Current Comments

The ASIS Outstanding Information Science Teacher Award: Pauline Atherton Cochrane Wins the Second Award

On October 28, 1981, the American Society for Information Science (ASIS) presented its annual Outstanding Information Science Teacher Award to Pauline Atherton Cochrane, Syracuse University, School of Information Studies. This is the second year the award,[1] which is sponsored by ISI®, has been presented. I was pleased to be present at the ASIS awards banquet, held in Washington, DC, because I consider Cochrane a most worthy recipient. However, it should be noted that neither I nor anyone at ISI was consulted on her selection by the ASIS education committee, which administers the award.

My interest in the education of our future information specialists is long-standing. Last year, I wrote an essay describing the present state of information science education.[2] More than 90 schools in North America alone now offer graduate programs in information science. But the field is still so young that no universal information science curriculum yet exists. Such a curriculum is still being shaped by today's teachers. When and if the disciplinary boundaries of information science solidify, it will in part be due to the influence of those willing to teach in an innovative and dedicated fashion. So to encourage the teaching of information science, we felt an appropriate award was in order.

In 1979, we at ISI approached ASIS about establishing an annual award. The society agreed. The new award carries an honorarium of $500, donated by ISI. Candidates must have been directly involved in the teaching of information science on a continuing basis. Last year, F. Wilfrid Lancaster, University of Illinois, was the first winner.[1] This year, Cochrane was selected from an outstanding list of candidates by an awards jury appointed by the ASIS education committee, which is chaired by Pauline V. Angione, System Development Corporation (SDC) Search Service, Santa Monica, California.

The award certificate presented to Cochrane cites her contributions as an educator, specifically "her innovative methods in introducing educational and computer technology and techniques to teaching in library and information science: She was the first to use bibliographic databases, online search services, and videotapes as part of the formal instruction in computer-based reference services in an academic program."

Cochrane received a bachelor of arts in social science studies from Illinois College in 1951. She earned a master's degree in library science from Rosary College in 1954. From 1957 to 1961, she did postgraduate work at the University of Chicago. During this period, she also served as assistant professor at the Chicago Teachers College. In 1966, she was named professor at Syracuse University. Cochrane served as treasurer of ASIS in

Pauline Atherton Cochrane

Education Experimental Project (LEEP), which was funded by the US Office of Education, and which Cochrane directed in 1967-1968. The project's purpose was to develop a computer laboratory for instruction in library education.[4] The laboratory used machine-readable cataloging (MARC) pilot tapes as a data base. This was even before MARC, the online catalog of the Library of Congress, was available to users. The laboratory developed at Syracuse University became a model for other laboratories at other institutions. And as a result of LEEP, Cochrane became one of the first teachers to integrate online searching into a graduate library school curriculum.

The total number of funded research projects that Cochrane has directed or otherwise participated in are too numerous to describe here. But one other project worthy of note was the Subject Access Project, funded by the Council on Library Resources, which Cochrane directed from 1976 to 1978. This project gave birth to a new data base for monographs in the social sciences and humanities.[5] The data base augments the descriptions of books by taking key words and phrases from the tables of contents and indexes and adding them to MARC records. I should mention that information specialist *extraordinaire* Björn Tell[6] translated the Subject Access Project manual into Swedish and adapted the system for indexing government reports. Tell was recently appointed permanent adviser to the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Athens. He was one of many information professionals who nominated Cochrane for the ASIS Outstanding Information Science Teacher Award.

Cochrane has authored many journal articles, book chapters, books, and user manuals. A selected bibliography of her books and manuals appears in Table 1.

1965 and as its president in 1970. She is also a member of the American Library Association and the American Society for Indexers.

During her tenure at Syracuse University, Cochrane has earned a reputation as an innovator in the teaching of information studies. For example, she was among the first to videotape students performing reference search interviews so that these exercises could be critiqued later. But what really makes Cochrane an outstanding instructor is her ability to combine original research with teaching. Henriette D. Avram, director for processing systems, Library of Congress, who has worked with Cochrane, testifies, "Behind all of her [research] efforts is not only the desire to make still one more inroad into access to information, but to pass on this knowledge to her students."[3]

An example of how Cochrane blends research with education is the Library

Table 1: A selected bibliography of books and user manuals authored by Pauline Atherton Cochrane.

Atherton P. *Online searching of ERIC: executive summary of a collection of recommendations and suggestions for redesign of the ERIC record and online data base.* Syracuse: Syracuse University Printing Services, 1979. 41 p.

Atherton P. *Online searching of ERIC: impact of free text or controlled vocabulary searching on design of the ERIC data base.* Syracuse: Syracuse University Printing Services, 1979. 194 p.

Atherton P. *BOOKS are for use. Final report of the Subject Access Project to the Council on Library Resources.* Syracuse: Syracuse University Printing Services, 1978. 172 p.

Atherton P. *Handbook for information systems and services.* Paris: Unesco, 1977. 259 p.

Atherton P. *Guidelines for the organization of training courses, workshops and seminars in scientific and technical information and documentation.* Paris: Unesco, 1975. 88 p.

Atherton P. *Putting knowledge to work: lectures on library automation and catalog use.* Presented at DRTC, Bangalore Conference. Delhi: Vikas, 1973. 158 p.

Atherton P & Christian R. *Librarians and online services.* White Plains, NY: Knowledge Industry, 1977. 124 p.

Keenan S & Atherton P. *The journal literature of physics.* New York: American Institute of Physics, 1964. 156 p.

Markey K & Atherton P. *ONTAP: online training and practice manual for ERIC data base searchers.* Syracuse: Syracuse University Printing Services, 1978. 182 p.

Meadow C T & Cochrane P A. *Basics of online searching.* New York: Wiley, 1981. 245 p.

Two of these,[7,8] both published by Unesco, have been translated into French, Spanish, and Russian. Her most recent book, which she coauthored with Charles Meadow, Drexel University, is called *Basics of Online Searching*.[9] Although this textbook does provide instruction for searching particular data bases, it concentrates on general principles that are common to all data bases. Thus, it presents a unified approach to teaching online searching.

Cochrane has international teaching experience. She has served as guest lecturer at universities in Australia, Canada, Denmark, India, and Sri Lanka. As letters of nomination from her former pupils in these countries and at Syracuse University testify, Cochrane makes a deep impression upon students wherever she teaches. A fellow professor at Syracuse University, Marta L. Dosa, states, "The quality of her academic approach is matched by her attitude toward her students. She is concerned with their career goals, theoretical and professional preparation, and their activities after graduation."[10] Cochrane herself believes that concern for students is her strong point. "I have never considered myself a great lecturer," she says. "I prefer to work one-on-one with students, giving individual attention wherever possible."[11]

In addition to her academic career, Cochrane has performed services in the private sector. Over the years, she has served as information consultant to a number of firms, including SDC and the Field Enterprises Educational Corporation. She is the current editor of the Wiley series on Information Science.

The ASIS Outstanding Information Science Teacher Award is not ISI's only experience with award sponsorship. ISI and Annual Reviews, Inc., are cosponsors of the James Murray Luck Award for Excellence in Scientific Reviewing.[12] The award is presented yearly by the National Academy of Sciences to honor outstanding authors of scientific reviews. In April 1982, the fourth James Murray Luck Award will be presented at the academy's annual meeting in Washington, DC. In addition, ISI has recently agreed to sponsor two new annual awards to be administered by the Medical Library Association. One consists of an honorarium of $500 to be presented for an outstanding contribu-

tion to the delivery of health sciences information. The other is a $1,000 doctoral fellowship for a worthy student in medical librarianship or information science. Both awards will be presented for the first time in 1982.

Most readers of *Current Contents*® (*CC*®) are not particularly interested in information retrieval and classification except in the practical way it affects their work. We often speak about bridging the two cultures. There is a significant gap between the worlds of the information scientist and technologist, and that of the research community. But that gap is closing rapidly. The advent of the microcomputer is accelerating the process. The world of classification is not unknown to the biologist, but few scientists I encounter are cognizant of the monumental contributions of people like Shiyali R. Ranganathan.[13] I mention this because a common admiration of his work was the basis for my first encounter with Cochrane. I first met Ranganathan in 1957 at the Dorking Conference on Classification. I have no doubt that were he still here with us, he would take great joy in the added recognition that one of his greatest disciples has now received.

We at ISI are gratified by the results of the second ASIS Outstanding Information Science Teacher Award, and we look forward to sponsoring the next award. ASIS will soon begin soliciting nominations for the 1982 award. Anyone who wishes a copy of the award criteria can write to Skip McAfee, Assistant Executive Director, ASIS, 1010 16th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036.

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*Reprinted in: **Garfield E.** *Essays of an information scientist.* Philadelphia: ISI Press, 1981. 4 vols.