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Editorial

Welcome to another issue of Library and Information Research: we are sure that you will find the papers and reviews in this issue of both intrinsic interest and of practical use, whatever your role and working context may be. Although the focus of the papers in this issue is very much on the academic library sector, we believe that all of the papers have generic messages that will be useful to all.

Thus, for example, we start with an invited contribution from Joanna Bryant, winner of the 2008 LIRG student award. Her paper is based on her dissertation for her MSc studies at Loughborough University, and discusses ethnographic research undertaken in the library at the University to investigate the way in which students were using open-plan learning spaces. In addition to contributing to our knowledge of how such spaces are used, the paper reminds us that ethnographic approaches to research tend to be under-used in the library and information sector, and have much potential to offer (as well as sometimes being fun to carry out!). Her paper also offers a timely reminder of the LIRG student award: entries for the 2009 prize are now being considered.

The refereed paper by Jon Warwick and Gary Bell explores how the use of a planning tool, the Holon Framework, can be used to facilitate single and double loop learning in academic libraries. Once again, although the focus of the paper is on exploring how the Framework can contribute to organisational learning in an academic library context, the theoretical implications are equally applicable to other library and information environments. At a time when libraries are having to work hard to justify their resource requirements, and indeed in many cases their very existence, Senge's view (cited in the paper by Warwick and Bell) that 'the ability to learn faster than your competitors may be the only sustainable competitive advantage' has particular resonance. In today's competitive and managerialist context, an adaptive approach to learning is not simply a *desirable* attribute but rather an *essential* survival element.

Daren Mansfield's paper addresses the much under-researched area of theft from libraries, again with a focus on academic libraries. Nevertheless, the paper will be of interest to many working in other sectors: sadly, theft from libraries is not a problem that is confined to university institutions, as the British Library will readily testify after recent much-publicised losses of rare and precious works. Mansfield's paper concludes with some useful practical measures that libraries may wish to consider adopting in order to minimise stock losses through theft. Some of these may be more applicable in an academic context, but many are of generic application.

Finally, we offer a number of reviews of recent book publications. Pat Gannon-Leary reviews Weaver's edited volume on the 'transforming potential' of higher education, when students are supported appropriately and their needs are considered holistically in the context of the 'whole student'. Veronica Lawrence reviews 'A Handbook of Ethical Practice: a Practical Guide to Dealing with Ethical Issues in Library and Information Work' by McMenemy, Poulter and

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Burton. As Lawrence concludes, this is indeed a useful and practical contribution to an area of practice that warrants more attention in the LIS literature. I can testify to the usefulness of the thought-provoking case studies in the book, which I have used to good effect in my own teaching.

Simeon Moore discusses Pugh's 'Change Management in Information Services', again a subject that has not been widely written about from the specific perspective of the LIS sector, despite the constant nature and rapid pace of organisational and technological change with which the sector has to grapple. Although Moore highlights the fact that the book is written very much from an academic and theoretical perspective, and is probably most relevant to libraries in the higher education sector, he also recommends it as a useful aid for LIS personnel working in every kind of library or information service. Mike Sharrocks' review of Harriman's guide to creating a business plan for your library also highlights the need to adapt business practices to the external and internal environment in which libraries operate: the accompanying CD provided with the book could, as Sharrocks notes, save practitioners a considerable amount of time and effort.

Meanwhile Juliet Eve's review of the second edition of Gorman and Clayton's work on 'Qualitative Research for the Information Personnel' is so glowing in its praise for the usefulness, relevance, interest and accessibility of the text, that it has convinced me of the need to add it to my own bookshelf!

We hope you enjoy this issue, and that these papers stimulate ideas for research that you can carry out in your own library context, and hopefully write about for the journal. *Library and Information Research* warmly invites you to submit your own contributions for publication in future issues. If you are not sure whether your work fits the journal's remit, please don't hesitate to contact either of the editors for advice. We look forward to hearing from you!

Louise Cooke

Miggie Pickton

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What are students doing in our library? Ethnography as a method of exploring library user behaviour

Joanna Bryant

Abstract

The paper summarises an ethnographic study conducted at Loughborough University in 2007 which investigated user behaviour in a new open-plan learning environment. It seeks to encourage wider use of ethnography within library and information science research and recommends the method as a particularly effective way to explore how library space is used. The author encourages both practitioner-researchers and academics to consider using the method more frequently.

A more in depth discussion of the findings of the project appears in Bryant, Matthews & Walton (2009), whilst the dissertation itself is available online (Bryant, 2007).

1   Introduction

For many practitioners, their Masters' dissertation is their first experience of undertaking a structured piece of library and information science (LIS) research. Once working full time, research is sometimes seen as a 'luxury' as the competing demands of the workplace take precedence. Indeed, LIS research has often been criticised for having a significant research-practice gap. Booth (2003) comments that "practitioner-led research is criticised for its lack of rigour, academic research for its lack of relevance." In the present economic climate, there can be few library and information services that are not feeling pressure to retrench. It is, therefore, particularly timely that LIS professionals demonstrate the value of their skills and services. As Thornton (2008) explains, research is one of the best ways of doing this:

I have always been a strong advocate of being forearmed and demonstrating the value – perceived or actual – of what we do to a whole range of different

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stakeholders, but it is the senior management who must take priority. Any dumb cluck who forgets that is going to be without a Library to run in pretty quick time.

(Thornton, 2008, 36)

Good research can be an effective way of demonstrating to administrators and funding providers how their money is being used, and why continued investment is worthwhile.

This paper argues that ethnography, also known as participant observation, is an under-used but effective qualitative research method for both practitioners and academics. It summarises the findings of a small ethnographic study undertaken at Loughborough University in 2007. The approach was used successfully to investigate how a new, open plan learning environment in the university library was utilised by students. The findings were used to inform library management how investment in the fabric and furnishings of the library had impacted on student use of space. Whilst the project was undertaken by a student researcher (who also worked part-time in the library in question), the method is fairly simple and could certainly be used effectively by practitioners.

2   Why use a qualitative method?

Quantitative studies have an enduring popularity with librarians, since they can make good use of the wide range of readily available data such as library gate-counts, book issue figures etc. Such studies follow a relatively linear progression, from research design, to data collection, to data analysis. At the end, the researcher may produce a set of statistics, or graphs to convey their findings. Such graphs make regular appearances in library annual reports or briefing papers. According to Berg (2007, 2), much research has a bias towards quantitative methodologies which are given "more respect. This may reflect the tendency of the general public to regard science as relating to numbers and implying precision…" However, statistics and surveys can only go so far. For example, data from the Library and Information Statistics Unit (LISU) indicate that visits to UK academic libraries rose by over 15% between 1995 and 2005 (LISU, 2006). Yet the number of visits per FTE student has fallen by 10% over the last five years (LISU, 2006). What does this *mean* for academic libraries? Such data cannot tell us *how* library buildings and resources are actually used. J.E. Davies, a former director of LISU, encourages practitioners and academics to make use of statistics, but also acknowledges the value of qualitative methods:

Simply counting things because they can be counted (and maybe, have always been counted) and then deciding what, if anything, to do with the results offers few opportunities for real services assessment and is a thing of the past. There is growing adoption of social measures, or 'soft indicators' to assess the influence of, and value added through particular initiatives or services. These are harder to analyse and interpret but can be used to advantage in charting the broader contribution of information and library services.

(Davies, 2002, 131)

For libraries seeking to evaluate the impact of investment in the fabric of their buildings, quantitative studies may not be the best approach.

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Ethnography is a form of participant observation most commonly utilised by anthropologists. Despite its ability to help answer that difficult question "what's going on?" ethnography is seldom used within LIS research. Hilder and Pym (2008) concluded that the method was used in just 3.7% of papers published in high-profile LIS journals in 2005. The authors recommend that, amongst others, the ethnographic method is given more coverage in LIS doctoral programs in order to prepare academic researchers to utilise it in the field. Whilst full ethnographic studies typically demand a researcher undertake a protracted period of participant observation, a shorter approach can be used to some valuable effect. 'Ethnographically informed reports' offer a condensed approach, concentrating on particular spaces or points in time (Fetterman, 1998; Berg, 2007). In his influential text, *Ethnography: a way of seeing* (1999), Wolcott argues fervently that the dominance of quantitative methods should not be allowed to overshadow the merits of qualitative approaches:

Neophyte researchers indoctrinated so rigorously in rigor that they no longer appreciate or trust what each of us accomplishes through personal experience may need to be reminded of the human capacity for observation and to recognize that ultimately everything we know comes to us that way.

(Wolcott, 1999, 46)

Wolcott's argument, that observation is the *sine qua non* of knowledge, is a powerful one. It is certainly true that we can learn much from simple observation, yet this is an approach to research inquiry which is often overlooked, possibly because of its perceived simplicity. It is, in a sense, too *obvious*.

3   The Loughborough University project

Loughborough University's Pilkington Library opened its flexible learning space (Open[3]) in 2005. This research project was undertaken in 2007 as a means of investigating how the space was being utilised. Flexible learning spaces like Open[3] are becoming commonplace across the academic sector, as libraries seek to respond to wider changes in higher education (HE) and student expectations. Historically universities taught by means of lectures and tutorials, and knowledge was tested by end-of-degree examinations. However, the structure and composition of HE has changed dramatically over the last fifty years, with growth in the number of institutions, and the number of students. The advent of tuition fees for UK students has led many to consider themselves the 'customers' of HE, rather than participants, and has 'marketized' universities (Fox, 2002). Teaching and assessment styles have altered in line with this transformation, with students now routinely producing collaborative work such as group projects, reports and presentations (Livingston and Lynch, 2000). New learning spaces in academic libraries seek to support this kind of learning by combining traditional library resources with electronic ones, and by providing spaces for collaborative work. Whilst library staff in many institutions have been successful in gauging user opinion on these spaces by means of satisfaction surveys, and quantitative analyses, there is hardly any published literature which uses ethnography/ participant observation as a method.

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The present study built upon an earlier user survey at Loughborough which explored how learners used library space, and their preferences for learning environments (Walton, 2006). One of that study's recommendations was that it would be beneficial to "identify precisely how Open[3] is being used and capture the different types of learning that occurs there" (Walton, 2006, 145). The ethnographic approach was chosen for this project as an appropriate way to study the activities of library users without resorting to another survey. There was a general concern that undertaking such a study might lead to a limited response from library users (who had only recently participated in a survey). There was also an appreciation that surveys and interviews might lead respondents to provide the answers they felt were expected of them (Creaser, 2006). By conducting an observation-based study, it was felt that the library would obtain as unbiased a view of what was going on in Open[3] as possible, without disturbing users.

A 'micro-ethnography' approach was used with data collected in phases. This meant that the library was studied at many different times of day, across several weeks. The researcher spent a total of 40 hours conducting fieldwork, recording observations in an electronic field-diary. Approval from the University's Ethics Committee was obtained before fieldwork commenced, and a notice was placed on the library website advising users of what was going on. The CILIP Code of Professional Practice (2007) was observed throughout the project. An initial pilot study was undertaken which established that using a laptop and word processing software to compile the field diary was more effective than taking notes longhand.

By the end of the project, the field diary was some 15,000 words in length. A grounded theory approach was used to analyse the diary and identify observation notes by theme (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). A selection of observation notes from the field diary are reproduced below in order to give a sense of the kind of activities the researcher observed taking place:

> **ON:** ...The guys across the table from me are testing each other on statistical tests, and going over previous exam papers. They are really working together as a team. I'd never thought of maths as a team subject – but they are clearly getting a lot out of working together.
>
> (Field Notes, 06/06/2007, 10.45-12.45).

> **ON:** ...A course mate comes over and says hello. We have a brief chat about dissertations…[she] asks me a question about questionnaire design. I don't know the answer, but the girl sat next to me (a stranger) has a think, and makes a useful suggestion.
>
> (Field Notes, 06/06/2007, 20.45-23.00).

> **ON:** ...Area seems very busy. At first glance, all the PCs are occupied but [many have been] abandoned by their users, left logged on. Frustrating!
>
> (Field Notes, 15/05/2007, 15.30-19.00).

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> **ON:** ..One of the library staff pops over for a chat, and asks how I am getting on. We exchange views about the space, and how the pizza boxes can be used as a metric to ascertain how busy it has been the night before. We both agree that Imago [who operate the library café] should start selling pizza. They are clearly missing a trick.
>
> (Field Notes, 18/06/2007, 08.15-09.45).

Until this study was undertaken, library staff had no evidence to support their assumptions of what activities were taking place within Open[3]. Analysis of the field diary revealed that the space was being used as both a study and a social space. The findings of this study, combined with other investigations undertaken by the library in recent years indicate that users are largely satisfied with the provision of resources and learning spaces in the library. Users clearly appreciate the range of study environments available to them, with library statistics indicating that each area attracts a large number of visitors. It is clear that ongoing development of a range of different learning spaces is fundamental to the continued improvement of library services. However the study concluded that it is important to maintain the diversity of learning spaces available. Extending the open-plan learning space paradigm to other floors of the library was not recommended. However further investment in the furnishings of Open[3] could lead to a more efficient use of the space. Simple suggestions, such as making sure computers left logged on but idle automatically reboot, thereby allowing another student to use them might help facilitate more effective use of the area. The study also indicated that mature students, and female students, were under-represented. Whilst the design of this study prevents any firm conclusions regarding the diversity of library users, this may be an area that the library management team wishes to explore further using an alternative methodological approach, such as a targeted survey. This would allow the library to investigate how far it is meeting the needs of different user groups.

4 Reflections on the methodology

Most of the data collection for this study took place during June 2007 when the library was trialling 24-hour opening. This period is one of the busiest times of the year for the library, when undergraduate students are revising for their exams. Some observation was conducted during the vacation period, but data saturation was reached fairly rapidly as the library was generally much less busy. The vacation observation phase was postponed for a time whilst Open[3] was re-carpeted and new electrical outlets were installed. This certainly had an impact on library usage during July, requiring anyone visiting to conduct their work on other floors of the building. It is impossible to establish how far study-habits developed during this period influenced library users over the summer. These factors are important to bear in mind as they have implications for the kind of activities taking place in the library. Had the study been conducted at a different point in the academic year, the results might have been markedly different. To gain a deeper

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understanding of how the university community uses Open[3] it would be necessary to undertake further studies at different junctures in the academic year.

This project used only one researcher, yet was successful in eliciting a number of useful conclusions which have helped inform library management on how the open plan study space was being used. It was possible to reassure staff that the space is being used effectively for study and not purely for social exchange (although the latter is certainly an important function of the space). The project also generated some simple, but useful, ideas for improving services. As Sturges (2008) argues so passionately:

there is a great deal that can be done, and done well, in LIS research using simple, inexpensive methods. Qualitative research can tell us most of what we need to know on some topics, and this information can be obtained using quite informal techniques.

(Sturges, 2008,33)

Any LIS researcher, be they academic or practitioner (or indeed, both) can use ethnography to help them explore what users are actually *doing* in their library. It is simply necessary to find the time, and learn how to 'see' again, essentially to observe deliberately and carefully. The results can be surprising, and insightful.

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The Occasion

Joanna Bryant was awarded the LIRG Student Prize for 2008 for her MSc dissertation: *An ethnographic study of user behaviour in Open3 at the Pilkington Library, Loughborough University*.

Acknowledgement

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Reducing book theft at university libraries

Daren Mansfield

Abstract

After the local press reported how a student stole books from the University Library and sold them on the online marketplace, eBay, it became clear that hardly any research had been undertaken into book theft at university libraries. This article puts forward some valuable recommendations that could be practically implemented, mindful of the dilemma of the juxtaposed needs of social inclusion and stock security.

1 Introduction

At the beginning of semester A, the local press reported how a student stole books from the University Library and sold them on the online marketplace, eBay, having foiled the security systems. Almost all of these missing books were latest edition, high demand texts that went missing over the 2006-07 academic year. The issue of book theft is complex, and the literature available is often contradictory, leaving libraries in an unenviable 'no win' situation where any potential solution contains inherent faults. SCONUL (2003, 101) recognises that 'there is an established market for the stolen items, and they usually retain their value'. Book theft is identified as the most common crime in libraries, which has been on the increase for many years (Sewdass et al, 1995).

2 Causes of Crime

According to Weiss (1981), pressure for academic success is a factor in increasing book theft among students. Roberts (1968) concluded in his four-year study of library crime that a high rate of book theft occurred in libraries with relevant and sought after material. There is also some evidence that offenders are young, predominantly male, second-or third-year undergraduates, and book theft is usually carried out during the afternoon or evening of semester periods (Sewdess et al, 1995). Boss (1984) contends that policies and procedures may cause anti-library attitudes which may produce an adverse effect where patrons rebel against perceived restrictions and steal books. Jayaram (1988, 138) in his study on the needs and attitudes of student library users, discovered that in some instances the

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extended hours coupled with the ease of access also make the library 'a particularly attractive setting for potential offenders'. Ungarelli (1973, 155) argues that the high loss factor of library materials is due to the physical arrangement of the library building where control of the exit is difficult, stating that in some cases where work stations or study desks are far from the stacks or shelving, and in addition, compact shelves, and limited space between the aisles, all provide ideal conditions for book theft. Weiss (1981) identifies economic and financial factors as major contributors to the theft of library books.

3 Perception

Lincoln (1984, 9) argues that there is a perception by many potential thieves and vandals that the library is a 'safe target', with 'good pickings' and a relatively low possibility of getting caught. Johnson (1981, 2) argues that most students view book theft only as an 'academic crime' rather than a 'real crime'. Arguably, there may also be a perception on the part of higher education students of the library as an infinite resource, since the introduction of tuition fees in the 2006-07 academic year (under the Higher Education Act 2004). Associated with this speculation, students paying increased fees may acquire a sense of ownership over library stock.

4 Changing culture and the dilemma of social inclusion

Balancing the changing needs of students (including the challenges of widening participation, changing expectations and new approaches to education and studying) with stock security is increasingly difficult: 'The key to protecting a collection from vandalism or theft lies in getting the right balance between access and security' (Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries (CMAL), 2003, 21).

5 Recommendations

Addressing the dilemma of social inclusion and stock security in today's libraries is not an easily achievable task. The causes of crime are diverse and book theft cannot be totally eliminated. Arguably, imposing security regulations in a library to reduce book theft sits uncomfortably with the philosophy of widening participation but shrinking budgets during the 'credit crunch' require some form of action. However, there are several measures which could be practically implemented as part of a crime prevention policy. Clearly formulating such a procedure would involve cleverly balancing the relationship between social inclusion and enforcement of regulations. Introducing measures like heavier fines and exclusion may well be counter-productive. As literature suggests that book theft is widespread, a broad range of measures aimed at all library users could raise security awareness and reduce book theft. Perhaps the most useful guide to book security is the mammoth Security in Museums, Archives and Libraries study conducted by CMAL (2003), which recommends a system of identification, monitoring and revision. Any steps to discourage book theft would need to be undertaken over a phased period; introducing different initiatives at separate times to produce a gradual, yet inevitable implementation that would not upset any customer-orientated service. The successful management of the apparent contradiction between enforcing rules against book theft and promoting social

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inclusion may be achieved through effective communication. Accomplished either through customer service, signage and through marketing the service as a valuable provision worth supporting, could be a positive way of reducing book theft at university libraries. The following measures, while none are infallible safeguards against book theft, are important recommendations for university libraries:

- **Regular stock checks:** Whilst they are extremely labour intensive, regular stock checks to monitoring loss are the most effective method to identify missing items from the collection;

- **Security staff**: 'In large institutions this means employing a team of guards or attendants to deter and detect the actions of the criminally inclined, and the entire team is constantly vigilant' (CMAL, 2003, 21);

- **Library Security Officer**: This monitoring role could be recruited and selected from the existing pool of staff. Crime must be recorded on relevant forms and thefts ought to be reported to the police (CMAL, 2003). The role of the Library Security Officer could consist of:

    o carrying out risk assessments on items most likely to be stolen, such as high demand, latest edition texts

    o compiling crime statistics (such as completing the Crime Report Form)

    o monitoring the effectiveness of self issue

    o reviewing the effectiveness of relevant policy and procedures

    o setting up relevant meetings

    o monitoring 'missing items' on the library management system

    o involvement in stock checks

(Guidance on NVQs can be provided by The Cultural Heritage National Training Organisation (CHNTO).)

- **Clear written policies:**

    o Publicising and enforcing rules and regulations

    o Staff to be aware of the escalation procedure for students stealing books

- **Maintenance of security gates**: A disadvantage of electronic security systems located at exit points in the library is that they create a false sense of security, and detection can also be overcome by power failures, or by electrical or electronic faults (Sewdass et al., 1995). Their typical success is preventing the absent minded patron from taking books out of the library, or the novice thief. As Witt (1996, 45) freely admits 'no electronic book theft detection system is foolproof' and no security system can eliminate book theft. In electromagnetic systems, tagged materials can be 'foiled by simply carrying a small magnet along with the sensitized materials through the sensing screens' (Witt, 1996, 52). Aluminium foil can be used to 'shield targeted materials from activating an alarm while passing through the sensing screens', tags can

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be easily peeled off, and electromagnetic alarms can be avoided by raising the sensitized item above the sensing screens (Witt, 1996, 52);

- **Short-loan**: Making short-loan books available over weekends if borrowed on a Friday evening during semester, to make theft less tempting;

- **Photocopiers**: Photocopying machines must always be in working order;

- **Extended library opening hours:** Literature suggests that most students prefer extended library opening hours because the library is the only building that is open after dark and on weekends within universities;

- **Bag checking**: According to CMAL (2003), bag searching acts as a deterrent and heightens security awareness and they suggest that bag searching is lawful under resurrected anti-terrorism laws! I discovered that out of 36 HE libraries, 15 (41.66%) searched bags or forbade bags entering the library, 14 (38.88 %) only checked the bags once the alarm sounded, and 7 (19.44 %) occasionally checked bags;

- **Assessing student needs**: It is important to continually review student library needs;

- **Enquiry sheets***:* When a student mentions to a member of library staff that a book is missing from the shelves but is 'checked in', a record could be kept of the item's author, title and barcode in case it has been stolen. This 'missing item' could be checked later in the day, and be reported to the aforementioned Library Security Officer as part of an ongoing risk assessment;

- **Radio Frequency Identification (RFID)**: Use of RFID tags means that regular stock checks can be processed relatively quickly by scanning bookshelves (Butters, 2006). Admittedly RFID can be an expensive investment and a compare and contrast exercise still has to be carried out with the library management system to identify missing items;

- **Clear signage:** this could inform students that bags may be checked and that it is forbidden to remove unauthorised items from the library. Signage intended to be both protective of the University's assets whilst encouraging a safe, welcoming environment that is fully inclusive could manage the difficult balancing act between security and inclusion for an HE institution benefiting from widening participation;

- **E-Books:** By increasing the amount of e-books, especially high demand, latest edition texts, book theft may be reduced by transferring a 'high risk' physical item into an electronic version that cannot be illegally removed from the premises.

Other recommendations include competitive insurance, use of lighting, reviewing methods of display, ensuring that electronic security systems function properly, reader identification, control of entry, tagging, visible staffing at high-risk areas, use of recordable CCTV, position of CCTVs, effective access control, an effective lone worker policy, and good fire evacuation and Health and Safety procedures.

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6 Conclusion

Just how much money is lost owing to book theft at university libraries is unknown. Unquestionably, introducing measures like stock monitoring, security assessments, bag searches, and appointing library security officers are culturally sensitive in widening participative environments. While research suggests that no easy solutions to combating book theft exist, much of the research is several years old, and while some of the theories are still current, further research into the practicalities of crime reduction into libraries needs to be undertaken. Clearly empirical research genuinely to understand book theft at university libraries is unexplored, highlighted by the fact that the research for this article was predominantly gathered from sources about the public library sector. Integral to any further study to reduce book theft at university libraries is understanding student perception. The speculation that some students steal books because they pay high tuition fees and feel they already own the books, is un-researched. Attempting to recognise why students steal from university libraries would be the foundation of any stock security policy, and a large-scale study of the sector may be required to offer guidance to libraries wishing to reduce book theft. Whether book theft in university libraries can be reduced implementing the wide range of recommendations mentioned in this article, while successfully balancing the juxtaposed needs of social inclusion and stock security, requires further investigation.

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A Framework for Exploring Organisational Learning in the Academic Library

Jon Warwick, Gary Bell

Abstract

This paper highlights some of the deficiencies with Higher Education (HE) planning paradigms and then describes the Holon Framework as an HE planning approach that overcomes some of the deficiencies. The paper outlines some key features from the literature of organisational learning and explores how the Holon Framework facilitates both single and double loop organisational learning. The paper then describes how the Holon Framework can be used as a strategic and operational planning tool with academic libraries and how the more conventional library operational research models can be included in a structured double loop learning process.

1 Introduction

Education in the United Kingdom has, in recent years, seen many changes as the education reforms of successive governments have impacted on teaching at all levels from primary school to university. Higher Education (HE) institutions have been forced to deal with a dwindling of financial support per student (in real terms) and when one adds to this the additional risks of high levels of competition for students, changing population demographics and general economic conditions (both of which will impact on potential demand for existing courses), and the impact of changing Government policy, then the environment within which universities operate can be clearly seen as unstable.

Typically, university responses to these challenges are fairly common across all institutions (both within the UK and abroad) and will include contracting out selected services, 'centralising' management and administrative functions common to faculties, reducing staff development and conference budgets and freezing staff recruitment (Guskin and Marcy, 2005). At the same time, of course, the university tries to protect the core functions seen as crucial to its role as a university which are typically maintaining learning and teaching standards,

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student support and research with the weightings applied to each adjusted to reflect the nature of the institution concerned.

All of this makes it imperative that adaptive strategic planning processes are in place so that the university can focus limited resources on those activities that support the mission of the institution, set priorities and achieve competitive advantage (Franz and Morrison, 2005). In fact, it is the process of achieving competitive advantage that tests the strategic planning processes of HE institutions since, as Senge (1990 p. 4) states:

The ability to learn faster than your competitors may be the only sustainable competitive advantage.

The ability of organisations to learn is thus seen as a necessary (if not sufficient) condition in establishing competitive advantage but, ironically, although HE institutions develop their reputation on their ability to produce high quality learning environments for their students, there seems to be little attention paid to the manner in which learning is achieved within the organisation itself. This criticism applies not just to universities as individual enterprises, but also to many of their constituent departments as well. University libraries, as major service providers within their institutions, are facing quite extreme forces of change and need to be equipped themselves as flexible, independent learners – just those characteristics that universities seek to develop in their students.

This paper briefly describes the Holon Framework as a process for supporting and enabling planning in HE institutions and departments within organisations. It then reflects on the way in which the framework supports double loop learning within the organisation and finally describes how academic libraries might benefit from the broad planning perspectives offered by the Holon Framework in combining both traditional quantitative library modelling and systems based enquiry.

This paper is an extended version of a paper presented at the World Multi-conference on Systems, Cybernetics and Informatics in 2006.

2 Improving Decision Making Within Academic Libraries

Over the last 50 years or so there has been great interest in the application of Operational Research (OR) methods and models to academic libraries. Many of these applications have been oriented towards improving operational aspects of the library and have focussed on the problem of determining correct loan and duplication policies and predicting the changes in demand for sections of the book stock (Morse, 1968; Chen, 1976). This focus has become evident as funding cuts have forced library staff to try and make restricted book stocks available to growing numbers of students and the reduction of loan periods is one way of increasing book circulation when additional funds are not available for duplication.

Indeed, ever since its origins during the Second World War, OR has provided modellers with a toolbox of techniques, methods and approaches with which to try and solve problems in a variety of management domains. Many of the methods are quantitative (mathematical programming, queuing theory, stock control etc.) and implicitly assume that the problem to be solved has certain characteristics that

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make these techniques appropriate. In particular, these characteristics include the reliance of the methods on data availability (including consideration of data credibility and accuracy), de-politicisation and assumed consensus of objectives and the treatment of people as passive objects (Rosenhead and Mingers, 2001). This raises questions about the applicability of such models to those systems perceived as human activity systems, that is to say systems which exist only as a result of the activity of humans within them. As argued by Dahlin (1991) the perception could well be that OR models are seen as having a very narrow focus of application and are not necessarily seen as relevant to helping with any of the "bigger" problems of library management.

A number of papers have reviewed the application of OR techniques to academic libraries (Kantor, 1979; Kraft and Boyce, 1991; Warwick, 1992) and this exercise will not be repeated here. However, as we have already noted the vast majority of the modelling work undertaken has been quantitative in nature and restricted to the building of sometimes complex mathematical models. Furthermore, since the initial burst of modelling activity in the later half of the last century there has been a lessening of this activity reported in the academic OR and information science literatures (Warwick, 2009). This decline has coincided with the growth of the world wide web as a source of information for students and the challenges that the provision of online information now poses for libraries in terms of policy and operations are significant. If the academic library is no longer the primary information source for students, researchers and lecturers then redefining and continually reviewing the services and academic support mechanisms offered to library users becomes strategically important to library (and university) management.

One further problem that often emerges within organisations is that of linking strategy to action and in particular predicting the effects of strategic interventions. These problems become particularly acute in complex systems. Brookfield and Smith (2006) argue that there is an inherent weakness in the management maxim that "if you can measure it, you can manage it". Specifically the weakness is concerned with the measurement techniques used which often assume linearity of relationships and a reliance on *a priori* data as a predictor of future performance. If we couple with this a recognition that we may well only have a partial understanding of the effects of system intervention (what Simon (1957) referred to as bounded rationality) then predictions of how a system may react to structural, environmental or policy change may be unreliable and controlling the change process itself becomes difficult.

System complexity results in only a partial understanding of the true dynamics of the system (Brookfield and Smith, 2006). Important here are macro and micro system properties and the notion of 'downward causation'. Downward causation is the process through which a system's micro components adapt to macro level intervention and this adaptation can, potentially, be very unpredictable. Thus the effect of macro level managerial intervention could be unpredicted micro level changes, the emergent properties of which may subsequently influence the properties of the wider system. For example, if loan periods are shortened as a substitute for buying extra copies (book circulation would be increased) it may be the case that library users become dissatisfied with the service and seek

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alternatives thus reducing demand for the texts. Conversely, buying extra copies may initially improve the service and might encourage greater use of the library thus increasing demand and negating the effect of providing extra titles. These types of changes require careful monitoring of system change after policy or operational changes. In general, Brookfield and Smith (2006, p.279) argue that there is:

 … a degree of uncertainty associated with intervention outcomes from a managerial perspective because the performance metrics of models of intervention (their motives, logic, organizational scope, timescales, and implementation) cannot capture easily, if at all, emergent system responses.

Many public bodies in the UK (and this applies particularly to education) are subject to high levels of government scrutiny which involves target setting and the measurement of 'quality standards'. Clearly these issues relating to our ability to measure and predict system change are crucial in understanding how systems will respond to management intervention.   It is difficult to predict system responses to change however systematically desirable and culturally feasible they might seem to be. Thus, high level policy formulation may have unpredicted effects at the lower levels relating to operations and interactions with, and between, system users.

These sorts of problem are not amenable to analysis by traditional OR models and so, as universities and their libraries seek to refocus their activities, new approaches to modelling have come to the fore (Rosenhead and Mingers, 2001) and of particular interest are ideas from the field of systems thinking.

3 The Holon Framework

Trow (1994) commented that hard and soft managerialism concepts were being applied to higher education institutions. Hard managerialism generally involves people from government and business who are resolved to reshaping and redirecting universities through funding formulae and other mechanisms, e.g. criteria to assess teaching quality. Soft managerialism usually revolves around senior administrators and some academics from that university and views managerial effectiveness as an important component in the provision of higher education of quality at its lowest cost. It is focused around the idea of improving the efficiency of the institution.

Galbraith (1998) identified the dominant HE planning approach that is associated with soft managerialism. The key parts of the approach are: a strategic plan; performance indicators (PIs); mathematical models and artificial structures (such as departments and faculties). A strategic plan usually has a mission statement and related strategic aims that assist in achieving it, e.g. excellence in teaching. These strategic aims are treated separately and expressed in terms of goals that are evaluated through the use of PIs. Furthermore, regression models and spreadsheets use the collected data for forecasting and budgeting purposes.

Bell *et al* (2000) identify concerns about the managerialist approach relating to the production of the vision for the institution or department in that there seems to be no clear method and, because of the lack of specificity (which may be due to the

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lack of dialogue about the direction of the university or department concerned), many academics consider the visions to be meaningless.

Typically, university management take the orthodox planning approach which views analytical thinking as key. We adopt an alternative conceptual view of HE planning which takes an holistic systems-based approach more suited to the complex real world situation with which we are dealing (Bell *et al*, 2005). Systems theory and systems terminology have long been used to describe organisations (Millett, 1998) and this can provide insights into their structure and operational processes (Robbins and Barnwell, 1998). The Holon Framework emerges from Checkland's Soft Systems Methodology (Checkland, 1981).

Checkland (1988) argues that researchers who apply systems concepts to investigate social situations face difficulties because these situations are never clearly defined. He prefers to use the word 'Holon' rather than 'system' as it highlights a distinctive approach to investigating such situations. We consider a Holon to be an abstract representation of a social situation that captures current problems (Bell and Warwick, 2007). The Holon Framework involves six different stages or modes of working and the aims of each are described in Table 1.0.

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Stage	Stage Aims
Framing	This stage has a number of objectives among which are that the stakeholders are identified and become familiar with the framework and that the investigators gain a broad understanding of the situation so that relevant holons (and sub-holons) can be identified and labelled.
Enquiry	This stage aims to identify the problems as perceived by the stakeholders.
Visioning	This stage attempts to collate various problems into themes to be addressed. These can be linked with a sub-holon hierarchical level.
Metrication	This stage analyses the themes and links the emergent problems with the appropriate hierarchical level. Metrics are generated to characterise specific problems.
Mathematical Modelling	This stage aims to analyse the data further using appropriate modelling techniques – for example a system dynamics model might be used to explain the situation of concern.
Action	This stage aims to facilitate change having achieved understanding of the area of concern

Table 1: Aims of Holon Framework Stages

As has been described elsewhere (Bell and Warwick, 2007; Warwick, Bell and Kennedy, 2005) the Holon Framework combines soft elements (Framing, Enquiry, Visioning) and hard elements (Metrication and Modelling). It addresses 'the who', 'the what', and 'the where' type questions for the current state S_0, and generates a vision of a desired state S_1. Additionally, this produces a relevant metrics programme, and the collected metrics can be used as dynamic behaviour patterns. It is then possible (using quantitative modelling techniques) to tackle 'the how', 'the why' and 'the when' type questions (Bell *et al,* 2005). The most important traits of this framework may be summarised as:

1. It provides management groups with an holistic view of a situation;

2. The use of a soft methodology to enable the capture of the stakeholders' point of view;

3. It enables control of the effects of bounded rationality;

4. It promotes the development of a desirable and feasible vision;

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5. The creation of a relevant metrics programme allows progress and the effects of change to be assessed;

6. By integrating quantitative modelling into the management process emphasis is placed on developing model ownership;

7. It allows discussion of the 'best solution' to achieve the vision given the cost constraints;

8. It encourages the use of models for examining various 'what-if' scenarios.

The Framing and Enquiry stages are means of exploring issues, drawing out themes, boundaries and experiences that the stakeholders feel are important within the situation of concern. These first two stages encourage a thorough examination of the current state, S_0, resulting in its definition. Next we move to Visioning in which the client group explore a vision of the future that they feel is feasible and desirable. The vision will be expressed in terms of the holon structure used throughout the enquiry and may be expressed formally in terms of root definitions. It is important though that the discussion of S_0 and the vision, S_1, are linked through issues and problems. The stakeholder group should identify the critical issues and problems, which require resolution if movement towards the vision is to be achieved. The issues and problems will generate goals, questions and metrics. The Metrication stage allows the stakeholders to learn more about the problems and issues in S_0, and the subsequent Metrics Collection Stage enables them to measure their progress towards S_1. This is followed by the Action stage in which modelling is undertaken to clarify the processes which can effect movement from S_0 to S_1.

Naturally, although the stages are denoted sequentially, it is likely that, for a large project, different modes of working may happen simultaneously. For example, the metric collection process could well be undertaken over a long period of time (a year or more) and during this time modelling might be undertaken, further enquiry might take place, and the vision might change as the environment changes.

4   Learning in organisations

The concept of organisational learning has been in the management literature for many years and is now a widely recognised term (Easterby-Smith *et al,* 1999). Many authors have sought to define the term organisational learning and the classic work of Argyris (1977) considers organisational learning as a process that detects and corrects errors, and is carried out by individuals within the organisation acting as agents for the organisation. Weick (1991) considers one of the defining properties of learning (of any type) to be a combination of same stimulus and different response and in the same vein Millett (1998) comments that if we are unwilling to reconsider our basic assumptions then we are confined to what he terms a "destination mentality" where the end point is defined and our only concern is how to get there.

Huber (1991) identifies four constructs that are considered to form a basic framework for organisational learning: knowledge acquisition, information distribution, information interpretation and organisational memory and notes that

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learning can be considered as a change in the range of *potential* behaviours and so may not always be observable.

Easterby-Smith *et al* (1999) make a useful distinction between the technical view of organisational learning (learning is based around information and how we process, interpret and respond to it) and the social perspective in which learning focuses on experience and the way that people make sense of the world around them. The former view is rather more formal while the latter is embodied more in social interaction and conversations.

The classic example of the technical view is found in the work of Argyris and Schon who describe single and double loop learning (Argyris and Schon, 1978). Their thesis is that in describing the interaction between individuals and organisations we need to distinguish between those theories (usually tacit structures) that are implicit in governing our actual behaviour (so-called *theories-in-use*) and those that are used to describe to others what we do, or would like others to think we do (called *espoused theory*). These two theories of action might be quite different but provided they do not become disconnected the tension between them can create an impetus for reflection and dialogue. As stated above, learning occurs when errors are detected which is to say that we encounter or experience something which does not fit with current knowledge (or our theory-in-use). Single loop learning (or adaptive learning) occurs when the action taken is to

… adjust our operational thinking and behaviour in a way that allows us to accommodate the anomaly without having to make any fundamental changes to our underlying belief or value system.

(Borden, 2005)

Double loop learning requires a rather more complex response in which the basic beliefs and value systems are called into question and they are examined and possibly altered or disregarded. This is illustrated in Figure 1 below.
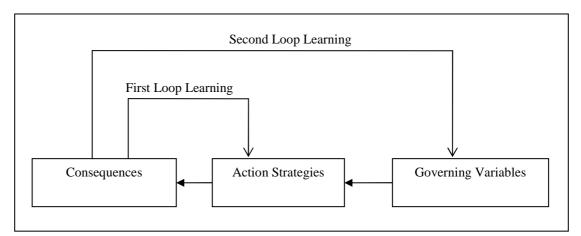

Figure 1: Double loop Learning (Argyris and Schon, 1978)

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Argyris and Schon distinguish between Model I and Model II organisations so that the former have policies and practices that encourage single loop learning (rules, regulations and structures are paramount and rigid) and the latter have a more fluid structure that allows rapid responses (in terms or rules, regulations structures and beliefs) to changes in circumstances and environmental conditions. Model II behaviour is far less common in organisations and if an organisation is to exhibit Model II behaviour then it would be expected to have the characteristics listed in Table 2.0.

Aspect	Characteristics
Governing Model II values:	• Valid information; • Free and informed choice; • Internal commitment;
Strategies include:	• Sharing control; • Participation in design and implementation of action;
Operationalised by:	• Attribution and evaluation illustrated with relatively directly observable data; • Surfacing conflicting views; • Encouraging public testing of evaluations;

Table 2: Encouraging Double loop Learning (Anderson, 1997)

In summary, single loop learning is the correction of errors without altering the organisation's policies or objectives, whilst questioning these policies and objectives themselves involves double loop learning.

5 Learning and the Holon Framework

The Holon Framework has its roots in soft systems methodology and is therefore concerned with two broad streams of enquiry which explore the facts and logic of the situation from the perspectives of those involved (logic-based enquiry) and also the myths and meanings through which we make sense of the world around us in general and the organisation in particular (cultural enquiry). Cultural enquiry will include roles, norms, and values as well as a political and other power related relationships and control processes. Note here that the phrase 'myths and meanings' encompasses a wide range of descriptors and is used to contrast with 'facts and logic' which make up the complementary stream of enquiry. We would draw a parallel between these two streams of enquiry and the

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two learning perspectives of Easterby-Smith *et al.* (1999) relating to the technical view and the social perspective of organizational learning.

Dealing first with the social perspective, the view here is that learning is something that can emerge from both casual and formal social interactions and conversations through which ideas, feelings, information etc. are communicated. The idea that these conversations within the organization play an important role in helping to define the organization's culture has been commented on in the literature where, for example, Seel argues that organisational culture is an emergent property of organisational activity.

"Organisational culture is the emergent result of the continuing negotiations about values, meanings and properties between the members of that organisation and with its environment."

(Seel, 2000, p.3)

As learning from a social perspective occurs so the organisational culture evolves and gaining an understanding of the culture through these conversations, values, properties etc. provides a window onto the myths and meanings that individuals or groups believe. This can then uncover opportunities for learning from each other or for challenging these beliefs with experimental or observational data. Previous work (Warwick *et al*, 2005) has shown how application of the Holon Framework can provide just such a window and shed light onto many of the underlying beliefs and views held by individuals or groups.

Turning now to the technical view, we contend that the Holon Framework facilitates double loop learning *i.e.* Model II behaviour. Table 3.0 below describes how the characteristics of Model II behaviour emerge from the Holon Framework process model.

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Model II Characteristics	Holon Process Model Stages
Governing Values	The Holon Framework emphasizes structured debate and vision generation together with a process that generates metric collection to help control the change process.
Strategies	Decisions, strategies and change are always within the control of the client group. The process is a shared and negotiated experience.
Operational Issues	The process allows examination of both 'logic and facts' and well as 'myths and meanings' through the exploration of assumptions and structured data collection, considering ownership of issues and problems as well as their nature and importance. Mathematical modeling helps with testing ideas, assumptions and evaluating progress.

Table 3: Addressing Model II Characteristics

In addition to allowing the emergence of the characteristics of Model II type behaviour, the Holon Framework also addresses the criteria listed by Huber (see above) that form a basic framework for organisational learning. The links are shown in Table 4.0.

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Characteristic	Holon Framework Perspective
Knowledge Acquisition	Learning occurs from knowledge acquisition both from within and external to the organisation. In the Holon Framework emphasis is placed on monitoring activity within the holons and in the wider environment and then modelling this to gain insights about the dynamic relationships at play.
Information Distribution	Learning often occurs through sharing of stories, anecdotes, information and opinions. The client group works together in developing a rich picture of the problem situation (structured by holons) and in developing a shared vision which they can each commit to.
Information Interpretation	The client group examine and interpret information from the metrication and mathematical modelling stages. The greater the availability of data and possible interpretations the greater the opportunities for learning.
Organisational Memory	As work with the Holon Framework proceeds, the client group develops a greater understanding of the problem situation both in terms of data (collected and stored on line for easy access and analysis) and as a shared understanding of the issues, opinions, expertise and biases. The development of metrics programmes and mathematical models provide a further basis for shared understanding.

Table 4: Huber's Organisational Learning Framework

Double loop learning in organisations is still a rare phenomenon in the sense that many organisations are not structured appropriately and do not have the required organisational culture to allow the characteristics of Model II behaviour to emerge. By using the Holon Framework over an extended period of time we contend that Model II behaviour can be developed so that, at least for the duration of the study, organisational learning can occur.

We now look at how the Holon Framework can assist in structuring the quality management and enhancement cycle for academic library management.

6 Encouraging single and double loop learning in library management

In this paper we have discussed some of the characteristics of double loop learning and indicated how application of the Holon Framework can bring about some of the discussions, explorations and actions necessary for the encouragement of a double loop learning process. We have also touched on the idea that library OR models to date have been exclusively quantitative and

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mathematical in style. This leads to the conclusion that library OR to date has been almost exclusively related to single loop learning processes as they have not had the capability to assist with policy definition and strategic thinking.

In order to assist with strategic thinking the Holon Framework uses ideas drawn from systems thinking and we now consider how it can assist in bringing about the process of double loop learning within a library management context. Figure 2 shows the double loop learning process reconfigured to incorporate the stages of the Holon Framework.
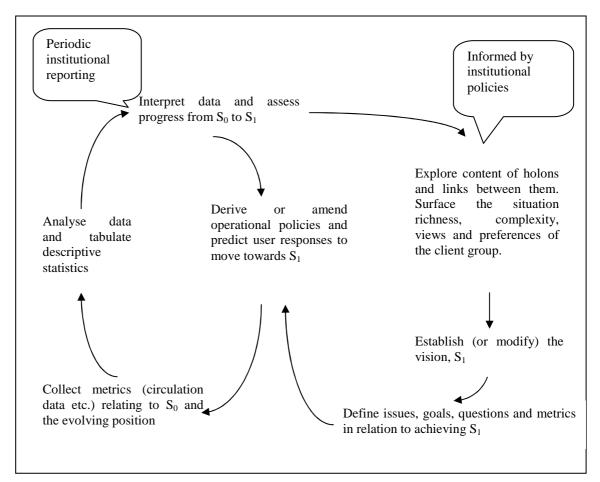

Figure 2: Double loop Learning Links with the Holon Framework

In Figure 2 the looping process on the left of the diagram corresponds with the single loop learning process. This relates to the optimisation of current operational policies and strategy and these activities would incorporate the use of the mathematical modelling techniques often described in the library OR literature. This corresponds to the Modelling and Action stages of the Holon Framework (see Table 1).

The looping process on the right of the diagram represents the second learning loop. These activities correspond to the Holon Framework activities from Framing to Metrication.

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The single loop learning process involves the continual monitoring of progress towards the vision, S_1, and whether we continue around the single learning loop or need to return to earlier stages of the Framework for second loop learning depends on the extent to which the dynamics of the change we observe in moving from S_0 to S_1 are consistent with current thinking or not.

7 Conclusion

This paper has described how the application of the Holon Framework can help in promoting opportunities for both single and double loop learning within HE planning processes and in particular for departments within universities. In contrast to more orthodox approaches to planning it is systemic rather than reductionist, participative rather than passive and promotes stakeholder involvement in a shared vision. This combination of attributes allows the emergence of Model II type behaviour which encourages double loop learning within which the client group re-examines their assumptions, strategies and objectives.

Furthermore, the Holon Framework contributes to each of the four processes identified by Huber that contribute to organisational learning so that the library management team can be responsive and fleet-of-foot in dealing with an extremely turbulent educational environment.

By adopting this type of approach library management teams can formalise their planning processes and integrate the traditional library OR models meaningfully into the planning and review cycle. The Framework also promotes reflection on, and re-examination of, assumptions and preferences in defining the future of the library, its policy and its relation with library users. As with many soft systems interventions, the client group would be drawn from all library stakeholders including library users and the process would be managed by someone with experience of working with this framework.

By merging the more traditional library modelling techniques with frameworks such as this that draw on elements from soft systems thinking, a more powerful management tool emerges. Library managers can now broaden the learning opportunities available to them to include both single and double loop learning within the same multi-methodology. Not only can new policies be developed and reviewed on a regular basis but the control of the change process required for movement towards S_1 is enabled by a carefully structured metrics collection programme. In this way, modelling is seen not just as a useful 'add-on' to other management techniques, but an integral part of management and control process

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WEAVER, M. (ed.) Transformative learning support models in HE: educating the whole student. London: Facet Press. 2008. 222 pages. ISBN – 978-1-85604644-2. £39.95.

When I first saw this title I thought it might contain chapters relevant to me. Although I have moved out of learning support in the library context, I am engaged in research in the Learning & Teaching Support section of an Academic Registry. I was particularly interested in the subtitle 'Educating the whole student.' When I first skimmed through the book, I felt perhaps it was not as relevant to me in my new role as the title might suggest. However, a somewhat misleading title and lack of relevance to me is not indicative of a lack of relevance to the wider readership. Indeed, I think that it will be of particular interest to those involved in strategic planning such as library managers and student services managers. Since I do not fit into these categories, I hope the readers of this review will forgive my perhaps eccentric approach to the text.

One of the key areas covered by the book, it is claimed, is the 'changing profile of learners' which led me to question, 'Who are our learners and how has their profile changed?' From my perspective this would embrace concepts such as widening participation, diversity, first generation students, distance learners, part-time student and students on franchise courses. Platt's chapter deals with widening participation pathways at the University of Manchester whilst a chapter by Marsh discusses capitalising on student diversity and the role of Learner Support Services in the Bradford student experience. Oddly, however, these two chapters were in different sections of the book and I could not quite understand why Platt's contribution had been consigned to the end of the second part of the book rather than following Marsh's piece in the first part, which I feel would have been more logical.

Cohen and Harvey's chapter discusses 'next generation' learning spaces to fit the changing profile of learners and the increasingly diverse student population. They include descriptions of some physical learning spaces and I feel these descriptions could have been enhanced by photographs or diagrams. There is a dearth of illustrative material in the text which is quite dense and demanding and could have been broken up by the inclusion of more charts, tables and other representations. When I refer to density and demand, this is not an implied criticism. It is inevitable, when a volume brings together a collection of shared thoughts and perceptions from a variety of worthy sources in a variety of writing styles that the reader is challenged. The challenging of some of our own thoughts and perceptions is, indeed, one of the strengths of the book and the editor, Weaver, is to be congratulated on gathering together these thought-provoking chapters.

The 'whole student' approach, involving supporting students socially, physically and academically is commendable. As Roberts and Stewart, in their very readable chapter, quote McInnes et al (2000) on how personal and emotional issues can have direct consequences for successful study. A New Zealand case study is offered by these authors and this is most welcome, as is Brophy's chapter giving a European perspective of the integration of physical and virtual environments to

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support higher education learners and Brown and Porterfield's chapter focussing on increasing student affairs' sphere of influence. The inclusion of more international case studies would have been appreciated and would have rendered the text more relevant to a wider, international audience. The publisher's blurb does talk about interfacing with the global skills agenda and perhaps gives the impression that the book takes a more international perspective than it in fact does.

The book makes a strong argument against the 'silo' mentality and for a collaborative environment of shared goals, learning partnerships and cross-service tasks. This is commendable and shows a customer-orientated perspective typified by LLS and other University support staff.

As I researcher, I found my appetite whetted by part 3's promise that we might learn 'from each other using research-informed approaches.' Whilst reading successive chapters by Martin who describes research project in learners' use of technologies at Edge Hill and Atkins who lists some examples of practical pedagogical research and practitioner enquiry, I felt that I wanted to know more about these projects than I was told. I guess the onus is on me to follow these up since I am sure that the word limit imposed on authors made it impossible to include more details. Weaver and Levy's concluding chapter redressed what I perceived to be an imbalance and delivered what it promised by highlighting the 'transforming potential and outcomes that arise when embedded models of critical inquiry into learning and its support are employed and acted upon'. I suspect this chapter and the book as a whole will inspire its readers to move from 'artful doing' to 'artful knowing'.

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MCMENEMY, D., POULTER, A. and BURTON, P. F. *A Handbook of Ethical Practice: A Practical Guide to Dealing with Ethical Issues in Information and Library Work*. **Oxford: Chandos Publishing. 2007. (Chandos Information Professional Series).**

153 pages. ISBN: 9781843342304 (pbk); 9781843342311 (hbk); 1843342308 (pbk); 1843342316 (hbk). £39.95 (pbk)/£57.00 (hbk)

According to Garber, Hanssen and Walkowitz, ethics is "a process of formulation and self-questioning that continuously rearticulates boundaries, norms, selves and "others". The present time, they say, sees a reinvigoration of the intellectual field of ethics (Garber, Hanssen and Walkowitz, 2000, viii-ix). The latest study of its application to the library and information profession is McMenemy, Poulter and Burton's *Handbook of Ethical Practice: A Practical Guide to Dealing with Ethical Issues in Information and Library Work* (2007).

The prime purpose of McMenemy, Poulter and Burton's book is to demonstrate how wide-ranging the connections between ethics and librarianship are. These encompass the activities of selection and purchase of materials, cataloguing and classification, information delivery (are you responsible for what is done with the information that you supply?), intellectual property rights, digital rights management, licensing, plagiarism, barriers to access (including censorship and internet filtering as well as physical and other barriers), privacy (including data protection), continuing professional development and person management. As the book is fairly short (153 pp.), it does not go into these areas in much detail but mainly sees its role as raising the reader's awareness of how extensive the field is. The discussion of these areas is illustrated by relevant cases and examples, such as Hauptman's experiment whereby he requested information from thirteen libraries on how to create a bomb in order to find out how many would comply with his request (p.xiii), an experiment carried out in 1975 although curiously relevant today.

This, on its own, though, would not make the *Handbook* into "a practical guide". The practical nature of the work is demonstrated by a series of case studies where a scenario is presented to the reader, giving him, or her, a variety of possible ethical choices at the end. The case studies tie in with the different topics covered by the book. Thus one finds case studies relating to the ethics of information supply, intellectual property, freedom of access, privacy and acceptable use and management of the self, the individual and the organisation. Scenarios range from a staff member allowing her own personal beliefs to affect the nature of the information that she delivers to incidents where copyright is deliberately ignored to issues relating to how to support fellow staff members in a conflict situation. The reader is then asked to select his or her preferred ethical decision and is directed to the section of the book where that choice is discussed. Frustratingly, the different choices for each case study are not discussed consecutively so, if you would like to read a discussion of all the various options, you have to page back and forth to find them all.

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A section at the beginning of the book looks at the ethical codes of the Library Associations of America, Canada, the United Kingdom, the Czech Republic, Indonesia, the Philippines, Australia and New Zealand. It establishes that most Library Associations' codes of ethics, unsurprisingly, cover similar areas of concern.

The book is successful in drawing the reader's attention to the wide range of ethical concerns that can impinge on the library and information professional's work. One does feel as though one is just skating over the surface of these issues though and that it would have been more satisfying had some of these topics been discussed in greater depths and presented in a way that provided more of a challenge to the reader's intellect.

Reference

Garber, M., Hanssen, B. and Walkowitz, R. L. (ed.) (2000) *The turn to ethics.* New York; London: Routledge.

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PUGH, Lyndon. *Change management in information services.* **2nd ed. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007.**

230 pages. ISBN 978-0-7546-4665-5. £55.00.

Context

Although a largely academic textbook in style, this work is recommended to service managers wishing to engage staff in the process of change. The focus of the book is on the need for consultation, for facilitating initiatives from front-line staff, and obtaining ownership of new systems. The underlying theme of the book and essential starting point is that during periods of rapid technological development an information service needs to be readily adaptable and able to adjust flexibly to the environment. Pugh rightly identifies and discusses the role of people in implementing the change and in accepting it, as ultimately it is the people within any organization that contribute disproportionately to either success or failure. *Change management in information services* examines the possibilities and methods to engage enhanced levels of support from the organization's membership. The book also demonstrates that employees can become empowered in the entire process of change and are ultimately responsible for the outcome of the change planning and implementation. Pugh describes how a change culture can be introduced and shows how specific changes can be made acceptable to staff and users.

Readership

Though written for information service specialists the book deals with general change management issues and covers a variety of aspects: organizational and change theories, change strategies, processes and models, team-work and leadership role in change management, psychology of change and skills. Readership could include library & information science students as well as those interested in organizational change, possibly studying public services administration up to MBA level.

Content

The book contains chapters on the nature of change; change theories; strategies; processes and models; metaphors for organizations; structures; teams in change management; leadership for change; psychology of change; and skills of change management. This work is mainly an academic text, though practitioners will also find it useful, especially as there are references to case studies throughout. The case studies illustrate a variety of approaches and they show failed as well as successful change management initiatives and give a feel for the success factors for the implementation of change. However, the case studies come with a cautionary note as they may be seen to lack concrete detail: "No particular individuals or institutions formed the basis of the narratives" (preface p.x).

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Usefulness

The book is good in discussing sections on leadership and the skills required for change management; the importance of relating to users as well as to staff as well as the need for flexibility in management and in structure. The book will be useful to a manager who can bring his or her own experience to the ideas discussed. *Change management in information services* is recommended for university libraries, especially if they run librarianship and information science and/or management programmes. However, the book is a very useful addition to the change management section of *any* library.

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HARRIMAN, Joy H.P. *Creating your library's business plan: a how-to-do-it manual with samples on CD-ROM.* **London: Facet Publishing. 2008.**

280 pages. ISBN 978-1-85604-656-5. Price £64.95

"When you know where you are and where you want to go, then you can describe how to get there." As a basic definition of a strategy, it couldn't be simpler, could it? But as with any journey you might make, there is a host of potential pitfalls and dangers along the way. Are you driving, flying, walking or hitch-hiking? Are you laden with baggage? Has your car been recently serviced? Do you have enough fuel? Does your route cross potentially hostile territory? And (for English readers) what's the weather forecast?

Strategy and business planning is all about charting your way ahead and it's all the more important in these times of increasing uncertainty. This book sets out to provide a clear step-by-step picture of what is involved, to enable managers of library and information services to understand the planning process and to address the issues that are an essential prerequisite of a successful plan.

A large part of the book is taken up with examples of actual plans and the various processes that these had to go through before reaching the final stage (much of this documentation is also provided on the accompanying CD-ROM). These are taken from a wide range of different library and information services worldwide (though sadly none from the UK academic sector), and it's immediately clear from them that there is no single best approach to producing the ideal business plan. Indeed, there probably isn't such a thing. Inevitably, the approach taken will vary according to the circumstances in which the plan is produced, and the individual ethos of the organisation that produces it.

However, there are several basic processes that are (or should be) common to most successful plans. Many of these are concerned with identifying and clarifying the first two prerequisites in the quotation above – finding out *where you are* and *where you want to go*. This may sound obvious, but failure to adequately address these two questions probably accounts for much of the fog that envelops many unsuccessful or poorly prepared business plans.

Having been fortunate enough earlier in my career to have participated in a full strategic planning process led by Sheila Corrall, I would strongly recommend undertaking a SWOT analysis in the early stages of any plan. The process of identifying your service's Strengths and Weaknesses, and the Opportunities and Threats present in the environment in which it operates, is an invaluable first step in understanding what is needed in your plan. Too often the strengths of an organisation are repeatedly underplayed, and its endemic weaknesses brushed under the carpet, leading to unrealistic expectations of what the staff can or should be able to achieve.

The basic process involved in undertaking a SWOT analysis is covered in one chapter of the book, along with worksheets (reproduced on the CD-ROM) and

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examples. If the questions suggested here (or other similar questions more pertinent to the service's particular circumstances) are addressed thoroughly and honestly, the answers they provide should lead to a better understanding of the service and its current imperatives. Other chapters deal in a similar manner with different stages of the planning process, from describing your initial service concept through to financial considerations and communicating the finished plan (as opposed to filing and forgetting it!).

Business planning can be an onerous task for any manager, and it's one that probably few of us approach with relish. I would recommend this book for anyone who seeks help with the process, or simply wants to do it better. The book does require a thorough reading, and might perhaps have benefited from the inclusion of a more simplified overview of the whole process for quick reference. But it should repay the effort invested in reading it. The examples and worksheets on the CD-ROM may save users an awful lot of work. I would caution against the temptation to follow the book's precepts too slavishly. Learn from it, and when you come to write your own business plan adapt what it has to say to your own particular circumstances. And, as with any other document, don't forget to add just a dash of inspiration.

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