Letters to the Editor

I enjoyed the first issue of *OR Insight*. Two papers were of particular interest to me.

Robert Dyson makes the distinction, which certainly exists, between practitioner and academic. However, those who research the process of decision and aids to decision must carry out their studies in real environments; they are both practitioners and academics. The interface is thus more of a semantic construct than a dividing line for many of us

The 'soft systems' approaches to which he refers, somewhat slightly, are covered by the phrase, "decision-aiding approaches" (misprint in footnote, p. 13) in the paper by Chris Huxham *et al.* Those of us who engaged in the group activity which the paper reports would not accept the dichotomy inherent in Dyson's outlook: our research and consultancy activities are complementary, each essential to the other.

Incidentally, the story told in the latter paper is easily recognized by me as one of which I was a part. The illustrations do, of course, help!

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