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Chan, L. et al 2002. *Budapest Open Access Initiative*. New York: Open Society Institute. Available at: <http://www.soros.org/openaccess/read.shtml> [Retrieved 22 January 2007].

Badke, W. (2012). *Teaching research processes: the faculty role in the development of skilled student researchers*. Oxford: Chandos. 222pp. ISBN 978-1-84334-674-6. £47.50. Pbk.

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William Badke straddles the academic/librarian divide, having once filled both roles in a dual appointment (p. ix). From this experience dates his concern with the lack of basic research skills shown by his students, and his belief that only the collaborative efforts of academics and librarians can help address the problem. *Teaching research processes* is an analysis of the reasons why the teaching of research processes is so rarely integrated into higher education curricula in the way that Badke believes it should be.

Badke equates “teaching research processes” with information literacy (IL) (p. 10). Largely, the view of IL that he promotes is holistic or relational (see Bruce et al. 2006). He seeks a “new vision of education in which the handling of information with skill and understanding is the basis of all instruction and student work” (pp. 163-164). He understands that good research requires more than just basic competencies in finding and handling information. It must also include the promotion of reflexivity, criticality and an understanding of the role that research plays in society. Good research is validated not only against its adherence to scientific method and other “objective” standards of good practice (pp. 100-101), but also against subjective, individual preferences and motivations, and intersubjectively, through the public presentation of results, debate and consensus. Though Badke acknowledges that this “dive into philosophy” may be difficult for readers, he addresses these points in a dense but useful passage on pp. 95-97.

He then criticises the HE sector in general for being enmeshed in a cycle of underachievement, unable and unwilling to teach research processes in this way: a deep, rather than surface, approach (pp. 119-120). As content, or at least information, has become a “cheap commodity... simply disseminating it is having less and less of an academic value in the classroom” (p. 124). Yet too many academics continue to focus on content, believing that students will acquire research skills through “osmosis” (pp. 36-37). Students generally adopt a “passive” approach to their learning, focusing on how to pass the exam (p. 21). Consequently, research skills are not much in evidence in submitted assignments, and the university comes not to expect standards to improve in this area.

Badke’s suggestions for addressing the problem are largely pedagogical. If academics simply see themselves as disseminators of content, then he argues this makes them irrelevant (p.175). What academics can offer students is more use of autobiography – telling stories about their own research practices and experiences – and the greater involvement of students in projects which use primary data. Better assessment design, with more complexity but also more guidance built in, is another suggestion (pp. 164-170). He is adamant that librarians can make a significant contribution to the whole process. Most of these suggestions are useful, and as a result the book should prove valuable to anyone trying to design a relational approach to IL and integrate it within curricula.

Although he acknowledges that time and financial resources are often lacking, Badke makes bold claims that the changes he proposes can be enacted with “absolutely minimal financial commitment and little reconfiguration of personnel” (p. 188). He predicts that if enough academics and librarians begin to work to these ends at the “grass roots” level, wider transitions will eventually be achieved (p. 175). Yet herein lies the one real problem with this book. If Badke believes that the

holistic teaching of research processes requires little financial commitment, nor a realignment of responsibilities, we must ask why it is not already happening.

I have argued (Whitworth 2007) that the teaching of IL is political, and that the spreading of critical thinking throughout the general, or even the university-educated, population is not a policy priority. This means there is little pressure from within or outside the institution to make the kinds of curricular change which involve more than just adjustments to content and challenge the ingrained perceptions of roles within HE; in turn, this can result in librarians being considered “intruders” into “faculty culture” (p. 63). From the students’ perspective, the main information filter will remain “what the professor wants” (p. 15), and there is often resistance to attempts to engage students in more active and critical modes of thinking. Badke does acknowledge this, but seems to underestimate the extent to which this filter weighs on the subjective preferences of the individual and shapes their information need: the need in this case being ‘how do I pass the course’ and the source of information about this question being the professor and their preferences (see the quotations on pp. 6-7). Both sets of assumptions contribute to the maintenance of the cycle of underachievement, and they are not addressed in quite such a direct way by Badke as the pedagogical aspects.

Regardless, this is a useful and positive book, written in an accessible style. It is well-organised, leading the reader through the criticisms (largely supported by useful evidence) to suggestions for change and the ways these could be resourced and encouraged. Sadly though, the main limitation on its chances of provoking real changes in HE is the fact of its publication with Chandos, the specialist press directed at the library and information science professions. The need for librarians to get involved in research process teaching is acknowledged many times by Badke and almost taken as a given, but he is preaching to the converted. The audience he really needs to reach lies outside the LIS discipline, in those academics who teach research methods and processes in other departments, and also senior managers and accrediting bodies who allocate resources and set priorities. The book is located within the genre of work that advocates more holistic IL teaching, but there has already been a great deal of this published in IL journals and with presses like Chandos and Facet. What such advocacy now needs is to go beyond its present audience and enter the worlds of those stakeholders who are currently perceived to be blocking change.

Additional References

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