

WHAT IN THE WORLD ARE WE TALKING ABOUT: INFO NEEDS, SEEKING AND USE:

KEY CONCEPTS: CONVERGENCES AND DIVERGENCES The differences that definitions make in core concepts

A ONE-DAY WORKSHOP CO-SPONSORED BY

**6th ANNUAL SIG-SI
RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM**
ASIST Special Interest Group
Social Informatics

**10th ANNUAL SIG-USE
RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM**
ASIST Special Interest Group
Information Needs, Seeking & Use

contacts:

dervin.1@osu.edu (Brenda Dervin)
hrosenba@indiana.edu (Howard Rosenbaum)
ahcjurquhart@btinternet.com (Christine Urquhart)

SYNOPSIS

What in the world are we talking about? The workshop objectives are to discuss challenges in meaning in concepts used by researchers and practitioners in talking about information needs, seeking and use. These concepts are sometimes called variables, sometimes factors, and sometimes challenged as "jargon". In this workshop we will explore divergences and convergences, identifying what is different when different authors use, or have used, the same labels, and what concepts might share similarities despite having different labels. Convergences and divergences are "knotty problems" but we must celebrate and learn from diversity in our midst -- from the differences that the definitions and labels used in information needs, seeking and use make in core concepts.

WORKSHOP ORGANIZERS AND MODERATORS:

- * **Brenda Dervin**, Ohio State University, Columbus, USA, dervin.1@osu.edu
- * **Howard Rosenbaum**, Indiana University, Bloomington, USA, hrosenba@indiana.edu
- * **Christine Urquhart**, Aberystwyth University, UK, ahcjurquhart@btinternet.com

WORKSHOP WIKI DESIGN AND MANAGEMENT

- * **Jeanine Williamson**, University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA, jwilliamson@utk.edu

PRESENTERS

(OPENING & CLOSING KEYNOTERS)

- * **Charles Cole**, McGill University, Montreal, CANADA, charles.cole@mcgill.ca

- * **Brenda Dervin**, Ohio State University, Columbus, USA, dervin.1@osu.edu
- * **Michael Olsson**, University of Technology, Sydney, AUSTRALIA, michael.olsson@uts.edu.au
- * **Soo Young Rieh**, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, USA, rieh@umich.edu
- * **Howard Rosenbaum**, Indiana University, Bloomington, USA, hrosenba@indiana.edu
- * **Steve Sawyer**, Syracuse University, NY, USA, ssawyer@syr.edu
- * **Christine Urquhart**, Aberystwyth University, UK, ahcjurquhart@btinternet.com

INTENDED AUDIENCE

Graduate students, Faculty and Practitioners.

Expected audience includes members of SIG-SI and SIG-USE, but the workshop would be open to any ASIST2010 participants who wish to attend either as active participants or as participant-observers.

THE CONCEPT BEHIND THE WORKSHOP

Commentators observing thrusts toward inter-disciplinarity and collaboration have noted among the struggles faced the challenges of communication barriers. Central to these is the problem of what are people "meaning" when they speak. In research this challenge is often manifested by efforts to define core concepts that run about in various disguises and cloaks.

Between different sub-communities and discourses, we so easily appear to be talking about the "same" phenomena

when our meaning worlds barely touch. We need to take a break from business as usual to meta-communicate about definitional challenges in user oriented studies of information technology use and information needs, seeking, and use. The intent is not to homogenize understandings, so as to zero in on presumably correct answers. Rather, we aim for a fuller picture of the reasons behind convergences and divergences between us.

ACTIVITIES AND PROJECTED SCHEDULE

08:30 am - Opening remarks, opening keynoter panel

09:45 am - Break

10:00 am - Concept group meetings

12:15 pm - Lunch

SPECIAL NOTICE: The annual SIG-USE awards ceremony and paper presentation by the recipient of the Elfreda A. Chatman Research Proposal Award will take place from 12:30 - 1:00 pm. All symposium participants will be cordially invited to attend.

01:30 pm - Concept group facilitator reports

02:45 pm - Brief "take-away" comments from opening panelists

03:45 pm - Closing

THE OPENING KEYNOTER PANEL

In the opening panel, the 9 keynoters (listed above) will each speak for 5-6 minutes in answer to: "Why we need to attend to the question: 'What in the world are we talking about?'" The keynoters will also serve as observers for the working group discussions. The opening keynote talks will be recorded and put on the workshop wiki.

THE CONCEPT GROUP MEETINGS: CALL FOR PROPOSALS

This call for concept proposal papers will be issued to the all potential ASIST2010 attendees and specifically to the membership rosters of SIG-SI and SIG-USE. Those who wish to participate most actively may submit a brief (maximum 1200 words) paper in which they propose a core concept that they feel should be the focus of one of the workshop's working groups. The proposed concept may show itself in the literature (as the proposer interprets the literatures relevant to him/her): a) under different names but aiming for the "same" meaning; and/or, b) under the same name but aiming for "different" meanings.

To submit a concept paper proposal, the requirements will be as follows:

* This is to be a think piece and commentary, not a research paper. Please do not use citations in text. Please do not use direct or indirect quotes from others. Your task is to

present YOUR THINKING.

* 1200 words or less

* Submit as a pdf document

* Put your name in the upper right hand corner of the first page

* Put pagination #s in the upper right hand corner

* Name your file as follows:

2010_SI_USEworkshop_yourlastname_concept_name.pdf
e.g. 2010_SI-USEworkshop_sullivan_info_needs.pdf
e.g. 2010_SI-USEworkshop_andrews_relevance.pdf

*Use these headers to organize your comments

- a) **PROPOSED CONCEPT, THE NAME I KNOW IT BY BEST:**
- b) **OTHER NAMES I HAVE SEEN USED TO LABEL IT:**
- c) **MY FAVORITE DEFINITION FOR THE CONCEPT:**
- d) **MY UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONCEPT'S HISTORY:**
- e) **WHERE I SEE PEOPLE WITH DIFFERENT DEFINITIONS CONVERGING:**
- f) **WHERE I SEE PEOPLE WITH DIFFERENT DEFINITIONS DIVERGING:**
- g) **MY UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT ACCOUNTS FOR THESE DIFFERENCES:**
- h) **REFERENCES FOUND HELPFUL: (no more than 2-3)**

DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING CONCEPT PROPOSALS:

To allow participants to be eligible for the early ASIST overall conference registration fee (deadline September 10) and to meet application deadlines at their local institutions, participants may submit concept paper proposals any time between September 1, 2010 and September 25, 2010.

EXTENDED TO OCTOBER 1, midnight eastern US time. The reviewing team will provide feedback within 7 days of submission.

Send a pdf file following the instructions above to each of following (the reviewing team)

dervin.l@osu.edu

hrosenba@indiana.edu

ahcjurquhart@btinternet.com

jwilliamson@utk.edu

michael.olsson@uts.edu.au

charles.cole@mcgill.ca

reijo.saviolainen@uta.fi

In the subject line of the email put the phrase:

ASIST workshop concept paper proposal

CONCEPT DISCUSSION GROUP ORGANIZATION

Because the workshop is designed as a working session all participants will be asked to commit themselves to the full day's schedule. Participants will be welcome in a variety of roles. Those who want to participate most actively are asked to submit concept proposal papers (as described above).

Concept discussion groups will be organized around similar or related concepts. Each group will have a group

facilitator chosen from the ranks of those assigned to the group. Those who did not submit concept papers will be assigned to their preferred group insofar as possible. Group facilitators will be provided with a "design for the group's dialogue procedures." In round 1, only those with concept papers will present for 8-12 minutes each. In round 2, all participants -- except the designated observer -- will be asked to participate using guidelines emphasizing meaning-making rather than conflict-resolution. In addition participants will be asked to fill in think-as-you go written response sheets with those contributions that they didn't have time to contribute to the assembled group. These think-as-you-go sheets will be scanned and posted (anonymously or by name, as the contributor wishes) on the workshop wiki after the workshop.

CONCEPT GROUP FACILITATOR REPORTS

Facilitators will be charged to report back the results of their group's deliberations -- convergences and divergences as well as conclusions and confusions. These "report backs" will be recorded and put on the workshop wiki.

TAKE-AWAY COMMENTS FROM KEYNOTERS

Each of the 8 keynoters will have sat in on one of the concept group meetings but only as an observer charged with listening -- regardless of his/her own positions -- for convergences and divergences, confusions and conclusions. Each keynoter will summarize his/her observations focusing particularly on the communication process and assessments of outcomes in a brief 5-6 minute closing comment. These comments will be recorded and put on the workshop wiki.

NAMES OF ORGANIZERS & THEIR CREDENTIALS

The proposal as presented above has been approved by both SIG-SI and SIG-USE leadership. In addition, all the keynoter panelists have regularly seen the proposal in development stages. Credentials for the 3 workshop coordinators are as follows:

BRENDA DERVIN is Full Professor of Communication, and Joan N. Huber Fellow in Social and Behavioral Sciences, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio. Her research interests focus on the design, testing, and implementation of dialogic practices for communication in any communicative setting -- e.g. interviewing, research planning and design, group deliberations, web design, pedagogy, citizen participation, etc. An active participant in ASIST'S SIG-USE, she received that SIG's 2005 award for outstanding contributions to information behavior research; and was elected a SIG fellow in 2009. In 2006, she received ASIST's information science research award.

HOWARD ROSENBAUM is Associate Dean, Associate Professor of Information Science, and MIS Program Director at the School of Library and Information Science, Indiana University, Bloomington, Indiana. He is also an Adjunct Associate Professor in the University of Indiana School of Informatics. His research interests focus on informatics, e-business, information architecture, computer-mediated communication, managers and information organizations, information policy and electronic networking, and the intersection of sociological and library and information science theory. He is a founder and current chair of ASIST's Special Interest Group on Social Informatics; and co-author with Kline and Sawyer of the seminal book on Understanding and communicating social informatics.

CHRISTINE URQUHART is Senior Lecturer, Department of Information Studies, Aberystwyth University, UK. Her research interests focus on information behavior, value and impact analysis, systematic reviews in health services research, evidence-based practice and policy making, and research methodologies in information management. Her research program actively traverses the research to practice divide, with many graduate students who are pursuing doctoral research (part-time) but working in diverse positions - in health information management, national archives, and academic libraries. She is a long-time active member of SIG-USE.

ESTIMATED ATTENDANCE

Both the SIG-USE and SIG-SI separate symposia have had from 60-80 attendees a year but this involved some overlapping participation. A guestimate for this year: 60.

EQUIPMENT REQUIRED

- * Front panelist table, 8 chairs long
- * Microphones if room acoustics and attendance size require
- * Separate group meeting tables with 8-10 seats each

FEES

The workshop fee includes a morning coffee/tea/snack break and lunch.

Workshop fees are:

Members \$105, non-members \$110.

If you are a member of SIG SI or SIG USE, you will receive a \$5 discount.