

LISDIS conference, 14 November 2015

Emily Wheeler, Rosie Higman, Michelle Bond, Jess Haigh

The first LISDIS conference took place on Saturday 14 November 2015 at Heritage Quay, the University of Huddersfield's new archives centre. The conference's aim was to showcase the variety of dissertation research being produced by students on postgraduate library and information science courses in the UK. We came up with the idea to put on a conference after attending an NLPN (New Library Professionals Network) event in March 2015. The NLPN event included an opportunity for recent graduates to present their dissertation research, which was very well received by the audience. We felt that more could be done to make available the enormous amount of dissertation research that is undertaken by LIS students every year, and a conference for recent graduates would not only enable them to share their research, but also give them experience of submitting a paper to a conference and presenting in front of a large audience.

We invited anyone who had completed their dissertation in the last 4 years, and who had not previously presented or published it, to apply to present at LISDIS. We received a large number of applications and the breadth of LIS research being carried out was immediately obvious. Choosing which applicants would present at the conference was an extremely difficult decision, as there were so many excellent abstracts to choose from. In the end we narrowed it down to 9 presentations, organised into three strands: Collections and Discovery; Public Libraries and the Community; and Valuing the Library. To complete the line-up, we invited Emma Coonan to speak in her capacity as the new editor of the *Journal of Information Literacy*, focusing on the process of publishing research in a journal. We also invited the unsuccessful applicants to present a poster at the conference instead.

The conference went very well on the day and it was encouraging to see that the audience consisted of people from all levels of the profession. The presentations were engaging and interesting and the presenters gave insights into their research methods and the issues and limitations that can arise when doing a small-scale, time-limited project. Research methods included ethnography, surveys and questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, and literature-based research. The topics ranged from 17th- and 18th-century female book collectors, through the provision of lesbian fiction in public libraries, to libraries caught up in conflict

Authors

Emily Wheeler, Rosie Higman, Michelle Bond and Jess Haigh are the co-organisers of the LISDIS Conference.

Email: E.Wheeler@leeds.ac.uk

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and terrorist attacks around the world. Other presentations looked at the relationship between libraries and the people they serve, whether in higher education, public libraries, or the corporate sphere.

The event sparked lots of discussion, both in the room and on Twitter using the hashtag #LISDIS, and it was a great opportunity to meet new people from different sectors of the library and information professions. The consensus was that LISDIS was a useful way of letting people hear about new research in LIS, which could lead to new publications, new collaborations or further research being carried out based on the work that was presented. The presenters told us that they appreciated being able to share the results of what can be a stressful and intense period of hard work; whilst the overwhelmingly positive feedback from attendees showed us how much people appreciated being able to hear about research in areas of LIS that they are not directly involved with and might not otherwise have known about, as well as hearing about new perspectives on topics such as cataloguing and classification.

We are aiming to run LISDIS again next year, so if you are interested in attending then please keep an eye on our website and social media for the latest news.

<http://lisdisconference.wordpress.com>

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