

Australian Society of
Indexers Volume 26, Number 8, September 2002

Newsletter

'Trivial' matters of indexing

Alan Walker

The skills ascribed to librarians by the [NSW Industrial Relations Commission] ... are usually quite trivial matters of classification and indexing.—Paddy McGuinness

Edited version of an address to the Society of Editors (NSW) Inc. on 4 June 2002, by Alan Walker, Vice-President of the Australian Society of Indexers.

My text is taken from the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 2 April 2002, page 13, by Padraic P. McGuinness. I intend tonight to describe the context in which this remark was made, and I particularly want to mention the implications of this slur for pay rates and employment conditions for editors and indexers. Then I'll canvass a number of topics of mutual concern to editors and indexers.

McGuinness's article

Apart from that slur on librarians' skills, McGuinness's article made a number of points which evoked immediate responses from librarians and indexers.

His first argument was that the equal pay case in 1966 which decided that Aboriginal stockmen in the Northern Territory should be paid union award rates for the job was the greatest single blow to Aborigines in the last 50 years. His second was that a similar blow is being dealt to libraries by a decision of the NSW Industrial Commission to grant about a 25 per cent salary increase to librarians in the public sector in NSW.

McGuinness claims: 'Rising salaries in librarianship have led to the decline of many libraries as the costs of administration have crowded out the basic function of a library.' And another quote: 'What the pay increases will achieve is a further decline in the quality of public libraries as people are substituted for books and journals and the few remaining independent libraries are priced out of existence. The

net result will be fewer jobs for librarians.'

The third argument, and this is really the guts of the article, is about relativities between different professions, the femininity of certain professions, and work value. He describes the basis of the salary increase as:

... a specious argument about the alleged depression of wages in female gender-specific occupations. This is based on an unproven historical effect, and on an invalid comparison with a male-dominated occupation—of all things, geologists. The disparity between the two is obvious.

Geologists have to undertake tertiary studies of a much more rigorous kind than the mixture of elementary skills and soft 'science' fed to would-be librarians. They have to participate in their training in exhausting field expeditions and most of them to further their careers have to spend long spells in uncomfortable remote areas. It is a tough life. There is no reason why women should not become geologists, but clearly it is not the kind of work that many women have

wanted to do. By contrast, librarianship is a genteel occupation with regular hours where work is sedentary and comfortable.

Moreover, libraries were not in past years solely staffed by women. It is only in the past 20 years that women have come to dominate the field. That is, the basic staff relativities by comparison with other jobs were laid down long before the huge influx into the workforce of women.

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Notice

Victorian Branch

A Panel Discussion – The Diverse Taxonomies Of Victorian Thesauri on Thursday 10 October 2002, at 5.45 pm for 6 pm start at Women's Health Victoria, 1st Floor, 123 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne

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 by CAVAL

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 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

board

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

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

Indexing Databases and Pictorial Materials

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 evc@caval.edu.au

Society of Indexers (UK)

New Training Course

If you want to learn indexing but find it difficult to attend courses, then the new electronic version of the Society of Indexers distance-learning course could be just what you're looking for. It's the next best thing to your own personal tutor and it's available whenever you switch on your computer.

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For further information visit www.indexers.org.uk

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Who Married Your Mother ?

On Tuesday 13 August a small group of Victorian indexers ascended the beautiful staircase of the Presbyterian Assembly in Collins Street, Melbourne for a fascinating afternoon delving into the records and archives collection of the Presbyterian Church of Victoria.

Just that morning a treasure trove of material had arrived from the Presbytery of Lismore, Victoria, in the Western District. Amongst the many items included was a large elephant folio-sized scrapbook, all pages totally blank BUT interleaved within these blank pages were various booklets, documents, letters, etc., covering its history from 1864 to 1962. At some time, one of the church's ministers or clerks had placed these historic documents in the safe-keeping of the scrapbook and they had certainly been well preserved, as the whole collection was then placed in a vault under the church, and discovered only recently. So we observed the wonderful volunteers checking each item and recording its provenance.

Another researcher was writing a book on the Reverend John Flynn and so material relating to his work in the ministry was being displayed and made available for study.

The Archives are based on the organisational structure of the church, from its main management body, the General Assembly (which oversees the eleven (in 2002) presbyteries in Victoria) down through the various groups and committees to the congregations. Records consist of Minutes of the Session (a Session comprises a group of Elders); the Board of Management, the various groups such as PWMU, Ladies' Guilds, youth groups etc. If a congregation merged with the Uniting Church in 1977, its records went with the people. Some presbyteries prefer to hold on to their records which is agreed to so long as the collection is safe and well managed.

Main client groups are people investigating their family history, theological students, researchers writing books, articles, etc. Chris Palmer, the Archivist, did her thesis on a

comparison of ten religious archival collections in Melbourne, as a way of finding out what else existed in this field, how these were organised, maintained, utilised, etc., and what might be the most appropriate method of recording the PCV collection for future generations.

Major finding aids used to help navigation through the records comprise a 'List of Presbyterian Ministers in Australia 1822-1901' which is a biographical register; a card index covering congregations and prominent individuals, i.e. people and places (pre-Church Union); presbytery listings and lists on the inside of cupboards which had been stored in the strong room prior to Chris's appointment as Archivist. Three volunteers come in one day per week to assist in the work and Chris also has the skills and expertise of Val, an electronic whiz, who is on the staff.

*Jenny Restarick
President, Victorian Branch*

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The Cotswold Wayzgoose

Tricia Waters

The Society of Indexers annual conference this year was held at the University of Gloucestershire, Cheltenham, England 16–18 July 2002. There were approximately 90 delegates, including some from the USA, Canada, South Africa and Australia. Glenda Browne, John Simkin and Tricia Waters attended from Australia. The Conference Committee made us feel very welcome, as did the University of Gloucestershire which provided excellent accommodation on campus. The well-organised program included so many interesting topics that it was sometimes hard to choose which session to attend.

The future of publishing

'The Future of Publishing' loomed large in the program. Andrea Powell from CABI Publishing (formerly Commonwealth Agricultural Bureaux) gave a thought-provoking talk centred on three issues, technology, economics and ethics.

There is a great temptation to do things with content simply because it is technically possible. If content is not online, it might as well not exist, because users access material from their work or home computers. Content must be accessible and retrievable by search engines. Technology affects the way CABI prepares content, e.g. editing is done on-screen. Technology allows for automated indexing, 'harvesting' of metadata, search and retrieval technologies and taxonomies. Users expect to link seamlessly between online resources. A DOI (digital object identifier), similar to an ISBN, is allocated to each article. Archiving of electronic material becomes of prime importance. Customers demand usage data to justify purchase or renewal of journal subscriptions, but it is not easy to measure usage of electronic content. Parallel publishing systems for print and digital are required.

How do publishers keep up with technological changes while still maintaining profit margins and revenues? Library budgets continue to be squeezed, which leads to pooling of assets to form purchasing consortia, e.g. university libraries. This in turn leads to site licensing and widespread access, e.g. Elsevier Science Direct. Bigger publishers with a critical mass of at least 50 titles are favoured. Smaller and not-for-profit publishers and learned societies cannot compete with the big publishers. This distorts the markets and causes discontent.

Academics agitate to 'liberate' their work by making it more widely accessible and deeply resent restrictive practices of commercial publishers. On the question of copyright ownership, isn't the author the moral owner? What would the author do with the copyright and, if it is breached, would the author be able to do anything about it? New models for online journals are proposed, whereby the print version is paid for and online access is free. 'People power' such as the Public Library of Science movement, and the Budapest Open Access Initiative are agitating that content should be free. Publishers have an obligation to provide access to developing countries, e.g. WHO's HINARI project.

Andrea concluded with the following predictions:

- Many small publishers will not survive.
- Thesauri and databases are being re-invented because publishers don't know that they already exist.
- Users will be less likely to pay for 'data', but will pay for interpretation and 'decision intelligence' such as ranking hits.
- Only those publishers who truly add value to content deserve to flourish.

Later in the program there was a panel discussion on the same topic. Richard Duguid from Penguin Books greeted us with "Good morning Indexers, Society of *see* Early risers". He spoke of the battle between quality of output versus the costs and responsibility to shareholders. The publishers face the pressure of time and schedules. There is a need to get a quick return for the publisher's investment, i.e. the advance to the author. Penguin allows nine months between the advance to the author and the publication of the book.

Technology

Lori Lathrop spoke on 'The Impact of Technology on Indexing'. Recent trends include:

- PDF files used instead of hard copy.
- 'Living documents' with embedded index markers, ideal for publications which are frequently revised.
- Online documents with metadata tags: www.dublincore.org
- Tags for HTML and XML developed by W3C World Wide Web Consortium
- 'Retro indexing' in which online indexes are created for conventional printed publications that will be converted to online. The challenges in this are inconsistent scope and structure and the lack of taxonomic structure applied to the whole project from start to finish.

Usability studies show that a few years ago most people used a search engine first and then the index. Now it is the opposite. Search engines do not provide topic analysis, cross-references, passing references and differences in terminology and spelling. Indexers must dispel the myth that readers do not need an index if they have search technology.

Updating indexes

Moir Greenhalgh gave a workshop on 'Updating Indexes'.

Legal issues involve copyright and the permission of existing indexer to update their index. The indexer and not the publisher is legally liable for the new index. Essential requirements for updating include: indexing software which can take existing file and put it in page number order; file of existing index (can be generated by scanning); copy of last edition of publication to see where text has changed and where the page breaks are.

The procedure for updating an index is as follows:

Put existing index in page number order and print it out. Compare old text with the new. Mark up new copy as 'New/Deleted' etc., looking at shape of paragraph. There is no need to check every word. Mark amendments/

deletions in page number order file which you have already printed out. If paragraph has been added and all pages have increased by, say, one page, then write +1 against all numbers and do a global change. Keep a running total of increments. May need to generate an extra entry where page breaks occur. Amalgamate new file with renumbered file, if you have made a new file for new entries, and check for consistency of headings and cross references. Put completed index into page number order and check page numbers.

Ergonomics

Nicola Ellis, a physiotherapist, roused us all from our collective slump with a dynamic rapid-fire talk on good working positions for indexers. With the help of a skeleton, Nicola showed us how to maintain good posture.

While working, an indexer should consider the design and layout of the desk, the position of the computer monitor, including screen adjustability and glare, the keyboard, the mouse and the telephone. Fatigue is reduced by changes of position of a task, varying tasks and changing the muscle groups being used, for example, by using the mouse in alternate hands. Avoid over-gripping of the mouse, excessive movements at hand and wrist and excessive pressure at the wrist.

Avoid asymmetrical positions and do not use wrist rests on the mousepad. Allow sufficient recovery time for tired muscles. It is better to have small short breaks than one long break. If discomfort from the previous day's work is still present, you are not getting enough rest time.

Nicola had us all doing exercises in our chairs to loosen tense shoulders and stretch our neck muscles.

Market for books

Elizabeth Tribe, from Hodder and Stoughton Educational, focussed on the market for books. Publishing for schools is dominated by high school examinations not by quality books by good authors. The school curriculum is geared only towards examinations. There is tension in the schools between diversity and a focus on results and outcomes.

Digital learning is having an impact on educational publishing. Huge investments are made in technology and ICT training for teachers. There is a proposed curriculum online initiative. The BBC is proposing a digital curriculum which will be free to schools.

Teachers are demanding resources which include assessment and feedback and complete managed learning systems. Students are demanding a Nintendo level of animation.

Elizabeth predicted that the book will survive accompanied by CDs and other media.

Project management

John Button talked about his company Bookcraft Ltd, project managers who outsource projects by publishing houses. As a 'one-stop' project management organisation, Bookcraft offer services such as editing, design, typesetting, proofreading and indexing. John raised the point that editors, proofreaders and indexers are rarely acknowledged and compared this with the endless list of credits for films.

Overseas reports

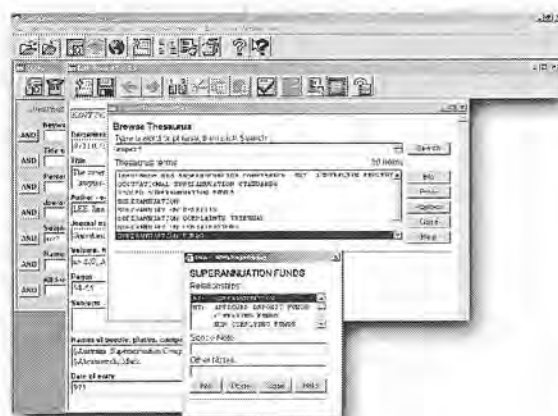
The conference ended with overseas reports in which Glenda Browne spoke about the Australian Society of Indexers and Tricia Waters invited all those present to come to AusSI's Conference in Sydney in September 2003. We encouraged the British indexers and international delegates to come and see that 'what Sydney could do for the Olympic Games, Sydney can do for indexing!'

Absolutely! — Ed. Glenda Browne's conference report will be published in our October issue.

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Australian Society of Indexers
Victorian Branch
GPO Box 1251, Melbourne,
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A PANEL DISCUSSION – THE DIVERSE TAXONOMIES OF VICTORIAN THESAURI

Thursday, 10 October 2002, at 5:45 pm for 6 pm start.

Women's Health Victoria

1st Floor, 123 Lonsdale Street, Melbourne

The Victorian Branch of the Australian Society of Indexers presents a panel discussing the diverse taxonomies of Victorian thesauri, their development, maintenance and usage.

The panellists include: Anna Gifford (ACER); Vicki Court (Royal Historical Society/Pictures Australia/Historical Society Thesaurus); and Mary Russell (Women's Health Victoria).

These people will discuss their own experience with the development, maintenance and intended usage of a Thesaurus – unique to their collections and requirements.

Please be prompt – the doors are locked at 6 pm. Nibbles and drinks will be provided. Join us for dinner afterwards, in a local restaurant, to continue the discussion.

RSVP: Monday 7 October 2002, Jennifer Csorba – 9891 6214, or by email: jennifer.csorba@roads.vic.gov.au.

If it were a generally underpaid job, there would be far fewer people employed in libraries or in training for such employment.

Finally he goes on:

But the real issue is the absurd notion that work in female-dominated industries is historically undervalued. There is simply no economic basis for this assertion. First, in the case of libraries it is historically untrue that it was mainly a female profession. Second, there is no evidence that salaries have been driven down by women entering it because there was no alternative employment available. Third, since libraries are chiefly a matter of public sector employment, there is no appropriate basis for market comparisons. Any other form of evaluation of 'value' of work must be based on non-economic considerations, and hence must be irrelevant to wage comparisons.

As part of this argument, McGuinness makes his slur on librarians' skills which was quoted at the beginning and which I will quote again in its context:

The skills ascribed to librarians by the IRC, drawing on the submission by counsel for the Public Service Association, are those which will be acquired in the course of tertiary education in the humanities by almost anyone fit to get a degree; the skills are usually quite trivial matters of classification and indexing. For the rest, it is simply book handling, book issuing, and searching databases—all easy to learn.

ALIA's response

As you will imagine, this article evoked an immediate response. The National Office of ALIA, the Australian Library and Information Association, sent a reply to the *Herald* on the same day that McGuinness's piece appeared. So far as I'm aware, the reply was not published. ALIA commented:

In any event, Mr McGuinness's view is of little moment. The case has been 'run and won' and librarians have been the big winners. What Mr McGuinness thinks of the outcome of a major consideration by the body charged with determining wage cases in NSW [NSWIRC] is irrelevant. Members

should be largely unconcerned by his views.

Demography of the information management professions

McGuinness's remarks on the demography of librarianship are disputable—indeed, I think they are all wrong, and have been proved wrong for many years. When I was a librarian at the University of NSW in the 1970s, research was done in the School of Sociology by Michael Cass and Sol Encel, among others, which contradicted most of McGuinness's assertions.

ALIA's unpublished reply says:

Many of Padraic's ... assertions are inaccurate. One example: he asserts that 'it is only in the past 20 years that women have come to dominate [librarianship]' and 'there is no evidence that salaries have been driven down by women entering it'. Yet evidence put before the Pay Equity Inquiry confirmed that as long ago as 1930 there was 85 per cent female employment in the State Library, but largely-unqualified men held the senior positions. These men enjoyed salaries on a par with other professionals across the public sector. It was only when more women gained senior positions that relativities declined. Further evidence showed that in 1955, 83 per cent of female librarians held tertiary qualifications compared with only 60 per cent of men. Yet female librarians' pay was lower than that of male counterparts and was falling relative to other professions with which librarianship had previously had parity ... what actually happened was that, as women came to dominate the librarian workforce, qualification levels increased but relative pay declined.

Now, comparing the demography of librarianship with that of other information management professions such as our own, I can draw on a great deal of personal observation, having been a librarian for 20 years and an indexer for another 20 years. While I can't produce solid figures on all demographic aspects of indexing and editing, I can tell you what figures I have and make some observations.

The Australian Society of Indexers (AusSI) membership figures show that there are comparable numbers of indexers in NSW and Victoria—nearly

30 per cent of our membership is in each of those states—but there's a substantial group—20 per cent—in the ACT region. Another 10 per cent is scattered up and down the Queensland coast, and the remaining 12 per cent are in other states and territories and New Zealand. Many of our members live outside capital cities because indexing, like editing, is by and large a freelance occupation and a solitary one which can be done remotely.

Membership is about 75 per cent female, and has been so for at least the last 10 years. If this audience tonight is typical, then much the same holds for editors. Given that sort of split, it's clear that in AusSI males have usually been over-represented in official positions, in the same way as for many years males were over-represented in the management positions in libraries.

One other demographic factor which McGuinness doesn't mention, but is one I always find interesting when I go to conferences of indexers around the world, is age distribution. In England, I would be a young indexer. English indexers are old women, and they are excellent indexers. One gets the impression that the average age of English indexers may be somewhere close to 70. We don't ask our members their age, but I would say that while the average age of Australian indexers is below that, it is not by more than a decade or two. From my observation of conferences in the USA, it appears that their average age is much lower.

There are various reasons for this age profile, the main one being that indexing is usually a second profession. Most indexers have been librarians or editors or academics or authors. Michael Wyatt and I have been running basic training in indexing for the last 15 years at the University of New South Wales as continuing education courses, and the people who turn up show that sort of mixture, and they tend to be of a certain age. I'm not quite sure what the industrial implications of the aging workforce are, but it is certainly a significant factor.

One other thing that I would point to is that not all indexers are book indexers. As our list of Indexers Available (on the AusSI website) and our marketing brochure make clear, indexers work with a wide range of analogue and digital materials, with

books and periodicals, loose-leaf services, archives, maps, pictures, databases, websites, intranets, and electronic publications of all sorts.

Gender equity and work value

But getting back to McGuinness's article, in the unpublished reply which ALIA wrote to the *Herald* they quoted from the previous weekend edition of the *Herald*, which had reported on the industrial case in the following terms: 'Employers said the decision was based on work value rather than gender equity because all parties agreed that librarians were underpaid'. And they went on: 'Employers have accepted the evidence put before the NSW Pay Equity enquiry that librarians are underpaid despite their work value having increased substantially over recent years.'

This raises the whole question of work value and relativities. When AusSI sets the recommended rate for indexing, which we do roughly once a year, we look at economic conditions and we look at established relativities. We have not ever been brave enough to try to upset the relativities, and so we take it for granted that people won't pay an indexer as much as they will pay an editor, but we fully expect that they will pay the indexer more than they will pay a proofreader.

These sorts of relativities have been there for as long as anyone can remember and I think what this judgement shows is that maybe old relativities and old ideas of work value should be reconsidered from time to time. And perhaps we should get excited when we consider that the richest person in the world is a nerd.

Skills

So let's go on to skills. Michael Wyatt posted a reference to McGuinness's article on two listservs, ALIAIndexers (which is the list supported by AusSI) and INDEX-L (which is the English-language international discussion list for indexers). There was an immediate flurry of outrage to the slur on our skills both from Australia and the USA. One American indexer, Al Austin, wrote:

I'm new to the list and a novice indexer ... but I do have a suggestion ... Let's sit [Mr McGuinness] down with a book and let him index it. Let's not make it too difficult for the fellow by giving him a medical text or a legal text or even a cook-

book. It is, after all, his first time out. How about Jacques Barzun's *From Dawn to Decadence* with the index cut out? A nice trivial romp through 500 years of the humanities. Of course, since it's only a trivial matter of classification and indexing, he should not be allowed any indexing reference books, publisher's style specifications, or advice from anyone. He must do it all by himself, in a small room, eight hours a day, for two weeks.

Maybe we can even arrange for him to be paid at the current salary for librarians.

That's a good point; it's a tough life for indexers as well. It may not be as blokey as geology, but it has its own stress.

The other comment I like was from Judy Hunt, also from the USA, who wrote: 'I'm a woman and an indexer and a geologist. Compared to indexing, geology is a piece of cake.'

The importance of triviality

I'd just like to make one little diversion into triviality, which I'm sure you are aware of, but it's worth a reminder.

Although the most familiar contemporary meanings of 'trivial' are 'trifling, slight, of small importance, or value, commonplace, ordinary, trite', it's worth remembering that its original meaning was 'belonging to the trivium'.

In the Middle Ages, the trivium was the lowest division of a university course of study comprising the three subjects, grammar, rhetoric and logic. Students built on this base when they moved on to the higher division of the course of the seven sciences, the quadrivium. That consisted of the four subjects, arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music. (Geology of course was not invented until the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century.)

Therefore the trivial, far from being useless knowledge, was the basis of all knowledge, and it consisted of the sort of knowledge that pertains particularly to information workers like editors and indexers—to grammar, rhetoric and logic.

Pay rates and conditions

How do these issues relate to pay rates and employment conditions for editors and indexers?

I don't know how all of these issues might relate to pay rates and employment conditions for editors and indexers, but I think we should be looking at the work value of our professions. We shouldn't take existing relativities lying down.

I don't know to what extent the societies of editors are involved in negotiating the award which applies to editors. I looked at all of the websites of the editors' societies in Australia and found no reference to that award.

AusSI has been absolutely minimalist in the way that we approach pay rates. We make a statement about once a year, and that statement is a recommendation for a minimum hourly rate of pay for freelance, self-supporting, registered book indexers working on short-term contracts. That statement probably excludes half of our membership, and half of the jobs done by some of the others, but the assumption is that it gives some sort of benchmark figure, which at the moment is \$44 an hour.

I personally find it useful. While I do not usually need to quote an hourly rate, I use this figure as a basis for my own calculations of an all-up quote for an index. I do have two clients that I use the AusSI rate with, two regular clients who I know will accept it, and whom I bill by the hour. In other cases, I know some clients who would hold up their hands in horror and say, 'Oh, we don't even pay our editors that!' So this sort of statement carries very little industrial clout.

When the subject comes up at meetings of the American Society of Indexers, all hell breaks loose because many of their members do not consider it appropriate for a professional organisation to make any statement at all about pay rates, which is seen as price-fixing. The British and Australian societies have lived with this sort of recommended rate for many years without any problem.

Editor-indexer expectations

At this point, I'd just quickly like to go through my little list of what indexers expect from editors and what editors expect from indexers.

My view is that generally indexers—and we're talking mainly about book indexing here—should be responsible for the content, quality, and length of the index within whatever constraints the editor imposes. And

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the editor should be responsible for typographical matters. But that process should be a partnership, which is the main point that I am making. However it's handled, the important thing is that we continue to talk to each other during the whole process.

Conferences in 2003

Finally, I'd like to mention that AusSI plans to hold an international indexing conference in Sydney on 12 and 13 September 2003, with associated or satellite events or workshops scheduled for immediately before or immediately afterwards. There are plans for a national conference of editors in Queensland at about this time, and I hope that the two conferences will complement and benefit each other.

AusSI thanks the Society of Editors (NSW) for permission to reprint this address, particularly Carolyn Bruyn, who transcribed, and Merry Pearson, who edited, Alan's talk.—Ed.

From Editor

We are pleased to include the address which Alan Walker made to an appreciative audience at the Society of Editors (NSW) on 4 June, and to welcome back Glenda Browne's 'From the literature'. Tricia Waters has contributed a very concise walk-through some of the workshops at the Cotswold Wayzgoose, with Glenda Browne's complementary report to come in the October issue. Also, in the next issue, we will include a report on the recent panel/workshops held by the NSW Branch. Some of the questions about biographical indexing raised during that workshop are being posted sequentially on our AusSI-supported listserv aliaINDEXERS@alianet.alia.org.au. If you are on the list, do join in and share your thoughts and experiences.

*Best wishes,
Frances Paterson*

What might an editor expect an indexer to do?

- ☐ Provide good estimates of time, cost and length of index.
- ☐ Provide the index in the house style (if there is one).
- ☐ Provide the index in a specified format (RTF, Word, one of the DTP formats, camera-ready copy, and so on).
- ☐ Deliver on time—I probably should have put that on the top of the list.
- ☐ Make queries which affect the index and draw attention to literals and inconsistencies in the text.

What might an indexer expect an editor to do?

- ☐ Give the indexer advance notice of any requirements for the index, especially content, length, budget and deadline.
- ☐ During the indexing process, inform the indexer of any textual changes, especially changes to page breaks, since even the movement of less than a line of text from one page to another may affect the index.
- ☐ After delivery of the index, do a spot check of some locators (not all!) and inform the indexer of any problems.
- ☐ Take typographical responsibility. Choose appropriate type size and style (not too small, leading, reasonable amount of indentation), adding headers or footers (which may serve the function of a note, for example, *This index refers to paragraph numbers*).
- ☐ Proofread the index thoroughly after typesetting or give the indexer an opportunity to proofread it. Check typography after typesetting, with a particular eye to widows, orphans and bad line breaks. Most errors in printed indexes occur at this stage, when new errors in indentation, turnover lines and typography are introduced during the conversion process.
- ☐ Insert 'continued' headings when index entries extend over page breaks.
- ☐ Recognise that indexers are usually the best people to cut or repaginate indexes. Indexers usually have records of cross-references and double entries (which might be affected by cutting the index) and use software which can put indexes into page number order (which greatly speeds the process of repaginating an index after changes to page breaks).
- ☐ Treat the indexer as a member of the team, through consultation on the above matters, offering a copy of the book (either gratis or at the house rate), and inviting the indexer to the book launch (if there is one).

Humour in indexes

Dave Ream writes to Index-L:

Some of you may be familiar with the children's series by Lemony Snicket (yes, a pseudonym) entitled *A Series of Unfortunate Events*. Currently 8 of the 13 volumes are out. It's about 3 orphans being pursued by an evil man intent on their fortune. It's very good and tongue-in-cheek. The author is supposedly reporting real events while on the run himself.

I picked up a companion book *The Unauthorized Autobiography* (of Lemony Snicket) and noticed there was an index. Here are some entries I found:

Abductions. see last-minute escapes
Last-minute escapes. see running for one's life
Running for one's life. see Snicket, Lemony
Snicket, Lemony, ix-211

Of course the page range reflects the entire book!

From the literature

Glenda Browne

The Indexer

The Indexer now has its own website at www.theindexer.org. Look here for editorial contact details and links to selected material from the journal.

Online Currents July/August 2002

Paul Bentley writes about the ALIA 2002 conference in 'Searching for the next sigmoid curve' (pp. 29–33). The conference was a gallant attempt to get an overview of libraries from outside the sector, and this article highlights many key points worth consideration. This issue also contains an article by me on 'Selection criteria for web resources' (pp. 13–16) and one by Jonathan Jerney on 'Setting up a mailing list' (pp. 19–21).

Page 27 introduced me to yet another metasearch engine, Kartoo (www.kartoo.com). Kartoo draws its results from AllTheWeb.com, AltaVista, Teoma and WiseNut, and presents them in a Flash-based interface in the form of a map showing sites that match a query, and their relationship to each other. I tried the simple search 'indexing' and found the Canadian Society's site (<http://www.indexingsociety.ca>) and Jon's ebook indexing site, as well as a few individual sites, but not AusSI or ASI. Clicking on the plus sign next to 'book' retrieved the ASI site. Could be worth exploration, although for me the results from this search were not good enough to make me want to look further.

Occult Review

I wrote in the April issue about my attempts to get a review of my

great-great-aunt's book, *That Colony of God*, through interlibrary loan. Unfortunately no library in Australia held the relevant issue of the *Occult Review*. Then serendipity stepped in. Keith Richmond, a Melbourne bookshop owner, found my 'From the Literature' piece and sent me a copy of the review from his collection.

When I asked him how he found my article, he replied: 'I actually run a bookshop (<http://www.BasiliskBookshop.com>) [in Melbourne] but also have rather a fondness for the unusual and quirky, which is why I have a fair run of the *Occult Review* in my own library. Some industrious individual actually compiled a rough index of the first fifteen or so years of the journal, and posted it online. I found it one day by accident, didn't "bookmark" it, and then, sometime later, realised it would actually be very useful. So I went to google.com and did a search with keywords "Occult Review Index" ... and the rest is pretty obvious!'

IASC/SCAD Bulletin Vol. 24, No. 2, Summer 2002

The Indexing and Abstracting Society of Canada bulletin has an article on embedded indexing (pp. 4–7), comparing the Framemaker Embedded Indexing Module and add-on software for Framemaker from Silicon Prairie software (<http://www.siliconprairiesoftware.com>) and IXGen (<http://home.pacifier.com/~franks/>). Judith Scott concluded that both of the add-ons were easy to use, and allowed her to see entries as she indexed. Of the two, she thought Silicon Prairie was easier to maintain

over several revisions of the manual. Having used these two programs she said it was tough to go back and index the 'old' way. People on Index-L have praised IXGen, but I haven't heard of Silicon Prairie before.

Pages 8–9 offer reviews of four talks given at the Montreal conference on 24 May 2002. One, by James Turner, was on multilingual indexing of moving image databases. The basic solution is to add textual metadata to the moving images. It may be possible to automatically generate indexes from already-created text, or closed-captioning files. As the report says, 'not music to human indexers' ears, but with the massive amounts of visual material to be indexed, automation may provide the only solution.' And then there's the issue of indexing sound, so that you can search for music using music. His website is at mapageWeb.umontreal.ca/turner. It has links to articles and presentations that would be of interest to visual indexers (especially French-speakers, although many are in English).

In 'Growing an office' (p. 18), Susana Gomes suggests some indoor plants for offices. She recommends ivy (especially in a hanging basket), peace lilies (great survivors), dieffenbachia (for corners or gaps between furniture, so long as it is in bright light) and African violets. I was given a peace lily when I left my last library job—on 12 September, so 'peace' was significant. It lost a few leaves to frost when I went away, but is thriving now.

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