

Editorial

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From January's bumper issue, we come back to normality and an issue of more 'normal' proportions. One of the advantages of the electronic journal is that you don't need to stockpile papers because of the number of pages in an issue - just one of the *many* advantages.

One of the other advantages, as some may have noticed from the January contents pages, is that you can update. So, [Ian Johnston's letter](#) and Charles Oppenheim's response did not have to wait three months before they could be published. Perhaps that will prompt some of our readers to send letters to the Editor - it seems that scholarly work in our field seldom moves people to comment. Even print journals that have been established for much longer publish few letters, presumably because they don't get many to publish.

I mentioned in the January Editorial that I was collecting data from the counters. Perhaps I should have kept quiet, since almost immediately, both of the counter services I used changed either their policies or their practice. One decided to drop its free counter service (because of the reduction in on-line advertising spend) and this involved me in finding another service and changing all the counters. The other has re-organized its service so that one of the reports I was using to collect the data so longer appears. So, if anyone is thinking of starting a journal, remember that there are maintenance issues.

Although this issue is smaller in the number of words, it is, once again, highly international in character. We have three refereed papers from South Africa, the USA and Finland/UK and two working papers, from Lithuania and Estonia.

The first paper, by Daisy Jacobs, was accidentally omitted from the January issue, partly because of problems we had in reading files sent by e-mail. Apologies for that, Daisy, but at least it is published, if a little later than planned. Daisy has looked at the publication patterns of South African scientists in the period 1992-1996. The study reveals significant differences between different areas of science, with relatively high productivity of published outputs in the life sciences, compared with chemistry and physics. This difference is not related to differences in levels of funding in the different fields.

In the second paper, Dawson and Chatman provide an overview of reference group theory and its application to library/information research, concluding that research into reference groups (i.e., the groups of 'significant others' from whom we take our standards and values) can play a significant part in LIS research, particularly in areas such as information-seeking behaviour and information use.

The third refereed paper is by Huotari and Wilson, reviewing their work on the use of the Critical Success Factors concept in information-seeking research. The results demonstrate that the idea has wide applicability and

can cast valuable light on organizational (as distinct from personal) information needs.

The two Working Papers cover two very diverse areas: on-line periodicals on the Web in Lithuania, and the role of courses on book history and publishing in LIS education in Estonia. Sarlauskiene's paper shows that the Web is making an impact on publishing even in a small, linguistically-distinct country like Lithuania. Clearly, Web-based publishing offers an economic advantage over print, when the target audience is small. Möldre's paper stands back from the current enthusiasm for technology and looks at the role that courses on book history have played in the education of librarians in Estonia. Möldre makes the point that these courses played a significant role in the Soviet era, when they served to help preserve the national culture, when all the communication media of the Soviet state were devoted to burying that culture.

We also have some reviews.

In sum, a varied and interesting issue. It was intended that this issue should be devoted to copyright in the digital age, but the papers have been slow to arrive and I hope that issue will be published in July.

Professor Tom Wilson Publisher/Editor-in-Chief

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