

## About the Author

Charles Cole has been a researcher-writer in the information science field for nearly 20 years. Beginning with a 1990 lecture on information need given by T. D. Wilson, he became interested in the motivation and behavior of a person seeking information, particularly the information need that begins the process and controls the person's subsequent information search behavior. Under Wilson's and David Ellis's supervision at the University of Sheffield, Cole studied the information process of 45 history PhD students, with a focus on what triggered the process. Was it mostly inside the person—and thus a need—or was the information process triggered by something outside the person? Or is information need, as Wilson said, an innate cognitive tool or mechanism that humans utilize to satisfy the primary cognitive, affective, and physiological human needs?

In the last decade, Cole has expanded his interest in information need to designing information retrieval systems based on why and how humans naturally search for information when they are in a construction-of-focus phase of performing a task. Along with Jamshid Beheshti (PI) and Andrew Large, he is currently conducting a 3-year Canadian government (SSHRC)-funded study, which will ascertain and build information seeking fundamentals into a virtual environment for 12- to 13-year-old students researching a school assignment.

According to two recent bibliometric studies, Cole was the sixth-most prolific author of articles published in the *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* (JASIST) in the 2000–2007 period, and in a Web of Science study, was fourth in impact in the topic “evaluation [information retrieval]” in the decade 1991–2000. He has authored or co-authored over 40 articles in the top-ranked journals in information science, including *JASIST*, *Information Processing & Management*, *Library Quarterly*, and the *Annual Review of Information Science and Technology*. With Amanda Spink, he has edited two books in information science: *New Directions in Human Information Behavior* (2006) and *New Directions in Cognitive Information Retrieval* (2005), both recently published in paperback by Springer. He received his PhD (Information Science) in 1994 from the University of Sheffield, his MLIS from McGill University in 1989, and his BA (History-Geography) from McGill University in 1978. He completed a 2-year postdoctoral fellowship at Concordia University in 1999. He is currently Researcher, Affiliated Member, at the School of Information Studies, McGill University. He is also a consultant (Colemining Inc.).