Introduction

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This is the second of two issues of *Library Trends* on the theme of "Information Literacy Beyond the Academy," which seeks to relocate information literacy outside its traditional base in higher education and to position it more within innovative thinking in such areas as: employability training, skills development, workplace decision making, adult literacies training and community learning and development, scholastic education, lifelong learning, and health and media literacies. The role of the public library in promoting awareness and understanding of information in many of these activities is a potentially important one and is explored in some of the articles listed below.

While the first issue focused more on policy-making issues both at a national and international level the current issue is more concerned with developing perspectives on specific areas often based round a discrete piece of research. Nine articles are offered here that break down into broadly three areas:

- Health literacy, which explores how people access and use health information, however defined and interpreted, and the overarching policy issues that emerge from these studies
- Lifelong learning and community, in which the theme of supporting the information needs of ordinary people in a wide range of learning contexts emerges (indeed, participative learning and learning as part of a community appear in several articles presented here)
- Education that includes a study of information skills acquisition across a range of educational sectors

As with the previous issue a common theme emerging is the need to greatly widen the concept of what information sources are and take much more account of social interaction and collective learning. Although health lit-

eracy is a discrete topic it also occurs in other articles often in conjunction with another recurring theme, the information needs of the people over fifty.

Contents of the Issue
Health Literacy

The first article is a study by Christine Yates and colleagues that explores health information use by older Australians within everyday life. It emphasizes the importance of information literacy in everyday life and sets health literacy within this context and sees older Australians as important health consumers. It reports on interviews with twenty older adults and includes a useful discussion about definitions of health literacy. The methodology used is phenomenography, which as Webber, Boon, and Johnston (2005) have shown is a particularly valuable tool as it seeks to explore differences and variations in the way people think or experience particular phenomena and can challenge the conventional perspectives of LIS professionals. Interviewees were found to be interested in information that was immediately relevant and focused on themselves as a source of knowledge such as observing their own health history and symptoms. As Christopher Walker also found (see below), learning from others was an important factor. Information sources favored by LIS professionals were not highly rated although health professionals were held in high regard. Policy lessons learned are discussed.

Audrey Marshall, Flis Henwood, and Elizabeth S. Guy from the University of Brighton in the United Kingdom pursue the health use issue further with a study of how people use information and communications technology and information literacy skills to manage obesity. They note contradictions in UK National Health Service policy that supports the importance of patient information in theory but does nothing to support information skills development in practice. As with Christine Yates and colleagues there is a discussion of definitions of health literacy. As with other contributors, varying types of information sources were identified such as information on packaging. Information seeking was found to be an unstructured process in practice and the role of information in weight management was shown to be less significant than previously thought. As with other researchers the authors found human contact and interaction to be important in supporting information use. The article contains valuable direct quotations and shows that it is important to purse local initiatives within the context of national policy.

Lisa O'Connor and Marcia Rapchak introduce a rather different topic, the debate over healthcare reform in the United States and how it is discussed in online political forums. They find that there is a need to take account of the realities of the information environment and the information seeking behavior of individuals that includes a discussion about everyday

life information seeking (ELIS). They assess the quality of information sources used in the healthcare reform debate and note issues around neutrality and the quality of information. Most of the postings did not cite formal information sources and many unsubstantiated claims were made on online political discourse. Where formal sources were used the quality varied widely and there was misattribution of sources. While information literacy should be recognized as a civil and political right the practical realities of what actually happens are somewhat different from the ideal.

Lifelong Learning and Community
This section opens with an article by Christine Bruce and colleagues on supporting informed learners where informed learning is defined as meaning using information to learn. The authors discuss this phenomenon in educational environments, the workplace, and in developing citizenship skills. In student learning for example, informed learning is linked to personal reflection, observation and interviewing, talking to others, and sourcing information. In the workplace the emphasis is in capacity building, social collaboration, and professional and organizational development. Promising workplace innovations include encouraging dialogue and reflection. For an informed citizenry, informed learning includes identifying formal and ephemeral sources of community information, participating in community networks, and applying knowledge of community issues to informed decision making; as an example, a community project to create an image collection is cited that resonates with Lark Birdsong's and Jennifer Freitas's work (see below). Health literacy is also mentioned in the context of generating a supportive environment with healthy ageing quotes as an example. The article concludes with nine principles of informed learning policy.

   Although Christopher Walker discusses the information world of parents—a study of the use of information by parents of young children—the themes of a diverse range of sources in the context of social interaction continue. He reviews how parents seek information and assess and use it to support child rearing. The research is based on thirty-three interviews with parents of young children (up to about the age of eleven) in the north of England city of Leeds. Gender emerged early on as a major issue as most of the interviewees were women drawn from a wide range of social groups. He has developed a theory of information usage based on five categories: being a parent; connectivity; trust; picture of self; and weighing. He identifies nonformalized sources such as friends and neighbors. Formalized networks providing information include doctors, teachers, and social service staff. The concept of trust in evaluating information is interesting, as "trusted information" seems to be accepted without evaluation. As others have found, the importance of human relationships in finding and using information is crucial. Walker's concept of weighing is perhaps

most akin to information literacy. This is the way parents make sense of the information they obtain.

Mary Ann Harlan and colleagues address a somewhat different theme, the use of social media by teenagers in the United States in the context of information literacy and the skills associated with it. The findings are based on seven interviews. A rather unstructured picture appears with a good deal of "serendipitous encountering" where information is gathered unintentionally. There is also reliance on Wikipedia, although the teenagers understood its advantages and disadvantages, and popularity is important in evaluating a source. Information literacy skills are being used although not identified as such. The authors related the teenagers' learning processes with Christine Bruce's *Seven Faces of Information Literacy* (1997) and link it with the concept of informed learning as explained by Christine Bruce and colleagues.

Lark Birdsong's and Jennifer Freitas's article is on a subject of great interest to this guest editor, how information literacy training can be provided for business, professional, health and wider community needs, that is, information skills that are both practical and useful. This has involved using a combination of classroom instruction and videos. They discuss the importance of information literacy in the workplace and return to the old problem of distinguishing between information and computer literacies. Their review of the high levels of information illiteracy in the workplace make worrying reading. Like Christine Yates and colleagues they focus on learners over fifty, people with a need for personal interaction and with strong health literacy needs. Public libraries have an important role to play and there is a useful discussion on teaching methods for nontraditional students. This is an area where identifying client groups and meeting their needs is difficult and the authors' lesson plans will be of wide interest. This article is a valuable resource for those who want to go down this rewarding but challenging route.

Education

The article by Jacqui DaCosta and Eleonora Dubicki comes nearest to information literacy as traditionally interpreted but discusses an important educational issue, that of cross-sectoral links, and certainly shows considerable initiative in making the best of an opportunity. The article describes an imaginative information literacy training program in New Jersey that grew out of an articulation agreement to standardize the transfer of students and their credits between institutions. Cross-sectoral development and progression of information literacy skills are key issues. The program develops transferable information literacy skills drawing on a wealth of U.S. standards and skills programs and the review of these is a useful feature of the article. Two skill levels were developed: "Introductory/Novice Skills" and a more discipline-based "Gateway/Developing Skills," which

marks the transition from two to four year colleges. There is scope for refining and extending the program including making links with school librarians. The program has also received endorsement and support from academics.

Finally Barbara D'Angelo describes a case study of the portfolios of the work of undergraduate students in technical communication at Arizona State University and reviews the skills exhibited by the students in relation to information literacy skills that are perceived as being needed for the workplace, which means using information to create new products and processes. The analysis showed that although there was a good deal of use of secondary sources there was an awareness of ethical issues—copyright and plagiarism. In higher education the focus of information literacy instruction remains on data collection rather than analyzing, using, and presenting information for a specific audience. There is a need to move on from data collection to a fuller understanding of research as a process. She detects in the process, as have other contributors, Christine Bruce's *The Seven Faces of Information Literacy,* which places information usage in context and on the basis of experience.

Acknowledgments

References

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John Crawford was, until retirement, library research officer and university copyright adviser at Glasgow Caledonian University. He was, for five years, the director of the Scottish Information Literacy Project, which was originally begun with the sole aim of developing an information literacy framework linking secondary and tertiary education. This remit was subsequently expanded to include nonacademic areas: early years, employability, the workplace, lifelong learning, and the wider community. This has led him to focus on information literacy outside the academy. He is a trustee of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) and serves on its council. He is also a member of the CILIP Task and Finish Group on information literacy.