

Journal of Information Literacy

ISSN 1750-5968

Volume 10 Issue 2

December 2016

Conference corner

McCormick, K. 2016. ECIL 2016: Information Literacy in the Inclusive Society. *Journal of Information Literacy*, 10(2), pp. 97-99.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.11645/10.2.2162>



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/).

Copyright for the article content resides with the authors, and copyright for the publication layout resides with the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals, Information Literacy Group. These Copyright holders have agreed that this article should be available on Open Access and licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution ShareAlike licence.

"By 'open access' to this literature, we mean its free availability on the public internet, permitting any users to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of these articles, crawl them for indexing, pass them as data to software, or use them for any other lawful purpose, without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself. The only constraint on reproduction and distribution, and the only role for copyright in this domain, should be to give authors control over the integrity of their work and the right to be properly acknowledged and cited."

Chan, L. et al. 2002. Budapest Open Access Initiative. New York: Open Society Institute. Available at: <http://www.soros.org/openaccess/read.shtml> [Accessed: 18 November 2015].

ECIL 2016: Information Literacy in the Inclusive Society

Kirsten McCormick, Librarian, The Mitchell Library. Email: kirsten.mccormick123@gmail.com

From 10-13 October 2016 the fourth European Conference on Information Literacy (IL) assembled in the magical city of Prague. Hana Landová, president of the Association of Libraries of Czech Universities, extended a warm welcome to more than 300 delegates and chaired throughout the event with consideration, humour and insight. The theme for this year's conference was "Information Literacy in the Inclusive Society" and delegates converged from across the globe to engage in discourse around the concept of IL and how best information professionals and educators can and do impart the skills necessary to find, evaluate and use information.

In a rousing keynote address, Tara Brabazon reminded us all of the power that librarians have to support learning in a society that regularly confuses popularity and ease of access with quality. She condemned low quality textbooks churned out by publishers and warned that unless we can get students to read more widely, the 'quirky' is in danger of being lost. The commodification of information and governmental non-cognizance of the IL concept, whether through ignorance or will, were recurring topics. Brabazon's speech was a rallying call for librarians to engage directly in a challenge against information ignorance and left no attendee in doubt that IL would be politicised over the course of the event.

The keynote programme was of an excellent standard and on the second day Jan Van Dijk spoke about *Digital and Substantive Skills for Every Citizen, Worker and Consumer in the 21st Century*. As well as distinguishing between the different medium-related and content-related skills necessary for 'life in the world' in the 21st century, Van Dijk addressed the equally complex problem of what work people will have as technology continues its rapid advance.

Annemaree Lloyd got right to the heart of the conference theme in her speech *Learning to Go On: Information Resilience in a Resettlement Landscape: Key Themes and Challenges of Fractured Landscape Research*. Refugees and migrants often have to navigate unfamiliar information landscapes in addition to their geographical and social resettlement. Digital and reading literacy as well as language barriers can add to the challenges that libraries face in supporting information resilience under these circumstances.

Serious games were on the agenda with another invited speaker Vít Šisler, who showed footage from 'Czechoslovakia 38–89: The Assassination' which blends real testimony with fictitious characters to tell stories from contemporary Czech history using multiple perspectives. Pupils play detective to work out what they think has really happened based on critical analysis of the various points of view. The research into digital game-based learning continues to grow. There was a profusion of paper sessions to choose from – covering digital literacy; health IL; financial IL; data literacy, and environmental literacy. As is to be expected, these were peppered with a healthy dose of theory. Sheila Webber and Bill Johnston discussed threshold concepts and how they have been incorporated into the ACRL, identifying anomalies therein.

In *How Groups Talk Information Literacy Into Being*, Andrew Whitworth demonstrated how observed mapping exercises with workplace learners can be used to record information about how people talk and make decisions. Collective judgement is of course at the heart of the democratic process and the recent Brexit vote was referenced on a number of occasions during conference. Lauren Smith presented a timely and necessary study into young people and their

understanding of political information while Konstantina Martzoukou and Elham Sayyad Abdi highlighted a dearth of research around IL in the context of everyday life. As collaboration grows between academic, public and corporate sectors it is to be hoped that this gap in the research can be addressed and translated into more streamlined IL programmes and resources accessible to all. We may then be in a better position to fulfil the Sustainable Development Goals proposed by the United Nations in 2015 as revisited towards the end of the conference (Gobinda Chowdhury, Geoff Walton, Serap Kurbanoglu, Yurdagül Ünal and Joumana Boustany).

Best practice sessions focusing on academic libraries addressed recent changes to the ACRL framework and mapping to other frameworks including the SCONUL Seven Pillars (Ma Lei Hsieh, Sharon Yang, Susan McManimon and Patrician Dawson). Students' preferences and levels of expertise in the use of mobile technologies to access information were discussed (Emmanouel Garoufallou) and Marion Kelt of Glasgow Caledonian University gave some very practical and accessible advice for those planning to develop digital IL resources.

The discourse around IL skills and provision for school aged children illuminated some excellent practice, but also reinforced the inequalities that exist both across and within geographical borders. Brigitta Jávorka shared her pioneering research into information literacy amongst disadvantaged children in Hungary. The project took a library bus to sixteen villages in four days to observe the target group who had been identified as 'difficult to reach' as they navigated English language, information seeking and web search tasks. Having observed difficulties with the interpretation of tasks and finding correct information it was recommended that formal education structures must pay more attention to these as part of information technology instruction.

On the flipside, Romana Fekonja described how library and information science is embedded within the school curriculum in both primary and secondary schools in Slovenia. The curriculum is prepared by experts and adopted by the Ministry of Education. Librarians are members of the teaching staff and correct citation of sources and attribution of images is worth 25% of certain graded papers for students.

The best poster award was hotly contested but on the final day the award was given to Ewa Rozkosz, Zuzanna Wiorogorska and Agata Matras for their "Bibliostory: educational comic stories". The poster promotes a series of twenty-four comic strips, each illustrating one IL, for use as a teaching resource with young people.



There are few places that can inspire with their beauty – even in drizzle – quite like Prague, and delegates enthusiastically exchanged recommendations of must-see sights. The social programme for the conference included library excursions to the Municipal Library of Prague, Nostitz Majorat Library (property of the National Museum), and the National Library of Technology. A lavish buffet gala dinner was provided at the Paspas Hall on the first floor of the Staropramen Brewery. Good company, entertainment and dancing were enjoyed by all in particularly impressive surroundings.

Typically forward thinking, Stephane Goldstein suggested an informal target of 10% attendance by delegates from beyond academia and libraries for next year's conference. Joumana Boustany, chair of the Organising Committee for ECIL 2017, showed a promotional video for the event which will be held on 18-21 September 2017 in Saint-Malo, France. A book of abstracts and gallery of the event are available on the [ECIL 2016](#) website.



Charles Bridge, Prague. © Kirsten McCormick, licensed under [CC-BY-SA 4.0](#)