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A HISTORY OF INFORMATION LITERACY IN COMMUNITY COLLEGES AS REPRESENTED
BY ARTICLES IN THE PROFESSIONAL PRESS

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BILLY PASHAIE

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Introduction

Community college libraries have long played a great part, in association with their parent organizations, in the role of education. The beginnings of this responsibility go back to the latter part of the 19th century and the dramatic growth of the academic community in the United States. Ever since the era of Melvil Dewey and the birth and rise of the *Library Journal* in 1876 a body of literature has been devoted to the role of the librarian as educator. A topic of frequent discussion has been the education of the user in effective and efficient use of library resources.

Though we now have a great number of source materials from which we can draw in our study of bibliographic instruction (BI) and information literacy instruction (ILI), a critical history of BI and ILI yet remains to be written. In today's age of information there seems to be a clear need for an evaluative study of the manner in which BI and ILI have developed in the United States in order to place such development in the context of the history of American librarianship. The purpose of the present work is to provide a contribution toward that goal, drawing from the primary source documentary evidence in the form of journal articles published in the professional press, as well as secondary source material in the form of books and other monographs. This work will undertake the task of providing a narrative historical background for the development of user instruction in the United States, focusing on the developments in BI and ILI in community college libraries from 1984 to 2004. The framework developed in this study will be derived from the research and professional literature.

Scope Statement

The topic of this project is "a history of information literacy in community colleges as represented by articles in the professional press." This study will be limited to community college libraries in the United States only, and will be limited to the writings and developments of the period 1984 – 2004. The beginning date was chosen because it coincides loosely with the time when the Internet first went public; about a decade later came the development and launching of the World Wide Web; and the terminal date has been selected because it simply makes a round number, encapsulating two decades of thought and documentary evidence for the work at hand. I will, however, prod somewhat farther into the past than the set chronological parameters in order to provide a brief examination of the events that provided the context for when our account begins.

I plan to study only activities termed as "bibliographic instruction," or "information literacy instruction," as they pertain to application at the junior or community college level. While we may not yet have an exact definition for the term "information literacy," many experts on the subject assume the definition of an information literate person as one who can "recognize when information is needed and [has] the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information."[1] Defined as such, the evolving concept of information literacy seems especially germane in this age of high-tech tools and information overload; a world where people are more and more asking if librarians and information specialists are any longer necessary.

As the expanse of available information widens, so does the divide between the competent and incompetent seekers and users of information. With the more complex nature of information in the modern electronic age, librarians are becoming ever more involved with the task of providing students with instructional assistance in using information resources. As such, many view the recent concept of information literacy to contain within itself the notion of bibliographic instruction, covering not only areas concerned with efficient and effective library use, but rather a holistic approach concerned with preparing students "for lifelong self-education in a global, electronic environment; [extending] beyond the library by preparing people to handle information effectively in any given situation."[2]

A Brief History of the Community College

A truly unique American invention, the community college has been said by many to be an institution without a past.[3] When compared with its sister institutions of higher learning—other colleges and universities—it is conceivable why the community college is perceived as a true babe in arms. As a far newer institution than its counterparts, it is sometimes thought that the community college is unfettered by the traditions that constrain those other institutions; that here for once is a case in point wherein one may remain free of the heavy hand of history, and of the constraints placed upon institutions through the context of culture.

While there may be some truth as to the newness of the institution, the rest of this picture is not exactly accurate. The community college is as much touched by the history that brought it into being as any other institution; its destiny determined to a great extent by the time and place of its birth and by its cultural heritage.

It is by the late 19th or early 20th century that we can discern the true emergence of the community college (then known as the junior college).[4] This was the era when the recently established US Office of Education and its Commissioner of Education first began to recognize the need for quality collegiate-level instruction. By the 1930s there was an ever-increasing growth in the two-year finishing schools for young women, normal schools for teachers, and the comprehensive community college.[5] As society began after World War II to demand greater access to higher education for all students, the role of the junior college expanded even further. But it was not until the 1960s that truly record numbers of students began to enroll in community colleges across the nation, a trend that continues to this day.[6]

Beginning in the 1960s, however, a serious contention took shape forming the opinion that students of the two-year colleges had a character different from those of the four-year schools.[7] This characterization was supported implicitly and explicitly in studies done in the mid- to late-1960s. Terry O'Banion, for example, implied this sentiment, writing that the skills of the community college student were about normal when compared to skills of the general public (with the implication that these skills are less than those of the university students).[8] And in 1965 Leland Medsker indicated his support of the theory in his identification of the sort of students traditionally enrolled in the community college:

- The lower achiever in high school who "discovers" college quite late.
- The high school graduate of low ability who enters community-junior college because of social pressure or unemployment.
- The intellectually capable but unmotivated, disinterested high school graduate who comes to a community-junior college to "look and explore."
- The transfer from a four-year college who either failed or withdrew.
- The high school dropout who comes from a minority group and a culturally disadvantaged background.[9]

It was largely due to this type of rationale that by the 1970s a national trend had begun to grow placing great emphasis on the community college "learning resource centers," and integrating library instruction into the curriculum.[10] The age of information was about to be born and the concept of information literacy would take on dimensions never before conceivable. But before we look at information literacy in this brave new world, it might be prudent to look at the concepts of information and literacy in the context of the nation that gave birth to the culture of information.

Literacy in a Culture of Information

The need for an informed people has had a long history in the United States. Thomas Jefferson in 1787 wrote:

> The way to prevent these irregular interpositions of the people is to give them full information […] were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter. But I should mean that every man should receive those papers and be capable of reading them.[11]

The concepts of information and literacy, then, have been with us since the birth of this nation. But the idea that the library had a role to play in bringing together a people with the literacy to use such information did not truly emerge until the mid- to late-nineteenth century—the same era that saw the birth of the junior college and the "transformation of American scholarship."[12]

This is the epoch wherein great fundamental changes began to take shape in the structure of education in the United States. With a proliferation of research in the sciences, and the passage of the Morrill Land Grant Act in 1862, the groundwork was set for the rapid rise and expansion of the academic institutions at all levels.[13] With the rise in the institutions of higher learning came also the customary appearance of specializations. Columbia and Michigan, for example, set up chairs in history in 1857; Cornell University was founded in 1868; and Johns Hopkins, founded in 1876, devoted itself to the German model of the university as an institute for research.[14]

The needs and working habits of the newly emerging researchers set the tone for a different view of the library from that held by previous gentleman-scholars. Typifying the German-trained historians of the era, Herbert Baxter Adams wrote in 1887:

> The library is, in a most important sense, the center of the University life […] the place where it is located is the place towards which teachers and students alike must turn, in order to find the means of pursuing their investigations.[15]

In a profusion of such statements from the late 19th century can one locate the newly formed dependence of the scholar upon the library. And closely related to this increased need for information was the need for easy and efficient access to materials.

Herbert Adams, complaining that searching for materials in the typical college library was the equivalent of looking for a needle in a haystack, upheld the value in Dewey's reorganization of the Columbia library, where an attempt had been made to "organize so thoroughly its literary resources in any given field like history or political science that they can be speedily massed upon a given point with […] precision and certainty."[16] Important to bear in mind is that in making such statements, the notion Adams had in mind was assistance to "the undergraduate and the neophyte in learning rather than aid for the mature scholar."[17]

The library was transformed from a repository for knowledge to an intellectual workshop, and the work of the librarian was altered from archivist to educator. The need for instruction in the efficient and effective use of library resources for research led to the concept of librarian as educator, a role that came to be well accepted by the end of the 19th century.[18] An active promoter of library education far ahead of his time, the Harvard University librarian Justin Winsor envisioned the library as "the grand rendezvous of the college for teacher and pupil."[19] Winsor was a great advocate of the education of student and faculty in the use of books and libraries. And finally it was Melvil Dewey himself who organized reference services at the Columbia College at the turn of the 20th century, expecting librarians to provide "discriminating counsel," and "direct training" to the student, allowing students to have a good knowledge of library resources so that they could "use them intelligently."[20]

After the turn of the century, discourse that sounds surprisingly modern may be found in statements such as that of Lucy Salmon who argued persuasively at an ALA conference in 1913 for the "[incorporation] of knowledge of how to use a library with the subject matter included in a particular course," so that the knowledge acquired would fall "naturally into its place in connection within definite concrete work."[21]

This undercurrent of interest in the education of the library user gained more momentum as scholarship became ever more specialized. The technical aspects of the library at this time gained prominence as vocational education programs started competing with the more traditional courses of study in the liberal arts.[22] This specialization resulted in the colleges' offering of courses, whether elective or for credit units, in library instruction. One of the more ambitious of such programs was the one launched by Louis Shores at Peabody College for Teachers in Nashville, TN. What Shores predicted was an innovative idea of a library college where all teachers would have training in library work, and would guide their undergraduate students in a self-directed course of study using appropriate library materials.[23] This concept emphasized the undergraduate use of problem-solving techniques within the regular college curriculum—an idea that would have interesting implications for later twentieth-century instructional programs.

Further attempts at developing innovative user instruction programs were made during the 1940s and the 1950s, but it was not until the 1960s that Patricia Knapp's program at Monteith College at Wayne State University brought a sophisticated understanding of the library and bibliographic instruction to the forefront of the undergraduate experience. In 1966 Knapp introduced an "instruct the instructors" program in order to educate instructors on the uses of library resources and their educational value.[24] For the students,

Knapp devised a plan of instruction that would integrate library use into the framework of a variety of courses across the curriculum. These instructions entailed assignments based on problem-solving activities devised to emphasize the process of research. Furthermore, the assignments entailed skills in using the library: locating call numbers and the ability to find books in the stacks, identification and ability to use essential reference works, and locating and evaluating information on diverse topics across disciplines.[25] The most important aspects of this method of BI were the emphasis on multidisciplinary activities involving critical thinking, as well as the importance of collaboration between instructors and librarians.

The experiences and successes of Knapp led to much interest in BI among academic librarians in the 1970s. This interest paved the way in the early 1970s for the creation within the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) of an ad hoc bibliographic committee, leading to the eventual creation of the Bibliographic Instruction Section of ACRL in 1977.[26] ACRL published the "Guidelines for Two-year College Learning Resources Program" in 1971, making several important statements regarding bibliographic instruction, including:

> […] such emphasis requires a commitment of the staff to involvement in the instructional program, provision for individual guidance in the use of materials and resources and in the interpretation of learning tools, as well as formal instruction to groups.[27]

Also important is the first mention of the term "information literacy" in library science and information literature in 1974. This abstract construct was first used by Paul G. Zurkowski in a document to the National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS). In this work Zurkowski suggests, "The top priority of [NCLIS] should be directed toward establishing a major national program to achieve universal information literacy by 1984."[28] The groundwork was now laid for the organization of BI and ILI as relevant to the years within the scope of this study.

The Second Generation of Bibliographic Instruction

The college librarians of the 1960s and 1970s in a sense had the role of instruction imposed upon them by the changing nature of higher education. In order to meet the needs of the increasing number of students with a full time enrollment (FTE) status, increasing diversity in students, and an ever increasing body of knowledge, as well as the traditionally close connections among students, librarians, faculty, and curriculum, community college librarians had begun to concern themselves less with library orientation tours and more with bibliographic instruction. These were changes that would continue dramatically into the years to come.

There were just seventy or so "wild eyed attendants" at the first Library Orientation Exchange (LOEX) conference of 1971, but their number grew exponentially within a decade.[29] Published in 1973, the first annual review of literature concerning bibliographic instruction contained only 29 items; within ten years the review had almost ten times the number of items, topping off at 240—and each annual review contained an average of 140 to 150 items each.[30] While these articles dealt with bibliographic instruction in all types of libraries, the majority of the items were concerned with university and college libraries. By the mid-1980s it was clear that bibliographic instruction had grown into a specialization.

From workshops on the use of the library it was just another step to teaching students to evaluate the information they found. This form of evaluation emphasized the element of critical thinking. This idea became an ever increasing theme in the literature of the 1980s. In describing educators, for example, Mona McCormik in 1983 wrote,

> If we set goals which describe intellectual curiosity and critical thinking as values in an educated person, we have to figure out ways to move students toward these goals by giving them the experience of thinking while they are in an educational setting.[31]

In showing students how to find books and journal articles, the question of relevancy, as well as biases and limitations in the works consulted became topics of discussion as librarians encouraged students to think critically about the information they found.

The 1980s approach toward bibliographic instruction increasingly involved the students in a "total library experience."[32] One of the outstanding programs of the 1980s that served as a leader ahead of its time was the Instruction Support and Learning Resources program of the North Campus Library of the Miami-Dade Community College. In a program designed to "give a systematic approach to improving students' information skills,"[33] the North Campus Library set the tone for the perception of bibliographic instruction in the years to come. Six librarians worked together in this program to design three consecutive workshops, wherein "students completed a twelve-page reading and writing inventory, were interviewed by a professional who customized a learning program, and completed a test on information skills."[34]

Important also to this decade was the advent of the Internet going public, along with the increased awareness of the role of computing in the library. While much of the literature of the 1980s still emphasized

the need to teach students the intricacies of the card catalog[35], one can witness the early stages of the coming age of the computer in several key articles. As early as the mid-1980s, for example, the library of Mineral Area College in Flat River, Missouri, started to offer a series of one-hour computer competency workshops teaching microcomputer basics, Logo, Basic, word processing, spreadsheets, and databases.[36]

As the 1980s decade drew to an end, there was an ever-increasing amount of attention paid to the approach which saw the role of the librarian as closely intertwined with that of the instructor in teaching the student the ability to understand, locate, and use the diverse resources available at the community college library. Furthermore, accountability in education basic skills, the role of collective bargaining, the end of the Baby Boom, and the decade of shrinking dollars brought about consequent revision in thinking about issues of college librarianship and its role in instruction in the decade to come.[37]

The Growing Concept of Information Literacy

ACRL's 1990 community college library standards placed a greater prominence in the role of library instruction when compared with their 1971 counterpart (see above). The new view emphasized, "[t]here shall be a program to provide to students bibliographic instruction through a variety of techniques enabling them to become information literate."[38] The 1994 version of the standards was somewhat revised to state, "[a]n information literacy program for students should be provided through a variety of techniques."[39] The so-called "variety of techniques" is most relevant in two trends developing during the 1990s.

The first of these trends was the explosion of new information technologies which had started in the 1980s, but really began to take off in the 1990s. Due to the impact of such new technology changes were implemented in budgeting, placing greater emphasis on software evaluation and design, in addition to a need for greater emphasis on technical literacy.[40] Community college librarians were among the first quickly to welcome experimental new information technology as valuable pedagogical tools in the field of student library instruction.

As library catalogs began to go online, the need arose to teach students how to perform effective OPAC searching. The Albion College library of Albion, Michigan, created an innovative program in teaching their system to their students. Of the 15-week ½ credit course in library research methods, the final five weeks were devoted to the use of the electronic library (online searching, CD-ROM, Boolean searching, databases, etc.).[41] The assignment for this section of the class consisted of three components: 1) a ninety minute block of time devoted to carefully selected OPAC searches by students;   2) a required five minute class presentation by students on what they each learned in their search; and 3) a brief two page summary and review of the assignment.[42] Though other colleges around the country initiated similar programs for their students, the Albion College program stood out for its interactivity and thoroughness.

Other noteworthy programs were Southwestern College's interactive Macintosh program in Winfield, KS, that guided students through the library. The analogy used in this program was that of a cockpit, with the

student as the pilot.[43] The library faculty of Baltimore's Anne Arundel Community College developed and taught an information literacy course in conjunction with the computer science faculty in 1994.[44] And Utah's Salt Lake Community College devised an online information literacy course in participation with a statewide project.[45]

As more institutions gained access to Internet and WWW sources, it became apparent that another target audience for education by the college library was the faculty and staff of the institution. An exemplary program from the 1990s aimed at this audience was the workshop co-developed by Donna Miller and Michael Ziegler at the Lebanon Valley College of Pennsylvania (LVC).[46] This was a program conceived to teach the use of Internet tools and applications, explain various utilities, demonstrate different features, and have hands-on demonstrations for the participants.[47] Other excellent programs from the 1990s include the one devised by Sandra Dulling and Patrick Max of the Castleton College, Castleton, Vermont. This program emphasized such salient points as "site-based management," "resource-based learning," and a "quest for incorporation of new technologies" into the curriculum.[48]

The second significant trend in information literacy to emerge from the 1990s was the push further to integrate library instructional work with the existing courses at the community college, combining scheduled class time, and collaborating with the faculty in specialty fields in order to weave the concept of information literacy into the course content. This was generally accomplished through the design of specific course materials that built upon the student's knowledge and skills accumulated from term to term. Collaborations extended in range from those with faculty, to multi-library partnerships.

An excellent exemplar in the field of course-integrated instruction was the program developed in the early 1990s by Abigail Loomis and Patricia Herrling of the Steenbock Library. In their program, Loomis and Herrling made a point of differentiating between "course-related" instruction, as opposed to "course-integrated" instruction.[49] The definition, admit the authors, was one of degree rather than kind.[50] The program listed a series of four criteria, three of which must be met in order to qualify as course-integrated:

- o Faculty outside the library are involved in the design, execution, and evaluation of the program.
- o The instruction is curriculum-based; in other words, it is directly related to the student's course work and/or assignments.
- o Students are required to participate.
- o The students' work is graded or credit is received for participation.[51]

Similar formats were typically used by many community college library instructional programs.

Ulster County Community College, for example, realizing that the library could not alone play a complete role in satisfying students' information needs, trained classroom faculty in library use in order to enable them to infuse information literacy outcomes into their own individualized courses. The program was a great hit, with faculty members championing the cause of making this course a requirement for all

students.[52] And Seattle Central Community College developed a handbook for faculty, educating them on methods of integrating information literacy outcomes into their curriculum. The guide contained "adaptable lesson plans which required students to practice and apply information literacy competency," and encouraged teachers to reach beyond the traditional textbook as a medium for transfer of knowledge to students.[53]

The 1990s also saw a great emergence in multi-library collaborations for the promotion of information literacy. One such program that stood out above the rest was the cooperative approach taken by the Shelton State Community College of Tuscaloosa, Alabama. The college librarians, along with the Tuscaloosa Public Library, the University of Alabama (UA) library, and the UA School of Library and Information Studies put together a program in which students were required to use resources from the college, public, and university libraries. The course was linked to the community college's introductory English composition class, and students were required to be enrolled in both classes at once.[54]

The 1990s then were an important milestone for the evolving concept of information literacy. This was a decade that served as a point of departure for many instructional librarians—a time when they could look back at what they had been, while looking forward to where they wanted to go. The important common thread running through most of the information literacy literature of the decade was that of technology, as well as integration. Different versions of the future were discussed: the "doomsday" version where the library of the future had no further need for the obsolete instructional librarian, as well as the more likely scenario in which librarians would play an important role in the 21st century information environment.[55]

Information Literacy in the Age of Information

The 21st century has been dubbed the "Age of Information," and the role of the librarian in this age is far from peripheral. With a profusion of technology for the creation and dissemination of information, the role, envisioned by Thomas Jefferson in the 18th century, of preparing an information literate society still provides plenty of challenges for educators and librarians.

One of the more important ideas that seem to be emerging from this new environment is that of multi-media information literacy. While the 20th century saw the rise of the motion pictures, television, radio, and telephone, the printed word still carried the greatest amount of authority as a source for information.[56] The 21st century saw an explosion of multi-media tools for the creation and dissemination of information, including the Internet, intranets, Web utilizations, and cellular phones. The value and legitimacy of the printed word has great potential for change in this environment of visual and aural immersion. As the ability to create and disseminate information in multi-media formats becomes more readily available, the need for multi-media information literacy greatly increases.

Hannelore Rader has identified the need for individuals to "achieve information fluency by acquiring cultural, visual, computer, technology, research, and information management skills to enable them to think critically," naming this new need, "information fluency."[57] Information fluency in this fluid environment

involves new skills that will help to assist college students (and professors) in making connections between the changing patterns of information creation and dissemination. Information fluency in this new light "gives a substance to information literacy that was never part of past pedagogies of library instruction."[58]

Released in the year 2000, ACRL's "Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education" made it possible to measure college students' outcomes effectively using five information skills standards, twenty-two performance indicators, and eighty-seven outcome measurements.[59] Included among these indicators is the students' ability to locate, evaluate, organize, and use information for specific needs, using a variety of resources, in print, computerized, or in other forms and mediums; as well as the ability to think critically and communicate effectively.[60]

In California, the Statewide Academic Senate for California Community Colleges and the Consultation Task Force of the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office began to lay the groundwork in 2001 for implementing information literacy (generally called information competency in California, after the terminology set forth by the California State Universities)[61], establishing it as a prerequisite for community college graduates.[62] Many of the California community colleges, however, did not wait for the implementation by the Board of Governors, putting into operation their own stand-alone, as well as cross-curriculum, programs of information competency.

Among the many programs implemented by community colleges in the early 2000s, six pioneering cases of formal information competency requirements stand out above the rest. The Diablo Valley College, proposed "planning a process prior to selection of a delivery model," detailing the learning outcomes expected from their program, and outlining a procedure for the information literacy committee to follow in approving new or revised courses.[63] Glendale College used research to determine effective models of information literacy, with the faculty doing a study to determine the impact of their one-credit course as it pertained to student success.[64] Cabrillo College introduced a "Co-requisite Course Model,"[65] wherein there was a "serious effort to add the use of electronic information resources to the syllabus and course content," while partnering with the faculty in an effort to integrate information literacy into the coursework.[66] Cuyamaca College implemented a "Modified Infusion Model,"[67] wherein students were exposed to different elements of information literacy in each GE course at the college.[68] Santa Rosa Junior College put into effect a "Multiple Options in Partial Implementation"[69] model, whereby linking with other departments courses was offered using multiple formats through various media.[70] And finally, Merced College introduced a program emphasizing "From Planning to Completed Implementation,"[71] wherein the faculty was educated in the use of multi-media information presentation, and then left free to articulate which aspects of information literacy they wished to embed into their own coursework.[72] What course other community colleges will take regarding these issues as the decade unfolds remains to be seen.

Immodest Proposals: The Voice of Dissent

Prevailing theories and methods of ILI notwithstanding, there exist nevertheless various detractors of the library instruction movement. In 1930 James Ingersoll Wyer introduced several theories concerning libraries' claims of service to clientele, and the pedagogical value of self-help. These conjectures were named the "conservative theory," the "moderate theory," and the "liberal theory" of reference work.[73] The conservative theory, which directs much of what has thus far been discussed in this paper, assumes the pedagogical superiority of education in the finding, evaluation, and use of information over the mere direct provision of information. Ever since Wyer's time, however, there have been those who have held to the assumptions of the moderate and the liberal theories.

At the second level of Wyer's taxonomy, the moderate theory, there have been voices that have called for a service model wherein the librarian serves a somewhat active role in the library education of the patron. Rothstein, for example, points to J. Christian Bay, who believed early in the 20th Century that guidance alone was inadequate, and that "the ideal for anyone connected with reference work is not merely to indicate a mass of literature but to illumine it."[74] More current suggestions at the limited service model include Ross T. LaBaugh, with an analogy drawn between BI and teaching students the elements of grammar. LaBaugh suggests that just as syntax does not help students become better writers creatively, neither does BI help students become better researchers critically. A plan is proposed to stop teaching students how to use, for example, InfoTrac, and to start teaching them "why journal literature is vital to their research."[75] According to this view, the idea of BI and ILI is not in itself a bad one, though the focus should be changed from "how" to "why."

Other voices in academic librarianship have argued vehemently for Wyer's third level of taxonomy, the liberal theory of reference service. A major theme in this line of discussion consists of the argument that scholarship should be devoted to the creation and testing of theses, and that the mechanical act of searching out, identifying, and obtaining sources of information are time-consuming tasks that stand in the way of true scholarship.[76] Proponents of the liberal theory do not conceive of critical thinking skills as a component of research: Rothstein, for example, argued in 1964 that adults have "no more reason to be guided in the techniques of finding out than they have in being shown how to fix a defective carburetor."[77]

Other major points of concern regarding the conservative theory have been:

- o   The validity of library use instruction, particularly as a function of reference service;
- o   The relationship between library use instruction and library use proficiency; and
- o   The educational role of libraries and librarians.[78]

Jesse Shera, for example, called in 1954 for librarians to "forget this silly pretense of playing teacher";[79] and Anita Schiller took a stand in 1965, expressing her concerns about the incompatibility of library user instruction and the role of reference service as information provider.

Schiller, in fact, saw the role of library user education and that of provision of information as antithetical to each other. The librarian, she argued, creates confusion in users because users never know which approach (conservative or liberal) to expect from the reference librarian. Expecting the conservative approach, and fearing that they should already know how to perform their own research, users attempt to modify their search strategy accordingly, obscuring the expression of the need for which they came to the library in the first place. Thus the librarian is left to interpret the need of the user, often leading to inefficient use of library resources.[80]

More recently, writers like Stoan have argued that the term "research," as used by librarians, is not at all the equivalent of the term as used by scholars. Stoan believed that scholars use methodologies consistent with the discipline to which they belong, with much reference work taking place in the location of works within bibliographies and footnotes, rather than the artificially constructed subject headings and descriptors used by librarians. Furthermore, Stoan argued that students cannot be taught cross-discipline research methods as envisioned by librarians, as much intradisciplinary research is based on "personal, domain specific, subjective, intuitive […] amalgam of insights, experience, and luck sparked by engagement with resources encountered, sometimes serendipitiously, along the way."[81] Stoan, in fact, believed libraries were organized to accommodate librarians more than users.

This discussion was carried further in 1990, when Eadie argued that instead of following Ranganathan's recommendation that the librarian's purpose is "to save the time of the reader,"[82] instructional librarianship is often aimed at saving the time of the librarian. Eadie's thesis was that in trying to anticipate questions from students, academic librarians create information literacy programs as a more cost-efficient alternative to point-of service user reference. These programs are themselves time consuming, however, and since the student in such a course has little motivation to learn, these programs in reality do more damage than good by taking time away from reference desk service, where students are actually open and motivated to learn because they have an information need.[83] The efforts of user instruction librarians were viewed as quixotic at best, and as a real barrier to student learning at worst.

Conclusion

Born about a century ago, the community college has made its mission not only to educate, but to provide higher educational opportunities for everyone. This is a mission taken philosophically and enthusiastically to heart by the libraries belonging to these organizations. Whether community college libraries and librarians will continue to play a role in shaping the characteristic elements desired by the American culture will depend more than anything else upon the librarians themselves. In helping students use the library actively and intelligently, librarians help create citizens with critical thinking skills that can not only survive, but can thrive in a world of information proliferation and a knowledge-based economy.

Libraries are no longer mere repositories of knowledge. The ongoing debates over the efficacy of BI and ILI notwithstanding, community college libraries have an extended influence as intellectual centers guiding users to become independent, life-long learners. An appreciation of such influence provides a useful point of departure for an investigation into the creative environment of access that reference and instruction librarians have helped to create.

Chronology

1984—*Beginnings of the Internet going public—many libraries begin to go online

1985—National Commission on Libraries states that "the basic objective of education is for each student to learn how to identify needed information, locate, organize, and present it in a clear and persuasive manner."[84]

1986—*Carnegie Foundation reports major correlation between libraries and quality undergraduate education.[85]

1989—*ALA releases report defining the term, "information literacy"

1989—Chancellor's office of the California Community Colleges begins to coordinate the Library and Learning Resource Program and Services.[86]

1990—*National Forum on Information Literacy is founded. Organization publishes ALA's "Nine Information Literacy Standards for Student Learning."[87]

1991—*World Wide Web released—online information literacy becomes a possibility

1992—Chancellor's office of the California Community Colleges sets goal to promote library and learning resources programs as means of enhancing the teaching-learning process and the promotion of intellectual growth.[88]

1994—*ACRL Standards for community, Junior, and Technical College Learning Resource Programs is published.

1996—Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges and the Chancellor's office of the California Community Colleges increase their information competency involvement.[89]

1997—*Institute for Information Literacy (IIL) is created

2000—ALA's Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) approves the Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education

2000—Pac Bell and UCLA GSEIS open their "Initiative for the 21st Century Literacies."[90]

2001—ACRL Board releases "Objectives for Information Literacy Instruction: A Model Statement for Academic Librarians," and "Report on the National Information Literacy Survey: Documenting progress throughout the United States"

2002—LOEX Clearinghouse for Library Instruction. LOEX 2002 conference, topic: Integrating Information Literacy into the College Experience[91]

The use of the * signifies dates of major events concerning this topic.

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