Information Literacy has been a constant theme and concern for Librarians and has always been the subject of much research and debate.

A newly developed theme which is exercising the imagination of the profession is that of the role of Web 2.0 and in particular how it interacts with Information Literacy. This book is a welcome addition to this debate.

This book is divided into four parts. Part one gives an introduction to the basics of Web 2.0. It starts by defining exactly what is meant by Web 2.0. “It’s about online applications, interactions, and tools which allow individuals to interact, create, and share information using the web as a platform.” (p. 7). Library 2.0 sees these tools applied to the library environment in an interactive and collaborative way.

Part one also asks if Web 2.0 has a role to play in Information Literacy, unsurprisingly the answer is an emphatic yes. Part two talks about the implications that Library 2.0 has for Information Literacy Learning. Sheila Webber poses the question whether library schools need to develop new frameworks and definitions of Information Literacy in light of the rise of Web 2.0. Judy O’Connell and Michelle Mclean look at the possibilities of Web 2.0 for school libraries and public libraries respectively.

Part three looks at how different libraries have used various Web 2.0 tools in the delivery of Information Literacy training and this is the section that I felt was most interesting. It builds on the theory and background from the first two sections and gives Librarians concrete examples to look at and see how they might fit within their own libraries. The usual suspects, such as blogs, Wikipedia and podcasting are looked at. But this section examines other brings up other less familiar tools such as using Flickr to learn the difference between natural and controlled vocabulary and the University of Pennsylvania’s development of Penntags, a social bookmarking tool.

Part four looks at the future. John Kirriemuir looks at how games can fit into Information Literacy frameworks and how some libraries are already using them to drive Information Literacy. Peter Godwin in the conclusion, looks at how Web 2.0’s user generated content, such as tags, and reviews will sit with the traditional professionally generated information, catalogues. He also comments on some of the major tools such as blogs and wikis and how they impact on Information Literacy.

I found this book to be both reassuring and informative. It was reassuring because it shows that libraries have already started on this path with many libraries having already developed blogs, wikis and RSS feeds. It was informative in articulating how these tools, which are frequently used by libraries to disseminate information about their own activities, can be used more explicitly for delivering Information Literacy programmes. If I have a quibble with this book, it is that part four actually spent very little time looking at the future and with a field as quickly developing as this, some horizon scanning would have been both interesting and useful.

This book will be of interest anybody who is involved in Information Literacy programmes or who has an interest in Library 2.0 developments. Keeping in with the collaborative, user created content spirit of Web 2.0 this book comes with a blog, which you can follow at http://infolitlib20.blogspot.com/.


Diarmuid Stokes is the Liaison Librarian for Public Health and Population Science, Health & Safety and Veterinary Medicine at University College Dublin.