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Challenging Information Literacies for a Democratic Society

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Challenging Information Literacies for a Democratic Society

How can information literacy research make a difference and how can it provide some answers to the big issues that contemporary society is facing? We are witnessing a rapid change of the information infrastructure around which we organise much of our lives. Commercial services such as Google and Facebook shape our understanding of what there is to know in the world. Mobile devices make this infrastructure always present and into a formative part of our everyday lives. The digitisation of school practices has only just begun to challenge the traditional epistemology of learning. All these developments have huge implications for how we see information literacy and what we want it to mean. Yet, information literacy as both a professional activity and a field of research has difficulties to reach out to an audience outside our own discourse. Drawing on my own research on the role of information searching in everyday life and in the field of education, I will argue that we as researchers and as professionals need to be bolder and less afraid of being complicated. This also means taking a stance, creating frictions, and posing the "big" and problematic questions and even trying to provide some of the answers.