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'You Misspelled Satan': Collaborative Pedagogy in One-Shot Information Literacy Sessions

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'YOU MISPELLED SATAN': COLLABORATIVE PEDAGOGY IN ONE-SHOT INFORMATION LITERACY SESSIONS

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ABSTRACT

While one-shot sessions remain a cornerstone of library instruction, there is opportunity to combine subject expertise to create innovative sessions. This poster explores how librarians approached library instruction from an interdisciplinary approach to engage students to explore a moral panic through the evaluation of primary and secondary sources.

INTRODUCTION

A first-semester composition course called for students to research and write about a twentieth-century moral panic, such as the early HIV/AIDS epidemic, War on Drugs campaign of the 1980s, and the Dungeons & Dragons-induced Satanic panic, among others. Students were required to find and evaluate historic primary sources alongside contemporary secondary sources, which made the one-shot information literacy session particularly challenging. Two subject librarians identified the need for interdisciplinary perspectives when tackling the complex one-shot session.

METHODS

Initially, only one librarian was asked to cover the needs of the students based on the course assignment, it was ascertained that students would benefit from having two different subject perspectives: History and English. One librarian could address the unique perspectives and approaches to conducting historical research while the other could focus on the complexity of researching topics around moral or ethical debate from a scholarly perspective. Furthermore, although students are often taught how to find primary sources from a variety of databases, both librarians agreed that ProQuest's News and Newspapers Database would be the most user-friendly option for first-semester students. Accordingly, the one-shot session was divided into two parts: information literacy and media literacy. The division allowed the history librarian to introduce key concepts pursuant to finding and evaluating historical newspaper articles, whereas the English librarian was able to focus on finding, evaluating, and integrating secondary, scholarly sources.



CHALLENGES

Instruction librarians are familiar with condensing key components of the ACRL framework into brief one-shot sessions, but incorporating both media and information literacy into a single brief session was difficult. Although time was divided evenly between the two librarians, clear inclusion and exclusion criteria had to be established. A second challenge was teaching the concept of anachronistic keywords to students who had minimal training in keyword development. For instance, students researching the HIV/AIDS epidemic had to be taught how mid-twentieth-century newspaper databases were unlikely to retrieve articles with "HIV" or "AIDS" since those terms were absent from the English lexicon when the epidemic started. Finally, teaching students the differences between primary and secondary sources, amid anachronistic language, proved challenging. This issue was exacerbated by the fact many of their newspapers were printed comparatively close to the present day.

LESSONS LEARNED

Collaboration among librarians, particularly humanities-focused librarians, is imperative to the advancement of information and media literacy of students, especially those who are not humanities majors. Furthermore, librarians should not be hesitant to ask for help when approaching complex instruction sessions. Course assignments are subject to the vicissitudes of higher education's evolution to meet workforce demands. Including or inviting another librarian for a one-shot information literacy allows for opportunities to learn from another professional in the field and to reflect on one's own teaching techniques in light of changing higher education paradigms.

IMAGE SOURCES:

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