Book review

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For librarians who teach, reflecting on their teaching (consciously or unconsciously) is common. Perhaps less common is reflection of the values, beliefs and experiences that underpin that teaching. *Library pedagogies: Personal reflections from library practitioners* is not an endorsement of any particular pedagogy. Instead, it is a collection of personal reflections and stories from practitioners in the higher education sector, aiming to inspire others to reflect on their own practice.

The book is divided into three sections: 'Developing ideas of information literacy', 'Authority, power and social justice' and 'Some approaches to teaching'. However, as the editors themselves acknowledge, there are some significant overlaps as each reflection covers several themes.

The first section 'Developing ideas of information literacy' includes reflections from practitioners whose pedagogy has been influenced by information literacy. A running theme is how the authors developed their teaching so that the learners engaged in active, rather than passive learning. It is regularly noted that this is especially difficult when only seeing groups in 'one-shots'. The chapters also provide reassuring reminders that imposter syndrome is a common feeling for librarians who teach. However, the reflections do not aim to find the solutions to these problems. Instead, most of them end with the acknowledgment that developing pedagogies is an ongoing process.

To highlight just a few, Heather Barker and Andrew Walsh both reflect on how they gained the confidence to develop their teaching from the expected lecture format into an active learning approach, with both incorporating play into their sessions. Laura Williams considers how she became a librarian who teaches and the relation of her pedagogies to the subject she works with (art and design). Kodi Saylor reflects on the difficulties of fostering collaboration in the classroom, and of gaining the trust of students, particularly in a one-shot environment.

Early career professionals in particular will find the discussions surrounding lack of confidence, imposter syndrome and building trust with students and academic staff reassuring. The chapters also serve as a reminder that moving past 'how to use a database' to teaching information literacy is complex.

The second section includes fascinating reflections on how personal beliefs on 'Authority, power and social justice' have impacted the authors' teaching. The section covers issues including, but not exclusive to, feminism, race, and social inequality.

Feminist pedagogy (especially the work of Maria Accardi) plays a large part in this section. Jess Wallis describes the way they incorporate examples of research bias into their teaching, and Jane Pothecary describes how her feminism led her to focus on learning through doing, decentring authority, and building community in her classes.

Gemmicka Piper reflects on her experience in tutoring and librarianship and the challenges of asking students to consider their backgrounds and biases. In Melissa Kaplin Prescott's thoughtful reflection on her journey to become anti-racist, she discusses bringing this into her information literacy teaching by highlighting unequal access to information and recognising her own racial stereotyping of students. A pedagogy based on compassion is the focus of Amy Pajewski's chapter. Her own experience as a first-generation student led to her interest on how 'first-gen' students act, use and feel about the library.

While this section offers thought-provoking chapters, it should be noted that the large majority are written by white practitioners, mirroring the issue of diversity in our profession as a whole.

There is little in the way of teaching tips in this book, as that is not its purpose. However, there are still interesting insights into teaching styles scattered throughout, mainly covered in the third section, 'Some approaches to teaching'.

For example, Mackenzie K. Brooks discusses her belief in the pedagogy of trial and error, and how she encourages this in the classroom. Maisie Prior considers how improvisation has informed her teaching style. Catherine Tomlin reflects on using images rather than text to help students how to critically evaluate. While most of the authors do not speak in flattering terms about undertaking lecture style instruction, John Hynes shares how his style of delivering lectures has changed, underpinned by the concept of authenticity.

Even if the approaches are not of interest, the reflections on the successes and failures could inspire readers to try something different in their own teaching.

By the nature of reflection, this book does not necessarily cover new or current practice. There are some mentions of the pandemic and the impact this may have in the future, most notably Claire Wotherspoon's discussion of digital literacy post-COVID. However, its strength is that reflecting on personal pedagogies has no end point for librarians who teach, and therefore the book will maintain its relevancy.

This book is valuable resource for any librarian who teaches. The tone of each chapter reflects the editors' belief that there is no one true pedagogy. Rather, the pedagogies are presented as evolving in line with the authors' own values and beliefs. The authors all speak candidly about their experiences, beliefs, and thoughts, which will likely encourage readers to do the same. It could also certainly be useful for practitioners seeking excellent examples of library teaching reflections.