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Book Review

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Chan, L. et al 2002. *Budapest Open Access Initiative.* New York: Open Society Institute. Available at: http://www.soros.org/openaccess/read.shtml [Retrieved 22 January 2007].

Walton, G and Pope, A. (eds). (2011). *Information Literacy: infiltrating the agenda, challenging minds*. Oxford: Chandos. 294pp. ISBN. 978-1-84334-610-4. £49.50. Pbk.

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This edited collection is based on seminars delivered as part of the Staffordshire University Information Literacy Community of Practice (SUILCoP) since its foundation in 2006, and follows on from Walton, G. and Pope, A. (eds) (2006) *Information Literacy: recognising the need*, Oxford: Chandos. The current collection takes a more scholarly approach containing academic articles rather than summaries of conference papers. Furthermore, the new collection only contains material from seminars held after the 2006 initial conference.

The editors were instrumental in setting up SUILCoP and the seminars which have followed. In this volume, they offer a brief overview of the current context of Information Literacy (IL) in the Higher Education (HE) sector. The authors are largely drawn from outside Staffordshire University, but all have contributed to the SUILCoP seminar programme (from 2007-2010).

With the exception of the article by John Crawford and Christine Irving, "Information Literacy in the workplace and the employability agenda", the contributors have focused on IL in a HE context. There is, however, wide ranging coverage of IL issues – ranging from the practical delivery of information skills teaching through to theoretical discussion of the relationship between IL as challenge to (Gramscian theories of) cultural hegemony.

In part one of the collection (Collaboration, Curriculum and Courses), John Crawford and Christine Irving look at a broad definition of IL, in line with current national agendas which seek to tackle Digital Literacy and Digital Exclusion issues. Furthermore, they concentrate on workplace and employability skills rather than information skills for academic study.

Other articles in this section examine the teaching and evaluation of information skills delivery in the HE sector. Katherine Reedy and Kirsty Baker in "Information literate pedagogy" describe the Open University's framework for articulating information skills across different levels of ability. Chris Wakeman's "Information literacy in the context of contemporary teaching methods in higher education" looks at the use of Enquiry Based Learning and in particular Webquests (i.e. directed online learning or enquiry) as part of a more integrated delivery of information skills within the curriculum (this integration by extension moving information skills delivery back under the remit of the tutor rather than the librarian).

Part two of the collection (Development, Dialogue and Design) focuses more specifically on the practical delivery of information skills, taking the examples of research students at Staffordshire University (Keith Puttick, "'Enquiring Minds' and the role of IL in the design, management and assessment of student research tasks"), sharing Reusable Learning Objects (Nancy Graham, "Are we sharing our toys in the sandpit?") and producing IL videos (Gareth Johnson, "Spielberg your way to information literacy").

Puttick's article revisits the need for Enquiry Based Learning identified in the previous article, while Graham's article includes an overview of current examples of sharing information literacy learning objects between institutions. Her article also includes a very useful checklist aimed at helping designers create learning objects to enable them to be shared more easily, along with advice on how to repurpose other institutions' shared learning objects. Finally Johnson's article is a very practical guide to producing your own IL videos, using his well-known blend of combining humour with serious content to promote IL.

Part Three (Obesity, Overload and Opportunity) offers a theoretical approach to the social and ethical aspects of IL. In “Information literacy and Noöpolitics”, Andrew Whitworth identifies the role IL has to play in challenging cultural hegemony in terms of challenging the integrity and meaning of all information resources, even those from supposedly impartial sources. The challenge here for information professionals is providing impartial advice on information seeking whilst also signposting quality resources.

Ben Scoble’s “Contemporary technologies’ influence on learning as a social practice” looks at the “profound impact” of social media on learning preferences. The social aspects of the internet, in terms of communication and collaboration, are identified as the most significant contributions of the web to learning (rather than increased access to information). Scoble argues that social learning is not new, and draws parallels with earlier forms of social learning such as seventeenth century coffeehouses. What is surely radical about social learning on the internet is that it is not confined by the geographic, social or occupational factors of these earlier models. However, it is in the realm of information provision, Scoble argues, that the new developments are most problematic, because of the proliferation of user-generated content, which lacks the quality filters associated with traditional (academic) publishing.

The final article (Jillian Griffiths and Bob Glass “Understanding the information literacy competencies of UK higher education students”) examines the assessment of information skills amongst a cohort of students at Manchester Metropolitan University. Their research concludes that students do require active intervention to improve IL skills and that this intervention needs to be ongoing throughout the degree programme (not just in the first year). The article also highlights the specific aspects of IL that the students struggled with. What would also be useful to know is why students continue to struggle with certain aspects of IL, i.e. is it because the concepts are inherently complex or is it more a case of lack of practice?

In conclusion, this collected volume contains articles covering a diverse range of IL topics. The articles do tend more towards the theoretical and are unsurprisingly HE focused. However, the breadth of coverage should mean this volume will have articles of interest to IL teachers and practitioners irrespective of their library sector.