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LLOYD, Annemaree. *Literacy information landscapes: information literacy in education, workplace and everyday contexts.* **Oxford: Chandos Publishing. 2010.**

200 pages. ISBN 978-1-84334-507-7. £45.00.

As practitioners in information literacy, it is all too easy to become ensconced in our own everyday practice and not think about the broader issues of exactly what it is and its place outside of formal learning. We talk a lot about the Holy Grail of embedding these skills into everyday life but never reach a full and informed consensus across the board. We quibble about definitions on information literacy and worry about where the future of librarianship lies but, Lloyd argues, if we 'continue to impose a library-centric view on the information literacy skills debate, we will find that we continue to lack relevance to the world outside of librarianship'.

This book (a follow on from doctoral research), is aimed at 'information literacy researchers, librarians and educators who are interested in the ways people experience an information environment', Lloyd (Senior Lecturer in the School of Information Studies, Charles Stuart University, Wagga Wagga, NSW, Australia), seeks to expand our thinking and place information literacy, as a catalyst for learning, in the context of a socio-cultural 'meta-practice'; something that is embedded in every part of our lives and is context dependent by the 'landscape' we find ourselves in at the time of need. The landscape may be related to our working lives, education or a particular circumstance such as a health issue, but all have a foundation based on human interaction and have evolved over time to include 'social, historical, political and economic layers'.

Lloyd gives an example from a study of fire fighters (Lloyd-Zantiotis 2004) to highlight this theory: a novice fire fighter will begin by acting out the role as a fire fighter but then goes through the process of being guided by experts, who will coach them and scaffold their development. Coupled with reflection on their experience, this enables the novice to transfer from 'institutionally sanctioned' information towards a 'development of collective competencies' and the ability to 'speak a fire'.

The first part of the book deals with the conceptual orientation the reader will need in order to understand how Lloyd has arrived at her theory of information literacy as meta-practice. It brings together a range of ideas and theories, from the definition of information literacy to discourse on the nature of practice theory and situated learning in context. This chapter draws on academic sources and develops a coherent argument for the broader view of information literacy acting as a catalyst for formal and informal learning but being more than the sum of its parts.

Chapters 3, 4 and 5 separate into reviews of the literature and practice taking place in the fields of higher education, the workplace and public libraries respectively (with a small proportion on health literacy), in terms of information literacy. It transpires that HE has had the most activity in research in this area but that the emphasis is on function and individual achievement. Few studies have been carried out on the workplace because of a general lack of knowledge of what information literacy is, exacerbated by the complication that information is not

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only 'explicit and rule bound' but 'tacit and nuanced'. Public libraries have done very little research on the subject as there appears to be a lack of agreed standards or framework to work to and there is some ambiguity on the role of librarians as to their part in the process.

Lloyd ends with a chapter on the potential of an overarching 'conceptual architecture' within society, for information literacy practice, which takes into account broader features such as: context, discourse, 'information modality' and opportunities which the landscape provides, to invite collaboration. One of the advantages to this concept is the added emphasis on knowing both how and why information is constructed as well as how to locate it. Something librarians, come back to time and time again.

The book draws on empirical research in various sectors to create an approach towards information literacy as a holistic practice based around constructivism and the novice in a dynamic environment, leading to the creation of lifelong learners. It requires the reader to fully engage with the wider themes of educational and social theory, which can be challenging when there are few examples to link it to actual physical practice. The review of the literature attempts to cover research on a global level but there is no mention of the work on non-linear information seeking behaviour by Foster (Foster 2004), although his model, encompasses some of the qualities that Lloyd is a proponent of. The author succeeds in her aim of creating a well-structured and coherent case, for a change in the thinking and pedagogy of information literacy as a social construction in a range of landscapes.

'Information literacy landscapes' is a book well worth reading if you wish to lift your head above the minutiae of daily practice and question the notion of what information literacy means in the very 'complex and messy' world of everyday life. It should be used as a tool to remind ourselves, as practitioners, of the bigger picture of the needs of our users.

References:

Foster A.E. (2004). A Nonlinear Model of information seeking behavior. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology*, **55**(3), 228-237.

Lloyd-Zantiosis, A. (2004). *Working information: a grounded theory of information literacy in the workplace*. Unpublished, University of New England, Armidale, NSW.

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