

**So You Wanted More Review Articles--  
ISI's New *Index to Scientific Reviews*  
(*ISR*) Will Help You Find Them**

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In 1975 ISI® will issue the first annual volume of our new *Index to Scientific Reviews*™ (*ISR*™). It will cover the review literature of 1974. Thereafter, *ISR* will appear twice a year. A paper-back interim index will cover the first six months of 1975. Then a permanently bound annual volume will cover the entire year.

One could, without too much exaggeration, say of review articles what Mark Twain is supposed to have said about the weather--everybody talks about it, but nobody *does* anything about it. It would be difficult to find an article on science information problems that does not contain some statement on the value of scientific reviews and the need for more and better critical reviews. This statement usually appears as an afterthought emphasizing the author's double awareness that he is saying what has been said a thousand times before and that his expectation of any action on the subject is small.

At ISI we decided to do something about it, and *ISR* is the result. We can't launch a program to underwrite production of more reviews, but with the *ISR* we intend to help scientists and librarians find and use the reviews that are being written. Our studies have indicated that about 16,000 review articles ap-

pear annually in the 2,400 journals covered by our multidisciplinary *Science Citation Index*®. This is in addition to the literature published in quarterly and annual review publications. In many cases, the review nature of an article, or part of it, is disguised by its title or buried in the text. The *ISR* will identify all such articles and assemble them in one handy volume that covers the spectrum of scientific research.

*ISR* will include an author index with full bibliographic data, a *Permuterm*® subject index, and a citation index. The library world is familiar with a plethora of 'bibliography of bibliography' publications. But none of them contains a citation index. The citation index section of *ISR* will list all articles and books that have been cited by any of the reviews we index. This will make it possible to start with an author, article, book, thesis, report, or patent that you know is relevant to a subject, and to locate all the current reviews that have referenced the author or earlier document. In *ISR* you will find not only *all* the reviews that have referenced the item, but *only* reviews.

In the past we have recognized the importance of review journals for the *SCP*®, but we have in fact given them a lower priority than original research journals. The ad-

vent of *ISR* means that our data base must now be enlarged even further to accommodate more of these journals. A number of publishers have announced plans for new review journals in 1975, and these will surely make their way into *ISR* coverage.

As most scientists and librarians know, the value of a review does not exist solely in the author's synthesis of previously published material. The bibliography in a review often becomes a surrogate for future authors in the field who want to cite a comprehensive bibliography. Too often scientists and librarians must repeat such bibliographical work in preparing articles. Thus, it is not surprising that our citation studies showed review journals to have very great impact.

I'm particularly happy about *ISR* because it is a culmination of work I began in 1951 when Chauncey D. Leake admonished me to study review articles and try to understand why they were so important in science. I later recognized that the sentences in review articles are implicit indexing statements. By making them the grist for an index to scientific literature,<sup>1</sup> the process of producing indexes could be 'automated'. This concept led eventually to the development of the *Science Citation Index*. At the same time I have remained aware that it will be impossible for artificially intelligent machines to produce the critical indexing statements that authors contribute when writing critical reviews.<sup>2</sup>

1. Garfield, E. Can criticism and documentation of research papers be automated? *Current Contents*® (CC®) No. 9, 4 March 1970, p. 4.

2. .... "Can citation indexing be automated?" In: *Statistical association methods for mechanized documen-*

*tation, symposium proceedings, Washington, 1964*, ed. by M.E. Stevens *et al.* (Washington, D.C.: National Bureau of Standards Miscellaneous Publication 269, December 15, 1965), pp. 189-92. Reprinted in CC No. 9, 4 March 1970.