

Information is power

Presenting Substance Abuse Libraries and Information Studies (SALIS), V. 2

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Introduction

Welcome to the second volume of *Substance Abuse Libraries and Information Studies* (a.k.a. the SALIS Conference eProceedings). In compiling the Proceedings of the 37th Annual Conference of the Substance Abuse Librarians and Information Specialists (SALIS), hosted by the Silver Gate Group in San Diego, CA, the editors have become intimately familiar with the topics first presented April 28 through May 1, 2015. We are strong advocates of content dictating format, reflected by the organization of this volume.

SALIS members have two distinct interests, represented by the two common

conference threads. We are specialists in information, and we are connected in some direct or indirect way to the problems associated with substance use. While these similarities inextricably tie us to one another, there is a wide and diverse range of ways that these two topics are expressed in our professional and academic careers.

Information is a powerful tool. This is the underlying message emerging from this collection of excellent papers after a thorough reading, reviewing, editing, re-reading, and final publication of each of them, with the help of our peer-review and copy-editing teams. As the information specialists in a field dedicated to a specific societal problem, we have a responsibility to serve as the arbiters

of its evaluation, organization, and ultimately presentation to our narrow scholarly and professional communities and to the broader public.

Because information is presented in various ways, this volume represents the diverse and vibrant styles and formats of the conference presentations by separating them into four distinct sections. These four sections allow us to group each piece by its central focus, although these categories are by no means mutually exclusive. Consider these sections a loose association of common threads ultimately pointing to the SALIS mission: namely, the “dissemination of knowledge and objective, accurate information about the use and consequences of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs” (About SALIS, n. d.).

Addiction Information

The first section comprises seven articles written directly about addiction through an information professional’s lens. The first of these articles is Barbara Seitz de Martinez’s “Risk and protective factors for adolescent mental health and substance abuse problems: Adolescent suicide in Indiana and the US – Why Hispanic girls are particularly at risk.” Martinez’s paper on this important issue sets the tone of the volume, displaying in great detail how data can be used as a way of better understanding a phenomenon with the ultimate goal of reducing risk. Next are two articles generated from a panel on systematic searching in the addiction field, written by Karen Heskett, Sheila Lacroix, and Karen Palmer, which offer practical advice not only for librarians but for anyone who wants to fully review a topic in this discipline. The section concludes with four articles from our “Language matters” panel, Judit Ward, William Bejarano, Christine Goodair, and David Man, analyzing the use and understanding of terminology from linguistic, historical, medical, scientific, and international perspectives.

Information Science

The second section is dedicated to emerging themes with the potential of linking worlds of knowledge. It starts with an overview written by William Bejarano and Judit Ward on displaying scholarly reputation in visually pleasing and meaningful ways in order to turn these large, complex data sets into something more digestible and understandable to the general public. The latter theme continues in “Short attention span theater: Instructional design for optimal learning” by Meg Brunner, Nancy Sutherland, and Jennifer Velotta, which addresses the relevance of cognitive demands in developing effective training materials and programs. Next, Christine Goodair’s “Facilitating the sharing of pools and seas of knowledge through channelling information more effectively” focuses on issues related to sharing knowledge and expertise across multidisciplinary projects. Rounding out the section is Judit Ward, William Bejarano, and William Haggis’ article “Open during renovation: Open Science and libraries,” which reviews the principles and ramifications of Open Science as well as the evolving roles for librarians that this movement entails.

Reports

Each SALIS Conference provides an opportunity to discuss current topics in the field as well as new advancements and updates on SALIS projects. This section begins with a report on the exciting marijuana panel titled “Marijuana: Exploring the next steps in marijuana control,” written by Sheila Lacroix and based on the contributions of Thomas Babor, James Lange, and John Minan. Following that is a four-part report by Andrea Mitchell, Sheila Lacroix, Nancy Sutherland, and Christine Goodair on the major SALIS digitization project entitled “The SALIS collection unveiled: Building an ATOD digital archive.”

Poster session

Following the success of the previous SALIS Conference, poster sessions were supported by 3-5 minute “ignite sessions” in which the presenters had the opportunity to avoid redundant conversation points during the observation period by giving a brief explanation of their posters to the entire group. There were five posters in total written up for the Proceedings, coming from the Alcohol & Drug Abuse Institute, University of Washington (“Finding substance abuse resources for your community” and “The retention toolkit”) and the Rutgers Center of Alcohol Studies (“Scholarly selfies in addiction,” “Bunky’s scholarly selfie,” and “Books that get to you”).

The Power of Information

As a collective, SALIS members make up the information and documentation arm of an emerging academic field. As illustrated by the broad range of topics offered in this year’s volume, this responsibility presents itself in increasingly diverse and specialized ways. It is difficult to pin down a substance abuse information professional’s job, but as a general rule, we all deal with the organization, processing, evaluation, and presentation of information related to the use

and misuse of substances. Sometimes that information can be found in the interpretation of data about a narrow societal issue at a crucial point in time. Other times, the scope is expanded to a wider historical or systematic review of a subject relevant to those in the field. These respective projects are presented annually during a few days in the spring to the relatively small group of members able to attend. For SALIS members who have not been able to attend, the members only section of the SALIS website has been helpfully offering [presentation slides of each conference](#) dating back to 2002. *SALIS News*, our quarterly newsletter, has been instrumental in providing a sense of community among SALIS members and a forum for keeping up with their latest activities as well as those of their respective organizations. Complementing these member-focused resources, *Substance Abuse Libraries and Information Studies* aims to expand access of this powerful information to the general public, hopefully inspiring fellow librarians to make their own contributions to the field by organizing and presenting on their own projects. Preservation of this information is important. We owe a great debt to our predecessors, and have a great respect for the past, and as such we feel obligated to preserve and disseminate this content for all to see.

References

About SALIS. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://salis.org/about/about.html>