

ISI Adds "Non-Journal" Material to the 1977 *Science Citation Index*

Number 9, February 28, 1977

Beginning in 1977 there will be a major addition to the 2,600 journals presently covered by the *Science Citation Index*[®]. *SCI*[®] will also include items from an important class of "non-journal" material: published proceedings, symposia, monographic series, and multi-authored books (thematic collections of papers).

This is a major departure for ISI[®]. Till now we've concentrated on the journal literature. Two factors have influenced our decision.

One is the growing tendency among researchers in recent years to seek forums outside the important journals in their fields to announce their findings. This has been due, in a large part, to the tremendous competition among authors for space in prominent journals and the resultant lag time between discovery and publication. In consequence, an increasing amount of important information is appearing in the "non-journal" literature I've described above. As I noted earlier, specialized conferences alone now account for publication of 2,500—4,000 single-volume monographs each year!¹

The other factor that influenced our expansion of *SCI*'s coverage is the longstanding problem of locating material published in proceedings and other scientific books. The conference literature has always been a bibliographic nightmare. Often this is due to the time between published proceedings and the event they record.² It is not unusual for proceedings

to appear in book form long after the conference. And then they may be disguised by a title that makes no mention of the conference. Although there are several bibliographic aids to the conference literature, most do not list the individual papers presented. Librarians and scientists alike have had no way to locate such items easily.

As a partial solution to the "non-journal" literature problem we introduced *Current Book Contents*[®] to *CC*[®] subscribers in 1972. *CBC*[™] not only alerts readers to new publications. It also gives a chapter-by-chapter breakdown. In this way you can scan the contents of multi-authored works the way you scan a journal contents page.

The success of *CBC* has proven to us that the non-journal literature is both important to the scientific community and inadequately retrievable--thus the need for indexing in the *Science Citation Index*.

In the first year of this program, the *SCI* will cover some 40,000 items from 1,400 non-journal publications of the kind described above. Among them will be such influential publications as the *INSERM Symposia Series*, *Methods in Enzymology*, *Science in the Practice of Clinical Medicine*, *Advances in Geophysics*, the *Kroc Foundation Series*, and the *Chemical Society of London's Specialist Periodical Reports*.

This material will be distributed among the same five broad disciplines and in the

same percentages as represented in the *SCI*'s present journal coverage: 42% will be in the life sciences, 23% in the physical and chemical sciences, 12% in clinical practice, 12% in engineering and technology, and 11% in agriculture, biology, and environmental sciences.

It has always been possible to use the *SCI* to determine what journal articles have cited particular papers in multi-authored books. Every book that is cited in a journal article becomes an entry in the *SCI*. But with the first quarterly issue of *SCI* in 1977 you will also be able to retrieve "non-journal" material when you look up a particular item or author. This means that we will index every item cited in these chapters or papers. And we will also, as is usual with the *SCI*, index the chapter by title words, source authors, and organizations.

As with all material covered in the *SCI*, indexing will be timely. Since many publishers like Elsevier/North Holland have been able to accelerate the process of publishing conference proceedings, this gives a new significance to such information, especially for current awareness. It is not unusual today for proceedings to appear within three months after the conference.³

Searchers will be able to find papers delivered at recent meetings and even follow the latest developments subsequent to presentation. This will be augmented by our coverage of monographic and review series.

You will now find in the *SCI* all the bibliographic information you need to obtain any "non-journal" publication indexed. The entry for each volume covered

will include: title, sub-title, all editors, publisher's name and location, publication date, number of pages, International Standard Book Number, and Library of Congress card number. Where applicable, the series title, volume, issue, and date will appear. Entries for conference proceedings will also include the conference name, location, date and sponsor. Each description will be as complete as possible.

To choose what "non-journal" publications should be covered, we have had to develop a new system of selection that markedly differs from the way we choose what journals are to be covered in the *SCI*. For example, of primary importance in selecting journals is frequency of citation and impact. But, we also have an editorial advisory board. Experts in a variety of disciplines regularly evaluate new journals. And we also reply on input from users and publishers.

Of course, we will give priority to those highly cited and well known book series which do have extended publishing histories. Unlike multi-authored serial books one-time symposia cannot have citation histories by which their value can be judged directly. However, the quality of the work can be judged as well as relevance to our users by other methods. Not only will we continue to use subscribers, advisory boards, and reference works. We can also follow indicators such as the number of particular books ordered through *CBC*.

Over time we plan to expand and perfect this selection process to insure that *SCI* users will be able to search with confidence the most significant portion of "non-journal" literature published every year.

1. Garfield E. Of conferences and reviews. *Current Contents*® No. 48, 1 December 1975, p. 5-9.
2. Drubba H. Conference documentation; general overview and survey of the present position. *Associations Internationales* 28(8-9):383-87, 1976.
3. Verbeek J L. Personal communication, 2 December 1975.