Software Review:
B.E.A.T. – A Reliable Environment for Thesaurus Administration

Helmut Klaus reviews the BEAT Thesaurus Administrator, which can be downloaded from the AusSI website.

What is B.E.A.T.?

B.E.A.T. is an interactive environment for the construction and maintenance of thesauri; it is thus not indexing software in its narrower sense. Its only purpose is to assist in the construction and maintenance of implements for indexing, thesauri. Most commonly, thesauri are known as controlled vocabularies for the indexing of and retrieval from databases. Moreover, there are also new application areas emerging, such as the indexing of multi-authored books and of the contents of distributed networks, notably the World Wide Web (see e.g. Fugmann 1997). Thesauri are therefore not 'conceptual legacy systems' from the early days of mechanised information retrieval, but conceptual ordering systems that add considerable value to the contents they help to make accessible, be it in print or digital format.

Hence an understanding of how thesauri are constructed and maintained may not only be of relevance to practising and future information professionals but also for many researchers who maintain private collections or are in other ways concerned with terminological control. This understanding, based on the knowledge of the respective standards, must be solidified by applying the appropriate electronic device to manage the word-stock, the thesaurus administrator. At this point, a software package like B.E.A.T. fits in: a low-cost, but industrial-strength program that is useful both for becoming familiar with the know-how of thesaurus construction, and for actually managing thesauri in day-to-day practice.

B.E.A.T. is an acronym for the Catalan phrase *good thesaurus administrator* and it was written originally by Josep Sau from the Centre d'Informatica de la Universitat de Barcelona, for the Catalan language only. Since its first version, released in 1990,

B.E.A.T. has found many users in museums, libraries and documentalist agencies in Catalonia. The program has been maintained and enhanced constantly and versions for the Spanish and English languages have been released recently. In 1997, the program became available to a much wider range of potential appliers, making it increasingly worthwhile to investigate whether B.E.A.T. is actually as good as its name suggests.

There have been several suggestions regarding the desirable features of thesaurus administration software (e.g. ANSI/NISO Z39.19-1993; Milstead 1990), as well as a structured approach to evaluate this type of application (Ganzmann 1990). In the following, a description of B.E.A.T will be given, with reference to Ganzmann's (1990) scheme, complemented with a comparison of what the ANSI standard has defined as the state-of-the-art thesaurus software.

How useful is B.E.A.T.?

B.E.A.T. as a plain vanilla text-based DOS application puts minimal demands on systems resources, and is therefore impressively fast to operate. The user interface is menu-driven, working with pull-down menus and function keys. The operator is prompted with self-explanatory confirmation and error messages. The uninitiated

Noticeboard

New members

A warm welcome to the following new members:

Ms Jacqueline Belisle, VIC

Ms Diane Thorogood, NT

Preparing Annual/Cumulative Indexes for Journals: Vic. Branch

The Victorian Branch is offering a half-day course on preparing annual/cumulative indexes for journals. The course is designed for indexers/editors/librarians who are responsible for the preparation of annual or cumulative indexes to periodicals. The course has a high practical component and will cover journals from a range of subject disciplines.

The short course is being held at Australian Council for Educational Research,19 Prospect Hill Road, Camberwell, on Tuesday 17 November, 1998, 9.00 am to 1.00 pm. Fees: $60.00 per participant.

For further information or an application form please contact Max McMaster, tel/fax: (03) 9571-6341 or email: mindexer@interconnect.com.au

NSW Branch Christmas Dinner

Venue: Duxton Hotel, 88 Alfred Street, North Sydney (opposite Milsons Point railway station)

Date: 1pm on Wednesday 9 December

Cost: $29.50 (for three courses, including a glass of champagne)

Booking essential: Contact Madeleine on (02) 4787 6277, email redcliff@hermes.net.au by Monday 7 December.

ACT Branch meeting report

On 20 October the ACT branch ran a general seminar titled: *How The Other Half Lives*. Using one small publication a back of book indexer and a database indexer demonstrated the purpose and method of their two disciplines. A fascinating experience for both 'sides' produced some interesting discussion. BME.

Dates for your diary

Annual journal indexes course	17 Nov
Victorian Branch speaker meeting	25 Nov
NSW Society of Editors Xmas dinner	1 Dec
NSW Branch Christmas dinner	9 Dec

August in Tasmania

The AusSI conference in Tasmania is being held back-to-back with the 8th Asia–Pacific Specials, Health and Law Librarians' Conference (sponsored by ALIA). The librarians meet from 22–26 August at the Wrest Point Hotel Casino.

Their themes include: Innovations: Meeting the challenges; Transience and permanence, access and ownership; The wired planet: information and IT trends; and The specialist niche in cyberspace.

More info at: http://www.alia.org.au/conferences/strait.

Our conference is being held from 27–29 August

Society of Editors Christmas Dinner

Tuesday 1 December at Diethnes Greek Restaurant, 336 Pitt St Sydney. Voicemail: (02) 9294 4999.

Victorian Branch: PICK-A-BOX: The hazards of uncatalogued records

On Wednesday November 25th, 1998, Elizabeth Wood-Ellem, historian and member of the Australian Society of Indexers Victorian Committee, will give a talk on her research into two queens – from E.M.Forster of Cambridge to the Tongan Queen, Salote !

Elizabeth has catalogued all of Forster's papers which were accessible in one room - Queen Salote's records were spread throughout the Commonwealth and involved making numerous trips to Archival and Records collections throughout the world.

Come and hear how a historian uses indexes, collections of manuscripts, letters, documents etc. and how we should be organising our own affairs to make life easier for all those biographers who are going to write about us when we're gone.

Hosted by the Australian Society of Indexers, Vic. Branch. Venue ACER, 19 Prospect Hill Rd., Camberwell, Vic. Parking in side streets nearby or in shopping centre car park behind Burke Rd. Trams from Burke Rd., disembark at Prospect Hill Rd., Camberwell Train station within walking distance. Time 6 for 6.30 pm. Admission free. Dinner will be available at a nearby restaurant after the meeting.

Further details from Jenny Restarick Tel. (AH) 9528 2539 (BH) 9545 2178.

Noticeboard

President's Letter: News from Abroad

Dear Colleague,

During October I spent a little time in England and China, meeting other indexers in both countries. Here is a brief report of some of the highlights of my trip. I will report on these matters in more detail as space permits.

Tynemouth Conference, 9–11 October 1998

The Society of Indexers (SI) annual conference, billed as "Bracing up to Indexing: a conference by the sea" was held at the Grand Hotel, above the beach at Tynemouth, in the northeast of England. The list of participants shows that, of the 89 delegates, 67 came from England and Wales, 10 from Scotland, 8 from the USA, 2 from Canada, and one each from Ireland and Australia.

In her keynote speech, "Revisiting the book index", Nancy Mulvany used various statistics to show that the English-language book publishing industry is continuing to flourish and grow. She predicted that, as book indexes increasingly go online, and become searchable, the valuation and visibility of indexing and indexers will increase. She described the software developed by Index Logic, of Colorado, which standardizes index-based searching, and includes relevance rankings. As the marketing departments of publishing houses come to use this data, the quality of indexes will improve because of market demand.

Other program highlights, for me, were Drusilla Calvert's practical description of using voice-recognition software as an alternative to typing, and a very lively panel on the editor–indexer relationship, in which editors from Blackwell Science, OUP, Sweet & Maxwell, and Transworld were put through their paces by a sometimes passionate audience of indexers. There was also a fun "balloon debate" after dinner one evening, in which four indexers attempted to justify publishing books without indexes.

The SI's next conference ("The Indexers Tale") will be held in Canterbury, Kent, on 16–18 July 1999.

International Agreement

During the Tynemouth conference, representatives of the British, American, Canadian and Australian societies met to draw up a new draft international agreement. This replaces the obsolete affiliation agreements between the societies, and provides a basis for the development of further co-operation. It will come into force on its approval by the participating societies; the Australian national committee has been the first to meet and approve the agreement.

Apart from formalising some current arrangements (e.g. for the supply of *The Indexer* to members of all societies at a discount), the new agreement also provides for members of any society to attend each others' conferences and meetings at member rates, and establishes a group of delegates to represent the interests of the societies on matters of international import and to act as liaison with the other societies.

China Society of Indexers

In Shanghai, I met the senior officers of the China Society of Indexers (CSI), Prof Xu Jia-Zee and Prof Ge Yong-Qing. The CSI was founded in 1991, and has over 1,000 members. Its activities include training, research and the encouragement of publication of indexes. Its next biennial conference will be held in October 1999. It has a website at <http://www.yp.online.sh.cn/>.

Alan Walker, President.

Web Indexing Prize

Details of the AusSI Web Indexing Prize are on page 100.

From the editor

*T*his month's highlights are a review of BEAT Thesaurus software and news about contacts with international colleagues.

Glenda Browne.

user can refer to an extensive and context-sensitive online help file, which, as it is in ASCII, may be also customised, if desired. The fact that B.E.A.T. is operated by keyboard only, instead of integrating a pointing device such as a mouse is no handicap, as the handling of database entries does not require this feature of the graphic environment.

Much attention has been devoted by the developer to the features of data integrity and security: passwords can be defined for individual thesaurus data files, as well as read-only restrictions; optionally, each operation can be written immediately to the disk. The use of ASCII as a data exchange format and the extensive logging function contribute considerably to the security for the applier: thesaurus data can be saved in ASCII format and easily re-imported; the logging of each operation guarantees that valuable work is not lost in case of a malfunction of the system: loading the log file into backup data files makes data recovery unproblematic, if this should be required. A further security aspect is that networked multi-user access to the data files is only possible in read-only mode.

The structural definitions for the thesaurus data file allow for the following attributes: term fields and the notation field may contain up to 60 characters each; text fields for history, scope and source notes can take up 2000 characters each. Thesaurus relations are predefined according to ISO 2788-1986, i.e., as equivalence, hierarchy and association and the

program can handle up to a total number of 80 relations per term. Polyequivalence and polyhierarchical relations may also be established.
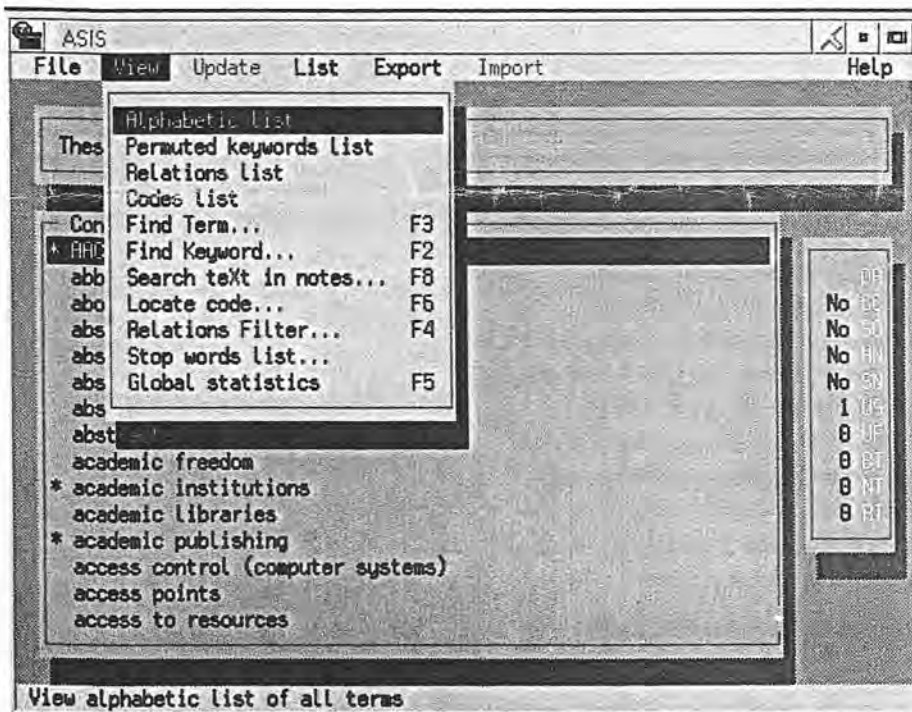
Interactive operation of B.E.A.T. is supplemented by the option to perform input, modifications and deletions in batch mode as well. ASCII files for batch operations can be set up easily, as they operate with the standard tags for field names and follow a simple syntax. The ASCII input and output format also makes it possible to import data from third party sources such as OCR-scanned texts and to merge different thesaurus files. Implicit relations are derived automatically during input while the deletion of all relations and notes must precede the deletion of a term.

Consistency controls are predefined and comprise the rejection of duplicate entry of the same term and rejection of hierarchical or associative relationship between descriptor and nondescriptor; there is however no control of circular relations within a hierarchy and of related term relations within a hierarchy.

The display on screen consist of three windows: thesaurus file name, display status of relation types and the main window. Within the main screen the following data can be displayed using the View menu: the alphabetical list of terms, the permuted list of keywords, the list of notations, the stopwords list, the record of an individual term, and a statistical summary on the current thesaurus file (Fig. 1).

Figure 1. *BEAT View Menu*

The options for output to a file are numerous and produce the output of the thesaurus data in various formats , such as alphabetical list of term records, KWIC, KWOC and hierarchy; other output formats available are designed to control thesaurus construction, e.g. the list of terms with polyhierarchy or polyequivalence (Fig. 2).

The data fields to be viewed on screen or dumped to a file can be selected by using the Relations filter which offers the option to fine tune the data display. The statistical data generated through the log file deserves special mention. These are far more comprehensive than the thesaurus statistics offered online and show not only the number of the terms and their attributes but also their proportion of the total number of terms and keywords. A feature of B.E.A.T. which may well be unique, is the integration of a thesaurus metrics as suggested by Van Slype (1986) to assess the quality of a thesaurus by means of a set of ratios, e.g. between non-descriptors and descriptors, and between the number of keywords and the sum of the non-descriptors and descriptors.

What are the limitations of B.E.A.T?

B.E.A.T. is a stand-alone application and not related to any database application; thus it does not help in integrating thesaurus construction and maintenance

with indexing and retrieval. Another obvious limitation is the lack of a hierarchical display of terms online. However, this limitation can easily compensated for when the software is run in a graphical environment such as MSWindows or OS/2; here a hierarchical output can be generated quickly and then viewed simultaneously with a file viewer or editor while working with the thesaurus administrator. Other restrictions exist with regards to the handling of relationships: although polyequivalence is permitted, there are no explicit provisions for semantic factoring; there is also no complete control over conflicting relationships, such as circular references within a hierarchy which might require special attention by the thesaurus builder. More sophisticated features of thesaurus management software, as specified in ANSI/NISO Z.39.19 such as candidate term management an customizable fields and relations, can reasonably be expected only from high-end products that come at a price and this should therefore not be considered as a shortcoming of B.E.A.T.
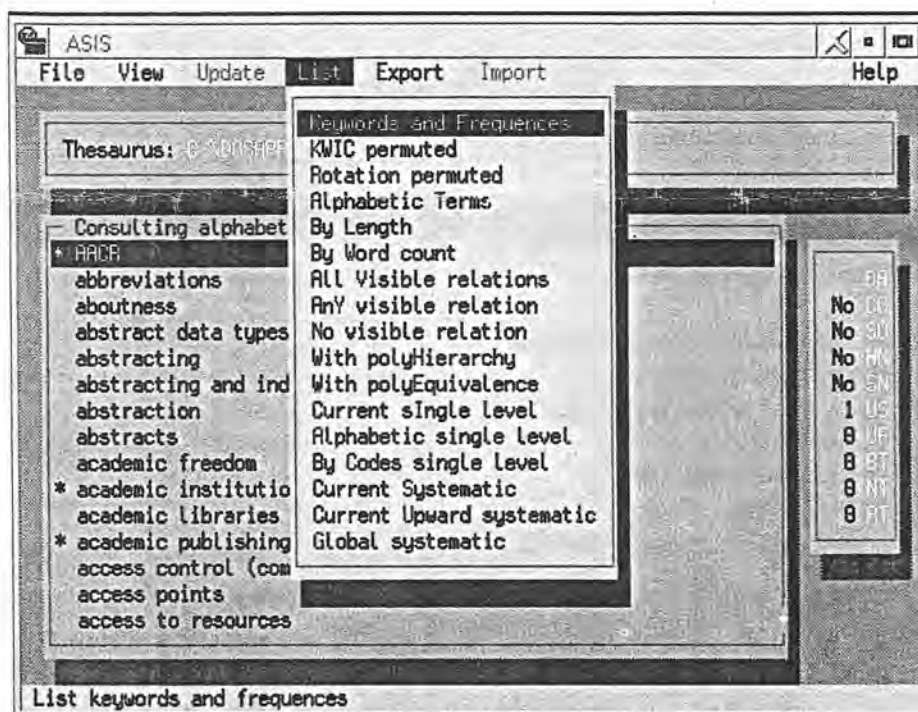
What is the verdict?

Despite these limitations, the simple facts are that B.E.A.T. is a highly reliable and fully functional software for thesaurus construction and maintenance which features a clear user interface and optimal output and statistics functions.

Despite these limitations, the simple facts are that

Figure 2. *BEAT List Menu*

ASIS						
File	View	Update	List	Export	Import	Help

Thesaurus:

Keywords and Frequences

Consulting alphabet
* AACR
  abbreviations
  aboutness
  abstract data types
  abstracting
  abstracting and ind
  abstraction
  abstracts
  academic freedom
* academic institutio
  academic libraries
* academic publishing
  access control (com
  access points
  access to resources

KWIC permuted
Rotation permuted
Alphabetic Terms
By Length
By Word count
All Visible relations
AnY visible relation
No visible relation
With polyHierarchy
With polyEquivalence
Current sIngle level
Alphabetic single level
By Codes single level
Current Systematic
Current Upward systematic
Global systematic

No
No
No
No
1
0
0
0
0

List keywords and frequences

B.E.A.T. is a highly reliable and fully functional software for thesaurus construction and maintenance which features a clear user interface and optimal output and statistics functions. Data transfer and global modifications can be managed easily and consequently also the creation and transfer of subsets or microthesauri. The field sizes for terms and texts will suffice most possible applications. B.E.A.T. is restricted to thesauri according to the ISO specifications, but again, it is very likely that this suffices for most applications. In brief, B.E.A.T., is a highly commendable product for everyone who wants to be able to get on with thesaurus administration without worrying about customising and configuring the application - it's a program that is ready to use "out of the box". As mentioned earlier, B.E.A.T. is freely available, but this also comes at a price: commercial use of this program in any form is not permitted.

Helmut Klaus is working as a research assistant with the ISMRC, School of Information Systems, Queensland University of Technology. He is interested in information retrieval and has just completed his master's thesis on the understanding of thesauri by social science researchers.

email: helmut@fit.qut.edu.au

References

ANSI/NISO Z39.19-1993 (1993) *Guidelines for the construction, format, and management of monolingual thesauri.* Bethesda, Md.: NISO Press

Fugmann, Robert (1997) Bridging the gap between database indexing and book indexing. *Knowledge organization* 24(4):205-212

Ganzmann, Jochen (1990) Criteria for the evaluation of thesaurus software. *International classification* 17(3/4):148-157. Online at: http:// www.willpower.demon.co.uk/Ganzmann.htm

ISO 2788-1986 (1986): *Documentation – guidelines for the establishment and development of monolingual thesauri* : ISO 2788-1986. Geneva: ISO

Milstead, Jessica (1990) Thesaurus software packages for personal computers. *Database* 13(6):61-65

Sau , Josep (1997) *B.E.A.T. 3.1.2.p* [Computer software] available at: http://www.zeta.org.au/~aussi/software/ beat312p.zip. Author's email: jsau@si.ges.ub.es

Van Slype, Georges (1986) *Les langages d'indexation: conception et utilisation dans les systemes documentaire.*. Paris: Les Editions d'Organisation.

From the Web

Print works about the Internet

Kerry Webb in *inCite* recommends the book *Reference sources on the Internet: off the shelf and onto the web* edited by Karen Diaz (New York: The Haworth Press, 1997. 266p with index US$60 hard ISBN 0789003589). As it lists mainly well-established sites he feels it doesn't run the risk of being that ludicrous proposition – a printed work listing out-of-date online sites.

He also comments that there is a comprehensive index which includes each URL, indexed under *http://* which he feels might not be all that useful.

DigiNews on image indexing

Also from *inCite*, details of an article in RLG's (Research Libraries Group) *DigiNews* Vol 2(1) Feb 15 1998 on current research into the indexing of images through mechanised image analysis.

While the program is of course limited, it was able to recognise pictures of horses, alone and in pairs. Find it at: http://www.rlg.org/preserv/diginews/ diginews21.html#feature. **G.B.**

Book Review

The Australian Writer's Marketplace 1998: the complete guide to being published in Australia. Editor Rhonda Whitton, Melbourne: Bookman, 1997. 433 p.

The Australian Writer's Marketplace 1998 is a directory for writers seeking publication. The first section contains five articles (including one by Thomas Shapcott) which give simple practical advice; the second section gives details of potential markets (magazines and newspapers, publishers, and agents) and the third section lists resources (societies, courses, and awards and competitions). I can't complain about a missing index – there are six of them!

The book is said to be "A first for Australia" although *The Australian and New Zealand Writers' Handbook* (published 1975 and 1980 by Reed for the Australian Society of Authors) had a similar aim, although not an identical approach or content.

I requested a review copy of this book because I thought that any resource for writers would also be useful for indexers – whatever they write we can index. In this I was quite satisfied.

Newspapers, magazines, and journals

This is the longest section, with 730 items on 267 pages. The list includes professional and other publications that don't pay for articles – for a writer trying to make a living this information would be useless. For an indexer every periodical without an annual index is a potential job, so there might be some useful contacts here.

If the writing bug bites (as it might when you browse the book) there are a few periodicals listed which publish work in fields related to indexing. You can find *Online Currents* by looking up Computers in the subject index. Its target readership is people working in information management. Freelancers write 25 percent of their articles, and it pays for them. The *Australian Library Journal* also pays for articles (up to $50 at the editor's discretion) which was a surprise to me.

Publishers

I have done two marketing mail-outs in the last ten years. For the first I chose 20 promising addresses from the telephone directory. For the second I chose publishers from their description in an Australian Bookseller and Publisher's brochure, then checked their addresses in the latest version of *Australian Books in Print*. If I had seen this book earlier it would have saved me the trouble – the publishers are there in an easy to read display with all the information I need.

As well as name, address, phone, fax and email, entries include specialties, submission information, tips and general information, and the editorial contact. The editorial contact's name is important as it means indexers can direct their mail or phone calls to the appropriate person.

(Another source of information about publishers is available through the National Library of Australia website at http://enzo.nla.gov.au/products/alg/resource/pub.html).

Literary Societies, Courses, and Awards

Some societies relevant to indexers are listed here, including Writer's Centres and Societies of Editors. I have sent details of AusSI and the AusSI medal for inclusion in the third edition. The section on Literary Courses includes degrees and short courses in writing and journalism at universities, TAFE colleges, and adult education colleges. Not much is directly relevant to indexing or even editing. For example, the editing and publishing diploma at Macquarie University is not listed. (More useful information on courses can be found in the *WiP Directory of Education and Training* which is reviewed on page 98).

Quality

Quite a few typos slipped through the net. On page 309 *Roseville* is *Roiseville*; on page 105 *AGPS* is *AGPs*; on page 350 *convenor* is *conveynor*. And entry 813 (pp. 305-6) gives *INFOCIS* as the company name and *infocis* as part of the email address, but writes *Infocus* in the text.

Agents come directly after publishers in the book, but the item numbers jump from 923 for the last publisher to 1210 for the first agent. Numbering for literary societies then goes back to 924. Presumably this anomaly was caused by a last-minute addition of the Agents section, or change in the order of the sections. A note at the end of the book where you would expect to find numbers after 1210 directing you to the correct page would be useful.

The (many) indexes

This book has six indexes: General index – Complete alphabetical listing of all entries in *The Australian Writer's Marketplace*, Subject Index, Publishers & Agents Index, Literary Societies Index, Literary Courses Index, and Literary Competitions Index.

All indexes refer the reader to the item number (not to a page number) and contain a code to show whether the entry is for a publisher (PB), society (LS), or other type of entry. In the indexes containing only one type of entry this code is redundant. Neither is it necessary in the others as there are no clashes, and anyone looking up Prentice Hall, for example, already knows it is a publisher.

Within the book the sections on societies, courses and awards are organised alphabetically within states. The indexes to these sections give one alphabetic listing of all entries in each section. However, as these items are also included in the General Index, these three special indexes are redundant.

The Publishers & Agents index is unnecessary as it lists

(Book Review, Continued from page 97)
entries in exactly the same order in which they are printed in the book. Within this index the Publishers are listed first, followed by the agents.

The General Index lists all entries from the book in one list, but seems to only list each entry once. Thus we have an index entry "Wagga Wagga Writers' Centre, Boorganga Writers' Centre, Voices Festival Competition LS 946" with no index entries under Boorganga or Voices Festival Competition (or Festival of the Voices as it is called elsewhere). To complicate matters further, the entry for the Writers' Centre and its competition seem to have been mixed up. Apostrophes are used inconsistently, and 'Writers' sometimes duplicated (as in Wagga Wagga Writers' Writers Centre) and sometimes not.

The title $cuba Busines$ is too clever for its own good, as you can only find this magazine under C.

The General Index is not as useful as it could be, as no thought seems to have been given to alternative access points. There would be no space problems if the four unnecessary indexes were scrapped.

Subject index

The Subject Index is the most interesting one, as it is the one requiring the most human effort. It is not easy to find simple categories in which to fit publications on this range of subjects (we have a similar experience with the specialisation categories in *Indexers Available*). Here magazines are allocated to categories fairly well, however the headings are inconsistently broad, and there is a desperate need for cross-references.

The subject list is organised alphabetically, with some use of classification. There are three subheadings under Automotive (Motor Trade, Motorcycling, and Motoring) but no references for people who look up Motor. There are 17 subdivisions under Sport and Recreation, but again unfortunately no references. For example, there is nothing to guide someone who looks up Skiing, or Diving, to the entry under Sport.

There are two headings *Baby and Child Care*, and *Children*, that obviously overlap, with another entry *Family*. *Sydney's Child* should be in the category *Children*, but isn't. *Australia's Parents* made it into all three of these categories as well as to *Women's Issues*, although not to *Men's Interest*, even though the title directs it to both parents.

Why Women's *Issues*, but Men's *Interests?* This is the sort of unconscious bias that librarians are trying to remove from library catalogues. The distinction is not useful, so either *Issues* or *Interests* should be chosen and used for both genders.

Great Cars Magazine, but none of the other 18 motoring magazines, is listed under Men's Interest. The heading Men's Interest is most appropriately used for general magazines – people interested in specific subjects can go there directly.

The heading Consumer has the lone entry *Australian Hi Fi*

Best Buys. Choice would fit here perfectly, but I couldn't find it anywhere in the index, and *Computer Choice* is only listed under Computers.

Conclusion

Overall, I like this book. I like its layout, and the information it provides is useful. It is the sort of book that can suggest possibilities. Its indexes are its weak part, and the next edition needs a professional indexer. If you want to market your indexing services to book and magazine publishers, their contact details are here in an easily accessible format. And if you want to write – good luck, there should be some gem of information here for you.

This review is of the first edition. The second edition is currently at the printers. Apparently the book has 'grown like Topsy' and has an extra 800 entries. The price remains the same. New sections include manuscript assessors and markets for script writers.

The book costs $44.90 ($39.95 plus $4.95 p&h) and can be ordered from Bookman on freecall 1800 060 555, by fax (03) 9654 2290 or by writing to Bookman Directories, Reply Paid 5029, 227 Collins St, Melbourne Vic 3000.

Visit the Australian Writer's Marketplace website at: http://www.deakin.edu.au/~rhondaw/aust_writers.html.

Reviewed by **Glenda Browne**.

Book Review

WiP Directory of Education and Training for the Publishing Industry. Editor Caroline Colton, North Sydney: Women in Publishing, 1997. 40 p.

This directory aims to help people who wish to enter publishing, and those in the industry who want to develop skills and keep up-to-date. It lists educational and training courses in publishing-related fields including indexing, editing, communications, and new media (multimedia).

The directory is organised by states, with a separate section for external courses. Each entry includes contact information and, where applicable, detail about specific courses.

Most entries are for universities and professional societies. One TAFE contact is provided for each state for information about business-related courses.

Indexing is represented by entries for the Australian Society of Indexers and the University of NSW (which runs a number of indexing courses).

The book is A4 size and spiral bound. Presentation is simple, but quite adequate. The information provided is useful and thorough. Cost is $10.

More information from Caroline Colton ph (02) 9665 3553, index@ozemail.com.au.

Reviewed by **Glenda Browne**.

Humour on the Net: Haiku error messages.

This article first appeared in SALON, an online magazine, at http://www.salonmagazine.com. An online version remains in the SALON archives. Reprinted with permission.

These haiku were created by various authors in response to a competition run by SALON. The wording of some has been altered slightly to make them relevant to indexing.

Imagine if, instead of incomprehensible geeky text strings, your computer produced error messages in Haiku :

A file that big?
It might be very useful.
But now it is gone.
    * * * * *

The Web site you seek
cannot be located.
But endless others exist.
    * * * * *

Chaos reigns within.
Reflect, repent, and reboot.
Order shall return.
    * * * * *

Aborted effort.
Close all that you have.
You ask far too much.
    * * * * *

First snow, then silence.
This thousand dollar screen dies
so beautifully.
    * * * * *

With searching comes loss
and the presence of absence:
'My Index' not found.
    * * * * *

The Tao that is seen
Is not the true Tao, until
You bring fresh toner.
    * * * * *

Windows NT crashed.
I am the Blue Screen of Death.
No one hears your screams.
    * * * * *

Stay the patient course.
Of little worth is your ire:
The network is down.
    * * * * *

A crash reduces
your expensive computer
to a simple stone.
    * * * * *

Yesterday it worked.
Today it is not working.
Windows is like that.
    * * * * *

Three things are certain:
Death, taxes, and lost data.
Guess which has occurred.
    * * * * *

You step in the stream,
but the water has moved on.
This index is not here.
    * * * * *

Out of memory.
We wish to hold the whole sky,
But we never will.
    * * * * *

Having been erased,
The index you're seeking
Must now be re-entered.
    * * * * *

Rather than a beep
Or a rude error message,
These words: 'File not found.'
    * * * * *

Serious error.
All shortcuts have disappeared.
Screen. Mind. Both are blank.
    * * * * *

From the Literature

Stylewise

Stylewise is a newsletter published four times a year by AusInfo (the old AGPS) and provided free to all who ask. Send a request to The Editor, Stylewise, AusInfo, GPO Box 84, Canberra ACT 2601.

It is subtitled *Communicating Commonwealth Style and Best Practice*, and it communicates through articles and small tidbits of information, and through example. Each year they use a different masthead, and each issue they use different paper, for example.

The current issue has articles on copyright and on science writing; a list of internet terms; examples of citation of titles (TV titles in roman with single quotation marks but video and film titles in italics); Dom Casual typeface; X as a symbol (Xmas; X-rated; X marks the spot etc) and so on.

There is an annual index (I think it is annual; I have only seen one so far) and Max McMaster has written on assessing indexes.

Highly recommended (and at this price, you can't go wrong)!

electronic publishing

I don't like titles with lower-case first letters, but the contents of this newsletter promise to be useful. The first issue was published recently. It is available free. Send a request to Eric Webb, AusInfo, GPO Box 1920, Canberra ACT 2601.

It is similar to *Stylewise*, but with a focus on electronic formats. The first issue introduces AusInfo and the editorial committee and discusses the need for guidelines and benchmarks.

More information at http://www.ausinfo.gov.au/guidelines/epub.htm. **G.B.**

Web Indexing Prize 1998

To boost interest in the new field of Web indexing, the Australian Society of Indexers is running their annual Web indexing prize again.

Anyone may enter. Entries close on 30 November 1998.

Entries are welcome for a number of different forms of Web indexing including Web site indexes, topical indexes to the Web, online book indexes and Web databases of bibliographies or genealogical information.

For further details and to register please go to:

> http://www.speakeasy.org/~dwight/ aussiwebprize98.html

or email your URL with details of author, tools and purpose of the index to dwight@speakeasy.org

Prizes:

- a year's membership in the Australian Society of Indexers including monthly Newsletter
- a year's free subscription to *The Indexer*, the premier indexing journal

Judges:

- Dwight Walker, WWWalker Web Development, past Webmaster of AusSI, corresponding editor of The Indexer
- Maureen Henninger, Coordinator, Continuing Education, School of Information, Library and Archive Studies, University of New South Wales
- Kerry Webb, Internet columnist for *inCite*, the magazine of the Australian Library and Information Association. Kerry's Internet column is at: http://www.alia.org.au/incite/ wwww/.

Database news: INSPEC

The INSPEC database is a bibliographic database covering the fields of physics and engineering. The database has included references to electronic journal articles since 1996, and is now available as a Windows-based CD-ROM. More information from their website.

Their newsletter *Inspec Matters* is available on the web at: http://www.iee.org.uk/publish/inspec/inspmatt/ contents.html. **G.B.**

Newsletter and Webmaster contacts

Editor: Glenda Browne
Webmaster: Jonathan Jermey
email: aussi@zeta.org.au,
web: http://www.zeta.org.au/~aussi

This newsletter is sent free to all members of the Australian Society of Indexers. It is published 11 times a year, with a combined issue for Jan/Feb. Opinions expressed in the newsletter are those of the individual contributors, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Society.

Copy should be sent to the editor by the last day of each month for publication in the middle of the next month.

Advertisement charges

Full page: $80; Half page: $40; Quarter page: $20.

Send copy to:

Glenda Browne
PO Box 307 Blaxland NSW 2774
ph: (02) 47 398 199; fax: (02) 47 398 189
email: Diagonal@bigpond.com

The Indexer (International indexing journal)

Janet Shuter, Hon. Editor, Shuter@cix.compulink.co.uk

Corresponding Editor Aust/NZ: Dwight Walker
ph (02) 98960286, email: dwight@zip.com.au

National Executive

ph: (02) 9560 0102,
email: gcousins@onaustralia.com.au

President: Alan Walker ph (02) 9368 0174,
fax (02) 9358 5593, email: alan.walker@s054.aone.net.au

Secretary: Lorraine Doyle (02) 8587 7229 (w)
(02) 9876 4218 (h), fax (02) 9888 2229
email: Lorraine.Doyle@lbc.com.au

NSW Branch

President: Michael Wyatt ph (02) 9331 7764,
keyword@ozemail.com.au

Secretary: Madeleine Davis ph (02) 9438 5354,
redcliff@hermes.net.au

Victorian Branch

President: Margaret Findlay, ph. (03) 9277 5555,
findlay@acer.edu.au

Secretary: Jenny Restarick, ph/fax (03) 9528 2539 (h),
Jenny.Restarick@enquiries.csiro.au

ACT Region Branch

President: Lynn Farkas, ph (02) 6286 3529

Secretary: Shirley Campbell, ph (02) 6234 2225,
Shirley.Campbell@Radford.act.edu.au

Details of other committee members are at http://www.zeta.org.au/~aussi.