

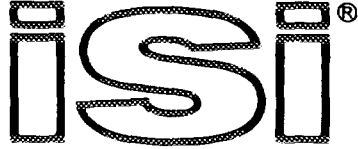
THE INFORMATORIUM

Who Are the Information Scientists?

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Several years ago a colleague commented that very shortly there would only be two kinds of scientists--the laboratory scientist and the information scientist. I don't know whether there is fundamentally much difference between this classification and the older classification of the theoretical and the practical scientist. I believe

there is now only one kind of scientist--the information scientist. I also believe there are two types of information scientists--the one who calls himself a laboratory man or a theoretician, and the other who calls himself a professional information scientist.



In many cases, the information scientist may be known by a variety of titles--editors, research directors, or literature scientists. All are quickly coming to the realization, however, that they are intimately concerned with information handling at one or more points in the information processing cycle. Every scientist is a creator, disseminator, consumer, evaluator, retriever, storer, or collector of scientific information. Now that science is creating more information in one decade than it did previously in a century, the consequences of this information explosion are only now slowly being felt. To be an effective and efficient scientist today means, ipso facto, to be an efficient information handler or, at least, an ardent consumer of information in all its forms, published or otherwise.

Occasionally a reader writes that he has had it; science information--*Current Contents* and anything else for that matter--is too much for him. He has decided to throw in the sponge; he has now decided to isolate himself in the quicksand of a few selected journals which he thinks he can at least finish reading. The vast majority fortunately recognize, however, that there is no perfect solution, that each new solution breeds new problems, and each new problem will generate more solutions. There are very few professional information scientists who can operate efficiently without *Current Contents* or its equivalent. If the laboratory scientist will regard himself as a full-time information scientist, he too will recognize that he cannot operate efficiently without modern information facilities.