

---

# Human Information Retrieval

Julian Warner

The MIT Press  
Cambridge, Massachusetts  
London, England

© 2010 Massachusetts Institute of Technology

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced in any form by any electronic or mechanical means (including photocopying, recording, or information storage and retrieval) without permission in writing from the publisher.

For information about special quantity discounts, please email [special\\_sales@mit-press.mit.edu](mailto:special_sales@mit-press.mit.edu)

This book was set in Sabon by The MIT Press.  
Printed and bound in the United States of America.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Warner, Julian, 1955–

Human information retrieval / Julian Warner.

p. cm.—(History and foundations of information science)

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-262-01344-4 (alk. paper)

1. Information retrieval. I. Title.

ZA3075.W375 2010

025.04—dc22

2009010120

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

---

## Acknowledgments

The John Campbell Trust supported a presentation on the labor theoretic approach to information retrieval at the Annual Meeting of the American Society for Information Science and Technology, Providence, RI, November 2004. I received hospitality and assistance from the Research Centre for the Social Sciences (RCSS), University of Edinburgh, where most of the articles from which material has been derived were originally written during study leave from the Queen's University of Belfast, February–July 2005.

I am indebted to the unnumbered students at the Queen's University of Belfast and Indiana University who interactively contributed to the development of the research themes expounded by taking courses in Information Policy, Communicating Electronically, and Computer Mediated Communication, 2001–2007.

Michael Buckland, Elisabeth Davenport, and Madeleine Coyle also gave me support and encouragement.

Chapters 2–4 are adapted, respectively, from the following series of articles:

Warner, J. 2007. Selection power and selection labor for information retrieval. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 58 (7): 915–923.

Warner, J. 2007. Description and search labor for information retrieval. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*. 58 (12): 1783–1790.

Warner, J. 2008. A labor theoretic approach to information retrieval. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 59 (5): 731–741.

Chapter 2 also incorporates material from the following article:

Warner, J. 2000. In the catalogue ye go for men: evaluation criteria for information retrieval systems. *Aslib Proceedings* 52 (2): 76–82.

Chapters 5–8 incorporate material from the following articles:

Warner, J. 2007. Analogies between linguistics and information theory. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 58 (3): 309–321.

Warner, J. 2007. Linguistics and information theory: analytic advantages. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 58 (2): 275–285.

They also include some material published in the following book chapter.

Warner, J. 2008. Materializing communication concepts: linearity and surface in linguistics and information theory. In *Exploration of space, technology, and spatiality: Interdisciplinary perspectives*, ed. P. Turner, S. Turner, and E. Davenport., 196–213. Hershey: Information Science Reference Press.