Information Literacy Research & Practice

an experiential perspective

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Information Literacy (IL) is largely invisible. The experiential agenda seeks to make peoples' experiences of IL visible.

making information literacy visible

Experience is profound. Experience is rarely defined; it is rather described. What might the experience of IL look like?

through an
experiential lens

Learning about IL is coming to experience it in new ways. Experience is constituted in the inseparable relationship between people & the world.

Experiencing IL involves:
a) Attending critical features of IL
b) Associating it with particular meanings that vary across different experiences

phenomenographically
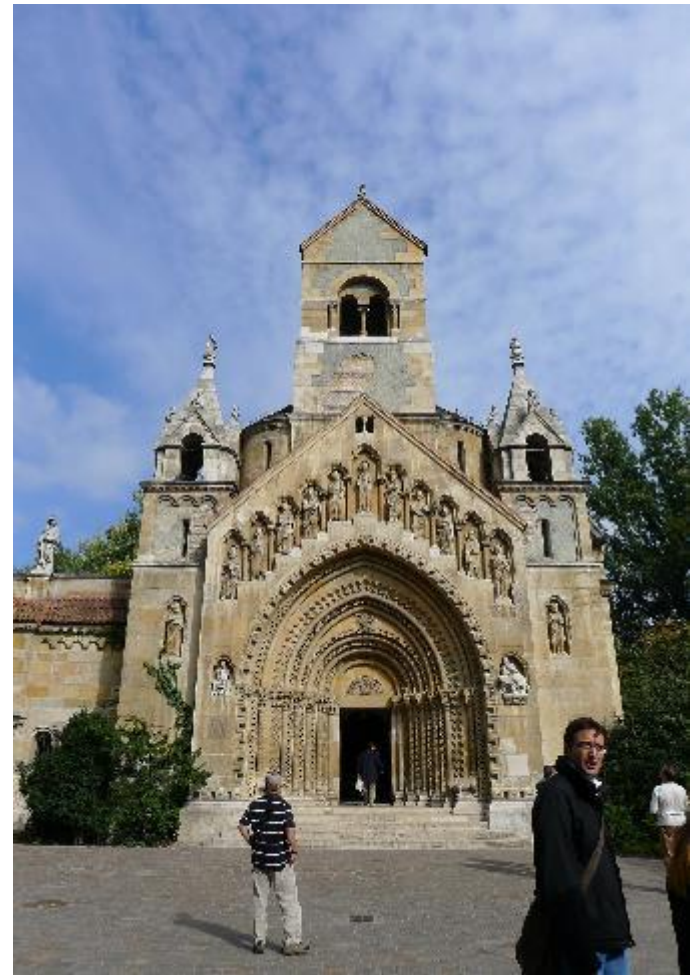
Health IL may be experienced as:

- striving for wellness
- reaffirming wellness
- knowing myself
- protecting myself
- screening knowledge
- storing knowledge

- (Yates et al, 2009)

experienced meanings
for information literacy

Religious IL may be experienced as:

- Growing faith
- Developing relationships
- Managing the church
- Serving the community
- Outreaching beyond the community

- (Gunton et al, 2012)

experienced meanings
for information literacy

Native American IL
may be experienced as:

- A communal, shared information experience that informs learnings, reflecting the understanding that lives are profoundly connected to both other people & the physical world

- Knowledge is appropriated through ritual, ceremony, art & appropriate technology for use in everyday life'

- (adapted from Bruce, Somerville, Stoodley, Partridge, 2013)

- Central to IL are values, relationships & spiritual beliefs

- (Sherman, in press, 2014)
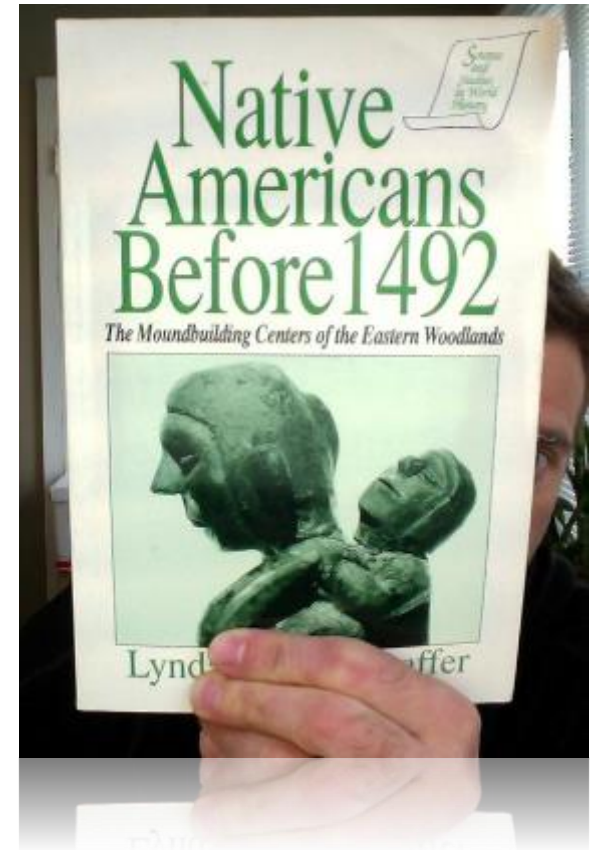
experienced meanings
for information literacy

- Information literacy may be said to be about the experience of using information to learn.

- I will explore the unfolding understanding of peoples' experience of information literacy stemming from this orientation.

through a relational experiential lens

revisiting the past

- The identification & naming of 'information literacy'

- Information literacy changes lives –

- socially, physically, professionally, politically, economically, academically

- Relevance to the world around us, transformation & empowerment

early motivators

Encouraging conformity

- Educating or training people so that they conform to professional or social norms embedded in our systems and processes

Valuing diversity

- Deepening our understanding of people, so that peoples' experiences of information literacy may be valued, celebrated & woven into the fabric of our society and its' systems

early orientations

1. Information awareness
2. Sourcing information for learning
3. Using information processes to learn
4. Connecting information with learning needs
5. Building a knowledge base
6. Extending knowledge
7. Wise use of information

experienced meanings of information literacy:
the 7 faces

Shifting emphasis on information & learning
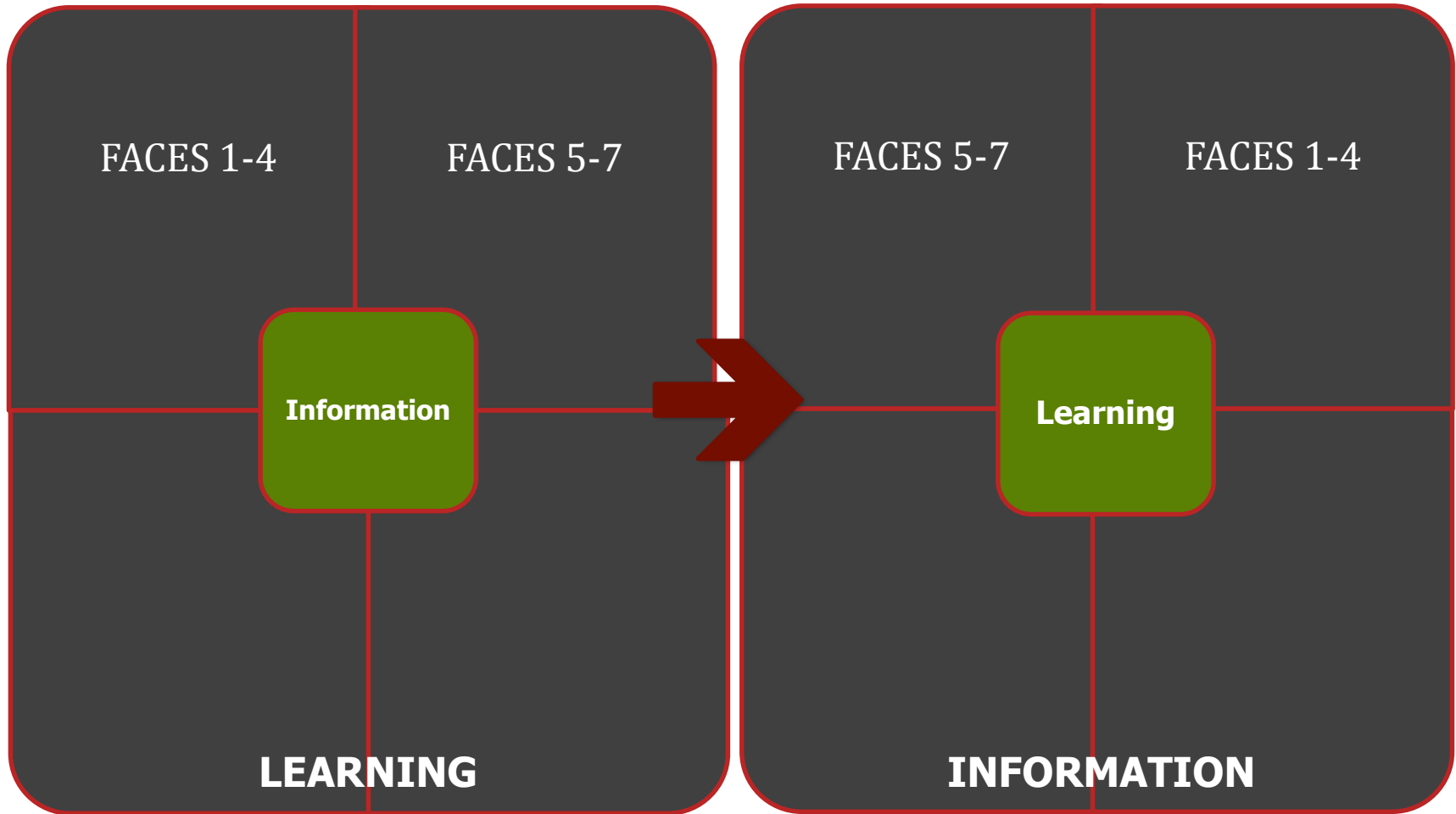
what **varies?**

Different experiences of information

as
objective

as
subjective

as
transformational

what varies?

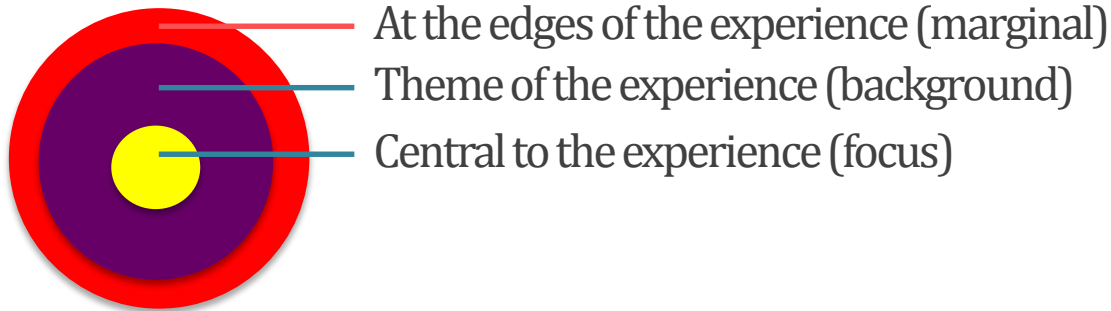|	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Tech	Center	Middle	Middle	Middle	Outer	Outer	Outer
Information Handling	Middle	Centre	Centre	Centre	Middle	Middle	Middle
Information use/learning	Outer	Outer	Middle	Middle	Centre	Centre	Centre
Information Experienced as	Objective	Objective	Subject-ive	Subject-ive	Subject-ive	Trans-formati onal	Trans-formati onal

At the edges of the experience (marginal)
Theme of the experience (background)
Central to the experience (focus)

parts of the IL experience –
and how they vary

Approaching

Information Literacy

Differently

- As relations between people and information, rather than attributes of persons

- As different ways of being aware of the world

- As featuring technology less than expected

- As social rather than individual

Key Learnings

Approaching Information Literacy Programs Differently

- Adopting an experiential approach requires finding new ways to do things within systems dominated by the need to measure skills & knowledge

- Portraits of experience need to be adopted & adapted for different contexts

- There are no established, preordained strategies

Key Learnings

Approaching Information Literacy Education Differently

- Acknowledging experiences, valuing heuristics…

- Enriching & expanding experiences… making new experiences possible

Key Learnings

Approaching Information Differently

- Not only is information literacy experienced differently, information is also experienced differently

- The same 'information' can be experienced as objective, subjective or transformational

- What informs? Information can take surprising forms

Key Learnings

Approaching Skills Differently

- Information literacy experiences govern behavior & skills

- Experiences are deeper & more powerful, they contextualize skills

- Skills may or may not be important to a particular experience

Key Learnings

Approaching Technology Differently in Research

- Only important if technology is the context, e.g. information literacy in social networking

- Direct focus on technology may give us a skewed understanding of the information literacy experience

present directions

Different experiences of IL Research

Diverse

Moments

Literacies – media, digital, trans

IL as behavior

Contexts – workplaces, communities, virtual and classroom learning

IL as experience

IL as practice

Methods and approaches

IL as discourse

**diversification & expansion
in the research territory**

the seven faces of information literacy
christine bruce

INFORMATION LITERACY AND LEARNING

PEOPLE | LITERATURE

MANDY LUPTON

Panning for Gold
Information literacy and
the Net Lenses Model
Sylvia Edwards

Ways of
Experiencing
Information
Literacy
Making the case for a
relational approach

information
literacy
relationship

The Learning Connection
Information Literacy and the
Student Experience

Mandy Lupton

Informed
Learning

Christine Susan Bruce

NP

We can talk about information literacy (experiencing information use in different ways for learning) as informed learning*.

Informed learning is using information creatively, reflectively, effectively & ethically in order to learn in any of life's paths. It is grounded in the effective information & learning experiences of professional, community & academic life.

*(Bruce 2008)

from information literacy to informed learning

The Etymology of 'Inform'

To give form or shape to

To give organizing power to

To give life to

To imbue & actuate with vitality

To animate
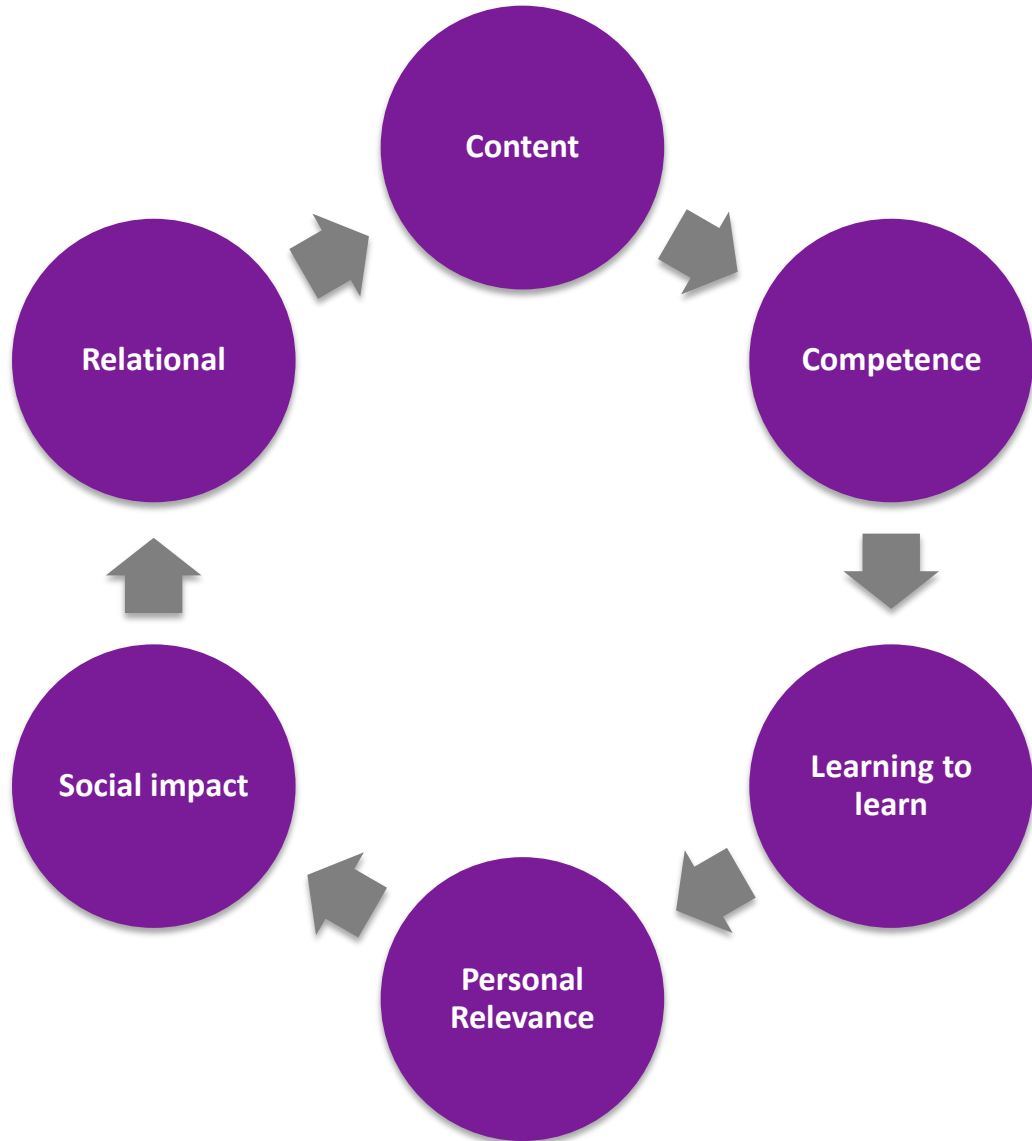
To mould

To figure

To fashion

Webster's revised unabridged dictionary (1913)

Six Frames for IL Education

Varying
Approaches to:
- Learning
- Information
- Information literacy
- Assessment

~

View of IL	IL is a set of competencies or skills
View of Information	Information contributes to the performance of the relevant capability
Curriculum focus	What should learners be able to do?
View of learning & teaching	Teachers analyse tasks into knowledge and skills; learners become competent by following predetermined pathways.
View of content	Content is derived from observation of skilful practitioners
View of assessment	Assessment determines what level of skill has been achieved

competency frame

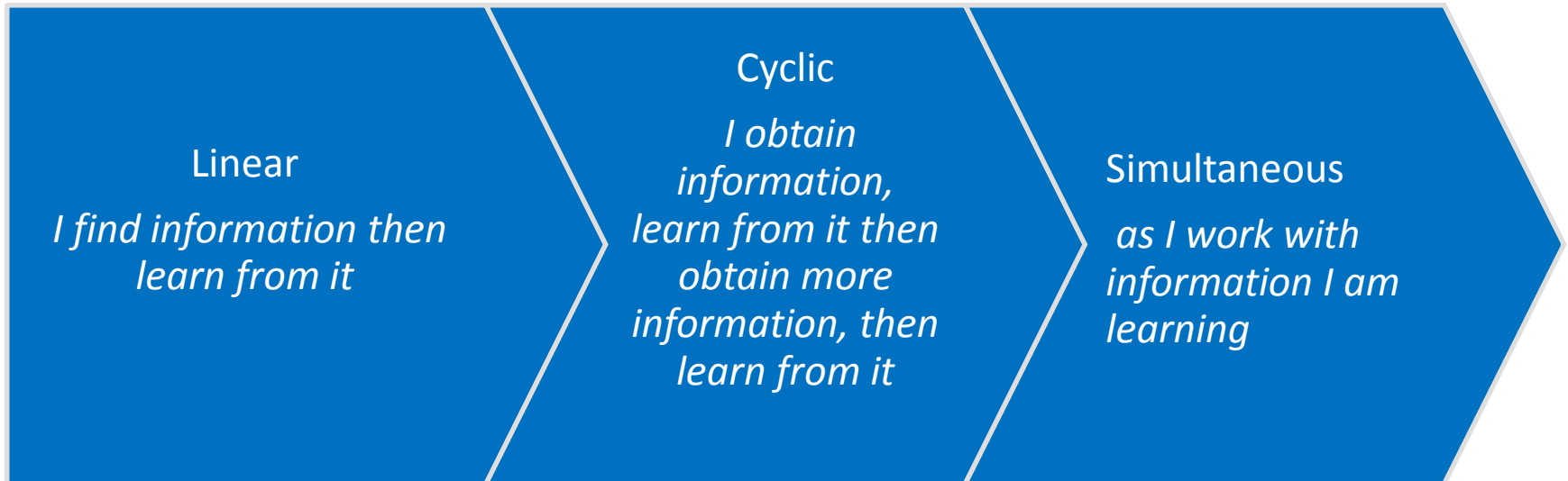|	
View of IL in the Content frame	**IL is** knowledge about the world of information
Competence frame	**IL is** a set of competencies or skills
Learning to learn frame	**IL is** a way of learning
Personal relevance frame	**IL is** learned in context & is different for different people and groups
Social impact frame	**IL** issues are important to society
Relational frame	**IL** is a complex of different ways of relating to information

variation across the frames

Teaching & learning in the Content frame	Expert teacher transmits knowledge. Learning - a change in how much is known
Competence frame	Teachers analyse tasks into knowledge & skills; Learners become competent by following predetermined pathways.
Learning to learn frame	Teachers facilitate collaborative learning; Learners develop conceptual structure & ways of thinking &reasoning
Personal relevance frame	Teachers help learners find motivation. Learning is about finding personal relevance & meaning
Social impact frame	Teachers challenge the status quo. Learning is about adopting perspectives that will encourage social change.
Relational frame	Teachers helps learners see different perspectives. Learning is coming to see the world in a range of different ways

variation across the frames

Students experience the relationship between information use & learning as

Linear

I find information then learn from it

Cyclic

I obtain information, learn from it then obtain more information, then learn from it

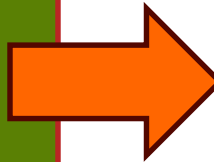**Simultaneous**

as I work with information I am learning

The latter breaks down the seek-find-use distinctions (Lupton, 2008)

linear, cyclic & simultaneous

INFORMED LEARNING
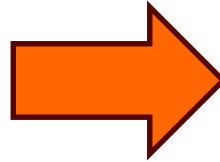
From having information capabilities

➜

To the experience of using information to learn

INFORMED LEARNING

Simultaneously...

Experiencing using information

➡

To learn something

critical, creative, reflective, ethical, wise
use of information (in all forms)
to learn (in all contexts)

Christine Bruce, *Informed learning*, 2008

PRESENT

Insights from RESEARCH:
Intertwining information & learning experiences

Information may be experienced as:

- Stable & meaningful across time
- Complex, an object needing to be governed
- Sourced internally & externally
- Influencing life style decisions
- Powerful, changing the community
- Relevant across contexts

using information to learn about health

Learning becomes increasingly:

- Contextualized
- Controlled
- Personal
- Powerful and
- Communal - as the HIL experience shifts from individual to collaborative

- (Bruce, Partridge, Somerville, Stoodley, 2013)

using information to learn about health

Varying experiences of health information literacy indicate an expanding awareness which increasingly acknowledges **learning** as:

- **Contextualized:** *Information* is applicable to a widening environment

- **Controlled:** *Information* is an object in its own right

- **Personal:** *Information* is sourced not just externally but also from within

- **Powerful:** *Information* is sourced not just externally but also from within

- **Communal:** *Information* is a force for change in the community

(Bruce, Partridge, Somerville, Stoodley, 2013)

learning & information
in health IL

Category	Health IL is …	Focus	Learning	Information
1. Absorbing	Intuitive, taking in information for possible future use	Filling a personal reservoir	Learning is about memory & recall	Information is stable & meaningful across time
2. Targeting	Strategically procedural, organizing information	Managing information	Learning is about assembling & managing information	Information is complex, an object in its own right & needs to be governed
3. Journeying	Personal, discovering unanticipated destinations	Trusting your own experience of health	Learning is about taking your own experience seriously	Information is sourced internally & externally
4. Liberating	Entrepreneurial, taking decisions about your lifestyle	Deciding about your health	Learning is about becoming able to carry out change	Information is influential, helping with lifestyle decisions
5. Collaborating	Collaborative, influencing each others' health	Changing the health of the whole community	Learning is about connecting with fellow learners	Information is powerful, changing the community & relevant across a wide context

what are the parts & how do they vary?

Information may be experienced as:

- Received
- Personalised
- Shared within relationships
- Corporate and systematic
- Personalised and responsive

- (Gunton, Bruce, and Stoodley, 2012)

using information to learn in church community

Using information to learn in church community

- **Learning varies from:**
  - Solitary and reflective to
  - Communal, evidence based, and kinaesthic
  - The latter involving learning through practice & acts of service
- (Gunton, Bruce, and Stoodley, 2012)

**using information to learn
in church community**

Using information for growing faith
(Gunton, 2012)

#1

Informed learning is experienced as understanding and interpreting communication inspired by God to develop a personal faith journey.

Forms of information (**what is information**):

- The Bible, artistic expression and narrative, craft, stories, drama and song around the same message.

Learning experiences
(**How people use information to learn**):

- Personal reflection and study, small group/peer discussion, informal conversation, formal education in the form of workshops, seminars and lectures, and learning by doing.

What is information & how it is used vary across the categories

Using information for developing relationships #2

- Informed learning is experienced as using information generated through social and pastoral interactions to grow relationships.

Forms of information (**what is information**):

- Church notices, sharing of stories and personal experiences, and sharing of beliefs and faith journey and artistic expression through stories, music, song, drama, poetry, etc.

Learning experiences (**How people use information to learn**):

- community activities, engagement in informal and social interactions; sharing with the wider community in worship services; supporting one another to cope with life experiences. Emerging use of social media.

Using information to serve the community

#3

- Informed learning is experienced as using personal interpretations of gifts & talents in response to needs within the community.

- **Forms of information** (**what is information**):
- Text, such as church notices, and verbal information distributed in face-to-face interactions, such as worship services or committee meetings, including digital information.

- **Learning experiences** (**How people use information to learn**):
- Learning by doing, using kinaesthetic styles, putting learning into practice; engaging in acts of service.

Informed Learning

- **Provides for inclusion of IL in discipline education as part of expert practice in the subject**

- **Students learn discipline content as they work with information (**Whisken 2011**)**

Anne Whisken's Questions
For Teachers

- *How can we make visible the information practices of the discipline/subject?*

- *What learning is taking place as students are using this information?*

- *How is information used in your subject area?*

- *What good information practices do you want your students to learn?*

- *What experiences will you design so they can learn them?*

(Whisken 2011)

Anne Whisken's Questions
(...more questions)

- *What are students learning by using information?*
- *From this source*
- *In this format*
- *For this purpose*
- *At this level*
- *In this language*
- *For this audience*

- *What are they learning about this subject?*
- *About the use of information in this subject?*
- *About the use of information generally?*

(Whisken 2011)

These examples begin to reveal rich pictures of the experience of using information to learn.

Examples from contexts not constrained by academic & 'scientific' values reveal different pictures of people's information literacy experience, suggesting the need to value different ways of experiencing & different approaches to practice.

Core to a phenomenographic understanding of experience is the concept of changing awareness.

As aspects of our environment become more or less relevant to us, our attention is constantly changing focus. Thus, what we perceive as central and peripheral adjusts in our changing circumstances.

These qualitative shifts of awareness indicate critical points for learning & personal change.

(Stoodley et al, in press)

on the **variation** in experience front

future outlook

- Information Literacy is about learning in many contexts, many communities, and many cultures

the fundamental interdisciplinarity of IL

- How does information literacy change lives?

How does it empower? How does it transform?

" How do we help people change their lives?

" What experiences make these things possible?

" Will lifting our heads to address these things empower & transform us as researchers & practitioners?

What do we need to attend to, in order to make possible information & learning experiences that will empower & transform others?

understanding **what matters**

IL research and practice must span the rich and the poor, the digitally enabled and the digitally disabled, the psychologically empowered, and the psychologically disempowered* and we must infuse the insights gained into our conventional spaces

* Bruce (2008, p.187)

what matters?

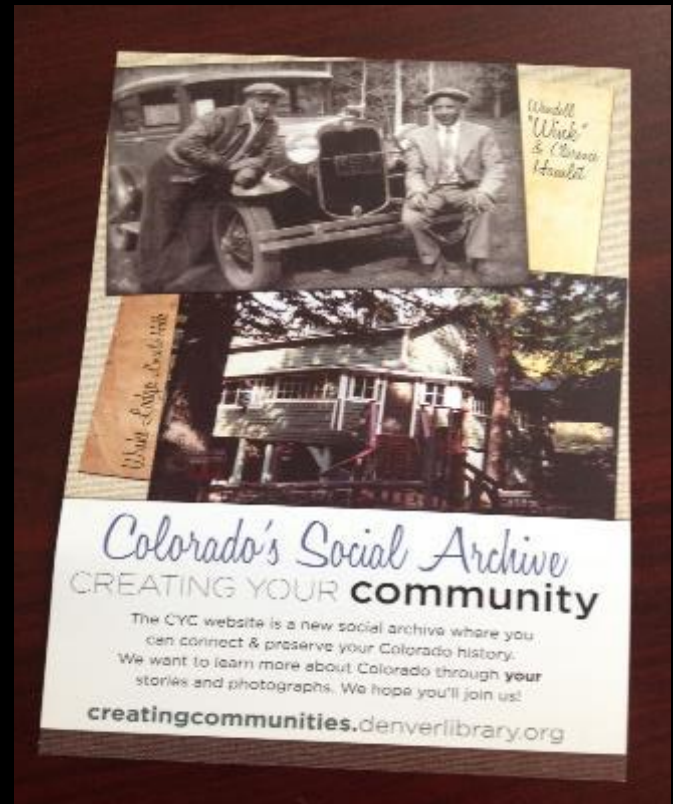Inviting the community to share their information experiences & create the potential for new experiences

Auraria Library, August 2012

IL principles helped the people reestablish their identity & revitalized Hispanic social action

Renewing civil rights, educational access & digital presence

Colorado's Social Archive
CREATING YOUR **community**

The CYC website is a new social archive where you can connect & preserve your Colorado history. We want to learn more about Colorado through **your** stories and photographs. We hope you'll join us!

creatingcommunities.denverlibrary.org

informed learning &
the Hispanic community

In our world, how can information literacy help? Into what spaces should we be taking our interest in information literacy; into what new contexts, new paradigms, new methods, new contexts?

The transformational empowering & emancipatory

entering into new spaces

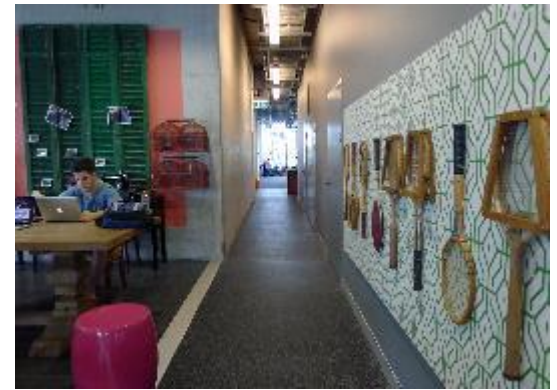# what can the information literacy agenda do for...

Poverty

Hunger

Natural disasters

Child abuse

Status of women

Wellness

Drug abuse

Homelessness

Information Literacy is about transformation, its capacity to make real what is important to people.
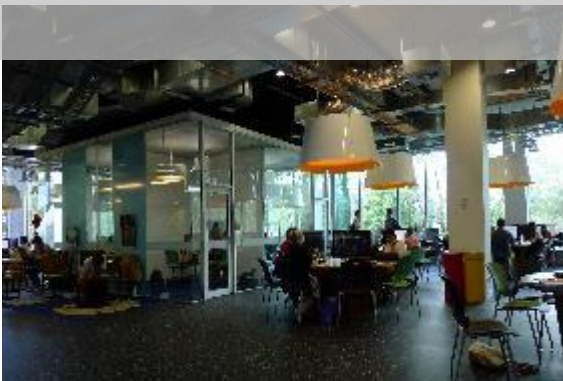
" The future of information literacy rests in our hands. Will we step out of our comfort zones and meet the world where its problems really exist?

Ward (2001, p.922)

building the research-practice nexus

innovative space

Colleagues interested in experiential approaches are developing a book which tackles the idea of Information Experience.

This new direction has been significantly influenced by the information literacy agenda, I commend the thinking involved in experientially grounded research & practice to you all.

from information literacy to
information experience

The idea of - What matters? is borrowed from Prof. Ference Marton, Goteborg University & father of phenomenography

I am as always indebted to…

The QUT & international research team interested in informed learning, information & learning experiences

The wider IL research & practice community

acknowledgements

In acknowledgement of Turkey's commitment to peace
An embodiment of the information literacy experience

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Image References

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- Slide 2: http://www.flickr.com_photos_lost_mitten_3974172837_sizes_o_in_photostream_
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