the great benefit of Hatfield.

New Directions: *All the poems: Stevie Smith*, ed. by Will May (2016, 704pp, \$39.95). Rev. by David Orr, *New York Times*, 22 April 2016.

Indeed, *All the Poems* is admirably professional and thorough, from its formal, scholarly introduction to its four appendixes to its two indexes, and it is almost disconcerting to see this poet of radical whimsy so coolly annotated.

Profile: *The quest for Mary Magdalene: history & legend*, by Michael Haag (2016, 354 pp, £14.18). Rev. by Barry Clayton, <https://www.amazon.co.uk/review>, 21 March 2016.

There is a bibliography, several photos, and an excellent index. [Index by SI member Caroline Wilding.]

Rowman & Littlefield: *The Medical Library Association guide to providing consumer and patient health information*, ed. by Michele Spatz (2014, 224 pp, £34.95). Rev. by Deborah A. Cronau, *Australian Library Journal*, 2015, **64**(3).

Supporting the concise, informative and easily negotiated chapters of this little book are well-constructed lists of figures and tables and a solid index.

Two cheers!

De Gruyter Saur: *85 years of IFLA: a history and chronology of sessions, 1927–2012*, by Jeffrey M. Wilhite (IFLA Publications, #155) (2012, 359 pp, €84). Rev. by Edward Reid-Smith, *Australian Library Journal*, 2013, **62**(4).

This is not historiography in the accepted sense, but rather a selection of some key features that tend towards the administrative – for each annual conference quite brief details are given The origins of details included are evidenced by the numerous in-text bibliographical references to sources such as *IFLA Journal* and *IFLA Annual*. These may be used to track people and events – but although the index may be reasonably complete, the topics appearing in the work itself are selective. This means that the book can be a useful source for ideas and literature searching, but only at a basic level.

De Gruyter Saur: *LIS education in developing countries: the road ahead*, ed. by Ismail Abdullahi, A. Y. Asundi & C. R. Karisdappa (IFLA Publications, #165) (2014, 186 pp, €93). Rev. by Edward Reid-Smith, *Australian Library Journal*, 2015, **64**(2).

Given that there are two main potential areas of interest – geographical and topical, it has to be said that the index is useful for names of places, institutions and people, but somewhat less so for subjects. Many entries refer to only a single page, though others do indicate wider coverage (e.g., ‘India’ has 10 references, and ‘curriculum’ has seven). Others (e.g. ‘collaboration, ‘online’ and ‘distance education’) are not indexed at all, although mentioned in the text.

Facet: *A handbook for corporate information professionals*, ed. by Katharine Schopflin (2015, 184 pp, £59.95). Rev. by Deborah A. Cronau, *Australian Library Journal*, 2015, **64**(4).

The only small problem I found was that, although the Index was generous in size and well constructed, its very small font size made it a little difficult to read.

W. W. Norton: *Between you & me: confessions of a comma queen*, by Mary Norris (2016, 240 pp, £9.99). Rev. by Robert Brown (*Journal of Scholarly Publishing*, **47**(3), April 2016).

While it does have an index that lets readers look up specific points of usage, such as who versus whom, the book lacks the customary layout of a reference book: no lists, no columns of paired examples, no sidebars, none of the apparatus that invites browsing. And its coverage of usage matters is too selective to make it a comprehensive guide on grammar and style.

Indexes censured

Ashgate: *Renaissance mad voyages: experiments in early modern English travel*, by Anthony Parr (2016, 248 pp, £60). Rev. by Elizabeth Scott-Baumann, *Times Literary Supplement*, 11 March 2016.

Chapters are structured neither according to an author nor genre but in rather more thematic clusters: ‘Strange Returns and Performances’, ‘Two Prodigious Feats’. The book is therefore not easily navigable for the reader looking for familiar journeys such as Jonson’s walk to Scotland, which features prominently in ‘Strange Returns’ and at the start of ‘Orpheus in the Underworld’; nor does ‘Scotland’ feature in the index (though Venice and Virginia do).

Cambridge University Press: *The end of Greek athletics in late antiquity*, by Sofie Remijsen (2015, 405 pp, £70). Rev. by Nigel M. Kennell, *Bryn Mawr Classical Review*, 11 April 2016.

The book’s major flaw is a common one: an inadequate index that contains many entries to specific individuals and institutions, but none to concepts. For example, the entry for ‘athletes’ (383-384) lists eleven names under ‘imperial age’ and fifty under ‘late antique’, but no sub-entries for ‘career athletes,’ ‘athlete performers,’ or ‘Christian athletes.’ A reader interested in any of these subjects must therefore be armed with quite specialised knowledge of individual athletes’ names to utilise this resource.

Facet: *Annual review of cultural heritage informatics, 2012–2013*, ed. by Samantha K. Hastings (2014, 290 pp, £65). Rev. by Ian McCallum, *Australian Library Journal*, 2015, **64**(2).

Each section has an introduction, and each paper has an abstract, a conclusion and list of references. There is a brief index of compromised utility (many entries have high numbers of undifferentiated locators, instead of subjects being analysed into meaningful sub-headings), and this is my only niggle. This is a carefully planned, well-organised record of cultural heritage, storage, preservation and access, and it deserves to be widely read.

Facet: *Records and information management*, by Patricia C. Franks (2013, 410 pp, £49.95). Rev. by Julie McLeod, *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, 2014, **46**(1).

There are many useful ‘end notes’ in each chapter, a glossary, a bibliography and an index. The latter appears comprehensive at first glance but does have gaps (e.g. references to recordkeeping in the introduction and the first chapter are missing). I doubt this is the fault of the author.

Oxford University Press: *The mark of Cain: guilt and denial in the post-war lives of Nazi perpetrators*, by Katharina von Kellenbach (2013, xi + 287 pp, \$36.95). Rev. by Marion Hussong, *H-Net Reviews*, April 2016, www.hnet.org/reviews/showrev.php?id=42219

One small criticism remains: it is puzzling to see that Oxford University Press appears to be skimping on the editorial support scholars need and deserve. *The Mark of Cain* contains typing and copy-editing errors; some individuals referenced in the text are missing from the index, and the names of two major historical figures are wrong: the first name of Hitler’s security chief, Kaltenbrunner, is Ernst, not Emil, and Joseph Goebbels’s name is not spelled with an umlaut. However, these quibbles are small distractions, and *The Mark of Cain* remains an important, well-executed interdisciplinary study.

Scarecrow Press: *A social history of books and libraries from cuneiform to bytes*, by Patrick M. Valentine (2012, 203 pp, £39.75). Rev. by Barbara Frame, *Australian Library Journal*, 2013, **62**(4).

The index is capricious. For example, the British Library, the London Library and Mechanics’ Institutes all receive significant

mentions on p. 96, but none of these can be found via the index – neither can a brief but very informative account of Indian libraries on p. 106.

Scarecrow Press: *Teaching information fluency: how to teach students to be efficient, ethical, and critical information consumers*, by Carl Heine and Dennis O'Connor (2014, 215 pp, £34.95). Rev. by Edward Reid-Smith, *Australian Library Journal*, 2015, **64**(3).

Standard features are an appendix ..., the bibliography ..., and a selective topical index (missing, for example, such key concepts as copyright, although it appears in the text).

Stone Trough: *Devoid of shyness: from the journal, 1926-1929*, by Alan Pryce-Jones, ed. by John Byrne (2015, 222 pp, £20). Rev. by A. N. Wilson, *Times Literary Supplement*, 27 May 2016.

You need to have David [Pryce-Jones's] memoir beside you in order to understand the father's diaries. The editor, John Byrne, tells us, 'I tried to inflict only a mild case of Betjeman's dreaded Foot and Note disease: readers requiring more information will conduct their own researches more adroitly than I could'. This, alas, is not true of the present reviewer, who needed help in identifying a whole gallery of forgotten, though no doubt once bright, young things. Byrne had access to 300,000 words of diary and has boiled it down to a short book. Many of the characters who cross the pages are, to me at least, quite unheard of. At one point, for example, we find Alan holding hands in a taxi with a man called Bobby Marshall, but he is not in the index, nor is there any explanation of his identity.... His descriptions of meeting figures as various as Henry de Montherlant (consistently misspelt in text and index here), Edith Wharton, Somerset Maugham, Harold Nicolson (with whom he had the inevitable fling) are all charming, and I suspect that with a bit more Foot and Note disease, and greater care choosing the extracts, a much more accessible volume could have been produced.

Indexes omitted

Jonathan Cape: *A walk in the park*, by Travis Elborough (2016, 384 pp, £18.99). Rev. by Rachel Cooke, *The Observer*, 30 May 2016.

My biggest criticism of the book, however, has nothing whatsoever to do with its author, and this is that it has no index. Why publishers try to save money by this means, as they seem to increasingly often, is beyond me. It's a false economy. The first thing anyone is likely to do on seeing *A Walk in the Park* in a bookshop is to try and find out if their own favourite (mine is Endcliffe Park in Sheffield, scene of much youthful wine-drinking) made the cut (it didn't). Unable to do this, how disappointed they'll feel, as if they'd run towards the ice cream van at the park gate only for it to have driven off at the last moment.

Emerald: *Library and information science trends and research: Europe*, ed. by Amanda Spink and Jannica Heinström (2012, 305 pp, £67.95). Rev. by John Buschman, *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, 2014, **46**(1).

This then is the point of the value of this volume: it can be read and used and explored in combinations and ways not necessarily envisioned by the authors and editors. An index would have been useful, but that is a small quibble.

Princeton University Press: *Hamburgers in paradise: the stories behind the food we eat*, by Louise O. Fresco, trans. by Liz Waters

(2015, 576 pp, £22). Rev. by Amy Bentley, *Times Literary Supplement*, 25 March 2016.

This is a Big Ideas book. As in many such studies, huge issues can be glossed over and sometimes dismissed in a sentence or two. Much of it is written in generalities, and the absence of footnotes or an index compounds this weakness, particularly when such complicated and controversial issues as genetically modified organisms are discussed.

Yale University Press: *Fashion plates: 150 years of style*, by April Calahan (2015, 440 pp, £90). Rev. by Susannah Clapp, *Times Literary Supplement*, 27 May 2016.

Fittingly, *Fashion Plates* is presented as a box of delights. It comes in a purple case that might be about to puff the scent of parma violets. Each page has an image that is delicate or sumptuous. Each short passage beside the image contains a factual nugget. It is only a pity that the volume is such an unwieldy slab: 440 pages; 28 by 33 cm; no index. The publishers might have supplied a decorative attendant to turn the page.

Obiter dicta

Allen Lane: *The great British dream factory: the strange history of our national imagination*, by Dominic Sandbrook (2015, 615 pp, £25). Rev. by Alex Clark, *Times Literary Supplement*, 1 January 2016.

The section 'Champagne in Bingley' [on John Braine], which details the journey of the author of *Room at the Top* from provincial anonymity to lunches with Kingsley Amis, Robert Conquest and Anthony Powell is gripping, not least because Braine seems such a shit. Entries in the index give you the flavour: 'disgraces himself in Kingsley Amis's bedroom/ robust views on benefits of slavery/ robust views on benefits of smoking/ robust views on benefits of South African government'.

Oxford University Press: *Charles Williams: the third Inklings*, by Grevel Lindop (2015, 544 pp, £25). Rev. by Geoffrey Hill, *Times Literary Supplement*, 25 March 2016.

On turning immediately to the index (to see if our own name is there) it is at once evident that the entry under 'Inklings' is extraordinarily brief, given the word's brazening in the book's title. Abruptly, the group appears to have less significance in the narrative than does the name of the poet, playwright, critic and editor Anne Ridler; and rightly so. She, as Grevel Lindop and I believe, played a most significant part in the strengthening – so far as she could – of Williams's later poetry and she kept counsel well and was valiant for truth in his behalf. [*The Inklings were a literary group who met regularly in Oxford in the 1930s and 1940s. Their best-known members were J. R. R. Tolkien and C. S. Lewis.*]

Not for linear reading

Hartmann Schedel is best remembered today as the compiler of the *Nuremberg Chronicle* (1493) – with 1,809 woodcuts the most lavishly illustrated printed book of the fifteenth century. ... The *Chronicle* was designed not for linear reading but rather as a reference book, whose contents were made readily accessible through a detailed index – a clear indication of Schedel's concern with the organization and retrieval of knowledge.

John L. Flood, 'A world in seven ages', *Times Literary Supplement*, 29 April 2016

Index to canon law

[It was announced in April 2016 that the real father of Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, was Winston Churchill's private secretary, Sir Anthony Montague Browne.]

A curious pendant in *The Daily Telegraph* concerned canon law in the Church of England, not a common topic in the daily press. It had, until changes adopted in 1969, made illegitimacy an impediment to episcopal ordination. (Something of the kind applied in the Catholic Church, I believe.) Yet even the old canon law would hardly have invalidated the archbishop's consecration automatically. 'The Archbishop was born of married parents and is therefore a child of the family until a court decides otherwise,' declared Lord Parmoor, a recently retired judge, in a letter to the paper. ...

I'm now perusing the canons for future time bombs. The index is promising: accession of sovereign; alms basin; Fast Days; films in church building; flagons; Latin in divine service; Oaths of Obedience; Old Catholic Churches; wine; women. Plenty of leads to follow up there.

Christopher Howse, *The Tablet*, 16 April 2015

The humble index

Concordances are among the simplest life forms in the rich and complex phylum of reference works – dictionaries, encyclopedias, atlases and so forth. In his delightful new history, subtitled *The*

reference shelf from ancient Babylon to Wikipedia, Jack Lynch neatly defines the "reference work" as a text designed for users rather than readers: plenty of people read Herodotus straight through (and so should you), but no one has ever read Powell's *Lexicon* from cover to cover. It is all too easy to underestimate the role played by the humble index, and its more elaborate variants, in the history of human knowledge. There is a terrific book to be written on the history of alphabetical order, for example, which is sketched out here by Lynch in an all too tantalizing three pages.

Peter Thonemann, review of *You could look it up*, by Jack Lynch, Bloomsbury, 2016

[See also the reviews of this book on pages 135–6.]

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

Words onscreen: the fate of reading in a digital world.

Naomi S. Baron. Oxford University Press, 2015, 320 pp.
ISBN13: 9780199315765 (hbk)

This was a free review copy. Tragic irony or poetic justice: the e-reader advance copy was a total formatting mess.

For a book like this, it may be important to establish the reviewer's bona fides. So here goes: our house has a room of built-in bookshelves and another room completely covered in bookshelves, and I have designs on library-style back-to-back rows in the center eventually, when the space in our current shelves runs out. We use Library of Congress categorization for the nonfiction. I love the smell of old books; they smell like raisin bread. I've reread books to pieces, though admittedly not the great books the author wants me to be rereading. I tried to ban laptops in the classroom, but have reverted to just requiring an honor code pledge to stay off the internet, which I think at least decreases the amount of time my students spend 'multitasking.'

With that out of the way, this book in defense of print is half arrant nonsense and half very important issues worth considering, especially when there are indeed foolish people in the world who think that physical books can be completely abandoned. A significant part of the book tells the story of changes in reading practices over time, including a move away from reading aloud/moving one's lips while reading; the adoption of an ordered alphabet and therefore the possibility of indexing; and the adoption of page numbers, which she considers particularly important in shaping how people interacted with books. Despite the reality of continuous change, we

were, the book implicitly argues, at a perfect point in the mid-20th century, and e-books are sending us downhill. For example, 'find,' Baron argues, reshapes reading from a linear/continuous activity to a 'random-access' process. This strikes me as a misuse of computer jargon, though reading practices clearly are changing. She doesn't discuss old accusations that the novel was destroying morality or the older accusations that print would destroy memory, though there's something of an echo in her contention that e-reading threatens the survival of long-form reading.

Unfortunately, Baron relies a lot on rhetorical questions (is it good that there are so many erotica groups on Goodreads?) and analogies (e-books are like exercise belts that purport to do the exercise for you, while print is real exercise), which is dangerous if your audience doesn't agree with you. To me, the prospect of lots and lots of people reading erotica because no one else knows what they're reading is not a parade of horrors. That's just a parade. Baron also believes, because of her own experiences and those of various authors she quotes, that no one has ever cried reading an e-book. Nobody tell her about fan fiction. I mean, she's gotten this far in life ...

In our fallen world, some people use reading to avoid social interaction. (The horror!) She even says that the Japanese have perfected this art on the subway, while acknowledging in the very same sentence that in fact, cultural constraints make it very unlikely that a stranger on the Japanese subway would approach you no matter what you were doing. Reading on electronic devices is simply standing in for parts of modern life she doesn't like. For example, in her list of prescriptions for improvement, she