In 1953, I wrote a paper entitled “Brief History of Information Science,” which was published in a Perspectives section of the Journal of the American Society for Information Science. Re-reading this paper today, I am impressed with my very good fortune in having known most of the people about whom I wrote.

Among these leaders in the second decade of ADI/ASIS history was Dwight Gray, for whom I worked as chief librarian of the Johns Hopkins Applied Physics Lab. Dwight, who introduced me to the world of the unpublished research report, was a primary mover in the bibliographic control of unpublished reports. His interest and knowledge rubbed off in many ways and are still affecting my day-to-day information activities.

Later, I met Eugene Garfield, who was then working at the Johns Hopkins University Welch Medical Library, where he was doing pioneering work in the punched-card production of indexes under a grant from the Armed Forces Medical Library. Gene, who was a great scientific socializer even then, introduced me to James Perry, Robert Casey and Madeline Berry (Henderson) who, with Allen Kent, were the editors of the classic Punched Cards: Their Applications to Science and Industry. From my viewpoint, this book provided the first cohesive perspective and prospective look at applications of non-manual processes to the field.

Through Gene, and later through others, I met Frank B. Rogers, the new director of the Armed Forces Medical Library (now the National Library of Medicine); Samuel Lazerow, Seymour Taine and Estelle Brodman, who were grappling with the complexities of indexing and searching the medical literature; Jesse Shera, who was making great strides in rationalizing the similarities and differences between classic library bibliographic organization and the impending information storage and retrieval systems; Ralph Shaw, who was working on the development of the Rapid Selector and injecting rigorous management science techniques into the administration of libraries.

Others I met in this all-important decade include Calvin Mooers, who coined the term information retrieval and was hard at work on his Zatocoding system; Mortimer Taube, who, through his Uniterm indexing and Uniterm card, probably did more than anyone else to clarify the basics of information retrieval; John Mauchly, co-designer and developer of ENIAC and a major force in the initial application of computers to information problems; Hans Peter Luhn, who introduced the concept of the thesaurus into indexing processes and did much to make punched cards and computers work for information storage and retrieval; and Claire Schultz, a librarian who worked closely with Garfield and Mauchly and helped bridge the gap between traditional librarianship and information science.

Most of these individuals and developments, and many others, were covered in the 1958
International Conference on Scientific Information (ICSI), which essentially summarized the thinking, views and state of the art as of that date. In addition to being broadly international in attendance and representation, ICSI looked into evolving developments in the intellectual and mechanical aspects of information organization and dissemination, as well as the needs, roles and interactions of users, an early and continuing area of personal interest to me.

An interesting sidelight characteristic of ICSI was its tacit preoccupation with Soviet scientific and technical information apparatus and processes. Not only did the conference take place one year after the launching of Sputnik I by the Soviet Union, but on the program were some key members of the much-vaunted All-Union Institute of Scientific and Technical Information (VINIITI), whom many attendees held in awe. Wariness of Soviet scientific power and potential was a strong factor in an accelerating emphasis in the late 1950s on information programs in such agencies as National Science Foundation, Office of Naval Research and the Air Force Office of Scientific Research. In a very real sense, Sputnik helped launch information science in the United States and elsewhere.

Saul Herner
Washington, DC

**Selected Readings 1949-1958**


