

Lynn Thorn

Thank-you so much for sending me to the 2018 CILIP Conference. I recommend attendance of CILIP Conferences – get it into your CPD plan now.

I found several threads of topics likely to be of interest to CIG members, so perhaps I can weave for you a conference tapestry. I may now leave that metaphor behind in case this account is too pervaded by warp and weft...from two very interesting and enjoyable and intense days, I am paraphrasing, altering the sequence and giving much-reduced extracts.

In fact, some of the important items I am going into very little depth at all about are: [Sally Walker](#) (award-winning librarian) on her many activities as Children's Librarian in Orkney; [EveryLibrary](#) who are very effective in applying an activist model to money-raising and support for libraries in the US; CILIP President Ayub Khan's breakfast session on an international strategy (so many aspects including an opportunity to get involved in the [Presidential Commission](#), perhaps by completing the [survey](#)); Samira Ahmed, journalist and broadcaster, on how the Windrush scandal looks to her (she feels genuine astonishment that the landing cards weren't given to the National Archives); Helen Dodd of Cancer Research UK on their journey to compliance with GDPR; TFPL on their survey of senior knowledge and information managers with amongst other things, a count of people saying they use AI for automating document review, content extraction and search activities; Dr Katharine Schopflin on working in a corporate situation, not necessarily a library, as an information professional; a session on the skills to be gained by volunteering chaired by Helen Berry. Alas, I can't tell you about all the parallel sessions that I could not attend!

They are cataloguing and indexing in the [House of Commons Library](#) as one part of a vital information ecosystem described for our benefit in a fascinating talk by Penny Young, House of Commons Librarian. Their first library catalogue was created in 1830; we were told that although relatively well-resourced, the library is none-the-less having to manage demand, particularly at the moment. MPs are busy, hard-working people with a difficult job (and I believe this was something she wished to convey in these anti-expert times, however tempting it might be to be cynical), supported by the library with confidential enquiries/research (30,000 p.a.) and briefings that are available to the public (900 p.a.). The library is a trusted brand.

Cataloguing and indexing (and abstracting and classification and many other tasks relating to information management) also occur in the information team of Linklaters, an international law firm: CJ Anderson, the manager of 96 information staff globally gave a talk on the evolution of their information service and the impact of AI upon it. Other professionals (e.g. lawyers, marketing) are beginning to ask the information team to the table not least on the basis, I think I understood, of the corporate taxonomy they created and that is used in their knowledge and information management (K&IM). At some point when she and her growing team had accumulated just about every task relating to information in the company (I am slightly awe-struck at that), they sat down and worked out what they wanted to keep, and what they did not (which incidentally I think must also have involved some more classifying, of tasks). Ms Anderson states that an information team don't need to be technologists: they just need to be able to see what the technology can do.

The new knowledge management accreditation was one of the things featured in Nick Poole's inspiring high-level overview on CILIP's activities for those of us who got here on the Tuesday evening before conference itself started (and thank-you, South East Branch, for your hospitality!). It is a good fit for CILIP, who already have an established accreditation process and is perceived as a complimentary accreditation that CILIP is well-capable of handling, which is needed (because at the moment anyone can call themselves a knowledge manager) and which strengthens CILIP.



In the interesting K&IM session on Wednesday Paul Corney included the curation of information as one of several critical skills required by what he calls a 'Knowledgeur', someone who takes knowledge gained from one activity or market, and uses it elsewhere. There's more about his Knowledgeur concept on [Knowledge et al.](#) There is an ISO standard on knowledge management soon to be published. Stephen Phillips of Morgan Stanley and the K&IM SIG in his clear presentation on the K&IM portfolio points out that now is a good time for the knowledge management initiative, which will be a quality mark to work towards, and also give recognition of knowledge management skills for the many people working in the field. There will be three levels (certified, chartered and fellowship).

Stephen also talked about the time being right to revisit the 1994 Hawley Report which covers the value of information to an organisation. The updated report is scheduled for publication in September 2018 after the opportunity to participate was mentioned at conference: [Information as an Asset](#). That report was also one of just four influential reports featured in Guy Daines' interesting presentation on the occasion of his retirement (a transcript has been provided [here](#)); the others were the 1993 [Follett Report](#), the [New Library: The People's Network](#) and Hargreaves' 2010 [Digital Opportunity](#). Along with several other speakers, he also mentioned ethics including the [ethics review](#) being worked on by CILIP.

In a breakout session with CLSIG, Oz Ablett from AECOM introduced us nicely to BIM (Building Information Management) with its 'combined view' of a structure with all relevant information, and the need to get the words right (for example because the different professions involved use different vocabularies) and wonderful outputs (e.g. virtual/augmented reality) – I am paraphrasing quite a lot here, as the presentation involved a lot of cheery images of Lego! In broad summary: vast amounts of information go into the planning, creation and lifetime of a building and BIM holds all of this together; BIM is mandated by government for public projects.

In the technical practice thread David Haynes of [ISKO](#) and City University gave a wide-ranging talk around issues of knowledge organisation, privacy and fake news, pointing out that indexing policy can affect access to information and there is no way of impartially conveying information (for instance, think DDC). Metadata is used in several activities of topical interest including the way people describe themselves (e.g. on social media), surveillance (e.g. [Greenwald, 2013](#)), the 'filter bubble' (he cited Pariser (2011) – I found the book, and there's a [TED Talk](#)) and digital forensics. He talked about the work of ISKO and I have also recorded mentions of Haynes' own work (eg [Haynes, 2018](#) and [privacy calculus](#)) and a [Post-Truth Forum](#).

In an informative call-to-action, Catherine Cooke of [BIC](#) talked about a set of interoperability standards replacing SIP2 for connections between the LMS and other library applications. She said [LCF](#) is designed to replace SIP2 and will for example enable connecting the LMS with computer booking and print accounts as well as self-issue machines, so that library users get information about their fines and PC bookings and printing charges at the same time when they access the system, and the administrative overhead is reduced. Catherine Cooke mentioned that there are many other functionalities that can be added, with lots of ideas for all public libraries – but librarians need to ask their suppliers for LCF. She points out that librarians don't need to understand the technicalities, because that is the job of the suppliers. She says they can ask suppliers if they are on the LCF development panel; if they aren't, or even worse haven't heard of LCF, Catherine says that tells you something about your supplier. She highlighted that BIC has a track record in developing standards for libraries and six public authorities have agreed to pilot LCF.

Dr Deborah Lee of the Courtauld Institute of Art presented a practically-minded discussion of cataloguing. She commented that cataloguing might now be known as resource description or metadata, although the people that do it tend to call themselves cataloguers (although also noting it's not always in the job title). She pointed out that it is all to facilitate retrieval and also provides an inventory of a collection. Dr Lee said cataloguing is done for several user groups in the library (patrons, colleagues in several roles) and even outside the library, and relationships are needed with all users. She stated that if the main user is local, local requirements need to be the primary focus. A description of the many daily tasks of a cataloguer and of what they think about as they catalogue was provided.

Local requirements, interpretation of RDA to fit local information and display requirements and ethical considerations all featured. She asked, for instance, if an artist depicts something that never happened, should the catalogue inform the user of that? Then in a splendid burst of CPD-inducing acronyms, Dr Lee mentioned some future developments ([3R project](#), [LRM](#), [BIBFRAME](#), linked data and increased ability to manipulate data). She also offered us some of her thoughts on the recruitment of capable cataloguing staff and a wish-list for the future.

Alison Brettle (University of Salford and LIRG) provided us with a couple of activities which got us involved in a session on 'the evidence in evidence-based practice', and mentioned that CILIP is promoting evidence-based practice and is setting up a portal pulling together evidence for the use of librarians. We heard Dr Diane Rasmussen Pennington give a comprehensive overview of who, what, why and how to do practitioner research (with another acronym for me (EBLIP – evidencebased library and information practice)), mention some specialised techniques including transcription and content analysis, statistics, secondary analysis and data mining; and mention that LIRG have put an introduction to research methods on the VLE. [Library and Information Research](#) is their open-access journal. It seems relevant to note that her first piece of practitioner research was while working as a cataloguer. Jenny Turner from East Sussex Healthcare talked about what sounds like very beneficial work collecting and using evidence routinely across health libraries: a study was conducted that gave rise to a Toolkit to help such research. Leo Appleton kindly told us about his part-time PhD at Edinburgh Napier University, using a longitudinal focus group methodology to measure the value and impact of public libraries. He has been re-visiting a focus group over time to see how things change. He should complete his PhD fairly soon; the research questions changed through the design, and if using a focus group he recommends a pilot first. He mentioned that he codes his research results to be able to analyse them. Part of the conclusion of this session was that anyone can do some practitioner research. It's not just for geniuses! My pre-conference literature search had caused me to think that it would be of interest and relevance to CIG members for me to attend the session. I would like to think (although I know this is not evidence!) that the analytical thought habits developed in CIG-related procedures would also find good application in research; many meta-analyses in medicine following approved methods refer to the 'advice of an experienced...librarian' for search strategies, which are part of research and are the other side of the indexing 'coin'.

The links in this report were found, accessed and believed to be sensible and useful, on 20th August 2018.