

# Current Comments

## Five Years of Current Book Contents and Multi-Authored Book Indexing

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It's hard to believe it has been five years since ISI® first started covering multi-authored books in *Current Contents® (CC®)*. When we began *Current Book Contents® (CBC™)* in the latter part of 1973 we looked on it as an experiment. As I reported to you before, that experiment was a resounding success.<sup>1</sup> At first we listed books only in the *Life Sciences* edition of *CC*. Now books are covered in every *CC* edition including our new *CC/Arts & Humanities*.<sup>2</sup>

Scientists and publishers may not be aware of this — although librarians surely are—but our treatment of books in *CBC* is revolutionary.<sup>1</sup> Libraries and other organizations traditionally catalog books. But they do not often catalog or index books at the chapter level. We treat each chapter as if it were a journal article, indexing title words and authors. Thus, we give readers access points to single chapters which had not been available before.

By the end of 1978, we will have covered 330 multi-authored books in *CC/Life Sciences*. Over 300 books, most of them multi-authored, will also be listed in 1978 in each of three other editions—

*CC/Social & Behavioral Sciences*, *CC/Physical & Chemical Sciences*, and *CC/Agriculture, Biology & Environmental Sciences*. Over 400 multi-authored books will be covered each in *CC/Engineering, Technology & Applied Sciences* and *CC/Clinical Practice*. We expect this growth to continue.

In 1979, some editions will list up to 600 books — about one dozen per week. As you might expect, there is some overlap between editions just as there is with journals. Nevertheless, the number of unique multi-authored book titles we will cover is in excess of 2,000.

There is an indexing fee for books listed in *CC/Life Sciences*. These fees are based on the number of chapters in the books. To date we have covered over 1,600 books in *CC/Life Sciences* alone. Over 70 different publishers were represented.

For the *CBC* sections of other editions of *Current Contents* no indexing fees are charged. We use several methods to locate books of potential interest to readers. Our staff examines publishers' catalogs, book announcements, and even the backs of book jackets for recent books of interest. Conference

listings in journals are examined for proceedings published as books. We then request copies of these books from the publishers. We have also built a close working relationship with many publishers who automatically send us books which they feel our readership might find valuable.

After we receive the books, we go through a further selection process before they can be covered in *CBC*. Since information about the contents of *multi-authored* works is poorly disseminated and inadequately indexed, priority is given to these books.

About 95% of the materials we handle in *CBC* are multi-authored works. Of that number, more than half are conference or symposium proceedings. This makes it easier for you to keep up-to-date on this rather elusive literature. Many of these are works in a series. We generally cover all volumes in major series, including review series.

To make information about *CBC* entries even more accessible to *CC* users, we include title words or phrases from book and chapter titles in the *Weekly Subject Index*. We also include the addresses (when provided) of first authors of chapters in the author-address directory.

From the beginning of *CBC*, ISI has provided a special coupon for readers who want to save time or consolidate their book orders by "ordering" through ISI. Having read the contents page you can simply circle the *CBC* number and

just mail the coupon to us. ISI forwards these orders to the publishers as a free service to readers and publishers. From past surveys we know that for every order we receive at ISI there are an additional nine or ten sent through other channels. Most of our readers use their institutional libraries or purchasing departments to order books. Nevertheless, from 1973 to 1977 we forwarded almost 29,000 orders to publishers. During the first 10 months of 1978 we forwarded another 4,500 orders.

We thought it might interest you to know which books generated the most orders during the last five years. In Figure 1 the number of orders we received and the book's citation count are listed. The citation data were obtained from the *Science Citation Index*<sup>®</sup> (*SCI*<sup>®</sup>) and the *Social Sciences Citation Index*<sup>™</sup>. Some of the books have been well-cited in the one or two years since their publication. But considering the number of papers these books contain, the number of citations most received is not yet so impressive. Their impact may not be noticed for several more years.

Two of the books on the list seem to be of general interest to scientists—books they might want for their private collections. *The excitement and fascination of science* is a collection of autobiographical and philosophical essays written by scientists. A possible reason for its popularity: Annual Reviews, Inc. offered it to our readers (and still does) at a minimal charge of \$1.50.

**Figure 1:** The books which generated the most orders forwarded to publishers by ISI® through CBC™ from 1974 to the present.

Number of Orders	Books	Total Citations to Date
365	<i>The excitement and fascination of science. A collection of autobiographical and philosophical essays by contemporary scientists.</i> Palo Alto, CA: Annual Reviews, Inc., 1965. 566 p. \$1.50 (35 papers)	62
147	Bloom B R & David J R, eds. <i>In vitro methods in cell-mediated and tumor immunity.</i> New York: Academic Press, 1976. 748 p. \$34.50 (58 papers)	186
131	Smith J R & Smith L G, eds. <i>Beyond monogamy — recent studies of sexual alternatives in marriage.</i> Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1974. 336 p. \$15.00 (16 papers)	54
122	Mendoza E, ed. <i>A random walk in science. An anthology compiled by R.L. Weber.</i> New York: Crane, Russak & Co., 1974. 206 p. \$12.50 (100 papers)	18
90	Travis J C. <i>Fundamentals of RIA (radioimmunoassay) and other ligand assays. A programmed text.</i> Anaheim: Scientific Newsletters, Inc., 1977. 168 p. \$25.00	—
67	Bergmeyer H U, ed. <i>Principles of enzymatic analysis.</i> Weinheim: Verlag Chemie, 1978. 260 p. \$19.60 (20 papers)	1
63	Bach F H & Good R A, eds. <i>Clinical immunobiology. Vol. 3.</i> New York: Academic Press, 1976. 422 p. \$24.50 (21 papers)	25
61	National Cancer Institute. <i>Modern concepts in brain tumor therapy: laboratory and clinical investigations. National Cancer Institute monographs. Vol. 46.</i> Bethesda: National Cancer Institute, 1977. 250 p. \$8.00 (32 papers)	9
61	Mulvihill J J, Miller R W & Fraumeni J F, eds. <i>Genetics of human cancer. Progress in cancer research and therapy. Vol. 3.</i> New York: Raven Press, 1977. 519 p. \$19.00 (47 papers)	48
60	Nierlich D P, Rutter W J & Fox C F, eds. <i>Molecular mechanisms in the control of gene expression.</i> New York: Academic Press, 1976. 655 p. \$28.50 (65 papers)	78

Another general interest book, *A random walk in science*, is an anthology of both amusing and serious pieces written about science and scientists. It sold for \$12.50.

Most of the other items on the list seem to reflect highly active areas in scientific research. Several deal with cancer. For example, *In vitro methods in cell-mediated and*

tumor immunity has been cited 186 times since its publication in 1976. *Molecular mechanisms in the control of gene expression* deals with another area that has been much talked about of late — cloning. It has received 78 citations since it was published in 1976. Both were published by Academic Press.

Several of the books cover methods. One of these was actually a programmed text. Although few texts appear in *CBC*, we are pleased this one piqued our readers' interests.

Encouraged by the success of *CBC*, we expanded our book coverage in 1977 to the *Science Citation Index*, again indexing at the chapter level. For the *SCI*, we create an indexing entry for every author and every significant title word. In addition, we index every cited reference, making the chapter retrievable through the *Citation Index* section of *SCI*. Most books covered in *SCI* have also appeared in *Current Book Contents*. This year we further expanded our book coverage at the chapter level by introducing *Index to Scientific &*

*Technical Proceedings*<sup>™</sup>. In 1979, we will add books to the *Social Sciences Citation Index* and the *Arts & Humanities Citation Index*<sup>™</sup> and we will introduce a new service which will also cover books, the *Index to Social Sciences & Humanities Proceedings*<sup>™</sup>.

*CBC* was thus an important beginning for us. But we must go on to more comprehensive book coverage in our services. How we will do this is the subject of another essay. Perhaps we will be able to use citation methods to select books for retrospective indexing. Any well-cited book ought to become one of our source publications.

In the meantime, I hope that editors of books and authors of chapters will appreciate the significance of our decision to select their books. On the other hand, we hope that editors and authors of books which we do not select will understand that there are economic limitations to our coverage of books as there are to our journal coverage.

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## REFERENCES

1. **Garfield E.** *Current Book Contents* settles in; progress report on a resoundingly successful experiment! *Current Contents* (34):5-6, 21 August 1974. (Reprinted in: Garfield E. *Essays of an information scientist*. Philadelphia: ISI Press, 1977. Vol 2, p. 118-9).
2. ...., Announcing *Current Contents/Arts & Humanities*: in 1979 our *Current Contents* series will cover virtually every academic discipline. *Current Contents* (30):5-7, 24 July 1978.