

Proceedings of the 5th ASIS SIG/CR Classification Research Workshop

October 16, 1994

**Held at the 57th ASIS Annual Meeting
October 16-20, 1994
Alexandria, Virginia**

Editors and workshop co-chairs:

**Raya Fidel
Clare Beghtol
Barbara H. Kwaśnik
Philip J. Smith**

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Preface

General Comments

These *Proceedings* are a *working copy* of the contributions to the 5th ASIS SIG/CR Workshop on Classification Research, held in Alexandria, Virginia, at the ASIS Annual Meeting on Sunday, October 16th, 1994. As working papers, their purpose is to provide participants with a chance to review the contributions, before, during and after the Workshop. As such, the papers are not in their final versions, and after the Workshop, authors will have the opportunity to revise and edit their papers. After revisions, the *Proceedings* will be published as an ASIS monograph by Learned Information, Inc., under the title *Advances in Classification Research. Vol.5* and will be available for purchase in 1995.

Each year we have purposely chosen to cast a wide net in order to expand our perspective on the general subject of classification research. The presenters have been asked to write for a broad audience — possibly an audience unfamiliar with the terminology and special concerns of the author's own field — and yet, participants have more than graciously taken great pains to edit their work accordingly and have answered numerous editorial questions. We see this as additional evidence of the need for scholarly communication across disciplines, especially in areas such as classification research.

The aim of this Workshop during the past five years has been to gather together researchers and practitioners from a broad range of disciplines and areas of application in order to exchange ideas, discuss dilemmas, and share approaches to classification research. In past years, as in this year, we have been gratified to receive submissions from participants who would not normally have had the opportunity to meet. This year, once again, we are pleased to assemble a truly eclectic group of researchers. We have been struck by the unlimited number of uses people make of classification and by the global interest in it. We also noticed what seemed to be a rising interest in *cultural classification research*, that is, classification as a tool of sociological analysis, both in a general sense (such as using classification to show cultural biases) and in "smaller" cultures (such as terminologies of different academic areas). We think this is a healthy sign of widening sophistication in classification research.

The one disappointment in past years, however, has been that in placing emphasis on diversity and a broad scope, we have often not been able to focus on any one topic in depth. Because we receive so many excellent submissions, we always try to fit in as many interesting or unique perspectives as we can, but this leaves little time for general discussion. Therefore, this year, we are trying something new. The morning part of the Workshop will follow an agenda similar to that of other years: speakers will make short presentations based on their papers. We have renewed our efforts to deliver these *Proceedings* to registrants before the Workshop so that papers can be read in advance. Since this is the case, we are asking presenters, once again, to refrain from delivering their papers *verbatim*, but rather to address only the high points and critical issues and to leave ample time for questions and discussion from the floor.

In the afternoon, instead of presented papers, we have assembled a panel comprising David Dubin, Caroline Eastman, Barbara Kwasnik, Michael Ranney, Chatpong Tangmanee, and Janice Woo. The panelists' papers are included in the *Proceedings*, but instead of presenting the papers in the usual sense, this panel will serve as an anchor for a discussion on the cognitive aspects of classification. Some of the questions that will provide a focus for discussion are:

- Is it important to understand how people classify? Why?
- What are the best ways to find out how people classify?
- Can we generalize, or is it actually that each person has an individual scheme?
- Are there any universals in the area of human classification?

We hope that this new format will provide some interesting exchanges and satisfy the need for more depth as well as breadth.

Organization of These Proceedings

The first part of the *Proceedings* contains the *papers* of both presenters and panelists. The second section contains brief *abstracts* that were submitted for consideration, and which are included here in their short form to provide participants with additional insight into the kind of work that is presently being carried on in classification research. Both papers and abstracts are arranged in alphabetical order by the last name of the first author. The final section contains brief *personal statements* of participants, also arranged in alphabetical order.

Acknowledgments

We would like to thank all the participants for their submissions and especially for their patience in dealing with our suggestions. We also wish to thank ASIS administration and staff, who have supported and subsidized this Workshop and the *Proceedings*. Our Schools, the Department of Industrial and Systems Engineering at The Ohio State University, the Faculty of Library and Information Science at the University of Toronto, the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Washington, and the School of Information Studies at Syracuse University, all have also facilitated our efforts at organizing this Workshop. Finally, we offer special thanks to Megan Adams, Graduate Assistant at Syracuse University, who put in many hours in helping to prepare the manuscript.

RF, CB, BHK & PJS

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