

librarian or student who reads it.—Ernest W. Toy, Jr., *California State University, Fullerton*.

Borko, Harold, and Bernier, Charles L. *Indexing Concepts and Methods*. Library and Information Science. New York: Academic Press, 1978. 261p. \$14. LC 77-77229. ISBN 0-12-118660-1.

The Cinderella of the world of knowledge, the index, until recent years was, at best, allowed to ride to the ball in the carriage trunk and, at worst, was not even considered worthy enough for this lowly estate. In recent years, however, the more perceptive have begun to catch glimmers of the true value (true *beauty* to loyal indexers) of the index and have begun to spread the word. The authors of this volume have pulled these glimmers together, added new material, and fashioned a "glass slipper" that is just the right size. The index, at last, has a setting to do justice to its long-neglected worth and beauty.

The authors' setting, designed to "provide a basis for a well-balanced course of instruc-

tion in indexing," combines principles and practice in a comprehensive pulling together of the many separate scenes of Cinderella's "act."

The wide range of this volume can best be illustrated by a listing of its five sections comprising sixteen chapters: "I. Introduction (1. The Nature of Indexes)"; "II. Structure (2. Entries; 3. Syndetic Systems; 4. Format, Standards, and Alphabetization)"; "III. Indexing and Editing Procedures (5. Common Indexing Procedures; 6. Indexing Monographs and Serials; 7. Editing, Typesetting, and Proofreading; 8. Thesauri; 9. Computer-Aided Indexing)"; "IV. Types of Indexes (10. Subject and Author Indexes; 11. Citation Indexes; 12. Word Indexes and Concordances; 13. Special Indexes)"; "V. Index Evaluation and Professionalism (14. Index Evaluation; 15. Indexer Qualifications and Training; 16. Indexing as a Profession)."

Following standard textbook format, the authors give an overview of the material to be covered, present the material systematically, and then tie it all together with a concluding summary. Throughout, when appropriate, definitions are used from, and references are made to, criteria for indexes of both the American National Standards Institute and the British Standards Institute.

An outstanding feature of this volume, and one that was mentioned twice in the review of the authors' 1975 work *Abstracting Concepts and Methods* (C&RL 37:472-73) is its readability. The authors' enthusiasm for their subject is soon sensed, and it is infectious. This, coupled with their knowledgeable and helpful, but never aloof, tone encourages the reader to want to learn more about a subject that is being revealed as neither mysterious, unfathomable, boring, nor dull. For the most part, the textual presentation is clear and the illustrations ample and well reproduced. There are, however, a few obscure passages whose meaning is not clear, even after repeated readings. The use of examples would help in some of these cases.

Following the text, there is an impressive list of references. These, in turn, are followed by a subject index prepared by author Bernier, past president of the American Society of Indexers, in accordance with the recommendations of that society. In

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addition to its usual function, this extensive and well-done index also serves as an excellent illustration of the principles introduced in the text. A check of one-sixth of the index revealed only four minor reference number errors (three incomplete references and one reference off by one number) and three linkages needed in the syndetic structure for consistency with the rest of the index.

Technically, this volume is well designed and sturdily bound in what seems to be the standard binding of this publisher. The typeface is attractive and easy to read, and only seven typographical errors were noted, only one of which will cause confusion: on page 161 the fourth line of the example is misspaced so that the lineup of the KWIC keywords is not readily apparent.

The authors' "slipper" fits; their excellent and complete presentation is a highly recommended *must* for students of library and information science, indexers, index users, information specialists, and publishers.—*Eldon W. Tamblin, Portland State University, Portland, Oregon.*

Christian, Roger. *The Electronic Library: Bibliographic Data Bases, 1978-79.*

White Plains, N.Y.: Knowledge Industry Publications, 1978. 105p. \$24.50. LC 78-18408. ISBN 0-914236-15-6.

At \$24.50, this slim one-hundred-page monograph is simply priced too high for the amount of information it provides. A much more realistic price would be \$5.95 for a monograph in paperback format that is an introductory discussion of electronic bibliographic data bases. Indeed, the *BRS System Reference Manual* costs only \$15, and it supplies specialized, precise, and detailed information on all of the various data bases that can be accessed through BRS.

Christian's work is also deficient because it does not list all of the various bibliographic data bases available in 1978-79. The *BRS System Reference Manual* and Williams and Rouse's *Computer Readable Bibliographic Data Bases: A Directory and Data Source Book* do provide this information in considerable detail, and they should be readily available to most librarians.

The lack of such a list in Christian's book is not critical, but when the author states

that bibliographic data bases have multiplied from 100 in 1975 to 360 by early 1978, it seems incumbent upon him to satisfy the reader's curiosity about what those data bases are. Christian does supply a bibliography, footnotes to each chapter, and an index; so a list of electronic bibliographic data bases might easily have been included as well.

These two deficiencies aside, Christian's book is an admirable introduction to bibliographic data bases for library school students and for librarians who would like to become more knowledgeable. Christian writes clearly, outlines his subject thoroughly, and eschews the use of jargon and confusing acronyms. He summarizes the background and development of bibliographic data bases. He describes various data base producers, such as Engineering Index's COMPENDEX, and explains the role of such data base distributors as Lockheed Information Systems, SDC Search Service, and BRS. Christian concludes with a chapter on problems, progress, and prospects.

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