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## Editorial

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# Broadening the scope of information literacy in 2015: beyond libraries

Many of you will be aware that 2014 marks forty years since the coining of the phrase 'information literacy' (IL). It is only fitting that our December issue has a broad scope and includes no less than seven peer-reviewed papers, seven short reports and four book reviews. I am indebted to Dr Ross Todd, a member of our editorial board and Director of the Center for International Scholarship in School Libraries (CISSL) at Rutgers University, for guest editing three of the papers that make up a special themed section on IL in school libraries. If we want to see IL as being something we need throughout our lives, then the work in school libraries really is a crucial foundation. However, many of the papers in this issue touch on the theme of broadening the scope of IL, either conceptually or beyond the academic confines.

As the year draws to a close I have been reflecting on continuing discussions over terminology – is it information or digital literacy, or even metaliteracy? It's clear that many outside the library sector still do not recognise the term IL. However in 2015 I would urge you to be an advocate reaching out to those in other disciplines and professions to understand where our interests overlap. Discussions about terminology arose several times just a month ago during the second European Conference on Information Literacy (ECIL) in Croatia. Sheila Webber and Bill Johnston presented a useful insight into IL as a discipline, looking at what makes a discipline. There were almost 300 people from over 50 different countries at the conference discussing IL, and discussions about terminology can be important in emerging disciplines. However when speaking to those outside the library and information profession, I think we really need some consensus and a clear explanation of what IL means. I appreciate that when talking to one audience I might explain IL as 'digital skills', or 'researcher development'. However, I'm now really clear on what IL really is all about and in my mind and it's not helping people find information. In today's digital world anyone can find something; IL is helping them be discerning, to manage information overload and use information (and technology) appropriately. There is not a right way of doing something and becoming information literate. IL is contextual, so we all need to be flexible about what and how we teach and ready to adapt and learn all the time.

Our first article really highlights the importance of IL being contextual, embedded in an academic discipline, and for the teacher to understand the needs of the discipline. Margy Macmillan provides a thought provoking article on research undertaken at a Canadian university with journalism students. She also raises the topic of 'threshold concepts' for IL, which has been the subject of much debate since the launch of the draft revisions to the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) IL standards earlier this year. The ACRL standards might be something developed in the United States, but their influence is global and so threshold concepts are likely to be something which, if you haven't heard of, you certainly will need to get to grips with soon.

Meanwhile, Karen Marie Øvern, a Norwegian librarian, writes about a topic close to the hearts of many academic librarians: faculty-library collaboration. Her article provides a useful literature review and outlines approaches she has adopted to work with faculty to improve learning outcomes.

Sarah McNicol and Emily Shields' article seeks to develop a new approach to IL, and presents us with an overview of the InFlow model. This model encourages students to engage with information in a variety of ways as they map, explore, ask, make, reflect, imagine, show and collaborate. It also raises questions about current teaching practices in relation to IL, such as the need to encourage collaborative working and the role of students as producers of information as well as consumers.

In an article based on a paper presented at LILAC, Sarah Purcell and Rachel Barrell examine the value of staff and student collaboration. Their article looks at how to raise both confidence and skills in IL with first year Initial Teacher Education students. It is based on a four year action research study and looks at how to develop trainee teachers' IL abilities to support their

development as a reflective practitioner. This paper is a nice bridge to our special themed section on IL in schools.

We have three additional peer-reviewed papers, which have been guest edited by Ross Todd, so I will allow him to introduce these papers in more detail. However, I am delighted to see the international flavour of this section. Kerry-Ann Rodney-Wellington writes about primary schools in Jamaica. Meanwhile, Margrethe Søvik examines the effect of efforts to develop students' IL in two Norwegian lower secondary schools and finally, Ruth Ash-Argyle and Snunith Shoham report on an evidence based study of school librarians in Israel.

There are seven short reports in this issue of JIL, which highlight the range of conferences and events in the IL field in recent months and work going on around the world. Philip Russell, who is Chair of the Library Association of Ireland's Taskforce on Information Literacy, reports on a seminar held in Dublin in June this year on the theme of 'Demonstrating the value of information literacy to staff and students'. The event brought those in secondary and higher education together with representatives from community organisations and industry. Another recent event in Ireland was the IFLA Information Literacy Satellite meeting held in Limerick, Ireland in August. Keynotes were given by Nancy Fried Foster and Conor Galvin and the conference brought together delegates from around the world. Clare McCluskey attended the conference and she has written a useful report.

We have one report as a direct result of JIL's ongoing work to encourage new writers in the field. Emma Silvey has written a report on the 'Research and writing for publication' workshop organised by the CILIP Information Literacy Group and Library and Information Research Group in September this year in London. Meanwhile in October, Cathie and I ran a workshop on writing for publication at ECIL in Dubrovnik Croatia. We are grateful to Maria Bell who agreed to write a report on this four day conference, which was a truly international affair.

This issue includes two short reports that provide country perspectives on IL initiatives. Firstly, Fabian Franke and Wilfried Sühl-Strohmenger have written a useful overview of teaching IL in German university libraries. The growth of IL teaching and the range of sessions that are run is significant in recent years. I am also grateful to Andrew Eynon for an update on the Welsh Information Literacy Project which is now in its fifth year. Our final report is from Stephane Goldstein who has written a report on the work of InformAll (formerly RIDLS) and their new programme of activity focusing on broadening the IL community to beyond the academic sector. Stephane reports on the valuable work InformAll have been undertaking on IL in the workplace and I was delighted to be part of a panel discussion at ECIL with other representatives from this group.

Finally there are four book reviews, so those of you yet to draw up your Christmas list might want to add a few of these titles to it! Firstly we have a review from Charlie Inskip of Andrew Whitworth's book *Radical Information Literacy*. Back on the subject of terminology, Christopher Walker has written a review of the book *Metaliteracy: reinventing information literacy to empower learners* by MacKey and Jacobson. Cindy Gruwell reviews Mery and Newby's book *Online By Design: the essentials of creating information literacy courses* and finally Sarah Wolfenden has reviewed a book many of us will be keen to take a look at, by Crane entitled *How to teach - a practical guide for librarians*.

My thanks as ever to the editorial board, our dedicated copy editors, Ian the book reviews editor and my managing editor Cathie for all their hard work. Enjoy this issue of JIL and I hope that 2015 will be as productive and inspiring as the last 12 months!