

# Lilac Conference

## Nottingham 2019

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### Overview

As someone relatively new to the Library profession, I'd heard lots of positive comments about previous LILAC conferences from both tutors at MMU and colleagues within the NHS. When I saw YOHLNet were offering bursaries to attend for 2019 I applied and was luckily awarded one.

For those who aren't familiar, LILAC is an annual conference hosted by CILIP's Information Literacy Group and focuses on all things information literacy. This year the conference lasted for three days with the University of Nottingham being the venue.

### When I was most engaged

Before I'd even got to LILAC I was most excited about Ruth Carlyle's keynote speech on health literacy. I found that the majority of the conference was aimed at people working in academic libraries so I was glad there was such an important session dedicated to health. Ruth spoke about health literacy as the way that people understand health information and how this is something that often changes throughout someone's life. Her speech contained some shocking moments, she revealed that less than 50% of adults in the UK cannot understand a paracetamol leaflet well enough in order to determine what dose to give to a child and asked us to consider times when we struggled to understand health information ourselves. She reminded us how scary it can be to be presented with information relating to our own health and offered advice on how this can be tackled by the NHS. Since her talk, I have signed up for health literacy training.

### What I might do differently at work

One of the sessions I went to was a workshop that replicated a typical journal club session that was led by a Librarian from the NHS. They used Edward De Bono's 'Six Thinking Hats' as a method of structuring these sessions, something I'd not come across before. This was interesting as De Bono's 'six hats' were different colours to represent alternate approaches to evaluating an article – objectivity, gut reactions, creativity, optimism, cautiousness and logic. Participants would be allocated a hat and had to evaluate the article with that specific mind set. This was a really fun and

engaging session and was far different to the standard checklists that are often used in critical appraisal sessions. It's definitely something I'd consider doing in my own Trust.

### Imposter Syndrome

On the last day, there was a really great session on imposter syndrome that was led by a new professional. In amongst the seriousness of LILAC, I found it really refreshing to see someone being honest about the pressure on Librarians as professionals, and how they are expected to be engaged in their career and their learning outside of normal working hours. This session was absolutely packed with a variety of people and featured a delightful moment when someone whose study had been mentioned numerous times throughout the presentation revealed they were in the audience!

### Networking

I've been on training courses before but the LILAC folk are definitely a friendly bunch! There's pretty much always someone who'll sit and chat with you but there's also a total understanding that networking can be exhausting for some. Before I went, I didn't think that I knew anybody there but I ended up going to both the networking events with the people that I met there and had a great time. On day one, there was an evening at Nottingham Contemporary featuring vegan tagine and exhibits to get people chatting. The conference dinner was also a fun evening but I will admit to being thrilled when my table agreed to phone a taxi as soon as the disco started.

### Alice's Conference Tips

- It's been said before but conference fatigue is a real thing. It's okay to not go to every single session, I strategically planned breaks where I could go for a little walk on my own to get some fresh air and thinking done.
- If you don't have Twitter, consider just making an account so you can follow the conference hashtag. There were some very keen Tweepers at LILAC so anything you fear you missed out on is most likely chronicled on Twitter. Check out #LILAC19 for this year's Tweets.
- Try to go to a session you think is totally unrelated to your job. I went to a talk on information literacy education for refugees in Germany and one on decolonising reading lists in universities. These were fascinating and very different to the types of training sessions I have been on so far.

- Sign up for the Buddy System. LILAC have a buddy system that has run for a few years now and it's a great way to meet people that you probably wouldn't normally meet. I think almost everyone that I talked to in sessions ended up meeting my buddy and vice versa so it made for lots of familiar faces very quickly.

Once again – thanks YOHLNet team for the bursary!