



Pergamon

Information Processing & Management, Vol. 32, No. 1, pp. 3–17, 1996
Elsevier Science Ltd. Printed in Great Britain

0306-4573(95)00046-1

THE HISTORY AND HISTORIOGRAPHY OF INFORMATION SCIENCE: SOME REFLECTIONS

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Abstract—The first part of this paper examines some of the difficulties for the historian of information science that arise from the lack of agreement as to what precisely constitutes information science and from its commonly accepted interdisciplinary nature. It examines in this connection Machlup and Mansfield's ideas about a "narrow" information science and information science as a composite of disciplinary chunks. Regardless of these issues, it demonstrates that the history of information science is gaining an identity both bibliographically and socially. The second part of the paper suggests that as a condition of their organization, reproduction, and control all societies have evolved their own distinctive ways of managing information. Ultimately, then, the history of information science can be considered to extend far beyond the last 50 years where attention is commonly focused. Drawing on Braudel's notions, *durée longue*, *moyenne* and *courte*, the paper suggests an approach to periodicity that provides a new perspective for the history information science. The paper also introduces the notions of synchrony and diachrony to suggest other approaches to the historical study of aspects of information science. The paper concludes that the history of information science is an historical interdiscipline and those interested in it need to draw on a range of related historical studies such as the history of science and technology, the history of printing and publishing, and the history of information institutions such as libraries, archives and museums.