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Editorial

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JIL begins a new chapter

This is the first issue of JIL I have seen through to publication since taking over as editor back in April and I am delighted with the range of articles from researchers and practitioners, bridging the gap between theory and practice, which is a key aim of this journal. In the editorial last December, my predecessor, Susie Andretta, wrote about her ambition to attract a greater number of submissions from around the world. In this issue we have papers from the UK, the United States and Singapore, as well as reports from a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) conference. I hope that we can attract papers from a greater range of countries in the future and I share the ambition to make JIL a truly international journal. I am particularly pleased that we have seen an increase in the number of published articles that result from presentations at the Librarians' Information Literacy Annual Conference (LILAC) and I am keen to encourage more authors to build on their conference papers and consider writing for JIL.

December seems an ideal time to reflect on the past six months in the information literacy (IL) world. It has been a busy year with numerous IL conferences both in the UK and around the world. The year also saw an important landmark for JIL's parent body, the Information Literacy Group, which after eight years was awarded full group status from the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) this summer. CILIP also held a high level briefing on IL in London this July, which attracted many librarians from outside the higher education sector. They have also announced that the annual CILIP conference, Umbrella, will have IL as one of the key themes. It feels like a new chapter in the IL story is unfolding.

From a personal perspective I was fortunate to attend a number of conferences this year. Of course we had LILAC in April, which was held in Glasgow and was my last conference on the LILAC committee. It seems a long time ago since Debbi Boden and I first thought up the idea of running a small event on IL, back in 2005. The dedicated committee, which has run this event entirely voluntarily, is for me an example of what can be achieved when committed professionals focus their minds and efforts! I also attended the Association of Learning Developers in Higher Education (ALDinHE) conference in Leeds for the first time in April, which is an organisation and conference that has many parallels with LILAC. Learning developers "share a common desire to empower students in their learning through helping them make sense of academic practices within higher education and supporting them to acquire the generic underpinning skills for the environments in which they are working" (ALDinHE 2012). Arguably they are natural allies for librarians and at many of the conferences I attended this year I encountered institutions where academic literacies are now increasingly being taught in conjunction with IL.

The opportunity to travel outside the UK was one of the highlights of my year. I was invited to Trinity College Dublin to speak at the annual Consortium of National and University Libraries (CONUL) IL seminar. I was also privileged to attend the UNESCO World Congress on Open Education in Paris in June, where I spoke on IL open educational resources with Nancy Graham from the University of Birmingham. Nancy reports on an IFLA conference she attended in Moscow in June in the conference corner in this issue. My travels continued and in August I travelled to Tampere in Finland for the IFLA satellite meeting aptly titled 'The road to information literacy'. The co-authors of my paper, Katy Wrathall and Maria Bell, have kindly written up this event. Louise Doolan from the British Library also attended the main IFLA conference in Helsinki and has included a report in the conference corner. Conferences are a valuable way of sharing experiences and learning from others. I often find that the perspective gained from preparing a conference paper, presenting your ideas and receiving feedback can really help you to understand an issue clearly. Next year I've already seen a host of exciting IL conferences (take a look at the National Forum of Information Literacy's list of conferences for ideas), so if you regularly attend events, but rarely speak, I suggest you make 2013 your year for taking the plunge! Who knows where it might take you?

Turning to the articles in this issue of JIL, Ralph Catts was a former keynote speaker at LILAC and he describes recent research he undertook on behalf of UNESCO. Catts undertook a secondary analysis of a number of significant global surveys to see if they yield performance indicators for adult IL. He concludes that IL has unique elements that are not encompassed in other surveys of adult literacy. However, the work he has done is illuminating and serves to argue the case at the highest levels that IL underpins learning and is vital for democracy.

Moving from the global perspective to an institutional level, collaboration between librarians and other professionals is being recognised as essential to the success of IL interventions. Therefore I was particularly pleased to read how librarians at California State University are working with academic colleagues to develop appropriate IL assessments. There is still much we need to learn about how librarians can work effectively with teachers and academic staff at the course proposal and course design stage. The paper by Debra Hoffman and Kristen LaBonte (who presented at LILAC 2011), entitled 'Meeting information literacy outcomes: partnering with faculty to create effective information literacy assessment', is welcome. Getting IL integrated into the curriculum means it needs to be considered at the planning stage and built into learning outcomes and the assessment process. This paper provides a useful model of how this can work in practice. Similarly on the assessment theme, a paper first presented at LILAC 2012 by JaNae Kinikin and Keith Hench explores how using poster presentations can provide an effective measure of students' IL skills. Poster presentations replaced an annotated bibliography in a third year undergraduate course and the authors argue that this form of assessment helped students to make a stronger connection between the skills required to find information and their ability to communicate what they have learned about their research questions. The value of reflective writing is explored by Barbara Sen and Pamela McKinney in terms of students' IL development at the University of Sheffield. Their research was first presented at LILAC 2012 and the authors explore the evidence that suggests reflective writing assessments and activities in the context of IL education are particularly valuable in higher education. Writing reflectively can help students to understand their own IL development and engage in deeper learning.

Remaining with the assessment theme, but turning to consider the IL capabilities of young people, a team from Singapore, led by Yun-ke Chang and colleagues, report on research to develop a baseline study for assessing the IL skills of secondary school students. The findings suggest that there is some scope to improve students' IL skills, particularly in term of the higher order skills such as information use, synthesis and evaluation. IL in the school curriculum is the theme of an article by Carl Miller and Jamie Bartlett. They published last year's Demos report 'Truth, lies and the internet' (Miller & Bartlett 2011), which explored what the authors call 'digital fluency' in school age children and the attitudes of teachers in terms of their ability to teach young people about these issues. My predecessor was particularly keen to see this article in JIL and since the authors first published their work, they have recognised the role that librarians might play in championing digital fluency in schools. Miller also spoke at the CILIP IL briefing in July and I look forward to meeting the authors when they visit the London School of Economics at the end of this year.

There seems to be no deceleration to the pace of technological change, with tablets and mobile devices getting faster and more sophisticated. The recent statistics from the Pew Research Centre (2012) found that smartphone ownership in the United States is now at 45 per cent of the population. Andrew Walsh's article on mobile IL is particularly timely and he asks whether the time has come to reconsider our understanding of user behaviour and IL. Walsh's initial findings suggest that searching behaviour on mobile devices is different to that on a desktop computer. Social media and social networks continue to be important tools that people use to find, curate and share information with others, so Rebecca Miller's study of how she uses social media to embed IL into a dietetics programme is enlightening. Her work was also first presented at LILAC 2012 and has been expanded in this article.

We have also published a number of short reports in this issue of JIL, all of which suggest that employers are increasingly recognising the value of IL. Colin Engel reports on work to develop an Information Literacy Passport for clinical students and clinicians, while Natasha Choolhun and Ruth Bird report on the BIALL Legal Information Literacy Statement. Both reports highlight how IL is valued in both the law and medical professions. Marion Kelt describes work to customise and update an integrated IL and academic skills package at Glasgow Caledonian University. She has used open educational resources to incorporate additional materials on transferable skills and employability, in line with the strategic aims of her institution.

Sharing IL teaching resources is something that the library profession has undertaken for many years, often fairly informally between colleagues and sometimes between institutions. However, the student contribution in this issue, from Samantha Appleyard, explores sharing and reuse of IL resources as open educational resources across higher education libraries in the UK.

Finally, the number of monographs published in the IL field in 2012 shows no sign of declining and we have three book reviews in this issue, all from North American librarians. I met Carroll Wilkinson and Courtney Bruch at IFLA in August, so I am heartened to read the review of their book 'Transforming Information Literacy Programs: Intersecting Frontiers of Self, Library Culture, and Campus Community'. We also have a robust assessment of William Badke's book 'Teaching Research Processes: the faculty role in the development of skilled student researchers', which is reviewed by Whitworth. Finally Donna Gilton's 'Lifelong learning in public libraries: principles, programs and people' is reviewed by Crawford, who suggests that the book's title may be misleading as it is primarily about IL instruction in public libraries.

I do hope you enjoy this bumper issue of JIL and I hope the articles and reports inspire your work over the coming six months. I am particularly grateful for all the support I've had in preparing this issue from the JIL Editorial Board, including the copy editors and our Managing Editor, Cathie Jackson, who has been a wealth of advice and support to me. Thank you also to the JIL reviewers and to all our authors who worked so hard to produce this issue. Finally, a special thank you to Steffi Sams, who stepped down as a copy editor this summer and who worked enthusiastically on JIL for the last three years.

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Resources

National Forum on Information Literacy: Information Literacy-Related Conferences
http://infolit.org/nfil-news/information-literacy-conferences/