Journal of Information Literacy

Book review

Gilton, Donna L. 2016. *Creating and promoting lifelong learning in public libraries: tools and tips for practitioners*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield. 213pp. 978-1442269521. £37.95. Pbk.

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This title follows on from the author's 2012 title *Lifelong learning in public libraries: principles, programs and people* (reviewed in this journal by J. Crawford (2012)). In her new offering, Gilton aims to provide "more explicit instruction on how to establish, implement and evaluate instructional programs and other lifelong learning in public libraries".

British public libraries provide lifelong learning opportunities to their customers in a variety of guises. In this book the author examines the theories, tools and practices associated with information literacy (IL) instruction more commonly associated with academic library settings. During the course of the book she offers examples of how these tools can be used to reframe some traditional public library user education activities, for example, genealogy sessions, detailed business enquiries, reader development work and events for children and families.

The book is very American in its focus. This is not a problem from the point of view of the philosophy, theories and methodologies that underpin teaching and learning IL. However, it does present a significant shortcoming for a British audience when reading sections on the history of IL instruction in the US as well as US standards, policy and service provision. The bureaucracy, infrastructure and funding of the US public library system differs from its British local government counterpart, meaning that while librarians in the US may be free to develop learning objects, Virtual Learning Environments (VLE) and web pages independently and to their own specifications British public librarians may struggle to achieve the levels of development the book suggests.

The early chapters of the book discuss planning, teaching and learning theories and practices in a way that is perhaps more familiar to academic librarians. Tools such as rubrics and lesson plans and methodologies such as problem based learning and Universal Design are discussed in detail. For librarians unfamiliar with this area of work the vocabulary and technical nature of the text may be heavy going. The inclusion of this does, however, lay the groundwork for the following chapters and allows the reader to view the tools presented in later chapters in context and to better evaluate their potential impact and benefit as teaching aids. Readers hoping for a straightforward step-by-step guide may be disappointed as this title is more of a textbook in nature.

In Chapter 4, the author moves onto a detailed overview of the technology and tools available to deliver IL instruction in the public library setting. The author considers the impact of developing technology and the tools available in Web 1.0 and Web 2.0. Tools such as web quests, blogs, social networking tools, VLEs and content management tools are covered. For each tool an overview of its history is provided and examples are given for their use. The majority of these examples are both American and academic but this perhaps reflects the current stage of development of IL instruction in public library settings. Each section ends with a comprehensive overview of literature and resources to facilitate further reading and professional development. The library as a physical space is also considered with discussion on learning commons, wayfinding and displays.

In her conclusion, Gilton calls for the creation of IL guidelines or standards within the public library sector and for a system of instruction that is designed for and has originated in public libraries. The need for this is perhaps best demonstrated by the comparative lack of public library examples in

the text and the slightly dated nature of some of the print works referred to in the extensive bibliography. Overall this is an interesting book that will provide food for thought for public librarians hoping to develop IL activities within their setting.