

Is Science-Information Information-Science?
Bridging the Gap between the Cultures of the
Professional and Trade Associations

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The Institute of Information Scientists (IIS) is a primarily British professional society. IIS has also become an accrediting organization for science information specialists. About ten years ago, IIS conferred on me a “fellowship” status. This confirms my belief in the biblical axiom that a prophet is not without honor save in his own country. The honor is reserved to a small selection of IIS members. Though grateful for the gesture, I am always puzzled that such fellowships mean higher dues. Is this an extension of the British tradition of *noblesse oblige*?

As noted previously,¹ in discussing their publication *The Information Scientist*, the stated scope of IIS implies that the terms *science-information* and *information-science* may be interchangeable. There is a significant difference between the two. I discussed the difference recently,² so

I won't labor the point here.

The IIS has played a definite and positive role in explaining the nature and value of its members' work. The evidence stands out in the classified ads for information scientists and science information specialists appearing in British publications. Such advertisements are comparatively rare in American periodicals. Consider that the American organization that corresponds most closely to the British IIS is the American Society for Information Sciences (ASIS), with a ten-fold larger membership of 4000.

The President-Elect of ASIS is an ISI[®] vice-president, Herbert S. White.³ His election to that office makes him absolutely unique among information workers. Herb has also served as president of the Special Libraries Association. I am serving as a past president and present chairman of the board of

the Information Industry Association (IIA).⁴ Therefore, our daily contacts at ISI provide a unique opportunity to facilitate communication between the professional society and the trade association of the industry. One concrete form of cooperation between the two groups is the IIA's responsibility for commercial exhibits at ASIS annual meetings.

Professional librarians, unlike information scientists and technologists, do not yet feel entirely comfortable in the presence of information entrepreneurs. This is changing.⁵ Ironically, the ever-sticky problem of copyright, on which librarians and publishers seem to be diametrically opposed, will in the long run bring them even closer together. The intermediary between these two camps, equally ironically, may prove to be non-profit organizations.⁶ Reasonableness will prevail. The alternative is anarchy and chaos.

1. Garfield, E. Information science then, now, and tomorrow; or will the real information scientist please stand up! *Current Contents* No. 39, 27 September 1972, p. 5.
2. ----- . Is science information science -- im-

plications for the information revolution. Presidential address to the Fifth Annual National Meeting of the Information Industry Association, Philadelphia, April 3, 1973.

3. ----- . Introducing Herbert S. White, ISI's Senior Vice President for Operations and Administration. *Current Contents* No. 4, 26 January 1972, p. 5-6.
4. ----- . Of presidents, politics, and chicken-pluckers. *Current Contents* No. 47, 22 November 1972, p. 5.
5. Nyren, K. The information communities. *Library Journal* 98(9):1417, 1 May 1973.
6. In a recent editorial on the copyright problem, I mentioned the copyright position of the American Institute of Physics. In a private communication, Mr. W. Passano of Williams & Wilkins has pointed out that the AIP, as well as the ACS, had also submitted an *amicus curiae* brief in the case. I am delighted to report this omission on my part. (See Garfield, E. Copyright revision bill requires priority action to meet needs of the information revolution. *Current Contents* No. 16, 18 April 1973, p. 5-8).