

Conference 2021: Boosting Your Indexing Business

PRESENTATIONS

Index: a history of the

Dennis Duncan's latest book, *Index, A History of the*, was published in the UK by Allen Lane in September 2021. The US version will be published by W.W. Norton in February 2022. The book charts the curious path of the index from the monasteries and universities of thirteenth-century Europe to Silicon Valley in the twenty-first, revealing how the book index has saved heretics from the stake, kept politicians from high office and made us all into the readers we are today. The book has two indexes: an automated one by computer program and a professional index by SI member Paula Clarke Bain.

In this joint keynote presentation, Dennis and Paula will be talking about the book itself and the successful partnership between author and indexer, including:

- author–indexer relations: collaboration and communication between
- book: the research and writing of
- indexers: humour, neutrality, personality, and snark of
- indexes: by computers versus human professionals
- metaness: of creating an index to a book about book indexes
- pandemic: challenges of publishing a book during
- responses and reviews: by critics and readers
- syndrome, imposter: and how and whether they have handled it.



Dennis Duncan is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and lectures in English Literature at University College London. He has published numerous academic books, including *Book Parts* and *The Oulipo and Modern Thought*, as well as translations of Michel Foucault, Boris Vian, and Alfred Jarry. His writing has appeared in the *Guardian*, the *Times Literary Supplement*, and the *London Review of Books*, and recent academic articles have considered Mallarmé and jugs, James Joyce and pornography, and the history of Times New Roman. Dennis is also very active on Twitter: follow him [@djbduncan](https://twitter.com/djbduncan)

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Paula Clarke Bain (MSocInd(Adv)) is also an Advanced Professional Member of the Chartered Institute of Editing and Proofreading (CIEP). She has degrees in English and American Literature, and in Psychology, and an employment background in printing and publishing. She is celebrating 20 years of being a full-time freelancer in 2021 and has been indexing professionally since 2003, with around 900 book commissions to date. She particularly relishes the synergic, friendly, and fun experience of working with book authors directly. She has enjoyed getting involved in various SI matters, including being co-creator (with Ruth Ellis) of National Indexing Day, past SI Marketing Director, and writing for *The Indexer* journal. Her indexing blog, including the ongoing comedy book indexes series, is on her website at baindex.org and she can often be spotted on Twitter at [@PC_Bain](https://twitter.com/PC_Bain).

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Getting started: finding work and using social media

This conference session is aimed at students who are in the final stages of the training course, newly-qualified indexers looking for their first projects and anyone who wants to think about how to broaden the range of their clients. The session will review the resources that the Society of Indexers provides that help indexers find work and how to use social media effectively to promote their indexing businesses. It will also look at the information and material that potential clients might send and suggest ways of responding. Managing client relations, such as feedback from the indexer and feedback from the client, and invoicing, will also be covered.



Nicola King (MSocInd(Adv)) has been a member of SI since 2011. After studying archaeology at undergraduate and post-graduate levels, her varied career included not only working as an archaeologist, but also in the areas of domestic energy efficiency policy, testing and trialling consumer products for *Which?* Magazine, and helping to deliver the first London Mayor and Assembly elections in 2000. She took two years to complete the training course while working part-time and since 2015 has been a full-time indexer. She is keen to help fledgling indexers take to their wings and regularly takes to Twitter as @icemaider1964 to promote indexing and indexers. She was elected to the Executive Board in 2017 and became chair in 2018.

Email: chair@indexers.org.uk

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Ruth Ellis (MSocInd(Adv)) has been a professional indexer since 2010. With a degree in chemistry and business studies, her previous career experience includes various technical and operational management roles in the chemical, food and drink industries and eleven years in business consultancy. As a keen amateur cook with an interest in the culture of food more generally, she specialises in indexing books on all aspects of food and drink, including science, technology and nutrition. She coordinated the Yorkshire local group for several years and was elected to the Executive Board in 2018, where she serves as internet director and manages the SI website. She also plays a key role in publicising indexing and indexers as the main coordinator of the Society's LinkedIn, Twitter and Facebook accounts. Along with Paula Clarke Bain, she was the co-creator of the first National Indexing Day in 2017.

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Financial matters: dealing with late payment

This session derives from activity on the SI Information Exchange over the last year or so, much of which related to chasing late payments. However much we love indexing, we do expect to be paid for our work, and paid promptly. The session will include a round-up of the legal position, together with helpful tips that other members have found useful in the past. There will also be an opportunity for participants to ask questions and contribute to the discussion, sharing their own experiences.



Sue Goodman (MSocInd(Adv)) completed her indexing training in 2016. With a background in teaching (mostly primary school), she is particularly interested in indexing books for children. She was elected to the Executive Board in 2018, and currently serves as vice-chair, in addition to running the Information Exchange and coordinating the Southwest local group. In her spare time she is very involved with local amateur dramatics and enjoys singing in two choirs. She also practises Qigong, and in a light-hearted and relaxed session at the 2019 conference she introduced us to this useful technique for 'looking after number one' and counteracting hours of sitting at the computer.

Email: valleyindexer@gmail.com

Website: <http://valleyindexing.co.uk/index.html>

Indexing the metatopic

To mention the word 'metatopic' is to strike fear into the hearts of many student indexers (should you always index it? Should you never index it?); it might give more experienced indexers pause for thought too. Melanie will talk about why the metatopic is important, how it might be indexed effectively as a main heading, and how the metatopic influences the rest of the index. She will draw from published literature, her own reflections as a 'metatopic muser', and the practices of other indexers revealed by the results of her short survey. Student indexers should come away feeling braver about facing the metatopic, and everyone will benefit from comparing different approaches.



Melanie Gee (MSocInd(Adv)) has degrees in physics and information management and also holds environmental conservation and music qualifications. She was the joint winner of the SI [Betty Moys Award](#) in 2013 but properly started indexing in 2018, specialising in health and wellbeing, psychology, physics, music, and ecology – although in practice many of the books she has most enjoyed indexing have been in completely different subjects. Before starting her indexing business, she was a patent examiner and also worked as an information scientist/researcher in a university research centre. She recently became a tutor for SI online tutorials and is coordinator for its Yorkshire group, organising and running professional development activities for other indexers.

Email: melanie@wordsandindexes.co.uk Website: <http://www.wordsandindexes.co.uk/>

Q&A SESSION and BREAKOUT ROOMS

Q&A panel session

Five experienced indexers will be on hand to answer your questions on indexing practice and working methods – the nitty gritty of real-world indexing, where the answers can't always be found in training courses and textbooks and it is often a case of 'it depends'. Ideally, questions will have been submitted in advance but it may be possible to raise issues during the session. Our panel, in strict alphabetical order:

- Kim Birchall
- Rohan Bolton
- Caroline Diepeveen
- Ann Hudson
- Caroline Wilding

Breakout rooms

Tuesday 16.00: You will be randomly allocated to a breakout room hosted by a member of the SI Executive Board where you can meet other indexers and chat informally over tea/coffee.

Wednesday 11.00: There will be a choice of five topic-based breakout rooms:

- Client relations
- Macrex
- Science & medicine
- Biography
- Embedded indexing