

The Slice

A Potomac Indexing Newsletter

VOLUME 10, NUMBER 2, SPRING 2017

Name Dropping in the Index

by Joanne Sprott

I've had some interesting additions to indexes during author reviews lately, mostly about adding in additional mentions of names.

One point of occasional tension between book indexers and authors will be how to handle names in the index. Authors have a tendency to lean in the direction of every-mention-of-every-name, or at least "every-mention-of-names-that-are-important-to-me." :)

Meanwhile, the indexer, looking at things also from the reader/index user's standpoint, wants to index only the significant mentions of names that are important to the author's story (think major quoted passages, folks who did influential things or served as major examples of the theme or argument).

Keep in mind that there are two considerations here: Including a name in the first place, and for included names, deciding how many and which mentions to include in the index.

I do sympathize with some of the author's desire to be inclusive, particularly when it comes to the main movers and shakers in their field or in historical events. But please let's not make the index user go to ten different places in the text to find out what John Smith wrote/said/did when he was just standing in the background or happened to be on a committee name list on five of those pages.

So much of indexing is about deciding. And it's the fine semantic decisions we make that still distinguish us human indexers

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Malware Defenses

by Meghan Brawley and Richard ShROUT



Malware is a common computer issue, and one that can cause serious problems—something no indexer wants to deal with, especially on a deadline. Recently, Richard ShROUT, PI founding partner, had a frustrating encounter with Trovi, a malicious adware application that hijacks browser search functions.

How does this happen? This kind of malware often comes bundled with other freeware downloads—that is, when you download free software, it's included in the package, much like unrelated policy riders attached to Congressional budgets. Many of these malware or spyware programs are browser plug-ins or browser helper objects—they attach to your browser software.

In fact, that's what happened here. Richard was unable to update any of his browsers. Not Chrome, Internet Explorer, or Firefox. They all had the same error message—not receiving correct information from a trusted source. The https had a red line through it. Only one computer was affected, leading him to realize there must be something wrong with his computer. In this particular case, the malware only affected the browsers, but that did mean no email, no Google searches, no new

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Welcome to this Spring's Edition of Slice!

Potomac Indexing is enjoying spring, finishing up administrative changes due to a partner's move to the Midwest and working on embedded indexing projects as well as our usual back-of-book indexing in how-to topics, accounting, scholarly topics, and religion.

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In the News

...Librarians in New York have heart, it seems. Working on unblocking children's access to the library when they can't afford late return fines. More [here](#).

...For those of us supporting school publishing, the changes at Pearson are starting to be felt. Read more [here](#).

...An interesting report in the UK on a return to the printed book over ebook reading. More [here](#).

In this column, we'll tune you in to interesting blog posts and news articles around the Web. Your finds or links to company news are welcome. Just send them to the Slice editor at editor.slice@potomacindexing.com

Indexer Associate Profile: Martha Malnor



Your Business

PI: How long have you been an associate at Potomac Indexing?

I believe Seth Maislin hired me for my first job with Potomac in 2007. The project was creating an index for a text called Fair Lending Compliance.

PI: Tell us your indexing (or other information access system) origin story. All superheroes, including indexers, have an origin story.

I left the corporate world in 1995 after working as an accountant for Amoco Pipeline Company for 15 years. As part of the severance package I accepted, Amoco paid for me to go back to school for a year. Always a book lover, I thought that I'd like editing, so I enrolled in the University of Chicago's publishing program. The most important thing I learned in my first editing class was that I was not, in fact, the amazing speller I thought I was. In my next course, which covered running your own business, I was given an assignment to interview someone in the publishing industry. Having read about the indexing profession in Money magazine, I decided to search for indexers in the Chicago area. Luckily for me, I was able to arrange a telephone interview and then a face-to-face meeting with a local indexer. After that meeting, I signed up for U of C's indexing course and I've been freelancing ever since.

PI: What are your specialties and/or favorite subjects?

My specialties are business and accounting, but my favorite subject might be city planning. I also really enjoy health and lifestyle books.

PI: Pick one of your favorite subjects and tell us why it fascinates you.

City planning interests me because I've lived in a number of big cities-Chicago, Denver, Houston-but I had never considered how those cities were created, why some designs work and some don't, and what drives the evolution of city design. I think that I might have enjoyed city planning as a career if it weren't for the politics involved.

PI: What's your best productivity or indexing secret tip (that you are willing to share, that is)?

I prefer to use a desktop computer for indexing. Get a giant monitor and look at the manuscript and your indexing software side-by-side.

PI: What do you consider the most challenging aspect of the work?

Marketing my services.

PI: Where do you usually work? (Please include a photo of your office setup unless it's a secret superhero location)



Most often, I work from a home office using a desktop computer. When I began indexing, I used my office primarily for work, but now that the Internet has become part of our daily lives, I find that I'm at my computer outside of work hours much more often. It can be a challenge to keep personal business and indexing projects from overlapping in my office space, so I use tricks like closing the office door or playing music to "remind myself" which thing I'm supposed to be doing.

PI: Talk about your process (and this can be for book indexing or other related projects, like keyword tagging, embedded indexing, etc.). Any advice for other professionals—new and experienced?

I always hope to receive front matter, including a table of contents, on each project so that I can get a feel for where the book is heading. It can also be helpful to read the final chapter of a book at the start of a project. (I once struggled to organize a major concept throughout a text, only to find a simple explanation-including charts-in the final chapter!) If a project arrives in its entirety, I usually index front to back, editing as I go, followed by a final read-through of the index. I keep a running list of questions as I index so that I don't get "stuck" on something that may become clear later in the text.

PI: What are your favorite/most-used tools, for indexing or other business purposes?

I use Cindex software and either Adobe or Word for reading the text. I also like to keep the stopwatch on my phone running as I work so I can calculate my speed in pages-per-hour. That data is handy for estimating how much time I'll need to finish the current job and in setting schedules and rates for future projects.

PI: CINDEX, SKY or Macrex (or other)? What do you like best about your choice?

I have only used Cindex, and I'm happy with it. The formatting options and tools it offers are very effective.

PI: If you could only recommend one book about indexing, what would it be?

Nancy Mulvaney's Indexing Books

Personal Perspective

PI: Where do you live (just approximately, since this will be published on the Web)? And if you like, tell us a bit about your surroundings and folks you live with (including furry friends) if you wish.

I've lived in the Houston area since 2004. In 2014, my husband and I, now empty-nesters, downsized to a much smaller house. It was wonderful to divest ourselves of so much extra stuff-I recommend it! Our current plan is to head up to the Midwest this summer to visit family and to escape the Texas heat. Our dog, Beau, will go with us and won't let us forget to get outside for a walk every day.

PI: Tell us about your hobbies. Are there specific ones you turn to as a break from work, or any that are a special treat in between or at the end of projects?

Reading (or listening to) books is my favorite "hobby." I also love trying out new recipes and watching NFL football (the result of many years living with an avid fan). Dog walking and bird watching are nice breaks from work, and a friend recently got me started on something called Zentangle, which I would describe as meditative doodling.

PI: What's the last book you read for fun?

I just finished a book called Behind Closed Doors. (Very creepy. I liked it!)

PI: What's your superpower?

Seeing the bright side.

PI: Thanks so much for your insights and stories!

Martha began indexing in 1996 while living in the Chicago area. She moved to Katy, Texas in 2004 and has been active in ASI's South Central Chapter.

Resource Finds

Adobe's Custom Stamps

You can create custom stamps ([here's how to do it in Adobe Acrobat XI](#)) by importing your own image files, which is helpful if you want to use different colors or have your own peculiar style. But, the easiest thing to do is to download a third-party set.

[Copyediting-L](#) has both a red and a black set under the Resources tab. Because the stamps are PDF files, they should import into most readers—just check the installation instructions.

For UK-specific stamps, [Louise Harnby's set](#) is super.

Keyboard Shortcuts

A good keyboard shortcut can save you precious seconds and mouse-related wear and tear on your wrist. Doesn't sound like much, but those seconds add up! Try one of [these](#), or go wild with the [master list](#). You can even [make your own](#).

Fresh from the Oven

From Joanne Sprott: Joanne enjoying the return of regular sunshine to south-western Oregon and is in the midst of house hunting in the area. Most interesting project lately has been our new information architecture job, conducted with the expert knowledge of our taxonomist associate, Fred Leise.

From Richard Shroul: Richard has settle in to life in Kansas, along with getting used to the weather in the American Midwest. He's been working regularly with our religious book clients and along with Meghan Brawley, is making plans to attend the American Society for Indexing conference in June in Portland, Maine.

From Estalita Slivoskey: Estalita has been balancing work and preparations to move from West Virginia to North Dakota this summer. Should be quite a change of scene!

From Meghan Brawley: Meghan has been dodging severe thunderstorms and hunkering down during tornado warnings in her part of Georgia while becoming our embedded indexing expert and managing her young children.

from search engine relevance algorithms.

I realize that sometimes name dropping for the sake of name dropping is due to a) the name being famous, or b) the name being one of your scholarly colleagues. Please remember that the indexer's default mode will be to include significant mentions of the various actors in the story or treatise, and may include villager Tom Jones who was an integral influence in Welsh music development in the 16th century, while excluding Tom Jones the famous singer because he's only mentioned in a list of Welsh singers in chapter 12.

If you are an author and want to have every mention of every name in your index, please let us know upfront and we will be happy to oblige. We may want to suggest a separate index for names, for example, and your request will likely affect the price quote on the project because of the increase in index entries per page.

Sometimes every mention of every name is what the project calls for, but just keep in mind that we indexers will be exercising our significance criterion unless you tell us different.



Joanne Sprott, a PI Managing Partner, has been indexing, editing and proofreading books and other documentation since 1995.

software.

Because the malware targets browsers and not operating systems, it's catholic in its impact. PC, Mac, you name it—if you use a browser, you could be targeted. The good news is that it is fairly easy to get rid of if you have the right tools.

Finally, always look carefully at all screens during downloads and don't accept anything other than what was originally intended and download only from trusted sources. Keep your operating system and system files up to date, and if your antivirus software doesn't protect against malware, make sure you get something that does. Keep that protection updated, too, and make sure to run it regularly.

Here are some recommendations from Richard:

Malwaretips.com

This site contains a comprehensive library of virus and malware removal guides. I used advice from Malwaretips.com which proved to be accurate and reliable. And I joined that group for future advice. They appear to be the good guys. Check them out [here](#).

AdwCleaner

It performed as expected and really did a thorough job. And there was no cost and no hint of an upgrade to a better package that would do more. The Internet is very much like life with both good and bad out there. I was very happy to find some support from good people.

MalwareBytes

One selling point for Malwarebytes, which costs \$33 per year for a complete version, is that it also protects against ransomware, which is something new. Indexers are businesses and our files are important. Malwarebytes can be tested in an almost complete version for free for 14 days. If you decide not to pay, you can still run the free version on your own. The free version does a full scan and also removes the bad files, and it's also available for Mac.

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Other Mac software includes ClamXav antivirus protection and Sophos Antivirus. While attacks on Macs are less common than on PC, they're still a potential threat. For more information on protecting your Mac, read [here](#).

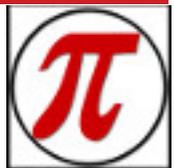


Richard Shroul, Founding Partner at PI, currently specializes in religious book indexing and works out of his home office in Lawrence, Kansas.

Meghan Brawley, Managing Partner at PI, indexes and provides research services from her home office in Georgia.

Potomac Indexing, LLC
2006–2017
Texas

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