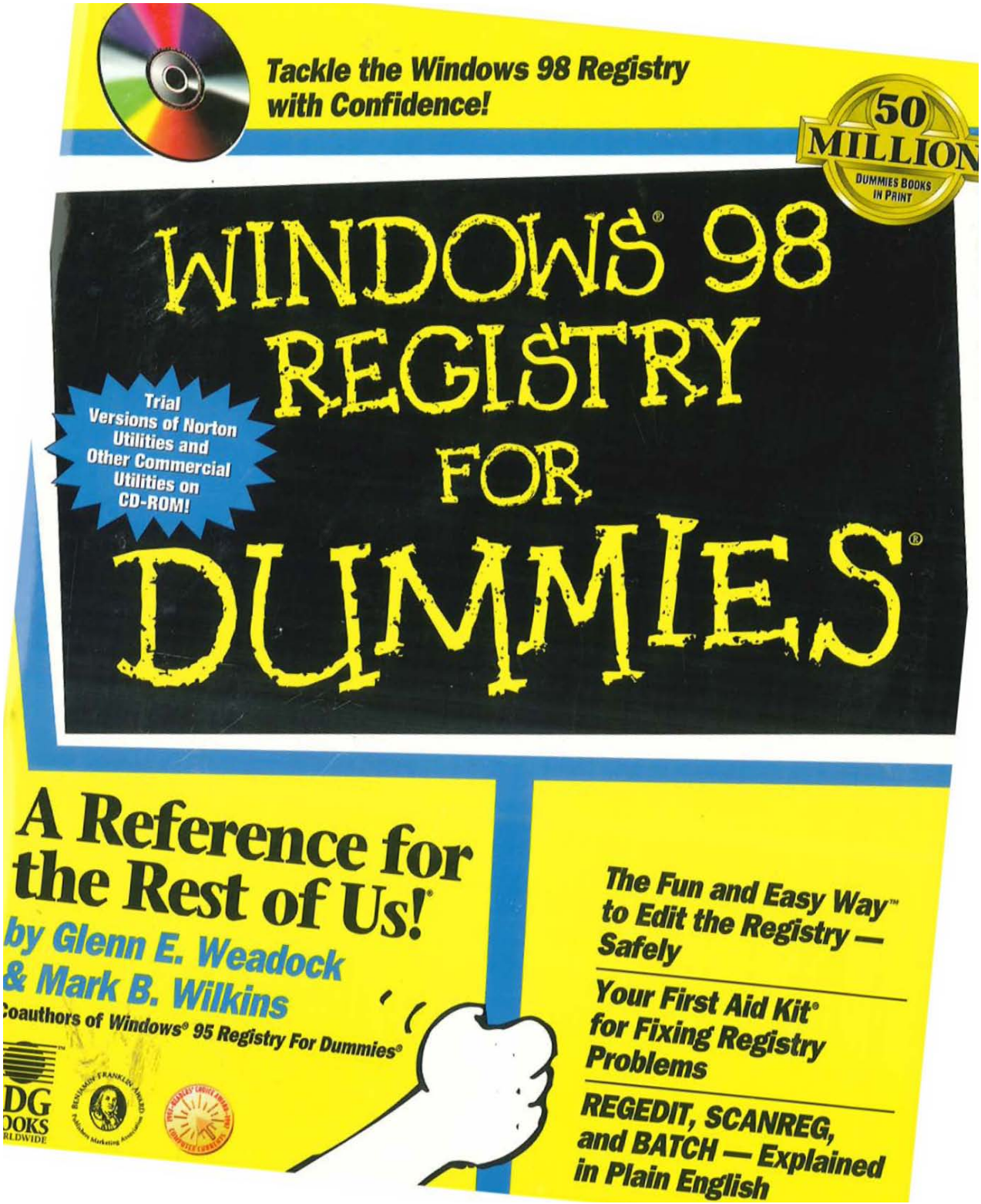


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# Introduction

The Windows 98 Registry is a vitally important part of Windows 98. Every document we've seen that discusses the Registry invariably refers to it as "the heart of Windows 98." That's true; the Registry contains just about every bit of information that matters about the hardware and software in a Windows 98 PC. You probably aren't aware of it, but Windows 98 and the programs you run with it use the Registry *tens of thousands of times* in a typical work session. Windows 98 can't blow its virtual nose without accessing the Registry a few hundred times.

For something so important, getting information about the Registry sure hasn't been easy. The documentation that you receive with Windows 98 doesn't tell you anything about it. (Okay, that documentation doesn't tell you much of anything about anything.) The Windows 98 software package contains practically no online help about the Registry. Even the seemingly encyclopedic, 1,600-page *Windows 98 Resource Kit* covers the Registry very lightly. This, despite the fact that the Registry gets 62 pages of coverage versus 18 pages in the *Windows 95 Resource Kit* and includes some TCP/IP and modem settings.

So, we thought that Windows 98 users could use a book like *Windows 98 Registry For Dummies,* which provides the information you need to use the Registry safely and to protect the Registry from problems that can range from inconvenient to disastrous. We give you many down-and-dirty details on how to change the Registry so that it bends to your will, rather than bending you to its. We explain cool Registry features that many Windows 98 users don't know exist, such as user profiles, hardware profiles, and system policies. We even tell you about a few Windows 98 bugs that you can fix by editing the Registry.

*Windows 98 Registry For Dummies* is very likely the only book you need to read or own on the subject, unless you're a professional programmer, in which case you may need to buy five or six books (but read ours first!). Certainly, our goal as authors is to include everything that the vast majority of our readers would need to know about the Registry.

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