

# Current Comments<sup>®</sup>

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**Information à la Carte:  
Custom Contents and the New ASCA  
Cater to Your Current-Awareness Needs**

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Many readers have informed me that *Current Contents*<sup>®</sup> (*CC*<sup>®</sup>) would be perfect if only we would add a few more journals in this or that subject. One reader of *CC/Agriculture, Biology & Environmental Sciences* (*CC/AB&ES*) suggests we include a few more chemistry journals in that edition, while a reader of *CC/Life Sciences* (*CC/LS*) requests more coverage of clinical medicine. The number of combinations is virtually unlimited.

Such requests reflect the dilemma we face in deciding which journals to include in each edition of *CC*. Earlier this year I discussed in detail our journal selection process for *CC*.<sup>1</sup> We aim to provide our readers with comprehensive coverage of the most important journals in the subject areas covered by each *CC* edition, but cost-benefit considerations dictate that some journals are excluded. We do not want to include journals of interest to only a small number of an edition's readers; the added cost would effectively penalize the majority. In most cases, we think we've found the appropriate middle ground. Our selections, however, are subject to change; we recognize that the importance of a journal for a field may increase or decrease over time and that new, essential journals are appearing every year. For these and other reasons, our journal-coverage specialists constantly review and evaluate the journals included in each edition.

## Introducing *Custom Contents*

No matter how justifiable our selection policies may be, some readers do have special needs that must be satisfied. In response to their requests for additional journal coverage, we have created a new service. *Custom Contents*<sup>™</sup> is a weekly listing of the contents of journals that you select from the more than 7,000 covered by *ISI*<sup>®</sup>. For example, if you receive *CC/Clinical Practice* (*CC/CP*) but want to stay current with a dozen or so journals dealing with management or computers, *Custom Contents* may solve your dilemma.

You can of course order *Custom Contents* even if you do not subscribe to *CC*. For thousands of pass-along readers of *CC*, *Custom Contents* should be a welcome supplement. So if you just want to follow a small number of extra journals, or a diverse collection of journals scattered in several editions of *CC*, now is the time to take the plunge.

A sample page from *Custom Contents* is illustrated in Figure 1. Each week you will receive your customized report, laser-printed on both sides of 8½-by-11-inch paper. Blank space is provided at the top of the page so you can punch holes and place your report in a loose-leaf binder, making it simple to flip through the pages. The page is divided into three columns. The journal titles you select are highlighted at the top of a

**Figure 1:** One page of a *Custom Contents*<sup>TM</sup> report. At the top of the column is the journal name with the volume, issue number, and date. Each item includes the article title, type (e.g., editorial, book review, and so on), page span, and number of references included. A check mark is placed next to those articles with specified items requested in the profile.

REPORT FOR 20 JUL 85		YOUR CUSTOM CONTENTS FOR THIS WEEK	
<b>SCIENCE</b>		<b>ALY28</b>	
229(4710):JUL 19 1985			
227	TRAUMA RESEARCH (LETTER) LAZEN AG AG LAZEN, NATL RES COUNCIL COMMISS LIFE SCI, 2101 CONSTITUIT AVE NW, WASHINGTON, DC 20418	1 REFS	
227	ULTRASOUND EFFECTS (LETTER) MARTIN AD AD MARTIN, NORTHWESTERN UNIV, SCH MED, DEPT OBSTET & GYNECOL, HUMAN GENET SECT, CHICAGO, IL 60611	5 REFS	
227	COMPUTING AND SOCIOLOGY (LETTER) TANNER MA MA TANNER, UNIV WISCONSIN, DEPT STAT, MADISON, WI 53706	7 REFS	
227	CRISIS IN ENGINEERING (LETTER) DRUCKER DC DC DRUCKER, UNIV FLORIDA, COLL ENGN, DEPT ENGN SCI, GAINESVILLE, FL 32611	1 REFS	
227	CORRECTION (CORRECTION)	1 REFS	
231	MODEST PROPOSALS FOR THE GRANTING SYSTEM (EDITORIAL) KOSHLAND DE	NO REFS	
233-238	PENTAGONAL AND ICOSAHEDRAL ORDER IN RAPIDLY COOLED METALS NELSON DR HALPERIN BI DR NELSON, HARVARD UNIV, LYMAN LAB PHYS, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138	43 REFS	
238-242	NEUROTROPIC FACTORS THOENEN H EDGAR D H THOENEN, MAX PLANCK INST PSYCHIAT, DEPT NEUROCHEM, D-8033 MARTINSRIED, FED REP GER	94 REFS	
242-247	A GENERAL METHOD FOR SATURATION MUTAGENESIS OF CLONED DNA FRAGMENTS MYERS RM LERMAN LS MANIATIS T RM MYERS, HARVARD UNIV, DEPT BIOCHEM & MOLEC BIOL, 7 DIVINITY AVE, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138	33 REFS	
248-250	THE ELECTRICITY INDUSTRY'S DILEMMA (EDITORIAL) CRAWFORD W	NO REFS	
251-253	UNIQUE ANTHROPOLOGY FILMS LIE IN LIMBO (EDITORIAL) HOLDEN C	NO REFS	
252	RIFKIN VERSUS GENE-SPLICING - NIH WINS A ROUND (EDITORIAL) NORMAN C	NO REFS	
252-253	EDUCATION RESEARCH REORGANIZATION ANNOUNCED (EDITORIAL) HOLDEN C	NO REFS	
253	SITE REQUIREMENTS DRAWN UP FOR SSC (EDITORIAL) NORMAN C	1 REFS	
253	PHYSICS INSTITUTE WILL NOT RESTRICT MEETINGS (EDITORIAL) NORMAN C	1 REFS	
254	A 750-MILLION DOLLAR PLAN FOR COAL RESEARCH (EDITORIAL) CRAWFORD W	NO REFS	
255-257	WEATHER SATELLITES COMING OF AGE (EDITORIAL) KERR RA	4 REFS	
257-258	PARKINSONS-DISEASE - AN ENVIRONMENTAL CAUSE (EDITORIAL) LEWIN R	4 REFS	
267-269	CYCLIC-AMP REGULATION OF EUKARYOTIC GENE- TRANSCRIPTION BY 2 DISCRETE MOLECULAR MECHANISMS WATERMAN M MURDOCH GH EVANS RM ROSENFEL MC M WATERMAN, UNIV CALIF SAN DIEGO, EUKARYOT REGULATORY BIOL PROGRAM, LA JOLLA, CA 92093	29 REFS	
272-275	CA-2+ AND CA-2+-ACTIVATED K+ CURRENTS IN MAMMALIAN GASTRIC SMOOTH-MUSCLE CELLS U1 SMALL NUCLEAR-RNA GENES ARE SUBJECT TO GOSAGE COMPENSATION IN MOUSE CELLS WANGJIN M ARES M WEINER AM M WANGJIN, YALE UNIV, SCH MED, DEPT MOLEC BIOPHYS & BIOCHEM, NEW HAVEN, CT 06510	41 REFS	
282-284	SEQUENCE HOMOLOGY BETWEEN CERTAIN VIRAL-PROTEINS AND PROTEINS RELATED TO ENCEPHALOMYELITIS AND NEURITIS JANNKE U FISCHER EH ALVORD EC U JANNKE, UNIV WASHINGTON, SCH MED, DEPT BIOCHEM, SEATTLE, WA 98195	34 REFS	
284-287	CHOLINE-ACETYLTRANSFERASE ACTIVITY IN STRIATUM OF NEONATAL RATS INCREASED BY NERVE GROWTH-FACTOR MOBLEY WC RUTKOWSK JI TENNEKOO GI BUCHANAN K JOHNSTON W MC MOBLEY, UNIV CALIF SAN FRANCISCO, SCH MED, DEPT NEUROL, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94143	80 REFS	
287-289	MEMORY PROCESSING OF SERIAL LISTS BY PIGEONS, MONKEYS, AND PEOPLE WRIGHT AA SANTIAGO HC SANDS SF KENDRICK DF DOOK RG AA WRIGHT, UNIV TEXAS, HLTH SCI CTR, GRAD SCH BIOMED SCI, CTR SENSORY SCI, 6420 LANAR FLEMING AVE, HOUSTON, TX 77030	29 REFS	



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column, with the complete contents of each issue listed below in sequence by page number. Various typefaces are used to facilitate legibility and scanning; for example, article titles appear in bold-face.

Complete bibliographic information is provided for each article, including all authors, an address for requesting reprints, and the number of references cited in the article. The type of article, its language, and its page range are indi-

cated. A unique check-mark feature is available with *Custom Contents*. Articles containing title words, authors, or citations you specified in your profile are indicated with a check mark.

We also supply ISI's journal-accession number so that you can easily order the articles you need from our document-delivery service, *The Genuine Article*<sup>TM</sup> (formerly *OATS*<sup>®</sup> [*Original Article Text Service*]). In fact, you can simply request the article you want from your copy of *Custom Contents* by writing the ISI accession number and the starting page of the article on an ISI order card and sending it to us. Or, simply put a check mark by the title and send the whole page to ISI or to your librarian.

At the end of your *Custom Contents* report, you will find an alphabetic index listing each journal included in that week's report. Notification will be given if none of the selected journals appear that week, since most journals are not published weekly.

The basic annual subscription to *Custom Contents* is \$100. This will allow you to include 10 journals in your profile, but you can order as many additional journals as you wish at \$10 per journal. A few very large journals, however, are priced slightly higher; should one of these appear on your list, we will notify you. The basic subscription includes one copy of your *Custom Contents* report, but additional copies may be purchased for a nominal fee.

*Custom Contents* joins our other current-awareness services—*CC*, *ASCA*<sup>®</sup> (*Automatic Subject Citation Alert*), and *ASCATOPICS*<sup>®</sup>—to provide you with a comprehensive information-retrieval system.

### **ASCA Improvements**

In response to customer requests, we've also recently added several improvements to our *ASCA* service, a personalized current-awareness service that

automatically locates in the journal literature every new item related to a subscriber's interests. This service has been described in *CC* on several occasions—the last time in 1983.<sup>2</sup>

*ASCA* reports are now laser-printed on single-sided 8½-by-11-inch paper to make filing easier. You will continue to receive two copies of your *ASCA* report, with no additional charge for the second copy. The new look of *ASCA* is illustrated in Figure 2. *ASCATOPICS* is also now laser-printed. This service differs from *ASCA* by using over 350 predetermined profiles designed by ISI staff for popular topics.

### **All-Cited-Author Searching**

For years, citation-indexing aficionados have requested all-cited-author searching. Now it's here. Previously, if you searched for a cited author who was cited only as a secondary author, you might have come up empty-handed. At your request, *ASCA* can now retrieve articles in which the cited author named in your profile is a secondary author. Up to 40 of the most recently published papers for each cited secondary author will be added to your report at no increase in cost. This extends to cited authors the already existing all-author capability possible for source authors. If a homographic name is a problem, the irrelevant papers can be eliminated by a more specific profile that searches for only those papers by the appropriate person.

### **Addition of Arts and Humanities Journals**

We have also improved *ASCA* by adding coverage of 1,300 arts and humanities journals to the 5,800 science, technology, and social-science journals previously covered. With this improvement, *ASCA*'s comprehensive multidisciplinary coverage spans the two cul-

**Figure 2:** A page of a sample ASCA® report. The column at left identifies the profile term that produced each entry. The profile contains J.P. Ewert and M.A. Arbib as cited-author terms, and the paper by Cervantes Perez cited these two authors.

REPORT FOR 12 APR 85 THIS SUBSCRIPTION EXPIRES 28 JUN

24,127 PUBLISHED ITEMS SEARCHED THIS WEEK

MODEL/ CONTROL THE DISTRIBUTIONS OF CELL-SIZE AND GENERATION TIME IN A MODEL OF THE CELL-CYCLE INCORPORATING SIZE CONTROL AND RANDOM TRANSITIONS  
 Tyson JJ Hannsgen KB 67 REFS  
 J THEOR BIO 113(1): 29-62, MAR 7 1985  
 -----> CHECK TO ORDER TEAR SHEETS ----->( ) #ADG65  
 JJ TYSON, VIRGINIA POLYTECH INST & STATE UNIV,  
 DEPT BIOL, BLACKSBURG, VA 24061

A NEURAL MODEL OF INTERACTIONS SUBSERVING PREY PREDATOR DISCRIMINATION AND SIZE PREFERENCE IN ANURAN AMPHIBIA  
 Cervante.F Lara R Arbib M 44 REFS  
 J THEOR BIO 113(1): 117-152, MAR 7 1985  
 THESE ITEMS IN YOUR PROFILE WERE CITED:  
 ENERT JP KYBERNETIK 14 167 74  
 ARBIB MA MACHINE INTELLIGENCE 10 501 82  
 -----> CHECK TO ORDER TEAR SHEETS ----->( ) #ADG65  
 F CERVANTESPEREZ, NATL AUTONOMOUS UNIV MEXICO,CTR  
 INVEST & FISIOL CELULAR,  
 MEXICO CITY 04510, DF, MEXICO

A NEURAL THEORY OF CIRCADIAN-RHYTHMS - SPLIT RHYTHMS, AFTEREFFECTS AND MOTIVATIONAL INTERACTIONS  
 Carpenete.GA Grossber.S 87 REFS  
 J THEOR BIO 113(1): 163-223, MAR 7 1985  
 THESE ITEMS IN YOUR PROFILE WERE CITED:  
 MEVER R KYBERNETIK 1 139 62  
 -----> CHECK TO ORDER TEAR SHEETS ----->( ) #ADG65  
 GA CARPENTER, NORTHEASTERN UNIV,DEPT MATH,  
 BOSTON, MA 02115



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tures of the arts and sciences. This expanded coverage will bring to your attention relevant articles from the history and philosophy of science, medical anthropology, archaeology, and other multidisciplinary fields. Needless to say, this will give humanities scholars an important new information resource as

well. As I've mentioned before, social and natural scientists often cite the humanities literature. They can also use *Arts & Humanities SEARCH™*, the online version of the printed *Arts & Humanities Citation Index™ (A&HCI™)* available through BRS, a database vendor.<sup>3</sup>

**Table 1:** A comparison of the searching capabilities of four ISI® current-awareness products.

	SEARCHING CAPABILITIES								
	TERM(S)	BOOLEAN TERM(S)	SOURCE JOURNAL	SOURCE AUTHOR	CITED JOURNAL	CITED AUTHOR	ADDRESS	LANGUAGE	ARTICLE TYPE
ASCA	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
ASCATOPICS*	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
CUSTOM CONTENTS	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
CURRENT CONTENTS	X TITLE WORD INDEX			X AUTHOR INDEX AND ADDRESS DIRECTORY			X ADDRESS DIRECTORY		

\*ASCATOPICS can provide all the same options as ASCA, but only in accordance with a predetermined profile.

### Selection Option

As stated above, you can now search the combined sci-tech, social science, and arts and humanities databases for articles. However, we have also made it possible to narrow your search as well. A new selection option enables you to limit the search to a single major subject area or any combination of areas. For example, you can now request a search limited to the social-sciences file or combine the sciences with the arts and humanities file.

### Comparison of Product Services

*CC*, *Custom Contents*, *ASCA*, and *ASCATOPICS*—ISI's family of current-awareness products—combine to pro-

vide any researcher with an efficient and affordable system that gives access to the most current literature.

Although all these products are similar in that they keep you up-to-date each week, each offers a different type of current-awareness coverage and possesses different searching capabilities. To enable you to design your own current-awareness system according to your special requirements, Table 1 lists in detail the differences between the four products in terms of searching capabilities.

Broadly speaking, among these four current-awareness services you have a choice between browsing or subject-specific searching methods. *CC* lists all articles in a journal and provides a method for browsing the literature. *ASCA* and *ASCATOPICS* are designed

Table 2: A matrix presenting the type of coverage and profile of each product.

		PROFILE	
		STANDARDIZED Scope determined by ISI	CUSTOMIZED Scope determined by customer
COVERAGE	COMPLETE All articles in each journal are included	CURRENT CONTENTS	CUSTOM CONTENTS
	SELECTIVE Only articles relevant to a specific area are included.	ASCATOPICS	ASCA

to provide selective, subject-specific coverage; individual articles are scanned and sifted to yield, in accordance with the profile you submit, only those papers relevant to your work. *Custom Contents* falls somewhere between these two; it provides comprehensive coverage of journal contents, allowing you to browse, but selectively indicates specific articles of interest by adding a check mark next to those relevant to your customized profile. This check-mark feature provides the full selection power of the *ASCA* system to help highlight your special interests. Fees for this feature are the same as for *ASCA* searching terms.<sup>2</sup>

I have previously discussed the merits of selective, subject-specific information retrieval and those of merely browsing.<sup>4</sup> In our pursuit of efficient information retrieval, we must not forget the serendipitous insights, frequently of a multidisciplinary nature, that poking through the literature can yield. Most of us have been the beneficiaries of unexpected discoveries through browsing. Such discoveries often are surprisingly effective in suggesting new lines of investigation.

Selective versus comprehensive coverage is one way of classifying our current-awareness products. They may also be grouped by whether they use a stan-

dardized or customized profile to search the literature. *CC* and *ASCATOPICS* provide a standardized profile, the scope of which is determined by ISI subject specialists, whereas *ASCA* and *Custom Contents* offer the user an opportunity to design a personalized profile.

The products are listed in Table 2 in a matrix according to the type of coverage and profile of each. *Custom Contents* and *ASCA*, both tailored to your specific needs, are especially recommended for researchers whose work crosses the boundaries of any one field or for administrators who must monitor several areas of interest.

You may be asking yourself which service is right for you. Let me suggest that your decision should not be of the either/or variety. As I've said above, there is great benefit to be derived from using the subject-specific mode of information retrieval and the browsing method in concert. On the one hand, you may receive the *CC* edition that covers the journals in your field and then cover your specialty with *ASCA* or one of our *ASCATOPICS* editions. On the other hand, you may be one of our long-time subscribers to *ASCA* but want to do a little browsing through the dozen or so journals in your specialty; in this case, *Custom Contents* will be a good extra choice for you. With *ASCA*, you could

also use a cited-journal term to retrieve all articles citing a specialty journal that defines your research front.

In future essays I'll describe how these services can be delivered electronically. ISI's machine-readable database can be used to deliver information to micro-computer terminals via local area networks. Information can also be accessed through online national and international hosts.

### Third World Applications

*Custom Contents* and our improved *ASCA* services can be especially important for our friends in the Third World. Scarce resources frequently do not allow for well-stocked libraries. *ASCA* and *Custom Contents* can provide researchers in these countries with a practical and economical way to receive information on their exact areas of interest. These services may speed the pace of scientific discovery in these areas. International funding agencies often say that the Third World needs to define its own

needs. Here is an opportunity to put that idea into action.

To our Third World readers, as well as to all our readers, I extend an invitation to let us help you determine what combination of current-awareness products can bring you comprehensive coverage at the most cost-effective price. In the US, contact Ron Levine at 1-800-523-1850, extension 1328, or drop us a line. Our address is ISI, Current Awareness Products, 3501 Market Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104, USA. The ISI European branch address is 132 High Street, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB8 1DP, UK, and the phone number is 44-895-30085. Or you can contact our representatives listed in each issue of *CC*.

\* \* \* \* \*

*My thanks to Lisa Holland for her help in the preparation of this essay.* ©1985 ISI

### REFERENCES

1. Garfield E. Journal selection for *Current Contents*: editorial merit vs. political pressure. *Current Contents* (11):3-11, 18 March 1985.
2. .... You don't need an online computer to run SDI profiles offline! So why haven't you asked for *ASCA*—the ISI selective citation alert. *Essays of an information scientist*. Philadelphia: ISI Press, 1984. Vol. 6. p. 88-95.
3. .... How to use the *Arts & Humanities Citation Index (A&HCI)* and what's in it for you and your mate! *Current Contents* (6):3-10, 11 February 1985.
4. .... What does *Current Contents Online* mean to you? *Essays of an information scientist: the awards of science and other essays*. Philadelphia: ISI Press, 1985. Vol. 7. p. 64-7.