

Current Comments

Introducing

Current Contents/Arts & Humanities —
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Current Contents[®] /Arts & Humanities (*CC*[®] /A&H) is a new and unique information service which provides scholars a quick and easy way to learn about new articles and books. *CC/A&H* displays the contents pages from the most significant journals in the arts and humanities. In 1979, it will cover almost 1,000 journals from such fields as literature, music, fine arts, architecture, history, philosophy, theology, classics, performing arts, communications, folklore, linguistics, and philology. The names of the journals covered in *CC/A&H* are listed both alphabetically and by subject area in this issue.

While some of the contents pages in *CC/A&H* are exact facsimilies of the original contents pages, most are not. They are enhanced at ISI[®] to provide more information than the tables of contents as they appear in the journals. We make some additions because many article titles do not adequately describe the subject matter. For example, a title like "The humanitarian eye" does not indicate that the article concentrates on the artist Ben Shahn. In *CC/A&H* an un-descriptive title is followed by the name of

the person, place, or thing discussed in the article. These "title enrichment" descriptors are chosen by ISI indexers.

Another enhancement provided in *CC/A&H* involves the treatment of book reviews. Arts and humanities journals include many reviews, but they often fail to indicate on the contents page which books are reviewed. They may simply indicate that there is a book review section. When this is the case, we not only add the title and author of each book reviewed, but also the name of the reviewer.

When you see an article you want to obtain, *CC* gives you all the bibliographic information necessary to locate it at your library or order it through inter-library loan. The contents page format includes authors' names, article title, journal title, volume, issue number, and pagination.

Of equal importance is the Author-Address Directory in each issue. It includes the names and addresses of all first or reprint authors. In the natural sciences it is well known that *Current Contents* is responsible for stimulating thousands of requests for reprints.

The address directory also facilitates correspondence between authors and readers.

If you are unable to obtain an article through these channels, ISI can usually provide it through our *Original Article Tear Sheet (OATS®)* service.

Most of the articles supplied by OATS are torn directly from extra copies of the journals. If, for some reason, tear sheets are exhausted, a photocopy is provided. This will only present a problem if you require the original color plates or photos in particular articles. We may consider obtaining a color copier for these if there is sufficient demand. But we expect that in many cases the reader will go directly to the publisher. That is why we include a publisher directory in CC every four months.

Besides displaying the contents pages of journals, CC/A&H lists the contents of selected books in a special section called *Current Book Contents™ (CBC™)*. Each CBC listing includes enough information to allow you to request the book at your library or order it from the publisher. For your convenience we have also instituted a service that allows readers to send their orders to ISI to be forwarded to the publisher. In 1979 we plan to cover 125 multi-authored books. We expect to expand the coverage of books in future years.

The table-of-contents format of CC/A&H is designed to make browsing easy. Nevertheless, some users may feel that they do not have time to browse each issue. To save

them time and to help readers quickly relocate articles in past issues, we have included several indexes.

The *Weekly Subject Index (WSI)* lists every significant word or phrase appearing in the titles of articles, books, and chapters in the issue. In addition, the title-enrichment terms are indexed in WSI. Authors and title words of books reviewed in the journal issues covered also appear in the index. Readers interested in new material on a particular subject can find it immediately by using the *Weekly Subject Index*.

The Author-Address Directory permits you to find out if a certain author of interest has published an article covered by the issue. The *Journal Index* lets you know what journals are covered in a particular CC issue. Contents pages are grouped in CC by discipline, assuring you that you do not overlook any journals in your field.

Besides contents pages and indexes, each issue of CC/A&H includes our Press Digest, a weekly feature designed to both inform and amuse the reader. Items in Press Digest are excerpts from journal, newspaper, and magazine articles. This section is multidisciplinary, allowing readers in the various specialties to get impressions of other fields. Readers who find a particular Press Digest item of interest should obtain the entire article to make sure they get the whole story, since ours is just an abbreviated version. We provide enough bibliographic information

to allow you to do this. Press Digest items can also be ordered through OATS.

Periodically we will include *Current Comments*[®] —essays like this one to keep you informed of various topics of interest to scholars and librarians in the arts and humanities. Some *Current Comments* will be original essays written especially for this edition. Others will be reprints from other *CC* editions. Many of these will be on subjects of particular concern to readers of *CC/A&H*. Some will be of more general interest.

CC/A&H is the seventh edition of *Current Contents*. Others cover the broad disciplinary areas of life sciences; physical, chemical and earth sciences; agriculture, biology and environmental sciences; clinical practice; engineering, technology and applied sciences; and social and behavioral sciences. We have been publishing information services in the sciences and social sciences for twenty years. Frankly, we hesitated to enter the arts and humanities area. But last year we took the plunge and published our *Arts & Humanities Citation Index*[™]. I will discuss this unique bibliographic tool in future essays.

The *Arts & Humanities Citation Index* has been received with enthusiasm by scholars and librarians. Apparently it has filled a previously unarticulated need. I expect that *Current Contents/Arts & Humanities* will do the same. Just because humanities scholars study problems which are "classical," it does not follow that they do not have a sense of urgency about the current literature. Nor is it true that scholars in the humanities have little need for multidisciplinary searches. An interesting example of such research is provided by the subject of computerized musicology.² Information about this subject is scattered through many journals of the arts and humanities.

I think that the acceptance of ISI's publications reflects the "catching-up" process now taking place in the humanities. Scholars in these fields have discovered the computer and are more aware that the humanities in the recent past have been ignored by information technology.³ Now that this technology is being extended to them, I think they will recognize it does not present a conflict with the basic humanistic aims of their research endeavors.

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REFERENCES

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3. **Schneider B R.** *Travels in computerland: or, incompatibilities and interfaces: a full and true account of the implementation of the London Stage information bank*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1974. 244 p.