
*Research in
Word
Processing
Newsletter*

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Academic Utilities

Indexx 6.02

Charles Ess

Indexx can be understood as an academic utility program. Unlike more complex application programs, utility programs are usually designed to accomplish one specific task — and that task only. They are frequently written by computer users who otherwise cannot find a program which performs a particular task. At the same time, the specific task is an important one — and once word gets out that such a utility exists, other users who likewise need to accomplish that one task are delighted to discover that someone has already written a program which nicely meets their requirements.

Indexx is just such a program. A simple but elegant program written by Professor Norman Swartz of Simon Fraser University, it is designed to do one thing only — namely, to automate much of the work entailed in creating book indices. As one indication of its simplicity — the tutorial spans 10 pages, covers virtually every feature of the program, and requires less than an hour to work through. At the same time, anyone who needs to create an index — for example, of a book required for research which has no index — will find the program to be marvelously helpful tool, one which eliminates much of the tedium and drudgery of the task. Indeed, like any good utility program, *Indexx* was born from Professor Swartz's own need to generate an index for his *The Concept of Physical Law* (Cambridge University Press: 1985). Now in version 6.02, it manifests the polish and elegance which comes from considerable refinement.

Indexx is designed to do for printed texts what indexing modules do for texts created by a word processor, such as *Word* or *Nota Bene* — namely, collect, alphabetize, and format for printing an index of references. In doing so, *Indexx* can create one level of subheadings (what the manual calls a minor reference) under a primary (or major) reference. (This is probably sufficient for most of our needs — though users who have been spoiled, for example, by the ability of *Nota Bene* to create three levels of subentries in indexing documents created with the word processor may find this something of a limitation.) Briefly, the program guides the user through the process of entering names and key words (in the so-called Normal Mode) and phrases, references to concepts, etc. (in the so-called String Mode), along with the appropriate page references. In doing so, *Indexx* provides several aids to the user, as it gradually creates a file of references and page numbers. Once a file

of such entries has been created, the user can instruct *Indexx* to collect and alphabetically sort these entries. In fact, the user can select one of two sort procedures. The first of these ignores the distinction between upper and lower case, and is thus the appropriate sort for creating a single index which includes both proper names and subject references. A second sort initially sorts between entries beginning with upper case and entries beginning with lower case, and then alphabetically sorts the two resulting lists. This second sort hence creates a subject index and an index of proper names. Once a file has been sorted, *Indexx* then formats the references for printing.

Indexx thus has a tightly defined set of tasks. Accordingly, the program is exceptionally simple to learn and use--a simplicity enhanced by neatly designed menus and screens. The program is initiated by typing "indexx"; upon loading, the program queries whether you are using a monochrome or color monitor; an opening logo then appears (reminding users that *Indexx* is not shareware, and directing them to send in their fee if they have not already done so), followed by the main menu. The attractive but uncluttered screen offers a series of options--restricted so as to force the user to have an index file "onhand" before attempting further operations:

-----*Indexx* 6.02-----

- 0 = Change defaults
- 1 = Begin a new index
- 2 = Retrieve previous index in progress
- * Update, i.e. add data, to index
- * Alphabetize index
- * Format index for printing
- * Make a backup copy of index
- 7 = Exit to DOS

* Option is unavailable until 1 or 2 is selected

If the user selects Option 1, a new screen requests that s/he identify the drive on which the index file is to be written; the user is then prompted to enter the name for the new index file. Alternatively, under Option 2, the user is asked to identify the drive on which a previously created index file is to

be found. At the conclusion of either procedure, the main menu again appears, now with the file name of the current index (i.e., either the new name supplied by the user, or the name of the file chosen by the user) in place of "index" on Options 3 through 6. At this stage, the user is restricted only from choosing Option 5 (i.e., formatting an index file for printing).

-----*Indexx* 6.02-----

- 0 = Change defaults
- 1 = Begin a new index
- 2 = Retrieve previous index in progress
- 3 = Update, i.e. add data, to index
- 4 = Alphabetize index
- * = Format index for printing
- 6 = Make a backup copy of index
- 7 = Exit to DOS

* Option is unavailable until preceding option is selected

Choosing Option 3 then brings up a new screen, divided into three parts. The top portion of the screen contains a number of status indicators--starting with a title bar which shows that the user is "in" "Option 3--UPDATE FILE 'C:FILENAME.IND'." The next portion of the screen shows the last item, if any, entered in this file (under "Reference") and the Page(s) number(s) accompanying the reference. The user can then read several other pieces of information on the file, such as the number of records it contains (with a maximum per file of 800), remaining memory space, the status of the file (i.e., whether it is sorted or unsorted), and the current page setting of "Auto-mode" (more on this shortly).

The cursor resides in the center portion of the screen, where references are entered, following a prompt which changes according to the "mode" of entry, i.e., "Normal" (for single-word entries or proper names) or "String" (for phrases, etc.). Finally, at the bottom of the screen runs a reminder bar identifying functions accessed through the function keys. One of these functions, F8, is a "pop-up" help screen which reminds the user of cursor-control movements available within the entry screen.

(These are quite standard, and include a Control + Left cursor or Right cursor for jumping by word, etc.)

Within Option 3, entry of references and page numbers is very straightforward — and facilitated in a number of ways by the program. Under “Normal” mode, for example, the user must enter the reference, followed by a comma, and the page(s) number(s). But the program will help the forgetful user who (a) enters proper names in a “first name first, last name last” sequence (forgetting, that is, that an index will be sorted and printed with the last name first), and/or (b) forgets, at page 383, exactly how s/he entered a name the first time it appeared back on page 15. For starters, if *Indexx* is given, say, “George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, 15” the program reorders the name so that it appears as “Hegel, George Wilhelm Friedrich, 15” in the data file.

As well, the program compares entries so as to collect page references for a specific entry under that one entry. That is, once an entry has been made, the program will scan previous entries, and, in the case of partial matches, present a screen with previous entries which resemble the current one. By using the cursor keys, the user can then select which, if any, of these previous entries the current entry is to go with. If no match is found, the user is asked he s/he wishes to add the current entry to the file as a new reference heading. Responding with “y” adds the entry; “n” returns the user to the entry screen, where s/he may either modify or erase the entry altogether.

Beyond accomplishing its primary function of gathering all page references under one entry, the search for partial matches helps the user in two further ways. One, once an initial entry has been made (“Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel”), the user may make later entries simply by typing the first letter (“G”). The program then lists what it calls partial matches — i.e., all previous listings that begin with the same first letter; the user can quickly identify “George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel” as the one intended, and the program makes this entry for the user. Especially the slower typists among us will prefer letting the program take them through the few steps of this procedure, rather than typing out

every entry individually. Two, if the user enters a reference to “G. Hegel,” and then later enters “GeorgH,” the program will again present the list of partial matches — in this case, suggesting a match between “Hegel, G.” and “H, Georg.” If the user accepts the match, a second query box appears; this box informs the user that if the match is accepted, the partial match (“Hegel, G”) will be updated to the new item (“H, Georg”). The update, in fact, results in updating both the first and second entries to “Hegel, Georg.” For both the facile and/or forgetful users, this feature of the program will save considerable typing and searching for the exact way in which a reference has been entered.

Similar help is offered under the Auto-mode feature. This feature, accessed in the program by pressing F2, accepts a given page reference and automatically inserts it after the user makes an entry. For example, while scanning page 28, the user may make a first entry, “analogy,28.” If additional entries are made from the same page — e.g., “analogical predication,” “Critical Philosophy,” etc. — under Auto-mode, the user simply types in these references, and the program enters them into the data file with the proper page number. While the program automatically sets the page reference according to the latest entry, it is also a simple matter to change the page numbers for automatic entry: the screen reminds the user that F5 will increase the current page number, and that F7 will decrease that number.

Finally, it should be noted that entering minor references is done under the “String” mode. Again, the program uses the check for partial matches function to make things easier. For example, an initial minor entry might be made as follows: “Hegel\dialectic.” Subsequent entries can be made by typing “H \.” The partial matching feature suggests that this entry match with “Hegel” — and then prompts the user to enter the minor entry. At this point, in fact, the user has three options. The first is to enter a new minor entry. Second, the partial match feature operates within the set of minor entries; this means that abbreviations for repeated entries may be used as the user relies on the partial match routine to identify and enter the full reference. Finally, a “wildcard” (* — the DOS wildcard)

may be entered, which results in a listing of previous minor entries for review and/or entry.

Once a file of references is created, *Indexx* then leads the user to sort the file, and, if desired, to format the sorted file for printing. One of the primary strengths of *Indexx* is that it follows the sorting conventions of the *Oxford English* and the *Merriam-Webster Collegiate* dictionaries; in doing so, it further sorts French, German, and Spanish alphabets correctly. For example, in a test sort of "Bißchen," "Bis," and "Bisschen," *Indexx* properly ordered the entries as "Bis," "Bißchen," and "Bisschen." (The user must instruct the program, however, whether ASCII character 225 is to be sorted as a Greek "beta" or a German Eszett.)

Because it is specifically an indexing program, the text-editing features are limited to cursor control and deleting. This means that once an entry has been made in the data file, it cannot be corrected from within *Indexx*. For that, the data file (along with other files created by the program) can be called up by a word processor such as *Nota Bene*, *PC-Write*, or *Final Word II* which "write" standard ASCII files (i.e., without automatically inserting program-related or formatting characters, as is done by *WordPerfect*, *MultiMate*, etc.). The user is aided in this, insofar as the program checks entries during sorting, formatting, and loading a previously created index file; problematic entries are "flagged" with a string of exclamation points, asterisks, or "#" signs, so that they can be easily located and corrected. Once files have been modified with a word processor, they can be called up under *Indexx* and resorted and/or reformatted.

A similar procedure must be followed if the user wishes to create an index file which includes formatting beyond the choices offered by the programming. Option 5 ("format index for printing") allows the user to instruct the program regarding the details of how wide the index column is to be (between 30 and 70 characters), line spacing (1-3 lines), whether initials are to be "spaced" or "compact" (i.e., no spaces, as in "Hegel, G.W.F.), and whether the reference is to be separated from the page numbers by a comma or a space. The program then generates a file (with the original name of the

index file, followed by "PRT" as the suffix) containing the sorted entries followed by appropriate page references (also in proper order), and with minor entries nicely indented. A menu appears which offers to send the file directly to the printer or to allow the user to view the file before printing. Any additional formatting (e.g., printing some references in boldface, etc.) must be done by manipulating the file with a word processor.

The program is uniformly easy to use. Default settings—such as a specified input/output drive, sound, how often the program automatically saves the current file to disk, screen colors, etc.—are changed by way of a very straightforward menu-driven process. (In fact, simple batch files may be created which invoke the program and define a given set of operating parameters, thus allowing the user to enter the program in a number of different ways. For example, one batch file could be written to set the sort parameter for treating ASCII 225 as a German Eszett, and a second to set the sort parameter for a Greek beta. The user could then invoke the appropriate batch file, depending on the need for sorting in German or Greek.) As well, the manual is well written and, like the program itself, carefully thought out. In particular, unlike many indices in computer documentation—the *Indexx*-generated index to *Indexx* is wonderfully complete and helpful.

Finally, *Indexx* is limited to single index files containing 800 records (individual references, each with up to 200 separate page citations) or 35,650 bytes per file. For that, the program is accompanied by a second program called *Indxplus* which can combine several different files into one large file—and, conversely, split these larger files into smaller files for further use with *Indexx*. (For example, a user might use *Indexx* to create separate index files for each chapter of a book, and then combine them into a larger file with *Indxplus*. If additional modification of the resulting index was called for, *Indxplus* will split the larger file into files small enough for working on with *Indexx*.) Like *Indexx*, *Indxplus* uses simple menus and accomplishes its tasks quickly.

Using *Indexx* is simply a pleasure. It is especially

satisfying to watch the program take a long series of references, complete with jumbled page references, and quickly generate from these a properly ordered and neatly formatted index. And as one would expect from a program which has gone through six revisions, there is little to criticize. Indeed, I can only note a couple of minor irritants. For example, my computer uses a CGA card and a monochrome monitor. While the program can be set to start, by way of batch files, with a specified set of operating parameters — it always asks whether I am using a color or monochrome monitor. It would be handy to be able to fix the program through some sort of setup procedure so that this step can be skipped.

Somewhat more seriously, after formatting a file for printing, the user is given the option of sending the file directly to the printer, viewing it first, or returning to the main menu. In viewing the file, if the file extends beyond the length of one screen (21 characters), the next part of the file may be seen by using the Page Down key. But there's no going back from there — i.e., there's no equivalent Page Up maneuver which would let the user look back at the beginning of the file. A more controlled inspection of the file thus requires exiting from the program and calling up the file through a word

processor. This may be a step one would have to take in any case — e.g., to add formatting or other material, or to incorporate the file in a word processing document, before printing. But this seems a peculiar inconvenience in an otherwise first-rate program.

In short, if one has need for generating indices, *Indexx* is a superb “academic utility” program for considerably reducing the labor involved in creating such indices. *Indexx* is written for the IBM PC/XT/AT or compatible, and requires a minimum of 256K, 1 disk drive, and DOS 2.0 or later. *Indexx* is distributed on one diskette (either 5-1/4” or 3-1/2”), along with *Indxplus*, a complete copy of the documentation manual, and miscellaneous files (text files for order and payment, along with batch files for easily printing these out). *Indexx* can be ordered directly from: Norman Swartz, 1053 Ridley Drive, Burnaby, B.C., CANADA, V5A 2N7 (tel. [604]-420-7454 [9:00-20:00 p.s.t.]).

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Articles & Reviews Welcome

The *Newsletter* welcomes article submissions that pertain to word-processing, text-analysis, and research applications in professional writing situations, either corporate or academic. Also, hardware and software reviews are encouraged, but please contact Dr. Jim Schwartz, Hardware/Software Review Editor, *before submitting them* (call Jim at 605-394-1246). Manuscripts should be submitted on MS-DOS 5¼” floppy disks using *Aldus PageMaker*, *XEROX Ventura Publisher*, *WordPerfect*, *Microsoft Word*, or standard ASCII format. The Editors reserve the right to edit manuscripts if necessary. If you want your disk returned, please send enough postage to cover the return cost along with a self-addressed mailer. Address all correspondence to the Editors, *Research in Word Processing Newsletter*, South Dakota School of Mines and Technology, 501 E. St. Joseph, Rapid City, SD, USA 57701-3995. Jim may also be reached on CompuServe (70177,1154).

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"*ArchiText* is a text processor—a software genre that goes a step beyond mere word processing. Text processing is computer-assisted reading in the way that word processing is computer-assisted writing or databasing is computer-assisted filing. Closely related conceptually to hypertext, text processing lets users search, comprehend, share, and communicate text with unprecedented effectiveness."

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"*XPress* has always offered much more typographic control than *PageMaker*. For example, *XPress* can kern (adjust the space between) letter pairs in increments of 1/200 of an em space, whereas *PageMaker* 3.0 can kern only 1/48 of an em space at a time. *XPress* lets you use fractional point sizes, such as 10.5 points; *PageMaker* 3.0 does not. *XPress* also has more PostScript-supported manipulation of fonts. You can scale type horizontally, thus producing condensed or expanded fonts of any typeface, and you can screen type in color or various shades of gray. Text files from several word processors can be imported, including those from *Word*, *WordPerfect*, *WriteNow*, *MacWrite*, and *Microsoft Works*. Basic formatting (bold, italic, and font size) is retained, although complete style sheets can only be brought in from *Word* files. *XPress* contains filters for exporting formatted documents back to *Word*, *WriteNow*, and *MacWrite*. *Quark XPress* has some of the best word-processing capabilities of any page-layout package, including a search and replace feature, a spelling checker, and the ability to show or hide invisible characters such as spaces, tabs, and carriage returns. Like *Microsoft Word*, *XPress* allows you to search for and replace even invisible characters." (p. 140)

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"To the layman, a *script manager* may be someone who works on the set of a movie. Actually, the Script Manager is a standard part of System software from Apple. It is the low-level code that extends the text-manipulation capabilities of the Mac beyond those needed for Roman scripts. The Script Manager works within an application by calling on the Script Interface System. The Script Interface System provides the Script Manager with fonts for a particular language: keyboard-mapping tables; special routines for character input, conversion, sorting, and text manipulation; and a desk accessory for system maintenance and control. The Roman Interface System is always present in the System file on the Mac. Other Systems can be purchased directly from Apple or through the Apple Programmers and Developers Association (APDA). Currently available are KanjiTalk (version 2.0 was available at press time) for Japanese applications, the Arabic Interface System (2.0), the Hanzi (Chinese) Interface System (1.0), the Hebrew Interface System (2.0), and the Korean Interface System (1.0). These systems work just like the standard System software, but their menus bars, Apple menus, and dialog boxes appear in the alphabet of the specific language. (p. 231)

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"Henry Ford and industrious termites made a common discovery in the evolution of their crafts—that division of labor is productive and profitable. Operating from the same logic, Interleaf has designed *IBM Interleaf Publisher* for the needs of a publishing group on a local area network, in which a team of writers, editors, and designers has to manage endless revisions required in producing long technical documents or books. *Interleaf* runs on a larger selection of computers than does virtually any other publishing program, and document files produced on various computers are interchangeable." (p. 76)

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"Writing labs will become like studio art courses, in which instructors can monitor and give immediate feedback on students' developing texts—and have their advice almost as quickly incorporated into the emerging documents. This may sound pretty good, but some teachers are troubled by the consequences. They think students become too dependent on easy access to teachers' help in all stages of the composing process. In addition, some teachers who want to see discrete 'drafts' of students' writing complain about no longer being sure how to define such a 'draft,' given the rapidity with which students revise their work. Other teachers aren't sure who should be getting the grade in such 'collaborative' writing environments." (p. 14)

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"One of my favorite features is the expanded search and replace function, with which you can change style attributes, such as boldface or point size, as well as individual words. Imagine changing all occurrences of bold type or 12-point Garamond text in a book-length document in one swoop. I used this feature in conjunction with the Font Usage function, which lists all the fonts in a document. When reviewing the list, I noticed a typeface that I did not want in my document. Using the search and replace function saved me from having to proofread every line to find any other occurrences of the typeface." (p. 155)

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"Although many disciplines will add their own tools, the student version of the scholar's workstation should provide an integrated environment in which to study and learn. This workstation would incorporate word processing and graphics tools for note taking, concept-development, and writing papers; a video window for viewing full color still images and movie clips; sound, to support music courses as well as voice annotation of papers and projects, and foreign language instruction; modeling tools; tools to keep personal databases of experiments, class notes, and related materials; and communications tools to access the library catalog and other databases and mail systems. At the same time, students should be able to run instructional software developed by faculty, and explore faculty developed and commercial databases from within the multifunctional workstation environment in which writing and annotation tools would always be available...Given the need of faculty to store a lifetime of research notes, experiments, publications, bibliographies, and databases, the scholar's workstation for faculty is, in many ways, a higher capacity version of the student's workstation. Beyond the functionality of the student workstation, the faculty workstation would include integrated publishing/text processing tools, on line access to field-specific collections of reference materials, support for rich compound document construction, and tools allowing data acquisition from a variety of sources." (p. 34)

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Summer Seminars in Humanities Computing

May 30-June 5 and June 12-17 have been set aside for a special summer school in humanities computing, offered by the University of Toronto and Oxford University to coincide with the ALLC/ICCH conference on June 5-10, 1989. Attention will be given to advanced work stations, computer-assisted language learning, computer translation tools, database management systems, hypertext systems, SNOBOL4, text analysis, and other topics. Contact the Center for Computing and the Humanities, 14297A Robarts Library, University of Toronto, 30 St. George Street, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1A5, Canada.

Technology and Education Conference in Florida

The Sixth International Conference on Technology and Education will be held March 21-23, 1989, in Orlando, Florida. The announced theme is "Education in the 90's: Challenges of the New Information Technologies." The conference is designed to facilitate the exchange of information, software and technical expertise between countries (the Fifth ICTE was held in Edinburgh, Scotland). Proceedings will be published. Contact Mr. Jamie Alexander, Sixth ICTE, 1600 One Tandy Center, Fort Worth, TX 76102.

Computing in Education Conference in March

The 27th Annual Conference of the International Association for Computing in Education will meet in San Francisco, California, on March 27-29, 1989, and convened jointly with the American Educational Research Association's annual conference. The theme will be "Research to Practice through Technology." Contact IACE/89, 1230 17th Street NW, Washington, DC 20036.

Call for Papers: Conference on Computers and Philosophy

The Fourth International Conference on Computers and Philosophy will come together at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on August 10-12, 1989. Papers and software demonstrations are being called for until March 31, 1989, in artificial intelligence, computational theories of mind, automated learning and discovery, computer ethics, and instructional software. Three copies of papers should be accompanied by three copies of 500-700 abstracts. Conference registration has been set at \$25.00, and proceedings will be published. Contact Leslie Burkholder, Center for Design of Educational Computing, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA 15213-3890.

Call for Papers: Humanities and Technology

Interface '89, the Thirteenth Annual Humanities and Technology Conference, will happen October 19-20, 1989, in Marietta, Georgia. May 1, 1989, is the deadline for submitting abstracts for papers on a wide range of topics covering the humanities and technology, including computers and word processing. A special plenary session on "Ethics and the Environment" is also being planned. Contact Dr. Charlie Weeks or Dr. Herb Smith, INTERFACE, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, Southern College of Technology, Marietta, GA 30060, or call (404) 424-7202.

1989 CCCC Conference to Meet in Washington

The 1989 Conference on College Composition and Communication will meet March 16-18 in Seattle, Washington. Concurrent session topics include those on

Thursday, March 16th:

Hypertext and Writing Instruction: Nontraditional Invention
Designing Tools for Empowerment: Theory and Research on Computer-based Writing Tools
Using Computers: Classroom Contexts and Questions
Computers and Basic Writers
Research in Computers and Composition: Current Directions
The Impact of Computer-based Tools and Rhetorical Prompts on Writing Processes and Products: A Report from NCRIPAL

Friday, March 17th:

Networked Computers and Truly Collaborative Learning and Writing
Responding to Literature: Theory, Practice, and the Role of CAI
Computer Text Analysis
Collaborative Learning through Creative Dialogue Across the Curriculum and Within the Department: Case Studies & Computer Applications
Computer-based Writing: Politics and Power
Computer-Supported Collaborative Writing: Theory, Research and Practice

Saturday, March 18th:

Computer Networks and Computer-based Collaboration
The Social Rhetoric of Empowerment in Computer-Supported Writing Communities
How Writers in Business Use, Perceive, and Are Affected by Computers
Exploring the Possibilities of Hypertext
Computers in the Composition Classroom: Impact on Pedagogy
Toward Usable Computer Documentation: Evaluation Theories and Practices in Industry
Getting Started with Computer-based Computer Instructions: Ideas and Resources

In addition, there will be a Software Sampler Workshop the first two days (contact James Gifford at the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point), and an all-day workshop on Wednesday, March 15th, entitled "Theory and Research into Practice: Word Processing and Writing Instruction" and chaired by Christine M. Neuwirth and Ayami Ogura of Carnegie-Mellon University.

Contact the National Council of Teachers of English, 1111 Kenyon Road, Urbana, IL 61801.

RWPN Back Issues

Volume 7, #1 [January '89]—Hard Disk Utilities: Backup Programs; *StrongWriter*: A Better Grammar and Style Checker; Bibliography Update; News & Notes

Volume 6, #9 [December '88]—Project Jefferson: A Hypertext Application for Teaching Students Research Skills; Bibliography Update; News & Notes

Volume 6, #8 [November '88]—Hard Disk Utilities: File Recovery Programs; Bibliography Update; News & Notes

Volume 6, #7 [October '88]—How the Other Half Wordprocesses; Bibliography Update; Hard Disk Utilities, DOS Shells, and Disk Optimizers

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Volume 6, #5 [May '88]—Writing in a World of Word Processing, Hypertext, CD-ROM, and Computerized Typesetting: A Bibliographic Report on the Rise of Computer-Oriented Document Engineering (CODE)

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