

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.

See also By the way... (formerly Obiter dicta) on page 86 in this issue.

Indexes praised

Aryan Books International: *Revitalizing Indian archaeology: further theoretical essays* (2 vols), by K. Paddaya (2016, xxxi + 803 pp, 1,950 rupees). Rev. by Krishna Mohan Shrimali, *Studies in People's History*, 4(2) (2017).

Each chapter is backed by comprehensive listing of 'References' and the cumulative index, too, is quite detailed and helpful.

Barcelona Press: *Music therapy research* (3rd ed.), ed. by B. L. Wheeler and K. M. Murphy (2016, 780 pp, \$125). Rev. by Raymond MacDonald, *Psychology of Music*, 46(2), 2018.

The glossary and indexes are excellent and the whole text is both authoritative and accessible. Therefore, this is not just a book for the novice researcher but a valuable resource for researchers of all levels of experience.

Bloomsbury: *Reading the rocks*, by Brenda Maddox (£20). Rev. by Teresa Levonian Cole, *Country Life*, 4 October 2017.

The non-linear narrative leads to much thumbing of the excellent index.

Brill: *India, modernity and the great divergence: Mysore and Gujarat (17th to 19th C.)*, by Kaveh Yazdani (2017, 669 pp, £177). Rev. by Eric Mielants, *Cultural Sociology*, 1–2.

The bibliography alone runs to 66 pages, followed by a useful index of persons, subjects, and places at the end of the book.

Cascade Books: *C. S. Lewis and the art of writing: what the essayist, novelist, literary critic, apologist, memoirist, theologian teaches us about the life and craft of writing*, by Corey Latta (2016, ix + 239 pp, \$30). Rev. by Crystal Hurd, *Christianity and Literature*, 67(1).

Latta wrote his doctoral thesis on Lewis, penning several books and articles... *C.S. Lewis and the Art of Writing* illustrates his exhaustive efforts to scour Lewis's most obscure books for evidence of his writing development. Indeed, Latta's index is impressive.

Cascade Books: *Two guides for the journey: Thomas Aquinas and William Langland on the Virtues*, by Sheryl Overmyer (2016, ix + 142 pp, \$21).

A half-page impassioned epilogue, a short appendix summarizing the action of Piers as a whole, a 10-page introductory bibliography for both authors, and a detailed index (see the useful subdivi-

sions for love, virtue, conscience, justice, and Jesus) round out the charming and compact monograph.

Centrum voor Studie en Documentatie van Latijns Amerika (CEDLA): *Cuba and revolutionary Latin America: an oral history*, by Dirk Kruijt (2017). Rev. by Margaret Randall, *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies / Revista Europea de Estudios Latinoamericanos y del Caribe*, 104 (July–December 2017).

This book accomplishes something few others do. It tells a complex story in clear and accessible prose. Well-conceived notes, a vast bibliography and fine index extend its value.

Oxford University Press: *Deltas and humans: a long relationship now threatened by global change*, by T. S. Bianchi (171 pp, \$59.95). Rev. by Charles W. Finkl, *Journal of Coastal Research*, 33(6), November 2017.

The subject index is detailed and quite useful. I mention this because it is somewhat more detailed than one would expect in a book of this sort. Kudos to the author for making the effort to provide easy access to all parts of the book.

Oxford University Press: *Navigation: a very short introduction*, by Jim Bennett (2017, xvi + 135 pp, £7.99). Rev. by W. F. J. Mörzer Bruyns, *International Journal of Maritime History*, 30(1).

The glossary that explains navigational terminology is very useful, as is the comprehensive index and the bibliography that lists most of the important books on the history of navigation published from the 1950s onwards.

Oxford World Classics: *The Jewish war*, by Josephus, trans. by Martin Hammond (2017, xlv + 562 pp, £10.99). Rev. by Steve Mason, *The Expository Times*, 129(4).

Maps and plans as well as a detailed index (pp. 504–62) make this volume useful for the scavenger as well as the reader.

Praeger: *Humane health care for prisoners: ethical and legal challenges*, by Kenneth L. Faiver (2017, 364 pp). Rev. by David M. Tatarsky, *Journal of Correctional Health Care*, 2018, 24(1).

The book is well-annotated and indexed, including a helpful index of all court cases cited.

Princeton University Press: *Child migration and human rights in a global age*, by Jacqueline Bhabha (2014, xi + 374 pp, \$24.95). Rev. by Stina Busman Jost, *Missiology: An International Review*, 45(4).

Finally, it should be noted that the index of the book is substantive, and can itself be a true resource. [*Did the reviewer mean 'substantial'?*]

Scribe: *The boy from Baradine*, by Craig Emerson (2018, 368 pp, \$A35). Rev. by Ross Fitzgerald, *The Weekend Australian*, 3–4, March 2018.

Among the revelations in this lucidly written, well-indexed book are that Emerson [an Australian Labor politician] is prone to epilepsy, moral scruples and obsessional behaviour. The obsessional streak explains his devotion to detail which was helpful in building a political career.

Verso: *October: the story of the Russian Revolution*, by China Miéville (2017, 384 pp, £18.99).

Basic Books: *The Russian Revolution: a new history*, by Sean McMeekin (2017, 445 pp, \$30 hbk, \$19.99 e-book). Rev. by Willie Thompson, *European History Quarterly*, 48(1).

Miéville, in contrast to McMeekin who concentrates on narrative, combines dramatic narrative with sharp analysis of a revolution he describes on his opening page as 'ultimately tragic and ultimately inspiring'. He is alert to the grassroots developments that underlay the memorable climaxes of the revolutionary process. There is for example a lengthy index entry on the role of women, with many subheadings, including the 'All-Russian Muslim Women's Conference' (McMeekin's index mentions only the Women's Death Battalion); much longer entries on workers (not featured in McMeekin's index), soldiers (ditto), and strikes.

Two cheers!

Brill: *Ocean law and policy: twenty years of development under the UNCLOS regime*, ed. by Carlos Espósito, James Kraska and Harry N. Scheiber (2016, xiv + 469 pp, €162). Rev. by David Letts, *International Journal of Maritime History*, 29(4).

... there is an adequate, if not completely exhaustive, index at the end of the book.

Facet: *Library and information science: a guide to key literature and sources*, by Michael F. Bemis (2014, 292 pp, £49.95). Rev. by J. H. Bowman, *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, 1–2.

There is a comprehensive index of authors and titles, but not of subjects, which means that unless the title of the book starts with the right word it is difficult to track down specific topics. There are, for example, works on the use of volunteers and student assistants, but these cannot be found from the index.

Manohar: *Notes on the races, castes and trades of Eastern Bengal*, by James Wise, ed. with intro. by Ananda Bhattacharyya (2016, xxxi + 509 pp). Rev. by Werner Menski, *South Asia Research*, 38(1).

The index (pp. 505–9), which ideally could have been more elaborate, does help to locate many specifics.

Princeton University Press: *The atlas of ancient Rome: biography and portraits of the city. Volume 1: text and images; volume 2: tables and indexes*, ed. by Andrea Carandini (2017, 1280 pp, \$199.50/£148.95). Rev. by Bernard Frischer, *Antiquity*, 91(360), December 2017.

In reading the *Atlas*, some general points should be borne in mind. First, the *Atlas* introduces a new concept, the topographical unit (TU). This is defined as the individual monument, or feature, of the city: 'each unit is like a tile in a mosaic or a word in a sentence' (volume 1, p. 2, cf. also p. 46). The concept is helpful because it allows features across the city to be given identification numbers (always *Region* in Roman numerals + *feature* in Arabic numerals,

e.g. XII 10 (= Baths of Caracalla)). These appear on the many maps of volume 2, thus reducing labels and promoting legibility (for some reason, they are omitted on some maps, e.g. p. 232); they have been organised in an index at the end of volume 2, making it possible to find all references to them across the two volumes. It is too bad, however, that the opportunity was missed to make TU numbers even more useful as an aid to searching by listing them in parentheses for related items in the two other indices at the end of volume 2 ('Index of ancient names of monuments and places'; 'Index of conventional and modern names of monuments'). ...

Feedback I have received from colleagues acquainted with the work (including the Italian edition) typically includes the complaint that it is hard to find what you are looking for in the book. Out of curiosity, I tried to find where the Laocoon statue group is discussed (see above photograph by Bernard Frischer showing detail of the Laocoon statue group; cast in the Skulpturhalle, Basel). The sculpture is illustrated in volume 1 (fig. 92), leading me to expect extended discussion of it; further, we have known since the publication of Volpe and Parisi (2009) where it was found, so the *Atlas* should now be able to provide a sounder integration of the statue group within the context of the ancient city. Looking at the indices, I first tried 'Ancient names of monuments and places'. As far as I could see, it is not there (whether under 'Laocoon' or 'Statua Laocoontis'). Next I tried the index, 'Conventional and modern names of monuments', using the same search terms. Finally, having not found the reference this way, I simply read the section of the book on 'Region III. Isis et Serapis', where the statue group was found. Here (volume 1, p. 316), I did find mention of the statue, along with a reference to Volpe and Parisi's article. I eventually also found the probable findspot indicated on tab. 118 in volume 2 (where, unfortunately, the statue group is not given a TU number, which could have allowed it to be traced elsewhere in the *Atlas* via the 'Index of topographical units'). Almost nothing is offered by way of the statue's date or its interpretation, if only in terms of the display of sculpture generally in the Gardens of Maecenas. One wonders why, in the end, the Laocoon warranted the illustration, and the whole process of finding where it was mentioned took too long and was successful only because I knew where to look in the first place. The indices ought to have been more generous in their coverage, and an index *nominum* would have been most welcome.

Indexes censured

Andrews UK: *Before consciousness: in search of the fundamentals of mind*, ed. by Zdravko Radman (2017, 339 pp, £19.95). Rev. by Patrick Rabbitt, *Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology*, 1–2.

Readers who would like to explore beyond this collection will be grateful that nearly all essays are copiously, even promiscuously referenced but will be irritated to find the general index so remarkably thin and patchy.

J. H. Bowman (ed), published by the Editor via www.lulu.com: *British librarianship and information work 2011–2015* (2017, xii, 550 pp, £35). Rev. by Peter Hoare, *Alexandria: The Journal of National and International Library and Information Issues*, 1–5.

In a volume aiming to cover so many aspects of the library and information world, the index must be an important supplement to the text. This volume's index is reasonably comprehensive, though a number of omissions have been noted – for example, the only reference under 'Ordnance Survey' (OS) is to the national libraries chapter (the addition of digitised maps to the National

Library of Scotland), whereas there are, not surprisingly, various references to the OS in the chapter on maps. Treatment of cities and institutions in them is inconsistent, for example, Robert Gordon University is not linked to Aberdeen, nor Bromley House Library to Nottingham. The index does include some interesting headings such as ‘rough sleepers’ and ‘quilts, indexing’ (both referring to quite serious topics). Neither Jane Austen nor Robert Louis Stevenson is indexed, though both are referred to in the ‘Cataloguing’ chapter in relation to ‘r-balls’ and ‘Jane-athons’, neologisms which are duly indexed. Detailed criticism of such an eclectic index is not of course appropriate, but it does somewhat reduce the usefulness of this otherwise valuable compilation.

Doubleday: *Auntie’s war: The BBC during the Second World War*, by Edward Stourton (2017, 432 pp, £15). Rev. by Ross Davies, *Reviews in History*, February 2018.

Auntie’s War is especially valuable as the Second World War goes the way of the First in receding from living memory. This is a lively and widely-researched study, if one let down by an indifferent index that for example seems unable to pinpoint exactly where and when the BBC came by its nom de guerre.

Northern Illinois University Press: *Roger Martin du Gard and Maumort: the Nobel laureate and his unfinished creation*, by Benjamin Franklin Martin (234 pp, \$39). Rev. by Nicholas Hewitt, *Times Literary Supplement*, 26 January 2018.

Those already familiar with Martin du Gard will find no detailed reading of the novels, nor, to tell from the notes (there is no bibliography and only three pages of index), anything which is not already available in the diaries and memoirs by Martin du Gard’s contemporaries, or the substantial body of secondary material available on the author and his circle.

Pen & Sword Maritime: *Battleships of the world: struggle for naval supremacy, 1820–1945*, by John Fidler (2016, vii + 145 pp, £19.99). Rev. by William H. Roberts, *The International Journal of Maritime History*, 29(4).

The very abbreviated index is difficult to use. For example, to locate a ship by name, one must first know its type and nationality.

Routledge: *Seals in medieval London 1050–1300: a catalogue*, ed. by John A. McEwan (2016, 208 pp, £50), rev. by Paul R. Dryburgh, *Archives and Records*, 30(1), Spring 2017.

The Index of Names is even more problematic. Record publications, with a diverse readership often interested in a few entries findable by person, place or specific subject, rely on full, accurate indices. In this volume, the catalogue of men and women is arranged by forename, which, while consistently applied, does not sufficiently correlate with the index. Those searching by surname will not be able to use the index to locate their specific target(s). It simply lists ‘additional name elements, including patronymics, toponymics and occupational names’ (p. 185) of the individuals whose seals are catalogued. No individuals are disambiguated and no identifiable place names given, although some, such as ‘Fulham’ [1290], have been silently modernised from their manuscript variant in the catalogue without leaving an index trace. This has created a muddle of entries. For example, the seal of Margery, wife of Fulk le Barber [1332], is indexed both under ‘Barber’ (correctly) and ‘Fulk’ but not under ‘Margery’; all eleven entries under ‘Adam’ relate to individuals in a relationship with someone with that forename, and each ‘Adam’ has a surname element (‘de Berle’, ‘Brother’, ‘clerk’, etc.); occupational surnames are grouped

together with designations of occupation without being differentiated, such as, for example, ‘Deodatus Goldsmith’ [247–8], silently grouped with ‘Adam de Bentley, goldsmith’ [178]. Amongst other, contrary instances are two index headings for ‘Knight’, one for individuals whose knightly status is recorded in the document, and the other [616, 1237] where Dr McEwan has misinterpreted the Latin forename ‘Milo’ as ‘Miles’ and assumed this implies knightly status. Such practices disregard standard indexing principles most rigorously outlined in *Indexing for Editors*, ed. R. F. Hunnisett (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 38–72. This is inexplicable since Dr McEwan appears to have been guided by that work. In explaining his treatment of patronymic surnames (so ‘Hugh son of John’ rather than ‘John, Hugh son of’), he cites Hunnisett as his authority (p. xv, n. 69). Reference, however, to the relevant page of that work unambiguously contradicts this! Perhaps the most egregiously poor treatment is reserved for London itself which is simply a list of 199 undifferentiated entries. There is no attempt, as advised by Hunnisett, to index aldermen, citizens, tradesmen, buildings or institutions through a larger than usual number of subentries. It is assumed by the author that researchers looking for London tradesmen will look under the relevant occupational surname. Those searching in the index for London citizens, moreover, will search in vain. To locate that important group, the researcher must browse the entire volume.

Royal Society of Chemistry: *Aerobiology – the toxicology of airborne pathogens and toxins*, ed. by Harry Salem and Sidney Katz (2016, 494 pp, \$281.19). Rev. by John A. Budny, *International Journal of Toxicology*, 36(1), 2017.

I found the Index to be the weakest aspect of the book. As an example from ‘Chapter 5 The Structural Biology and Biochemistry of the Ricin Toxin and the Military Use and Inhalation Toxicology of Ricin Aerosols,’ specifically section ‘5.5 Signs, Symptoms and Toxicity of Ricin Exposure’ discusses allergic reactions to ricin. Although the discussion centers around the allergic reaction caused by ricin that is IgE mediated, there is no entry in the Index for allergic (allergy), IgE, or immune. I became suspicious of the indexing problem when I realized that there were only 8 pages of index topics for 486 pages of text. As enigmatic as this may be, it is easily resolved by the reader with an electronic version of the book that can be subjected to a word search using an appropriate software. [Hmm.]

Indexes omitted

Abingdon Press: *The Hebrew Bible for beginners: a Jewish and Christian introduction*, by Joel S. Kaminsky and Joel N. Lohr (2015). Rev. by Nancy J. Duff, *Theology Today*, 74(3).

Unfortunately, no index is provided.

Academic Press: *Nanoparticles and the immune system: safety and effects*, ed. by Diana Boraschi and Albert Duschl (2014, 138 pp, \$49.95 paperback, \$49.95 eBook in most formats, \$59.95 for both paperback and eBook). Rev. by David W. Hobson, *International Journal of Toxicology*, 1–2.

Surprisingly, there is no index at the end of this book, but one may find the eBook version with the ability to search the text electronically more desirable than a print version. [Or not?]

Biteback Publishing: *Exceeding my brief: memoirs of a disobedient civil servant*, by Barbara Hosking (2017), note at back of book.

If you are looking for the index, there isn't one. It would be too long!

William Collins: *Fall out: a year of political mayhem*, by Tim Shipman (2017, 592 pp, £17). Rev. by Andrew Marr, *Sunday Times*, 10 December 2017.

Enter this newspaper's political editor Tim Shipman with the second volume in his wildly implausible novel sequence – sorry, works of calm reportage. (Though, like a novel, this doesn't have an index... grrr.)

Wm. B. Eerdmans: *The emergence of personhood: a quantum leap?*, ed. by Malcolm Jeeves (2015, 246 pp, \$30). Rev. by Russell L. Almon, *Review and Expositor*, 114(4).

Also, the lack of an index decreases the practical and research usefulness of this book, especially for non-specialists.

Har-Anand Publications: *India's foreign policy: selected writings of Prof. Manohar Lal Sondhi*, ed. by Harsh Pant (2017, 224 pp, 695 rupees). Rev. by Ajay Darshan Behera, *India Quarterly*, 73(4).

The volume would also have been immensely useful for scholars and researchers if the publishers would have also included an index at the end.

Michael Joseph: *Mythos*, by Stephen Fry (2017, 432 pp, £20). Rev. by Hermione Eyre, *The Spectator*, 16/23/30 December 2017.

Why there is are [sic] contents or index in a production of this quality is utterly baffling, except perhaps for the reason that it would quickly reveal that this selection is full but not comprehensive; there is no Medea, nor Oedipus or Herakles, for example. 'Mythos begins at the beginning,' acknowledges the author, in a note that faintly presages a sequel, 'but it does not end at the end.'

Routledge: *Remembering places: a memoir*, by Joseph Rykwert (186 pp, £24.99). Rev. by David Collard, *Times Literary Supplement*, 26 January 2018.

Remembering Places would benefit from illustrations, footnotes, an index and more scrupulous editing: there are no writers going by the name of Elias Cannettis or Isaac Bashevits Singer; the Zionist leader was Ze'ev (not Zeev) Jabotinsky, the painter Fernand Léger needs that accent, the model engineer was Bassett-Lowke with a double 't' and so, distractingly, on.

St Vladimir's Seminary Press: *Into all the world: an orthodox theology of mission*, by Edward Rommen (2017, 288 pp, \$28). Rev. by Craig Ott, *International Bulletin of Mission Research*, 1–2, 2018.

The addition of indexes would have also enhanced the usefulness of the volume.

Springer: *Biliary disease: from science to clinic*, ed. by Gideon Hirschfield, David Adams and Evaggelia Liaskou (2017, 264 pp, £66.99). Rev. by James Rink, *British Journal of Hospital Medicine*, 78(11), November 2017.

The book lacks an index which is a disadvantage when different chapters may contribute to the same topic, e.g. cholangiocarcinoma.

Warm thanks to the contributors to this section:

Geraldine Begley, Donegal Town
Rohan Bolton, Chalfont St Giles
Jill Halliday, Pulham St Mary
Nicola King, Newport Pagnell
Trevor Matthews, Sydney, NSW
Jacqueline Speel, Pinner

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

By the way...

[Note: The 'Obiter dicta' section of *Indexes reviewed* has been replaced by a new feature, 'By the way...'. This has been created to accommodate the increasing number of items on indexes and indexing found in the media which don't fall comfortably within the scope of the *Indexes reviewed* categories.]

Cape: *Paper cuts*, by Stephen Bernard (208 pp, £14.99). Rev. by Terri Apter, *Times Literary Supplement*, 9 February 2018.

An aim of the memoir, which Bernard wrote while he was undergoing trauma therapy, was to pin his experiences down to what's past, and halt the endless recurrence. So he starts the day with a history game. He reads the 'news', but not today's news. He reads about events from 1701, pretending to himself that he does not know what has happened. He then moves on to his scholarly work as bibliographer and index maker. His indexes have the power to secure posthumous reputations, showing what someone is known for and associated with, what they have written and what they have said, and what others have said about them. As he brushes his hand across the pages, he thinks of Fogarty's hands and his 'bony, paper-white teeth', inflicting hidden, ever-smarting 'paper cuts', and he begins another index of his thoughts and memories, an index that will stain Fogarty's reputation along with those of other powerful men in the Church who 'denied the truth of [young men's] allegations and made them ill'.

Haus: *Cabinet's finest hour: the hidden agenda of May 1940*, by David Owen (2016, 306 pages, £18.99). Rev. by Tony LeMesma, Amazon, https://www.amazon.co.uk/Cabinets-Finest-Hour-Hidden-Agenda/product-reviews/1910376892/ref=cm_cr_dp_d_show_all_btm?ie=UTF8&reviewerType=all_reviews, 30 December 2016.

Owen clearly thinks highly of Arthur Greenwood, a socialist MP of whom I had not heard. He has a longer entry in the index than Halifax!

An inestimable boon

To my mind, the copiously indexing of a volume gives it a much greater value than it would possess were it to be published without this addition. Students of literature have doubtless with myself experienced great inconvenience from the want of – and from the imperfect – indexing of vast numbers of most important and interesting writings. Much valuable information has gone to waste simply from the fact of its being contained in imperfectly indexed or, as in many instances, un-indexed volumes. Therefore it is that I crave a small portion of your space to urge the importance of this matter upon those of your readers who may now be occupied in

preparing works for the press; and if they will but take the hint, and complete their labours by supplying their volumes with carefully prepared and comprehensive ‘tables of contents,’ they will confer an inestimable boon upon the student of this and after ages, and deserve the thanks of the entire reading community.

FS, *Notes and queries*, 4th series VI, 19 November 1870

Indexing on demand

As a constant student, and frequent reader at public libraries, I would suggest the formation of a staff of index compilers, whose duty would be to supply the omission of author or publisher where required. This might be instituted upon the principle that regulates purchase in some cases; ie a book of ‘Indexes Wanted’ might lie open for signature, and the number of applicants under each head would be the test of necessity in each case.

AH, *Notes and queries*, 4th series VI, 19 December 1870

To be read quickly

Phyllida Law’s *Dead Now of Course* [Fourth Estate], Henry Woolf’s *Barcelona is in Trouble* [Greville Press] and Sweetpea Slight’s *Get Me the Urgent Biscuits* [Weidenfeld] have titles that sound like entries for a competition – to be found on the back page of the *TLS*, perhaps. They have other things in common, too: short sentences, short chapters, no index. These are the signs of a book meant to be read quickly. Otherwise they are quite different.

Lois Potter, ‘Diamonds in the ordure: some theatrical recollections’, *Times Literary Supplement*, 1 December 2017

Clues

She turns to the index, to discover more about Valentine, and notes that there are several scattered early references and one little mid-volume cluster that presumably marks his death. There is also, helpfully, a biographical index: thank you, Bennett, she says aloud to the old man in the cactus garden in the Canaries, thank you. She has always approved of biographical indexes and depends on them increasingly as her memory becomes, as she puts, it, less retentive. [There follows a paragraph from the index:] Here, so unexpectedly, are clues. There’s a lot to work on here, *Work box*, *Women’s work*, *Needlework*.

Margaret Drabble, *The Dark Flood Rises* (Canongate Books, 2016)

The

Veronica, who looks at Twitter, told me of an exchange she thought would interest me, about the use of *the*. She was right. *The* is one of my favourite words.

The exchange concerned Sam Leith’s splendid new book, *Write*

to the Point: How to be Clear, Correct and Persuasive on the Page. He begins one chapter thus: ‘In his *The Nigger of the Narcissus* (1897), Joseph Conrad...’. Should he have written that yoking of ‘his *The*’?

A friend of Veronica’s recommended Kingsley Amis on the subject. In (his) *The King’s English*, Amis is characteristically forthright. ‘Kafka’s *The Castle*,’ he writes, ‘is the sort of thing that people never say but make no bones about writing.’ He rooted out from his memory a legendary attempt by *The Times* always to have the definite article cleaving to its name. It failed at jumps such as ‘the *The Times* crossword’. ...

Amis remarks that it looked until recently as if you could write of Burgess’s *Clockwork Orange* and Kafka’s *Castle*, but ‘indexers unnecessarily and pissily put a stop to that’ by throwing *A* and *The* and so on back in front of the main body of the title. As the *New Oxford Style Manual* tacitly implies, it is possible to contrive constructions that look or sound messy. ‘Have you read *Westward Ho!*?’ may be correct, but ‘Why did you exclaim ‘Don’t give me *Westward Ho!*?’ is getting silly.

Dot Wordsworth, ‘Mind your language’, *The Spectator*, 28 October 2017

[Readers may like to be reminded that Glenda Browne won an Ig Nobel prize for her article on this very subject in the April 2001 issue of *The Indexer* (https://www.theindexer.org/files/22-3/22-3_119.pdf). Dot Wordsworth returned to the subject in a later issue of *The Spectator*.]

The aura of indexers

Pissily figures nowhere in the *Oxford English Dictionary*. That is not out of prissiness. The world’s worst words, sexual C or racial N, according to your sensibilities, are there. Indeed, *pissily* is implied by *pissy*, illustrated by a quotation from T. E. Lawrence’s *Seven Pillars of Wisdom* (in the 1922 edition kindly published for him by the *Oxford Times*): ‘That hot pissy aura of thronged men in woollen clothes.’

As for Amis, his intention was surely to apply a slightly taboo depreciative term to indexers, and the connotations of *pissily* made it ideal.

Dot Wordsworth, ‘Mind your language’, *The Spectator*, 25 November 2017

Warm thanks for contributions to:

Rohan Bolton, Chalfont St Giles
Norma Munson, Rockford, Ill.
Jacqueline Speel, Pinner

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

Book review

Book indexing for authors: how to create a professional nonfiction index in Word. Michelle Campbell-Scott and Kath Verne. 2017. Coe Farm Press. Kindle Edition via Amazon Media, 6,471 KB, 279 pp. £1.99.

There’s a lot of advice here: 18 short chapters of breezy encouragement, three appendices (the second covering using Sigil software

to convert to HTML) and, I’m afraid, some massive non-sequiturs. Though two authors are credited, the book is written throughout in the first person *singular* and, looking at Campbell-Scott’s other publications, I discovered that she is British, yet she seems to have heard of ASI but not the SI. So perhaps we’re not seeing the result of years of painstaking research here.

She doesn’t supply an index to this ebook but neither, I am