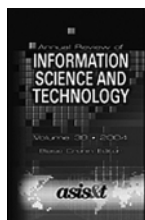


Reviews

Submissions and suggestions for journal or other recent publication reviews should be submitted to the Editor, L. Pilar Wyman, pilarw@wymanindexing.com or (410) 757-7119.

Cronin, Blaise, Editor, Annual Review of Information and Science Technology (ARIST), Volume 39. Information Today, Inc. (ITI); Medford, NJ USA on behalf of the American Society for Information Science and Technology (ASIST). November 2004, ISBN: 1-57387-209-1. 704 pp.



The American Society of Information Science and Technology (ASIS&T) has been putting out its annual review (ARIST) every year since 1966. According to ASIS&T, it has “long been considered a landmark publication within the information science community.”

The 2005 volume is divided into 14 chapters, or articles, grouped into five sections. This is an increase of two more chapters and of over 100 more pages since last year. The chapters are each written by one or more different scholars in the field of information science, both renowned names and newer researchers. Authors for the 39th volume are from universities in the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Denmark. As in the past, the chapters are grouped by sections, although the section topics vary from year to year. This year’s section topics are: Information Retrieval, Technology and Systems, Social Informatics, National Intelligence, and Theory.

The first section, Information Retrieval, has been a standard part of ARIST for several years. The first article explores “Statistical Language Modeling for Information Retrieval” and is the first ARIST review of this subject. The next article deals with “Information Retrieval on the Web.” Both articles include various equations, which are probably not understandable by those unfamiliar with the

scientific aspects of information retrieval. Nevertheless, the lay person can still follow to some extent the explanations of link analysis and content analysis. The third article in this section reviews studies in “Webometrics,” defined as the “quantitative study of Web-related phenomena,” such as web size, content, use, and especially links.

The Technology and Systems section covers three quite different areas. The first chapter is on “Information Visualization,” a potentially interesting topic even for those of us not familiar with the concept. The chapter has various illustrations of different graphical user interfaces and graphical models, whether for the Web, digital libraries or virtual communities. The next chapter, “Bioinformatics,” the first such review in ARIST, deals with information retrieval, data modeling, visualization, etc., as related to the field of biology. The third chapter in this section is on the topic of “Electronic Records Management.”

Of greater interest to those outside of academia is the third section, Social Informatics, which starts off with a chapter on “Interface Design and Culture.” This fascinating article reviews recent research into how users in different countries react differently to the interface of software. Colors, icons, layout and format can be interpreted differently. Translation issues are also discussed. The next chapter, “The Social Worlds of the Web,” considers web access, switching worlds, overlapping worlds, and how online and offline worlds can merge. “Children, Teenagers, and the Web,” is a thorough treatment of the subject, including surveys of web access and use, research on information seeking-behavior, a look at web design criteria, and a discussion on web content and safety. This chapter is valuable reading for any teacher or parent.

The fourth section, National Intelligence, is a topic that was first introduced in ARIST in 2002, with its consideration of the ties between intelligence and information science. The first article, “Intelligence, Terrorism, and National Security” was written by the volume’s editor, Blaise Cronin. He examines the ways in which organizational structure and culture (in this case the organizations of the FBI and CIA) have influenced information behaviors

and intelligence and security effectiveness. The other article in this section, “Domestic Security Surveillance and Civil Liberties” was written by an intelligence officer and attorney. It takes a historical look at government surveillance, and brings it to the present with the Patriot Act and its subsequent controversy. A topic of interest to all Americans, not merely to information specialists, this article is also an easier read than some of the more academic chapters.

The final section, Theory, looks at information science from the perspective of social science theory. It starts off with a chapter on “Managing Social Capital,” defined as the wealth and potential benefits of an individual’s social networks. The second article in this section, “Labor in Information Systems,” seeks to apply Marxist theory of labor to information systems. The final chapter is “Poststructuralism and Information Studies.” The reader comes away from this section and from the entire volume appreciating how information science is truly a very interdisciplinary field.

Chapters tend to have a broad and thorough treatment of their topic and a review of the literature. So, when combined in a single volume, ARIST truly is a review of the field of information science and technology. Each chapter has extensive endnotes and a bibliography. The volume also features an introduction, contributor biographies, and a 63-page index, which reaches such a length largely due to the inclusion of all cited authors.

Although the index was critiqued rather harshly in the last *Key Words* review of an ARIST volume (volume 37, 2003), I did not find the same problems with the volume 39 index.

The index would benefit, though, from a slightly smaller font size, so as to minimize the number of entries that carry over to a second, third, and even fourth line. To the dismay of us indexers, the only reference to “indexing” in the index is: “indexing, automatic, for visualization, 156, 163.”

The volume seems to have something for everyone, but very few readers would find all the articles to their interest. I would consider this a most valuable book for any library, not

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just academic libraries, but it is likely that only professors or researchers of library and information science would want to purchase the book for themselves.

More information can be found about the ARIST series at <http://www.asis.org/Publications/ARIST> or at <http://books.infotoday.com/asist/arist39.shtm>.

Editor's Note: You can search all the ARIST volumes by title, author, or keyword at

www.asis.org/Publications/ARIST/search.html.
A search on the term "indexing" yields 4 articles:

- "Abstracting and Indexing Services in Science and Technology" (Keenan, Stella – 1969, Vol. 4, Starting Page: 273)
- "Evaluation of Indexing Systems" (Bourne, Charles P. - 1966, Vol. 1, Starting Page: 171)
- "Indexing and Retrieval for the Web" (Rasmussen, Edie M. - 2003, Vol. 37, Starting Page: 91)
- "Indexing Images" (Rasmussen, Edie M. - 1997, Vol. 32, Starting Page: 169)

— *Review by Heather Hedden,
Hedden Information Management* 