

ndexers

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Newsletter

Style Manual

a review

By Heather Jamieson

The team involved in the new bigger, brighter and better *Style Manual* have taken their own excellent advice and produced an exemplary reference work in a very attractive package. No longer bearing the Commonwealth coat of arms and the government imprimatur (AGPS in earlier editions, AusInfo in the fifth of 1994), the sixth edition nevertheless builds on and extends the strengths of its predecessors, long the de facto style sheets for publishers (or publishing clients, to use the manual's more comprehensive term) of all sorts.

These comments are not mere gratitude for my review copy of the book. The sixth edition is literally bigger and brighter. Brighter in its cover and the internal use of colour and illustrations, and bigger in every way—larger in format, greater in extent (560 pages, compared to 480 in the fifth edition), fuller in its treatment of key topics and, most importantly, wider in coverage. This reflects not only the explosion in the electronic delivery of information since the fifth edition (there was no World Wide Web in 1994) but also a more wholistic appraisal of the publication process. Thus, along with the desiderata of screen-based publications, expanded sections covering design and illustration, structuring of documents, legal considerations and further reading and resources, there are new chapters which provide clear and succinct overviews of the planning and evaluation of publications. These are welcome additions in a publishing environment where expertise can be fragmented by increasing outsourcing and pressure on in-house resources.

But the standout feature—the one that justifies the claim that the new edition is better—is its superb signposting. From the 'How to use this book' section in the early pages to the excellent index, the manual is a model of accessibility and clarity. Following its own precepts, it

demonstrates how good a happy marriage between design and content can be, and how well tailored to its use by readers. Like a good Web page, the manual is browsable and searchable. With its wonderfully clear lists of contents at the chapter openings, liberal sprinkling of headings (clearly ranked and well structured, just as the manual counsels), and its frequent cross-references, links and explanatory glosses in the generous margins, it shows how the best examples of screen publication can have a positive influence on printed material.

The sections on grammatical style, revised and expanded since the fifth edition, are balanced and judicious, quietly demolishing traditional shibboleths about splitting the infinitive and the singular use of 'they', as well as putting into perspective blanket rulings of a more contemporary flavour, such as prohibitions on use of the passive voice. (The manual points out that there are times when the appropriate information emphasis is best achieved by the word order the passive allows.)

While the focus on government publications that characterised the earlier editions is retained, the manual canvasses and comments upon Australian publishing practices in the broader context. Overwhelmingly it does not attempt to be prescriptive, choosing instead to outline the range

of usage and treatment, note new trends and offer guidance in the form of recommendations. This is a sensible and appropriate approach, given the spread of practice within Australia and the influence of publications from other English-speaking nations. Indeed, the few places in the manual where I noted the information as inaccurate or questionable involved some form of prescription.

But minor quibbles aside, the new manual will be welcomed by seasoned professionals and novices alike. It is surprisingly affordable, and authoritative without being too rigid. It will no doubt continue to be known as the 'style manual', but it is a measure of the achievement of the sixth edition that in many respects it has outgrown its familiar title to become a comprehensive and eminently user-friendly publishing handbook. Congratulations are due to all involved.

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Notice

NSW Branch Panel/Workshops Saturday 24 August 2002

The NSW Branch of AusSI invites you to a day of panel/workshops to be held on Saturday, 24 August 2002 – see advertisement on page 75.

Program

10:00 am to 12 noon: Panel/workshop on indexing periodicals, including journals, magazines and newsletters: introduced and chaired by Deirdre Ward

12 noon to 1:00 pm: Light lunch, socialising and general discussion

1:00 pm to 3:00 pm: Panel/workshop on indexing biographical texts, introduced and chaired by Trevor Matthews

Venue

Thomson Legal & Regulatory Limited, 100 Harris Street, Pyrmont (about 3 kms from Broadway)

ACT Region Branch Database Indexing

The ACT Region Branch of the Australian Society of Indexers will be offering a day of database indexing, comprising two half-day sessions: an introduction and overview of database indexing (for newcomers and experienced indexers who wish to review their skills), followed by an afternoon focusing on the use of a particular thesaurus—MeSH (medical subject headings) which is one of the world's best examples of a hierarchical thesaurus—and its application for health-related indexing. MeSH is used locally for both database indexing and some metadata projects, and the afternoon session will concentrate on MeSH itself—how to access it and find the right terms—rather than specific applications, although some of these will be used as examples in the workshop.

The workshop will be held on Saturday 7 September 2002, in Room 3005 of the Coombs Building at ANU and participants can enrol in either or both sessions. Costs will be \$160 for the full day, \$90 for a single session. Sessions will be conducted by Lynn Farkas, Sandra Henderson and Prue Deacon and will include lots of hands-on practical work. For more information and a course registration form please contact Lynn Farkas (02) 6286 4818 or email lfarkas@pcug.org.au

Indexing Courses

Disclaimer: In view of recent advertising of indexing courses stating they were 'endorsed by the Australian Society of Indexers', the Society would like to make it clear that it has no policy on the endorsement or otherwise of indexing courses run in Australia or overseas, and has not endorsed any such courses in recent times. Similarly, the Society has no policy on the content of courses offered, although its recently-formed Education Committee will be examining this issue. Courses in various aspects of indexing have been run by branches of the Society from time to time which are taught by highly experienced Society members. Courses are also offered by academic and commercial entities, some of whom use the same members of the Society as trainers. The Australian Society of Indexers advises that clients seeking indexing training look for courses taught by experienced Society members, and choose courses with content appropriate to their needs.

*Lynn Farkas,
National President
Australian Society of Indexers*

Despite predictions that computers and search engines would make indexing obsolete, quality indexes are here to stay as readers, researchers, publishers, librarians and others admit that quality indexing adds context and integrity to a world otherwise populated by disorganised information.

CAVAL Collaborative Solutions is happy to offer the following training courses for those responsible for the provision of indexes to assist locating information.

Indexing Books – an introduction

This back-of-book indexing workshop provides an introduction to the theory of indexing and the opportunity to apply this in practical exercises. Authors, editors, indexers, librarians and technical writers who are responsible for providing quality indexes will benefit from this workshop.

Indexing Databases and Pictorial Materials

Most organisations devote time and energy to database building, and then neglect to provide enough assistance to find the resources. Pictorial materials, such as maps, photographs, charts, etc, comprise rich sources of information, but their non-textual (i.e. pictorial) nature, can make them

board

particularly difficult to manage, store, and access. This workshop provides the opportunity for those responsible for the management and access of databases and pictorial materials to learn and practice indexing fundamentals such as writing abstracts and selecting index terms.

All courses are developed and presented by Max McMaster who has been a freelance indexer for the past nine years. Although he has mainly worked on back-of-book indexing, he is also highly experienced in database indexing, journal indexing and web-indexing. He arrived at indexing after spending 19 years in the library and information fields, mainly involved with scientific disciplines in State government departments and CSIRO. He has in excess of 900 indexes to his name. Max lectures on indexing to editing and publishing students at RMIT, and runs indexing training courses for the Australian Society of Indexers and others all around Australia. Max has been awarded the prestigious Australian Society of Indexers Medal on three occasions.

2002 Schedule

Indexing Books – An Introduction

12 August	Cairns
15 August	Brisbane
2 September	Perth
5 September	Adelaide

30 September	Auckland
3 October	Wellington
7 October	Christchurch
6 November	Newcastle

Indexing Databases and Pictorial Materials

13 August	Cairns
16 August	Brisbane
3 September	Perth
6 September	Adelaide
1 October	Auckland
4 October	Wellington
8 October	Christchurch
7 November	Newcastle

Venues: To Be Announced

Cost per day: \$220.00 or \$198.00 (CAVAL and ALIA Individual Members)

To register to attend any of the above sessions, please use the online registration form at http://www.caval.edu.au/Services/rego_form.html

For further information please contact Eve Cornish, Administrator, Acquisitions & Training at evvec@caval.edu.au

Dates

Diary

Aug 12 & 13

CAVAL courses Cairns Qld. See Noticeboard for details.

Aug 15 & 16

CAVAL courses Brisbane Qld. See Noticeboard for details.

Aug 24 NSW Branch Panel/Workshops. See page 75 for details.

Sep 2 & 3 CAVAL courses Perth WA. See Noticeboard for details.

Sep 5 & 6 CAVAL courses Adelaide SA. See Noticeboard for details.

Sep 7 ACT Region Branch Database Indexing. See Noticeboard for details.

Victorian Branch News

Report on metadata meeting in Melbourne

On the evening of 18 July, a small group of indexers, cataloguers and students were treated to a very interesting demonstration of Indexing on-line content using a metadata application profile, by Nigel Ward. The case study focused on The Learning Federation and showed how metadata is used to catalogue "learning objects" which can be either a single resource or an aggregate of a number of resources bundled together to be used for a particular learning sequence.

Curriculum Corporation supports schools through project management and resource development, and hence assists in improving classroom learning with a wide range of curriculum materials based on best-practice teaching. The Learning Federation is a Commonwealth initiative involving all states, territories and NZ and

involves the creation and management of online curriculum resources for use in schools, focusing on the Key Learning Areas.

Each object within a resource contains its own metadata. As these objects are designed to be used as one resource or taken apart by the teacher and repackaged somewhere else for a different learning sequence, there are digital rights and other management issues involved which therefore create a need for metadata to be assigned to each object as well as the larger "aggregate" object.

Steven Haby then described the various capabilities of SCIS, ScOT (Schools Online Thesaurus) and the associated indexing, metadata and thesaurus applications. SCIS (currently used for subject headings) is not totally adequate for conversion to a thesaurus format and thus the reason

for the ScOT project. Content is developed by the various states, territories, NZ, Catholic and Independent school groups. In the future, it is hoped that DDC numbers will be aligned to terms—for example ARA = Dance 770.9. The terms in ScOT are much more specific than the broader headings currently found in SCIS.

We thank Steven Haby, Curriculum Corporation and Nigel Ward of The Learning Federation for such a stimulating talk and demonstration, and our sincere thanks to ACER (Australian Council for Educational Research) for once again opening its doors to our members. The evening closed with dinner at Café Platia and a continuation of the "thesauri" topic.

*Jenny Restarick
President, Vic Branch*

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New South Wales Branch

Day of Panel/Workshops

24 August 2002

The NSW Branch of AusSI invites you to a day of panel/workshops to be held on Saturday, 24 August 2002.

Program

10:00 am to 12 noon: Panel/workshop on indexing periodicals, including journals, magazines and newsletters: introduced and chaired by Deirdre Ward

12 noon to 1:00 pm: Light lunch, socialising and general discussion

1:00 pm to 3:00 pm: Panel/workshop on indexing biographical texts, introduced and chaired by Trevor Matthews

Venue

Thomson Legal & Regulatory Limited
100 Harris Street, Pyrmont (about 3 kms from Broadway)

Transport

By car: Parking is limited along the street and is all metered. Parking is available at Star City Casino: \$5.00 for 6 hours (enter via Edward or Pirrama Streets: Star City is directly behind 100 Harris Street)

By light rail: from Central (alight at John Street station)

By bus: 443 Bus from Town Hall (alight at cnr Harris & John Streets) or Casino Bus from Town Hall (alight at Star City Casino: Star City is directly behind 100 Harris Street)

By foot: Walk from the city across Pyrmont Bridge and straight ahead to Harris Street, then turn right and walk about 100 metres

Cost

AusSI members: \$20

Non-members: \$25

The charge, which is to defray expenses, includes attendance at both workshops and a light lunch. You can pay on the day, but you must register beforehand.

How to register

Contact: Lorraine Doyle
Library Manager, TLR
100 Harris Street
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Phone: 02 8587 7229
Email: Lorraine.Doyle@thomson.com.au

What to bring

Examples of indexes of the type under discussion. Your problems and questions. If you have issues you would particularly like to be discussed, then please contact the panel leaders beforehand:

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Any restrictions on page length?

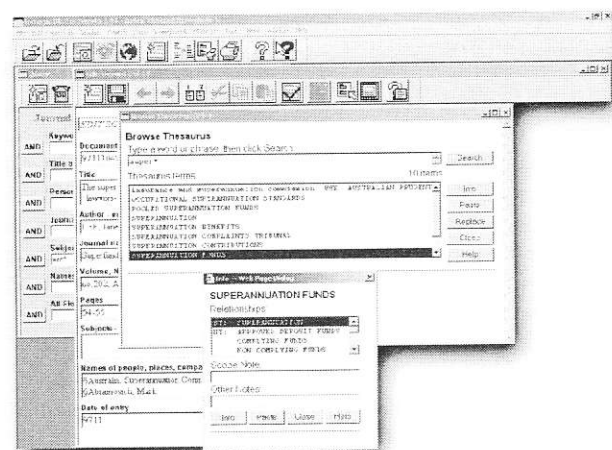
AusSI member Tonia Johannsen writes:

I did an index where my calculations indicated there was something like eighteen pages available for the index. I did a pretty good eighteen-page index. However, I was then told there were only twelve pages. So, to incorporate most of what the author wanted indexed, I had to revert to deleting a lot of subs, and to long strings of locators after fairly general headings, which I judged was preferable to not indexing certain material altogether. Everyone was happy with the index, or so I was informed. A few months later: Ah, there is the book in the shop. I will see what the index looks like in print. Marvellous. Especially the six blank pages at the end of the index!

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Copy should be sent to the editor by the fourth Friday of each month for publication in the middle of the next month. We are delighted to receive contributions, both large and small, from members. Please contact us if you have any questions about suitable items for publication. The editor reserves the right to cut and edit material. If greater than one A4 page, please send files on a disk or via email in Rich Text Format, Word for Windows, or plain text (ASCII). Do not embed footnotes in Word files.

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