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Book Reviews (editorially reviewed)

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McNicol, S., ed. (2016). ***Critical Literacy for Information Professionals***. London: Facet Publishing. ISBN 978-1-78330-082-2

In her introduction to this admirable collection, which brings together 14 contributors from the UK, US, Australia, and Greece, Sarah McNicol defines critical literacy as having two facets: concern with the socio-cultural contexts in which texts are created and read, and practical actions and community engagement. As such, critical literacy affirms both the need to engage with texts in terms of their political connotation and the overall commitment to equity and social justice. A pivotal figure in the field is Paulo Freire, whose seminal *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is referenced throughout the volume.

The spirit of Freire is reflected in “Exploring pedagogical implications of students’ search mediation experiences through the lens of critical information literacy” by Sarah Clark. The paper is notable for its analysis of several drawings (reproduced in the book) made by the student participants who expressed the challenges they faced in understanding information systems. A Friereian emphasis also comes out in Rachel Elizabeth Scott’s “Engaging undergraduate communications students in critical information literacy,” a thoughtful discussion of the oral communications course that she co-teaches at the University of Memphis. In “Social justice, adult learning, and critical literacy,” Jennifer Lau-Bond draws upon several other theorists to write insightfully about her work as a librarian and teacher at Rice University.

Andrew Whitworth’s “‘Anyone can cook’: Critical literacy in the workplace” is a wide-ranging exploration of the literacies that shape workplace interaction. Particular importance is attached to the steward, a workplace mentor who plays an informal leadership role. Whitworth champions radical information literacy, a form of workplace democracy where authority and stewardship over information practices is redistributed from individuals to the community as a whole.

Three essays are concerned with empowering the reader, with McNicol contributing the first two. “Renegotiating the place of fiction in libraries through critical literacy” builds a compelling case for promoting critical reading communities of fiction. “Reading health-education comics critically: Challenging power relations” explores the disruptive

potential of comics to lessen doctor-patient power differentials in health care, thus promoting critical health literacy. The third paper, Jessica Critten's "Death of the author(ity): Repositioning students as constructors of meaning in information literacy instruction," synthesizes perspectives on the author/reader relationship to put the focus on the reader; the paper also critiques the ACRL Information Literacy Framework in Higher Education.

Three papers address critical literacy in the context of school curriculum design and implementation. "Diffusing critical web literacy in a teacher-education setting: Initial reflections and future planning" by Evangelia Bougatzelli and Efi Papadimitriou, describes the integration of critical web literacy into a four-year undergraduate program at the School of Education, Aristotle University. In "Critical literacy and academic honesty: a school librarian's role and contribution," Anthony Tilke focuses on the curriculum and teaching of academic integrity at the primary and secondary school levels as mandated by the International Baccalaureate, an independent, international organization. "Curricular and extra-curricular opportunities to engage school students in critical literacy" by Rebecca Jones details the multi-faceted program of a librarian at a girls' boarding and day school in the UK.

Two papers investigate media literacy. Michael Cherry's "A picture is worth a thousand words: Teaching media literacy" describes the remarkable joint partnership of a public library in Indiana with a youth detention centre where incarcerated teenagers learn to analyze media outlets, including choices of content, headlines, and illustrations. In "New media and critical literacy in secondary schools," Joel Crowley argues that school librarians must teach students critical approaches in their use of platforms and social networking sites such as YouTube and Wikipedia.

The perspective shifts from critical literacy to the related field of new literacy in two papers: "Reframing librarians' approaches to international students' information literacy through the lens of new literacy studies" by Alison Hicks and "Using new literacies to discuss disability in the library" by J. J. Plonke. Both authors urge librarians to reflect critically on their practices with regard to the two user groups.

All of the essays are clearly and succinctly written with thorough documentation. Completing the impeccably edited presentation is an annotated bibliography (entitled "Further Information"), brief biographies of the contributors, and an index.

Critical Literacy for Information Professionals is a valuable addition to the field and is highly recommended for librarians and educators.

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