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Editorial

To begin, could I say what a huge privilege it is to take over from Louise Cooke who has stepped down as Joint Editor of *Library and Information Research* after three years of hard work. It is a great pleasure to join Miggie Pickton as Joint Editor of the journal. Two of the key objectives of *Library and Information Research* are to encourage reporting of research by practitioners and to encourage reflective and evidence based practice (Library and Information Research, 2010). I endorse these objectives whole heartedly and am therefore extremely glad to be joining the team on the journal. One of my own key objectives in my 'day job' as Head of an academic division and research methods lecturer is to encourage students to engage critically, enthusiastically and systematically in their own research. Many of my students are themselves practitioners as I am fortunate enough to do a lot of my teaching on distance learning and work-based learning courses. It never ceases to amaze me how full time practitioners can take on an undergraduate or postgraduate course and dedicate so much time and energy to their learning. All of their courses culminate in a substantial element of independent research which, in most cases, in based in their own working environment. This experience is always challenging but the most common sentiment expressed by my students after the research is complete, is the sense of achievement they feel in having done something that not only contributed in such a significant way to their own award, but also made a difference in their workplace. Many years of having this experience makes me very sure that encouraging practitioners to engage in research brings benefits to the individual, the organisation and the profession.

In this issue we have two research articles that report on studies that both excite and enthuse me, reading these has left me eager to embark on a new research adventure myself and I hope they leave you feeling the same. The theme here is information literacy from different perspectives, one from school students, teachers, and teacher librarians and the other from librarians in higher education. Both research studies take a qualitative approach to the research questions they ask and provide rich and detailed 'mile deep' studies. There has been a call for more research that 'tells the story' (Brophy, 2008) by applying qualitative research methods to extend our understanding of issue and exploring the story behind the action. Practitioners are in an ideal position to embark on this type of research as they are already immersed in a setting and have a great deal of tacit knowledge and understanding to bring to any investigation, as well has been in an ideal position to examine questions over time.

Herring examines school students' attitudes, use and reflections on information retrieval for assignments, using the views of the school students themselves, teachers and teacher librarians. He also examines the extent of transference of the skills acquired during this process to other subjects and over time. The location of the research was rural Australia but the methods of investigation and the discoveries made, have significance for a global audience. Rich data gathered

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from diaries, questionnaires and interviews provides the basis for the constructivist grounded analysis and emerging theory. This constructivist approach is becoming increasingly more popular for providing detailed insight into information behaviour. Both the findings and the method provide a fascinating and compelling picture of the way in which school students perceive information retrieval.

Houtman explores the experiences of academic librarians in their journey towards teaching information literacy. Narrative inquiry is used to uncover and present these experiences in an intimate and highly relevant study of individual stories. This approach is rarely used in LIS research although it is much more to narratives Houtman shares with us from eight academic librarians in Ontario, Canada, explore areas such as; library school education, expectations of librarianship, their own identity as a teacher librarian and many other elements of what it means to deliver information literacy instruction within higher education. Again, the issues identified in this research paper have global significance and identify the many aspects of this element of the role of the academic librarian. The methodology applied in this research is another example of 'mile-deep' exploration that tells the story and provides valuable insight and interpretation.

We have four books reviewed in this issue, two are compilations; the first a collection of chapters first published as an issue of the *Journal of information Science* to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Institute of Information Scientists; the second is a festschrift paying tribute to Peter Brophy. Also reviewed is the work of Paul Pedley, an authoritative text on *Copyright Compliance* and Martin Palmer's text on *Making the most of RFID in libraries*. All four reviews offer valuable overviews of the texts and personal insight from the reviews.

As always, if reading one of the papers in this issue, inspires you to undertake your own research project or write up a project that you have already completed then please do consider submitting your work to *Library and Information Research*. We would love to hear from you, I have thoroughly enjoyed my first experience of the editorial process on LIR and am incredibly grateful to Miggie for all of her support and tolerance as I get used to both the software and the process! I am looking forward to working with her and the Editorial Board on the journal.

Alison Jane Pickard

Reference:

Brophy, P. (2008), Telling the story: qualitative approaches to measuring the performance of emerging library services, *Performance Measurement and Metrics,* **9** (1), 7-17.

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