Setting the Stage: Empowering Students to Challenge Established Power Structures in Research
Sarah E. Brown, Liaison Librarian and Kari D. Weaver, Instructional Design Librarian, University of Waterloo

Literature Review
There is a long established body of literature that points to the ways in which communities in the margins are systematically erased, excluded and further marginalized by cultural institutions seeking to uphold the status quo (Acker, 2006; Crenshaw, 1991; Isokpe, 2013; Petzen, 2012). This work has also filtered into the literature surrounding academic libraries. There is a large body of literature examining the ways in which marginalized groups continue to be pushed to the margins. It’s clear that libraries have a role in further marginalizing the ways libraries collect, catalogue and prioritize the stories and research of these groups (Adler, 2009; Berman, 1993; Bourg & Sadler, 2015; Henry, 2015; Olson, 2001; Roberts & Noble, 2016).

Berman (1993), Olson (2001) and Adler (2006) identify countless ways in which traditional cataloging systems are problematic for marginalized groups. Sadler & Bourg (2015), Henry (2015), and Roberts & Noble (2016) draw attention to the ways in which search and discovery technology fail to meet the stated desire of libraries to remain neutral and further disregard the needs of diverse groups while continuing to support current power structures.

In Critical Information Literacy, Elmborg (2006) asserts that librarians must foster a learning environment wherein students may be exposed to the power structures that drive knowledge production and knowledge curation and the freedom to critically question the library’s part in upholding them. Arcand’s book (2013) Feminist Pedagogy for Library Instruction, presented an intersection of library instruction and feminist theory. Schlesselman-Tarango (2014) combines critical information literacy and feminist pedagogy to imagine a cyberfeminist approach to library instruction.

This approach necessitates the cyberfeminist to “effectively challenge students to critically examine [the ways in which] dominant systems of information are mapped within these educational frameworks” (36).

Future Research
This poster examines a particular pedagogical approach to teaching a key component of information ethics, bias in information generation and dissemination. As part of this broader field of study, there is the need for additional research both in information ethics at large and in techniques that uncover the complexities of our information dependent societies within and beyond classroom settings. Librarians and faculty should consider how to actively interrogate the paradigms inherent in our information generation processes and consider the efficacy of implementing different strategies in classrooms to enhance student learning of these important concepts throughout the curriculum.

From a teaching and learning perspective, there is the need to understand how librarians can use this technique, and others, that require large portions of class time are devoted to relatively unstructured active learning. Research is needed to better understand what benefits librarians perceive and experience from engaging in these more significant active learning lessons and to help train librarians in how to successfully apply dramatrical teaching as a pedagogical approach.

References

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Sarah E. Brown is the Liaison Librarian for Philosophy, Sociology & Legal Studies, and Women’s Studies at the University of Waterloo in Waterloo, ON. Her research interests include how theories of intersectional feminism can be applied to shape our views of libraries, information literacy instruction, and systematic reviews. Sarah may be reached with questions or comments at sarah.brown@uwaterloo.ca.

Kari D. Weaver is the Instructional Design Librarian at the University of Waterloo Library in Waterloo, ON. Her research interests include student perceptions and librarian methods of delivery in information literacy instruction across academic disciplines, the efficacy of librarian professional development training, academic integrity in scientific research, and book banning and censorship. Kari may be reached with questions or comments at kdwweaver@uwaterloo.ca.

Research Questions
1. How do you expose students to traditional forms of knowledge creation and information dissemination through the Women and Gender Studies lens?
2. How can you use non-traditional teaching methods within Library instruction to more effectively unpack gender and racial paradigms of information creation and dissemination?

The Process
Students were assigned a reading by Selpha Umeaja Noble. Students were asked to consider the following questions throughout the reading:

- What kind of hiring practices does Selpha Umeaja Noble suggest should be implemented to address racism and sexist bias in search engine algorithms? Why might these practices be effective?
- How is the internet an undemocratic space?
- In class, students were split into two groups. Each group created a 2 minute video based on one of the following scenarios:
  1. Heart attacks are often perceived as affecting men more than women, when in fact, heart attacks and heart disease are just as common in women that in men. Librarians often fail to identify symptoms of a heart attack because most of what we know about heart attacks come from research on white, middle-aged men. With your team create a video discussing this issue and why diversity is important in research.
  2. Black Panther, the latest Marvel movie, will need 50 interns. This film that features a predominantly black cast and boasts diverse representation throughout the narrative. With your team, create a video of a group of students discussing why this film is important to so many people and why diverse representation is important in popular culture. Feel free to reference other pop culture media, if you choose.

Following the Skits
The Librarian led the class in a discussion about content production and how certain groups are often preferred over others as authority figures. Not only are these groups preferred culturally but also within academia.

A number of core themes emerged from student feedback:

- Be Critical of, and Evaluate, information
- Not all peer-reviewed scholarly sources are equally valuable
- Popularity/Quality: A number of respondents identified that the top result of most highly cited paper doesn’t necessarily mean the best article for their research

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