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Book review

Pashia, A. and Critten, J. (eds.) 2019. *Critical approaches to credit-bearing information literacy courses*. USA: Association of College and Research Libraries. 323pp. 978-0838989470. £65.95. Pbk.

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This book shares a selection of examples of critical information literacy (CIL) in practice within the United States. The editors have collated a set of high-quality individual accounts of a range of critical approaches to teaching information literacy as credit-bearing taught units from just a few hours to several weeks. While short, each chapter incorporates a lot of detail so this review will focus upon three features that I picked up on that might encourage you to read this.

The first is that the book provides a valid entry point to understanding CIL as a term. There are 15 chapters in the book, and each chapter can be picked up and read regardless of order. Going beyond a case study each of the chapters tells the author's story in a reflective style that clearly outlines what, how, why and what next from a variety of organisations and course leads in the US. What this approach does well is illustrates how individuals have applied CIL in a practical way giving very clear reasoning for what they did, what happened and why. It is this structure of providing practical examples of how both pedagogical and critical theory has informed information literacy teaching that facilitates the accessibility of the text both for practitioners and theorists alike. The chapters share the two forms that 'critical' manifests within information literacy teaching: both through the pedagogy and through what is being taught. This is suggestive that CIL bridges the perceived gap that is often seen between these two groups of professionals.

Which leads me into my second feature, which is to suggest that potential readers should overcome any rejection that they have of picking up this book based upon the term 'credit-bearing' being present in the title. Whilst reading this book my mind was busy thinking about how some of the activities could be incorporated into my own non-credit-bearing teaching, suggesting that practitioners responsible for teaching one-shot sessions could take away a significant amount of inspiration to apply practically to their teaching. There are a whole host of inspiring examples of CIL activities contained here that could very easily be imported into a class. The activities that I could use in my classroom included the following: the critical examination of Wikipedia using four questions ('Who writes history?', 'Who provides access to information?', 'Who has access to information?' and 'How do I write history?') which is referenced in Chapter 14, the analysis of post-truth and fake news items in Chapter 5 and the position and privilege of information that is drawn out in Chapter 4.

Finally, there is a significant amount of further reading triggered by the short chapters and shared through each chapter's endnotes and reference lists. This reflects the co-existence of the practical and the theory and situating them together in this way emphasises the importance of praxis for professionals working in this space. I have created for myself a relatively long list of reading to take away and digest and I would challenge any reader not to do the same.

Overall the book is a refreshing read that really gets into the role that information literacy plays beyond the bounds of education and positions it within society. Given that this book has a US focus it would be nice to see a global representation in a future publication. The book points

towards how library professionals can incorporate CIL into their teaching and so should appeal to any librarian involved in any aspect of library teaching.