

A SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY OF PUBLICATIONS ON INDEXING

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INTRODUCTION

The LOGOS Editor initially asked for a bibliography of books about indexing: only books.

Difficulties started there. So much that is published appertaining to the practice of indexing is in non-book form: journal articles, continually and profusely appearing, as witness the current-awareness bibliography that appeared for ten years in *The Indexer* - and that entire journal regularly devoted to the subject. Are Standards books? Are training courses? Are Conference proceedings, papers delivered at conferences gathered together? John Vickers' *Quickguide 13: Indexing your book* (Society of Authors, 1996) gives invaluable guidance to authors - but, at 12 pages, does it constitute a book? What Is A Book?

The editor proscribed further: 'The bibliography should not include any specialism'. But the discipline of indexing consists of an amalgamation of subject specialisms - indexers claiming only to be 'generalists' meet with professional disparagement. In the latest edition of the *Directory of the Society of Indexers* (SI) its members offer their services in 179 defined subject specialisms, from accountancy /auditing/taxation, administration, advertising and marketing, to visual arts, women's studies, zoology. There is no offer of generalist indexing. As Maureen Lipman suggested in a famous UK television commercial, there's glory in an 'ology. The majority of publications on indexing are geared to the subject specialists.

So, no place for *Beyond book indexing: how to get started in Web indexing* (ed. Brenner and Rowland); *Indexing children's books* (Bakewell and Williams); *Indexing collections of electronic images* (Cawkell); *Indexing specialties: history* (ed. Towery); *Indexing specialties: law* (ed. Kendrick and Zafran); *Indexing legal materials* (Moys et al); *Indexing the medical and biological sciences* (Blake et al); *Indexing newspapers, magazines and other periodicals* (Beare); *Indexing specialties: psychology* (ed. Hornyak); *Indexing specialties: medicine* (ed. Wyman); or *Website indexing* (Browne and Jermy).

Then, the list was 'to steer clear of any publication more than fifty years old'. Out went the early, cherished classics: Mary Petherbridge's *The technique of indexing* (Secretarial Bureau, 1904) with such period charm for the indexer of today, and G. V. Carey's excellent little guide, *Making an index*, which includes a wonderful spoof index, published in 1951 by Cambridge University Press in their "Authors' and Printers' Guides" Series.

To make the selection, I consulted many professional colleagues. Overall, against my own historical and archival inclinations, they insisted that books that were out of print or out of date should not be included. The Society of Indexers was founded in 1958, and through the next decades its distinguished officers published books on indexing that were hailed as expert and excellent. But - out with the oldies but goodies: Margaret Anderson's splendid *Book indexing of 1971 / 1979 / 1985*, succeeding Carey's; Robert Collison's *Indexing books, a manual of basic principles* (Ernest Benn, 1962) and *Indexes and indexing* (Ernest Benn 1953, 4th revised ed. 1972); *Indexers on indexing: selections from The*

Indexer 1958 to 1976, ed. L.M. Harrod (Bowker, 1978); *Indexing, The Art of: a guide to the indexing of books and periodicals* (Allen & Unwin, 1979) by the founder of the Society of Indexers, G. Norman Knight; and his edited volume, *Training in indexing: a course of the Society of Indexers* (M.I.T. Press, 1969).

I was particularly sad to eliminate Carey's guide and the two volumes by Collison. Reading those three books and *British Standard 3700:1964, Recommendation for the Preparation of Indexes* (now superseded by ISO 999), had constituted my own preparation for a career in indexing. I had written to the then Secretary of SI in 1964 to ask how one became an indexer, and was advised to read those four texts.

Colleagues I consulted had varying preferences and recommendations. One held that Ruth Canedy Cross's *Indexing books* (The World Guild, 1980) was 'relatively slight, but more charmingly written than other introductory manuals'. Another advocated *The Changing Landscapes of Indexing: The Proceedings of the 26th Annual Meeting of the American Society of Indexers* as 'noteworthy because of the focus on technical indexing' -- but that was rejected by the LOGOS Editor as a specialist area.

'There should be three kinds of books: those useful to established practitioners; those seeking advice on entry into the profession; and outsiders who simply want to know something about indexing. There may even be a biography', ran the prescribed criteria for inclusion in the list.

I was struck, in seeking to meet these criteria, by how little has been published on indexing for the general public, or general book world, rather than just for indexers and information users. Textbooks on indexing abound; little of general interest or for entertainment.

This caused a problem for the publishers of the anthology, *Indexers and indexes in fact and fiction*. Since books with the words 'indexes' or 'indexing' in the title are usually manuals on how to do it, it was essential to make clear at sight that this was no text book, but intended to entertain. The words 'indexers' and 'fiction', little seen in textbook titles, were planted in the anthology's title as clues, with a cartoon commissioned for the cover to settle the matter.

The list finally arrived at, printed below, may seem to contravene the editor's orders. He yielded to the compiler's pleas for the admission of the journal, *The Indexer*, she having edited it for many years. Similarly, *Indexing biographies* may appear to be a subject specialism -- but its author argues that, far from indexers of biographies being limited to such, all human life is there; biographies constitute a genre for indexing rather than a subject specialism.

The SI directory is a trade publication. The Standard may not be considered a book, but is regarded as an essential reference tool for indexers. The two books by Wheatley are more than a hundred years old, the Hunnisett thirty, but their reviewers plead eloquently for their relevance today.

This article appeared in *LOGOS, The Journal of the World Book Community* Vol. 14 Issue 1, 2003. See below for an expanded version of the selection given there, alphabetically ordered.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF INDEXING

BELL, Hazel K. *Indexers and indexes in fact and fiction*. British Library and University of Toronto Press, 2001. 156pp. Includes account of the history of indexing, annotated extracts from entertaining indexes, and examples of indexers in fiction. ISBN 07123-4729-1

BELL, Hazel K. *Indexing biographies and other stories of human lives*. 2nd edition 1998, 65 pp. Society of Indexers Occasional Papers on Indexing No. 1. Considers the particular problems of narrative, humanities indexing. ISBN 1-871577-18-7

BOOTH, Pat F. *Indexing: the manual of good practice*. Munich: Saur, 2001. Covers aspects of whole-document indexing of books, serial publications, images and sound materials, and areas such as managing the work, technology, and subject specialisms. 489 pp ISBN 3-598-11536-9

CANEDY CROSS, Ruth. *Indexing books*. The World Guild, 1980. 145 pp. Succinct advice written with charm, delightfully designed and printed. 0-9692524-1-X

CAREY G.V. *Making an index*. Cambridge University Press (Cambridge authors' and printers' guides). An excellent little guide first produced in 1951. A splendid spoof index was added to subsequent editions. 18 pages.

The Changing Landscapes of Indexing: The Proceedings of the 26th Annual Meeting of the American Society of Indexers. ed. Carolyn McGovern. American Society of Indexers: 1994. 59 pp. A collection of papers focusing on technical indexing. ISBN 0-936547-23-5

COLLISON, Robert L. *Indexes and indexing*. Ernest Benn: 4th revised ed. 1972. 232p. Standard British textbook of its time by the (later) President of the Society of Indexers, including a reference section and guide to further reading.

COLLISON, Robert L. *Indexing books, a manual of basic principles*. Ernest Benn, 1962. 96p. Useful guide for the beginner, with exercises and answers and a reading list. 0-510-45722-3

FETTERS, Linda K. *Handbook of Indexing Techniques: A Guide for Beginning Indexers*. 124 pages; 2nd edition 1999. Fetters Infomanagement Co. A well organized brief guide through all stages. 0-929599-02-0

HARROD, L. M. (ed.) *Indexers on Indexing. Selections from The Indexer, journal of the Society of Indexers, 1958 to 1976, covering the practice of book indexing; systems and methods; technology; typography; indexing periodicals, and scientific and technical literature*. New York: Bowker, 1978. 430p. ISBN 0 8352 1099 5

HECKSCHER, William S. *Art and literature: studies in relationship*. Duke University Press, 1985. Includes one of the most significant articles that ever appeared in *The Indexer*, 'The unconventional index and its merits', based on Heckscher's indexing of Joachim Camerarius's analysis of Albrecht Dürer's engraving, 'Melencolia I' (pp 503-21). 528 pp 0-8223-0630-1

HUNNISETT, R.F. *Indexing for editors*. British Records Association, 1972. 145p. (Archives and the user, no. 2) Useful

guide, particularly for the humanities and archives, with chapters on terminology, places, persons, subjects, filing and presentation.

Indexers Available: Directory of the Society of Indexers. Annually revised: includes advice to publishers, recommended practice for indexers, and details of indexers categorized by location, and by subject and media specialisms. No. 19, 2001, 200 pp, ISSN 0266-4860.

Indexes. a chapter from The Chicago manual of style. 14th ed. rev. University of Chicago Press, 1993, 65 pp. The main guide for American indexers. 0-226-10388-9

ISO 999: 1996 Information and documentation: Guidelines for the content, organization and presentation of indexes. Geneva: International Standards Organisation, 1996. Published in English and French versions. Summarises the rules and conventions. 47 pages, costing £55.

KNIGHT, G. Norman. *Indexing, The Art of: a guide to the indexing of books and periodicals*. Allen & Unwin, 1979. 218 pp. Guide to indexing books and periodicals. By the founder of the Society of Indexers, written in his last years and published posthumously.

KNIGHT, G. Norman, ed. *Training in indexing: a course of the Society of Indexers*. M.I.T. Press, 1969. 219p. Fourteen papers with exercises and solutions, and a bibliography.

LEWIS, D. B. Wyndham, and LEE, Charles. *The Stuffed Owl: an Anthology of Bad Verse*. J. M. Dent and Sons, first published 1930, often reissued. Its nine-page Subject Index, with perfectly valid entries aping the pomposity of the poems is sheer joy for indexers to read.

MULVANY, Nancy C. *Indexing Books*. University of Chicago Press, 1994. 320 pp. A comprehensive guide to indexing for all involved in the production of nonfiction books. 0-226-55014-1

WEINBERG, Bella Hass. *Can You Recommend a Good Book on Indexing? Collected Reviews on the Organization of Information*. Information Today for the American Society of Indexers, 1998, 162 pp. A collection of reviews on the organization of information, useful as indicating and evaluating further appropriate reading. ISBN 1-57387-041-2

WELLISCH, Hans H. *Indexing from A to Z*. H. W. Wilson; 2nd edition 1996, 569 pp. Encyclopaedic: ninety-eight essays cover all aspects of indexing. The vigorously expressed judgments of a most distinguished author, cogently and wittily argued. 0-8242-0882-X.

WELLISCH, Hans H. *Indexing and abstracting: an international bibliography*. ABC-Clio 'in co-operation with the American Society of Indexers and the Society of Indexers', 1980; 328 pages. A comprehensive survey of literature on indexing and abstracting.

WELLISCH, Hans H. *Indexing and abstracting 1977-1981: an international bibliography*. Clio Press, 1984. 176 pp; continuation of above. (From 1986 to 1998 this current-awareness bibliography was resumed in the form of regular instalments supplied for *The Indexer*.)

WHEATLEY, H.B. *What is an index? A few notes on indexes and indexers*. 2nd ed. Longmans Green for the Index Society, 1879. 132p. The first major work on indexing, by 'the father of indexing'. Includes a list of English indexes.

WHEATLEY, Henry B. *How to make an index*. Elliot Stock, 1902. 236p. (The book-lover's library). Classic historical and practical study with notes on the Index Society (1877-90).