Review of Intersections of Open Educational Resources and Information Literacy

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Review of *Intersections of Open Educational Resources and Information Literacy,* edited by Mary Ann Cullen and Elizabeth Dill

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Abstract

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Review of *Intersections of Open Educational Resources and Information Literacy,*
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Mary Ann Cullen and Elizabeth Dill's *Intersections of Open Educational Resources and Information Literacy* is a text very much made for its moment. It arrives at a time when rising educational costs, new thinking about how knowledge is produced and shared, and the need for tools to promote a more critical and nuanced relationship with information have all come to occupy a prominent place in the work of academic librarianship. It is a pedagogical environment in which the move to open educational resources and increasing institutional support for information literacy present us with both a marvelous wealth of possibilities and some rather daunting risks. As Rajiv S. Jhangiani's thoughtful foreword suggests, "despite the self-evident value of both concepts, the uncritical advance of open education and information literacy risks not only limiting but also actively harming the shared goals of these movements" (vii). Throughout this book, Cullen and Dill have done their best to address both the risks and the rewards of pursuing information literacy in an open information context by assembling a collection of essays that lay the foundation for serious work on open pedagogy in information literacy.

In addition to Jhangiani's foreword—which helpfully connects the open pedagogical ethos to the specific elements of the ACRL *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*—Cullen and Dill provide an introduction that both previews the content of the book and roots their project in an experience many librarians and library staff will find familiar: the beginnings of an "accidental OER practitioner" (xix). Like many of the book's likely readers, its editors arrived at the intersection of open educational resources and information literacy as the result of the need to make a virtue of necessity when it came to finding accessible and appropriate instructional materials on relatively short notice. They also came to it with an absolute commitment to openness as such, both in terms of the book's content and with regard to its creation and publication; this book is available for free online under a CC-BY-NC-SA 4.0 license and went through the ACRL's recently-adopted open peer-review process prior to publication.

This collection is organized into six sections, each of which addresses the book's audience from a different vantage point. The three chapters in Part 1: Foundations lay the basic groundwork for the materials that follow by providing an increasingly complex tour of the central terms, concepts, practices, and relevant stakeholders that will be featured in the essays in the rest of the text. Mary Ann Cullen's "An Open Primer: OER, Open Pedagogy, and Information Literacy" is a beginner-friendly point of entry to the larger project at hand, laying out the problems of access and use that open methods and materials are intended to solve, explaining those methods and materials (Creative Commons licenses, OpenStax, etc.), and situating open resource use in the context of information literacy instruction and the ACRL *Framework*. The other two chapters in this section (by Paul Bond and Lindsey Gumb, respectively) present a tour of the development of and connections between open education and information literacy as movements alongside a model for the use of open pedagogical practice to grow more engaged, more critical learners.

Parts 2 and 3 lead the reader through some excellent examples of open pedagogy at work and illustrate the process of supporting open course and open curriculum development. In Part 2, two of the three chapters demonstrate the challenges and advantages of OER use and development: Liljenquist and Strosser share their successful use of OER in their hybrid information literacy/intermediate English composition course, and Cason and Rackley offer a useable model for librarians and other faculty interested in the open textbook development process. The third chapter in Part 2 shifts gears to address the use of Open GLAM (galleries, libraries, archives, and museums) content for the purpose of teaching primary source literacy in a welcome expansion of what is typically understood to be an OER. Part 3 takes up the challenge of working with open pedagogy and information literacy in a wide range of projects that move beyond the expected content of composition courses: Goodsett's discussion of creating digital media objects, Riehman-Murphy's example of a transcription project at the intersection of formal education and public knowledge production, Lowe-Wincentsen's business course/information literacy "Open Shark Tank," and Arce and Grossman's lively integration of open pedagogy and animation.

The remaining sections of the book chart a new course from the realm of classroom instruction into the wider—and wilder—world in which open pedagogy becomes self-perpetuating open practice. Part 4 turns to the role of open pedagogy in a more critical approach to information literacy in the context of questions of social justice and information privilege. Swart's chapter in this section illustrates the power of using open materials to

bring underrepresented and misrepresented stories to light in a way that encourages more critical engagement with academic authority, while Bergstrom-Lynch et al. provide tools that academic librarians using OER can deploy to empower students to take up that same sense of critical engagement in various ways to address information deficits and inequalities. Parts 5 and 6 further advance the goals of open pedagogy and information literacy through examples of activities and resources that can bring students in as leaders and champions to support OER use and adoption (Hughes and Scott; McCaffrey) and train librarians, faculty, and students to take up both movements in the future (Larson; Smith-Cruz and Bakaitis; and O'Reilly et al.).

When taken as a whole, the content of this collection can be more than a bit repetitive, but that repetitiveness is consistent with the editors' expectations; each chapter is meant to stand on its own as a contribution to the broader discussion of open pedagogy and information literacy. Like any book destined for print that frequently refers to online resources, it does run the risk of eventual link rot, but the beauty of open-licensed publication in both print and online formats is that—should the editors, authors, and publisher wish to do so—it is relatively easy to edit the text's content to repair or remove bad links or references to unavailable resources. While *Intersections of Open Educational Resources and Information Literacy* is still an early entry in the growing literature on open pedagogy and information literacy education, it represents a step forward in the development of resources to support librarians, their students, and the faculty in other fields with whom they work.