Sometimes a teacher, sometimes not: Connections and voice in critical library instruction

by

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B.A., Chadron State College, 2000
M.A., Kansas State University, 2004
M.L.S., Emporia State University, 2010

AN ABSTRACT OF A DISSERTATION

submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

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Department of Curriculum and Instruction
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# Abstract

Library instruction in a university setting, in the primary manner it has been taught for decades, has a problem: the instruction is not teaching. Many library instruction sessions at universities are taught through a traditional lecture-style instruction session where students are allowed no voice in the classroom and there is no room for any evaluation of the information presented. Teaching without an engaged pedagogical framework without any active participation is problematic for teaching critical information literacy. This research focused on library instruction within higher education institutions and the choices made by instruction librarians to include (or not) critical pedagogy and critical information literacy within their teaching styles and classrooms. This study explored (a) the decisions of librarians to teach either in the traditional or critical library pedagogy manner and (b) barriers or encouragement in librarians' choice to teach through a critical lens.

With critical theory as the overarching framework and engaged pedagogy a central part to all these theories, critical engaged pedagogy combines critical race feminist theory, critical library pedagogy, and critical information literacy (the latter two frequently used interchangeably). The combined theoretical framework gives context for researching the reasons that instruction librarians choose (or do not) to implement these theoretical and pedagogical styles into their instruction of information literacy in classrooms. Using the qualitative methodology of narrative inquiry, specifically narrative analysis, this study analyzed and interpreted data from interviews, observational data, and field notes recorded in a reflexive journal through the lens of this theoretical framework.

Findings showed that in their everyday experiences as academic instruction librarians, the participants faced both barriers and encouragement to their decisions regarding teaching methods

and curriculum in addition to how they are impacting their students' lives and learning. Four different themes emerged from the data. The first theme, sometimes a teacher, sometimes not, speaks to the struggle that the participants handled every day: though they were instruction librarians, they were not able to always feel as though they were real teachers or faculty on their campuses. The second theme, if only I had a choice, discusses how discipline faculty affect their teaching decisions and the participants' goal to at least try to teach critical evaluation to the students. The third theme, teaching is a political act, focuses on participants' teaching under a critical library instruction pedagogy, emphasizing their engagement with the students, the falsehood of neutrality, and teaching about marginalized groups, injustice, oppression, and similar political-minded concepts in their classes. The fourth theme, real world, lifelong skills, discusses how the participants view their impact on student learning and student lives in general, demonstrated through teaching students critical thinking and evaluation (of the real world) skills in addition to impacting students beyond the classroom.

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# Acknowledgements

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# Dedication

For my mom, who taught me
to stand up for myself;
to love myself; and
to think beyond myself.

§§

To Gaby and Cindy, my best friends, split-aparts, and life-savers –
Without your love and support, this pegacorn would not have her wings.
#pegacornlife #unicorngirlsquad #fouryearsandcounting

# Chapter 1 - Introduction

## Background

Historically, the majority of library instruction sessions at academic universities are taught through a teacher-centered lecture in a one-time instruction session (Daland, 2015; Oakleaf et al., 2012; Ragains, 2013; Watson, Rex, Markgraf, Kishel, Jennings, & Hinnant, 2013;). Librarians come into the classroom to demonstrate as many resources as possible in their given time and then leave, hoping the students managed to retain some of the information. This method of teaching allows students no voice in the classroom nor allows any evaluation of the information presented. Students are there to accept the information given to them without questioning or discussion (see Accardi, 2013; Barr & Tagg, 1995; Zald & Gilchrist, 2008).

I started my teaching career at the university as an English instructor in 2004 and continued to teach courses in the English department ranging from composition to literature to technical writing courses until 2009. In addition, I taught for the Women's Studies department from 2004 to 2006. I learned to teach from a short training session in 2004 and through the observations of my colleagues, studying my mentors, and a lot of reading and learning on my own. I have wanted to be a teacher since I was a small child and learning how to teach was a priority for me. In 2006, I began a change in career tracks that led me to the tenured Associate Professor librarian position I am in today. Though I started in the library as a reference generalist, I moved quickly into leading tours and teaching general introduction to the library courses. In 2010, I moved to a faculty librarian position where I taught classes throughout the semester for the disciplines on which I focused. In the last eight years, I averaged approximately 40 different library instruction sessions or classes each semester. I received no training in teaching for this position; I only brought with me my years of experience and desire to learn

more. I began researching teaching styles, pedagogies, and methods while also attending workshops and trainings about instruction assessment. Currently, I lead training and information sessions about library instruction at my own library to help my colleagues learn more about teaching and improving instruction for our students. Why? Because as I stated above, the majority of library instruction sessions are what we call a "one-shot," a one-time library instruction session that is lecture style and teacher focused rather than student focused. I myself have done this type of teaching and observed many of my colleagues conduct these instruction sessions.

The effect of this teacher-centered style of teaching from my observations is that students are disengaged, if not bored, during the teaching session. Additionally, when I have done end-of-semester assessments (ranging from evaluating sources in final paper bibliographies to online testing of material), I learn the students have not retained the majority of information and are still making the same errors in their papers and research as they made at the beginning of the semester. This style of teaching is without an engaged pedagogical framework and no active participation; the learning experiences of students do not reflect lifelong learning or critical thinking in other words, the teaching of class is futile.

In recent years, there have been a small, but increasing, percentage of librarians who have worked to move away from the teacher-centered model to a more active-learning, feminist, and hands-on teaching method (Accardi, 2013). As technology has changed, there has been a movement to include online modules, tutorials, and other embedded-learning objects (digital content/materials and assessments with defined instructional value and centered on student learning; see Pitts, Kearns, & Collins, 2017) into library instruction sessions or even to substitute the face-to-face sessions. These technology changes and the rise of critical information

literacy/critical thinking focus within academic libraries have given feminist librarians opportunity and theory to change the traditional patriarchal model of library instruction. Yoder (2003) presented the idea of cyberfeminism and cyborgs, using technology as method of social change through librarianship. Schlesselman-Tarango (2014) expanded the intentions of a cyborg librarian to include the implementation of cyberfeminist library instruction through a critical information literacy and feminist pedagogy lens.

Additionally, librarians have changed teaching styles to focus on student engagement, though maybe not through critical information literacy nor an engaged feminist pedagogical style (Accardi, Drabinski, & Kumbier, 2010). These changes have included incorporating Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory into instruction and teaching to accommodate different learning styles (Ha & Verishagen, 2015; Kolb, 2014). Using engaged teaching methods to apply to community engagement and service learning (Riddle, 2003), and discussing and critiquing the engaged teaching within massive open online courses, i.e., MOOCs (Toven-Lindsey, Rhoads, & Lozano, 2015) are additional examples. However, there have been few instances of engaged critical race feminist pedagogy incorporated into multiple courses at an academic library. Broidy (2007) successfully created an information literacy course using feminist foundations and theory but not all academic institutions allow stand-alone information literacy courses. Most recently, Accardi (2013) published *Feminist Pedagogy for Library Instruction*, a much-needed monograph to guide librarians who are ready to move to a progressive, engaged, and critical race feminist pedagogy in their classrooms. This study is situated here, at the beginning of the movement to integrate engaged pedagogy and critical information literacy into library instruction sessions.

My research combines two fields, education and librarianship. Outside the field of librarianship, many academic faculty do not realize librarian instructors at a university may also

be faculty themselves; librarians teach in classrooms on a regular basis. The stereotype about librarians at a university is that they only do presentations, order books, and work the reference desk. This understanding of librarians was exemplified in a discussion with a qualitative research professor about my work with library instruction at our university. She was not familiar with the field of librarianship, its history, or how library instruction is conducted. Due to her lack of familiarity, she did not understand the background of library instruction or common practices that I work with every day. Additionally, information that I consider common knowledge is actually the opposite when writing for an audience outside of librarianship. In order to establish the connection and relationship between education and librarianship, I begin with my feminist, critical analysis of the historical context of critical pedagogy within library instruction.

## Historical Context

The importance of providing historical context for instruction within academic libraries is paramount for my readers to understand the impact of my research and the work librarians do. Therefore, my introduction focuses on the history and background of library instruction, specifically how instruction has been taught, with regard to teaching methods, throughout the years. Guiding my analysis of this historical context is the question: How has the method used for library instruction within a university setting changed in the last fifty years? As part of this larger research about using an engaged pedagogy within a library instruction session, providing the historical context of library instruction teaching methods allows my audience to understand how these sessions have been conducted. Overall, through the use of primary sources, the critical analysis of past library instruction provides the background information needed to inform my research.

**From Bibliographic Instruction to Critical Information Literacy: Historical Analysis**

The historical analysis of library instruction and its transformation provides context for research on how a feminist engaged pedagogy (Accardi, 2013, 2016; Hartstock, 2009; hooks, 1994, 2010; Ladenson, 2010), using critical information literacy (Keer, 2016; Pagowsky & McElroy, 2016; Swanson, 2004), creates lifelong learners in the classroom. For this analysis, I searched for library instruction primary sources. I first started at my own university working in the Libraries' Special Collections and Archives department where I knew there was library-focused material. During exploration of the archives, I discovered a collection that was not yet catalogued: it was a box of library instruction workbooks, manuals, and outlines for instruction sessions from the late 1980s. These materials were from library instruction taught at Farrell Library at Kansas State University. The second group of primary sources includes two library instruction workbooks from 1970 and 1981, created and used at the University of California, Los Angeles.

For each primary source, contents were examined and each workbook or manual was analyzed using a feminist critical lens. Specifically noted was any evidence of active learning, engaged teaching styles, and inclusion of any multicultural foci. Once the analysis and examination was complete, I had pages of notes about comparisons between the materials, the materials' resemblance to librarianship pedagogy at the time of use, and missing information or ideas from the sources that were necessary for feminist engaged pedagogical teaching. These notes and excerpts from the sources, in addition to support from scholars from the profession, are included in the following analysis of library instruction and its historical context.

**Kansas State University Library Instruction: 1984-1989**

During the fall semester of 1984, students enrolled in *Oral Communications I and IA* were required to complete a library resource workbook that was incorporated into their course syllabus. The syllabus was spiral bound and consisted of 63 two-sided pages—the library resource workbook consisted of 41 of these pages. The workbook is largely comprised of a self-guided tour where students complete worksheets provided within the pages. Currently at K-State, the students are still required to take this course (though now titled Public Speaking) but there is no library workbook, no library tour, and no face-to-face library instruction. Today the students complete an online library assignment that consists of learning objects and leads the students to specific resources for their own speech topics. I explain the difference here to highlight my surprise in learning that there was an integrated required assignment for library resources in the course 30 years ago as I was not aware that this existed. My surprises about library instruction integration would continue as I examined later years' materials.

The students were required to complete the library resource workbook as part of the overall course grade. The pages of the workbook were to be filled out while working through a self-guided tour. The pedagogy was foundationally bibliographic instruction, usually a 50-minute one-time instruction session focused on the teacher rather than student learning—the students are given information and the librarian demonstrates or explains how to search for materials; however, as the students walked through learning and reading information from the workbook, some active learning was involved. The self-guided tour sent the students through all floors of Farrell Library, directing them to specific resources and departments. As stated on the first page of the workbook, the objective of the tour was "to take a self-guided tour Farrell Library to learn the physical arrangement of the building and the services by the library services" (Slater, 1984,

p. 26). The stated objective sets the tone that the instruction would not entail active learning and that it is a self-guided tour shows that the library instructors are not working with the students in an engaged pedagogical manner.  Additionally, the tour and worksheets show the students the resources they may (or may not) need for their speeches but they do not provide a foundation for lifelong learning or any active learning to promote retention. For example, the workbook includes a short informative paragraph before each resource or service where students read and learn about different library terms or systems (e.g., an explanation of the Library of Congress Classification System). Most of the questions that follow do not require the students to work through any process or activity where they would take an active role in learning or use critical thinking skills. The students are simply asked questions to prove that they were present at the appropriate location and can read signs and information policies, as seen in Figure 1.

A copy machine located near the Reserve desk is very conven-
ient when students want to make copies of the assigned readings.
Other copy machines can be found throughout the library on the
1st, 2nd, and 5th floors; as well as stack levels 1, 3, 5, and 7.
Watch for them.

    8.  How much does a single copy cost?_____

The office for Enrollment and Scheduling, a division of the
Registrar's Office is located on the opposite side of the floor.
The University ID cards are issued by this office.

Use the main stairs and return to the first floor. Open one
of the large brown doors and go into the next area.

### FIRST FLOOR

The first floor is the main focal point of the Library and should
be the first stop when looking for any information – whether
asking directions, beginning a research project, checking out
library materials, or needing the correct spelling of a scienti-
fic term.

### CIRCULATION DEPARTMENT

Stop in front of the Circulation Desk, which is on your left
as you enter. You will see several computer terminals on the
counter. These terminals are connected to the library's auto-
mated circulation system. Materials in the library are being
recorded into a database that will enable the entire borrowing
process to be handled quickly and easily. A machine readable
code will be assigned to each item, as well as every student,
faculty and staff ID card. All students will need to be
registered in the Patron DataBase. Ask an attendant at the
Circulation Desk for an application.

A guide to the circulation policies has been laminated on
top of the tables directly in front of the Circulation desk.

    9.  For how long can an unbound &/or post-1960 stacks periodical
        be checked out?_____

   10.  Can library materials be renewed?_____

   11.  If yes, how do you renew them? If no, go on with the
       tour._____

A copy of the Circulation policies can be obtained from the
Information Center racks.

Now, turn so your back is to the Circulation desk.

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*Figure 1*. Library resource workbook page from *Oral Communications 1 and 1A Syllabus*
showing page 2 of the library tour and worksheet (Slater, 1984, p. 2).

After the self-guided tour, the workbook contains additional assignments, with objectives stated; however, none of them require the students to do anything besides read the one or two pages of information about topics such as card catalogs, search process, *New York Times* index, etc. There are no examples of any type of active learning nor engaged teaching within these last pages.

The following years of library instruction manuals in the sample show a continued growth in active learning, presence of the library instructor, and more in-depth assignments. In 1985, the library resources workbook was separated from the *Oral Communications* course and became a separately printed resource. The self-guided tour was not changed from the earlier year; however, the later assignments were expanded. Students were required to now complete short activities and answer questions connected to each section. In the instructions to the workbook, students read that their "answers for all other units should be written directly on the assignment sheets. Some of the answers can be found in the reading, some can be found in the library and some will require using your own logic" (Slater, 1985, p. ii). For these students, their learning expanded beyond recording what color a sign was that they saw during their tour—they worked with the resources to find information related to their topic.

Students' active learning was expanded the following year in 1986, when the brief library skills workbook was transformed into a semester-long course titled *Introduction to the Library*. In the following year, fall semester of 1987, the course was moved to a for-credit course within the College of Education's department of Curriculum and Instruction, EDCI 217, *Information Retrieval: An Introduction to Library Use*. It continued in this format and location through the rest of the instruction manuals I had discovered, through the spring of 1989. This course included face-to-face instruction sessions in addition to a (slightly revised) walking tour and completion of larger assignments such as abstracts, bibliographies, a mid-term, and final exam. In the

preface of the course textbook (an 82-page spiral-bound manual), the students read that the course is designed to give them a hands-on learning experience (Starke, 1987, p. 1). The textbook was full of information for the students to read ranging from how to take notes while researching and creating research timelines to periodical indexes and using microforms. For this course, I did not have access to the assignment sheets so I do not know the questions or specific types of activities the students completed.

**University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) Library Instruction, 1970**

As a comparison of library instruction during the same timeframe, I chose the library instruction workbooks from UCLA that are available online. One of the workbooks I analyzed was the Chicano Library Instruction Workbook from 1970. The Chicano Library Instruction Workbook was for a specific (and different from the one at K-State's) audience of incoming Chicano freshmen students in the Chicano High Potential Program, housed within the College of Special Education. The students needed additional instruction resources for their academic success and integration into a new culture. With special focus and instruction needed for these students, my initial assumption was that this would be a workbook full of active learning and engaged pedagogical teaching. However, within the first few pages of the workbook, I learned that the library instructors and directors of the program chose to "devise a program which would be self-directed as possible, require a minimum of verbal instruction, and permit the student to proceed at his own pace in as close to a real library situation as possible" (Dudley, 1970, p. 2). However, the comparison between this library instruction workbook and the set of workbooks from K-State showed that the assignments from UCLA were considerably more engaged than those at K-State. For example, UCLA also had an assignment for a self-guided tour; however, this tour had the students go to a specific location on a map of the library and rather than just

answering a question about what color a sign may be, the students were asked to inspect the destination and then describe whatever the service/resource was and how they could use it. They additionally were required to complete tasks such as going through the entire process of checking out a book (after finding it on the shelf) or using the reference resources in an in-depth manner to answer questions.

With the exception of the assignments that did require students to participate more actively in their learning process, the UCLA and K-State are similar. Most of the pages within the workbooks are full of definitions, examples, terms, and large blocks of text with information. Of note though is that the small steps toward active learning that K-State library instruction was making in the mid-1980s, UCLA library instruction had already made a decade prior.

## Feminist Critical Information Literacy

While reviewing the primary sources and their inclusion of active learning or engaged pedagogy, I analyzed them for inclusion of critical information literacy skills, feminist pedagogy examples, or ideas related to diversity. For the most part, the library instruction manuals and workbooks did not include any activities, assignments, or questions about these topics. However, following Accardi's (2013) ideas of how librarians can alternatively incorporate feminist ideals into library instruction, I specifically searched for any instances where the examples used in the workbooks or course textbooks included ideals of diversity, multiculturalism, or progressive education (Accardi, 2013, p. 48). The search was largely unsuccessful with the exception of two examples. One example is in the 1986 Kansas State University *Introduction to The Library* course textbook, within the information regarding the difference between author and subject catalog cards. Figure 2 shows example cards for James Cronin's *Labour and Society in Britain 1918-1979* (1984).

*Figure 2.* Author and title cards examples (Hatfield, 1986, p. 37).

Though this might not be the best diversity example, it is a book about labour class and social

conditions. While the instruction librarian could have chosen a more radical catalog card

example, assuming she wanted to use a feminist engaged pedagogy framework for critical

information literacy, an example discussing the economy, politics, and social conditions is a start. An additional example from the source is in the discussion of Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH). Librarians have a large number of options to select from when choosing an example of how the LCSH headings work in classification. The example in this textbook is depicted in Figure 3 with Energy Conservation, the breakdown, and related subjects such as Recycling.

The following is an example from the LCSH:

```
Energy conservation (Indirect) (TJ163.3-4)
        Here are entered general works on the
        conservation of all forms of energy
        Works on the conservation of a spe-
        cific form of energy are entered under
        that form, e.g. Petroleum conservation.
        Works on the conservation of energy
        as a physical concept are entered
        under Force and energy.
    sa  Petroleum conservation
        Recycling (Waste, etc.)
        Waste heat
     x  Conservation of energy resources
        Conservation of power resources
    xx  Conservation of natural resources
        Power resources
        Recycling (Waste, etc.)
```

Terms used as subject headings are printed in boldface. Following the term the word "Indirect" means that this subjcet can have a geographical subdivision, such as ENERGY CONSERVATION-KANSAS. The number in parentheses is a suggested call number. Do not rely completely on this number, as books about this subject may have another call number, depending on the scope of the book. Beneath the heading is a **scope note**. This explains the use of the terms as defined by the Library of Congress.

Other important symbols are:
  sa: (see also) indicates headings for related topics
   x: (SEE from) indicates that a reference has been made from this heading which is **never** used to the heading in boldface above it. For example if you looked up CONSERVATION OF ENERGY RESOURCES you would be directed to "see ENERGY CONSERVATION".
  xx: indicates additional related topics, usually broader in scope.

You may use "sa" headings and "xx" headings. Those headings with an "x" or a "see" reference are not used and nothing will be filed under these headings in the card catalog.

The Subject card catalog will contain names of persons, places, and corporations even though these are not listed in the LCSH.

When you search the card catalog, it is often beneficial to use the **subject tracings** found at the bottom of the catalog card. These can lead you to other subject headings that might be used on your topic. If you start with an author or title card, the tracings can help you find similar information.

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*Figure 3.* Example and explanation page of Library of Congress Subject Heading (Hatfield, 1986, p. 37).

Again, this example may not be as radical as using something like Feminism or Heterosexism,

but in the 1980s, conserving energy, conserving natural resources, and recycling were not nearly

as mainstream as they are today. The librarian was, in her own way, making a statement for action regarding these topics.

The University of California Los Angeles library instruction workbook for the Chicano High Potential Program students was an example of diversity and library instruction. As mentioned above, UCLA was already well ahead of K-State with regard to active learning and engaged pedagogy; it is not surprising then that they also would be ahead in understanding multiculturalism and its connection to academic success. Analyzing the pages of the workbook, I noted that all examples were of Mexican, Spanish, or Hispanic subjects, titles, people, and photographs. As seen in the example in Figure 4, scattered throughout the workbook are images of students and librarians—each one representing the students' race and ethnicity.

*Figure 4*. Student conversing with librarian in photo (Dudley, 1970, p. 56).

The students were learning about library instruction while seeing themselves represented in the

textbook: students succeeding in college. This idea was carried through the examples given in

the directions, images, assignment instructions, and assignment questions. As a comparison to

the K-State examples of Author and Title Catalog Cards, the UCLA example in Figure 5 shows

Cecil Robinson's *With the Ears of Strangers; the Mexican in American Culture* (1969).

*Figure 5*. Example catalog cards from workbook (Dudley, 1970, p. 25).

The theme of including relevant examples carries throughout the workbook. The instruction

librarians created an entire critical information literacy workbook—though it is not fully engaged

pedagogy based nor full of active learning—it is, in fact, critical information literacy. The library

instruction pushed their students to see themselves as successful students in an environment that

they, as first-generation college students, are not familiar with in any way. That is radical

instruction for forty years ago. Part of creating that radical space in the classroom is the understanding that using the critical lens means focusing on all inequalities. This lens is "a way of interrogating and problematizing the inequalities that all marginalized people face, not just that of women, and is concerned with issues such as racism, homophobia, and xenophobia" (Accardi, 2013, p. 15). For these instruction librarians, though we cannot know for certain that they were teaching with a critical race feminist theory lens, engaging with the Chicano High Potential Program students was an activist decision to fight against inequalities for these students.

## Connecting the Past to the Future: Discussion

The analysis of the sources from decades ago provides a snapshot of library instruction in two universities; in particular, it gives an understanding how said instruction has changed into what we see and do today in our libraries. As admitted above, I mistakenly assumed the library instruction was more archaic than it really was in the 1970s and 1980s. It was by no means at the place I hoped, but it surprises me still that it was incorporated into classes and was a for-credit course here at Kansas State University. We by no means have such a course currently at K-State and have not for the last 20 years. Additionally, I am impressed with the Chicano Library Program Workbook; not only for its existence, but also for the continual inclusion of diversity and engagement with the students and their culture. It is a model that could be used today for future feminist critical information literacy instruction within libraries.

Incorporating a feminist, engaged pedagogy into library instruction sessions can be challenging for librarians. Librarians are limited to the power the credit-bearing faculty member gives them. Some librarians are able to work with faculty to be embedded into courses, teaching students for multiple sessions in one semester, or can co-create the course research assignments,

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ensuring that a feminist lens is being utilized. However, most librarians are still restricted to teaching one-time library instruction sessions for most of the semester. In these cases, librarians have specific information literacy objectives to meet during their brief time with students. This is not to say that librarians cannot use feminist engaged pedagogy while teaching these sessions. Accardi (2013) explains that,

> [J]ust because my primary objectives in the classroom are information literacy learning outcomes does not mean that I cannot achieve these outcomes through a feminist lens. For instance, I might choose feminist-themed, gender-related, or women-centered examples in database searching demonstrations. (p. 37)

Using this method, the librarian can still exercise autonomy by using her examples to show a critical race feminist lens to the students and we see this method clearly in the Chicano Library Program Workbook and partially in the K-State workbooks.

Future research, including my current research focused on critical race feminist engaged pedagogy within library instruction, needs to acknowledge that this method is not a new idea. Librarians may only recently be teaching more frequently with active learning, engaged pedagogy, critical information literacy, and focusing on lifelong learning—but feminists, teachers-as-activists in the classroom, and radical librarians have been making waves and empowering students for decades. As a critical race feminist researcher, librarian, and scholar, I am confident of the importance of my research focus on teaching with a critical race feminist engaged pedagogy and the importance of telling the stories of instruction librarians who teach our undergraduate students vital critical thinking skills. Within the historical context of library instruction, this research impact continues the path of exploring how librarians are transforming instruction into a stronger lifelong learning experience for our students.

## Statement of Research Problem

This research focuses on library instruction within higher education institutions and the choices made by instruction librarians to include (or not) critical pedagogy and critical information literacy within their teaching styles and classrooms. Many library instruction sessions at universities are taught through a traditional lecture-style instruction session where librarians, for the most part, present as many resources as possible in their given time and then leave. Students have no voice in the classroom and there is no room for any evaluation of the information presented. This style of teaching from my observations disengages students and they have not retained the majority of information; in fact, they continue to make the same errors in their papers and research as at the beginning of the semester. Teaching without an engaged pedagogical framework without any active participation is problematic for teaching critical information literacy. This study explores (a) the decisions of librarians to teach either in the traditional or critical library pedagogy manner and (b) barriers or encouragement in librarians' choice to teach through a critical lens.

## Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore how five instruction librarians discuss the role of engaged pedagogy and critical information literacy in library instruction for undergraduate students. The discussion of why and how librarians choose the teaching styles and methods they use in classes everyday provides an opportunity to learn not only these answers, but also opinions, viewpoints, and understanding of engaged pedagogy and critical information literacy. With this information, librarians throughout the profession will be able to learn where the strengths and weaknesses are in their own teaching and in their organization with regard to library instruction teaching styles. Overall, instruction librarians will be able to use their

colleagues' narratives to reflect on their own teaching—and hopefully in the end, change their teaching to be student centered, engaged, and critical.

## Research Questions

This qualitative narrative inquiry study explores the teaching styles and method decisions of instruction librarians from Midwest higher education institutions. The research questions are:

1. What are the participants' experiences teaching information literacy and library instruction during their academic career as librarians?

2. How do the participants view the role of teaching method and style in their teaching and preparation?

3. How do the participants view the impact of their library instruction on their students' learning?

## Methodology

The framework in which my methodology is situated is critical theory (Fischman & McLaren, 2005; Giroux 2001; Giroux & Robbins, 2006; Kellner, 1989; McLaren, 2015; Torres, 1999), including critical race feminist theory (Accardi, 2013; Hartstock, 2009; hooks, 1994, 2010; King, 1988; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Wing, 2003), as an overarching framework. Within this framework, I am additionally including critical information literacy (as part of critical library pedagogy) (Doherty, 2007; Downey, 2016; Drabinski, 2014; Elmborg, 2006; Gregory & Higgins, 2013;  Luke & Kaptizke, 1999; Pagowsky & McElroy, 2016; Pawley, 1998; Schlesselmann-Tarango, 2014;  Swanson, 2004) and engaged pedagogy (Berry, 2010, Freire, 2000; hooks, 1994, 2010; Rogers & Freiberg, 1994). With critical theory serving as an overarching framework, an umbrella theory of sorts, critical race feminist theory falls under it as a specific offshoot. Critical library pedagogy and critical information literacy are connected and,

at times, have been used interchangeably (see citations above for different uses of the terms); they, too, fall under that umbrella of the larger critical theory, albeit an offshoot toward the margins in the librarianship profession. Engaged pedagogy is a part of critical theory, especially critical race feminist theory, and also in critical library pedagogy. Engaged pedagogy stands as a vital part of each theory. The combined theoretical framework gives context for researching the reasons that instruction librarians choose (or do not) to implement these theoretical and pedagogical styles into their instruction of information literacy in classrooms. I interpreted and analyzed the interviews and narratives of my participants through the lens of this framework. I have selected this integrated theoretical framework to emphasize the importance of moving beyond traditional ways of teaching—the teacher-centered lecture, banking deposit models (Freire, 2000)—when providing learning experiences for students, including library instruction at universities.

Critical Theories to Critical Engaged Pedagogy Model
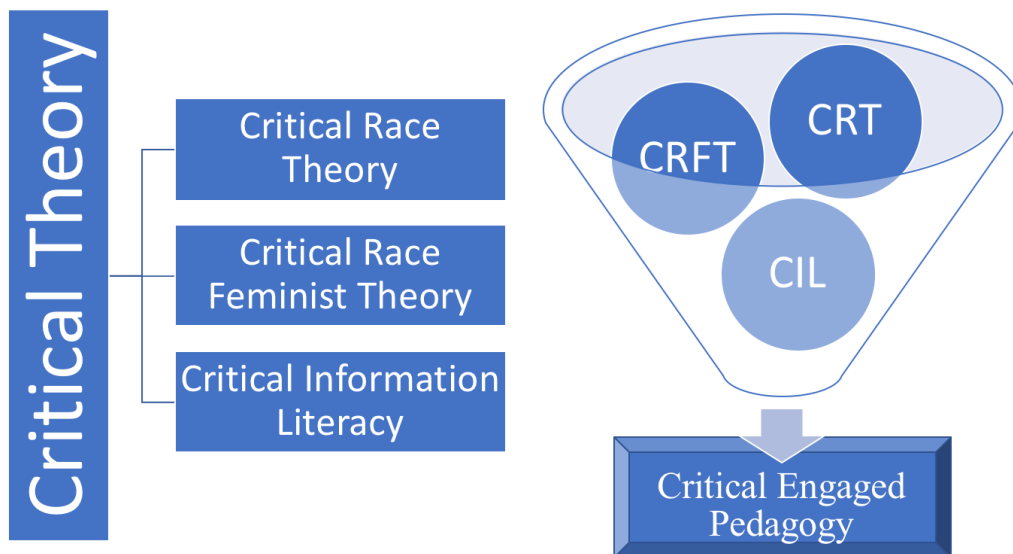


*Figure 6*. Theoretical model portraying the process from Critical Theory to Critical Engaged Pedagogy © Melia Erin Linda Fritch, 2018.

In order to successfully complete this study, I used the qualitative methods of narrative inquiry, utilizing interviewing for data collection. Narrative inquiry overall as a qualitative research method allows researchers to gain great insight from the stories of their participants. With regard to using narrative inquiry as a research method, "we say that people by nature lead storied lives and tell stories of those lives, whereas narrative researchers describe such lives, collect and tell stories of them, and write narratives of experience" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2). People tell their own stories and to reflect their own lived experience, "naming their own reality" both with and against the mainstream (Delgado & Stefancic, 1993, p. 462). By using interviews as a conversation between researcher and participants, a way to intentionally inquire about their lives, researchers have the ability to learn in-depth information to then write representative narratives of their participants' lives. The intentionality and ability to learn about the participants in an in-depth manner is why I have selected the narrative inquiry methodology.

Semi-structured interviews guided the research with pre-determined, open-ended questions. Questions emerged during the interview for further clarification, information, or discussion topics that arose during the interview. Most importantly, I asked the participants to tell their lived experiences with me, their own stories of library instruction, teaching styles, and reflection on their students' learning in the classroom. After submitting and receiving IRB approval, I interviewed five instruction librarians in lengthier interview sessions that were digitally recorded and then transcribed. After transcription, I entered into a narrative inquiry analysis of the data, highlighting codes and themes from the study.

## Definition of Terms

**Information Literacy** – as a basic definition, information literacy is a set of abilities to "recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information" (American Library Association, 1989, para. 3).

**Critical Information Literacy** – a model of information literacy where librarians encourage students to think critically about the information they encounter and to develop a critical consciousness, to critically evaluate the system of valued information in academia, including examining the political potential of digital literacy (Schlessman-Tarngo, 2014).

**Engaged Pedagogy** – hooks (1994), in her defining explanation, stated engaged pedagogy is more demanding than other critical pedagogies and is holistic and progressive. The pedagogy emphasizes well-being, meaning that "teachers must be actively involved committed to a process of self-actualization that promotes their own well-being if they are to teach in a manner that empowers students" (hooks, 1994, p. 15).

**Feminist Pedagogy** – a framework based upon feminist thinking and teaching strategies. According to Accardi (2013), feminist pedagogy's primary characteristic is "a concern with gender injustice, sexism, and oppression against women, and how this concern affects what happens in a classroom" (p. 35). Feminist teaching strategies are largely thought to be anti-hierarchical and student-centered.

**Critical Theory** – a theory "informed by multidisciplinary research, combined with the attempt to construct a systematic, comprehensive social theory that can confront the key social and political problems of the day. The work of the Critical Theorists provides criticisms and alternatives to traditional, or mainstream, social theory, philosophy and science, together with a critique of a full range of ideologies from mass culture to religion" (Kellner, 1989, p. 1).

**Critical Race Theory** – a theory that "questions the very foundations of the liberal order, including equality theory, legal reasoning, Enlightenment rationalism, and neutral principles of constitutional law" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 3). It focuses on the work to "transform the relationship between race, racism and power" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001, p. 144). Critical Race Theory is situated by the tenet that racism is pervasive in the dominant culture and members of the non-dominant culture are continually marginalized by white supremacy and privilege.

**Critical Race Feminist Theory** – a theory borne out of Critical Race Theory and legal studies that calls for a critical feminist viewpoint within the tenets of Critical Race Theory, including intersectionality, the multiplicity of oppressions against women at one time. It is situated with feminism as a "race intervention in feminist discourse" and "provides a critique of the feminist notion that there is an essential female voice, that is, that all women feel one way on a subject" (Wing, 2003, p. 7).

**Intersectionality** – a concept or framework introduced first into legal scholarship about how Black women are marginalized when all people are grouped together in categories such as race and gender because their experiences are not either/or, they are both black *and* women at the same time. The concept of intersectionality describes how the experiences of Black women are shaped by the interaction of race, gender and class (Crenshaw, 1991).

**Narrative Inquiry** – research methodology that is a collaboration and mutual storytelling between research and participant. Within this method, "data can be in the form of field notes of the shared experience, journal records, interview transcripts, others' observations, storytelling, letter writing, autobiographical writing, documents such as class plans and newsletters, and writing such as rules, principles, pictures, metaphors, and person philosophies" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 5).

## Limits and Possibilities of the Study

### Limitations of the Study

1. Regional proximity of participants may influence a teaching style commonality among the instruction librarians from Midwest universities.

2. Participants may lack a willingness to speak openly about their own teaching style that they may perceive as negative or the incorrect style.

### Delimitations of Study

1. In order to narrow the scope of the study, instruction librarians were selected only from Midwest universities. This delimitation may not allow the study to be generalizable among university instruction librarians across the nation. Additionally, due to the narrow scope of only university instruction librarians, this study may not be generalizable to librarians who teach at smaller colleges, community colleges, public libraries, and within K-12 school libraries.

2. Due to a significant life event causing me to change my timeline, my limited availability to be absent from work, and ability to travel to conduct research, I was able to interview participants only during late July through early August of 2018. Restricting the schedule of interviewing to a summer time period provided a smaller population from which to select my participants due to the travel schedules, summer work projects, conference attendance, etc., of university instruction librarians.

## Statement of the Significance of the Study

Library instruction in a university setting, in the primary manner it has been taught for decades, has a problem: the instruction is not teaching. Ladenson (2010) explains that "traditional bibliographic instruction methods emphasize a patriarchal paradigm, which involves

the librarian dominating the classroom by lecturing to students about a plethora of information sources and search strategies" (p. 105). The answer, the integration of critical race feminist theory and engaged pedagogy, is challenging and time-consuming as it calls for action and purpose. However, the result of this work is powerful and impactful. A major outcome of my study is to learn how instruction librarians are moving forward in transforming their instruction (or, the barriers causing them to remain with a traditional lecture style of teaching) and about the power shared between the librarians and students in the classroom when the learning experience is active, engaged, and empowered.  Librarians can advance by using the findings to change the way they teach library instruction sessions—for the better.

The significance of this study then is the impact on how librarians teach information literacy and engage our students on a large-scale level for all universities. Learning the teaching stories of librarians, analyses of their teaching styles, and their plans to improve information literacy instruction contributes to the early scholarship and foundation for other librarians to reflect on their experiences and make changes. The impact of information literacy instruction framed by critical pedagogy makes,

> The classroom a place of dialog and mutual learning for learners of all backgrounds and cultural contexts. Critical pedagogy provides an opportunity for all students to fully interact with the curriculum, not only to obtain the maximum benefit from it but also to apply it constructively to enrich and change their own lives. (Keer, 2010, p. 157)

Further, the students ultimately benefit from being engaged and fostering critical thinking from the paradigm shift this profession needs.

## Researcher Positionality

As a critical race feminist researcher, librarian, and scholar, I bring my own critical race feminist lens to the study. In the background section above, I explained that my history of teaching started in the English and Women's Studies departments. I am wholly dedicated to the

students' learning experience and have sought out opportunities to learn more about student-learning outcomes, assessment, active learning, engaged feminist pedagogy, and teaching critical information literacy. My research areas include critical theories; I have specifically focused on Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Critical Race Feminist Theory (CRFT). I point out these theories specifically because as a female white student and faculty member, my positionality affects how I used CRFT to analyze my data. My understanding of CRFT will always be different because of my situation; I cannot, and would not, claim to know what life experiences are for everyone who does not live in this white privileged position. I do, however, understand the critical importance of using critical theory to analyze and examine society and its cause and effect of race, law, and power. My graduate education has included coursework and research in subjects such as Critical Race Feminist Theory, intersectionality, and historical oppression—this work has carried into my own publications and work (see Fritch, 2018). I most recently was the coordinator of a center for multicultural and community studies housed within my library and am the (unofficially titled) diversity librarian. As a faculty librarian, my areas of focus within my current position include Sociology; American Ethnic Studies; Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies; and Curriculum and Instruction. In addition to my position as Associate Professor at the Libraries, I am an affiliated faculty member in the Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies department. These experiences and work influenced me in my analysis of my participants' narratives.

I am confident of the importance of my research focus on teaching with a critical race feminist engaged pedagogy and the importance of telling the stories of instruction librarians who teach our undergraduate students vital critical thinking skills. My positionality in this research is from the viewpoint that the study fully demonstrates how these combined pedagogies, theories,

and ideas can make an impact on teaching not only information literacy, but on teaching at a university in general. Within the historical context of library instruction, this research continues the path of exploring how librarians are transforming instruction into a stronger lifelong learning experience for our students.

## Organization of the Study

This study explores the experiences and lives of instruction librarians through narrative inquiry. Using a framework of critical theories, including critical race feminist theory, critical information literacy, critical pedagogy, and engaged pedagogy, the study discusses the selection of teaching styles and practices that instruction librarians make with every class. This dissertation is organized into five chapters. Chapter 1 provides an introduction, including historical context and initial background information. Chapter 2 reviews the literature of the theories and prior relevant research. Chapter 3 explains the data collection process through interviews and the narrative inquiry methodology in detail. Chapter 4 presents an analysis of the findings through a one-act play written by me, a narrative of participant experiences and stories. Chapter 5 presents a traditional analysis of the findings and research questions with emergent themes. Chapter 6 discusses the interpretation of the findings, including recommendations and conclusions from the research.

# Chapter 2 - Literature Review

Establishing the theoretical framework and reviewing the literature to build a foundation

for this research encompasses a number of fields due to the multidisciplinary approach to my

research. The literature reviewed spans feminist theory, engaged pedagogy, library instruction,

critical information literacy, and lifelong learning. Specifically, the review begins with an

overview of Critical Theory and its overarching ideas that are carried into the discussions of both

Critical Race Feminist Theory and Critical Information Literacy. Critical pedagogy, specifically

engaged pedagogy, as practice for the above theories is detailed in an examination of how critical

pedagogy creates a classroom centered on social justice and empowerment. Together, these ideas

combine into a framework that creates the context and theoretical lens to examine researching

the reasons that instruction librarians choose (or do not) to implement these theoretical and

pedagogical styles into their instruction of information literacy in classrooms.

## Critical Theory

> *No realm of freedom or ethics of social justice worthy of the name can continue to be defined by social relations constructed to assure privileges for whiteness, capitalistic relations of exploitation, patriarchal forms of family organization, and forced heterosexuality.* (Fischman, & McLaren, 2005, p. 355)

In many ways, defining Critical Theory in a basic manner can be frustrating or confusing

(or both) due the nature of its founding theorists—and many theorists since then—collectively

*not* being able to settle on only one position upon which the theory would stand.  Actually,

defining Critical Theory resembles for me trying to define feminism:  many tenets of feminism

are debatable among its own believers. Can you say all feminists are against pornography? What

about sex work? The list of contentious beliefs of feminism is long, as is the list of ideas and

movements within Critical Theory. However, feminism does, for the most part, have a baseline

for which all can agree ("women should be treated equal") and Critical Theory does as well. In my mind, the baseline for Critical Theory is that one needs to be critical of all parts of mainstream society AND fight to create a just society. However, my baseline does not accurately portray the number of ways that Critical Theorists impact society and the work that is done using the theory as a framework for research.

In the late 1920s, members of the Institute for Social Research, also called the Frankfurt School, developed Critical Theory based on Marxism (and Hegel and Freud, depending on source) and sought to analyze and critique the many relations and systems within society (Bronner 2011; Giroux 2001; Kellner, 1989). The members moved to the United States in exile during Adolf Hitler's regime and became part of Columbian University. During this timeframe through the 1950s, the theorists of the Frankfurt School began to largely diverge from each other with regard to how ideas should be implemented, the basic notions that were (or were not) the most important to base their own ideas upon, which problems to address: social, philosophical, science, religion, politics—all were up for discussion. There were, however, similarities between the different tenets of Critical Theory. Kellner (1989) for example, explains "at least some versions of Critical Theory are motivated by an interest in relating theory to politics and an interest in the emancipation of those who are oppressed and dominated. Critical Theory is thus informed by a critique of domination and a theory of liberation" (p. 1). Kellner additionally states that the theory is informed by multidisciplinary research, combined with the attempt to construct a systematic, comprehensive social theory that can confront the key social and political problems of the day" (p. 1). The themes of multidisciplinarity, emancipation, and confronting social problems remain a central part of Critical Theory today, almost 100 years after its original conception, as do the different tenets of the theory focused on by researchers and theorists.

Following Critical Theory means that all thought, research, and work are done with the aim of creating a society in which there is only justice. A Critical Theorist then is also an activist. There is no sitting idly by observing rather than analyzing. Giroux (2001) states there is no observing unless one also includes critical reflection and understanding. He believes that people must be self-aware and acknowledge that all observations are built upon a theoretical framework; there is no neutral perspective from which people observe. The acknowledgement that we are not neutral people living in a neutral society while neutral decisions are being made is an important step in learning and using a Critical Theory framework. There is no such thing as neutral. Kellner (1989) explains this framework is used to show "the relationships between ideas and theoretical positions and their social environment, and thus attempts to contextualize, or historicize, ideas in terms of their roots in social processes" (p. 45). The importance of seeing the world through this lens is taken further to that of freedom and justice by Giroux (2001) as he states that "critical theory contains a transcendent element in which critical thought becomes the precondition for human freedom. Rather than proclaiming a positivist notion of neutrality, critical theory openly takes sides in the interest of struggling for a better world" (p. 19). The basic notions of Critical Theory include being skeptical of mainstream society and then fighting for justice as I mentioned earlier, but these notions are quickly built upon to create a strong framework of critical thought, analysis, fighting for a better society, and the absolute refusal to accept the existence of neutrality.

## Critical Theory and the Education System

As generally described above, there is no part of mainstream culture or institution for which Critical Theory cannot be used. It is a theory critical of society. A major part of our society and culture is our education system and Critical Theory is the overarching lens I use to

critically examine education in our country. In its general sense, education involves a number of characteristics: curriculum, policy, teachers, administrators, classrooms, ideologies, disciplines, pedagogies, knowledge, thought, etc. Education itself then can be seen as its own society, culture, and institution. Critical Theory can be used in all of these areas—through ideologies in a classroom, as a means to dismantle institutions, and as a framework to fight the injustice. The fact that it can (and should) be used in a myriad of ways is what "makes critical theory so relevant for the study of education is its interdisciplinarity nature, defying the logic of separate disciplines analyzing discrete objects of study" (Torres, 1999, p. 93). Critical Theory is a broad framework based on critical analysis and thought—examining what is wrong and working to make it be as it should—and it "emerges as a seminal framework to understand education, curriculum and instruction, classroom practices and educational policies" (p. 93).

The first step in this process of analyzing the education system through a critical lens is to accept "that schools are not neutral institutions that prepare student equally for social and economic opportunities in the wider society" (Giroux, 2001, p. 207). Though we hear otherwise in our media, our education system is not neutral and it has flaws. Through a Critical Theory lens, those flaws are seen and can be examined and taken apart.

There is a proven connection between inequalities in society and in our classroom. Racism exists in the larger society and racism exists in the classroom. The link between societal injustice and the education system is institutionally denied—most school systems are not having any professional development or in-service days where the teachers are learning about how their ideologies must be analyzed and recognized before creating lesson plans, discipline options, or classroom environment. This idea may at first seem odd to those in the educational field (and outside of the field as well) but recognizing how their own ideologies affect their pedagogy in

the classroom, and how the structural forces in society affect school policy, is part of the first step mentioned above. Learning that there is no such thing as neutral is difficult. Accepting that assumptions about education may very well be based on an unjust system can also be hard.

When framed as an ideology, Critical Theory becomes a strong influence in the classroom. Giroux (2011) argues that educators can use the ideology to begin asking questions "about the social and political interests that underlie many of the pedagogical assumptions taken for granted by teachers. Assumptions about learning, achievement, teacher-student relations, objectivity, school authority, and so on, all need to be evaluated critically by educators" (p. 67). The evaluation is the responsibility of all educators, at all levels of the education system. Examining ideologies, thinking, and assumptions through a Critical Theory framework is difficult and uncomfortable. Educators must be willing to accept that the traditional and neutral mentalities are false and harmful. Fischman & McLaren (2005) state educators "need to struggle and abandon formalized forms of thinking . . . postformal thinking involves understanding the production of one's own knowledge and includes etymology; the exploration of culturally validated knowledge; and understanding the patterns and relationships that support the lived world" (p. 353). As part of analyzing their assumptions and thinking, teachers will see how their and others' ideologies are established in the everyday life of their classrooms. Critical Theory can lead educators in the creation of a foundation for an everyday practice of critique, analysis, and their own reflexive thought. However, Giroux (2001) also cautions against using Critical Theory as just a tool, explaining that the "crucial element in both its production and use is not the structure at which it is aimed, but the human agents who use to give meaning to their lives" (p. 21). Using a theory critical of society means remembering that the reason for activism is to create a society without injustice—and that society is created for the people; they are the focus of

activist work. In the case of the education system, that means working as educators to create

classroom environments full of opportunity and knowledge for the students, all students.

## Critical Race Theory

> *Black people are the magical faces at the bottom of society's well. Even the poorest whites, those who must live their lives only a few levels above, gain their self-esteem by gazing down at us. Surely, they must know that their deliverance depends on letting down their ropes. Only by working together is escape possible. Over time, many reach out, but most simply watch, mesmerized into maintaining their unspoken commitment to keep us where we are, at whatever cost to them or us.* (Bell, 1992, p. v)

Critical Race Theory is a framework used to analyze, discern, and critique the prevalence

of racism in United States legal system—and in society itself. Legal scholars began writing and

publishing in the 1970s (Bell, 1976), through the 1980s (Harris, 1989) and beginning in the

1990s, scholars were additionally publishing using Critical Race Theory in other fields such as

education (Bell, 1996; Crenshaw, 1991; Delgado, 1995; Delgado & Stefanic, 1993, 2001; Ford,

1996; Ladson-Billings, G. & Tate, IV, W.F., 1995). Though still not considered mainstream, in

the 20 years, there has continued to be research, writing, and studying of Critical Race Theory

across the disciplines and within new areas of Critical Race Theory such as Critical Race

Feminism, Latino and Asian Critical Thought, and Queer-Crit Theory.

At the base of Critical Race Theory is the notion that racism is "normal, not aberrant, in

American society" (Delgado, 1995, p. xiv) and appears to be normal to people. Ladson-Billings

(1998) points out that one of the early Critical Race Theorists, Derrick Bell, bases his book

*Faces at the Bottom of the Well* (1992) on the premise that "racism is a permanent fixture of

American life. Thus, the strategy becomes one of unmasking and exposing racism in its various

permutations" (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 11). Though not everyone agrees completely, most

theorists would agree that Critical Race Theory consists of central tenets including the

permanence of racism, storytelling/counterstorytelling, a critique of liberalism, whiteness as

property and interest convergence" (Ladson-Billings, 1998, pp. 11-12). Similar to Critical Theory is a foundational belief, Critical Race Theory is centered around activism: "it not only tries to understand our social situation, but to change it; it sets out not only to ascertain how society organizes itself along racial lines and hierarchies, but to transform it for the better" (Delgado & Stefanic, 2001, p. 3).

## Critical Race Feminist Theory

> *By permitting myself to engage in the ideology of critical race feminism, I can be more free to bring all of who I am into the classroom. By doing so, I can disregard the monolithic discourse of the universal Black woman and acknowledge the multi-dimensionality of my personhood.* (Berry, 2010, p. 24)

As part of an overarching Critical Theory framework, there are many different critical theories—though not all are direct descendants of Critical Theory itself. Critical Race Feminist Theory, borne out of Critical Race Theory, is one such theory. It is similar to Critical Theory in that it fights against an unjust society and is, therefore, not always accepted by mainstream culture. Critical Race Feminist Theory is also fought against because the idea of examining society and our ideals in a critical manner, focusing on marginalization, oppression, and the need for change is not wholly incorporated into our philosophy nor even wanted by some (read: elite white men). This is partially due to what some might see as the radical nature of Critical Race Feminist Theory, moving beyond a general feminist theory that analyzes gender inequality to one focusing on criticizing not only the misogynistic view of women in society but also feminist theory itself in its inadequate analysis and limited push for action.

Within Critical Feminist Theory, there was a push for critical race feminism advocating for a feminism that moves beyond the idea that women are the same and have lived the same experience (essentialism). Inquiry and analysis of women of color ensures that Critical Race Feminist Theory does not look past those who are marginalized in society. Wildman (2014)

explains that "from a global perspective, critical race feminism both examines the marginalization of women of color and theorizes solutions to that invisibility" (p. 66). In this manner, it is also about identity and visibility within the greater society. Theorists and scholars have since moved the Critical Race Feminist Theory analysis and critique to other fields, primarily the social sciences, but also within different areas and specialized societal groups. Critical race feminists are now also joined by queer-crits, LatCrits to "reveal and challenge the practices of subordination facilitated and permitted by legal discourse and institutions" (Harris, 2001, p. xx). Though not pervasive by any means, it is beginning to appear in scholarship beyond the fields of social sciences and law. In addition to specifically connecting identity and visibility, Critical Race Feminist Theory is becoming prominent and being incorporated into the field of education (Berry, 2009; Childers-McKee & Hytten, 2015; Hill Collins, 1999; Ladson-Billings, 1998).

## Identity, Intersectionality, and Counterstorytelling

Using a Critical Race Feminist Theory lens to analyze one's identity, visibility, or place in society was not a new idea when first introduced in the legal profession. Though it was not prominent nor named as a theory, women had been analyzing their own marginalization and oppression (and writing about it) for quite some time. King (1988) examines the idea that Black women face oppression on a variety of levels. She explains how it's not just race nor just gender that causes struggle but that it is both at the same time, and sometimes even more. One must see all the oppressions to fully see the picture. The use of terms such as double jeopardy to describe the oppression of Black women is harmfully oversimplified as it makes it appear that it is just a number of oppressions added together when, in fact, the oppressions are actually simultaneous and hold multiplicative relationships with each other. King connects this idea to the many forms

of politics, societal, legal, and economical ideologies that Black women then face. Due to the many consciousnesses Black women must have (e.g., women, Black, familial), creating a black feminist ideology must focus on the visibility of Black women overall and as powerful and independent. Crenshaw (1991) connects the idea of simultaneous oppressions to the idea of intersectionality. She explains how Black women are marginalized when all people are grouped together in categories such as race and gender because their experiences are not either/or, they are both black *and* women at the same time. Her concept of intersectionality describes how the experiences of Black women are shaped by the interaction of race, gender, and class. Wing (2005) shows the difficulties for Black women when their intersectionality is not acknowledged in any areas of their lives, specifically within the services that address disability. She explicates this through the critical race feminist telling of the story of her own ex mother-in-law who fought against issues of disability, race, and class but she also supposes other scenarios people with disability could deal with related to sexuality, nationality, and language.

Black feminist ideology is expanded by Hill Collins (2000) who introduces Black feminist thought and epistemology to her readers as "subjugated knowledge in that African-American women have long struggled to find alternative locations and epistemologies for validating our own self-definitions" (p. 269). She overviews Black feminist epistemology and its four dimensions: lived experience as a criterion of meaning, the use of dialogue, the ethic of personal accountability, and the ethic of caring. Through her explanation, she leads readers through an introduction to the community of Black women, language, knowledge claims, and how Black women have fought against the dominant (read: primarily white men) groups in society and academia.

Working in academia as a Black woman is a constant battle of identity, being forced to choose between the dominant mainstream ideal of scholarship and the lived experience of community and recognition of emotion and feeling. Through the critical race feminist/theory method of counter storytelling, Rodriguez (Rodriguez & Boahene, 2012) tells the story of how she struggled in the White academy and buried her own silent rage. However, once addressed, her rage led her to understand that she, as a woman of color, needed to stay in the White academy and help students while deconstructing White supremacy and meeting well-intentioned White liberals' complicity in racism. She uses her story to talk about this identity of role model and activist and encourages women of color to stop being silent and engage with their own rage.

Using a critical race feminist lens to examine identity within society and community additionally helps scholars see how societal norms and ideals frequently force women of color to be generalized into roles they do not actually inhabit. One example of generalized role stereotypes is that of refugee women and the women who assist them. In the societal message and ideal, the refugees are "victims" of circumstance and any volunteers who are working in organizations to help these refugees are the "helpers" or "liberators" there to bestow their benevolence. However, in a study of volunteers in an organization in Turkey who helped refugees from Syria, Erden (2017) explains that both groups of women, the volunteers and the refugees found that they were quite similar, formed a community, and participated actively in the work of the organization. The study showed that both groups, refugee and local women, received benefits and empowerment from their participation in the organization. Erden's study demonstrated how the women's identities were not that which was forced upon them from society.

Through a critical race feminist lens, Qin (2012) shows that the idea of a set, unified, and gendered self (an essentialist idea) is in fact not true and that women's lives and life experiences are fluid and individual. Her study of Chinese immigrant women tells the story of women who lived as one identity in their homeland but after immigrating into the United States, were forced to change into new reconstructed selves. Qin found that the women discussed themes of both being professional women in their homeland and then becoming working-class immigrant women in the United States, leading to a fragmented self and need to transform. Their self-transformations of identity were part of their individual gendered self and not part of the broad generalization of Chinese immigrant women.

Using critical race feminism as a foundation to examine personal intersections of race, gender, and power, authors tell the stories of a sense of self and histories. As mentioned above, one method used within critical race theory, and thereby critical race feminism, to explicate their own history, struggle, and identity is that of (counter)storytelling when analyzing the use of and effects of oppression and marginalization connected to power and women of color. In Rodriguez and Boahene (2012), Boahene tells the story of learning how her own personal anger was largely due to the intersection of her marginalization from her race and gender. She uses her story to explain how important learning from authors such as Audre Lorde were in her own personal education journey, leading her to discover that she could use her anger and transform it into action.

One of the most prominent critical race feminist storytellers of oppression and identity is Gloria Anzaldúa. Her work (1987, 1999) describes the history of her people and their culture (as created by men and to be followed by women) on the borderland between the United States and Mexico. Her historical recount includes Spanish literature, poetry, and language unapologetically

woven throughout and is a story of her culture and its struggles, told in a manner unfamiliar for normal and mainstream history. Her focus and details of the history present then a counterstory to the traditional history U.S. students are taught. Her story delves into the treatment of women, gender and "two in one body," and lesbianism within her culture and how she rebelled and resisted (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 19). She tells of the original powerful, magical, and good women, spirits, and leaders who originally were the foundation of the culture. In her critical race feminist analysis, she includes the details of men controlling the power, the telling and teaching of history through keeping women in their assigned roles, and the violence against and dismissal of women who showed independence or spirit. Her own struggle, resistance, and rebellion partners with her stories of others to explicitly share her history and culture through her lens. The telling of her identity provides an eye-opening view into life and society for women, especially women who face an intersectionality of oppressions (e.g., women of color, mixed heritage, lesbian) that one would normally not be privy to today. Within the telling of life on the Borderlands, the author shares the experiences and stories of people, including her own.

The invisibility of women of color in areas such as mainstream scholarship, policy, or law is largely connected to the mainstream ideals based upon the white elite patriarchal society. Within this society, the marginalization of women of color forces them to choose between identities, fight against generalizations of their selves, or even rebel against the oppression and become activists as needed within their lives. Though feminist theory began an analysis of women as a whole and of gender inequality, women of color were not included and they found no place for their own identities. However, the use of a critical race feminist lens allows for the recognition, inclusion, and championing of women of color and their own voices and stories.

**The Field of Education: Racism and Reform**

Critical Race Feminist Theory is a focused branch of Critical Race Theory—therefore having its beginnings in the field of legal scholarship. However, critical race feminism is just as needed and powerful within other fields; it has been utilized at times in the social sciences. One field where it is vital for its inclusion is education. Within education it can be used to analyze the curriculum, instruction, assessment, school funding, reform, and gatekeeping (Berry, 2009; Childers-McKee & Hytten, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 1998). Most importantly, using Critical Race Feminist Theory for educational equity will "expose racism in education and propose radical solutions for addressing it" (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 22). Addressing the many aspects of racism within the field of education is a substantial challenge as it is pervasive from the way we teach and research specific subjects such as science (Hill Collins, 1999) to how educators are required to assess our students' progress and how education institutions treat the achievement gaps as a national deficit (Ladson-Billings, 2006). The wide expanse of racism within the educational system is very reason the institution needs the inclusion of Critical Race Feminist Theory.

One example of how the curriculum that is taught is founded on racist or exclusionary ideas is seen in Hill Collins' (1999) essay about the field of science in the academy. She highlights how the science discourse and practice needs to include more intersectionality, even within the feminist scholarship within science. She urges that intersectionality needs be applied not just to scientists and their categories of knowledge but also to those who critique science. Hill Collins shows the importance of an intersectional approach within scientific methodology and science and modernity as "science speak[ing] the language of power because it *is* the language of power" (p. 279). The discussion of curriculum can then be expanded to how we

teach those who teach—and how we can teach within a critical race feminist lens. The combination of ensuring intersectionality is included within each academic discipline and in what we are teaching and teaching our students to teach, is an important aspect of Critical Race Feminist Theory and method and is a vital part of the fight against racism in education.

Examining racism in education also means examining stereotypes, generalizations, and expectations. These issues span the professed neutral guidelines that are based upon white, elite, male society to our own expectations for students to adjust their own culture and identity to match whom we believe they are and whom they *should* be. The latter is clearly seen in the treatment of international students. These students are expected to be model students within their own culture and community while also adopting the white ideal within the academy and for some students, they struggle against the stereotypes that the institutions have already formed against them. Berry (2009) shares the story of a Chinese undergraduate student who had to overcome barriers in a teacher education program, including pushing back and working harder than other (white) students and fighting against assumptions of Chinese women being introverted and quiet. Berry highlights how the intersections of the student's identities and the structural inequalities and assumptions caused her to fight gatekeepers within the institution. Berry argues for an inclusion of critical race feminist pedagogy and recognition of multiple languages and dialects within a classroom to fight against marginalization within the curriculum.

The idea that students (and faculty) of color must transform/conform to the mainstream patriarchal white ideal is not new nor is it connected only to the classroom and the common lecture style teaching method (Berry 2010). In addition to schoolwork, teaching, and class assignments, the racism and whiteness of academia is seen in our own policies, guidelines, and writing styles for papers and research. In opposition to the gentleman's agreement to not accuse

anyone of racism in academia, Thompson (2004) examines, through critical race feminism and whiteness theory, the *APA Style Guide Manual* (2001) to show how it reflects and reinscribes the racialized and gendered power structures within the academic setting. Though often touted as neutral, she shows how the manual forces users to work within a system championing whiteness and patriarchy, though disguised as gender-blind or color-blind. Examples given by the author include a comparison to Chicago-notes style where an author could explain ideas needed for understanding or to bring the readers into the conversation; how the use of initials rather than first names actually obscures gender and ethnicity, making the white and male neutral format the norm; and the discrediting of personal experience or oral stories as simply personal communication rather than an official reference. Thompson's analysis is another example of how it is time to actively address the institutionalized racism in academia.

Within the field of education, there is a constant discussion of assessment, reform, low test scores, and achievement of students (Apple, 1990; Childers-McKee & Hytten, 2015; Cochran-Smith, 2004; Gay, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 2006). Though this is not a wholly negative aspect, it is not one without its pitfalls because oppression and marginalization are pervasive (though not fully admitted by those in power) within the core of these discussions. Research by Ladson-Billings (2006) and Childers-McKee & Hytten (2015) explicates this problem, through the discussion of school reform and achievement gap within education. Childers-McKee & Hytten review and examine past efforts of school reform, highlighting the problems and why the reforms did not work. Largely the problems were because the reform was based hierarchical, top-down approaches that used standardized testing and punishments of sorts to establish a good reformed school. Additionally, past reform efforts pushed a neutral policy that ignored the needs of different communities and was deficit-based reform. They instead propose reform using a

Critical Race Feminist Theory lens that is based on the principles such as educational reform being "contextual, local and creative; they ought to meaningfully involve the people most affected by educational changes in decision making and reform efforts; and they should serve to raise the consciousness of marginalized community members, not simply raise test scores" (p. 408). Connected to the discussion of deficit-based reform (and its failure), Ladson-Billings (2006) argues that rather than using the term achievement gap to explain or discuss the lower test scores and academic achievement in non-white students, we need to replace it with the term/idea of education debt. She provides the foundation of the educational disparity, or education debt, by reviewing the facts of historical, economic, sociopolitical, and moral debt that it is built upon. She concludes by explaining that this education debt must be addressed because of the impact it has on the present education progress, the value of understanding the debt in relation to past education research findings, and the potential for forging a better educational future.

Using Critical Race Feminist Theory within the field of education has many opportunities to fight against the structural and institutional racism that is embedded into the educational system. Though the above examples of literature are a small sampling of the numerous aspects that can be addressed, they represent the wide range of possibilities. Using this lens allows researchers, scholars, teachers, and others to deconstruct the structural inequalities that keep education as a field where oppression continues to keep a stronghold.

The push to use Critical Race Feminist Theory in our research in order to fight to eradicate the marginalization and oppression of women of color is increasing each year (Erden, 2017; Rodriguez & Boahene, 2012; Webster et al., 2016). Though at this time we do not see mainstream popular discussion of Critical Race Feminist Theory, we do see the theory moving beyond law and into education, other social sciences, and to new areas of research (Ahmed,

2014; Anker, 2012; Qin, 2012; Wing, 2010). Without Critical Race Feminist Theory, a feminist analysis of society is merely a white feminist analysis and that is not acceptable. Each educator and/or researcher needs to examine their work and their field or discipline with a critical race feminist lens so they can ensure that all members of society, especially marginalized groups of people, are both seen and heard in our education system.

## Critical Information Literacy

*Perhaps not accidentally, Freire equates the common library functions of receiving, filing, collecting, and cataloging with the banking concept. In doing so, he poses important challenges to librarians. What is the role of the library in the Freireian vision of critical literacy? Is the library a passive information bank where students and faculty make knowledge deposits and withdrawals, or is it a place where students actively engage existing knowledge and shape it to their own current and future uses? And what is the librarian's role as an educator in this process?* (Elmborg, 2006, p. 193)

Similar to Critical Race Feminist Theory, Critical Information Literacy is a theory that is not directly borne out of Critical Theory itself but does follow the same tenets with regard to critically analyzing society and fighting for social justice. In this case, however, the lens being used is specifically with regard to information literacy: the defining and use of it, teaching of it, and assessment of it. As a general definition, information literacy is a set of abilities to "recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information" (American Library Association, 1989, para. 3). These information literacy skills are what have been taught in library instruction sessions at academic universities, primarily taught through a teacher-centered lecture in a one-time instruction session (Daland, 2015; Oakleaf et al., 2012; Ragains, 2013; Watson, Rex, Markgraf, Kishel, Jennings, & Hinnant, 2013). Librarians come into the classroom to demonstrate as many resources as possible in their given time and then leave, hoping the students managed to retain some of the information. This method of teaching allows students no voice in the classroom nor allows any

evaluation of the information presented. Students are there to accept the information given to them without questioning or discussion (see Accardi, 2013; Barr & Tagg, 1995; Zald & Gilchrist, 2008). In the last few decades, there has been a movement for instruction librarians to move away not only from the traditional style of teaching, but also to pedagogically change what they were teaching (Accardi, 2013; Doherty, 2007; Schlessman-Tango, 2014; Swanson, 2004). The goal was to reexamine information literacy through a critical lens and change teaching to a critical information literacy model—a model where "librarians encourage students to think critically about the information they encounter and to develop a critical consciousness, to critically evaluate the system of valued information in academia, including examining the political potential of digital literacy" (Schlessman-Tarngo, 2014, p. 33).

Beginning in the late 1990s, librarians began discussing the idea of critical information literacy, though called by different names at the time, and how there needed to be a conversation about the construction of knowledge, power in the classroom, and the practice of teaching (Doherty, 2007; Doherty & Ketchner, 2005; Elmborg, 2006; Kapitze, 2003;  Luke & Kapitzke, 1999; Pawley, 1998; Simmons, 2005; Swanson; 2004). Librarians wanted to use a critical lens to examine their work (Leekie, Given, & Buschman, 2010) and work towards social justice in the field of librarianship and in their classrooms (Accardi, 2013; Accardi, Drabinski, & Kumbier, 2010; Gregory & Higgins, 2013; Morrone, 2014). In recent years, librarians took steps to research and publish on critical information literacy and its use in creating a critical pedagogy in the classroom, including the beginning of scholarship explaining how to use these ideas (Downey, 2016; Pagowsky & McElroy, 2016).

Luke & Kapitzke (1999) published one of the very first articles calling for a critical information literacy transformation in the field of librarianship. In the conclusion, they state

there needs to be a critical information literacy training that includes three core assumptions.

These assumptions, now almost 20 years old, listed below are:

- That the texts and knowledges of the new technologies are potentially powerful sources for shaping students' beliefs, practices and identities, and indeed that students will require critical perspectives and strategies for repositioning themselves in relation to these texts and knowledges.
- These texts and knowledges are not pre-existing, waiting to be discovered and documented through library work. Rather, they can be co-constructed by the student in a mediated dialogue with other times and spaces, texts and identities—both real and virtual. In this way, libraries can be sites where students can use these same technologies to actively and critically construct, shape and negotiate knowledge, practices and identities.
- In so doing, a critical information literacy can encourage and enable learners to systematically reposition themselves in relation to dominant and non-dominant modes and sources of information. (p. 486)

The assumptions today may seem not as radical as 20 years ago—though for many, this idea of critical examination and thought may still be radical today—but at the time of publication, librarianship as a whole was still about passing on information to others and doing it the right way. In fact, one of the first areas of information literacy that was analyzed with a critical lens was that of the different forms of the information search process. These models, stages, and steps forced the research process into standardized finite (linear) stages, usually including: defining a topic or question, narrowing the topic and identifying sources, synthesizing the sources, and then presenting the results (Elmborg, 2006). There was no place for any reiteration of steps or critical examination or movement—just a specific list of steps that the researcher should follow in order to do research correctly. In similar categorization, the American Library Association and Association for Educational Communications and Technology together created a set of nine information literacy standards in 1989 that labeled each standard as part of three categories, Information Literacy, Independent Learning, and Social Responsibility depicted in Figure 6 (American Library Association, 1989).

| Information Literacy | |
|---|---|
| Standard 1: | The student who is information literate accesses information efficiently and effectively. |
| Standard 2: | The student who is information literate evaluates information critically and competently. |
| Standard 3: | The student who is information literate uses information accurately and creatively. |
| **Independent Learning** | |
| Standard 4: | The student who is an independent learner is information literate and pursues information related to personal interests. |
| Standard 5: | The student who is an independent learner is information literate and appreciates literature and other creative expressions of information. |
| Standard 6: | The student who is an independent learner is information literate and strives for excellence in information seeking and knowledge generation. |
| **Social Responsibility** | |
| Standard 7: | The student who contributes positively to the learning community and to society is information literate and recognises the importance of information to a democratic society. |
| Standard 8: | The student who contributes positively to the learning community and to society is information literate and practices ethical behaviour in regard to information and information technology. |
| Standard 9: | The student who contributes positively to the learning community and to society is information literate and participates effectively in groups to pursue and generate information. |

Figure 3. ALA/AECT nine information literacy standards for student learning.

*Figure 7*. ALA/AECT nine information literacy standards for student learning (Luke & Kapitze, 1999, p. 481).

Though an improvement from earlier-listed standards and stages, the information literacy standards still showed no critical evaluation by the student. The students were still shown as "passive recipients of information" and "no mention is made of students as active agents in the production of knowledge" (Luke & Kapitzke, 1999, p. 480). The lack of active participation by students is exactly the type of traditional teaching that educators should be against; and yet, the American Library Association was putting forward a model of assessment based upon it. Though used heavily by librarians since their publication, the standards were also critiqued by many of the scholars who began publishing on the subject of critical theories, critical literacies, and knowledge production.  Elmborg (2006) wrote about the New London Group (an

interdisciplinary group of scholars engaged in defining and developing new literacy practices) and the expansions of literacy theory and new definitions of literacy. He stated that "literacy cannot be described, therefore, in broad terms as a set of universal skills and abstractable processes. Rather, literacy is in constant flux and embedded in cultural situations, each situation nuanced and different than the others" (p. 195). The standards are

> decontextualized from the actual research process and . . . they also make some basic assumptions about the nature of knowledge that should be of concern. For example, while it is suggested that information found will be evaluated, this information is evaluated in strong procedural terms, not critical terms. (Doherty, 2007, p. 2)

The critical analysis of the information literacy standards continued for years until they were replaced with the Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education in 2015 (American Library Association, 2015). The librarians at the beginning of the critical literacy discussions continued to publish, some repeatedly, in journals and within two decades, the movement was substantial enough that librarians were publishing their own books and edited volumes (see Accardi, 2013; Accardi, Drabinski, & Kumbier, 2010; Downey, 2016; Gregory & Higgins, 2013; Leekie, Given, & Buschman, 2010; Morrone, 2014; Pagowsky & McElory, 2016).

Within the field of librarianship, literature discussing teaching methods and pedagogy, much less critical pedagogy, has primarily been published only within the last few decades (Accardi, Drabinski, & Kumbier, 2010; Doherty, 2007; Downey, 2016; Galoozis & Pinto, 2016; Pagowsky & McElory, 2016; Swanson, 2004) . For many years, librarians considered themselves more of a support resource or presenters rather than instructors. Librarians would show students or patrons different resources patrons could or should use. Then, librarians would be finished until they might help the patrons at the reference desk later in the semester. This is largely connected to the "concept of information literacy in the context of librarianship has been around since the 1970s . . . but the idea of librarians teaching it rather than presenting it only since the

1980s" (Accardi, 2013, p. 26). Librarians discussing and considering pedagogy at all is quite a recent development in the field. Literature that includes discussion of a critical pedagogy, such as feminist pedagogy, is even more recent. In fact, Accardi (2013) explains in the introduction to her book that one of her goals of her work is "to identify and fill a gap in the literature. To date, there is no book-length work or periodical article exploring the connections between library instruction and feminist pedagogy" (p. 5). She summarizes two authors who in the last ten years published about integrating feminist teaching strategies in the library instruction classroom and integrating gender *and* information:

> Landenson describes methods of using feminist active and collaborative learning techniques to enhance and transform the library instruction classroom from a passive, lecture-based environment into an active, engaged, dynamic experience. Thus, bringing feminist pedagogy into the library instruction classroom promises to provide new ideas and directions for library instruction theory and practice. (Accardi, 2013, p. 28)

The work being published in the field of librarianship regarding implementing critical pedagogy, critical feminist pedagogy, or even an engaged pedagogy specifically into library instruction is just beginning. For example, within the last year, a two-volume handbook including essays discussing critical library pedagogy has been published and includes an array of topics. The second volume consists entirely of lesson plans, activities, and ideas for instruction librarians to implement in their own classrooms—in other words, an entire handbook dedicated to teaching librarians *how* to use critical information literacy, not just teaching about the concept of critical information literacy (Pagowsky & McElroy, 2016). This idea is reminiscent of Elmborg's (2006) call for praxis in the field. He declared that the "real task for libraries in treating information literacy seriously lies not in defining it or describing it, but in developing a critical practice of librarianship—a theoretically informed praxis" (p. 198). In just over a decade, the literature of critical information literacy moved from theory and ideas to publications guiding instruction

librarians in the process of implementing critical information literacy into their own programs and classrooms. As more librarians are embracing the change of pedagogies within the field, the more instruction-focused publications about critical information literacy will be published, and thereby furthering the movement.

## Using Engaged (Critical) Pedagogy in the Classroom

*Knowing how the mechanisms of power work is not the same as knowing how to resist them.* (Vetter, 2010, p. 8)

The critical theories discussed above are effective when they are combined with action and practice (praxis). For an analysis of research data in the field of education, this praxis is seen through teaching—the pedagogy each teacher takes to the classroom (Accardi, 2013; Elmborg 2006; Freire, 2000; Gregory & Higgins, 2013; hooks, 1994; Keer, 2016; Pagowsky & McElroy, 2016; Rogers & Freiberg, 1994). Critical theories need critical pedagogies to be at their full potential. Below is explanation and review of engaged pedagogy, how it intersects with critical race feminist theory and power, its role in the classroom and library instruction, the importance of critical thinking, and the challenges to teaching with critical pedagogies, engaged pedagogy in particular, by instruction librarians.

### Engaged Pedagogy = Theory + Practice

Engaged pedagogy is the connection between theory and practice—it is *how* we practice theory in the classroom. Educators, researchers, theorists, etc., need to have the ability to speak beyond top-level theory and ideas; otherwise there is a failure to give people the methods, or ways to practice, in order to bring that theory and ideas to the ground level, the authentic everyday activities and lives of others. Educators need to find the way to connect theory and practice so that ideas such as critical theories can be brought to our students at the level where they can learn and in the manner that is being modeled in their classroom. That decision—to

include the theory as the method—is what makes engaged pedagogy such an impactful change in our education system.

As activists, educators, and theorists began writing and dialoging about engaged pedagogy more frequently, many teachers found the groundwork they needed to make the shift in their own classrooms. Florence (1998) explains the importance of engaged pedagogy in a book discussing bell hooks and her contribution to teaching, stating that by connecting theory and practice, "engaged pedagogy avoids reification of knowledge from issues faced by most students, both within and outside of educational settings . . . provid[ing] students with multiple perspectives that enable them to know themselves better and to live in the world more fully" (p. 77). The inclusion of students in their own education, as part of their own learning process, is another reason that engaged pedagogy has such an impact on students in the classroom. The choice to teach with an engaged pedagogy entails a new ideology—a critical ideology. Teachers who take this perspective to their classroom and analyzing and critiquing the school system's norms and doing what they see is best for their students are choosing not only an engaged pedagogy, they are teaching with a critical pedagogy. Engaged pedagogy is critical pedagogy; engaged pedagogy is critical theories in practice.

## Critical Theories, Engaged Pedagogy, and Power

Foundational reading and theory in engaged pedagogy, Critical Race Feminist Theory, and Critical Information Literacy, the combination that forms the theoretical framework for this research, highlights how Critical Race Feminist Theory and Critical Information Literacy inform the engaged pedagogical framework used within my specific focus on education within library instruction programs. My analysis of my participants' narratives will be done through this lens,

focusing on power in the classroom by examining the teaching styles of instruction librarians and the effect of traditional ways of teaching and how they do not impact our students.

A critical analysis of how power is presented in the classroom must begin with the works of Paulo Freire and bell hooks. In her writings, hooks (2010) credits Paulo Freire for providing avenues to examine her own thoughts about education and, in some ways, give additional power and validity to her ideas. Freire's thoughts and experiences in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* laid groundwork for her to enact and transform (2000). The combination and connection between Freire and hooks show a clear call-to-action for an education reform based on a theoretical critical race feminist engaged pedagogy. The importance of including students in their own learning—and in the teacher's learning as well—is a critical part of a critical race feminist engaged pedagogy. Without their inclusion, the students become passive recipients of knowledge forced upon them. Berry (2010) tells of her own education journey and her move to use both engaged pedagogy and critical race feminism in her classroom. She focuses on teachers moving to a place of resistance rather than the safe place of lecture, changing the power relationship between teacher and student through revealment in the classroom, intersectionality of identities, and seeing the complexities in ourselves and in others. As part of her use of critical race feminism, she highlights these ideas through counterstorytelling, exemplifying her statement that "engaged pedagogy from a critical race feminist perspective is, in fact, a counterstory" (p. 25). Using strategies such as counterstorytelling is a method to resist the traditional way of teaching, where the teachers in the classroom have all the power as they are the ones with the information and knowledge and, therefore, the most important (read: powerful) person in the room. Both hooks and Freire repeatedly discuss this dynamic of power in the traditional classroom. Florence (1998) weaves the two together and then shares Freire's thoughts on traditional teaching:

hooks also notes the manner in which some teachers discount students' contributions to classroom discourse. She links the mentality to a reinforcement of 'dominations' as opposed to a 'freeing' education. hooks' discussion of a 'banking' approach to education is similar to Freire's critique of traditional education and the manner in which hierarchical relationships between the educators and students mirror hierarchical social arrangements in privileging one group (teachers/elites) over other groups (students/the masses):

a.  the teacher teaches and the students are taught;
b. the teacher knows everything and the students know nothing;
c.  the teacher thinks and the students are thought about;
d. the teacher talks and the students listen—meekly;
e.  the teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined;
f.  the teacher chooses and enforces his [sic] choice, and the students comply;
g.  the teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting through the action of the teacher;
h. the teacher chooses the program content, and the students [who are not consulted] adapt to it;
i.  the teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his [sic] own professional authority, which he [sic] sets in opposition to the freedom of students;
j.  the teacher is the subject of the learning process, while the pupils are mere objects. (pp. 80-81)

Freire's (2000) list above that Florence includes in her point of hierarchal relationships in the classroom exemplifies the meaning of power in the classroom in any traditional teaching style—a teaching style that is not grounded in engaged pedagogy.  Nowhere in that list is there a moment where a student has a voice or a say in her/his own education nor is his/her life deemed important. And this is where engaged pedagogy is different—it, as hooks (2010) states:

emphasizes mutual participation because it is the movement of ideas, exchanged by everyone, that forges a meaningful working relationship between everyone in the classroom . . . engaged pedagogy makes the classroom a place where wholeness is welcomed and students can be honest, even radically open. (p. 21)

Without an engaged pedagogy, the students are as Friere explains, merely "objects" and are to "comply" and "adapt" to their teachers' demands (2000, p. 59). There is no room in the classroom for the students to experience their own education, to be active participants in their own learning. The students are forced to be schooled and to only receive knowledge from the

expert in the room, without any questioning or exploration of ideas and without any true growth of the students' minds.

An important question to answer in order to successfully incorporate a theoretical framework of feminist engaged pedagogy theory into the research is, if traditional teaching is about power of the teacher, then what is engaged pedagogy? In order to answer that question, the first step is to define power and what it really is in the classroom. There is no way to eliminate the fact that teachers are the people at the end of the day who record the grades for students. Even library instructors are seen within this perspective by students in the classroom. Those aspects alone give them the power. However, power does not have to be just about a grade at the end of the year. Power can instead be about empowered students and rather than a hierarchal relationship between student and teacher, there can be a mutual learning relationship. In *Teaching to Transgress* (1994), hooks explains this relationship as an empowerment for both teacher and student. She states, "Engaged pedagogy does not seek to simply empower students. Any classroom that employs a holistic model of learning will also be a place where teachers grow, and are empowered by the process" (p. 21). hooks and Freire advocate to teachers to share the power and use an engaged pedagogy—a model where the teacher is side-by-side with the student rather than a benevolent giver of knowledge. In this way, empowering students means relinquishing control, to "pass along a level of trust and responsibility for learning to the learner" while remembering that "the teacher and the learner are in partnership" (Doherty & Ketchner, 2005, p. 8). Using a critical race feminist engaged pedagogy in the classroom means that instead "of the teacher serving as the ultimate authority on all knowledge and information, knowledge is collaboratively discussed and created by the students and the teacher together. The students are not passive vessels waiting to be filled by the teacher's wisdom" (Accardi, 2013, p. 25). If the

teacher does not choose to deny that traditional ideal of power and knowledge in the classroom, then he/she will be unable to see the students' needs fully and foster their understanding and participation in the classroom.

The idea of denying traditional ideals of power and giving it or sharing it with the students seems difficult to comprehend to some and a challenge to others. Additional theorists-turned-practitioners Rogers and Freiberg (1994) examine the challenge of power and trust in the classroom when using a person-centered learning model (an engaged pedagogy in itself). They state that the teacher "who considers using such as an approach must face up to the fearful aspects of sharing power and control. Who knows whether students or teachers can be trusted, whether a process can be trusted? One can only take the risk, and risk is frightening" (p. 179). Teachers using a traditional model where they are fully in control, and are leery of the idea of giving too much power to students, struggle with the idea of empowering students. However, it is this fear of the unknown, fear of retaliation, and fear of losing their own power that educators need to overcome for the success of our students. The idea of pushing against the traditional ways of teaching or fighting against institutions in order see students become an active part of their own education is for many, one they are unsure of. But McLaren (2015) proclaims that educators must fight for their students and "get beyond the manufactured fear and the hysterical rhetoric, peddled by what we call the corporate-state-military-media complex (or simply, the 'power complex'), and instead seek a deeper means challenging repressive and violent social structures" (p. 227). No matter what educators may fear in their choice to teach with engaged pedagogy, the importance of this one decision is, without a doubt, unmatched in the importance for students' learning.

Traditional methods of teaching do not focus on student participation nor valuing student

voices. The process of praxis in the classroom is most clearly achieved through authentic student participation. Freire (2000) explains the challenge of giving up freedom and authority as they "cannot be isolated, but must be considered in relationship to one another. Authentic authority is not affirmed as such by mere transfer of power, but through delegation or in sympathetic adherence" (p. 179). Authenticity and delegation/sharing of authority in the classroom comes with respect for voice (both the students' and the teacher's) and active dialogue between people in class. In this way, the power in the classroom is shared.

## Engaged Pedagogy vs. Traditional Teaching

In order to ensure that true feminist ideals are not being swallowed by a white oppressive patriarchy and diluted into mainstream easier to digest ideas, hooks (1994) urges scholars to critique and examine educational philosophy—and this includes critiquing other feminist scholars. Critiquing other theorists, even those in the same discipline is an important part of critically analyzing scholarship and theory. hooks (1994) questions feminist theorists for their lack of teaching feminist practice and theory "directed toward helping individuals integrate feminist thinking and practice into daily life" (p. 70). The point here is that with any critical theory or pedagogy or philosophy, there is often a lack of discussion on *how* people can put these ideas into practice. With writings on engaged pedagogy, the same is often not true. Using critical race feminist engaged pedagogy and following scholars such as hooks to learn how to put these ideas into action in the classroom is a vital part of the research. The distinction between traditional teaching and engaged pedagogy that embodies critical race feminist ideals, which hooks advocates for, is one of the most important concepts in both educational theory and the field of librarianship. Engaged pedagogy is the strongest educational theory *and practice* to foster students' successful education. By using critical feminist engaged pedagogy, teachers are

engaging themselves and students, as active participants in learning. As active participants in their own learning, students are enhancing their own critical thinking skills. Critical race feminist pedagogy then becomes the foundation for instruction—including library instruction—that promotes students to actively engage these skills in their lifelong learning. Accardi (2013) summarizes the goal of a critical feminist pedagogy in library instruction:

> Critical actors take the knowledge they have learned in the feminist classroom and translate it into everyday life and society and culture. They are more aware of forms of oppression and act to end them. They are more aware of the power of knowledge and language to influence society and culture and they ask critical questions about where information comes from, about who decides what is knowledge and truth, thus illuminating the structures that create and perpetuate information production and dissemination. This is what makes feminist pedagogy different from learner-centered teaching: critical thinkers become critical actors. (pp. 57-58)

This praxis in the instruction classroom is what will enhance students' learning experience, their critical thinking skills, and empowerment in their own learning. Introducing engaged pedagogy, critical thought, and the empowerment of praxis to students in a class is not just about aligning curriculum in a course plan of readings. Teachers must rethink their own ideologies, classroom practices, and beliefs about how a class is supposed to be structured. Miller (2005) discusses this change of thinking when she converted her classroom to an engaged environment based upon the work of hooks (1994) and Freire (2000). She shares her case study research from teaching a junior-level English course at low socioeconomic high school in an urban area. Whereas the other teachers taught in traditional lecture method, she restructured the class to create an environment where the students were active participants and engaged in their learning. Miller stated that though she was not sure how to officially assess any transformation in her students, she did "recognize that individual students felt authentically changed and acted out on that change" (p. 544). In addition, "the students came together cooperatively to discuss and process the experience through the dialogic" (p. 544). She also emphasizes the importance of

engaging students and how empowering it is for them to be an active part of making changes in the classroom, to be teachers themselves in the classroom. Miller includes text from a response essay that one of her students, Ricardo, wrote:

> Every morning that I wake up I feel a desire to learn a lesson ready to be taught. I also realize that the person that is teaching is also ready, also has the desire to learn and in which case the pupil teaches the teacher. You see everybody has a desire to want to learn it is the wise that ease's the situation by showing the desire. The class also I believe has grown, has the opportunity to learn everyday. I can see it in each of their eyes, that they come to learn. (p. 546)

Ricardo's powerful words about learning and teaching explicate the meaning behind Miller's words and decision to change her classroom to one designed on an engaged pedagogy foundation. She also acknowledges that this type of work does not just end when the class is over, stating, "[t]eaching individuals that they are capable of creating change is just the beginning; teaching them to sustain change is the challenge" (p. 544).

Teaching with an engaged pedagogical framework is time-consuming and challenging at times but also a progressive and holistic teaching model that has positively impacted the education system and more importantly, students. hooks (1994) encourages educators to remember that "the classroom remains the most radical space of possibility in the academy" and the need to meet this challenge directly" (p. 12). The inclusion of these radical spaces in higher education can be present in a variety of courses, not just those already renowned to be taught with a critical pedagogy such as Women's Studies or American Ethnic Studies. In the beginning of his research and selection of participants, Spencer (2015) sought professors not just in feminist classes, but also those general education or interdisciplinary courses that included a diversity or social justice framework or taught through an intersectionality lens. Spencer interviewed 21 different professors who had components of diversity, identity, or social justice and student engagement in their courses.

A primary focus of Spencer's (2015) research was learning what strategies those professors used; he then used those strategies in his classes as part of an action research project. Teaching with a feminist engaged framework can be challenging, especially when discussing topics in class that some may find difficult or full of emotions—including anger. Spencer (2015) added (half-joking, I am sure) that "[f]eminist courses should probably be judged as failures if no one feels angry at some point during the term" (p. 199). The difficulty of an engaged classroom is that when topics are difficult, the space, though still safe, becomes uncomfortable at times until things such as classroom guidelines for discussion (e.g., respecting classmates' opinions even if you do not agree with them) are not just developed but also regularly followed by all. Spencer reported that one of the themes from his participants is recognizing that confronting issues such as racism or privilege in class can be difficult for students. He stated that,

> To have honest and productive conversations, these instructors suggested a variety of ways to make students comfortable with the topic. Comfort here refers not to the sort of comfort one would expect from customer service at a high-end hotel, but to creating a classroom that invites students to share their ideas and questions in a safe place, that makes it okay for students to be vulnerable even while they are being challenged. (p. 203)

Creating a safe environment with students, a classroom that feels safe to express opinions and voice is the only way any type of critical engaged pedagogy will be successful. Though, as Spencer does point out, safe does not equate feeling comfortable with all topics all the time. Part of critical race feminist engaged pedagogy is to take that lens to society around you—not just to see it in a new way, but to change it for the better.

Fischman & McLaren (2005) describe schools "as centers of possibility" and explain that teachers have to "understand them as spaces of transmission and creation of meaningful knowledge and as political laboratories that can deepen participation and dialogue about the larger social, political, and economic relations and practices" (p. 355). The idea of schools being

a place of meaningful knowledge and dialogue can be seen in Critical Studyin' (CS), a "Black Studies-inspired pedagogical approach teacher educators can employ to support prospective educators in their journey towards developing social consciousness and learning to teach for social justice" (Acosta et al., 2017, p. 242). The authors taught a course for preservice educators using the CS approach and interviewed the students after they graduated about their experience having participated in the class. Using Black Studies theoretical framework, CS can be conceptualized "as a productive way to engage educators in learning about race and culture and its practical implications on teaching and learning" (p. 242). Acosta et al. (2017) discuss their findings from the interviews through themes including how the students confronted their own positionalities and ways of thinking, meaningfulness of hands-on learning and experiences, and how the students carried the knowledge out into the world with them even after the class was over.

Similar to Spencer (2015), Acosta et al. (2017) report how important dialogue in the classroom with each other and in-class activities were in their learning; in other words, engagement was a key part of the process. Acosta et al. explain that the students appreciated the different types of "in class learning activities they engaged in, not because they were easy but because they were authentic and demanded them to wrestle with ideas and perspectives some of them had seldom had the opportunity to think about critically" (p. 247). They include a comment from one student, Anika, to exemplify,

> I've never had to think so much, to question myself so much, question my own beliefs, reflect on my own experiences. I've never been excited to really read pages and pages of books and, you know, I've never left a class feeling like 'I can't believe this is over.' Literally, never, in my life. (p. 247)

The success of implementing CS is detailed in the authors' explanation of activities and environment, themes, and overall discussion of the impact that approach has made for the

students. Their findings point to success in the use of an engaged pedagogy, connection of students to social justice issues, critical thinking skills, and learning historical knowledge. They explain, "CS leveraged an experiential approach to learning that demanded students personally connect to course content. This helped students co-construct meaningful knowledge" (p. 250). The change to a new framework for teaching—and for teaching future teachers at that—is a powerful decision that will make a difference in our students' lives. Both credit-bearing course faculty, and library faculty, who understand the effect of this shift from traditional teaching pedagogy to critical pedagogical style—and take the steps to make the change—will be able to witness the empowerment of their students, enhance their students' learning, and develop their students' critical thinking skills.

Bondy, Hambacher, Murphy, Wolkenhauer, and Krell (2015) discuss an online graduate course that taught educators to be familiar with "key concepts and principles of critical theory, critical pedagogy, and social justice education so that they might be able to use this body of work to inform their teaching and leadership" (p. 228). The course, Critical Pedagogy, consisted of 19 students in a four-year online professional practice doctoral program. These students were the teachers and administrators who were already out in those "political laboratories" that Fischman and McLaren (2005) describe and were learning how to make that difference, to bring a new level of critical thinking and engagement to the classroom. In addition to being unique as a Critical Pedagogy course taught online for education doctoral students, the students, for the most part, stated that it was at times easier to be engaged in critical conversations with classmates because it was an online course—a statement one would not normally think of as true. In focus group sessions, the students reported they felt "more comfortable to take risks" and,

> unlike traditional face-to-face classes, they weren't afraid of being interrupted and, therefore, misinterpreted, when they communicated online. They had the freedom to

compose responses to one another that were at the same time personal and scholarly, contributing to the rich dialogue, experiences, and dispositions that we saw come out of the course. (pp. 241-242)

In this situation, we have educators who are learning to teach through a critical pedagogical lens, to ensure that our students are going to be taught with the engaged method needed to ensure they are active and engaged students in their own learning. This ideology of teaching is needed across all disciplines, for all students. Library instruction students who learn critical thinking and information literacy skills through an engaged and critical feminist pedagogical learning style will see those skills as an important part of lifelong learning and feel empowered to know that they are prepared to handle evaluation of their information needs.

Engaged pedagogy in general, and even more so critical race feminist engaged pedagogy, affect both students and teachers in their learning environments to create a positive impact on society and on students' lives. The importance of understanding engaged pedagogy and its impact is sometimes indescribable. However, Giroux and Robbins (2006) detail and define this in a way that cannot be paraphrased in any way that would give it justice; therefore, it is included below in its entirety:

> Central to any viable notion of critical pedagogy is its willingness to take seriously those academic projects, intellectual practices, and social relations in which students have the basic right to raise, if not define, questions both within and outside of disciplinary boundaries. Such a pedagogy also must bear the responsibility of being self-conscious about those forces that sometimes prevent people from speaking openly and critically, whether they are part of a hidden curriculum of either racism, class oppression, or gender discrimination or part of those institutional and ideological mechanisms that silence students under the pretext of a claim to professionalism, objectivity, or unaccountable authority. Crucial here is the recognition that a pedagogical culture of questioning is not merely about the dynamics of communication but also about the effects of power and the mechanisms through which it either constrains, denies, or excludes particular forms of agency—preventing some individuals from speaking in specific ways, in particular spaces, under specific circumstances. (p. 274)

**Engaged Pedagogy in Library Instruction**

In order to have an understanding of the change in library instruction, it is important to explain the different types of said instruction. For years, the traditional model of library instruction was called Bibliographic Instruction and was a traditional-style of teaching. In recent years, there has been a shift to information literacy instruction, a more active-learning style of teaching. As not all readers are familiar with the different styles, it is important that a solid explanation be given. Although admittedly a long quoted section for a literature review chapter, I include below Accardi's (2013) description and analysis of the differences between the two styles:

> I characterize bibliographic instruction (BI) as a more passive, tools-based approach that focuses on how to use a particular library resource without paying much attention to critical thinking or transferable skills. A BI session might take place in a non-networked classroom, with the instructor at the only computer, pointing and clicking through the library catalog or article database. Or the librarian instructor might roll in a cart full of print reference books to hold aloft and page through in front of the class. In an information literacy classroom, active learning is encouraged, and learning takes place in a networked classroom where each student has a computer. Rather than relying heavily on passive demonstration, which is more typical of BI, an information literacy instruction session provides space for students to learn in a collaborative, hands-on manner. And rather than focusing on how to use a particular tool, the focus is on critical thinking skills and how they can be deployed across any library platform, no matter what the interface. (pp. 58-59)

The shift to information literacy instruction is, first of all, not widespread throughout all universities (Ragains, 2013, p. 24). Many librarians are still teaching BI sessions due to the requests from faculty not changing: faculty still want the standard one-shot library session where the librarian is only given one chance to work with the students (p. 13). Second, information literacy instruction does not automatically guarantee an engaged pedagogical style or one that is taught through a critical race feminist lens. These aspects are the next level librarians need to strive for and these aspects are also the most difficult for librarians to incorporate into their

teaching due to the challenges of not being the teacher of record and collaborating with faculty of the courses.

Connected to the struggle of incorporating a critical race feminist lens into a one-shot library instruction session is a challenge that all engaged pedagogical teachers face in the classroom:  the students only want to learn in the traditional lecture teaching style. Accardi (2013) concedes that at times, it does seem like it would be easier to use the bibliographic instruction model and not create a dynamic classroom where the students may feel forced into student participation; however, as she explains, "just because it is easier does not mean that it is the most effective technique for producing and facilitating student learning" (p. 48). Teaching with an engaged critical race feminist pedagogy is challenging and librarians need to be dedicated to confronting those challenges and focus on the successful engaged instruction sessions.

As mentioned above, librarians are beginning to write more and discuss with each other specific models and methods to incorporate engaged active learning in library classrooms. In fact, the recently-published *Critical Library Pedagogy* two-volume handbook includes both theoretical chapters, workbook activities, and lesson plans for librarians to use in their own classrooms that the authors have successfully (or not, in some cases) implemented into their own classes (Pagowsky & McElroy, 2016). Adapting Freire's popular education idea of analyzing one's situation and then acting to create social conditions, Garcia (2016) describes a four-step popular education process that engages student participation and can be implemented into library instruction (p. 96). The process includes finding an issue, analyzing it, acting upon potential solutions, and then reflecting upon the action taken. These four steps would be too time-consuming and intensive for librarians' typical one-shot library sessions where they are with the

students for only a brief time. However, it is possible to include this engaged style of teaching by using the first two steps, identifying and analyzing an issue, as part of an activity where students discover research topics and search terms. Garcia explains:

> The focus on identifying and analyzing an issue can lay the groundwork for the student's engagement with taking action and reflection on actions taken. Acting on potential solutions and reflecting on actions taken would involve multiple sessions. Again, this highlights the limitations of incorporating popular education concepts in a one-shot library instruction session. (p. 97)

For further ideas and creation of outcomes to build an instruction session based on feminist pedagogy, Accardi (2013) includes in her book a table that cross lists specific feminist teaching strategies with specific feminist instruction librarian teaching strategies (table included in Appendix A). For example, she converts the feminist teacher strategy "emphasizes hands-on or interactive learning, field trips, service or community learning" into the feminist instruction librarian strategy "employs hands-on learning activities that require students to engage with library research tools" (p. 50). These strategies were published by Accardi only within the last five years so at this point, they are just the beginning of more librarians using and practicing Accardi's critical feminist pedagogies in the classroom and publishing on their success in the classroom.

Implementing critical pedagogies (though maybe not specific critical race feminism) in library instruction program or even into specific courses has been discussed for a number of years. As one example of what implementation might resemble, Swanson (2004) describes the pedagogical and theoretical change that the instruction librarians at a community college applied towards a research paper assignment in a lower-level composition course. For each library session, the students were required to critically evaluate the sources they had chosen; they participated in activities where they had opportunities to make their own decisions about

credibility rather than just given a source they were informed was credible. In addition, the

examples and resources used in the class (selected by the librarian and teacher) were timely, rich

in opposing values, and could be affected by students' personal beliefs. Though only a small

sample, findings revealed that the students who were actively part of the exercises understood

credibility more than the students who were not. The important note here is that the instruction

librarian not only had permission from the composition teacher to change the teaching pedagogy,

there was also participation.

Other starting points in using critical pedagogies can be found in the examination of how

library instruction has traditionally been taught, as in, what students are not being taught.

Doherty (2007) exposes a few critical issues he has witnessed:

> Students are not asked to examine the range of books on a particular topic, to expose the potential varieties of viewpoints, or lack thereof, to examine who are the prolific authors and who are not represented, or to even look at how the book has been categorized on the library's shelves. The same could be said for a journal article. Most research assignments in higher education tend to focus on the peer reviewed article, and there are ACRL Standards designed to teach a student to demonstrate knowledge of what makes a journal peer reviewed and why it is important to use it. Yet, there is no critical examination of the peer review process, again asking what information is excluded versus what information has been included. (p. 3)

Doherty (2007), Swanson (2004), Accardi (2013), and others have not only laid down the path

changing to a critical engaged pedagogy, they also have given practical examples and strategies

to show the way. However, at this point, the literature including research—either qualitative or

quantitative—of the implementation of critical or engaged pedagogy into library instruction is

scarce. One notable exception includes Downey's (2014) dissertation research where she

examined critical information literacy and its use and effectiveness in higher education. She

interviewed 19 academic librarians about the support they received from their institutions,

effectiveness of implementing critical information literacy into their library instruction, and what

they felt were barriers to their ability to implement critical information literacy practices. The

findings revealed that the librarians used critical content in their courses such as critical source

evaluation and language used in information production. Overall, the participants felt that the

success of implementing critical information literacy programs was largely dependent on the

collaborations and partnering with faculty. One aspect that the participants saw as a challenge

was using critical methods in their instruction, as opposed to using critical content in the class,

which they felt more comfortable doing and faced less obstacles from the faculty. Downey's

research showed that librarians are, in fact, wanting to do critical work and are beginning to

implement it into their instruction programs; however, though the teaching of critical content is

manageable, teaching with critical methods is still a challenge. One of the challenges is the same

as Accardi (2013) discusses: the pushback from the faculty and their expectations. Downey

(2014) explains:

> Professors, regardless of the discipline or level of class, often had clearly defined goals
> for the IL [information literacy] session that the librarians deferred to. These goals
> usually took the form of the content that the professor wanted students to learn, which
> had an obvious effect on teaching methods as well. Every librarian interviewed talked
> about aligning their instructional goals with what the professor wanted them to teach. In
> the cases of it preventing them from being able to use critical methods, it was usually
> because the professor wanted them to demonstrate a specific database or other tool, show
> the relevant features, answer questions about the tool, and be done. While there was some
> amount of frustration with this, the participants were generally accepting of and resigned
> to this reality. (p. 105)

Librarians struggling to use critical methods in the classroom because of the faculty's request

will be a challenge that needs to be surpassed in order to succeed in teaching with a critical race

feminist engaged pedagogy. In the same manner that incorporating critical information literacy

through selected critical content was easier than teaching critically, librarians will struggle with

implementing any type of critical pedagogy into their instruction. However, as discussed above,

it is a struggle that needs to be fought, for the students' sake.

Mokhtar, Majid, and Foo (2008) conducted a study in Singapore on the teaching of information literacy to students in secondary schools. The curriculum in the schools had advanced to a point where research and source evaluation skills were required at a level that the teachers did not have experience in and there were few school librarians in the system to assist. The purpose of their research was to "augment students' project-based learning and support teachers' lessons, [the] study aimed to determine how IL trainers and school librarians can facilitate student learning in the area of IL through pedagogically-based IL teaching approaches" (p. 197). They used 497 students in their study and separated them into separate experimental and control groups, either in mediated learning or multiple intelligences methods groups, and then separated again into groups related to specific teaching methods.

The students worked in groups through assignments based on research after learning IL skills (through different methods depending on which group they were in) and completed a final group project. The projects were graded in a blind process by three different independent and neutral teacher-examiners. The findings showed differences of scores in the separate groups and overall concluded that:

> IL competencies cannot be sufficiently learned and applied when the competencies are learned through one-time training, such as lecture-tutorials, workshops, or hands-on sessions. The competencies need to be reinforced through close coaching or mediated learning so that students can identify their learning gaps, rectify them, and improve their learning under the close supervision and guidance of an expert. (p. 199)

Granted, this research was done with high school students rather than college students, but the message about learning styles—and thereby teaching methods—is clear: students need more than a lecture-based one-shot instruction session. In this case, the findings state the students need more than even workshops and hands-on sessions; they need continual assistance throughout the project. However, I assume that is related to the age of the participants. This particular finding

speaks to the need for embedded librarianship, another form of engaged pedagogy in library instruction. Regardless, the research shows the difference in students' learning when they are not a part of what Freire (2000) would label as the banking concept in education.

When given opportunity to integrate critical information literacy into classes, librarians impact students in a manner that, for some, can be life altering. An example of an opportunity such as this is seen through Swygart-Hobaugh's (2013) semester-long honors course (freshman seminar) over the topic of social justice and information access. She describes the class as structured to:

> enable a problem-posing, dialogic learning process. As a seminar-style course, free of lecturing and rote exams, the students, the guest speakers, and I engaged in dialogues about the session topics. Each topic was a problem posed for dialogue and aimed at exposing why it was a problem. Students and teacher debated the nature of the problem, explored our own experiences in relation to the problem, and discussed possible solutions. (p. 222)

Swygart-Hobaugh uses content analysis to code themes from the text of twelve students' assignments. She was focused on gauging "students' affirmation and/or challenging of the critical-theoretical and social-justice frameworks; and whether and how students discussed librarians and libraries as social justice and/or democratizing agents" (p. 229). The findings were overwhelmingly positive toward the use of pedagogy in the class and how the class was eye-opening with regard to justice and the importance of what librarians do. She includes a quote from a student's assignment that addresses the critical-theoretical critique of the political economy of capitalism, with regards to power that publishers hold over academia:

> The publishing industry is one of the most capitalistic entities [in] today's society . . . The academic publishers are the worst kind of criminals . . . Information should not be used as goods, with which one may raise the price due to demand, because information is not a good. Information is a vital part of intellectual growth, scientific discoveries, and societal growth. (p. 234)

An opportunity to teach a semester-long course such as this does not happen frequently (unfortunately) but when it does come to pass, the results are powerful. The students are fully engaged while learning critical theory and social justice topics. Swygart-Hobaugh's case study of this course shows an example of what the impact could be with the integration of teaching methods that are structured with critical theories framework.

The research regarding the use of a form of critical pedagogy is not abundant. There could be a number of reasons for this: (1) the only recent (last couple of decades) incorporation of critical pedagogy in library instruction or information literacy discussions, (2) the challenges librarians are still facing in the integration of critical pedagogy into their instruction, or (3) maybe that conducting research, whether quantitative or qualitative, is difficult with a one-shot session taught by an overly-busy librarian. Incorporating engaged pedagogy and critical theories into library instruction is an overwhelming task at times but as more librarians practice and publish, the less daunting it will seem. For this reason, my research is important in order to not only fill a research gap but also to extend the path for other librarians to follow.

### Critical Thinking Skills and Lifelong Learning

The connection between critical thinking skills and lifelong learning is a strong ideal taught by information literacy instruction librarians. Teaching critical information literacy is teaching lifelong learning and critical thinking. However, the importance of critical thinking skills is even stronger for those teaching critical information literacy skills through a feminist lens. Using a critical race feminist pedagogical style teaches students how to be lifelong critical thinkers and learners—this can be challenging when in order to teach how to critically evaluate information, librarians must first teach students to think in a more dynamic way than they may have in the past. Galoozis and Pinto (2016) describe the challenge as "from a critical information

literacy perspective, in order for students to engage with ambiguity when seeking and evaluating information, they first need to see themselves as more than passive consumers and their education as more than a form of currency" (165). They additionally explain that critical information literacy situates "students as critical thinkers, guided to learning not with modules of marketable skills, but through self-directed inquiry and developing a tolerance for ambiguity" (p. 161). Teaching students critical information literacy skills leads to students becoming critical thinkers and lifelong learners. If librarian instructors are able to work past the challenges, the impact of these students entering the larger society will clearly be seen as they will now be active members who are able to make informed decisions. Or, as Accardi (2013) states, "critical thinkers [who] then become critical actors" and push for change in society (p. 57).

Connected to the idea of teaching students to be lifelong critical thinkers and then using those skills to act in the society, is the idea of the library instruction as a political force. Teaching using a critical pedagogical framework is political as it is; teaching with it in library instruction is both radical and at the same time, directly obvious. First, Keer (2016) clearly defines the difference between teachers using critical pedagogical framework and those who do not:

> Critical pedagogy is not just another approach to teaching, like active or team-based learning. It is a radical reconceptualization of the roles of both teacher and student in the creation of knowledge. Adopting critical pedagogy requires an acknowledgement that teaching is a political act. Teachers are not and can never be neutral or benign actors within education, and education is not a natural phenomenon but rather a process of enculturation that traditionally upholds an unequal social order. (p. 67)

Carrying this idea of teaching as a political act, Accardi (2013) points to one of the key themes of Critical Theory: there is no such thing as neutral. She discusses her frustration with the national librarianship organization, the Association for College Research Libraries, and its continued promotion of:

the idea that information literacy is some neutral, apolitical concept that exists outside of the culture and paradigm that produced it . . . is problematic to me. Of *course* information literacy is and should be politicized. So should the classroom, the library, and its institution. (p. 66)

When examining how teaching information literacy is political and how only recently the governing bodies of academic librarianship are moving towards a positive change, Keer (2016) admits that at this point, it is not enough to actually promote critical pedagogical teaching. Using the *ACRL Information Literacy Framework* (American Library Association, 2015) as a reference, and how it does stress problem posing and exploration-based learning, she identifies the "trope that objectivity and neutrality are hallmarks of the library profession persists and is incompatible with critical approach to information" (Keer, 2016, p. 68). Critical information literacy instruction, critical pedagogy, and teaching through a critical race feminist lens are all avenues that support library instruction as a political act. At this time, it is not a wholly prevalent ideal in librarianship as evidenced by the continued claiming that librarianship is neutral by some librarians in leadership positions (p. 69).

## Teaching Through Critical Race Feminist Engaged Pedagogy: Challenges

The above discussion leads to a conversation about the challenges to teaching critical information literacy through a critical race feminist, engaged pedagogical framework. As it is only a recent shift in the field of librarianship, there are still many issues that librarians confront. Two general challenges that almost every librarian instructor meets are explained here. Mentioned previously a number of times, one of the major challenges to teaching through a critical race feminist lens is the one-shot instruction session obstacle. Accardi (2013) describes this challenge:

And given that many instruction programs deliver instruction only in one-shot sessions, where serious relationship-building with students is nearly impossible, and where time constraints and the demands of learning outcomes often render it impractical to employ

any creativity, imagination, or care in instructional approaches, the very structure and system upon which most library instruction programs are based almost sabotage feminist efforts from the start. (p. 69)

There are ways to overcome this obstacle; however, a couple were discussed previously. In addition, it is important not to be overwhelmed and have the no responses from faculty discourage continued efforts to make the changes. An additional challenge that the librarian instructor is *not* the actual teacher of the students they are teaching—they are not the faculty assigning grades nor teacher of record. Therefore, "their ability to incorporate critical pedagogy into information literacy work is also largely contingent on the receptivity of the faculty members they collaborate with. Even if the librarian is fully invested in critical pedagogy, the classroom faculty may need to be convinced" (Keer, 2016, p. 70). The success of integrating a critical race feminist engaged pedagogy into the classroom relies on support from faculty (and administrators). Therefore, "it must be integrated across the curriculum, which requires the partnership of the campus community (Swanson, 2004, p. 265). Working with the teachers of record and department administrators to create instruction critical race feminist engaged pedagogy instruction is not always easy and depending on their view of critical pedagogy in general, the teachers may be a complete obstacle for librarians. In this case, librarian instructors can use the method mentioned previously where at least the search term examples they use in class can be feminist based and critically chosen. Overall, it is not a simple nor easy task to use critical feminist and engaged pedagogy in a library instruction classroom. In fact, at times it may seem overwhelming. Keer (2016) gives the following thought regarding this daunting task:

> Since the larger project of rehabilitating democracy or reducing the neoliberal influence on higher education is outside of the scope of the average librarian's responsibilities, critical librarians will continue to encounter these and other philosophical and practical tensions as they endeavor to develop their praxis. (p. 71)

Though not an optimistic outlook, Keer reminds librarian instructors of the challenges they will face in their political act of using engaged pedagogy in their classrooms, a critical race feminist pedagogy that will provide opportunities for students to become critical thinkers, critical actors, lifelong learners, and people who are empowered to evaluate information. Giroux (2001) in his own words of encouragement for teachers struggling against the challenges:

> Teachers work under constraints, but within those constraints they structure and shape the classroom experiences and need to be self-reflexive about what interests guide such behavior. Put another way, as teachers we need to reach into our own histories and attempt to understand how issues of class, culture, gender, and race have left their imprint upon how we think and act. (p. 241)

## Summary

The combination of multiple critical theories, in addition to an understanding of critical pedagogy and how they can all be together in practice, might seem unwieldly at times. Critical Theory, Critical Race Feminist Theory, and Critical Information Literacy at the outset may not appear to be related in any way except for the word "critical" in their names. Using engaged pedagogy as an example of critical pedagogy, in fact as *the* example of critical pedagogy when integrated with the critical theories listed above, might also appear as sidestep in the wrong direction. However, as an instruction librarian who lives a critical race feminist engaged pedagogy lifestyle every day in the classroom and for every hour of class preparation, I can state assuredly that not only is the above feasible, it is overwhelmingly successful.

I recognize that not all who read this might have a clear vision about what engaged pedagogy with a theoretical framework that includes three different critical theories might specifically look like in the library instruction classroom. Rather than explaining it conceptually here in closing, I will instead show how it is done. Therefore, I include the examples given by Accardi (2016) of what a feminist librarian might do in a classroom:

- Promote active participation when discussing possible research topics, database searching strategies, or other information literacy learning activities;
- Rely on student input for database demonstration, keyword brainstorming, and search query formation;
- Make use of group work or partner work for information searching or evaluation;
- Develop learning activities that solicit and validate students' experiential knowledge;
- Raise awareness of sexism and other forms of oppression through library research content and examples (e.g., using "women in engineering" for a search topic in a career research class);
- Collaboratively develop goals and learning outcomes for library sessions with students;
- Invite suggestions from students on how to achieve goals. (p. 151)

This chapter has given an overview of Critical Theory, Critical Race Feminist Theory, and Critical Information Literacy as part of theoretical lens I analyzed the data from my research. As part of this theoretical lens overview, this chapter has also shown how theory and practice are evidenced through engaged pedagogy, a critical pedagogy, in the classroom, librarianship, and in education overall. Chapter 3 moves forward with discussion of the research design and rationale, research questions, data collection and analysis, and trustworthiness of the research.

# Chapter 3 - Methodology

## Introduction

This qualitative narrative inquiry study explored how five instruction librarians discuss the role of engaged pedagogy and critical information literacy in library instruction for undergraduate students. Specifically, the study explored (a) the decisions of librarians to teach either in the traditional or critical library pedagogy manner and (b) barriers or encouragement in librarians' choice to teach through a critical lens. This exploration of teaching styles and method decisions is focused on instruction librarians from Midwest higher education institutions.

Data collection methods included interviews, observational data, and field notes recorded in a reflexive journal. A critical theories framework, consisting of Critical Theory, Critical Race Feminist Theory, and Critical Information Literacy, is the lens through which the data was analyzed and interpreted. The discussion of why and how librarians choose the teaching styles and methods they use in classes everyday provided an opportunity to learn not only these answers, but also opinions, viewpoints, and understanding of engaged pedagogy and critical information literacy.

Chapter 3 includes the following sections, in this order: (a) suitability of the research qualitative design, (b) purpose of the research, (c) research questions, (d) research design of the study and rationale, (e) data collection, (f) data analysis, (g) trustworthiness, and (h) summary.

## Suitability of the Research Qualitative Design

In the selection of qualitative research for this study, I have prioritized the use of personal experience in the understanding of an experience, event, or other problem to be analyzed from society over a statistical or quantitative research design. In the examination of the selected

problem, qualitative researchers in general will be using "an emerging qualitative approach to inquiry, the collection of data in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study, and data analysis that is inductive and establishes patterns or themes" (Creswell, 2018, pp. 42-43). The problems that are examined and the research questions for which answers are sought can be approached differently, evidenced by types of data, and performed with an array of different methods (Creswell, 2018; Polkinghorne, 1995). Creswell (2018) classifies the different methods of qualitative research into five categories: narrative, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study. Each calls for its own method and data collected (Polkinghorne, 2005); however, most qualitative researchers follow a set procedure and process that includes an introduction, questions, methods of data collection, and analysis (Creswell, 2018).

Qualitative research lends itself to those who desire an in-depth and detailed understanding of the research problem. Rather than asking participants to complete a survey or analyze statistical data to find meaning, qualitative researchers ask participants to let them into their lives, learn their stories, and join a part of their lives, if only for a short time. The data, the lived experiences of the participants, guide qualitative researchers in their understanding of the findings guided by the research questions. Due to the personal relationships that are established, those who conduct qualitative research "empower individuals to share their stories, hear their voices, and minimize the power relationships that often exist between a researcher and the participants in a study" (Creswell, 2018, p. 45).

There are no set rules or characteristics of qualitative research that one can argue fits for all methods or that all qualitative researchers could possibly agree upon. However, there are a number of different explanations, summaries, and lists that researchers have shared. As one example of an effort to create a general definition or list of characteristics, Mason (2002)

includes the following list of key points about qualitative research. She states that qualitative

research should:

1. Be systematically and rigorously conducted.
2. Be accountable for its quality and its claims; it should not attempt to position itself beyond judgement, and should provide its audience with material upon which they can judge it.
3. Be strategically conducted, yet flexible and contextual.
4. Involve critical self-scrutiny by the researcher, or active reflexivity.
5. Produce explanations or arguments, rather than claiming to offer mere descriptions.
6. Produce explanations or arguments which are generalizable in some way, or have some demonstrable wider resonance.
7. Not be seen as a unified body of philosophy and practice, whose methods can simply be combined unproblematically. Similarly, qualitative research should not be seen as necessarily in opposition to, or antithetical to, quantitative research.
8. Be conducted as a moral practice, and with regard to its political context. (pp. 7-8)

With regard to this specific project, I selected a qualitative approach because in order to

fully answer the research questions, there needed to be opportunity for participants to tell their

stories, their lived experience of teaching library instruction courses. The context in which each

participant lives and works needs to be examined in order to fully understand the experiences

and decisions made by the participants. Additionally, as teaching methods and styles are an

individual choice, a specific preference one might have, it is important to allow each participant

a voice in the examination of teaching and choices made by instruction librarians.

## Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this study was to explore how five instruction librarians discuss the role

of engaged pedagogy and critical information literacy in library instruction for undergraduate

students. The discussion of why and how librarians choose the teaching styles and methods they

use in classes everyday provided an opportunity to learn not only these answers, but also

opinions, viewpoints, and understanding of engaged pedagogy and critical information literacy.

With this information, librarians throughout the profession will be able to learn where the

strengths and weaknesses are in their own teaching and in their organization with regard to library instruction teaching styles. Overall, instruction librarians will be able to use their colleagues' narratives to reflect on their own teaching.

## Research Questions

This qualitative narrative inquiry study explored the teaching styles and method decisions of instruction librarians from Midwest higher education institutions. Specifically, the study explored (a) the decisions of librarians to teach either in the traditional or critical library pedagogy manner and (b) barriers or encouragement in librarians' choice to teach through a critical lens. The research questions are:

1. What are the participants' experiences teaching information literacy and library instruction during their academic career as librarians?

2. How do the participants view the role of teaching method and style in their teaching and preparation?

3. How do the participants view the impact of their library instruction on their students' learning?

## Research Design of the Study & Rationale

I used the qualitative methodology of narrative inquiry, utilizing interviewing, observational data, and field notes recorded in a reflexive journal for data collection. Specifically, narrative analysis is used in the study. Below is (a) a brief overview of narrative inquiry, its suitability for the study, selection of specific narrative analysis type, a listing of elements required to design a narrative inquiry study, the connection with critical theory, and its use within the research of education. Following the overview, information pertaining to (b) participant selection and (c) research site is included.

To begin, one needs to understand that a discussion about narrative inquiry means a discussion about story:

> Story, in the current idiom, is a portal through which a person enters the world and by which their experience of the world is interpreted and made personally meaningful. Viewed this way, narrative is the phenomenon studied in inquiry. Narrative inquiry, the study of experience as story, then, is first and foremost a way of thinking about experience. Narrative inquiry as a methodology entails a view of the phenomenon. To use narrative inquiry methodology is to adopt a particular narrative view of experience as phenomena under study. (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006, p. 477)

Narrative inquiry overall as a qualitative research method allows researchers to gain great insight from the stories of their participants. With regard to using narrative inquiry as a research method, "we say that people by nature lead storied lives and tell stories of those lives, whereas narrative researchers describe such lives, collect and tell stories of them, and write narratives of experience" (Connelly & Clandinin, 1990, p. 2). People tell their own stories to reflect their lived experience, "naming their own reality" both with and against the mainstream (Delgado & Stefancic, 1993, p. 462). Participants share their realities about a topic or event in their life in an interview conversation with the researcher.

Researchers learn in-depth information about the participants' lives and then combine the interview data with field notes, journals, or a different data source to create a narrative, a story, about the specific problem being examined. The narrative (or storied) analysis "is an attempt to understand individual persons, including their spontaneity and responsibility, as they have acted in the concrete social world" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p.19). The intentionality and ability to learn about the participants in an in-depth manner and share their stories about experiences teaching in libraries is why the narrative inquiry methodology was best suited for my research.

Specifically, the type of narrative inquiry methodology for this project was narrative analysis. As opposed to analysis of narratives, where the data being analyzed is in fact a story,

narrative analysis uses other forms of data such as interviews, case studies, observations, or documents, to create the story, or narrative. In other words, "the purpose of narrative analysis is to produce stories as the outcome of the research" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 15). Researchers begin with questions they are interested in learning the answers to and seek data that will allow them to organize information into a storied outcome. Using a play, or drama, as the storied outcome,

> presents a unique opportunity to create a close, sometimes seamless fit between what we have experienced and learned in one narrative inquiry and what find essential to share. In its three-dimensionality-on-paper, drama can broaden understandings of themes, metathemes, contexts, social/political/cultural/economic surrounds, the players, the complex researcher, and the pulse of the story. (Ely, 2007, p. 591)

Participants share stories from their lives from the past, present, and hope for the future; and while each individual participant has stories of their own to share, when weaved together with the other participants' stories, a new narrative is heard: voices from each participant sharing a commonality of experiences. Ely (2007) describes the powerful effect using a play in narrative inquiry: "[I]f the drama works, the substance of the temporal happening, the contextualization, offers readers layered, nuanced pictures that make sense of often puzzling, complex events—pictures meant to trigger understandings, feelings, and considerations about past, present, and future" (p. 590). Presenting the analysis of the participants' stories in this manner shares the layers of a narrative that encompass the many themes in each participant's life. Though themes carry through all of the interview data for all participants, their stories are not straight, linear, and set lines; neither are their lives. A play then offers an analysis that shares "layered, nuanced pictures" with its audience (Ely, 2007, p. 590). For the sake of this research, the narratives were created using data gathered in the participants' interviews along with observational data and field journal notes.

Understanding how to create a narrative inquiry or write a narrative story (structured in play form) or even begin planning a research study utilizing narrative inquiry is like most things, more complicated than one might think. It is not simply just "write a story" about your research topic. It involves planning and design. Clandinin, Pushor, and Murray Orr (2007) describe a framework of eight design elements of narrative inquiries in their article specifically focusing on teachers and teacher educators. These elements are briefly summarized below:

1. Justification – reasons why the study is important – must include connections to the personal, the practical, and the social.
2. Naming of the phenomenon – the 'what' being inquired into.
3. Consideration and description of the particular methods use to study the phenomenon.
4. Analysis and interpretation processes.
5. Positioning of the study in related to other research on the particular phenomenon.
6. Description of the uniqueness of the study.
7. Ethical considerations.
8. Process of representation and text selection. (pp. 24-31)

A major point emphasized by Clandinin, Pushor, and Murry Orr (2007) is narrative inquiry is not a last-minute decision to "add a story in real quick" to research projects. Narrative inquiry is not simply "telling a story" and is actually a methodology that requires an extensive planning and organization process in addition to considerable mental labor in the forming of an accurate and representational narrative of the phenomenon being studied.

Connecting qualitative research methodology to a theoretical framework created from multiple critical theories and pedagogies is not difficult to imagine. Examining our world and society through a critical lens while focusing on specific moments of people's lives and how those moments are connected to larger oppressive systems and institutions are baseline assumptions for some (read: me). However, Critical Theory scholars and narrative inquiry scholars do not always agree on effectiveness of the other and at times, participated in a battle of recrimination (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007). Whereas narrative inquirers may regard Critical

Theory condescendingly, believing that "it approaches people's experience with the presumption of deficits that only the Marxist academic can remedy," Clandinin and Rosiek (2007) argue that there is "much that narrative inquirers can gain from a continued dialogue with Marxist-influenced social theorists" (pp. 50-51). However, when Critical Theory is used in connection with narrative inquiry, it creates a bridge back to the lives of the people whom are affected by the unjust society in which we live. Critical Theory is used to form a "narrative inquiry research community that can avoid simply reproducing narratives that support macrosocial systems of oppression, and can instead contribute to the amelioration of oppressive conditions" (Clandinin & Rosiek, 2007, p. 51).

An additional consideration made in the selection of narrative inquiry for the research was its ability to connect to not only an individual's personal life, but also the context in which the participant (myself included) lives. This dynamic is important in all fields; however, it particularly becomes useful within the field of education. I developed narratives from other educators in my own fields, both education and librarianship (which can also be considered education in this context). In the last couple of decades there has been a variety of narrative research conducted in connection to education (see, e.g., Clandinin & Connelly, 1992, 1995, 2000; Elbaz-Luwisch, 2007; Hatch & Wisniewski, 1995; Lyons & Laboskey, 2002; Tierney & Lincoln, 1997). Though the specific areas of education that have been covered are great in number, one area specifically related to this research project is narrative inquiry and its focus not just on an individual participant's story, but also the context in which the participant lives. In a discussion of using narrative inquiry to study K-12 teachers' experiences, Elbaz-Luwisch (2007) explains,

> the understanding of the individual cannot be fully realized without a simultaneous consideration of context: Not only the place of the individual biography within a wider

historical story but also the embeddedness of the teacher in a school and school system and its mandated curricula, ideologies, pedagogical trends, and reform processes need to be taken into account. (p. 359)

As the research questions indicate, the context in which the participants work in every day play an active role in their decisions and experiences with regard to teaching styles and methods. Using narrative analysis allowed me to examine participants' experiences both on an individual level and in the wider context in which they live and work.

## Participant Selection

In order to investigate the teaching methods and styles of instruction librarians, and their experiences using them in the classroom, I interviewed four instruction librarians who teach in an academic library located in Kansas, Nebraska, or California. The fifth instruction librarian to contribute is me. Selecting participants from a variety of states (and sizes of universities) is to assure there is no geographical or university-size bias; in other words, to minimize potentially similar teaching styles at the same geographic locations.

The selection of participants was purposive, "chosen for their relevance to the research question, analytical framework, and explanation or account being developed in the research" (Schwandt, 2015, p. 277), as well as criterion to "explain why particular units were chosen," (Schwandt, 2015, p. 270). These criteria include instruction librarians who are known to me and who teach in a variety of methods and styles. Each participant teaches at a university distinct from the others, with the exception of the university at which I teach—there were two from that institution, including myself. The reason for this specific purposive selection was to ensure the participants would be able to share their stories of their lived experiences in instruction librarian careers.

**The Research Site**

The research was conducted at a Midwest land-grant university at which I am an Associate Professor in the Academic Services Department of the Libraries. The university has an enrollment of approximately 24,000 undergraduate and graduate students, over 1,000 full-time faculty, and 3,000 full-time staff. During the 2015-2016 academic year, there were 3,900 Bachelor's degrees conferred, in addition to 990 Master's, 179 Doctoral, and 115 DVM Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine degrees (Kansas State University, 2018). The university is a primarily white institution (PWI) with 75% of the students reporting as White. The next two largest percentages are students reported as International with 8% and then 6.5% for those reporting as Hispanic/Latino. For faculty, the numbers include 78% White, 13% Asian, and 4% Hispanic as the three largest groups (Kansas State University Office of Planning and Analysis, 2018). The university's main campus is located in a town of 55,000 people and the university is the largest employer in town. In addition, the town is located near a military post, which is the second largest employer. Similar to the university's demographics, the town is primarily (83.5%) White, with Black as the second largest with 5.5%, and Asian as the third (5.1%). The majority of people (29.4%) in town are between the ages of 20 to 24 years old (City of Manhattan, Kansas, 2011). Analysis of data and all other parts of the research process, except for data collection, occurred at the location of this university campus.

The sites of data collection varied for each participant. Locations primarily included a location on the campus at which the participant taught.

## Data Collection

Data collection for this narrative inquiry study was done through the use of semi-structured interviews, observational data, and a reflexive journal. Rather than having to "rely on

a single data source," I used this combination to triangulate data sources and thereby provide trustworthiness to the research and data analysis (Creswell, 2018, p. 43). Using multiple data collection methods gave an opportunity for me to "generate a true (i.e., authentic) understanding of people's experiences" (Schwandt, 2015, p. 11), through the recording of both audio and visual data during the interview and also throughout the research process. The data collection procedure, includes: (a) data and participant protection, (b) timeline, (c) interviews, (d) observational data, (e) classroom teaching observations, (f) reflexive journal, and (g) role of the researcher.

### Data and Participant Protection

I received Institutional Review Board approval prior to conducting research (see Appendix B for IRB #9316 approval letter, application, letter of consent, and debriefing statement). All participants are anonymous, and each was assigned a pseudonym of their own selection. Participants were audio recorded during their interviews. Both the audio files and transcription files were saved in a password-protected folder on an external hard drive. The hard drive is kept in a locked filing cabinet in my office at place of residence.

### Timeline

The original proposed timeline for the study appears below; the actual timeline follows. The timeline and ability to complete classroom observations as originally planned were changed due to a significant event in my life. In May 2018, the library at which I work was severely damaged due to a fire. In addition to being displaced from my office, all of my office belongings were destroyed, and I needed to rethink and restructure my job. The fire caused enough damage that the library is not scheduled to completely reopen until the end of the year 2020. This situation caused me to postpone my interviews with participants and due to the nature of the

library instruction, I was unable to perform any classroom observations because the summer is not an active time for library instruction sessions. The observation checklist remains in Appendix F as the concepts and activities included in each are a prominent part of this research and analysis. Both timelines appear below.

**Proposed Timeline**

April 25, 2018

       Dissertation proposal meeting with committee

May 18, 2018

       IRB approval received

May – July 2018

       First interviews and classroom teaching observations of participants

July – August 2018

       Second interviews with participants

September 2018

       Transcription of audio files; member checks with participants

September 2018 – March 2019

       Analysis and dissertation writing; peer debriefing

April 2019

       Final dissertation defense

**Actual Timeline**

April 25, 2018

       Dissertation proposal meeting with committee

May 18, 2018

IRB approval received

<u>May 22, 2018</u>

Fire occurred at campus library

<u>July 2018</u>

First interviews with participants

<u>August 2018</u>

Second interviews with participants

<u>October 2018</u>

Transcription of audio files; member checks with participants

<u>November 2018 – February 2019</u>

Analysis and dissertation writing

<u>March 27, 2019</u>

Final dissertation defense

**Interviews**

When the IRB approval was finalized, I began contacting potential participants via email and scheduled visits to the location of each participant. To ensure the participants' comfort, interviews were conducted face-to-face at a setting of their selection. There were four interviews of other participants, in addition to my own, making five instruction librarians total. Each librarian was interviewed twice. The length of interviews varied between one hour and two and a half hours; the second interview was longer than the first for all four participants. Three participants were interviewed in person, at locations of their choosing, ranging from work conference rooms to offices to living rooms in their homes. The fourth participant was interviewed using Skype as the researcher's originally-planned travel to participant's location

was not able to be completed. In addition to the four participants who were interviewed, I served

as fifth participant and also answered all questions from the interview questionnaire.

I asked the participants to share their lived experiences with me, their own stories of

library instruction, teaching styles, and reflection on their students' learning in the classroom.

The primary method of data collection was through semi-structured interviews, which guided the

research with pre-determined questions. The questions asked during the interview were

developed as "subquestions in the research study, phrased in a way that interviewees can

understand" (Creswell, 2018, p. 164). The interview questions for the first interview were sent to

the participants in advance; the same process followed for the second interview. The interviews

were semi-structured as additional questions emerged during the interview and asked for further

clarification, information, or discussion topics.  As I used narrative inquiry, and my goal was to

be a part of my participants' lives through their narratives and stories, my questions invited the

participants to tell stories of their experiences rather than answering many questions of a

narrower focus. The interview protocol is included as Appendix C and includes information

about consent, member checks, and peer debriefing statements. The interview questions and

Informed Consent Form are in Appendix D and Appendix E, respectively.

Each interview was audio recorded with the exception of one participant who was

interviewed through Skype; Call Recorder from the Ecamm Networks was additionally used to

ensure an accurate recording of that interview. All recordings were transcribed and each

participant was given a copy of the transcript to perform a member check for accuracy. The

participants were given the option of removing any information, making corrections, or adding

comments to the transcript. Two participants made corrections and one participant both deleted

comments and added in comments as bracketed [comment added during member check review]

notes in the transcript. The fifth participant, me, typed all answers to questions, transcribing my own interview while answering the questions.

## Observational Data

With the permission of the participants, I had planned to observe one classroom teaching session. This observation would have taken place before the interview happened to ensure an authentic class unaffected by answering interview questions beforehand. Each participant would have selected the class for observation. For each classroom observation, I was planning to use a standardized checklist, included in Appendix F, created from a combination of the feminist instruction table in Appendix A (Accardi, 2013) and the Behavioral Engagement Related to Instruction protocol (Lane & Harris, 2015).

When only using an audio recording, researchers may miss visual data that is apparent during an interview. Though one answer might be to video record it, a researcher can choose to take field notes rather than work with a video camera that may seem obtrusive to a participant. These field notes serve as an additional data collection method and may include things such as observations of body language, inflections in tone, environmental factors, and the creation of a participant's environment if held in their office or home (Polkinghorne, 1995). In addition to taking notes during the interview, additional extensive notes about other observations made were recorded immediately following the interview in a location away from the data collection site.

## Reflexive Field Journal

I recorded thoughts, discussions, questions, and ideas as formal field notes collected in a reflexive field journal (Creswell, 2018; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Using a reflexive field journal became even more important as I traveled to interview my participants. Whether the ideas and questions that arose while I was driving to a different state or the same when I am present in a

new environment, these notes gave me data to reflect on and examine during the data analysis process. The records that I made in the journal are important and helped to "provide the fullest possible justification for [my] own decisions" (Mason, 2002, p. 77). In addition, as a third method of collecting data, it adds to the credibility of my research and the trustworthiness of my data.

## Role of the Researcher

During the research process, the role that I played changed with context. As a qualitative researcher who understands the importance of learning more about a person's lived experiences than what can be gathered on a short survey, I worked on building rapport and establishing trust with participants (Creswell, 2018). Part of that was showing that I am human and that I have an interest in understanding the participant's experience or story. If I had not succeeded in building trust and rapport, then I would not have earned their authentic stories of lived experiences.

Part of conducting interviews, building rapport and establishing trust, and showing an interest in the participants' stories is the understanding that the researcher is a part of this social interaction. We are not just people sitting at a table with someone who is talking (Creswell 2018). We cannot deny our role in this collection of data and we cannot deny that we are not "objective" and we have bias. Mason (2002) argues that interviews are social interactions and one cannot just separate the interview from the social interaction it was conducted in because "you cannot separate 'facts' from contexts" and that we should instead "try to understand the complexities of the interaction, and try to develop a sense of how context and situation work in interview interactions" (p. 65). During interviews then, it was important for me not only to be an active participant in the interviews, but also to note observational data and thoughts (possibly

waiting until right after the interview to do so) in order to ensure I was collecting as much relevant data as possible.

As a part of building rapport and trust with participants, it is important to remember how the difference in quantitative and qualitative research methods is largely due to relationships and interactions. Often, researchers are not just researchers and the roles played vary throughout the process. At times, these role changes allow researchers to learn more from the participants and gather deeper insights; at other times, the changes in roles become situational, maybe awkward, and may also lead to relationships outside of the research project. These different roles are what Noddings (1986) considers part of the ethical considerations when conducting qualitative research in education—and what I consider one of the many benefits of selecting to use qualitative research methods, narrative analysis especially. Noddings explains,

> When we encounter research subjects face to face, we are forced to deal with them as autonomous beings, and so our ethical problems are, by the very nature of our working relationship, different from those engendered by research in which we never encounter the living subject as individual. In qualitative research, we often chat with our subjects, share food and coffee breaks, and generally build trusting relationships. (p. 507)

## Data Analysis

Once interviews are transcribed, I gathered them with the notes from my field journal and observational data and began to read everything before beginning analysis (the reading of all transcripts and notes was a reiterative process). The first step of the analysis was to examine all data and assign codes to all relevant data. This step entailed letting the data create codes rather than forcing preconceived codes onto the data. Creswell (2018) explains this process used by qualitative researchers lets them "build their patterns, categories, and themes from the 'bottom-up,' by organizing the data into increasingly more abstract units of information" (p. 45). Emphasis is put on the "construction or discovery of concepts that give categorical identity to the

particulars and items in their collected data" (Polkinghorne, 1995, p. 10). Each piece of data was analyzed using the same method and coding key. Once initial coding is complete, I examined and analyzed all codes to start the process of placing codes together into larger emerging themes. After a review of the assigned codes-into-themes, they were then analyzed and sorted into patterns or categories (Polkinghorne, 1995; Strauss, 1987). I used Creswell's (2018) data analysis spiral where the process begins at the bottom with the data and then moves through and around levels of analysis and process until those data and themes are represented in the final report or account. The data analysis, coding, and emerging themes were through the lens of the critical theories framework, i.e., Critical Theory, Critical Race Feminist Theory, and Critical Information Literacy, in order to answer the research questions (Creswell, 2018). During the analysis and coding process, I compared interview transcripts with both observational data and reflexive field journal notes to ensure that no context was lost from the coding and that there was consistency among the analyses.

## Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985) explained that the basic issue connected to trustworthiness is answering questions such as how can a narrative inquiry researcher, "persuade his or her audiences (including self) that the findings of an inquiry are worth paying attention to, worth taking account of? What arguments can be mounted, what criteria invoked, what questions asked, that would be persuasive?" (p. 290). In addition, trustworthiness includes "how researchers account for and disclose their approach to all aspects of the research process are key to evaluating their work substantively and methodologically" (Anfara, Brown, & Mangione, 2002, p. 28). Trustworthiness of the data in this research, the answering of these questions, is

addressed through (a) credibility, (b) transferability, (c) dependability, and (d) confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Each is described in turn.

### Credibility

Credibility parallels the traditional quantitative criterion of internal validity. Credibility is met when there is agreement between what the participant believes is the meaning of their experiences and the researcher's representation of those experiences and meaning. For this study, I used member checks to assure participants' experiences were accurately represented. Member checks occurred first through an accuracy check of interview transcription by the participants. Through this method, "the data are, in an important sense, mutually constructed by researcher and subjects" (Noddings, 1986, p. 509) but as the lived experiences belong to the participants, credibility is set by having participants review the researcher's interpretations.

### Transferability

Transferability parallels the traditional quantitative criterion of external validity. Transferability ensures another researcher would have "sufficient information about the context in which an inquiry is carried out so that anyone else interested in transferability has a base of information appropriate to the judgment" and enough information about this study to replicate it with their own participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, pp. 124-125). Within this study, transferability is met through the detailed descriptions of the methodology sections (a) participant selection, (b) site selection, (c) data collection, including participant sampling and data collection methods, and (d) data analysis methods.

### Dependability

Dependability parallels the traditional quantitative criterion of reliability. In order to ensure dependability, I demonstrated that the research process was logical, documented, and able

to be traced, an "internal check on rigor" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 237). For this study, I used first, triangulation of the data. Rather than using only one data source, I collected data from interview transcripts, observational data notes, and field notes recorded in a reflexive journal. Each set of data was compared to the others to ensure accuracy. Second, I did member checks with participants at various points during the research process, giving them opportunities to verify the accuracy of the data collected and interpretations of the data by me. Third, peer debriefers reviewed interview transcripts for accuracy.

## Confirmability

Confirmability parallels the traditional quantitative criterion of objectivity. Confirmability ensures all interpretations and assumptions can be directly linked back to original data. In this study, I used data triangulation and note taking in a reflexive field journal. Using a reflexive field journal is not just to list observations while collecting data; rather, reflexive field journals contain the thoughts of the researcher as the research process unfolds. These field notes included thoughts on how decisions were made with regard to whom to interview, any revision of research questions, and thoughts on usefulness of particular data collection methods. The reflexive field journal was additionally included as data (process notes) in an audit trail (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 319). Through this method, I was at all times accountable to participants, readers of the research, and myself as the researcher as there is a constant authentic recording of my internal thought process.

## Summary

This study used a qualitative narrative inquiry research design. A critical theories framework, consisting of Critical Theory, Critical Race Feminist Theory, and Critical Information Literacy, were the lenses through which the data were analyzed and interpreted. The

triangulation of data and inclusion of multiple member checks throughout the data collection and analysis process ensured the trustworthiness of the research. Data analysis was conducted through layers of coding, emerging themes and patterns, through the critical theories lens. Chapter 4 will address the results of the study in the form of a one-act play created by the researcher.

# Chapter 4 - Presentation of Findings

## Sometimes a Teacher, Sometimes Not: A One-Act Play

SOMETIMES A TEACHER, SOMETIMES NOT

-------------------------------------------------------------

A Play of Connections and Voice, in One Act

by

Melia Erin Fritch

## Cast of Characters/Librarians

Rupert:  Caucasian, male, heterosexual; 49 years old; academic librarian; head of a public services department; worked in same academic library for 20 years, working with both reference and instruction; father was a high school teacher; educational background in sciences; description of himself includes "librarian"

Anastasia:  White, cis female, heterosexual; 34 years old; academic librarian; STEM librarian; mom was a high school librarian and she grew up "playing in the stacks" at her mom's library and biking to the summer reading program; holds PhD in Library and Information Science

Nancy:  White, British (includes that her nationality is Canadian), cisgender woman (identified as androgynous in high school), dyke (but is okay with lesbian; just prefers dyke); 48 years old; academic librarian; faculty and engagement librarian; educational background includes sociology, women's studies, and being "very politically involved in a lot of things which would now be called social justice;" description of herself includes "feminist" and "ADHDer"

Karl:  Latino (Nicaraguan), male, heterosexual; 49 years old; academic librarian; subject specialist for 10+ different areas; teaches Introduction to Chicano Research Methodology (planning to change the name to Introduction to Latinx Research Methodology); holds a PhD in History; description of himself includes "first-generation student"

Melia:  White, cisgender female, bisexual; 41 years old; academic librarian for social sciences and education; focuses on library instruction, assessment, and critical pedagogies; educational background in English and social sciences; description of herself includes "feminist"

SETTING:          In a black box theatre, five librarians stand on an

empty stage, standing in a "W" formation, spanning

the width of the stage. Librarians are costumed in

their own unique way, of their own personal choice.


Stage lights set to warm glow, a comfortable dusk.

Spotlights set to focus in on each person. Each

person will be lit by spotlight when they are

speaking to the audience. When not speaking, each

librarian will remain "frozen" in the last gesture or

pose they used from their last lines spoken.


The librarians speak their lines together with

cadence, telling the story of librarians, their

everyday experiences, choices in teaching, and how

they impact students' lives.

(FADE IN)

**ANASTASIA**

There has to be something better. I have to be doing something differently, not only for the students but for myself. I can't just stand up here and do this. It's very awkward and if I feel awkward, students can sense it. They can feel that I don't want to be up here doing this and then it's just an awful toxic classroom.

**NANCY**

I've been using different frameworks all along. I would not necessarily announce what they were in an instruction session, but I definitely looked at stuff really differently than other folks, which was like, "Nancy, it's just, we're just looking up jails." And I'm like, "it is not just a jail, it is not just a jail. It was never *just* a jail." And watch out for Nancy's soapbox because I think everybody deserves access to information.

**KARL**

I think I've alluded to it already, it's just for a lot, for a lot of students even before going into any of the databases, just a recognition that they are literally and figuratively working under the gun. They cannot afford to wait to the last minute.

**MELIA**

I actually first heard of something like critical library instruction in an article I read online or maybe a book chapter. I can't remember. Of course, I think it rocks. I really got into this deeper when I started studying bell hooks and Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* so it was a good convergence of ideas for me. I love that it is political and I love that it is pretty much in line with my own teaching goals.

**RUPERT**

I like those ideas. I think it's important. I'm not really sure how far like, the revolution, you know, that's just kind of like underlying—to overthrow that, that as a white male, you know, it's kinda like, I'm sensitive and I don't…[pause]. I don't like the idea of just perpetuating all the patriarchy and the systems to keep people down. *And* I want to keep all my privilege in place.

**NANCY**

So one example would be a—so we have first-year experience classes and I got asked to do a social welfare class and the topic was poverty in America and the professor wants everything, "Teach them everything." And she's like, "I can give you, you can have a classroom, I guess 75 minutes." And I don't argue with faculty if I've never worked with them before. They're like, "This is what I'm going to give you." And I'm like, "Okay." And I take what they give me, and I do whatever they ask, with my own spin, to some degree.

**MELIA**

I do a little bit of all the methods and styles. For some courses, because I know it's what the faculty wants and I am sometimes just too tired and stressed to argue with them, I do a lecture one-shot.

**RUPERT**

I feel like, it's hard to really get into, like, the critical theory. I think it's hard to do that, to get to those kinds of discussions and simultaneously, at least for a lot of assignments I was working with, and different teachers, do what they were asking me to do and also do sort of consciousness raising and thinking more critically about what we're, what is this whole enterprise about? Why are we even doing this? Why did your teacher give you this assignment? [laughs] You know?

Interesting questions, but it's hard to make the teacher happy. Yes, we need to. I mean, our success relies so much on that, I think. So we're in a little bit of a pickle.

## ANASTASIA

It's not your syllabus, it's not your curriculum. You don't get to make certain choices about that. You don't build relationships with students the same way that you would if you had them for a full semester or even six weeks.

## NANCY

But anyhow, so the professor is like, "So…scholarly sources and how do they connect and blah, blah blah, blah blah." And I'm like, "Okay. Poverty in America." So this class was around the time of the Olympics. What is the critique about the Olympics and what it does? I started looking at information on mega events in the Olympics and I didn't even know the term "mega event" yet. So I started looking at things connected to the Canadian Olympics, kind of the good, the bad and the ugly of it. And I created this activity with the students where we were going to look at a range of sources. Not judging them as to whether or not they were like, "this is a good source because it has got...," but it was to, kind of a…we need a better word than interrogate…but to really look at this. Trying to get into it and we couldn't…we can never go as far as I want to go because there's never enough time because it's not my class.

## KARL

Oh, I should have clarified that aspect, that part of establishing a relationship with the teacher or the TA who's been teaching the class—just letting them know that "No, I'm sorry. Twenty minutes is not going to do it. I need to…you at least need to make time for me for an hour or so." And then quite frankly you have to say no. And I think that's something that a lot of librarians,

you know, we cave in, nobody wants to be the bad guy. The attitude is, "Well, better some time than no time."

## RUPERT

A lot of it is because of the time constraints because I don't know the individuals in the classes, I don't have a way of knowing where they're coming from, what they already know, what they don't know, what they care about. They don't care about what we're trying to do. And so, um, that's the problem though.

## ANASTASIA

To go into a room that the instructor was almost always male and the classroom would easily be all male, if not 80 percent male. Um, and to say, "I know what I'm talking about. Listen to me," to students who were very close to my age, some of them were older than me. Um, I have a lot of confidence, but I had to build that confidence wall around me when I was teaching the first couple of years. So that I could tell students, "Yes, this is important. Yes, you need to stay. Yes, you need to sit down. We're doing this because your instructor asked me to be here. They think what I have to say is valuable."

## NANCY

But I did this activity where I actually laminated the pieces of paper because it's like, they're going to get trashed doing this. But I had examples of videos, stuff from Twitter and it was all over the place connected to the Olympics, dealing with homelessness, sex workers, transmitted STDs, gentrification of the location where the event was happening. There was a lot of controversy around First Nations people participating in it. First Nations people dancing at the Olympics, is it a really moment of colonizing "unity"? But what we never heard about at that moment in time, while Donald Sutherland is talking, is that outside behind the barriers, were

another group of First Nations people protesting all of this. Because it's on Native land. They disagreed with the politics of what was going on with the Olympics. So there was controversy, then controversy, then more controversy.

**RUPERT**

Like, oh my God, I'm gonna get in trouble. I guess I've been a little scared of it because it's like sometimes, it's like a rabbit hole. Like if you're questioning every source of authority and wondering why, what are the motivations behind it? Where do you stop? Sort of, like how, is it enough just to question it and be aware of it? But if you're craving the sense of certitude, it's kinda like, I feel a little guilty with going to students and saying, "Okay, look, if you're being a rational person, you need to be questioning every damn thing you hear." It feels like, you know, you're making...like you're wanting to tell people you can never be comfortable. Right? And so I always kind of feel a little guilty about that.

**NANCY**

With the "new changes" that are not new? But they are for a lot of people and they're like, "Ooh, a shiny new car: critical information literacy." I'm like, yeah, we didn't call it that in my day. But I get it. It's the new way to think about instruction.

**KARL**

And neutral isn't real, it's not a thing, that's what's being exposed and now you've got to ask yourself, well, who deemed it neutral for what reasons? Were you being neutral or being good, in fact?" Why? And then, of course, "Why are you questioning? Why should you question? Why are you causing trouble? This is making me uncomfortable." It's like, it's not a question about you; it's not a personal attack on you. It's others. I mean, you know, whenever I hear that phrase, "Oh, I wish we had it like the good old days." So, like what? The fifties when women had no

rights, people of color had no voting? What are you talking about - those days didn't even exist anyway. When you talk about the good old days...yeah, it was never there.

## ANASTASIA

I did teach one semester when we revamped the curriculum to include more critical evaluation and understanding where information is coming from. And we teach a whole lesson in one 50-minute session on biases and we have students look at…and it's all about politics and we designed it that way. Look at two similar events or news sources and compare and contrast those two things. Um, it was heated, and it's supposed to be…fully expect students to come with their own experiences and biases and political affiliations. But I think at the end of the class they all found it very useful. So they, even if they didn't agree with what they had found, they all agreed that having those skills to look deeper was useful.

## MELIA

Seriously though, if we can help students examine their world in a critical manner, evaluate the information around them and their surroundings, I think we'd be rocking it, for sure. Of course, this is not easy and frankly is mad crazy difficult but I like to think that if nothing else, we can work with students and teach them how to at least evaluate information so they can make better consumer decisions.

## RUPERT

It gets so crazy making, trying to figure out what can you believe, honestly. How do you trust? What do you, how can you trust? What does trust mean to this [political] environment? And I think library instruction can play a really big role in that, in that conversation.

**NANCY**

So the activity that I had the students do was, I gave them all these sources and I had examples. For me, it's if you can tell what the attributes are of a source. So if you can kind of understand what the attributes are, you've won half the battle because you kind of know what it is and then you can dig into it to figure out how you want to use it. You have to figure out what the purpose is. I had all these descriptions of what things were and then I just gave them scholarly articles that were 30 pages. I gave them the first page and the last page. The first, the first page was intro blah, blah, blah; last page was the bibliography or the very end of the bibliography. And I don't know if some of this worked as well as I'd hoped it would, but then I'd have like an image of the YouTube clip of like First Nations people, protesting against the Olympics, articles about sappy stories about the Olympics, which everybody loves. So it was a combination of all of these things and they're all connected to poverty.

**KARL**

You know, kids these days, they have an idea. They just need to be pointed in the right direction. So, they might say, "Well, I use Wikipedia," and I say, "that's a good start. Let's delve a little deeper." And that's the most important thing. I find that they're comfortable with it and that you're not just simply, "You must learn this technique and this is where you'll be tested on this kind of thing." It gets boring.

**RUPERT**

I've had classes where I felt like people were very heavily engaged and they would say "this was great. I wish I had had this information. This is going to help me so much". Um, but I've also had the contrast, where you have a sea of blank faces, no engagement, no overt signs of engagement whatsoever. Ideally you would actually try to have the students do something with what you've

been giving them, the experience to learn, and then you would know, you would have some insight into whether they've gained new skills, abilities or attitudes have been changed in any way whatsoever. And I always felt that was like, I guess the messiness of that, the time that it takes and the possibilities that you won't get to certain concepts or content…The exploratory active learning, it just takes time and I always felt really time constrained in our setting.

## ANASTASIA

So I do a lot of active learning in my classes now, which is really exciting because that's more of what I like to do.

## KARL

"No, I can't come in for 20 minutes to just, 'hi, it's [Karl] and, well goodbye everybody. Take care.' Just no." Twenty minutes? I'm barely getting warmed up. I need 20 minutes just to get them engaged.

## ANASTASIA

That was feedback I got on a post-it, "this database changed their life, happy face." Um, that's super exciting. And so, man, that's just exciting, skills that we can give to people that they're gonna use outside of college. Like, I'm sure people get excited about algebra and they get excited about art history and things, um, but looking something up on Google and be able to tell that it's legit is a skill that everyone will use after they leave college.

## NANCY

I handed stuff out to all the students and I said, "Okay, tell me where it goes on the board." And I had primary, secondary, tertiary, and kind of the typical things. And I said, tell me where it goes. And the students started asking me questions, they didn't talk to one another. They didn't even look at what I'd given them. And they're like…so I walked them through it the first time and then

said, "Now give it all back." And then I switched it all around, gave it back, and I said "Go." So I had them do this exercise. And then it's like, "Okay, so why did you put this here?" "Well, well I was talking to so and so and they said that this might go here." And I said, "And did you look over at the board to see what it said?" "Well, yeah kind of…" and some of them were not right and it was squishy. Because this shit is squishy and so, and that's what I kept saying, "This is squishy and it takes time to figure it out."

## ANASTASIA

So that's something that I do in almost all of my classes. If it's not, "show them exactly how to get to this specific piece of information," we do a think-pair-share that way they will think about their topic. So they will write in their topic and then we have them think about like their subject terms and then I'll say, "Okay, stop and share with your partner what your subject, your subject words are for your proposal." They'll share with their partner and then we'll go back to writing a little bit and then I'll say, "Okay, add something to your partner's keyword list because they are done thinking of these keywords. But everybody comes from different backgrounds and thinks about things differently. So add something to their list that they didn't think of." And then they think it's great because they think their partner is doing some of their homework for them and so by the time we get done, they've outlined, they have keywords, and um, you know, they've thought more in depth about their topic.

## RUPERT

One of the main messages that I'm trying to impart is that we're here and that we, we're an ally to students that need help and they can come to us later.

**KARL**

In my experience, for a lot of grad students, Project Muse, JSTOR, that's it. Oh, and MLA, MLA International Bibliography, that's all they need to learn. And so sometimes when you talk about, you know, because they'll go talk about, "Oh, I want to examine the intersection or intersectionality of gender 'this' or gender 'that'," or you know, whatever, fill in…you know, critical—you know, we used to call it the Holy Trinity: gender, race, class. Now it's, now it's the square: gender, race, class, sexuality, whatever. So I would say, "well, have you looked at the GenderWatch database? Have you looked at...?" He's like, "Why would I want to do that?" "It's gender or sexuality, you know, you want to do…you are being taught to do the due diligence, but it's hard for you to think about it if..." "Well, I have enough just by looking at JSTOR or MLA or…" And then later the students are like, "I found this database, it's called GenderWatch" and it was like, you know, mind blown. I'm just like, "Uh, you know that there are others, too."

**NANCY**

So now when I do classes, I don't really teach databases. I actually, I just talk to the students.

**MELIA**

I also think it would super fantastic if we could work with students for more than 50 minutes and most definitely more than one session. Then I could really work with the students and help them build up their skills and see them engage with the ideas and material. But, there would have to be substantial culture change in how discipline faculty teach and what role they see librarians having in their classes in order for any of that to happen.

**RUPERT**

Well, I think where the conversation should happen then, it would be incumbent to talk to the professors who were giving these assignments with these superficial markers and say, "Why?

Why do you feel like that is something that you should require students to do? That, if the idea is that there are some you want them to use, teach to think critically about their sources that are accessing, you should not just say 'get three peer-reviewed articles.' You should say, you know, find resources and then explain to me how, why you feel like these are useful resources for this argument that you're trying to make." That would be a much, much more effective approach. And that's, I don't know, that's something that I think you've got to build up a fair amount of political capital with the people that you're talking to. So that takes time to do that.

## KARL

You know, with the undergrads at best I only have them for, you know, the usual complaint, that would be one-shot BI session and you only have at most for 45 minutes to an hour. And that's the thing too, I've had people say, "Well, can you come in for 20 minutes? I just need you to be part of this much." No. Yeah, no. I tell them, "You know what? No offense, but no." "They're like, well why can't you do this?" "Because I have 10 other areas and I'm not going to joke with you. The other people that I work with know that I need at least an hour and to be really thorough."

## MELIA

I also teach library instruction for Sociology; Anthropology; Social Work; Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies; Journalism; American Ethnic Studies; Curriculum and Instruction; and the undergraduate courses in the rest of the College of Education. During my heavy instruction load days, I can sometimes teach four or five sessions that range from one to two hours. Using my time in the best way is super important when I am working with faculty to plan a class.

## ANASTASIA

So ideally I would like to see library instruction as a for-credit course. It's not offered as a for-credit course at our institution. I just feel like in order to have informed citizens, a literacy course

is necessary. We spend a lot of time prepping students for financial literacy and career prep and can you dress right and answer the interview questions and shake hands in an interview, but we're not teaching them how to find that information about a company. Are they ethical, where are they located? Things like that. We're not teaching them how to evaluate information that they see on the news and things like that. I would love to see a for-credit course.

### RUPERT

The academy needs to invest money in it and give us some power. And like a course might be very helpful if we can say it's very important that students are able to, uh, understand where information is coming from, why it's produced, how to find it, how to evaluate, how to assess it, how to speak intelligently about it, incorporate it into their own thinking. All of the things that we care about that, that is essential. They need to hire more of us or give us a course where we can teach independently or something like that. I feel like that's really the type of, well, what we need to do as a profession.

### NANCY

Teaching Boolean searching in library instruction—that's one thing, people always saying it's, "it's the core of our identities as librarians." And I'm like, "it is not!" We do more than that. People are worried they're going to be replaced by Google. I haven't seen that. Maybe it has happened, I don't know. But there's more to me than how to search a fucking database.

### MELIA

So, yeah, in general, library instruction needs a makeover. Big time.

### NANCY

So anyhow, with this assignment, so the first year I did it and then I kind of figured out what didn't quite work with it and then next year I kicked it up a bit more because my goal was to

figure out how to get—I mean you can't go deep really fast. You've got to introduce them, you got to coach them along and…and part of that coaching to me, I feel more like I'm either a social worker or coach as opposed to a librarian. That's been a really big shift for me. And I think in those moments, I'm kind of coaching through stuff. It is getting the students to take the risk to say something they're so uncomfortable with, part of it is [pause] I'm like, "Tell me, 'I think it means this […], because […].' Just fill in those blanks for me and we're off to a good start and if it doesn't quite work, we will work through it together." And that, it worked really well, that exercise. And I've done similar ones too.

### KARL

Usually one of the last things I do is, I'll tell the students, I'll let him know that "Look, look, I don't have any fucking kids. I'm up at 1:00, 2:00 playing games anyway." By the way, that's the thing that's always a hit. "What? Like, what? You play first-person shooter games?" "Yeah, like Call of Duty, Fallout 4." "Are you on Steam?" "Of course". "What platform?" You know, and I'll be like, "Look, sometimes you know, I'll be up so you can contact me and take advantage of the chat function on Facebook or what have you. Contact me then. Really". "Okay. That's cool". You know, so that's how I make myself available to them.

### ANASTASIA

I think it's very exciting, especially when they get it, which for me, a lot of times the students who struggled the most don't get it until they come see me and then it really makes a lot of difference in my little heart when I could tell they were struggling in class and then they finally like failed the first draft and then they have to come see me and then it makes sense when we're one on one, which I still consider that to be instruction even when it's one on one, whether it's in a class of 25 or one on one.

**MELIA**

At first I just started with using more political examples and projects, then I moved to the point where I wasn't even standing at the podium hardly at all and the students were leading the class and sharing their own discoveries. And that is pretty damn cool to be a part of. The best part, besides them learning to critically research, is witnessing them get excited about what they're learning and finding out what's there that they just hadn't noticed before.

**KARL**

I think this also kind of hints at that the work that we do, whether it's a timeframe that's quarter or semester is, and in some cases increasingly, with all the information and misinformation that gets around. Uh, and it's not just the students, is that sometimes you have to be kind of like a social worker. You're a counselor. You're a, you're an ear, you know, people don't want you to help them find a database. Um, "I don't need you to review these databases. I just need you to listen." So you do become like a social worker or just an ear. They just need someone to vent to, someone to just help them define something that a database cannot, in fact, define. You know, like why they feel so alienated or cutoff and they need to hear different experiences with different voices.

**NANCY**

And part of it too, when I do stuff, is I always try to emphasize that we're working on it together. So that nobody's alone, they're not feeling abandoned and it builds trust. Because what's really important to me, trust with students. And so, nobody's gonna make fun of anybody if they really muck it up. If we muck it up, we need to understand how we mucked it up and then unmuck it.

**RUPERT**

So yeah, and then I took a really, I've taken some really interesting opportunities, learning

opportunities to kind of reframe and say, it's kind of a situation where I know that for teaching, I

need to do it differently, better…

**NANCY**

…working through stuff together and I'm learning stuff from them and they're learning stuff

from me…

**MELIA**

…we can help students examine their world in a critical manner, evaluate the information around

them and their surroundings…

**KARL**

…getting involved politically through education, through literacy…

**ANASTASIA**

…it impacts the class and makes better citizens…

**RUPERT**

… I want to do it better. I want to be a teacher who is…students are leaving and actually

transformed in some way.

(BLACKOUT)

# Chapter 5 - Traditional Analysis of the Findings

In the previous chapter, the interview data and analysis were presented in the form of a one-act play I created by using excerpts from the participants' interview transcripts. This chapter details traditional data analysis based on the research questions and emergent themes. The five sections of the chapter include: (a) analysis of the findings, including descriptive data and an introduction to the research questions and emergent themes, (b) analysis of the first research question and its theme, (c) analysis of the second research question and its first theme, (d) analysis of the second research question and its second theme, and (e) analysis of the third research question and its theme.

## Analysis of the Findings

This study explored how and why five instruction librarians choose the teaching styles and methods they use every day. This discussion provided an opportunity to learn not only these answers, but also opinions, viewpoints, and understanding of engaged pedagogy and critical information literacy in library instruction. With this knowledge, librarians throughout the profession can learn where the strengths and weaknesses are in their own teaching and in their organization with regard to library instruction teaching styles. Overall, instruction librarians will be able to use their colleagues' narratives to reflect on their own teaching. This analysis section of the chapter includes (a) descriptive data for the participants and (b) an introduction of the research questions with emergent themes from the analysis.

### Characters/Librarians descriptions

In the previous chapter, the findings were presented in the format of a one-act play script. In the spirit of a play, the script includes character descriptions which are in fact true descriptions of the participants from this study. The descriptions, compounded with the demographics shown

in Table 5.1 and their voices heard within the play, provide an introduction to the five participants in the study. Table 5.1 includes the following demographic characteristics for the participants: (a) age, (b) gender identity, (c) race/ethnicity, (d) sexuality identity, (e) type of area they were raised in, (f), if they considered themselves a religious person and description if so, and (g) an "other" space for participants to include any other descriptive characteristics of their choosing. Each characteristic was open-ended and allowed participants to provide an answer they considered appropriate.

**Table 5.1. Demographic information for each participant**

| Name | Age | Gender Identity | Race/ Ethnicity | Sexuality Identity | Raised in (area) | Religion | Other (chosen by participant) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Rupert | 49 | Male | Caucasian | Heterosexual | City | Some days agnostic, other days atheist | Librarian |
| Anastasia | 34 | Cis Female | White | Heterosexual | Town, 20,000 | Lutheran | N/A |
| Nancy | 48 | Cisgender woman; in high school identified as androgynous | White, British. Nationality: Canadian | Dyke, Dyke, Dyke. Lesbian is ok too. But I just really like the word dyke | Rural, outside of a town of 50,000 | No, I am a screaming pro-dinosaur atheist | Feminist; ADHDer |
| Karl | 49 | Male | Latino | Heterosexual | City | No, but identify with progressive Protestantism and Judaism | First-generation student |
| Melia | 41 | Cisgender female | White | Bisexual | Town, Midwest | Broadly Christian but very against organized religion | Feminist |

**Research Questions and Themes**

This qualitative narrative inquiry study explored the teaching styles and method decisions of instruction librarians from Midwest higher education institutions. Specifically, the study explored (a) the decisions of librarians to teach either in the traditional or critical library pedagogy manner and (b) barriers or encouragement in librarians' choice to teach through a critical lens. Below are the research questions with the themes that emerged:

1. What are the participants' experiences teaching information literacy and library instruction during their academic career as librarians?

    a. Theme: Sometimes a teacher, sometimes not

2. How do the participants view the role of teaching method and style in their teaching and preparation?

    a. Theme: If only I had a choice

    b. Theme: Teaching is a political act

3. How do the participants view the impact of their library instruction on their students' learning?

    a. Theme: Real world, lifelong skills

Each theme and its connected subthemes are discussed, highlighting specific examples from the play in the previous chapter. In addition, each theme is expanded as needed with the inclusion of the participants' stories that were not included in the play. Table 5.2 displays the major themes aligned with the research questions and related subthemes.

**Table 5.2 Research Questions Aligned with Themes and Subthemes**

| Research Question | Theme | Subthemes |
|---|---|---|
| RQ #1<br>What are the participants' experiences teaching information literacy and library instruction during their academic career as librarians? | Sometimes a teacher, sometimes not | • It's not my class<br><br>• Classroom connections |
| RQ #2.a<br>How do the participants view the role of teaching method and style in their teaching preparation? | If only I had a choice | • The discipline faculty<br><br>• At least critical evaluation |
| RQ #2.b<br>How do participants view the role of teaching method and style in their teaching preparation? | Teaching is a political act | • Engagement with students<br><br>• No such thing as neutrality<br><br>• Teaching the holy trinity |
| RQ #3<br>How do the participants view the impact of their library instruction on their students' learning? | Real world, lifelong skills | • Critical thinking<br><br>• Evaluating the real world<br><br>• Beyond the classroom |

Instruction librarians do not, for the most part, teach entire quarter or semester-long courses. They have one-shot sessions with the students; they meet with the class one time (Daland, 2015; Oakleaf et al., 2012; Ragains, 2013; Watson, Rex, Markgraf, Kishel, Jennings, & Hinnant, 2013). This method of teaching allows students no voice in the classroom nor allows any evaluation of the information presented. Students are there to accept the information given to them without questioning or discussion (see Accardi, 2013; Barr & Tagg, 1995; Freire, 2000; Zald & Gilchrist, 2008). There are exceptions where a librarian has built a relationship between the discipline faculty member and the librarian is able to meet with the class multiple times or create a co-teaching partnership with the faculty member. Recently there has been a movement for instruction librarians to move away not only from the traditional style of teaching, but also to pedagogically change what they were teaching (Accardi, 2013; Doherty, 2007; Schlessman-Tango, 2014; Swanson, 2004). Librarians who make the choice to move away from the traditional bibliographic instruction model are asserting themselves as teachers, colleagues to all faculty at their university. The decisions librarians make about their teaching—if it should be traditional or geared toward critical information literacy, how assertive they will be in negotiations with faculty, how much time is too much time to be available to students, or even how best to encourage students to evaluate the fake information they're finding on social media—occur frequently and are part of the everyday life of an instruction librarian.

While analyzing the data for this study, the lens of critical engaged pedagogy was used to give context for researching the reasons that instruction librarians choose (or do not) to implement these theoretical and pedagogical styles into their instruction of information literacy in classrooms. Through this lens, the voices of the participants told their stories of experiences, teaching methods, and their impact on student learning. Those stories are told through the

following themes: (a) sometimes a teacher, sometimes not; (b) if only I had a choice; (c)

neutrality isn't a thing; and (d) real world, lifelong skills. Those findings are described below.

**Research Question 1: What are the participants' experiences teaching information literacy**

**and library instruction during their academic career as librarians?**

**Theme: Sometimes a teacher, sometimes not**

In order to fully comprehend the teaching load and experiences of instruction librarians, it

is best to learn what instruction means in their lives. Rather than describing the many different

types of instruction involved, I will let them speak for themselves:

> **Anastasia**:
> It's pretty heavy. Um, I teach all of the one-shot classes for science, technology, engineering, math, and the College of Business. I don't teach any Comp 2 or English courses anymore. We have about 23 of those sections that come in per semester. Our associates teach all of those. I teach more of the specialized classes. So these are gonna be people who are sophomore, junior, senior, um, there is one section of Business Communication or one class that has 11 sections, so I go out and teach one, 75-minute instruction session for all 11 of those sections. And then the other classes in the science and technology engineering, um, areas kind of rotate. It depends on what's being offered. If it's like a fall, odd-year class versus spring even-year class, I may or may not teach the Writing in Biology, Writing in Chemistry, Intro to Entrepreneurship, kind of like one of those classes that are offered. Um, I think I teach about 20 sections a semester or 20 sessions. They're all 75 minutes. So a good amount, but the Marketing 3200 or the, the Business Communications class is the exact same curriculum across all 11 sections. It was standardized. So I literally give the same to dog and pony show 11 times October, sometimes back to back to back.

> **Karl**:
> You know, with the undergrads at best I only have them for, you know, the usual complaint, that would be one-shot BI session and you only have at most for 45 minutes to an hour. And that's the thing too, I've had people say, "Well, can you come in for 20 minutes? I just need you to be part of this much." No. Yeah, no. I tell them, "You know what? No offense, but no." "They're like, well why can't you do this?" "Because I have 10 other areas and I'm not going to joke with you. The other people that I work with know that I need at least an hour and to be really thorough."

> **Melia**:
> Library instruction here looks different, there is no real standard. Well, I suppose the most common teaching style here is still standard lecture one-shot session. But other than that, we have librarians who are embedded, who meet with a class 2 or 3 times, who work

within [course management system] only, maybe running a message board, we have a number of librarians who are scaffolded, or in process of scaffolding, into their departments, we have some who do instruction through LibGuide only, and then those who when teaching face to face, they do active learning, hands-on, participatory, and so on. It's pretty cool, actually, how many different things we have going on.

**Rupert**:
It was pretty canned. It was 50-minute-long sessions. Students would come meet us in the [lobby] and then we'd, uh, I would take them on a tour of the library and we would spend 15, 20 minutes doing that and then we'd go to the instruction classroom and have them set up the computer, introduce them to our website and to our catalog at that point. How to search for materials. We talked a little bit about database and article searching. Um, explaining how we organize our resources. Just pretty much a really quick brief overview of how to use the library.

**Nancy**:
[I]t's all over the place. [We] had a reorg in the library a few years ago and a lot of people feel that the priorities shifted with instruction not being [seen] as important because we shifted to more of a… subject specialties were removed, taken away from people. So we all kind of became like these, generalists who didn't have any general knowledge. [W]hen things kind of come through the queue, you just get given something. I get people still contact[ing] me from my [previous] areas and I still do those. [T]he shift to the new model I think caused a significant decrease in the amount of people who contact us because they don't know [whom] to contact.

The range of experiences instruction librarians live through at a university is in some ways, indescribable. Every librarian at every institution is a little different, doing things a little differently. However, there is common ground found in the stories of the participants, and especially with regard to the idea that sometimes they are considered a teacher, but other times are not.

When librarians are meeting with the classes only one time, frequently their time is spent struggling over authority of the session's content or negotiating with the faculty member about how long the instruction librarian is allowed to be with the class. The shorter the length of time, the less of a chance they have to make a connection with the students. These experiences the instruction librarians work through every day are detailed below through the subthemes of (a) it's not my class and (b) classroom connections.

**It's not my class**

Throughout the conversation with the participants, the theme lack of ownership over the classes they teach recurred. As the librarians are not the teacher of record for the course, the feeling was conveyed that the courses "belonged" to the discipline faculty member. One example of this theme is seen early in the play, when Anastasia is describing the predicament:

> It's not your syllabus, it's not your curriculum. You don't get to make certain choices about that. You don't build relationships with students the same way that you would if you had them for a full semester or even six weeks.

When planning an instruction session for a course, the choices as to what curriculum, pedagogy, and teaching method they can use are highly dependent on the faculty member of the course and what they want. I (Melia) express my frustration with not being able to use a particular teaching method because it is not what the teacher wants, and I give in to their request:

> I do a little bit of all the methods and styles. For some courses, because I know it's what the faculty wants and I am sometimes just too tired and stressed to argue with them, I do a lecture one-shot.

While discussing planning for an upcoming instruction session, Karl states, "but mostly it, again, it depends on the instructor, too, because obviously I have to be cognizant of what they want."

At times, librarians have been able to work with multiple faculty members and courses to create a curriculum where a couple of classes are pre-planned to include library instruction. However, even if that information literacy curriculum is now embedded and planned into a course, if things change in the department and a different teacher or department head is now in charge, it doesn't matter anymore. There is new person in charge of it and that person is *not* the

librarian, who now has to enter back into the process of making proposals to be a part of or

recommend a change to those same classes they do not own.

Nancy has been through this process and tells of her frustration with faculty members'

refusal to accept her curriculum recommendations:

> But then there are all these changes within the department and then there's a new chair
> and then there's a new this and new that, I don't have any control over that. And I'm so
> tired of going back and having the same conversation over and over. I always felt like I
> wasn't, it wasn't a square one, but I was always at square two with trying to get something
> to move forward. We collaborated really well for the most part, came up with a beautiful
> plan with people who were working on the overarching idea, when we started talking
> about the specific core courses, not even someone's pet course, which I don't ever want to
> touch, but with core courses [that students] needed to do, the prerequisites in order to
> graduate, even with that, people were like, "I am not making those changes."

In addition, her excerpt shows her reluctant acceptance of the knowledge that a faculty member's

pet course is not something she should even attempt to change because it is not her class.

Related to the experience of teaching in classes that they do not own, the feeling that they

were not equal to the faculty member of the course emerged throughout the participants' stories.

For some, this feeling presents itself during the authority struggle of what will actually be taught

during the session. Anastasia tells of a particular experience of trying repeatedly to have a

discipline faculty member revise an outdated worksheet he required his students to complete in

conjunction with the library instruction session:

> So I have been trying, um, but they have a worksheet and the worksheet is "find these
> things, and find five articles about these things, and find the oldest known article to
> reference this thing." And so this is an assignment that I have tried to get changed. Last
> year, finally, I felt like I had enough authority to go, "we need to change this. I, as a PhD-
> holding librarian cannot complete this worksheet. It is out of date based on the current
> resources that we have." We have changed some databases [since] back whenever this
> worksheet had been created and I could no longer easily complete this worksheet. And I
> was told, "[W]ell, the point of the worksheet is just to familiarize students with library
> resources. It's not really whether they do the worksheet accurately or not because you're
> there to show them the databases so they can complete the worksheet."

Karl shares an example from a class he worked with that consists of administrators in the

field of education, near retirement age, who are earning a Doctor of Education degree. He explained that a number of men in the class had spent years being dependent on someone else to do their external information gathering for them. For Karl, this same attitude seemed to be directed towards him as well. He shared his inner monologue response to them:

> Now, however, if you wish to pay me independently, I'll be more than happy, you know. In fact, in my background, I used to help my dad, you know, to gardening and cleaning houses so [Karl] can come over your house. He can trim the bushes in la casa, you know, come for the gardening, stay for the Web of Science. [Karl] provides all services.

In order to work around the frustration of not having control of the class, and the feeling that they were viewed unequally to the faculty members, a number of participants mentioned their wish to teach a for-credit course of their own. In this situation, an instruction librarian would in fact have control of their class; however, the decision to include for-credit courses focuses on information literacies is that of library administration or even university policy. In the play, Rupert speaks of that conflict between librarians and administration pertaining to whether or not librarians can own their own courses:

> The academy needs to invest money in it and give us some power. And like a course might be very helpful if we can say it's very important that students are able to, uh, understand where information is coming from, why it's produced, how to find it, how to evaluate, how to assess it, how to speak intelligently about it, incorporate it into their own thinking. All of the things that we care about that, that is essential. They need to hire more of us or give us a course where we can teach independently or something like that. I feel like that's really the type of, well, what we need to do as a profession.

Though their own individual experiences were shared, together the participants spoke of the struggle of being instruction librarians when they did not own the classes, leading to authority issues as teachers.

### Classroom connections

The additional subtheme that emerged was that of connection—between the participants and students in the classes with which they worked. Each participant stated repeatedly that

connecting to the students was a priority to them, to make the students feel comfortable,

understood, engaged, and know that they could come to the participants at any time for help.

Karl believes that making sure the students know that he does empathize with them and the

pressure they might be facing:

> You know, my spiel, my shtick is to make them feel like, "hey, I know where you've been, and I know what you're going through. You're confused or lost…" or the whole idea of me talking to them and them nodding their head going, [nodding], you know? You know, when you acknowledge that, they realize, "oh yeah, you do know that, what I'm going through."

The connection with students is dependent on the amount of time that they are able to be

in the classroom, actually with the students. In discussing the importance of active learning in a

classroom, I explain the importance of teaching method and connection with students:

> I think it is more important for us to use active learning because we only get the students for on average, an hour, when discipline faculty have them all semester long. If those students come in and we lecture at them for 50 minutes, they're not gonna feel engaged and won't remember what we said, nor will they contact us later. We basically made no impression on them and they're not gonna see us as helpful when it comes to doing research.

Creating that connection between the participants and students in the classroom becomes a

priority, to make that impression in the small amount of time they have. If that connection is

made between the librarian and students, the participants consider it successful, whether it was a

connection with one student or the entire class. Rupert shares in the play one goal of his, "the

main message that I'm trying to impart is that we're here and that we, we're an ally to students

that need help and they can come to us later." He later in our conversation shares another way to

make that connection, through the common ground of subject:

> I feel like one of the sessions that was most successful was actually for a class that came for psychobiology and I, I feel like part of that was because I really liked that topic. I have taken psychobiology classes. I, you know, I felt like the students and I had a connection, like I could relate to them what their interests were and...finding your affinity group or something. I don't know. So that was really why it was successful. It wasn't so

much that I taught totally different things. It was just more my feeling about it. My ability to relate to the people as people.

Connected was also the decision making made with regard to how best connect with those students when they did not have relationships with the students due to their limited time with them. For Anastasia, this consideration of lack of connection or relationship with the students directed her decision making while teaching in class:

> I will call on people randomly in class if I feel comfortable or more likely, I will say "someone from this group of tables tell me" or "someone from this row of chairs tell me." Since I don't have a personal relationship with students, I don't like to call people out. Like, "hey, you, tell me something" because that really makes introverts and especially our international students really uncomfortable if they suddenly have to speak in front of class. So I'll usually just ask for a volunteer from certain row or certain quad of tables.

In addition to taking the lack of connection or relationships into consideration while teaching, it is also a part of the preparation for the class and creating of lesson plans and resources. In Nancy's description below, she is discussing the use of an online research/resource guide that academic librarians frequently use—it is largely a content management system and most libraries have standards, guidelines, and templates to follow when creating content (Fritch & Pitts, 2016). Nancy expresses her dislike for LibGuides and how she feels they stop her from connecting to the students in her classes:

> The LibGuide, for me, it takes more time to make than putting together something that I can do visually on paper. People have stopped hassling me when I hand out paper. [It was], "Tami, you should just be using a LibGuide" and I'm like, "Yeewwwg" and, the template for the LibGuide is a pain in my ass because I don't like it, and someone got pissed off that I put up a picture of my cat[s] so I put it on a separate page and people [were] like, "You're not supposed to put pictures of your animals". And I'm like, "[H]ow are they supposed to connect with me? They don't know anything about me. My cats will connect them."

**Research Question 2: How do participants view the role of teaching method and style in their teaching and preparation?**

**Theme 1: If only I had a choice**

The role of teaching method and style in librarians' teaching and preparation is complicated. On the one hand, they each have a certain method and style they prefer to use or would like to do more of in their teaching and that is an easy question to answer for them. On the other hand, they are not teaching semester-long, for-credit courses. The problems that librarians might have with that lack of authority or ownership of classes and challenges with making connections with students were discussed above in the "sometimes a teacher, sometimes not" theme. The participants' repeated conversations about faculty playing a large role in what choice they have about their own teaching is heard. These experiences are detailed below through two subthemes: (a) the discipline faculty and (b) at least critical evaluation.

**The discipline faculty**

Repeatedly, each participant shared experiences about the discipline faculty with whom they worked. As shown in the findings reported for the theme of "sometimes a teacher, sometimes not," the faculty own the classes and the librarians are in constant negotiation with them about time in the class, number of sessions, content of the sessions, and even the assignments the students related to library research. Not all interactions with the discipline faculty are negative however; some of the participants shared experiences when they had successful partnerships with the faculty. Overall, the theme of "if I only had a choice" emerged repeatedly as the participants discussed their work with the discipline faculty and proved over and over that the participants largely did not have a choice.

In the play, Karl and Nancy both shared their experiences negotiating, or not, with

discipline faculty about the time they could be in class or what they could be doing while in said

class. Karl discusses the beginning part of the relationship between the faculty and librarian:

> Oh, I should have clarified that aspect, that part of establishing a relationship with the
> teacher or the TA who's been teaching the class—just letting them know that "No, I'm
> sorry. Twenty minutes is not going to do it. I need to…you at least need to make time for
> me for an hour or so." And then quite frankly you have to say no. And I think that's
> something that a lot of librarians, you know, we cave in, nobody wants to be the bad guy.
> The attitude is, "Well, better some time than no time."

In Nancy's story of working with a new class and new faculty member, she shares that though

she may agree to the faculty member's request, Nancy will still revise a little to her own liking:

> So one example would be a—so we have first-year experience classes and I got asked to
> do a social welfare class and the topic was poverty in America and the professor wants
> everything, "Teach them everything." And she's like, "I can give you, you can have a
> classroom, I guess 75 minutes." And I don't argue with faculty if I've never worked with
> them before. They're like, "This is what I'm going to give you." And I'm like, "Okay."
> And I take what they give me, and I do whatever they ask, with my own spin, to some
> degree.

Additional explanations of the participants' attempted negotiations with discipline faculty

include Anastasia's difficulties with faculty giving her a copy of the course syllabus or research

assignment. She stated, "some faculty are good about providing a syllabus, some won't. I think

it's a territorial thing." I express a similar sentiment when discussing how I wished I could teach

the classes how I wanted, how I "would love if every one of my classes could be done in an

engaged and critical manner but sadly, some [faculty] push back too much." The decisions and

choices that Anastasia and I are making about our own teaching is frequently determined by the

faculty member, causing the larger decision of, as Anastasia stated, "serve our interests or serve

the faculty?" This struggle is exemplified in Rupert's thoughts about what faculty members ask

them to teach versus what they, librarians, would like to teach:

I think a lot of it does get down to very superficial, you know, "this is a database," "what's a database?," "here are the fields of the database," "here's how you manipulate that," "here's a record," and very, very...kinda...it's important, in some ways, the terminology and just knowing these facts, but it's not usually very philosophically minded or engaging, but that's part of the way we've chosen to do it as well. But it seems like that's what the professors have asked me for. So the question becomes, you know, do we promote our curriculum or our point of view that we want to promote or are we serving the interest of the faculty even if we disagree with those interests?

However, the participants also shared experiences of collaboration, partnerships, and an understanding with the discipline faculty. Nancy told a story about working with particular faculty member and suggesting a design to the research assignment:

I spend a lot of time talking to [faculty] about the research...and I do the same thing with them that I do with the undergrads and the grads. The conversation might be a little different, but it's almost the same thing. [I was] working with a professor one time and she said, "[W]ell I don't, I, the other students never get this assignment right and I don't know what to do so I'm just not going to change it". And I said, "[B]ut it doesn't work. [W]hat do you want it to do?" "Well I want it to do blah blah blah". I said, "[S]o what do we need to do to make it blah, blah, blah?" She's like, "[A]lright, I need to change it." I got her to change it from one big paper to six small ones. So she's like, "well, we could do six small papers but that's too much." And then I think we ended up with the students would write three papers—so they would take a topic and they would theorize it using those three lenses and kind of talk about the differences with it. And that took a lot. Took over a month of conversations with that professor.

Nancy's years of experience working with discipline faculty had additional positive overtones, including an understanding that both discipline and librarian faculty are teaching research. She summarized her work with faculty:

The thing is with faculty, I mean they are teaching research. We're teaching different parts of research, different types of literacies at the same time they are, and so I think if there are ways to, to collaborate, be more complementary, it's really helpful and it…I've, I've developed some pretty good relationships with the faculty with doing that.

**At least critical evaluation**

Another part of the "if only I had a choice" theme was that of the participants' statements that though they may not have control over all (or hardly any) of the content they would be teaching for that session, they would at least make sure that teaching students about critical

evaluation would be part of the session. Rupert explains how most of the time, one pressure is

seen in the opposing views of what should be taught in the class whether it's for a good grade,

what the teacher wants specifically for an assignment, or if it is for something more such as

critical evaluation. He states,

> I mean, to succeed in school, to get As, not that As are inherently what you should be seeking, if that means we're to teach them how to find the kinds of information that teachers are going to superficially deem as being more types of things that they're hoping students to find, then we're not really talking about why that is or delving down into that, unpacking that.

Pushing students to critically evaluate, to unpack, information is part of the participants' goal in

teaching. That lesson is taught through a variety of means and examples. While Karl is

discussing how students are ready and able to learn beyond a simple a test measure, he gives an

example of the critical evaluation he encourages in his classes:

> You know, kids these days, they have an idea. They just need to be pointed in the right direction. So, they might say, "Well, I use Wikipedia," and I say, "that's a good start. Let's delve a little deeper." And that's the most important thing. I find that they're comfortable with it and that you're not just simply, "You must learn this technique, and this is where you'll be tested on this kind of thing." It gets boring.

Karl's push for his students to "delve a little deeper" into finding information, moving beyond

Wikipedia, is heard in a similar fashion from Anastasia. As a STEM librarian, her students are

pointed to direct and specific sources. However, she would like to see her STEM students learn

more about the evaluation of information:

> Unfortunately in the STEM areas, it's peer review or nothing. So it makes it very easy to discredit a lot of information and just toss it aside because of the nature of those disciplines. So I think that would be interesting to have STEM students evaluate different pieces of information because so many times they dismiss things that aren't peer reviewed immediately. So I think that'd be an interesting project to put into the STEM areas is to have them critically evaluate things, um, especially information and information overload. In the sciences right now is, well for everybody it's a problem, but for the information in the sciences when we can no longer trust things like the EPA website or the CDC website or the government that is telling us climate change is not a thing. That is information that they encounter that is not validated by the rest of the scientific

community. So how can we think critically about information that we were teaching to students to have value on from the government and other associations that has always been accepted and respected? And now we're seeing a riff between those two things. So I think that would be some additionally useful skills in, in the context of critically evaluating all information.

The importance of putting information into context is a key to evaluation; for Anastasia, her students now have to put information into the context of politics, government, and the questioned credibility of science. For Nancy, using the understanding of context in evaluation is a basic skill that she wants her students to learn. She tells a story about colleagues trying to teach too-high of a level of skills, trying to create "mini librarians" and discipline faculty requiring students to do assignments with no context:

> I hear people say it over and over, "I don't understand. I taught them Boolean instruction and they're just not doing it." And, it's like, "no, [they're not] because they're going to search how they want to search and serendipity is our friend sometimes." Yeah, we can like, if they're not doing systematic reviews, it's going to be really hard to get them to pay attention to descriptors. Like it's gonna be really hard to get them to do the things we want them to do to make them into mini librarians. This is why I think it is more important to talk about, okay, "what do you have in front of you? How do we think about this? Who wrote it? What is the context?" It drives me nuts when students have an assignment where it's like, "write an annotated review of one scholarly article." Uh, I, what's the context? How do you know how this article works in relation to whatever?

> Critical evaluation, delving deeper, unpacking, and examining context are skills

mentioned by all the participants. They feel it is a vital skill. In the play, my thoughts about critical evaluation are heard, "if we can help students examine their world in a critical manner, evaluate the information around them and their surroundings, I think we'd be rocking it, for sure." I later elaborate on my statement, "[b]ut what I really want is that they make better informed decisions politically and within society. An informed citizen of society is the best—we can play a role in that with our students and their learning."

**Theme 2: Teaching is a political act**

Throughout their conversations about their decisions of what and how to teach when they were preparing for classes, a second theme emerged of politics, uncovering structures, questioning, and overall, neutrality—that there was no place for it in their teaching. They discussed this idea of their teaching both in the manner of teaching style, that standing in front of the room without reaching out and engaging with the students was not an option for them, and also how their teaching style and content were frequently either already—or desired to be— political in its pushing the students to "question the narrative," to evaluate subjects from different angles, and teach resources and search strategies that were purposefully not the false neutral standard that is frequently followed in academia.

Not surprisingly, most of these conversations occurred around the idea of critical engaged pedagogy, specifically critical information literacy. To start analyzing and discussing this theme, a few excerpts from the participants regarding their thoughts about or experience with critical library instruction are illustrative:

> **Me**:
> At first I just started with using more political examples and projects, then I moved to the point where I wasn't even standing at the podium hardly at all and the students were leading the class and sharing their own discoveries. And that is pretty damn cool to be a part of. The best part, besides them learning to critically research, is witnessing them get excited about what they're learning and finding out what's there that they just hadn't noticed before.

> **Nancy:**
> I've been doing this for a long time and I try to sneak it into everything I do, it actually doesn't have to sneak in because it just kinda comes out with everything I do. Which means when I'm working with students on how to use a…how to think about oral history, and critiques about oral history, and what does it mean, a white lesbian interviewing lesbians of color? Like the dynamics in the power that is in that situation. And what it kind of represents. And so, so even those moments when I'm talking about things that may not seem like they are specific to library instruction, and I think everything is instruction to some degree, I still try to weave it into everything that I do.

**Rupert:**
I really like the ideas that the, that it's based upon. I strongly approve of this idea of questioning, questioning why things are the way they are, questioning power differentials and privilege and being more thoughtful, conscientious about what the implications are for the way that you frame questions, the types of things you choose to teach or there was an inherent assumption. We're making lots of choices about that. So I really, really appreciate the overarching point of view that it relates to.

### Engagement with students

One of the frequent ideas talked about was that their style of teaching was to engage the students, to not stand in front of the room, and ask the students to join them in learning. When telling about beginning to teach in this manner, Anastasia stated that she realized that active learning meant "I don't stand up here and show you things. We learn them together, doing them hands on. I would just go into classrooms and say this is what I'm doing." Part of this engagement choice also means changing how they were teaching subjects, moving to a style that students would connect to and understand. Rupert showed this in his description of how to engage the students with material,

> [B]asing it on their past and their understanding of the context that they have been familiar with, to try to make sure that the way that you're relating the content actually makes sense to their world views and that you can then help them or provide opportunities for them to discuss and grow in their understanding.

Karl takes the idea of engagement with the students a step further and discusses how listening to students is a part of critical library instruction and connects it to the idea that neutrality is not always the answer:

> So, I guess that's, that's what connects the idea of listening, listening carefully. And I think that's becoming more crucial, especially in these times as you begin to consider that critical library instruction, because that really the framework you're talking about here, begins to extend far more than just information. It begins to extend about what we do politically, socially and you know, it just boils back down to the idea of listening, carefully listening, and that the days of simply saying, well you have to be neutral or you have to adhere to this particular model of a, in one case, a reference interview interaction; yeah, it still holds, but sometimes it doesn't.

Tying together engagement with students in the classroom with the idea of "pushing students to think deeper," Nancy explains the importance of a classroom being safe place where students can trust her:

> I just go in and I talk to them about their work and things like brainstorm, brainstorming. We doodle on the board and I just keep on…what I like about working with students, and I [feel] that when I had subject areas it was much better...but when you get to know the areas that they're working [in], really well, you can engage with them in a way that pushes them to think deeper and you can do it in a way that doesn't feel…I can do it in a way with students that they trust me. [W]e can't always create…the notion of creating a safe space doesn't exist. [B]ut I can try and create a safer space to get them to be a bit more vulnerable with pushing how they're thinking about something to actually question and problematize what they think is fine. [Is] it really fine? [So] kind of figuring out ways to do that. I really, really enjoy [that] [and all] of a sudden then I can be like, so why do you give a shit about this? And they'll be, "I give a shit because blah blah blah". And there it is. And there it is and it takes a while to get there. But, it's a process. And [I've] got to kind of fumble through it and then you fumble through it, like when you fumble through something with someone, it's better. [I]t's not this lonely experience and their start of an idea is a good idea and let's figure out how to make that grow into something awesome, because what they do have to offer is a solid contribution to the [larger] conversation, whatever it may be. It may be a tiny part of it, but it's a part of it.

**No such thing as neutrality**

The idea that teaching in any type of critical pedagogical manner is political in some form or another was discussed by all participants. The discussion of how it is not possible to be "neutral" when teaching any subjects or in any manner was raised repeatedly. The participants shared stories of teaching politically, teaching material that helped students question the world around them, pushing students (and themselves) to examine privilege, and for some, their choices not to teach critically.

The fact that critical library instruction is different than the traditional style of teaching in libraries raises a few issues for librarians who would like to (or already do) use it, especially the political aspect of it. For Anastasia, putting the word "political" in it gives her "concern about the word political because of the current political climate right now; I guess that's on my mind and I

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think that's on the mind of a lot of people in academia." Rupert's concern about implementing a critical engaged pedagogy into an information literacy program is if it would be "perceived to be like, this really radical sort of a take that, you know, people who are practicing it are kind of entering into political foray that they may not be aware of, just sort of trying to understand the context surrounding it." For many librarians, the idea of being political may very well be the opposite of what it means to be a librarian. This is because most graduate programs in library science or library and information science have taught that librarians should be ethical and thereby neutral at all times. The librarian is to only help the students get the information they need without sharing any opinions or advice to the students. Rupert elaborates,

> So I think a lot of the curriculum in library school sort of imparts that, that idea that we should be neutral about values and that we should reflect that in our collections and they should reflect the point of view of the community and we shouldn't tell our opinions about anything. We should just try to give people the information that they're asking for, not trying to change minds.

With regard to what librarians are learning in their graduate programs, Anastasia comments that she is constantly doing professional development in order to "learn more about the pedagogy because I think we definitely don't get enough of it in library science."

The whole idea of neutral being, well, neutral is false and needs to be evaluated. Both Karl and I shared our own viewpoints of this idea of neutrality. For me, it's that neutral reinforces the status quo, therefore keeping the privileged in their places of privilege. I believe that this is a lesson that librarians can teach their students:

> We cannot have a society of people who just nod their head and go with what they think is status quo, or "neutral," which is actually just oppressive privilege. By saying they're neutral, they are standing with the white patriarchal heteronormative culture – the privileged. Therefore they have to learn how to critique in a constructive manner and I think 100% that this is where librarians need to stand and shine and teach and take over the world.

Karl connects the falsehood of neutrality with the importance of questioning the narratives we were raised thinking:

> And neutral isn't real, it's not a thing, that's what's being exposed and now you've got to ask yourself, well, who deemed it neutral for what reasons? Were you being neutral or being good, in fact?" Why? And then, of course, "Why are you questioning? Why should you question? Why are you causing trouble? This is making me uncomfortable." It's like, it's not a question about you; it's not a personal attack on you. It's others. I mean, you know, whenever I hear that phrase, "Oh, I wish we had it like the good old days." So, like what? The fifties when women had no rights, people of color had no voting? What are you talking about - those days didn't even exist anyway. When you talk about the good old days...yeah, it was never there.

Related to the narratives that we are taught growing up, Rupert talks about his first time actually experiencing critical instruction in a classroom. The classroom was in college and he was the student:

> It was sort of one of my first exposures to somebody [who] was questioning the narrative that I had been exposed to. The kind of, seemed to always be a tightly constructed, narrative. And this was sort of the first sort of pulling back the curtain and realizing, hey, there's a, there's a section of discourse that is not consonant with all of this received wisdom.

Later in our conversation, it was clear that Rupert had advanced from being a student first learning about ideas such as critical evaluation of narratives to a critical instruction librarian who is teaching students to evaluate and question the peer-review process. His growth in understanding is clearly seen a few of the questions he is teaching students to ask: "what voices are being shut out, um, what are the consequences of this system being set up, um, the privilege to gatekeeping? What does that do? Does it, does it mean that the other voices are wrong?"

**Teaching the holy trinity**

Toward the end of the play, Karl is heard discussing his experience teaching students to look beyond the same two or three databases they have always used, to expand their

understanding of their research—especially that relating to intersectionality—by looking outside

the traditional resources of their field. Karl states,

> And so sometimes when you talk about, you know, because they'll go talk about, "Oh, I want to examine the intersection or intersectionality of gender 'this' or gender 'that'," or you know, whatever, fill in…you know, critical—you know, we used to call it the Holy Trinity: gender, race, class. Now it's, now it's the square: gender, race, class, sexuality, whatever. So I would say, "well, have you looked at the GenderWatch database? Have you looked at...?" He's like, "Why would I want to do that?" "It's gender or sexuality, you know, you want to do…you are being taught to do the due diligence, but it's hard for you to think about it if..." "Well, I have enough just by looking at JSTOR or MLA or…" And then later the students are like, "I found this database, it's called GenderWatch" and it was like, you know, mind blown. I'm just like, "Uh, you know that there are others, too."

Though it may have taken the student in that scenario awhile to comprehend the importance of a

database such as GenderWatch, the student does eventually learn that including the resources

from that source is needed. Teaching students to use resources such as GenderWatch, a database

that indexes sources that have specific focus on gender, is part of teaching students through the

lens of what Karl refers to as "the holy trinity," historically about gender, race, and class; today,

that same sentiment is there but the "trinity" has expanded to be more inclusive, adding

sexuality, ability, religion, among others. Teaching critically, teaching students to look at the

world around them and start putting on different lenses in order to reveal underlying structures of

oppression, is a major part of critical engaged pedagogy, of critical library instruction.

Using opportunities where faculty and students might be more open to critical library

instruction is a way that instruction librarians can begin their own pedagogical transformation. I

share how I first started teaching library instruction using a critical engaged pedagogy:

> Some of my first experiences in teaching following a critical library instruction, a critical pedagogy, was in Women's Studies, now it's called Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies. It was kind of a safe way for me to practice it or try it out in a classroom because the students were inherently already on board with those ideals since they were majoring in Women's Studies. At first, I just started with using more political examples and projects, then I moved to the point where I wasn't even standing at the podium hardly at all and the students were leading the class and sharing their own discoveries. And that

was pretty damn cool to be a part of. The best part, besides them learning to critically research, was witnessing them get excited about what they were learning and finding out there that they just had not noticed before. So I still do all that and I slowly push those ideas into my other classes, but not to the extent that I do with the Gender, Women, and Sexuality Studies students.

Anastasia is also making changes to increase critical pedagogy in her teaching as much as possible, and revised a curriculum to include political themes and critical evaluation:

I did teach one semester when we revamped the curriculum to include more critical evaluation and understanding where information is coming from. And we teach a whole lesson in one 50-minute session on biases and we have students look at, and it's all about politics and we designed it that way. Look at two similar events or news sources and compare and contrast those two things. Um, it was heated, and it's supposed to be…fully expect students to come with their own experiences and biases and political affiliations. But I think at the end of the class they all found it very useful. So they, even if they didn't agree with what they had found, they all agreed that having those skills to look deeper was useful.

Teaching students about critical evaluation and then connecting it to oppressive systems in our culture is another way for students to learn how to deconstruct institutions that may appear to be neutral but absolutely are not. Nancy shares an experience teaching and using critical examples,

I remember doing [an] American Studies class and I was doing searches on, I was showing the differences between looking for prisons, prisoners, uh, correctional facilities, jails, and at the same time talking about how prob--, privatization and talking about how problematic it was and one time this business student in one of these classes said, "so I could make a lot of money?" I said, "if you don't have a conscience." There is no such thing as a neutral library. There is no such thing as a neutral person. It is all bullshit and I'm just going to lay it all out there; I was very critical with the examples I used and I would talk about a whole range of things with them.

This is the same course that Nancy uses as an example when she discusses how she does things differently than others and that she has always taught in a different manner, an explanation shared in the play. Her example from the course is included:

I've been using different frameworks all along. I would not necessarily announce what they were in an instruction session, but I definitely looked at stuff really differently than other folks, which was like, "[Nancy], it's just, we're just looking up jails." And I'm like, "it is not just a jail, it is not just a jail. It was never *just* a jail." And watch out for Nancy's soapbox because I think everybody deserves access to information.

Encouraging students to engage in uncomfortable conversations, evaluate the way they have looked at the surroundings, or even learn things that show them that maybe society isn't as neutral and perfect as they once thought is built on the idea of critical evaluation and questioning. In many ways, these are areas that librarians excel in as they are the given experts in how to search for information. But for students, searching for and evaluating information is not easy, especially when systems they are taught to trust are in need of critical evaluation themselves. Karl discusses his teaching about the educational nationalism problem of science databases proclaimed to be the source of all credible information:

> And one of the features that you may have seen already on Google Scholar is that when you look up an article, you'll see that it's cited by X number of people. But to the right-hand side, at least in our case anyway, you'll see a little thing that'll say, oh, that number is usually cut in half or more than half. To then say, "oh, you know, an article, they may be cited 136 times on the right-hand side, but you'll see Web of Science has 13 times" and then I'll explain to them, "well, why do you think that Web of Science is only looking at those 13 articles versus the 136?"

> Then we have to discuss, and this is where the aspect of the information literacy comes in, the fact that yes, the nice thing about Google is it covers universally around the world, a lot of materials that you'd not normally find so that you will find articles that are cited by folks in different parts of the different countries that comprise Asia, Africa, Europe. But for here, for either contractual reasons or in some cases educational nationalism, they don't include them. There is that view that yes, Latin America is at the forefront of open access, but we don't care to cite any material coming out of *La Revista de Estudios Bolivianos*. You know, you can find the best fucking article on the *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, but because it comes from Bolivia...there's just this view that it must come from the United States.

As a last example of librarians teaching the holy trinity and critically engaging students, Nancy shares a story about working with students who have what others may consider diverse, tough, uncomfortable, or complicated topics. These students are working in areas such as pornography, capitalism, and racism and Nancy feels that engaging and working with students, together, is important no matter what their research topic might be. She is comfortable with the

conversations that other librarians might otherwise avoid. Her (lengthy) story begins in her office

with a student researching pornography:

> One grad student was writing about, porn. Fascinating stuff. And, of course, I'm visual.
> So I'm drawing…okay, so here's what, I'm drawing, boobs. I'm, "here's, okay, so this is
> the woman, okay, what's going on over..." I had to map it and people are walking by,
> they're like [WTF, Tami], and I'm like, "it's work!"
>
> I was working with another student who is looking at notions of time and uh, and
> capitalism, so he's looking at Marx right? So, capitalism [and] time as a white construct
> to oppress people of color and [one of the ways] that people of color pushback against
> that is sleeping. It was a really interesting argument. Brilliant. Brilliant. And I'm like,
> "okay, and?, and?, and?" I will ask like these really basic questions because it forces
> them to explain it a bit more. Then we add to it, then we add to it [again] then we add to it
> [some more]; we're writing on the board and we're taking pictures and writing.
>
> They can say things to me like, "Yeah, but, so, it's like the way that white people do this,
> the way white people do this." And I don't take offense to any of it because [I shouldn't].
> Right, right. I totally get it. And I'm like, "Okay, so white people are doing this, what are
> people of color doing over here?" Right? "Okay. So is this different for Latinx, isn't it?"
> And we can work, there's this trust that we can work through this, and use the language
> and not be concerned or fearful of using terminology, like African American or
> something like that. Because some [white librarians] are terrified to say that when they're
> working with students [of color] because they're worried they're going to offend them. I
> have more of a comfort level. And that could be why I think I do work with a lot of
> students of color as well. And I think it's because I'm white, I know I have fucked up and
> I will continue to fuck up, but in this moment, I will do what you need, so yeah, so I think
> with instruction it's kind of, it's an endless battle.

**Research Question 3: How do the participants view the impact of their library instruction**

**on their students' learning?**

**Theme: Real World, Lifelong Skills**

The discussion of how they, themselves, and also instruction librarians as a whole, impact

student learning appeared in many different interviews, ranging from the fake news issue in

social media to finding quality healthcare information to helping marginalized groups of people

to feeding students when they're too hungry to learn. Two excerpts below, one from Anastasia

and one from Nancy, show additional examples of the range that the participants connected to

impact student learning:

**Anastasia:**
We have assessment conferences and we have assessment tracks and "how are we tracking student learning?" Some of it I like because I think it's good to make sure students are learning things. Sometimes, I feel like the conversation is steering a little bit too much towards scores and "are we meeting these student learning outcomes? Can we check off the box for Higher Learning Commission on students will be lifelong learners?" Sure, they had one Comp 2 "bias and fact checking" class with us. We'll check that off. Assessed - check. But I don't know that we've found a great method for assessing student skills, you know, lifelong literacy or understanding bias or understanding the information cycle.

**Nancy:**
I encourage students to think big, and to think that they can do it because they can, but they sometimes need support that they might not have had or they might not get in other areas. [T]hat's kind of the role I play now with working with people.

Examining student learning through assessment scores or thinking broadly in terms of helping students get the help they need and to enter the world with big idea are both ways that can be seen as successful in discussing student learning. The participants overall believed their instruction helped students learn the real world, lifelong skills they will need. The larger theme of their conversations is shown below through three subthemes: (a) critical thinking, (b) evaluating the real world, and (c) beyond the classroom.

### Critical Thinking

At the core of critical library instruction is students becoming critical thinkers. By using critical engaged pedagogy in their classrooms, instruction librarians are engaging their students and themselves as active participants in learning. As active participants in their own learning, students are continually enhancing their critical thinking skills. Critical library instruction then promotes students to actively engage those skills in their lifelong learning. Students are taking those skills with them when they go out into the world, questioning "where information comes from, about who decides what is knowledge and truth, thus illuminating the structures that create

and perpetuate information production and dissemination" (Accardi, 2013, pp. 57-58). Teaching

critical thinking skills, the skills needed to ask the important evaluative questions about their

world around them, to students seems at first glance to be a given or an uncomplicated matter of

changing a curriculum plan. However, that is not (usually) the case. For Rupert, the whole

process of teaching students to question their world is scary because he sees it as a rabbit hole

and feels guilty about making the students feel uncomfortable. We hear in the play his

explanation of mixed feelings towards teaching students to question:

> Like if you're questioning every source of authority and wondering why, what are the
> motivations behind it? Where do you stop? Sort of, like how, is it enough just to question
> it and be aware of it? But if you're craving the sense of certitude, it's kinda like, I feel a
> little guilty with going to students and saying, "Okay, look, if you're being a rational
> person, you need to be questioning every damn thing you hear." It feels like, you know,
> you're making...like you're wanting to tell people you can never be comfortable. Right?
> And so I always kind of feel a little guilty about that.

For Anastasia, the hesitancy in teaching critical thinking skills is not due to guilt or fear; she

fully believes that teaching critical thinking skills to students will make them better citizens. She

thinks it needs to be a priority on her campus and "so that's something that we've worked into the

curriculum hard and fast and I think in a, in a good way. So I'm in favor of any time that we can

teach students to critically [think and] evaluate information." However, the issues that she has

with including critical thinking in her teaching sound familiar: not enough time in the class and

not aligned with the discipline faculty's course outcomes. She talks through the different layers

of that decision below:

> I think anytime that you can give people skills to think critically, it impacts the class and
> makes better citizens…. I think that it would add a lot to our curriculum. I think as with
> all of our curriculum, we would have to prove why that's valuable and, and why we
> should spend time on it. You're always so limited in a one shot, especially with "how
> much can I throw at students and how much will actually stick?" So do I want to spend
> 50 minutes really pounding in this lesson of critical thinking? Well, maybe I can try to
> work it in, in 50 minutes because they really need databases because they really need to
> pass this class. It's a gateway class or something. Um, I would love to see it in there. I

think it would be valuable, but I think that we'd have to make a case of how that ties into the student learning outcomes the faculty member has, if it's not a course that we own.

Making the connection between the importance of teaching critical thinking skills, lifelong learning skills, and evaluating information outside of the classroom environment is not difficult. There is a stronger focus now on testing in the schools than there was 20 years ago, an issue Karl raises when talking about engaging in education, the "why are we dumbing down the system?" debate, as he calls it. He discusses that with the last few decades of "simply testing students," there isn't an opportunity to get the students,

> to really think about, "well, what is it that you really are doing?" "What is it that you're really...", you know? Yes, you can test well, but if you really critically engage education or just any information, because now when we're with the advent of the Internet and access to all sorts of information and especially now in the era of the so-called fake news and information literacy, you really have to ask, "yeah, how, how am I taking this?" Because back in the good old days, as you know, the joke was that "Oh, that must be true. It's on the Internet. I mean, clearly it must be true," you know? And to some extent, it kind of was, you know, 20, 30 years ago.

But Karl does see success stories in his students, especially those who take full advantage of learning those critical thinking skills. The students who are asking, "who wrote it, when did they write it? How do you begin a simple search? If you are going to use Google, how do you evaluate this information? You know, the ones who are thinking critically about how we engage information."

Students learning critical thinking skills at this level for the first time are at times taken aback, and understandably so, as for some, it is first time they have examined their own world with this new critical lens they've developed. Taking that new critical lens back to their own real world when they go home for the first time after learning about it can be a tumultuous experience for both the students and their families. Nancy shares her experience teaching and working with students who recently went home for fall break:

I think that first year is so hard for them because everything they have learned [until that moment], a lot of it's not true. And so, that develop[ing a]critique hits them really hard, really fast. And I love it when I work with students who have gone home for the fall break or even if I'm working with the classroom something after Thanksgiving I'll say to them, "so who went home, who went to visit family?" and the hands will go up. And I'd be like, "and how was it?" And they'd be like, "it's okay" and I'll be like, "how many of you kind of fought with your family during fall break and Thanksgiving was a complete shit show?" And all these hands go up. [I]t's amazing what happens when you develop critique. And you see things through different lens. And so part of that is whenever I talk to students about it, it's to encourage them to keep on doing it, recognizing how hard it is, and that they're actually learning and developing new ways of looking at what appears to be kind of natural, such a bad word to use. Or for lack of a better word, what appears to be normal life. What is normalcy?

### Evaluating the real world

Nancy's story about the students going home for the first time with their critical thinking and evaluation lens in place is also an ideal example of what evaluating the real world might look like for those undergraduate students learning to actively participate in their learning, in the learning about being critical actors in society. Rupert specifically notes that the importance of critical library instruction and its impact on students is needed even more today. He explains that critical thinking skills are needed especially today in order to critically evaluate what is being heard and the implications of what is being heard. He believes that it's especially important for people to understand that, "especially now, I mean in this, in this environment now with all this crazy stuff about 'don't believe anything you hear unless it comes from me!' You know, the 'these people are wrong! This is all fake!' statements that are being made." The issue about students not being able to go out to the real world after college and successfully discern truth from falsehood is one that also worries Anastasia. Her experience with teaching students critical thinking and evaluation skills in class through healthcare information was one she found concerning:

> And so that was the way that we could think critically. Most of them would spot the fake website immediately, but a lot of the websites were a harder sell if you have a whole

website built on articles that look like legit health issues or you know, lead in the water or fluoride or vaccines was a big thing for a while or vaccine or don't vaccinate. You know, and a lot of students just missed, they missed the right website for the one that didn't have credible information. And so, um, that was very concerning to me that people are getting fake, um, healthcare information.

As a critical library instruction librarian, I state outright that,

> Teaching students how to critique the world around them is so important. One of my number one priorities. Especially in today's news and media world. But, just critiquing the situation is not enough. I need students to really examine how people, ideas, things, policies, whatever, are being portrayed and then focus in on the marginalized groups of people who are frequently construed and put in a negative light.

Karl can partner with me on this sentiment, and he expands it with an example of how the exposure of social media, students—citizens—need to take their critical evaluative skills to the streets so to speak, and make a difference:

> Well to reuse the phrase, it's all the more crucial because of the times we're living in. I think these issues have always been there. I think that the exposure of social media, which is intimately connected with information that we provide is making it so ubiquitous, more so than before. I recall for instance, when the Rodney King beating was happened, people were shocked that this guy was being beaten, oh yeah, because you videotaped it. Now you see more of that because now you have your iPhone. It does a better job in that. Not only that, you can record it. You can zoom in on this, and now when you begin to see the exposure of the system that goes in some cases beyond race or economic, gender, class, you're shocked; but now the question is, now what do you do? and that's where you come in and this is where librarians can, well, what if you want to do something, let me show you where you can go and not simply find one website and think, oh, this has all the answers because you know, for better or for worse, you got to think critically about it. That's your due diligence as a citizen. You're supposed to interpret that and the sad part is that back in the good old days, we used to have citizenship classes. You used to have, and corny as it may seem, "I'm just a bill. An ordinary bill." You're wondering, yeah, why is it, why does it have to go through this process and they don't teach that anymore. No, I mean it's, I get it, you know, the easiness with which to say, yeah, let's be lazy. Let's do this, but that's no longer the case. Can't be the case.

> Teaching students how to think and evaluate critically during class is not necessarily

always about taking those skills to the real world, sometimes it is about taking the real world to

the classroom. Nancy talked about teaching students how to look at an article and examine it,

finding out the point of it, how they might find more articles about the same topic as this article, and so on. For her, the most successful way to help students understand what the process is actually about is to connect the academic research to real life situations. She explains that she asks the students, "Do you just go and buy a car? Do you just go and buy a cell phone? How do you know that the, the, what is it? The PS4, whatever, is like, better than a Nintendo?" to help make the connection scholarly article evaluation and typical evaluations they might be doing in their lives every day.

**Beyond the Classroom**

Within the theme of real world, lifelong skills, there emerged a subtheme that spoke to the idea that librarians were having an impact on student learning, but it was not in the teacher/student/classroom scenario I might have imagined. Many of the ideas and moments connected to this subtheme didn't occur in a classroom at all. Rather, the librarians' impact on their students occurred in offices, at home, online, and for those moments that did it occur in a classroom or office, the librarian was wearing their social worker and academic counselor hats.

Karl explains how he sees his work as more than "just" librarian:

I think this also kind of hints at that the work that we do, whether it's a timeframe that's quarter or semester is, and in some cases increasingly, with all the information and misinformation that gets around. Uh, and it's not just the students, is that sometimes you have to be kind of like a social worker. You're a counselor. You're a, you're an ear, you know, people don't want you to help them find a database. Um, "I don't need you to review these databases. I just need you to listen." So you do become like a social worker or just an ear. They just need someone to vent to, someone to just help them define something that a database cannot, in fact, define. You know, like why they feel so alienated or cutoff and they need to hear different experiences with different voices.

Nancy's impact on her students' learning falls into more of the bottom half of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1943); her students need safety, shelter, food, all things that Nancy believes she needs to provide because they need her and she has the means to do so. The students

whom Nancy helps at times are not even her students any longer—a different librarian may be working with the class now—and they still reach out to her. Nancy explains that she likes making strong connections with students:

> I want them to know that I'm here for them because I have played the role beyond the librarian. I get students emailing me, they're like, "[O]kay, so I'm on the verge of going into crisis mode. I'm extremely stressed, I'm not feeling good about myself". And I'm like, is this student becoming… they're reaching out, I need to do something.

If she is doing evening work sessions with students who are volunteering to come in and get help with their class research, Nancy brings food "because I don't know when those kids have eaten last, even though we now have a food pantry on campus." Feeding students is something she will even do in classes:

> So if they're hungry, and I do take granola bars when I go to teach and someone looks hungry, I feel like you're not here. I taught a class of student athletes and one was real grumpy one day I said, "are you okay?" He said, "I'm sorry, I'm just really hungry." And I said, "I have a banana. Would that help?" He's like, "yes." And he was a big, he was a really big football player and you could tell that he'd had some hard stuff happen to him, just kind of the way that he spoke in general. [I]t's just a random act of kindness to feed him that and he was, it's not that he wasn't nice prior to that, but he was like, "thank you very much. That was very helpful." And then he was really, he talked to me a bit more after that. [T]hat doesn't take much out my day, doesn't take much out of my life to do that. And so if I can do it, I do.

And so, Nancy's philosophy of "and so if I can do it, I do" is not surprisingly taken beyond librarianship and beyond the classroom, and sometimes, taken very far in general. Nancy shared a story about being in contact with a student who was unable to get in to the university counseling mental health facility because there were no openings. There was a local mental health clinic and hospital that the student could go to, but the student had no insurance and had no money to pay for the visit. She offered to not only take the student there, but to also pay for it because she was concerned for their health and safety. Connected to her concern for students'

wellbeing is also the unofficial role she plays on campus as designated faculty member to help

LGBT students, whether that is as a mentor, counselor, librarian, or just a safe person:

> I also, I mean, and I've also had faculty, if they have students who they can tell through the student's writing that the student is kind of starting to come out as some kind of ident….whatever their identity might be….they're like, "you need to go talk to [Nancy] about some research for this paper". If a student is, they come out pretty fast, talking to me and for whatever reason they feel that they need [to] and then it's totally like, and it's like, okay, I got it, I get why we're here. Okay. "So we're going to become friends on Facebook, I'm going to keep an eye on you" because I'm tired of kids dying and it's, because someone, well I had a colleague come and they're like "you're friends with a lot of students". And I'm like, "it's cause I want them all to stay alive."

Karl's availability to his students is also beyond what most might consider the standard

for faculty. For the classes that he teaches,

> Usually one of the last things I do is, I'll tell the students, I'll let him know that "Look, look, I don't have any fucking kids. I'm up at 1:00, 2:00 playing games anyway." By the way, that's the thing that's always a hit. "What? Like, what? You play first-person shooter games?" "Yeah, like Call of Duty, Fallout 4." "Are you on Steam?" "Of course". "What platform?" You know, and I'll be like, "Look, sometimes you know, I'll be up so you can contact me and take advantage of the chat function on Facebook or what have you. Contact me then. Really". "Okay. That's cool". You know, so that's how I make myself available to them.

Anastasia's time with students in her office ranges from general research and instruction

discussions to moments of counseling, therapy, and academic guidance. She meets for hours

every semester with students who come to her for extra help, sometimes help they believe they

cannot ask anyone else for, from international students, students who are autistic, and even

military veterans. All of these students she is happy to help and when she has students feel

comfortable enough to come see her, she considers it a win. She will have students return to her

office multiple times and they will go over parts of their assignment as many times as they need.

> Then they finally get it. That's very satisfying for me, to see that success. I can't think of any like one amazing class where, I mean I wish like 99 percent of their little light bulbs went off, but I think most of the successes are one-on-one, at least that I've witnessed.

Karl's time is also frequently filled with non-library-instruction-classroom type work, or what one would normally not consider part of the job duties. More than likely due to his teaching style and method, students feel comfortable coming to him with questions that they either cannot or do not want to ask anyone else. They trust him to answer them truthfully, to not mock them, and to just help them. He talks to me about this new situation he faces:

> And especially now, you know, in an academic setting, especially when you have at least more than a public library, what do you do with those students who are saying, "hey, I have gender issues here. I don't know what to make of this." And it works both ways. And those students who are like, "hey look, I'm a good guy, but I don't get why we're having to refer to people as Latinx or Chicanx. Maybe you can explain this for me" or "hey, I'm sorry. I know, I only see men and women. How do I get this idea of fluidity or gender construction?" I mean I know they're trying. They're trying. Because the ones who don't try, they're not even. They're not even bothered. They already know the answer. So it makes you thankful and it goes back to the thing you were talking about it and why it's crucial and the research that you're doing.

## Summary

This chapter provided a traditional analysis of the findings, following the previous chapter providing an analysis of the findings through a one-act play I wrote using excerpts from the participants' interview transcripts. In addition to descriptive data of the participants, this chapter described the emergent themes and subthemes of the research questions including:

1. What are the participants' experiences teaching information literacy and library instruction during their academic career as librarians?

    a. Theme: Sometimes a teacher, sometimes not

        i. Subtheme: It's not my class

        ii. Subtheme: Classroom connections

2. How do the participants view the role of teaching method and style in their teaching and preparation?

    a. Theme: If only I had a choice

    i. Subtheme: The discipline faculty

    ii. Subtheme: At least critical evaluation

  b. Theme: Teaching is a political act

    i. Subtheme: Engagement with students

    ii. Subtheme: No such thing as neutrality

    iii. Subtheme: Teaching the holy trinity

3. How do the participants view the impact of their library instruction on their students' learning?

  a. Theme: Real World, Lifelong Skills

    i. Subtheme: Critical thinking

    ii. Subtheme: Evaluating the real world

    iii. Subtheme: Beyond the classroom

Chapter 6 includes discussion of the findings for each of the research questions and emergent themes. It additionally includes the conclusion and recommendations for practice and future research.

# Chapter 6 - Discussion of the Findings

The previous two chapters provided analysis of the findings; Chapter 4 presented the findings in the form of a one-act play and Chapter 5 provided the traditional analysis, including the emergent themes and subthemes from each of the research questions. This chapter discusses the analysis of the findings, connected to the research questions and emergent themes and subthemes, as well as the conclusion and recommendations. The chapter is organized into seven sections: (1) discussion of the first research question and its theme, (2) discussion of the second research question and its first theme, (3) discussion of the second research question and its second theme, (4) discussion of the third research question and its theme, (5) conclusions, (6) recommendations for practice, and (7) recommendations for future research.

Focused on library instruction within higher education institutions, this study focused on the choices made by instruction librarians to include (or not) critical pedagogy and critical information literacy within their teaching styles and classrooms. This study explored (a) the decisions of librarians to teach either in the traditional or critical library pedagogy manner and (b) barriers to or encouragement in librarians' choice to teach through a critical lens through three research questions:

1. What are the participants' experiences teaching information literacy and library instruction during their academic career as librarians?

2. How do the participants view the role of teaching method and style in their teaching and preparation?

3. How do the participants view the impact of their library instruction on their students' learning?

A critical theoretical framework, specifically critical engaged pedagogy, provided the lens through which the narrative analysis of interview and observational data were analyzed. Findings showed that in their everyday experiences as academic instruction librarians, the participants faced both barriers and encouragement to their decisions regarding teaching methods and curriculum in addition to how they are impacting their students' lives and learning. Four different themes emerged from the data: (1) sometimes a teacher, sometimes not; (2) if only I had a choice; (3) teaching is a political act; and (4) real world, lifelong skills.

This study provides an impetus for action and further research about the impact on how librarians teach information literacy and engage our students on a large-scale level for all universities. Learning the teaching stories of librarians, analyses of their teaching styles, and their plans to improve information literacy instruction contributes to the early scholarship and foundation for other librarians to reflect on their experiences and make changes. Further, the students ultimately benefit from being engaged and fostering critical thinking from the paradigm shift this profession needs. The discussion of each of the research questions and their connected themes follow.

## Research Question 1: What are the participants' experiences teaching information literacy and library instruction during their academic career?

## Theme: Sometimes a teacher, sometimes not

Academic librarians play many different roles in their jobs—no one librarian really has the same job duties as another. For instruction librarians at a university, the same holds true. As seen above, even the instruction part of their job can look drastically different from one person to the next. However, I think it could safely be said that instruction librarians are passionate about two things: teaching and connecting to students. One frustration is that not everyone on campus

sees instruction librarians in the teacher/faculty member role. Frequently they can move from feeling that they are a teacher and respected and treated as such; other times, however, just the opposite. Relationships with students are one way that librarians may feel connected, feel like a teacher. Interactions with other faculty and administrators may cause them to feel unequal. The stories and experiences the participants share include pieces of both kinds, a sampling that was shown through the play and in their narratives in Chapter 5.

Librarians who are finding ways or making attempts to move beyond a one-shot, traditional style of teaching are frequently faced with the obstacle of the discipline faculty not cooperating fully—a challenge discussed in the theme, "if only I had a choice" in the second research question. However, the struggles discussed by the participants of not owning a class or feeling unequal to the teaching faculty is another kind of challenge. The inability to convince a faculty member to change even one idea, date, or give an extra minute is frustrating but librarians frequently have no power in the matter because they do not have control over the syllabus, curriculum, or what they teach. It is not surprising then when I state I was "too tired and stressed to argue" and give in to the faculty member. Nancy takes it a step further in trying to be accommodating by purposely avoiding the classes she knows the faculty will say no to, their pet courses that are untouchable, but is still told "I am not making those changes" for other courses. Her experiences show that without full integration and partnership from the university campus as a whole, it is a challenge to find faculty who will collaborate and not be an obstacle to instruction librarians who want a larger presence in the classroom (Swanson, 2004, p. 265). These stories are examples of librarians struggling against the fact that they do not teach their own courses and must propose to faculty to let them work with their classes. However, a couple experiences of the participants were more than just a struggle over class authority where faculty do not want to let

the librarian be a co-teacher or collaborator. When Anastasia states that it took her multiple semesters to garner the courage to speak to a faculty member, an older white man, about changing the incorrect worksheet he were assigning to students, she uses her PhD as a way to prove her worth as a faculty member, and not just a librarian. Even with her doctorate degree and the fact that the content on the worksheet is outdated library content, she is not able to convince him to give up his ownership of that assignment.

This type of struggle with authority, ownership, and inequality is beyond just not wanting to collaborate. Giroux (2011) argues that all "assumptions about learning, achievement, teacher-student relations, objectivity, school authority, and so on, all need to be evaluated critically by educators" and when examined through a critical theory lens, there is definitely another layer of inequality present in the situation (p. 67). When Anastasia was telling this story to me, she stated the "white male faculty in that department have been teaching for 20 plus years" and that it was "difficult as a young white librarian to…come in and establish my authority." In this situation, though Anastasia is white herself, she cannot be seen as equal in this faculty member's eyes because she is young, a woman, and a librarian. For Karl, though he is a PhD-holding man, he is also a librarian but not white. When Karl shares what he would like to say to the EdD students, he is talking about a class full of education administrators, largely a group of English-speaking upper-middle class white men, who are there taking classes at the end of their career. For most, this degree will mean they can work as consultants after they retire.

As Karl describes to me how he teaches that course and what they need to learn, he explains that the students have either forgotten how to do this work or they have had their secretary, Betty, as Karl states, do this type of work for them for years and that they have not done anything at all. He explains, "and so there is that hand holding when you tell them, 'oh,

you're gonna have to do this on your own, because Betty's gone and I'm here to help you, but you're not paying me'." His response then about growing up helping his dad garden and that he could do all sorts of services if they (the white older male students) paid him to do so is distressing in a power struggle manner, administrators (but students) versus librarian. However, it is further compounded in that Karl identifies as Latino and is Nicaraguan. The image then, of white men paying him to do their research for them, just as their secretary did, being equivalent to the white men paying the Latino man to trim their bushes image is distressing. Karl is proud of his PhD in History, proud of his library faculty position, and of course is proud of his heritage as well. But the constant struggle of inequality and service is seen here between the librarian and the administrators; the white men and Latino man; the older white male faculty and the young white female librarian; the faculty and the librarian. These types of stereotypes, generalizations, and expectations within education are not wholly surprising as racism and sexism are in fact "normal, not aberrant, in American society" (Delgado, 1995, p. xiv) and appears to be normal to people. These issues span the professed neutral guidelines that are based upon white, elite, male society to expectations and assumptions about our students in education, but also to colleagues, faculty, staff, and librarians (Berry, 2009; Childers-McKee & Hytten, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 1998).

Karl and Anastasia are clearly cognizant of the power structures at play. To fight against the fact that "racism is a permanent fixture," they appear to be using the strategy of "unmasking and exposing racism in its various permutations" (Ladson-Billings, 1998, p. 11). Learning how to manage these situations and find ways to change them in small ways, albeit hand holding and working around assignments, is how the participants are "moving to a place of resistance rather than the safe place of lecture," in order to change the power dynamics in the classroom between

not just the teacher and student, but also the librarian and teacher (Berry, 2010, p. 25).

Making a connection with students in the classroom is a principal goal most instruction librarians seek to do while teaching. Those connections look different because of the variety of classes, subjects, faculty, and students the librarians work with every day. The need to connect to students and make sure they know, if nothing else, that they can get help from librarians is repeated over and over by the participants. As teachers, instruction librarians believe that they are the students' partners, there to help them learn, together (Doherty & Ketchner, 2005). As already seen, however, creating that connection is hard due to lack of ownership of class, lack of time with students, and not having a relationship with the students in place already. Karl's need to use his "schtick" or "spiel" at the beginning of class and my need to use active learning in the classroom are decisions we make out of what we see as necessity—that need to grab the students' attention and pull them in to be a part of their learning experience.

The act of making a connection with the students in the classroom is based on engaged pedagogy. The librarians do not want the students to feel as merely "objects" in the classroom who must comply to their teachers—both discipline faculty and librarian—without any questioning or exploration of ideas (Freire, 2000, p. 59). Whereas discipline faculty have an entire semester with students, the librarians do not. In order to ensure that the classroom is "a place where wholeness is welcomed and students can be honest, even radically open," librarians must first make that connection, sometimes in as few as 5 minutes (hooks, 2010, p. 21). That sense of urgency is felt when Nancy talks about her being told she must use a LibGuide for her class. She is already against the obstacle of only having a short time to create that connection with students and then is given another obstacle when told that she must follow specific regarding what is allowed to be in her LibGuide. She knows that she needs to break that barrier

of the students thinking she is just another person talking to them in class, to have them see her as a person they can engage with, trust, and be a partner in their education. For Nancy, using her cats in class is her way to connect the students. After being told that she cannot put images of her cats in her LibGuide because doing so was against the standards set for the creation of LibGuides at her university, Nancy decided she would just not use any Libguides at all. It was more important to her to connect to students than use an online resource, so she found another way to connect to the students with her cats. In this case, she started using paper handouts and creating 'zines full of images of cats along with the pertinent information the students needed. Her librarian colleagues then stopped hassling her about her instruction methods and following standards; and more importantly, the students had a way to get to know her, to connect with her.

Addressing the obstacle of not having relationships with the students is also a matter of how then to make a connection while teaching, using engaged pedagogical classroom management techniques. Anastasia's decision not to call on students to answer questions or report discoveries while searching in class is one that is made because she does not know the students but also one of creating an engaged classroom. She is creating a safe and trusting environment for not just the international or introverted students, but for all the students in the class (Rogers & Freiberg, 1994). Spencer (2015) expresses the importance of creating a classroom "that invites students to share their ideas and questions in a safe place, that makes it okay for students to be vulnerable even while they are being challenged" which Anastasia is doing for her students, helping them feel comfortable and safe, even if she is only with them for 50 minutes (p. 203). For each of the participants, there is a "willingness to create spaces in the classroom where all voices can be heard because all students are free to speak, knowing their presence will be recognized" (hooks, 1994, p.186). Creating that connection, that safe space

where voices of the students can be heard, in the short time they might have with them is always first in their teaching goals.

Though not wholly the same as lack of ownership issues with faculty about a class, a similar issue that arose was that of a lack of ownership of their own class due to their lack of authority to have their own class. A number of participants mentioned their desire to have a for-credit information literacy course at their university. A course like this would be semester-long or quarter-long and taught by instruction librarian faculty. Ideally, it would be a required course for all undergraduate students to ensure they are learning those skills; however, logistically that would not be possible at larger universities due to lack of faculty to teach it. A course taught as an elective, or a requirement for specific programs, or a number of other options might work and have worked at some programs. Both Rupert and Anastasia talk in the play about the necessity of such a course. Anastasia feels that it is needed so we "have informed citizens" and makes the point that they're teaching students how to get the job, but not how to research to see if they want the job or if the company is ethical or not. And that traditionally, "we're not teaching them how to evaluate information that they see on the news."

Rupert shares the same concerns, taking it to a higher level of understanding the information cycle and incorporating it into their own thinking. But Rupert also raises the issue of why there is not already this class in existence at his university. This is due to the fact that the librarians are not in charge of this choice, this class. Rupert suggests that the "academy needs to invest money in it and give us some power" and "hire more of us" in order for them to teach a class independently show his own (and others') lack of control over this problem. The idea that "the academy" and "the profession" need to change this problem is another example of how instruction librarians experience a lack of power and authority in their everyday teaching.

**Research Question 2: How do participants view the role of teaching method and style in their teaching preparation?**

**Theme 1: If only I had a choice**

Librarians discussing their teaching and preparation, and how a teaching style and method play a role in that, is a fairly recent occurrence. Accardi (2013) explains that this is because the "concept of information literacy in the context of librarianship has been around since the 1970s . . . but the idea of librarians teaching it rather than presenting it only since the 1980s" (p. 26). Librarians discussing and considering pedagogy at all is quite a recent development in the field. For almost that long, librarians have been discussing the issues they have with discipline faculty, or teachers of record, in the teaching of information literacy or bibliographic instruction (Amstutz & Whitson, 1997; Downey, 2014; Hardesty, 1995; Keer, 2016; Manuel, Beck, & Molloy, 2005). Therefore, it is not completely surprising that Anastasia feels that the lack of cooperation from a faculty member is a "territorial thing" or that I cannot always teach how I would prefer because the faculty "push back too much." In addition, Karl urging librarians to say "no" when faculty want an unreasonable request but also conceding that most librarians just say yes because they don't want to be "the bad guy" is a sentiment supported throughout the literature. One example is the research that Downey (2014) conducted for her dissertation. She found that even though every librarian whom she interviewed expressed the desire to align their own instruction outcome goals to those of the professors' requests, they were not always successful. The librarians explained that it was because "the professor wanted them to demonstrate a specific database or other tool, show the relevant features, answer questions about the tool, and be done;" and similar to Karl's comment, Downey stated that "while there was

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some amount of frustration with this, the participants were generally accepting of and resigned to this reality" (p. 105).

Part of the struggle between wanting to teach in a more critical manner and the professors' superficial requests as described by Rupert is that in addition to not being able to at least teach students how to critically evaluate, there is not even an opportunity to critically evaluate why those assignments are superficial to start with, there is no "delving into that, unpacking that." The conversation about the STEM fields and evaluating why some sources are deemed appropriate simply because they are peer reviewed and all others pushed aside is another example of this conflict.  Anastasia remarks how she would prefer to have the STEM students learn how to critically evaluate those sources, and information overall. She would prefer to have that "critical examination of the peer review process, again asking what information is excluded versus what information is included" (Doherty, 2007, p. 3). With the current issue of credibility in government websites and policies, she poses the question, "how can we think critically about information that we were teaching to students to have value on from the government and other associations that has always been accepted and respected?" At this point, the STEM departments at her university are not ready to face that question and continue to promote government information and peer-reviewed sources as the standard for research.

The questioning of the faculty's choice of library instruction content, even the inclusion of at least some type of critical evaluation, is reiterated by Nancy's exclamation, "[i]t drives me nuts when students have an assignment where it's like, 'write an annotated review of one scholarly article.' Uh, I, what's the context? How do you know how this article works in relation to whatever?" That skill of critical evaluation, to understand and learn the context of sources, has been a foundational assumption of critical information literacy for two decades. In the article

published by Luke & Kapitzke (1999) calling for a critical information literacy transformation in librarianship, they list core assumptions. The first assumption states:

> That the texts and knowledges of the new technologies are potentially powerful sources for shaping students' beliefs, practices and identities, and indeed that students will require critical perspectives and strategies for repositioning themselves in relation to these texts and knowledges. (p. 486)

Though this assumption was written 20 years ago and has been focused upon within the field for just as long, it is not only still relevant today, but also probably even more so. In 1999, though there were cell phones and an internet to search on their computers, the authors could not have known that there would be a day when students were using their phones to access the internet, retrieving an indescribable amount of information in minutes. And, they definitely were not aware that those students would get almost all of their information, including any type of research for the schoolwork, from easily-accessible sources and resources such as Google, Wikipedia, and any number of social media platforms. The importance of critical evaluation when using these "new technologies" is beyond words. Students using Wikipedia as their primary resource for information is just an assumed practice. Students will go to Wikipedia first, and some will not use any other resource; discipline faculty and librarians now have to address that practice or learn how to work with it in their classes. Karl touches on this, recounting his work with undergraduates, "they might say, 'Well I use Wikipedia,' and I say, 'that's a good start. Let's delve a little deeper.' And that's the most important thing." Though only a beginning to encourage students to critically evaluate information, Karl's example demonstrates one way that instruction librarians are able to work it into an instruction session. Working with the students in this critical engaged manner is the preference for the participants; however, as shown earlier, the librarians do not always have this choice.

Keer (2016) explains that because instruction librarians are not the actual teachers of the students they are teaching,

> their ability to incorporate critical pedagogy into information literacy work is also largely contingent on the receptivity of the faculty members they collaborate with. Even if the librarian is fully invested in critical pedagogy, the classroom faculty may need to be convinced. (p. 70)

That convincing sometimes is not always successful; however, for some participants, there have been opportunities. In addition to collaborating on research assignments for courses or co-teaching a number of sessions, some librarians have taught full-quarter or semester-long course. Karl has had a number of opportunities to teach with faculty on campus, using his research background and education:

> I've helped co-teach with one professor in the Latin American Studies department, you know, kind of doing human rights in Latin America and then another with another TA…focused on Nicaragua and during the Sandinista Revolution, which is kind of where my research came in.

Nancy has also had success with collaborating and making partnerships with faculty, even though they may take a month of work on her part, as she describes above. Her experience with successful faculty relationships is connected to her view that faculty and librarians are teaching the same thing: research. She explains that "[w]e're teaching different parts of research, different types of literacies at the same time they are, and so I think if there are ways to, to collaborate, be more complementary, it's really helpful." She also explains that part of the reason that potential partnerships do not work out is,

the lack of buy in, I think from faculty. I mean, I think they're into it, but if it gets in the way of their work, their teaching, [then] they don't have to have it, don't necessarily need it and they [will] just send their students to the reference desk. Or, their students just won't figure it out and that's too bad.

Librarians who want to "encourage students to think critically about the information they encounter and to develop a critical consciousness, to critically evaluate the system of valued information in academia" are being stifled in some ways by the faculty working in that same system of valued information in academia (Schlessman-Tarngo, 2014, p. 33). The challenge then for the instruction librarians who want critical evaluation in their teaching, or ideally, to teach the entire session following a critical engaged pedagogy is creating the way to work with faculty who are pushing back on that choice. That challenge is best expressed through the question posed by Rupert: "So the question becomes, you know, do we promote our curriculum or our point of view that we want to promote or are we serving the interest of the faculty even if we disagree with those interests?"

## Research Question 2: How do participants view the role of teaching method and style in their teaching preparation?

### Theme 2: Teaching is a political act

Teaching is a political act—a sentiment expressed by all the five participants in this study—and understanding that is not necessarily a given in the academic community. It is definitely not a given for the academic librarianship community; in fact, as the findings show for both this and the "if I only had a choice" theme, there are plenty of stories and experiences to be told about denying that teaching is political and attempting to maintain the falsehood of there being such a thing as neutrality. An instruction librarian who incorporates critical instruction

pedagogy makes a choice that provides opportunities to engage with students, teach them how to critically evaluate the structures and oppressions around them, demonstrate questioning any claim of neutrality, and to work together with students to ensure the voices of all people are heard. Once that decision is made, there is no denying their teaching is political.

When library instruction is taught in the traditional manner, what Freire (2000) would describe as the banking model, the librarian depositing information into the students' minds is not effective. That depositing of information is overwhelming, the students are not interested, and there is no engagement between the students and librarian. Ladenson (2010) explains that "traditional bibliographic instruction methods emphasize a patriarchal paradigm, which involves the librarian dominating the classroom by lecturing to students about a plethora of information sources and search strategies" (p. 105). Moving away from this type of teaching is not easy and those instruction librarians who move forward to a critical library instruction are not without barriers, as shown above. However, it is also not without its benefits—for both the students and the teachers.

Using engaged pedagogy in the classroom is seen throughout the participants' stories. Librarians inviting students to participate during class, during their own learning experience, is commonly heard. Anastasia talks about learning things together with her students rather than standing in front of the room telling them things, preferring to not have to "show them exactly how to get this piece of information," a reference to the traditional style of instruction. Her preference is to engage her students with a "think-pair-share" activity:

> that way they will think about their topic. So they will write in their topic, and then we have them think about their subject terms and then I'll say, "Okay, stop and share with your partner what your subject, your subject words are for your proposal." They'll share with their partner and then we'll go back to writing a little bit and then I'll say, "Okay, add something to your partner's keyword list because they are done thinking of these keywords. But everybody comes from different backgrounds and thinks about things

differently. So add something to their list that they didn't think of." And then they think it's great because they think their partner is doing some of their homework for them and so by the time we get done, they've outlined, they have keywords, and um, you know, they've thought more in depth about their topic.

At first it appears that she is using a common active learning method in her class as the think-pair-share activity is one used frequently because it works so well; however, she is taking it one step further and adding the part that their partners will add to their keyword lists because "everybody comes from different backgrounds and thinks about things differently." At this point she moved from an active learning exercise (not to say anything against that, active learning is an excellent move away from traditional library instruction) to a critically-framed active learning exercise. The handful of decisions that Anastasia made for that one class session falls in line with a number of examples that Accardi (2016) says a feminist librarian would do; namely, promoting active participation when discussing possible research topics; relying on student input for database demonstration and keyword brainstorming; using group or partner work for information searching or evaluation; and then creating a learning activity that solicits and validates students' experiential knowledge (p. 151).

The most powerful moments for students in class are when they can express their voices, feel their lives are important, and can trust enough to be vulnerable. These moments are seen when Karl shares his view on the necessity of listening carefully to students or when Nancy shares that even though there is no such thing as a completely safe space, she tries to create a "safer space" for them so she can "engage with them in a way that pushes them to think deeper" and they are able to be more willing and open and vulnerable because they trust her. The whole process culminates in the students' ability, and comfort doing so with her, to critically question and problematize the very things they walked into the classroom thinking were everyday "normal" things. Part of the students' willingness is that Nancy "fumbles" through it with them

because "when you fumble through something with someone, it's better." These ideas and

activities are examples of how engaged pedagogy is different (and more effective) than the

standard lecturing-at-the-podium teaching method.  It is wholly different because it,

> emphasizes mutual participation because it is the movement of ideas, exchanged by
> everyone, that forges a meaningful working relationship between everyone in the
> classroom . . . engaged pedagogy makes the classroom a place where wholeness is
> welcomed and students can be honest, even radically open. (hooks, 2010, p. 21)

Nancy works to make sure her classroom is that place where students trust her enough to be

honest and vulnerable. She engages them in a way that shows them that she is with them,

working with them, and a person whom they count on during their research process (Acosta et

al., 2017). Her thoughts on this are heard in the play, when she explains that her engagement

with the students includes not just learning together, but also learning from mistakes together:

"what's really important to me is trust with students. And so nobody's gonna make fun of

anybody if they really muck it up, if we muck it up, we need to understand how we mucked it up

and then unmuck it."

As critical library instruction, a critical engaged pedagogy, is built on Critical Theory as a

whole, it is not a surprise to learn that the participants in this study talked about the education

system, neutrality, and how to teach students to examine their world with a critical lens.  A major

part in any analysis of the education system through a critical lens is to accept "that schools are

not neutral institutions that prepare student equally for social and economic opportunities in the

wider society" (Giroux, 2001, p. 207).  Critical pedagogy contains, as Giroux (2001) states, that

"transcendent element in which critical thought becomes the precondition for human freedom.

Rather than proclaiming a positivist notion of neutrality, critical theory openly takes sides in the

interest of struggling for a better world" (p. 19). Neutrality and its nonexistence, falsehood, and

problems are raised as issues by every participant, and for some, repeatedly. They are clearly choosing to openly take sides in the classrooms

The issue with neutrality, beyond its general problems, for librarians is that we are taught during our graduate education that librarianship is about maintaining ethics, privacy, and neutrality. A statement that is so contradictory I am still saddened to learn is in the practice of teaching librarians to be "ethical" they must always be "neutral" when working with students and patrons happens. Rupert shares his frustration about this when he talks about how the library school curriculum taught them that should only give out information to patrons, not to ever give their own opinions. Karl relates with a similar story:

> But the point is the idea of getting to know someone first before that, that was something that I... You couldn't apply that dry library school model, the library school model would say no, don't engage personally. Don't make a connection. You're only there to answer the question the same way.

For the participants in this study, the idea they were taught in school that they needed to remain neutral directly conflicts with their actual knowledge that there is no such thing as neutral. We do not live in a neutral society where everyone makes neutral decisions because we are all neutral people observing from a neutral perspective (Giroux, 2001). Rather, each one of us brings our own perspective and when it comes to feigning an idyllic version of a neutral society in which we all live, well, that's just not possible. I refer to neutrality as "oppressive privilege" and "the white patriarchal heteronormative culture – the privileged" and for those reasons alone, librarians should not ever believe that being neutral is an option. And as is seen in the findings, the instruction librarians in this study understand that as well.

Part of learning to teach the harsh reality of what neutrality stands for is also learning about, and learning how to teach, the "holy trinity" of gender, race, and class. Karl refers to it in this way but it is has been called the same by a number of other scholars. I believe I first heard it

in Delrosso's (2000) article, "Catholicism's Other(ed) Holy Trinity: Race, Class, and Gender in Black Catholic Girl School Narratives" where the author examines the three by analyzing narratives where Catholicism is also othered (Delrosso, 2000). But moving beyond the name, Karl also states that it is no longer a trinity because we (read: those who understand, study, and teach about oppression and intersectionality) now understand that oppression is seen in more areas than just those three that we should be examining. We now see literature discussing oppression due to sexualities, abilities, ethnicity, religion, nationality, etc., and, adding in another layer of oppression, intersectionality (see Anzaldúa, 1987, 1999; Berry, 2009, 2010; Childers-McKee & Hytten, 2015; Crenshaw, 1991; Erden, 2017; Harris, 2001; Hill Collins, 1999; King, 1988; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Rodriguez & Boahne, 2012; Qin, 2012; Thompson, 2004; Wing, 2005; to name a few). More scholars are researching and writing about it and more people are talking and telling their stories, and counterstories, so their real lived experiences are being heard rather than that assumptive white, heteronormative, male, upper-middle-class narrative discussed earlier. For instruction librarians, the additional voices and the additional scholarship and literature mean there are more resources to teach the students. Today there are even resources that focus solely on specific subjects that might by seen as outside of the mainstream neutral literature. Karl's experience with the student who did at least want to include intersectionality of gender in his research, but did not want to use any resources other than the regulars for his area, is an example of how students are still hesitant to take that leap of inclusivity. The years of always doing it the same way still form a wall that has not been broken yet.

Teaching with a critical engaged pedagogy looks differently for instruction librarians not just because everyone is different or does it in their own way, but also because it looks different depending on where the librarian is at in their own development. I described first trying these

teaching practices in a women's studies classroom because it felt safe to me, and I shared how I

started behind the podium in the first class and then gained the confidence to move to a point

where the students were leading class discussions themselves. That is a different image of

teaching critically than the class Anastasia describes where she is co-teaching and they have the

students evaluating bias in politics—a classroom full of discussion that was heated, but

controlled as Anastasia anticipated that reaction from the students was prepared for it ahead of

time (for additional example of preparing and creating a course based on engaged pedagogy,

social justice issues, and critical thinking, see Acosta et al., 2017). Both of those classes

happened at the beginning of my and Anastasia's journeys to become critical library instructors;

however, Nancy's descriptions are of classes that she taught after having already been doing

critical librarian instruction. When listening to Nancy share her stories of classes, experiences,

students, and general thoughts about librarianship, I could not stop repeating to myself, "teaching

is a political act" because it is what Nancy's teaching style reminds me of – Keer's (2010)

definition of critical pedagogy and those who teach it:

> Critical pedagogy is not just another approach to teaching, like active or team-based learning. It is a radical reconceptualization of the roles of both teacher and student in the creation of knowledge. Adopting critical pedagogy requires an acknowledgement that teaching is a political act. Teachers are not and can never be neutral or benign actors within education, and education is not a natural phenomenon but rather a process of enculturation that traditionally upholds an unequal social order. (p. 67)

Knowing then that Nancy is definitely not a neutral nor benign actor in education, the

powerfulness of her passion is seen in how much she gives to her students and their feeling of

powerfulness, their feeling of trust in her, and their willingness to open up to different ideas

about being critical of themselves and the world around them. Nancy does not apologize for how

critical her examples are, how far she pushes the students, and how important social justice and

equality are to her. It is important to her that it's known that "there's more to me than how to search a fucking database."

For Nancy, it truly is "never just a jail," it has always been about oppression, institutional and systemic racism, and privatization. Her working with students and teaching them ideas of critical evaluation or helping them with their research in a more in-depth manner frequently moves to her office where it turns into a one-on-one instruction session. In her description of these sessions in her office she mentions that people walking by can hear her; her office is really one in a row of cubicles. Though their cubicles have high walls and doors (something I had never seen), nothing stops the sound completely from traveling out of the top, over the walls and the door. And that, I believe, may put a different image in the mind when thinking of her drawing boobs while discussing the anatomy of a woman with the student's research topic of pornography. But it also continues the "teaching is a political act" description I have for her. Part of creating that radical space in the classroom is the understanding that using the critical lens means focusing on all inequalities. Teaching politically, or critically, is "a way of interrogating and problematizing the inequalities that all marginalized people face, not just that of women, and is concerned with issues such as racism, homophobia, and xenophobia" (Accardi, 2013, p. 15). Nancy explains how she works with students who maybe her colleagues are not comfortable helping with because of their research topics—pornography, capitalism, racism—or unfortunately, because her white colleagues are not comfortable working with students of color for fear that they might accidentally offend the students. Those concerns are not even a consideration for Nancy, or if they are, they are a consideration that is immediately quieted by her wanting to help the students.

The next step in critical library instruction is teaching students how to deconstruct, analyze structures, and question narratives: demonstration. Instruction librarians willing to break the unspoken rule of neutrality and speak out against someone or something, or openly talk about topics and subjects that some people may not want to hear (or know how to handle), are exhibiting how to move from analysis to action. It is one thing to encourage students to take a chance and stand up for something but the ability and willingness to demonstrate it being done for them speaks volumes. The decision to demonstrate during the class creates for the students a space for "creation of meaningful knowledge and . . . political laboratories that can deepen participation and dialogue about the larger social, political, and economic relations and practices" (Fischman & McLaren, 2005, p. 355). For Karl, this demonstration comes in the form of working with an entire class and teaching them that not only is Web of Science wrong, it is wrong because the United States of America is wrong in its educational bias. Most academic librarians would explain that when it comes to the giants of the databases world, Web of Science is at the top, especially for the sciences. And, the citation numbers Karl speaks about are the number of times an article or author has been cited in other articles (also usually found in Web of Science) and those are the numbers that are frequently examined when a faculty member is going up for tenure or a promotion or when applying for a new faculty position. In other words, those numbers are very important. If the number is low, then the person is possibly considered not "worthy," at least in the sciences.

Through an exercise of critical evaluation, unpacking, and basic questioning of why things are the way they are, Karl demonstrates to the students how Web of Science is not being inclusive. To further that demonstration, he continues the evaluation to examine why the articles from other countries are not included and proposes the answer of "educational nationalism." His

proposed answer is then the educational system in the United States is oppressive and the Web of Science is elitist. I argue that Karl leading this discussion while in a prominent American educational institution, more than likely with Web of Science up on the screens of the computers—both the classroom equipment the database paid for by said university—is an extremely powerful demonstration and an example for his students. If their teacher can stand there in that particular situation and speak up for what is right and fair, then those students could be taking it to heart, knowing that they, too, can take the ideas they learned out to the real world.

## Research Question 3: How do the participants view the impact of their library instruction on their students' learning?

## Theme: Real world, lifelong skills

Answering the question of how librarians view their impact on their students' learning could have been as simple as stating that they, of course, believe (or hope that) they have a positive and long-lasting influence on student learning. Two things however impede that answer: (1) it's never just that simple and (2) it doesn't actually speak to what we really want to know, "the how." For the participants in this study, the "how" is impacting the students and their learning through real world, lifelong skills. Those skills, the overall theme, are discussed through teaching students critical thinking, the students using those skills to evaluate the real world, and the librarians impacting the students' lives with their work beyond the classroom.

Teaching students through critical library instruction leads to students becoming critical thinkers and lifelong learners (Accardi, 2013, 2016; Hartstock, 2009; hooks, 1994, 2010; Keer, 2016; Ladenson, 2010; Pagowsky & McElroy, 2016; Swanson, 2004). However, this can be challenging when in order to teach how to critically evaluate information, librarians must first teach students to think in a more dynamic way than they may have in the past. This means

learning to think critically about their own lives, including their family, surroundings, upbringing, etc. and therefore is more likely to raise issues for students. Nancy's "Thanksgiving was a real shit show" story is a humorous but powerful example of how changing the way students think also changes how they act and see themselves in society. Students learn that there is ambiguity in the world to contend with and they must develop a tolerance to it, through self-directed inquiry and by seeing themselves "as more than passive consumers and their education as more than a form of currency" (Galoozis & Pinto, 2016, p. 165). Providing students authentic in-class learning moments through an engaged pedagogy gives students opportunities to think about information critically and learn to take those questioning skills out into their own lives, into their own real world (Acosta et al., 2017; Spencer, 2015).

When Karl shares his thoughts about students taking the idea of critical evaluation and their critical thinking skills to the world as a whole, to use the critical information literacy tools they now have learned to do something about the inequalities in society, he is talking about critical thinkers becoming critical actors. Critical actors "take the knowledge they have learned in the feminist classroom and translate it into everyday life and society and culture. They are more aware of forms of oppression and act to end them" (Accardi, 2013, p. 57). He pushes the students asking, "now what do you do?" and reminding them that,

> this is where librarians can, well, what if you want to do something, let me show you where you can well, what if you want to do something, let me show you where you can go and not simply find one website and think, oh, this has all the answers because you know, for better or for worse, you got to think critically about it. That's your due diligence as a citizen.

With their new critical thinking skills, Karl expects that his students will take that knowledge with them to evaluate their own world, but to also continue to do their due diligence as a citizen and as a critical actor. I speak about this same expectation when I state I need my "students to

really examine how people, ideas, things, policies, whatever, are being portrayed and then focus in on the marginalized groups of people who frequently construed and put in a negative light." In many of these examples, the words of hooks (1994) can continually be heard echoing in the background, "the classroom remains the most radical space of possibility in the academy" (p. 12).

Though the classroom may be the most radical space of possibility, the participants repeatedly discussed the work they did outside of the classroom. For them this work may not always be radical but is definitely another way they are impacting the lives of their students. That's not to say they are not impacting their students in the classroom; on numerous occasions all of the participants made reference to moments in class where they acted as social workers, counselors, guides, and coaches. Students frequently go to them for advice, for an ear where they can talk about frustrations, or even to talk about the topics they don't understand whether that is assignment related to the class or to ask why there is now an "x" where an "o" or "a" used to be. In some ways, the stories that the participants tell of their time with students beyond the classroom are actually counterstories to the narratives about librarians simply checking out books, not being faculty, considered unequal (especially if not a white heterosexual male librarian), and uneducated. The amount of care, passion, and time spent dedicated to their students is surprising even to me in some cases. Their willingness to share these stories with me speak to counterstory technique, a way to ensure that people understand what their lives are really about as an academic instruction librarian (Delgado & Stefanic, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

# Conclusions

In their everyday experiences as academic instruction librarians, the participants face both barriers and encouragement to their decisions regarding teaching methods and curriculum in addition to how they are impacting their students' lives and learning. If they are confident in teaching critically and pushing students to think a little deeper, question a little more, and evaluate their own culture, librarians can create their own curriculum focused on critical engaged pedagogy and the discipline faculty's outcome for the course. One participant in particular, Nancy, shares many examples of this throughout her stories and conversations. In the play representing the central themes of the findings found in Chapter 4, the main story weaved throughout the play is that of Nancy's work with a class about poverty, her communication with the faculty, creation of the lesson plan and activities for the class, her own research she needed to do as preparation, encouraging and engaging with the students, the successes and failures, the different roles she played besides librarian, and her thoughts about the entire experience. In addition to being represented in the play as a whole, all four themes from this study are seen within her one story:

1. Sometimes a teacher, sometimes not

2. If only I had a choice

3. Teaching is a political act

4. Real world, lifelong Skills

The first theme, sometimes a teacher, sometimes not, was by far the most prominent theme that emerged within the study. It directly speaks to the struggle that the participants handled every day: though they were instruction librarians, they were not able to always feel as though they were real teachers or faculty on their campuses. There were two main reasons for

this, (1) their feeling of lack of ownership or authority over any classes and (2) how they were treated as unequal to other faculty on campus. Not having ownership of the classes they were teaching meant they had no say in what the curriculum of the course was, nor even the curriculum of their own session for the course, nor did they have control over how long they would be able to connect with students in the classroom. Added to that frustration was when they tried to partner or collaborate with the faculty of the courses, they were frequently dismissed or treated with unequal standing even though for some of the participants, they held the equivalent degree, a doctorate, as the faculty member. Their struggle with not always being seen as faculty and being in the classroom was additionally dispiriting because it meant they were not able to make the classroom connections with the students. Connecting to students and building a relationship with them, ensuring them that the librarians are there to help them, was one of the most important goals of the participants. Because they were only sometimes a teacher, they were not able to make as many of those connections as they wanted.

The second theme, if only I had a choice, discusses the participants' experiences in how they view the role of teaching method and style. It is shown through two angles, first, how discipline faculty affect their teaching decisions and second, their priority to ensure that they at least try to teach critical evaluation to the students if they are able to do so. As implied in the first theme, though there are positive interactions, most of time the participants struggle with their collaborations with faculty. If they were able to convince a discipline faculty member to allow them to teach a session, they were immediately challenged with the time negotiation. Faculty frequently just want librarians to give a quick introduction of library resources in short amounts of time, ranging from 5 to 15 minutes. The librarians, however, would like to at least be in the class the entire time, teaching the students about critical evaluation and using active

participation, though all participants stated they would prefer to teach the students for multiple class sessions. The constant attempted negotiation with discipline faculty for class time or the ability to teach a curriculum/lesson plan of the librarian's choosing is exhausting. Though they would like to push back, many times the librarians give in and resort to teaching a 20-minute one-shot library session. For the time the participants were able to teach in the courses, they included critical evaluation in their lesson plans. Even if it was simply encouraging students to delve deeper than simply using Wikipedia, they wanted it included. For the participants, teaching students to question their sources and examine why they were considered credible or in what context they should examined was important enough to sneak it in if necessary when they do not own the classes nor its curriculum. The conflict between teaching what the discipline faculty wants or what the librarian wants remains present in almost every class they teach.

The third theme, teaching is a political act, also discusses the participants' experiences with the role of teaching method and style; however, it instead focuses on their teaching preferences, i.e., critical library instruction pedagogy. The three areas they emphasize are engaging with the students, neutrality isn't a thing, and teaching the holy trinity in their classes. The participants spoke about the importance of engaged pedagogy in their classrooms where they listen to students, build trust with them, and work with them to uncover realities and learn to question their surroundings. Using critical active learning exercises and encouraging students to be a part of their own learning experience were mentioned as two ways to create an engaged pedagogical classroom.

The concept of neutrality was discussed by the participants in reference to its falsehood, how it's taught to be ethical in library school, and their experiences teaching students and working with them to understand that through questioning and uncovering of structures in

society, they will see the truth about neutrality and be able to take that lesson with them throughout their own lives. Teaching about gender, race, and class—or, the holy trinity—and also moving beyond only those three, is where the participants talk about students learning about standing against oppression, seeking justice for marginalized groups, and finding credible sources to examine these oppressions and their effect on society.

The fourth theme, real world, lifelong skills, discusses how the participants view their impact on student learning and student lives in general. The first two ways the participants examine their impact are critical thinking and evaluating the real world. These two subthemes intersect in a number of ways but for the participants, there is a distinct separation between the two. They use their own critical library instruction pedagogy to teach students critical thinking skills and thereby teach them to be critical actors in society. Then the students take those critical thinking skills outside of the classroom to their own real world and use them to evaluate their lives and the information they come in contact with every day. The third way that the participants discuss their impact is on not just student learning, but also on the students' lives. The impact that they are having however is not done through regular librarian job duties. They are working beyond the classroom in addition to their work as instruction librarians. They share stories of fulfilling the roles of social worker, counselor, therapist, mentor, and caretaker. The extent of their passion to connect with and help students seems to have no boundaries for the participants.

## Recommendations for Practice

The one recommendation for practice gleaned from this study that would have the largest impact on instruction librarians throughout the profession is quite unrealistic. That recommendation would be to find a way to make all the discipline faculty on campus respect

instruction librarians as equal faculty members and share their classes with them. While this recommendation is ambitious, if not impossible, we need to look at the smaller acts librarians can do to promote critical library instruction and start building the inroads to make it possible.

The first actual recommendation is connected to promoting critical library instruction within the profession. As shown in the study and literature, instruction librarians making the transformation from traditional lecture-style teaching to one following a critical engaged pedagogy is not a prominent move seen yet. There are a number of reasons librarians may not be changing their teaching style, ranging from no time to do the prep or research to learn about it, to having never heard of it or its benefits, to the unwillingness of discipline faculty on their campus to allow the librarian to do so. Through my conversations with the participants for this study, a new reason was raised by Nancy that I think those of us interested in critical librarianship can work to fix. I will let Nancy explain this issue:

> So we've gone from bibliographic to information literacy, critical librarianship, this shiny new car and it's got a vocabulary in it that nobody understands and you know what, we can talk about this in a much more accessible way, and that's why [colleagues in] the libraries that are not really interested in it because they feel that they're not qualified to talk about it. How do we incorporate that? I think it's too bad that an elitism has developed…[continued]… I follow the crit lib stuff, I'm interested in it. Some of it I don't get sometimes and I have to like, "oh my God, what is, what does this word mean again? What does this..." I have to look them up and take notes, read the definitions down again, it just doesn't stick with me. [B]ut you know, I've always incorporated that type of stuff into my work. So it's not new to me to incorporate it. [I]t's very familiar and I'm glad these conversations are happening that need to happen. [A]t the same time, the way that the conversations are happening are alienating people who have never thought about their instruction in that way.

The problem that Nancy is explaining is interesting because what I would say is one of the tenets of critical librarianship—to ensure information is accessible to everyone in society, and to encourage other librarians to join in the fight against ideas such as neutrality is good or other similar sentiments—is clearly being ignored in particular scholarly discussions about critical

librarianship. It is concerning because when it comes to critical librarianship and teaching with a critical race feminist pedagogy, Nancy is someone whom I would look to for advice and therefore that *she* feels this way about the nature of the discussions makes me pause. My recommendation is for those of us practicing critical librarianship, especially when talking about it to others, is to be more conscious of how we are talking about it and work to make it accessible for any librarian to learn and to practice. The more instruction librarians who understand the benefits of it and are not intimidated by it, the more librarians we have on campuses practicing it.

The second recommendation I have is follow through on an idea discussed by scholars such as Accardi (2013) and practiced by librarians. I include it here because my experience tells me that not everyone is aware of it as an idea or what a large impact a small change in their own teaching can make. The technique is especially helpful for those librarians who are unable to negotiate an entire curriculum of their liking or able to get a decent amount of time in a class. That technique is to change our keywords when demonstrating databases. We can choose "feminist-themed, gender-related, or women-centered examples" rather than old standbys that traditionally are not diverse in any way (Accardi, 2014, p. 37). As the fifth participant in the study, I include my own words regarding this technique from a larger discussion about critical engaged pedagogy:

> But, having said that, I always have the students on computers doing searches with me with their own research question keywords and my examples always include some kind of diversity, meaning, if I am demonstrating how to do a search, I would use Toni Morrison's The Bluest Eye rather than Hemingway's The Old Man and the Sea so I can at least get some kind of non-white-man shit in there.

Using this technique, we can still exercise our own autonomy by using examples to show a critical pedagogical lens and therefore still bring critical library instruction to the classroom.

# Recommendations for Future Research

For future research I recommend additional conversations with instruction librarians about their experience with critical library instruction with three changes and additions:

1. Conduct interviews and focus groups with a more diverse sample of participants; in addition to personal demographic diversity, the sample of instruction librarians should be from different-sized universities and in different regions.

2. Perform classroom observations to supplement interviews and focus groups in a method similar to that described in Chapter 3. Researching instruction librarians and their choices with regard to teaching would be enhanced by the opportunity to observe how teaching method and style are executed in a classroom.

3. Explore the connection between the power between teacher and student with the power between librarian and discipline faculty member. The scholarship about power in the classroom is about students not having power in the classroom, only receiving information, and whose voices are not heard (Accardi, 2016; Freire, 2000; hooks, 1994, 2010; Rogers & Freiberg, 1994; Swanson, 2004). As shown in this study, librarians frequently have no power in the classroom, no voice in selecting curriculum, and receive information from the faculty without any opportunity to contribute their own knowledge. The parallel positions of power between students and librarians is one worthy of further exploration.

## Summary

This study focused on the choices that instruction librarians within higher education institutions made about whether or not they include critical pedagogy and critical information literacy in their teaching styles and in the classroom. Specifically, the study explored (a) the

decisions of librarians to teach either in the traditional or critical library pedagogy manner and (b) barriers or encouragement in librarians' choice to teach through a critical lens. Critical engaged pedagogy, as part of the critical theoretical framework, provided the lens through which the narrative analysis of interview and observational data were analyzed.

Findings showed that in their everyday experiences as academic instruction librarians, the participants did face both barriers and encouragement to their decisions regarding teaching methods and curriculum in addition to how they are impacting their students' lives and learning. Four different themes emerged from the data: the first theme showed the participants' struggle to be seen as real teachers on campus; the second theme discussed how discipline faculty affect their teaching decisions; the third theme focused on participants' teaching under a critical library instruction pedagogy; and the fourth theme discussed how the participants view their impact on student learning and student lives in general.

Its impact on how librarians teach information literacy and engage our students on a large-scale level for all universities is the significance of this study. Understanding the stories of instruction librarians, analyses of their teaching styles, and their plans to improve information literacy instruction is a key part of contributing to the early scholarship and continued building of a foundation for other librarians to make changes and reflect on their experiences. Moreover, the ultimate benefit is to the students now being engaged and fostering critical thinking from the paradigm shift this profession needs.

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# Appendix A - What Feminist Pedagogy Looks Like in the Classroom

| The feminist teacher: | The feminist instruction librarian: |
|---|---|
| Makes use of the seminar discussion-based format, which fosters active participation and values student voices (Broidy, 2007; Chow et al., 2003). | Promotes active participation when discussing possible research topics, database searching strategies, or other information literacy learning activities. |
| Is characterized by the absence of lecturing and assertion of authority. Instead, the teacher asks for student input (Carillo, 2007). | Relies on student input for database demonstration, keyword brainstorming, and search query formation. |
| Emphasizes hands-on or interactive learning, field trips, service or community learning (Chow et al., 2003). | Employs hands-on learning activities that require students to engage with library research tools. |
| Facilitates cooperation, class participation, group work; builds community; involves students in decision making; elicits personal responses material (Duncan & Stasio, 2001). | Makes use of group work or partner work for information searching or evaluation. Develops learning activities that solicit and validate students' experiential knowledge. |
| Employs consciousness-raising (Fisher, 1981). | Raises awareness of sexism and other forms of oppression through library research content and examples (e.g., using "women in engineering" for a search topic in a career research class). |
| Is attentive to language as a way of constructing reality and knowledge; acknowledges central role of language in teaching, learning, and theory formation (Giroux, 1989). | Takes care to explain how keywords and/or subject terms often fail to take into account or inadequately describe marginalized people of topics. Demonstrates how to rephrase search language in order to retrieve satisfactory results. |
| Uses egalitarian classroom practices, encourages student development of personal strengths, and fosters social relations that challenge patriarchy (Giroux, 1989). | Makes use of learning activities that validate learners' talents and strengths and invite students to share or demonstrate skills for class. Fosters an anti-hierarchical classroom environment where student input is sought, utilized, and valued. |
| Fosters an environment in which all individuals work together to achieve goals collectively (Hayes, 1989). | Collaboratively develops goals and learning outcomes for library session with students. Invites suggestions from students on how to achieve goals. |
| Encourages students to define key terms for class discussion (Maher, 1985). | Seeks student input on keyword brainstorming. Encourages students to help |

| The feminist teacher: | The feminist instruction librarian: |
|---|---|
| | set the agenda for learning activities and goals for the session. |
| Supports students in achieving mastery on their own or in collaborative group exercises (Parry, 1996). | Develops learning activities that allow students to improve and hone library research skills individually or with partners/groups. |
| Makes use of reflective personal journals (Parry, 1996). | Employs learning activities or assessment instruments that promote student reflection on learning and research process and facilitate metacognition. |
| Employs networked computerized classrooms, which can shift power relationships and promote active learning (Parry, 1996). | Uses computer classroom in a way that empowers individual learners and promotes hands-on kinesthetic learning. |
| Focuses on interaction, such as impromptu speaking, group exercises, ice-breakers, keeping people meeting new people, changing physical environment (Torrens & Riley, 2004). | Keeps the classroom interesting and lively by encouraging students to speak, work in groups, and move around the classroom. |
| Makes use of think/pair/share, team work, and team reports, and group problem-solving (Webb et al., 2004). | Develops learning activities that require students to work individually, then share with a partner, and then share with group. Provides problem-based research scenarios for students to solve together. |

*Figure 8*. Feminist teacher to feminist instruction librarian adaptation (Accardi, 2013, p. 50-52).

# Appendix B - Copy of IRB Approval Letter

**KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY** | University Research Compliance Office

TO:     Dr. Kay Ann Taylor                        Proposal Number: 9316
        Curriculum and Instruction
        246 Bluemont Hall

FROM:   Rick Scheidt, Chair
        Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects

DATE: 05/18/2018

RE:     Proposal Entitled, "Critical Race Feminism and Engaged Pedagogy: The Power of Voice in Library Instruction"

The Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects / Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Kansas State University has reviewed the proposal identified above and has determined that it is EXEMPT from further IRB review. This exemption applies only to the proposal - as written – and currently on file with the IRB. Any change potentially affecting human subjects must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation and may disqualify the proposal from exemption.

Based upon information provided to the IRB, this activity is exempt under the criteria set forth in the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, **45 CFR §46.101, paragraph b, category: 1, subsection: i.**

Certain research is exempt from the requirements of HHS/OHRP regulations. A determination that research is exempt does not imply that investigators have no ethical responsibilities to subjects in such research; it means only that the regulatory requirements related to IRB review, informed consent, and assurance of compliance do not apply to the research.

Any unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects or to others must be reported immediately to the Chair of the Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, the University Research Compliance Office, and if the subjects are KSU students, to the Director of the Student Health Center.

# Appendix C - Interview Protocol

## Prior to First Interview

Prior to the first interview beginning, the participants will be briefed on the following:

1. The purpose of the research

    a. Identify the reasons academic instruction librarians choose different teaching styles and methods

    b. Identify how academic instruction librarians view their role in students' learning

2. The procedures of the research

    a. Sources and methods of data collection

        i. Classroom teaching observation, if permission granted

        ii. Interview as primary source of data collection

            1. Interview will be recorded with digital recording device

        iii. Observation data from notes during interview

            1. I will have paper and pen during interview to take notes

        iv. Notes from reflexive field journal

    b. Member checking

        i. Participants have opportunity to review transcripts, make additions, and/or modifications to ensure their meaning, information, and data are accurate

3. The risks (if there are any) and benefits of the research

    a. Risks

        i. No risks anticipated to the participant

    b. Benefits

        i. No direct benefits but your participation will further enhance the positive

impact of the study on the librarianship profession

4. Participation is voluntary, and participant may make the decision to withdraw from

   research at any time without repercussion

5. Procedures used to identify and protect confidentiality

   a. No direct attribution of information to participant

   b. Pseudonyms will be used for all participants

6. Signing consent form

   a. Both researcher and participant sign two copies

      i. One copy for participant; one copy for researcher

## Prior to Second Interview

Prior to the second interview beginning, the participants will be reminded of the following:

1. The purpose of the research

   a. Identify the reasons academic instruction librarians choose different teaching

      styles and methods

   b. Identify how academic instruction librarians view their role in students' learning

2. The procedures of the research

   a. Sources and methods of data collection

      i. Interview as primary source of data collection

         1. Interview will be recorded with digital recording device

      ii. Observation data from notes during interview

         1. I will have paper and pen during interview to take notes

      iii. Notes from reflexive field journal

        b.   Member checking

             i.  Participants have opportunity to review transcripts, make additions, and/or modifications to ensure their meaning, information, and data are accurate

3. The risks (if there are any) and benefits of the research

    a.  Risks:  No risks anticipated to the participant

    b.  Benefits:  No direct benefits but your participation will further enhance the positive impact of the study on the librarianship profession

4. Participation is voluntary, and participant may make the decision to withdraw from research at any time without repercussion

5. Procedures used to identify and protect confidentiality

    a.  No direct attribution of information to participant

    b.  Pseudonyms will be used for all participants

**Conclusion of Interviews**

At the conclusion of each interview:

1. Thank participant

    a.  Debriefing statement, which includes contact information

2. Explain member checking process and arrange timeline

3. In private setting away from interview location, record information

    a.  Record reflexive field notes

    b.  Record additional observation notes as needed

4. Listen to participant's interview

# Appendix D - Interview Questions

**First Interview**

<u>Introduction</u>

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. As I mentioned earlier, this interview should take about 90 minutes and you may end the interview at any time.

<u>Background and Education</u>

1. How did you get here, to this point, in your career? What has been your path?
   a. Tell me about your graduate program in library science.
      i. Did you like it? Why or why not?
      ii. How would describe it as far as academic rigor? Was it "good"?
   b. What types of classes did you take and/or what courses did the school offer in instruction?

2. Tell me about your current position and your involvement with instruction.
   a. Is this your first position that involved library instruction?
      i. If not, tell me about your earlier library instruction positions.
   b. What does the library instruction look like at your library?

<u>Library Instruction Experience</u>
3. How would you describe your work with instruction here?
   a. What does instruction work entail?
   b. How often to you teach?
   c. For which types of classes and disciplines?

4. What is your understanding or viewpoint of using different teaching styles, methods, and pedagogies in library instruction?
   a. What, or who, influenced you in your understanding?

5. How would you describe the pedagogy, method, or style of teaching that you use the most?
   a. Why did you choose that particular method?
   b. What would you change about that method if it was possible to do so?
      i. What would have to be different for you to be able to make that change?

<u>Conclusion</u>

Thank you for being a part of this interview and sharing your thoughts and experiences with me. You have my contact information if you have any questions – don't hesitate to contact me at any time. I will be sending you the transcript of this interview so you can review it and ensure it is done accurately before I move on to the next stage of the research process. Thank you again.

## Second Interview

Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me again today. As I mentioned earlier, this interview should take about 60 minutes and you may end the interview at any time.

Critical library instruction

[Handing the participant piece of paper that gives a definition of engaged pedagogy and what I will call "critical library instruction" and give them a moment to read it]

6. What are your initial thoughts about this, if you are not familiar with it, and if you are, tell me about your thoughts when you first heard of it or your thoughts now, either.

7. Now, I am going to ask you to reflect for a moment on whether or not you have experienced this type of method as either a student or teacher. Please share some of those experiences with me.

Impact on students' learning

8. Talk about what you think the role of library instruction's impact on students learning is—or should be.

   a. What about critical library instruction – how would (or would not) it make a different impact?

Overview

9. What are your thoughts about your experience with, and in general, library instruction?
   a. What challenges have you handled or faced?
   b. What success stories do you have to tell?

10. What thoughts would you like to share about things I have not addressed in my questions?

   a. What have I left out?
   b. What issues in the profession are important and should to be discussed?
      i. Who should be discussing them? Why?

Conclusion

Thank you for being a part of this interview and sharing your thoughts and experiences with me. You have my contact information if you have any questions – don't hesitate to contact me at any time. I will be sending you the transcript of this interview so you can review it and ensure it is done accurately before I move on to the next stage of the research process. Thank you again.

# Appendix E - Informed Consent Form

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
**INFORMED CONSENT**

**PROJECT TITLE:** Critical Race Feminism and Engaged Pedagogy: The Power of Voice in Library Instruction
**APPROVAL DATE OF PROJECT:**                    **EXPIRATION DATE OF PROJECT:**
**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:** Dr. Kay Ann Taylor
**CO-INVESTIGATOR(S):** Melia Erin Fritch
**CONTACT NAME AND PHONE FOR ANY PROBLEMS/QUESTIONS:** Dr. Kay Ann Taylor; 785-532-6974; ktaylor@ksu.edu
**IRB CHAIR CONTACT/PHONE INFORMATION***:*
- Rick Scheidt, Chair, Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS  66506, (785) 532-3224.
- Cheryl Doerr, Associate Vice President for Research Compliance, 203 Fairchild Hall, Kansas State University, Manhattan, KS 66506, (785) 532-3224

**SPONSOR OF PROJECT:** None

**PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH:**  The purpose of this study is to identify (1) the reasons academic instruction librarians choose different teaching styles and methods; and (2) how they view their role in students' learning.

**PROCEDURES OR METHODS TO BE USED:**  Participant interviews will be face-to-face lasting about 90 minutes for the first interview and 60 minutes for the second interview. This interview will be recorded on an audio recorder and we will take notes on paper during the interview. Additionally, there will be observations of the participants teaching in their classroom setting, with writing notes on paper and completing an observation checklist.

**ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES OR TREATMENTS THAT MAY BE ADVANTAGEOUS TO SUBJECT:**

N/A

**LENGTH OF STUDY:**  90 minutes (first interview); 60 minutes (classroom observation); 60 minutes (second interview)

**RISKS OR DISCOMFORTS ANTICIPATED:** We do not anticipate that your participation would result in any risks or discomforts.

**BENEFITS ANTICIPATED:**  Though there may be no direct benefits to you individually, we do believe that your participation in this study will further enhance the positive impact of the study on the librarianship profession.

**EXTENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY:**  None of the information you share with us will be attributed to you directly as all participants will be given a pseudonym.

**IS COMPENSATION OR MEDICAL TREATMENT AVAILABLE IF INJURY OCCURS:** N/A

**PARENTAL APPROVAL FOR MINORS:**  N/A

**TERMS OF PARTICIPATION:**

**I understand this project is research, and that my participation is completely voluntary. I also understand that if I decide to participate in this study, I may withdraw my consent at any time, and stop participating at any time without explanation, penalty, or loss of benefits, or academic standing to which I may otherwise be entitled.**

**I verify that my signature below indicates that I have read and understand this consent form, and willingly agree to participate in this study under the terms described, and that my signature acknowledges that I have received a signed and dated copy of this consent form.**

**Participant Name:** _____

**Date:**

**Participant Signature**: _____    _____

**Witness to Signature: (researcher)** _____    **Date:** _____

# Appendix F - Observation Checklist

**Observation of Classroom Teaching**

Participant Name:

Date and time of observation:

Course Name, Number, Section:

Estimate of class attendance:

Location (include description of classroom):

Description of environment (temperature, students' positions, technology, etc.)

Other notes about classroom & pre-class activities/discussions:

(adapted from Lange & Harris, 2015, p. 86)

Instructor Observation
Is there evidence of the behaviors listed table below during the class session?
List and describe evidence for decision. (Table adapted from Accardi's (2013) Feminist
Instruction Librarian table; see Appendix A)

| List of Actions/Goals | Y / N | Notes, evidence, details for decision |
|---|---|---|
| Promotes active participation when discussing possible research topics, database searching strategies, or other information literacy learning activities. | | |
| Relies on student input for database demonstration, keyword brainstorming, and search query formation. | | |
| Employs hands-on learning activities that require students to engage w/ library research tools. | | |
| Makes use of group work or partner work for information searching or evaluation. Develops learning activities that solicit and validate students' experiential knowledge. | | |
| Raises awareness of sexism and other forms of oppression through library research content and examples. | | |
| Takes care to explain how keywords and/or subject terms often fail to take into account or inadequately describe marginalized people of topics. Demonstrates how to rephrase search language in order to retrieve satisfactory results. | | |
| Makes use of learning activities that validate learners' talents and strengths and invite students to share or demonstrate skills for class. Fosters an anti-hierarchical | | |

| List of Actions/Goals | Y / N | Notes, evidence, details for decision |
|---|---|---|
| classroom environment where student input is sought, utilized, and valued. | | |
| Collaboratively develops goals and learning outcomes for library session with students. Invites suggestions from students on how to achieve goals. | | |
| Seeks student input on keyword brainstorming. Encourages students to help set the agenda for learning activities and goals for the session. | | |
| Develops learning activities that allow students to improve and hone library research skills individually or with partners/groups. | | |
| Employs learning activities or assessment instruments that promote student reflection on learning and research process and facilitate metacognition. | | |
| Uses computer classroom in a way that empowers individual learners and promotes hands-on kinesthetic learning. | | |
| Keeps the classroom interesting and lively by encouraging students to speak, work in groups, and move around the classroom. | | |
| Develops learning activities that require students to work individually, then share with a partner, and then share with group. Provides problem-based research scenarios for students to solve together. | | |

<u>Student Engagement</u> – Include remarks about the students in the class. Use rubrics on following page to assess student engagement (Lane & Harris, 2015, p. 85).

Other Final Notes:

## TABLE 1

**Descriptions of student in-class behaviors that indicate they are engaged.**

| Engaged | |
|---|---|
| **Listening** | Student is listening to lecture. Eye contact is focused on the instructor or activity and the student makes appropriate facial expressions, gestures, and posture shifts (i.e., smiling, nodding in agreement, leaning forward). |
| **Writing** | Student is taking notes on in-class material, the timing of which relates to the instructor's presentation or statements. |
| **Reading** | Student is reading material related to class. Eye contact is focused on and following the material presented in lecture or preprinted notes. When a question is posed in class, the student flips through their notes or textbook. |
| **Engaged computer use** | Student is following along with lecture on computer or taking class notes in a word processor or on the presentation. Screen content matches lecture content. |
| **Engaged student interaction** | Student discussion relates to class material. Student verbal and nonverbal behavior indicates he or she is listening or explaining lecture content. Student is using hand gestures or pointing at notes or screen. |
| **Engaged interaction with instructor** | Student is asking or answering a question or participating in an in-class discussion. |

## TABLE 2

**Descriptions of student in-class behaviors that indicate they are disengaged.**

| Disengaged | |
|---|---|
| **Settling in/ packing up** | Student is unpacking, downloading class material, organizing notes, finding a seat, or packing up and leaving classroom. |
| **Unresponsive** | Student is not responsive to lecture. Eyes are closed or not focused on instructor or lecture material. Student is slouched or sleeping, and student's facial expressions are unresponsive to instructor's cues. |
| **Off-task** | Student is working on homework or studying for another course, playing with phone, listening to music, or reading non-class-related material. |
| **Disengaged computer use** | Student is surfing web, playing game, chatting online, checking e-mail. |
| **Disengaged student interaction** | Student discussion does not relate to class material. |
| **Distracted by another student** | Student is observing other student(s) and is distracted by an off-task conversation or by another student's computer or phone. |

*Figure 9.* Rubrics to assess students' engagement during class (Lane & Harris, 2015, p. 85)