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# Metatopic Menace

or

## Indexing in the Age of Search

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# introduction

- Who I am and why I care
- Humbled
- Disclaimer
- Remember: no rules, only contexts



# naming the menace



# terminology

- Metatopic(s) – main topic of whole document
- Local main topics – main topic of a particular section or sections



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# audience considerations

- General usability
- Kids and other users
- Search engines
- E-books



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# usability

- Olason's usability study (2000) – users unfamiliar with content go to heading which reflects title of document. In books, although the TOC was available, users tried to find this same type of material in index.
- Olason's study also indicated that undifferentiated locators with subheadings were confusing, except when they indicated primary discussion spreads.
- if not chunks, then cross-references.
- brevity



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# indexer considerations

- The metatopic will drive the structural development of the index
- The ever present problem with metatopics is the temptation to index the entire document under a single overarching topic, or ignore the direct indexing of the metatopic altogether.



# taming the monster: sketching

## ■ Linear approach, such as outline

### ORIGINS OF AGRICULTURE

#### ■ AGRICULTURE COMPARED TO HUNTING-GATHERING

- Advantages of Agriculture
  1. More efficient use of land
    - agriculture: 1 sq km supports 50 people
    - hunting-gathering: 25-30 sq km support 5-6 people
  2. More stable food source through year (with storage)
  3. More free time in non-critical seasons
- Disadvantages of Agriculture
  1. Malnourishment
    - farmers often deficient in protein
  2. Labor intensive in critical seasons
  3. High risk if crops/herds fail

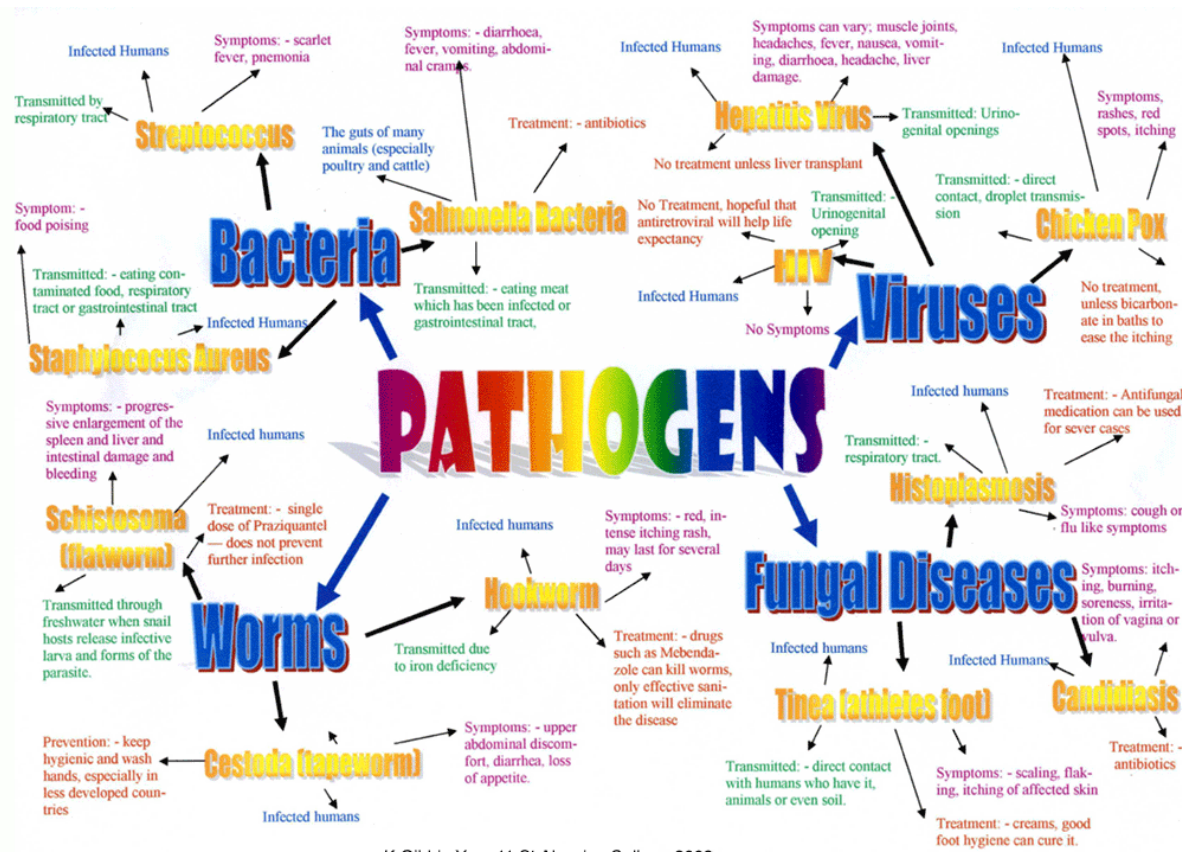
#### ■ IDENTIFYING DOMESTICATES IN ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORD

- Plants
  1. Seeds are bigger in size
    - example: teosinte to maize
    - example: domesticated sunflower is at least 5 mm
  2. Seed coats are thicker
  3. Found outside natural range of distribution
- Animals
  1. Horns change in morphology
    - example: sheep
  2. Body size changes
  3. Changes in coat or fur
  4. Age-sex distributions in skeletal collections



# taming the monster: sketching

- Graphical approach, such as concept map



K.Gibbie Year 11 St Aloysius College 2008



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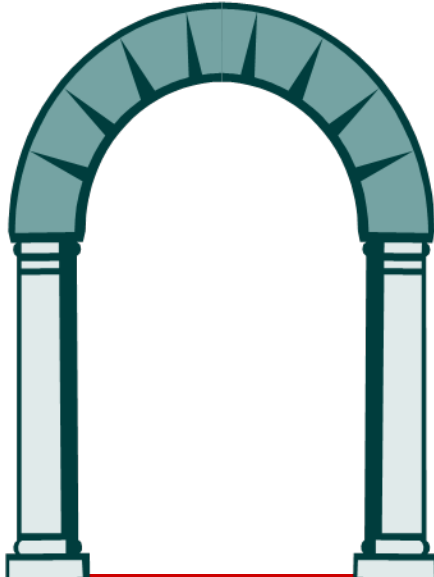
# taming the monster: indexing

- Traditional approach
- Table of Contents approach



# traditional approach - textbook

- User knowledge assumptions by indexer
- Subheading stand-alone test...



## Latin America

misconceptions and stereotypes of, 1–4  
nations and territories, 10*m*, 11*t*

reasons to study, 4-7

*see also specific nations, such as Peru; specific regions such as cultural regions; specific topics*



# table of contents approach - textbook

## Latin America

- agriculture and agrarian development, 252–287
- cultural regions, 1–14, 186–216
- climate and weather, 49–73
- economic development, 381–399
- health and nutritional development, 399–423
- Iberian heritage, 96–120
- landform regions, 16–48
- mining, manufacturing and industrial development, 288–325
- misconceptions and stereotypes of, 1–4
- nations and territories, 10*m*, 11*t*
- natural regions, 74–94
- political change, 121–150
- population and demographics, 346–356
- race and ethnicity, 151–185
- reasons to study, 4–7
- religion, 217–249
- urbanization, 328–344, 357–379
- see also specific nations; specific topics*



# scholarly text

## Traditional approach

Capital punishment. *See* death penalty

### Death penalty

cognitive dissonance regarding, 3, 85-89, 137-140, 417

symbolic role of, 15-17

*see also* capital crimes; executions; *specific state jurisdictions*;  
*specific topics*

## TOC approach

### Death penalty

alternatives to, 116-134

American's attitudes towards, 79-114

arguments for/against, 403-419

capital crimes, 36-78

capital trials, 319-361

cognitive dissonance regarding, 3, 85-89, 137-140, 417

Constitutional issues, 189-246

deterrence, 136-174

domestic, generally (U.S.), 1-20

executions, 363-401

international, 22-34

life imprisonment vs., 176-189

race, 248-274

as ritual sacrifice, 422-435

social class, 275-317

symbolic role of, 15-17

*see also specific state jurisdictions; specific topics*



# traditional approach - textbook

no information at “child development”

child development

American cultural context for, 14–21, 425, 513, 529–530

critical issues in, 5–11

defined, 4–5

historical view of childhood, 11–14, 446–447

individual differences, attempts to address, 21–24

*see also specific modes of development, such as* cognitive development;

*specific periods of development, such as* early childhood; *specific topics*



# TOC approach - textbook

## child development

conception, 80–84

prenatal development and pregnancy, 89–107

childbirth, 107–118

newborn, 118–124

infancy and toddlerhood, 129–238

    cognitive development, 167–200

    emotional development, 205–213

    language development, 184–200

    physical development, 131–163

    social development, 205–238

early childhood, 243–337

    cognitive development, 269–295

    emotional development, 308–315

    language development, 282–287

    physical development, 245–265

    social development, 299–335

## child development (cont)

late childhood, 339–439

    cognitive development, 367–399

    emotional development, 406–418, 436–437

    language development, 379–383

    physical development, 341–363

    social development, 403–439

adolescence, 443–553

    cognitive development, 485–509

    physical development and health, 448–481

    social and emotional development, 513–551

American cultural context for, 14–21, 425, 513, 529–530

critical issues in, 5–11

defined, 4–5

genetic influence on, 63–80

historical view of childhood, 11–14, 446–447

individual differences, attempts to address, 21–24

*see also additional details under each topic*



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# Traditional - two distinct, interlaced metatopics

## Demographics

categories for. *See specific demographic categories, such as age, race or sex*

Census data controversies

and educational attainment. *See specific criteria for educational attainment, such as high school or college*

metrics for

research on

## Educational attainment

criteria for. *See specific criteria for educational attainment, such as high school or college*

by demographic category. *See specific demographic categories, such as age, race or sex*

as national policy issue

research on

theories on



# TOC - two distinct, interlaced metatopics

## **Demographics**

Census data controversies  
measurement of  
metrics for  
research on

## **Demographics, categories for**

age  
disability  
geographic location  
home ownership  
household configuration  
income and wealth  
parent occupation and employment status  
race  
sex  
student occupation and employment status

## **Demographics, and educational attainment**

less than 9th grade  
high school drop-out  
GED  
high school graduate  
some college  
Associate's degree  
Bachelor's degree  
professional degree  
Master's degree  
Doctorate degree

## **Educational attainment**

as national policy issue  
research on  
theories on

## **Educational attainment, categories for**

less than 9th grade  
high school drop-out  
GED  
high school graduate  
some college  
Associate's degree  
Bachelor's degree  
professional degree  
Master's degree  
Doctorate degree

## **Educational attainment, by demographic category**

age  
disability  
geographic location  
home ownership status  
household configuration  
income and wealth  
parent occupation and employment status  
professional degree  
race  
sex  
student occupation and employment status



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# biographies

- Is there a better way?



# next steps

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- Browne, Glenda and Jermey, Jon. 2007. *The Indexing Companion* and workbook. Cambridge University Press, 2007
- Mulvany, Nancy C. 2005. *Indexing Books, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.* University of Chicago Press, 2005
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