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Book review

Broussard, M. S. 2017. *Reading, research, and writing: teaching information literacy with process-based research assignments*. Chicago, IL: Association of College and Research Libraries. 140pp. 978-0838988756. £34. Pbk.

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The 'one-shot' library instruction model, still the most common scenario for teaching information literacy skills, typically leaves little time to do much more than show students how to find sources. By necessity, the process of discovery is divorced from reading strategies and information synthesis. Broussard asserts right away that 'Reconsidering information literacy as situated within reading and writing has the potential to make information literacy instruction much more meaningful and integrated into students' learning process' (p.2).

The author begins the six-chapter book by impressively meandering back and forth between theories of reading and composition, cognitive psychology, education theory, and library science and information literacy. She borrows from the work of Brent when she advocates replacing the term 'research paper' with 'writing from sources', because as Brent asserts 'it changes the focus from what the product *is* to what the writer *does*' (p.9). She emphasises throughout the text 'The basic premise of this book is that academic librarians can go beyond helping students find information to helping them use information' (p.89).

Since college, nearly two decades ago I have given little thought to the research paper writing process as a whole, but rather, have focused almost exclusively on the part I am responsible for as an instruction librarian. I found myself remembering my days as a student as Broussard touched on the many ways students struggle with writing from sources assignments. She crystallises this idea when she writes 'Instruction librarians teach information literacy in a way that neither librarians nor the professors they work with actually practice. It is imaginary and impossible, detached from both reality and the critical-thinking, creativity, reading, and writing skills that students must perform in order to successfully complete the assignment' (p.33).

In chapter three Broussard explains the benefits of 'low-stakes' writing (drafting, freewriting, journaling, mind mapping, outlining and reflective writing) and how it can help students distribute the cognitive load of writing from sources assignments resulting in increased motivation and heightened self-efficacy. Chapter four focuses on reading for comprehension along with reading to write and touches on The Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education. She writes that 'three of the six frames "Information Creation as a Process", "Research as Inquiry", and "Searching as Strategic Exploration", stress the messy, iterative nature of research where reflection, reading, and writing happen simultaneously throughout the knowledge-creation and meaning-making process' (p.71).

Chapter five focuses on 'Instructional Supports' that can help students effectively synthesise information from various sources. To this end she includes useful overviews of the important role that notecards (digital or paper), mind maps, highlighting notes in different colours, and graphic organisers can play in helping writers transition from 'low stakes' writing to more formal 'high-stakes' writing from sources assignments. She also emphasises that 'Writing and information literacy are each a series of judgements and decisions. Librarians need to understand and influence student decisions if they are to teach information literacy.' She concludes by writing, 'Any

effort to separate information literacy from reading and writing will be artificial and therefore detrimental to student learning' (p.106).

Early in the final chapter, the author writes, 'many readers are likely to have read the first five chapters of this book wondering how this kind of support and instruction is possible given librarians' already overloaded schedules and small numbers in comparison to teaching faculty, who also have overloaded schedules' (p.111). In chapter six she transitions from theory to practice and advocates, among other things, creating online tutorials for information literacy as add-ons for writing from sources assignments across the disciplines and looking for more sustained instruction opportunities like embedded librarianship. She encourages 'curriculum mapping and integrating information literacy instruction into departmental and institutional learning goals' and rightly points out that these endeavours 'have many advantages over disjointed one-shot instruction sessions or individual librarians' instructional efforts' (p.120). She recognises that not all efforts can be large scale and that if nothing else librarians can 'change how they talk about research with little adjustment in the time they spend on instruction' (p.112).

The author ends by claiming that 'If librarians were to develop a thorough understanding of composition and rhetoric as it relates to information literacy, they would be able to help bridge the artificial divide between research and writing, improving direct instruction with students and indirect instruction through advocacy with teach faculty and other institutional stakeholders' (p.127). Broussard's work has indeed given me a better understanding of writing from sources assignments, along with the intellectual tools to start conversations with my colleagues regarding the research and writing process and how the individual parts (research, reading, and writing) can come together holistically to create more rich and meaningful experiences for students.

Reference

Brent, D. (2013) The research paper and why we should still care. *Writing Program Administration* 37(1) 38.