LIRT's Top Twenty for 2004

Selected and reviewed by the Continuing Education Committee: Tiffany Anderson Hebb, Corliss Lee, Camille McCutcheon, Harry Meserve, Ericka Arvidson Raber (Chair), Leslie Sult, and Leanne VandeCreek. Committee members reviewed over one hundred articles related to library instruction and information literacy. The committee worked to include articles from various library settings as well as a mix of both theoretical and practical articles.

Barone, Kathleen, and Glenda B. Weathers. "Launching a Learning Community in a Small Liberal Arts University." *College & Undergraduate Libraries* 11.1 (2004):1-9.

Barone and Weathers discuss the value of building learning communities and describe the collaboration of their library and English department in creating one. They worked together to design a learning experience where the students would see the integrated nature of information and build new knowledge. Because of research showing that Gen Y students are visually oriented, they started by having the students look at several pieces of art and, in small groups, design their own research questions. The librarian then provided them self-guided pathfinders and let the students search for answers to their questions and create their own discoveries.

Brower, Stewart. "Millennials in Action: A StudentGuided Effort in Curriculum-Integration of Library Skills." *Medical Reference Services Quarterly* 23.2 (2004):81-88.

This article details a project taken on by Pharmacy students at the University of Buffalo along with librarians and the school's curriculum committee, to help create their own training plan for information literacy skills. Their final plan involved integration of this training throughout the first three years of their program. Brower attributes their initiative largely to their being part of the millennial generation. Throughout the article, he also ties in other millennial characteristics and how they impacted this project and the role the students played in it.

Christenson, Beth. "Warp, Weft, and Waffle: Weaving Information Literacy into an Undergraduate Music Curriculum." *Notes* 60.3 (2004): 616-631.

Christensen describes the program of sequential course-integrated library instruction for students in the music department at St. Olaf College. The article

includes examples of the assignments, which continue to build on higher level skills throughout the major curriculum. The assignments are designed to take advantage of the four stages of epistemological development, as described by Ethelene Whitmire. Christensen also touches on the importance of assessment and faculty support in this type of program.

Donham, Jean, and Corey Williams Green. "Developing a Culture of Collaboration: Librarian as Consultant." *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 30.4 (2004): 314-21.

Cornell College Library restructured four of its five librarian positions as Consulting Librarians (for Arts and Humanities, for Social Sciences, etc.). This model is more meaningful for library users and enables true collaboration with faculty. Consulting librarians integrate collection development, instruction, and in-depth reference for their respective academic areas. They attend meetings, serve on faculty committees, and are active throughout the college. Consultation follows a model based on ACRL's Information Competency Standards for Higher Education, so the library and other support systems are available to students at each stage of the research process. The article briefly discusses the process of strategic planning and describes how librarians work collaboratively with faculty in planning and teaching courses. This model should be useful to all instruction librarians as we ponder how to truly integrate ourselves into the teaching of our institutions.

Drabenstott, Karen M. "Why I Still Teach Online Searching." *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science* 45.1 (2004): 75-80.

In her online searching course, Drabenstott, a professor at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, School of Information, teaches her students the importance of facet analysis, which requires topics to be broken into several concept groups. Other aspects of the course include how to query information systems, the benefits of controlled vocabulary in information retrieval, and the value of information retrieval and web search strategies. Her rationale for teaching online searching is so that her former students will not only be able to incorporate their knowledge of facet analysis into their online searching, but they will also be able to train their library users to use these skills in their online searches.

Ellis, Lisa A. "Approaches to Teaching Through Digital Reference." *Reference Services Review* 32.2 (2004): 103-19.

Ellis examines the growing acceptance of the importance of teaching as a part of reference, the rise in popularity of digital reference, and lessons learned from online education. She outlines how the ACRL Information Competency

Standards for Higher Education can serve as a curricular framework for teaching in digital reference interactions. This well-written article addresses the confluence of instruction and digital reference, two major trends in the library field.

Eshet-Alkali, Yoram, and Yair Amichai-Hamburger. "Experiments in Digital Literacy." *Cyberpsychology & Behavior* 7.4 (2004): 421-429.

According to Eshet-Alkali and Amichai-Hamburger, digital literacy consists of five components: photo-visual skills, reproduction skills, branching skills, information skills, and socio-emotional skills. The authors discuss each component and then describe experiments they conducted with high school, college students, and college graduates to assess their competencies within each component. Their findings showed that younger users were more skilled with photo-visual literacy and branching skills; older users were more skilled at tasks requiring information and reproduction literacy skills. This article should serve to remind librarians that information and computer literacies are not just technical and text-based competencies. The discussion is mostly theoretical, but has interesting implications for educators.

Foster, Allen. "A Nonlinear Model of Information-Seeking Behavior." *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 55.3 (2004): 228- 237.

Foster's nonlinear model of information-seeking behavior is based on an interview of 45 academics engaged in interdisciplinary research. He proposes that information-seeking behavior does not unfold in three neat stages (initial, middle, and final), but rather non-sequentially, with any one behavior possibly leading to any other behavior. Foster writes about three core processes: Opening, Orientation, and Consolidation. His model also illustrates three contextual interactions: External (such as social), Internal (such as feelings), and Cognitive Approach (such as flexible and adaptable). The article is an interesting exploration of the research process with many implications for information literacy.

Heller-Ross, Holly. "Reinforcing Information and Technology Literacy: The Plattsburg Tip Sheet." *College & Research Libraries News* 65.6 (2004): 321-26.

The general education curriculum at SUNY Plattsburgh has recently been revised to include a new one-credit information and technology literacy requirement. As a result, the library offered a workshop to assist faculty in revising their courses to meet this new requirement. The tip sheet provides faculty with alternative methods to lectures, class activities and assignments, through the incorporation of technology and research sources. Heller-Ross also

suggests ways that librarians can use the workshop and tip sheet at their own libraries.

Hensley, Randy Burke. "Curiosity and Creativity as Attributes of Information Literacy." *Reference & User Services Quarterly* 44.1 (2004): 31-36.

Hensley defines curiosity and creativity in an educational context and encourages readers to insert inquiry into their instruction. By building an environment that acknowledges the problems associated with the research process and encourages creative responses to the "why" questions, librarians can foster curiosity and creativity in their classes and other interactions with students. Hensley asks us to move beyond our efforts to teach students how to identify information needs, how to find information, and how to evaluate information. We should also focus our energies on getting students to ask the "whys" about information. This article offers a very thoughtful and refreshing perspective that will spark ideas and remind us why we enjoy teaching.

Hunt, Fiona, and Jane Birks. "Best Practices in Information Literacy." *Portal: Libraries and the Academy* 4.1 (2004): 27-39.

ACRL has recognized the library at Zayed University, United Arab Emirates, as being one of the top institutions in the world which has demonstrated best practices in information literacy. In the article, the authors discuss six of the ten categories of ACRL's "Characteristics of Programs of Information Literacy that Illustrate Best Practices: A Guideline." The categories explored include Goals and Objectives, Administrative and Institutional Support, Articulation with the Curriculum, Collaboration, Pedagogy and Evaluation/Assessment. These selected characteristics were considered by the authors to be important, and in some cases, problematic in the beginning phase and in the continual development of their information literacy program. The authors' hope is that their article, based on personal experiences and examples cited from the literature, will be of benefit to other librarians who are using the ACRL guidelines to develop information literacy programs at their institutions.

Kipnis, Daniel G., and Gary M. Childs. "Educating Generation X and Generation Y: Teaching Tips for Librarians." *Medical Services Quarterly* 23.4 (2004): 25- 33.

Kipnis and Childs suggest ten tips for library instruction sessions with the specific generational qualities, attitudes, and learning styles of Generation X and Generation Y in mind. However, when followed, the suggestions would improve instruction with just about any population, and in a variety of settings. For example, it may seem obvious to introduce yourself and talk a little bit about your background at the start of each session, but this step is easy to overlook or

forget. Additionally, librarians can get caught using the same examples or search strategies class after class, particularly for multiple sections of the same class. The authors remind us to provide relevant and real-life examples in our instruction sessions. They also remind us of the value of humor and relationship building, and that it is possible to establish authority while at the same time remaining amicable. Kipnis and Childs have written a very practical and straightforward yet thought provoking article that instruction librarians can review any time they feel the need for a fresh approach to their classes.

Ladner, B., et.al. "Rethinking Online Instruction: From Content Transmission to Cognitive Immersion." *Reference & User Services Quarterly* 43.4 (2004): 329-37.

Ladner et.al. take up some important pedagogical issues in the course of describing the development of a library-nursing collaboration in information literacy. They make the useful distinction between the old, bibliographic instruction model of IL, based on "transmission of content" and a more dynamic model, based on the interaction of student, faculty, and librarian in the creation and use of distance learning tools, course management systems and other forms of interactive, cognitive styles of learning and teaching. The description of how these new tools are applied in the course of information literacy instruction in Nursing illustrates how active learning is promoted in a context where course management systems and other online environments are utilized. The authors illustrate a few ways in which we can understand and implement instruction where students are not so much "taught" as they are "immersed" in the subject matter. The article is very engaging and raises many questions, both of pedagogy and of practical methodology that will be of general benefit to all interested in developing new, more effective instruction.

Lindauer, Bonnie Gratch. "The Three Arenas of Information Literacy Assessment." *Reference & User Services Quarterly* 44.2 (2004): 122-29.

The author discusses the three arenas essential to information literacy assessment: the learning environment, information literacy program components, and student learning outcomes. She then provides a series of questions for each arena that would encourage assessment planning and practice. One of the most valuable aspects of the article is her discussion of organizations and resources which deal with information literacy assessment. Lindauer refers the reader to resources such as: workshops and online seminars: standards and guidelines; practical applications; research projects; and professional association web sites which link to publications and bibliographies of materials on information literacy assessment.

Macpherson, Karen. "An Information Processing Model of Undergraduate Electronic Database Information Retrieval*." Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* 55.4 (2004): 333-47.

MacPherson introduces us to the application of some concepts from cognitive psychology that may help us to understand what we are doing when we plan and provide instruction in information literacy. She uses her insights from cognitive psychology, especially in the area of information processing, to underline the methodology of concept-based instruction and critical thinking. MacPherson then uses a literature survey to argue that, while we use different terms and different constructs, we all seem to have a similar understanding of what we are doing when we teach information literacy skills, especially given the focus on critical thinking, problem solving and knowledge formation. This is a useful article because it demonstrates the value of using the established discipline of psychology to provide us with a potentially common theoretical base for the pedagogy of information literacy. While we may not accept MacPherson's proposed theoretical base, we can still take note of its usefulness to improve communication and as a model for the future.

Owusu-Ansah, Edward K. "Information Literacy and Higher Education: Placing the Academic Library in the Center of a Comprehensive Solution." *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 30.1 (2004): 3-16.

Owusu-Ansah presents a comprehensive approach to information literacy instruction in which librarians embrace their teaching roles and develop campus-wide programs. Part of this approach involves the elevation of the library to a teaching department that would offer an independent, required information literacy course. The author also argues for the continuation of course-specific instruction to reinforce skills, and to allow opportunities for faculty-librarian collaboration. This article shows that the argument for the inclusion of an information literacy course in the required undergraduate curriculum is still alive.

Small, Ruth V., et.al. "Motivational Aspects of Information Literacy Skills Instruction in Community College Libraries." *College & Research Libraries* 65.2 (2004): 96-121.

Although this article focuses on information literacy skills instruction in community college libraries, the successful blending of theory and practice can be adapted to a wide variety of library settings. The article begins with an examination of the ACRL Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education. After this brief introduction, the authors explore the interrelatedness of motivation and student learning, and introduce John M. Keller's ARCS Model of Motivational Design. The ACRL standards and the ARCS Model of Motivational Design form

the basis for a research study that the authors conducted with students at seven community colleges. The authors use what they discovered in their study to offer practical tips that librarians in any setting can use to motivate students during in-class library sessions.

Swanson, Troy A. "A Radical Step: Implementing A Critical Information Literacy Model." *Portal* 4.2 (2004): 259-73.

The author argues that it is time to move away from the print-based bibliographic instruction model for teaching research techniques. This article presents a case study whereby a critical information literacy model is applied to the research paper component of a first-year composition course. Four six-class sessions devoted to gathering information are taught with the librarian acting as class leader. Though the sample in this study is small, the limitations are adequately addressed by the author, and it does not detract from the information and ideas presented. While the approach may be radically different, and implementing this type of program may be impossible on many campuses, Swanson presents a unique, interesting, and plausible approach to teaching students critical literacy skills.

Tag, Sylvia G. "A Library Instruction Survey for Transfer Students: Implications for Library Services." *The Journal of Academic Librarianship* 30.2 (2004): 102-8.

The institution examined in this case study is fortunate to have a varied instruction program that includes orientations, course-integrated bibliographic instruction, course-linked credit instruction, and library credit courses. Tag presents a well-written article based on sound methodology and analysis that addresses the information needs and skills of a population that is frequently overlooked in library literature and on academic campuses: transfer students.

Walton, Marion and Arlene Archer. "The Web and Information Literacy: Scaffolding the Use of Web Sources in a Project-Based Curriculum." *British Journal of Educational Technology* 35.2 (2004): 173- 86.

Walton and Archer make fine distinctions between academic literacy, information literacy, and web literacy. They argue that developing students' web literacy is a specialized activity because "the conceptual difficulty of evaluative tasks required of students using the Web for research is considerable." This paper describes a three-year case study of a curriculum-embedded web literacy course for first-year engineering students. Relying on qualitative data such as online discussions, in-depth interviews, and reviews of assignments and evaluations, the authors detail the problems their students encountered with web searching. Applying techniques such as educational scaffolding, the authors draw important

connections between developing knowledge of academic discourses and successful academic use of the Web. They conclude that making these skills transferable requires sustained attention throughout the undergraduate curriculum. The theory and methodology employed by these authors provide a unique approach to teaching critical evaluation of Web resources and could be adapted in a variety of instruction environments.