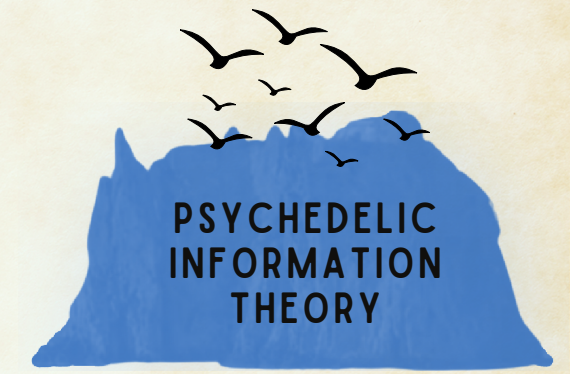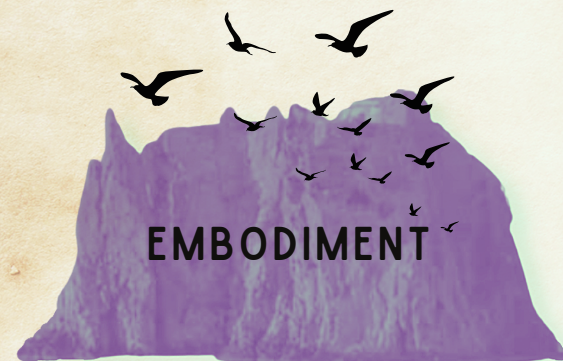# AN ARCHIPELAGO
## OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

JENNA HARTEL

Metaphorically speaking, Library and Information Science has a mainland, where information literacy, information behaviour, information retrieval, and other core notions reside. Off the coast and vanishing into a misty horizon, is an archipelago, that is, a group or chain of islands and smaller islets. Symbolically, these are novel ideas. The archipelago is inhabited by innovators; captures the imagination of students; and has much to offer all of us by way of inspiration. From a real, geological perspective, archipelagos form through volcanic activity, shifting oceanic sediments, or the Earth's tectonic movements. Geochronologically, archipelagos are relatively young, emregent, and sometimes unstable. They are sites of the earth's dynamism and evolutionary creativity. *An Archipelago of Library and Information Science*, enacts the metaphor of an island chain of incipient concepts existing still somewhat offshore, but within view, of our LIS mainland. Let's go on an archipelago adventure, together. We have five stops, namely: embodiment, contemplation, the multispecies perspective, love, and psychedelic information theory.

## EMBODIMENT

## CONTEMPLATION

## MULTISPECIES PERSPECTIVE

## LOVE

## PSYCHEDELIC INFORMATION THEORY

### EMBODIMENT

Historically speaking, the Library and Information Science mainland, has long been under the influence of a cognitive metatheretical perspective that places emphasis on the Mind and Thought. Differently, the island of **EMBODIMENT** recognizes that information behaviour, information literacy, and knowing also involve the body, significanlty. After all, the senses are our primary information acquisition channels. Through lived experience; socialization, routine practices, and muscle memory our bodies enable us to do things that may never coalesce into thoughts, words, or narratives. Our bodies, through their facial expressions, gestures, form, and adornment project much information about ourselves, including our moods, health, identities, and social and cultural affiliations. This island was first explored and then popularized by Dr. AnneMaree Lloyd, an Australian scholar, theorist, and educator of LIS. Through empirical research into the learning of firefighters, emergency medical technicians, and antique car restorers, Dr. Lloyd convincingly demonstrated the role of the situated and socialized body in information practices and information literacy. She has written, "The corporeal experience has been ignored in information science research and it is time to bring the body back into the information field."

### CONTEMPLATION

The Oxford English Dictionary defines **CONTEMPLATION** as the action of looking thoughtfully at something for a long time; or as deep, reflective thought. Yet contemplation has also been associated with transcendence of the intellect to reach for or achieve knowledge of the divine. A secular take on contemplation is known as Mindfulness, "Awareness of the present moment, coupled with non-judgemental attention to one's internal states and surroundings." Multiple classroom-based experiments have determined that just a few minutes of mindfulness meditation increases student enjoyment of a class and leads to better learning outcomes. A book, *The Mindful Librarian: Connecting the Practice of Mindfulness to Librarianship* applies the principles of Mindfulness to reference service, the student research process, and the ACRL's Framework for Information Literacy. *Mindful Tech: How to Bring Balance to Our Digital Lives*, by David Levy, invites us to non-judgementally observe our experience of personal technologies, a practice that he casts as "digital craftmanship." Levy encourages all people, to become better digital craftspersons by watching our feelings, bodies, and thoughts, followed by gentle, incremental improvements.

### MULTISPECIES PERSPECTIVE

A **MULTISPECIES PERSPECTIVE** acknowledges the interconnectedness and inseparability of humans and other life forms. It challenges the anthropocentrism and human exceptionalism that have marked thought for centuries. A multispecies approach replaces a dualist ontology of human culture *versus* nature with a more relational and shared vision. In the Multispecies vocabulary, life consists of entanglements or assemblages of humans, animals, plants, fungi, landscapes, and microbes. This Islet has an activist spirit, committed to protecting all life forms and their ecologies. The Multispecies idea is virtually unknown in LIS perhaps because our definitions of information focus only upon human information phenomena (with the exception of Marcia Bates' evolutionary perspective). Right now, the Multispecies Perspective is being introduced to LIS by Niloofar Solhjoo at the School of Information Management, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand, who takes a phenomenological approach to study the informational relationships between people and their companion animals. We must also remember that the French documentalist Suzanne Briet argued, famously, that an *antelope* can be a document!

### LOVE

Welcome to the islet of **LOVE**! My video, *The Crossroads of INFORMATION & LOVE*, can be watched at my YouTube channel of educational videos, INFIDEOS. It is a perfect summary of this islet, and explains ten relations between information and love: 10. SENSORY AND EMBODIED INFORMATION (since love is communicated in a lover's kiss or touch) #9. CAROL KUHLTHAU (the first in LIS to recognize an affective dimension of information seeking) #8. LOVE STUDIES (an emerging academic interdiscipline that is focusing scholarly attention on love) #7. BIBLIOPHILES, LECTIOFILES, SAPIOSEXUALS (terms for people who love books, reading, and ideas, respectively) #6. AFFECTIVE COMPUTING (which integrate feelings into computer operations) #5. BIBLIOTHERAPY (a practice of librarianship in which books are recommended for healing the heart) #4. CARDIO INFORMATICS (a field that combines information and the heart) #3. ONLINE DATING (many people find love through this technology) #2. "LOVE AS A LENS for LIS..." (a great article by Mary Greenshields and Sarah Polkinghorne) #1. YOU (self-knowledge and self-love are perhaps the most important concepts on this island)

### PSYCHEDELIC INFORMATION THEORY

I discovered this underwater seamount through the book, **PSYCHEDELIC INFORMATION THEORY**: *Shamanism in the Age of Reason* by the science writer, James L. Kent. As his method, Kent consolidates the scientific literature on the topic. He writes, "Information in the psychedelic state is generated spontaneously within visual and audio hallucination; ideas which pop into the subject's imagination; novel juxta-positions of previous concepts; and removed perspectives that allow for new holistic analysis. This information can be literal or figurative; it can be abstract; it can come in words or phrases; it can be spoken or sung; it can be visual; it can emerge as epiphanies or brilliant ideas..." On the microsocial plane, Kent describes the concept and important role of the shaman, who "...works by organizing the flow of energy and information within individual and (social) structures." Kent compares the psychedelic information experience to non-linear quantum computing. He sees it as the currency of the next information age, and as a model for a next generation of artificial intelligence. This is a shockingly interesting book that presents a new and mind-expanding perspective on information.