Using Our Voice: Bringing a Socially Conscious Approach to Information Literacy (IL) Practice

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Patti Ryan, York University
Lisa Sloniowski, York University

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23 May 2012
Overview

Introductions

Theoretical foundation

Critical pedagogy in action
  o The Research for Citizenship Project

Taking it to the classroom
  o Teaching Others to Find Their Voice by Finding Your Own

Discussion and questions
Theoretical Foundation
Challenge library neutrality

Inspirations

• Rights-based approach
• Revisioning IL
• IL can be a political act
High-level: A rights-based approach

• Alexandria Proclamation (2005)
  o IL is "a basic human right in the digital world"
  o IL cannot be separated from social and cultural contexts
  o IL empowers citizens and communities

• Librarians and information professionals play a key role
Mid-level: Revisioning IL

• Traditional IL is **analytical**, and focuses on
  - skills and competencies
  - teaching how to use tools and resources
  - technical aspects, e.g., how to find and cite

• Critical IL must also be **personal and connected**, by
  - engaging students with ideas, opportunities, and situations
  - bringing the real world to bear
  - not being caught up in tools and processes
Mid-level: Revisioning IL

Forming critical connections between user and topic "is not research for the sake of practice research, but for making a difference."

(Ward 2006, emphasis added)
On the ground: IL is a political act

• Critical IL accounts for those traditional, analytical standards:
  o "lifelong learning"
  o building skills and competencies
  o outcome-based practices
  o learning the tools and processes

• But it is more than these things...
On the ground: IL is a political act

- Critical IL also accounts for social and cultural contexts and the inherently personal nature of research:

"In terms of IL pedagogy, one of the best ways for us to encourage students to be engaged learners is for us to become engaged learners [ourselves], delve deeply into our own problem posing, and embody the kind of engagement we want to see in our students."

(Jacobs 2008)
The Research for Citizenship Project
• Background on the *Research for Citizenship* project: origins, theoretical underpinnings

• *Occupy Your Mind* at the Scott Library, York University
“Our overarching purpose...is to graduate critically engaged, information literate citizens able to fully participate in the information society across all levels – scholarly, personal, vocational and political. Our program, therefore, will focus on enabling students to develop information-seeking behaviours that transcend specific finding tools, to recognize the societal context of information, to think critically about the information they find and to let that information transform them.”

http://www.library.yorku.ca/binaries/Home/ILManifesto.pdf
Help get our public library re-opened

Contract talks between library workers and the City have stalled because the City’s negotiators would not budge from their demand for the right to fire librarians and staff anytime they want, for whatever reason they want.

In all good conscience, it is a demand that we cannot accept. For if we did, the door would be wide open for

You know things are MESSED UP when librarians start marching

“We’re going to be outsourcing everything that is not nailed down”

Doug Ford - February 6, 2011

Mayor Ford has launched a new attack on our public library to achieve the destructive goal so clearly expressed by his brother last year.

Determined to off-load at least parts of our cherished public library to private interests, the Mayor has opened a new front — this time at the bargaining table — to target librarians and other people who serve you at your neighbourhood branch. The first step is to lower our world class standards of the Toronto Public
How does one engage in a radical pedagogical praxis when constrained by a growing awareness of the ways in which academic libraries and librarians have become institutions of hegemonic order and often serve the imperatives of neoliberal capitalism?
How might we develop an alternate vision of libraries as imaginative and conceptual spaces of resistance?
Neoliberalism
Research for Citizenship

A collaborative forum for exploring and developing programming designed to foster civic, social and cultural engagement through the Scott Library's Collections and Research Department's Information Literacy program, at York University.

The Project

This project was born out of shared desire by the authors to think collaboratively and creatively about how libraries and librarians can counter the hegemonic practices of knowledge production in higher education through drop-in programming and outreach that makes critical sociopolitical interventions at particular historical moments. We see such interventions, which can exist both within and beyond traditional Information Literacy paradigms, as critical opportunities for advocacy for librarians and libraries. We posit that such advocacy is also, and necessarily, an act of radical pedagogical praxis in its intentional prioritization of democratic values and the public historical record over the corporate bottom line and the commodification of information.

We envision this site as a forum to exchange ideas for developing drop-in programming and outreach that resist the dominant discourse, but also, to explore theoretical frameworks for understanding the value and implications of adopting a radical pedagogical praxis in academic libraries.

We welcome comments and feedback.
Occupy Toronto, St. James Park, Oct. 2011
Photo by P. Ryan, Creative Commons License
#OCCUPY YOUR MIND

Join us in the Scott Library for an informal, participatory discussion about the OCCUPY movement with members of the York community.

**Tuesday November 1\textsuperscript{st} at 1pm**
**Scott Library, 2nd floor atrium**
(aka the York University People's Library)

For more information, contact Lisa Szkolnick (lszl@yorku.ca) or Patti Ryan (prayan@yorku.ca)
“...[r]ather than viewing [IL]...as a kind of banking where librarians deposit knowledge about how to identify, evaluate, find, and use information, if we position ourselves and our students as critical co-investigators in the problem-posing education of information literacy, we begin to move toward a critical information literacy praxis where we can work toward the ideals of critical literacy such as democracy, equity, shared decision making, empowerment, and transformative action.”

Occupy Movement Research Guide

A list of recommended resources for finding information about the global Occupy Movement. It is curated by Fatti Ryan (ryan@yorku.ca) and Lisa Sloniowski (lisasi@yorku.ca).

What's in this guide

This guide is designed to help you consider the complicated question, what is the Occupy Movement all about? It is a work in progress, with a North American focus, and the authors welcome suggested additions. It is divided into the following sections:

- News Sources
- Scholarly Sources
- Websites/Articles
- Data & Statistics
- Video
- Image Collections
- Libraries

Influential Works

No Heroes! However, there are some thinkers and publications who can be credibly cited as influential to the Occupy movement according to The Guardian. Others can’t help but see parallels with the Situationists. To find out what the occupiers are reading, you might look at what items are available in the People’s Library at Occupy Wall Street. Or there is a fantastic reading list created by Mita Williams, librarian at the University of Windsor. Of course, if you find anything interesting, you might search for it in the York Libraries’ online catalogue.

Direct Action: An Ethnography - David Graeber
ISBN: 9781904859796

Books on Related Topics

- Social Movements
- Social Action
- Corporate Social Responsibility
- Nonviolence
- Protest Movements

Need help?

- Can’t find what you’re looking for? Need help with your research?
- Book an appointment with one of our research specialists.
- Visit a research/reference desk at one of the libraries.
- Chat online with a research specialist.
“..would emerge from the struggles of communities that are seeking and deserve liberation, [and]...recognize that the world can’t be cleanly divided the scholarly and the ordinary. If knowledge matters, it must matter beyond the boundaries of our campuses.”

Teaching Others to Use Their Voice by Finding Your Own
Step 1: Vocal Warm-Ups

- integrate collaborative and inquiry-based techniques into your classroom
  - catalogue record analysis: who wrote this and why?
Selling Albertans short: Alberta’s royalty review panel fails the public interest

Gibson, Diana, 1967-

Personal Author:  
Title: Selling Albertans short: Alberta’s royalty review panel fails the public interest / [Diana Gibson].

Electronic access: Free Access
Physical descrip: ii, 20 p. : charts ; 28 cm.

Energizing investment: a framework to improve Alberta’s natural gas and conventional oil competitiveness


Title: Energizing investment: a framework to improve Alberta’s natural gas and conventional oil competitiveness.

Electronic access: Free Access
Physical descrip: 21 p. : ill. ; 28 cm.

CAPP’s technical review of the Alberta Royalty Panel report

Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers

Corporate Author:  
Title: CAPP’s technical review of the Alberta Royalty Panel report.

Electronic access: http://www.capp.ca/raw.asp?x=1&e=PDF&dt=NTV&dn=127546
Physical descrip: 24, 17, 2, 1 p. : ill. ; 28 cm.
Step 1: Vocal Warm-Ups

- integrate collaborative and inquiry-based techniques into your classroom
  - catalogue record analysis
    - who wrote this and why?
  - content analysis
    - what does word selection tell the reader about the writer/socio-political context?
    - is there indication of bias by omission?
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    - Program Description.
    - Performance Summary and Analysis of Program Activity.
    - Lessons Learned.
Program Activity: Claims Settlements

Program Description

This program activity provides approved payments to Aboriginal groups for the settlement of special, specific and comprehensive claims that were successfully concluded through negotiations.

2010-2011 Financial Resources ($ millions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planned Spending</th>
<th>Total Authorities</th>
<th>Actual Spending</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>455.9</td>
<td>850.0</td>
<td>836.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The difference between Planned Spending and Total Authorities primarily reflects incremental funding provided through Supplementary Estimates for specific claims settlements, the settlement of the Treaty Land Entitlement claims submitted by the Bigstone Cree, and to implement the Eeyou Marine Region Land Claim Agreement. The difference between Total Authorities and Actual Spending primarily reflects the deferral of funding for the implementation of the Eeyou Marine Region Land Claim Agreement; this deferred funding has been reprofiled to 2011-2012.

2010-2011 Human Resources (FTEs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planned</th>
<th>Actual</th>
<th>Difference</th>
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The Claims Settlement Program Activity is used for the identification of settlement payments only. There are no activities and consequently no FTEs reported against it.

Expected Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Indicators</th>
<th>Targets</th>
<th>Performance Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada honours its negotiated obligations</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>Met All</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Performance Summary and Analysis of Program Activity

In 2010-2011, AAANDC settled 18 specific claims and transferred $616 million to First Nations under the terms of these settlement agreements. Of the claims settled in 2010-2011, $50 million from the Bigstone Cree settlement will be paid out in 2011-2012 as per the agreement. By transferring planned claims settlement dollars in accordance with specific claim negotiations, Canada has demonstrated its commitment to honouring its negotiated obligations.
REPORTS OF SUPERINTENDENTS AND AGENTS.

ONTARIO.

Grand River Superintendency—J. T. Gilkinson, Visiting Superintendent and Commissioner...... 1
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Samuel Woods, M.A., Principal Ottawa Ladies' College, Paper on Education of Indians in
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QUEBEC.

Caughnawaga Agency—A. Brosseau, Agent............................................................... 24
St. Béghs do Robert Tyre do ................................................................................. 25
I had some difficulty in adjusting the boundaries of this reserve so as to satisfy the conflicting claims of Bobtail and Sampson, the latter chief contending that Bobtail should not be given all the land fronting on the north side of the river, in the neighborhood of the Methodist Mission, as some of his (Sampson’s) band had settled there; that he himself had drawn logs for a house, and that having a large family, he wanted to live near Rev. Mr. Glass, whose residence he desired to have included in his reserve, and not in Bobtail’s; and, moreover, that he had a prior claim to the land on the north side of the river as far as the creek at the “Leavings,” having been in possession of it before Bobtail, as could be attested by Rev. John McDougall, of Morleyville. After carefully considering the matter, I promised Sampson to run a line north from a point on the river twenty-eight chains due east of Mr. Glass’ residence, so as to take in the logs he had drawn for a house, and to give his reserve a river frontage of a mile and a-half on the west side of this line. While absent with Bobtail, on a visit to some lakes which he wished to have included in his reserve, Mr. Green, my assistant, whom I had instructed to run the line which happened to cross the corner of a field belonging to Bobtail, was stopped by Mrs. Bobtail, who took the axes from the men and sat down on them, as a protest against what she considered her husband’s rights. After talking the matter over with Bobtail, I decided to make a jog to the west immediately south of the field, and run far enough to take in some logs he had drawn for a house. Bobtail wished me to make the jog greater, and so take in Papaschase’s house, but the latter had decided objections to living in Bobtail’s
Step 2: Voice Techniques

• provide/solicit contextual information
  • ownership of information
  • intellectual controls and impact on coverage, access, etc.
• use/ask for illustrative examples
  • e.g., Debates of Canada
The extent of concentration in journal publishing

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ABSTRACT: This study examines the extent of concentration in the journal publishing industry. A number of aspects are considered: publishers, journal impacts, countries, and languages. For journals indexed in JCR from 1997 to 2009, just 0.2% of publishers produce 50% of journals and articles, and 0.3% of publishers account for the top 50% of citations, impact factors and immediacy indices. More than a half of publishers in JCR are from four countries: USA, UK, Germany and Japan. In addition, more than a half of journals come from the USA and UK. Examining the publishers’ interactions in terms of buying and selling journals shows the extent of change by acquisition, and the acquisition links between publishers. The findings confirm that the international market of journal publishing is essentially dominated by a few publishers.

Introduction

As we all know, academic publishing is a global industry. There is often debate about the types of publishers, and the efficacy, efficiency, economic value, and desirability of their role.1–3 Electronic publishing and the more recent phenomenon of open access has perhaps intensified this debate.4–8

Crucial to this debate are, or should be, facts about the make-up of the current journal publishing industry – its size, the players, etc. Tamber,9 for example, looked at how important just a few publishers are. Taking Journal Citation Reports (JCR) (from ISI/Thomson Reuters) as a source, the number of publishers producing high-impact journals is increasing over the years (Table 1, 2nd column), but specialized publishing sectors are merging. Furthermore, if just a few publishers dominate, there would seem to be inevitably a relative ‘invisibility’ of a large number of local journals.10

In this paper we explore some features of the concentration of the industry. We look at publishers, countries, and languages.

Research methodology

The data for this study were extracted from JCR, from 1997–2009, in 2010. Abbreviated and full journal titles, ISSN, language, coup
Step 3: Voice Strengthening

• bring current events into the classroom
• take it to the Reference Desk
• find like-minded faculty members
Vocal Self-Care

- talk about progressive theories and techniques with your colleagues
- incorporate techniques into professional presentations
- join Edmonton chapter of the Progressive Librarians Guild
  [http://plgedmonton.blogspot.ca/](http://plgedmonton.blogspot.ca/)
Thanks!

Use Your Voice.
Questions?

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Select sources


