Preface

With the publication of this sixth volume, *Essays of an Information Scientist* will appear annually. All earlier volumes covered at least two years. There are several reasons for this change. While there have been fifty-two essays per year since 1972, the shorter length of earlier essays made it feasible to include the material for two years in each volume. By following an annual schedule the yearly crop of *Current Contents*® essays becomes available in book form much more quickly. Since each volume is indexed separately, the improved timing means that the indexing task is simpler and done even faster. Finally, by reducing the number of current essays, it is now possible to include other papers which, for a variety of reasons, have never appeared in *Current Contents*. Many appeared in journals or books not easily accessible to the average reader. And since I myself and others cite them from time to time, their re-publication here as an Appendix makes them more easily accessible for the first time. In the Preface to Volume 1 I promised to do this, not realizing it would take seven years to overcome the reasons for not doing so.

The "extra" papers span about twenty-five years, beginning in the early 1950s. A chronological review shows the evolution and development of mechanized indexing techniques. The earliest papers describe the pragmatic use of punched-card machines for indexing as well as the theory of citation indexing. Later papers present a variety of evaluative uses of citation data for assessing journals and research, and for tracing the historical development of specialties.

In publishing these background papers, there is an element of redundancy. But the convenience of having them available in book form was the overriding factor in making the selections.

The main corpus of the book, however, remains my weekly essays. As always, citation-based studies comprise a healthy percentage of the essays. This volume contains numerous lists of most-cited articles. Also included is a major study of Third-World scientific research.

In previous years, essays which covered topics of general interest, like specific diseases or problems, did not include much citation data. Citation analyses were once a breed apart from essays on child care or schizophrenia. Although we always performed citation searches to support the background research for these "topical" essays, citation analyses *per se* were not published in the essays. In this volume, you will find in many topical essays several kinds of citation data—with heavy emphasis on and listings of relevant research fronts or specialties. This greater combination of citation analysis with almost any theme one could mention reminds me of that McLuhan phrase "the medium is the message."

However, this intermingling was not done to merely answer those critics who find it hard to understand why essays by an information scientist are not limited to information science itself. As the world becomes increasingly information-conscious, more scholars will realize that the tools of an information scientist permit one to explore almost any subject in a new kind of scientific journalism.

The topical group of essays in this volume fall into several broad categories. "General science" includes those essays on scientific eponyms, the awards of science, scientific editors' associations, using citation data for faculty evaluation, and artificial intelligence. "Health-related concerns" are represented by essays on sleep disorders, schizophrenia, prolongevity research, and child safety. "Personality profiles" include tributes to Scott Adams, Sol Spiegelman, and Robert K. Merton, as well as several essays on winners of specific scientific awards.

Of course, there are, as always, some unclassifiable essays which reflect my personal pet peeves—for example, "The Tyranny of the Horn—Autombile, That Is" and "Striking Back at Graffiti." And there are also essays about ISI procedures, problems, and new products.

In closing, I would like to register my pleasure that Professor V.V. Nalimov, the noted Soviet polymath and philospher of science, has consented to write the Foreword to this volume. I first paid tribute to this Renaissance scholar several years ago when ISI Press published

two of his books[1]. Since then, we have also published his remarkable *Realms of the Unconscious*[2]. By contributing this Foreword, he joins a distinguished group of scholars who have honored me in this way. However, it is bittersweet to say that one of them—my dear friend Derek deSolla Price—died unexpectedly in 1983. I dedicate this volume to him. A eulogy in his honor appears at the end of the Appendix.

REFERENCES

1. **Garfield E.** In tribute to V.V.Nalimov: Renaissance scholar and scientometrician par excellence. *Current Contents* (8):5-15, 22 February 1982. (Reprinted in: Garfield E. *Essays of an information scientist.* Philadelphia: ISI Press, 1983. Vol. 5. p. 417-27.)
2. **Nalimov V V.** *Realms of the unconscious: the enchanted frontier.* Philadelphia: ISI Press, 1982. 320 p.