Preface

This volume documents the formal presentations delivered at the 4th International Conference of the International Society for Knowledge Organization (ISKO) in Washington, DC, July 16-18, 1996. The conference was sponsored by the Library of Congress, where the meetings were held, in cooperation with OCLC Forest Press. The conference was also supported by the Classification Research Special Interest Group of the American Society for Information Science (ASIS SIG/CR) and the College of Library and Information Services (CLIS) of the University of Maryland. Previous international conferences were held in Copenhagen (1994), Madras (1992), and Darmstadt (1990).

ISKO '96 addressed "Knowledge Organization and Change," a theme outlined in the keynote address by Roland Hjerppe. This theme was developed through a series of sessions on: Knowledge Organization in Cross-Cultural and Cross-Linguistic Settings, The Role of Relationships in Knowledge Organization, Knowledge Organization in the Online Environment (2 sessions), Management of Change in Knowledge Organization Schemes, Thesauri and Metathesauri (2 sessions), Knowledge Organization and Images, Knowledge Organization in the Business and Economic Environment, User Focus in Knowledge Organization, Interdisciplinary Approaches to Knowledge Organization, Interplay of Epistemology and Knowledge Organization, and Natural Language Processing. Although various classification schemes received attention throughout the conference, there were also sessions specific to the Library of Congress Classification and the Dewey Decimal Classification. There was also one session for software demonstrations.

A variety of experiences rounded out the three days of paper presentations. Pre-conference activities included a demonstration session at the Digital Library Visitors' Center, a guided tour of the Library of Congress, and a reception sponsored by OCLC Forest Press in commemoration of the 120th anniversary of Melvil Dewey's Decimal Classification. The reception was preceded by a talk by Fran Miksa on "The DDC, the Universe of Knowledge, and the Post-Modern Library." The next evening a banquet was held at the Supreme Court of the United States, where the group was addressed by Douglas Bennett of the American Council of Learned Societies. The final evening of the conference, a reception was hosted for the group by the German Embassy. Two post-conference excursions—one to the National Agricultural Library, the other to the National Library of Medicine—rounded out the occasion.

Producing the proceedings of a conference is a mammoth undertaking. Of course, none of this volume would exist but for the thoughtful effort of those who proposed, wrote, and presented, as well as of the program committee, who reviewed the initial abstracts and gave valuable feedback. I acknowledge the help of Susan Westenbarger with the initial editing of the full papers. And as anyone who knows anything about ISKO will surely expect, I gratefully acknowledge the unflagging effort of Ingetraut Dahlberg, who is responsible for the index, and, who, through INDEKS Verlag, is fully responsible for the proceedings being anything more than a pile of pages on my desk.

Rebecca Green  
Program Chair  
17 May 1996