



HAL
open science

Introduction.

Thomas Dousa, Fidelia Ibekwe-Sanjuan

► **To cite this version:**

Thomas Dousa, Fidelia Ibekwe-Sanjuan. Introduction.. Fidelia Ibekwe-SanJuan & Thomas Dousa. Theories of Information, Communication and Knowledge. A Multidisciplinary approach., Springer, pp.331, 2013, Studies in History and Philosophy of Science - Vol. 34, 978-94-007-6972-4. 10.1007/978-94-007-6973-1_1 . hal-00857973

HAL Id: hal-00857973

<https://hal.science/hal-00857973v1>

Submitted on 5 Sep 2013

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

In Theories of Information, Communication and Knowledge. A multidisciplinary approach, Fidelia Ibekwe-SanJuan & Thomas Dousa (eds.), Springer. Series in [Studies in History and Philosophy of Science](#), volume 34, 2014, 331 pages. DOI : [10.1007/978-94-007-6973-1_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-6973-1_1)

Chapter 1. Introduction

Thomas Dousa & Fidelia Ibekwe-SanJuan pages 1-21

This book addresses some of the key questions that scientists have been asking themselves for centuries: what is knowledge? What is information? How do we know that we know something? How do we construct meaning from the perceptions of things? And how do we communicate this meaning to others—that is to say, inform them? Although no consensus exists on a common definition of the concepts of information and communication, few can reject the hypothesis that information – whether perceived as an « object » or as a « process » - is a precondition for knowledge. Epistemology can be defined as the study of how we know things in general—this is its primary signification in the anglophone world—or, more specifically, as the study of how scientific knowledge is attained and validated—this is how it is conceived in the francophone world. To adopt an epistemological stance is to commit oneself to render an account of what constitutes knowledge or, in procedural terms, to render an account of when one can claim to know something. An epistemological theory imposes constraints on the interpretation of human cognitive interaction with the world. It goes without saying that different epistemological theories will have more or less restrictive criteria for distinguishing what constitutes knowledge from what is not. If information is a precondition for knowledge acquisition, giving an account of how knowledge is acquired should affect our understanding of information and communication as concepts.

While much has been written on the definition of these concepts, relatively few researchers have sought to establish explicit links between differing theoretical conceptions of them and the underlying epistemological stances. This is what this volume attempts to do. The idea for this book came about as the result of a project funded by the French Institute of Information and Communication Sciences on the epistemology of information and communication and how it affects interdisciplinarity in scientific research. A colloquium was organised within the framework of this project on the 8th April 2011 in Lyon¹ which gathered some of the leading specialists on the topic. The current book is a follow-up to the 2011 colloquium. It is a multidisciplinary exploration of how information and communication are perceived in different disciplines and how this affects theories of knowledge. As editors of the volume, we have endeavored to elicit viewpoints from a wide spectrum of disciplines and thus offer readers a diverse but complementary set of studies covering a wide range of theories of information, communication, and knowledge. We hope that the diversity of background of the authors makes for a rich dialogue and so contributes to readers' comprehension, and appreciation, of these fundamental phenomena.

The rest of the Introduction at <http://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-94-007-6973-1/page/1>

¹ See EPICIC's colloquium website for more details at <http://www.epicic.org/en/node/16>.

Acknowledgements.

The scientific editors are very grateful to the Institute des Sciences de la Communication (ISCC²) of the CNRS (The French National Center for Scientific Research) and its board of directors (Dominique Wolton and Pascal Payez-Burgeon) for funding the EPICIC project which created the initial framework under which the work undertaken in this book could be gathered and then published. This book is a direct result of the EPICIC colloquium held in Lyon (France) on 8 April 2011 and attended by many of the contributing authors. The colloquium featured very high-level and though-provoking talks that formed the backbone of some of the chapters of this book. We are grateful to the ISCC for having made it possible, through the grant, to organize the colloquium and to invite such high-profile researchers.

References.

- Bates, M. J. (2005). Information and knowledge: an evolutionary framework for information science, *Information Research* 10(4) paper 239 [available at <http://InformationR.net/ir/104/paper239.html>].
- Bates, M. J. (2010). Information. In M. J. Bates & M. N. Maack (Eds.), *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Sciences* (3rd ed.; pp. 2347–2360). New York: Taylor & Francis.
- Brier, S. (2008). *Cybersemiotics: why information is not enough*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Capurro, R. & Hjørland, B. (2003). The concept of information. *Annual Review of Information Science & Technology*, 37, 343–411.
- Case, D. O. (2008). *Looking for information: a survey of research on information seeking, needs, and behavior* (2nd ed.). Bingley, UK: Emerald.
- Cornelius, I. (2002). Theorizing information for information science. *Annual Review of Information Science & Technology*, 36, 393–425.
- Cronin, B. (2012). The waxing and waning of a field: reflections on information studies education. *Information Research*, 17(3) paper 529. Accessed 25 September 2012 from <http://infomrationR.net/ir/17-3/paper529.html>
- Floridi (2011a). *The philosophy of information*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Floridi, L. (2011b). Semantic Conceptions of Information, *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* [available at <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/information-semantic>].
- Furner, J. (2010). Philosophy and information studies. *Annual Review of Information Science & Technology*, 44, 161–200.
- Hofkirchner (2013). *Emergent information: a unified theory of information framework*. Singapore: World Scientific Publishing Co.
- Hjørland, B. (2007). Information: Objective or subjective/situational? *Journal of the American*

² <http://www.iscc.cnrs.fr/>

Society for Information Science and Technology, 58(10), 1448-1456.

Ibekwe-SanJuan, F. (2012). *La science de l'information: origins, theories et paradigms*. Paris: Hermes Science.

Kaiser, J. (1911). *Systematic indexing*. London: Isaac Pitman & Sons.

Lagache, A. (1997). What is information? In M. Bastide (Ed.), *Signals and images: Selected papers from the 7th and 8th GIRI Meeting, held in Montpellier, France, November 20–21, 1993, and Jerusalem, Israel, December 10–11, 1994* (pp. 279–292). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic.

Lowe, E. J. (2006). *The four-category ontology: A metaphysical foundation for natural science*. Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press.

Nöth, W. (2012). Charles S. Peirce's theory of information: A theory of the growth of knowledge and of symbols, *Cybernetics & Human Knowing*, 19(1-2), 137-161.

Rapoport, A. (1955). What is information? *Synthese*, 9(1), 157–173.

Shannon, C. E., & Weaver, W. (1998). *The mathematical theory of communication*. Urbana/Chicago: University of Illinois Press. [Originally published in 1949].

Stonier, T. (1986). What is information? In M. Bramer (Ed.), *Research and development in expert systems, III: Proceedings of Expert Systems '86: The Sixth Annual Technical Conference of the British Computer Society Specialist Group on Expert Systems, Brighton, 15–18 December 1986* (pp. 217–230). Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.