Defining Information Science

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2:00-3:30 pm on Friday, April 25, 2008
Indiana University Bloomington, Herman B. Wells Library, Room LI 001

Refreshments will be available prior to the talk at 1:45 pm.
Following the talk, all interested individuals, especially students, are invited to stay for a reception and informal discussion with the speaker.
Talk co-sponsored by Networks and Complex Systems.

ABSTRACT

This is a talk for word people. Over the past half century, many authors have wrestled with the task of succinctly defining the field of information science to which the Annual Review of Information Science and Technology is addressed. This discussion will look critically at some of their formulations, in particular those that overreach and those that are muddled, vague, or obscure. The goal is to characterize the field in a way that is clear, concise, and evidence-based. Any such formulation should serve to distinguish the field of information science from the many others to which it is related while at the same time implying their relevance. It should also fit well as a title to an inventory of the major problems on which information scientists in the ARIST sense are conducting research.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Howard D. White joined Drexel University’s College of Information Science and Technology in 1974, where he is now professor emeritus. During his four-decades of published work, he has examined bibliometrics and cocitation analysis, evaluation of reference services, expert systems for reference work, innovative online searching, social science data archives, library publicity, American attitudes toward library censorship, and literature retrieval for meta-analysis and interdisciplinary studies. He has been honored for his many distinguished contributions to the field of information science, including, most recently, the International Society for Scientometrics and Informetrics with the biennial Derek de Solla Price Memorial Medal for contributions to the quantitative study of science. In the past year he has written chapters on information science, relevance, and citation analysis for the third edition of the Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science and revised his chapter on literature retrieval in meta-analysis for the second edition of the Handbook of Research Synthesis. More information about his research is available at: http://www.cis.drexel.edu/faculty/HUD.Web/HUD.html.