

NL CINDEXTM and the Ease of Computer Indexing

Ronald A. Smith

Penn State University

Indexing a book traditionally has been both time consuming and frustrating when using the 3 x 5 card method. A computer indexing program, N L CINDEXTM, has been created by Newberry Library to produce a traditional scholarly index. The Newberry Library Cumulative Index (N L CINDEXTM) allows the indexer to generate the index, rather than word processing indexes, such as Word Perfect or Word Star, which pick out key words from a computerized manuscript. The powerful N L CINDEXTM program has been used first for multi-volume editions such as *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson* and *The Documentary History of the First Federal Congress*, but is effective on smaller works such as a one volume history or biography. It was used for the index for my own *Sports and Freedom: The Rise of Big-Time College Athletics* published by Oxford University Press in 1988.

N L CINDEXTM is programmed for IBM-PC's and clones, using two floppy disk drives (or preferably a hard disk) and at least 256K of RAM storage, which is a minimum for most IBM-PC's or clones. The index is based upon the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 12th edition, which is what most historical journals use, including the *Journal of Sport History*.

What N L CINDEXTM does best is to facilitate the entry of indexing terms by arranging them and their page number in proper order. Thus, the index can be arranged on a letter-by-letter method (generally favored by book publishers) or in a word-by-word method if that is desired. The N L CINDEXTM program provides the indexer with the accepted method of dividing index entries into three categories. That is, a main entry, sub-entries, and sub-sub-entries. The main entry is, of course, necessary in all indexes, but sub-entries (and sub-sub-entries) are most valuable to the reader because they are specific to the main entry. For instance, the term "Commercialism" in my book simply could have had 18 page numbers following the citation, but such sub-entries as "and football," "at Henley," and "by railroads" gives much more information to the reader. Because the computer page orders and alphabetizes all entries and facilitates easily sub-entries and sub-sub-entries, the result can be a more effective index and ease in its use by readers.

To index with N L CINDEXTM, a "Main Menu" appears on the screen. You have a choice of five programs, the first of which is to enter indexing terms on the computer. A second program allow the indexer to edit the index by creating an edit file. A third and fourth program lets one create a single volume index or a cumulative index while alphabetizing and page ordering sub-entries. A fifth program allows the indexer to prepare the index for sending a computer disk directly to a printer, if that would be desired.

The indexer first chooses to enter index terms on the N L CINDEXTM. The screen allows five entries: 1) page number, 2) main entry, 3) sub-entry, 4) sub-sub-entry, and 5) page text. "Page text" gives the indexer the option to place text with a page number to designate a particular kind of reference such as a table or an illustration and to signify "See also" and "See" entries.

N L CINDEXTM does allow more ease in indexing. Instead of several weeks to index a volume, only several days are needed. More information can be obtained by writing to The Newberry Library, 60 West Walton Street, Chicago, IL 60610.