Critlib Unconference   Critlib 2015

Mar 25th, 9:00 AM

Session: Guerilla Session 1

Critlib Unconference 2015 Session 1 Attendees

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https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/critlib/2015/Conference/6

Session 1, 9:30-10:30:

Introductions:

Experiences: student and works reference desk
reference at an academic library in NY
library instruction coordinator at an academic library / supervision of tiered reference
reference/instruction librarian
public/academic reference library with 10+ years experience at current academic library
library student with 8+ years in public services at libraries
instruction/reference librarian at academic library
director of research services at an academic library
first post-MLS job as a reference librarian (will be doing instruction)
public services/user services at small academic library "haphazard reference" - my desk is the reference desk
director of reference, chat reference, cooperative chat at an ivy league academic library
library at community college - interested in neutrality (challenge it, recognize it as core component)
reference librarian at a big state university

What does neutrality mean?
When can you disagree with a student's search process?
Definition is cloudy. Gets mixed up with intellectual freedom.

Issue with topics. Position based.
Ethical position of the librarian.

In library school, what are we taught?
Dervin sense-making.
studies on reference librarian response to hot-topic questiosn

After a reference interview a student should not know my political perspective.

Community element? Can you get close without breaching neutrality?
Can you have a conversation and still disagree?

Drawing the borders between the search help and personal advice.

If all your sources are coming from one journal, what does that mean? - this is a neutral question.

When is it okay to say "oh, you're wrong."

Need for neutrality is more important in public libraries.
not as a part of the community (compare public library with small liberal arts)
legal/medical/financial issues at a public library - don't make them feel judged in ANY WAY.

Students really want advice
-not only advice, they don't mind being challenged.

How many of you have an actual reference desk
Everyone at the table is at a library with a reference desk
One library has an access point for multiple services
"Spaceship Enterprise" desk and NO ONE EVER CAME UP TO IT.
Granite, intimidation, "The ghosts of the institution are judging you!"

We have two horrible desks in front (used to be three)
On tours - saying come through the door (no door, just a doorway)
Tiered reference services

Visibility. When do you need a desk?
What is the critlib part of that?

Students don't get the difference between types of questions like staff do.

Be at the place where the students are going to go!

What does this mean for our identity if we lose the reference desk, as librarians?

Having an IT person, a reference librarian and a circulation person.
Doing multiple things at once.

Public not knowing what reference means - "research help desk" instead.

Starbucks in the library - the STARBUCKS gets more library questions

Shared service desk - relating to critlib, doing circulation and reference is different
patron confidentiality!
adjacent desks can solve this.
collapsible reference desk?
24 hour library, but the librarians go home at 5 pm
An empty reference desk is a horrible message.

Value of the reference desk? open ends at the desk. Inviting a student to sit down with you and walk up next to you.
Deeper interactions and giving the reins over to the student.

Share photos of your reference desk!

Reference desk can be imposing - is a desk an ideal way of providing service/help?
Online presence.
No research guides.

LibGuides exclude people?

Outreach - are guides the most helpful way to reach out?
Are guides a phantom, a dummy at a desk?

Tiered reference is a good solution.
Incorporate your guides into the first level of reference service
train your assistants in the online sources you create

Instructional technologists are there later than the librarians?
Cross-training is an excellent way to extend services.
Overwhelming subject guides, targetted course guides.

Library website entirely in Libguides!
2 year students (part-time), community college students.
How many things? How many barriers?
Don't waste students' time.
Technology barriers.

Guides with critical thinking embedded in them.
alphabetized lists of databases, not evaluating based on usefulness

Multiple entry points at universities is good
Some communities need fewer access points.

Having control of your own library website - if you don't, then it takes forever
the site has to be all things to all people
Using the guides as a crutch
Are they going to use the resources?

Do you include resources that are outside the library's databases, etc?

Guide to Google searching?
30 minutes session for writing classes (10 minutes spent on hands-on comparison on Scholar vs. databases).
First year students - embedding an NPR clip - scientific studies and positive results (bilingualism)
Media and photographs are good for LibGuides

Put your photo up! It makes you more approachable.

ESL students - embedding podcasts
Use lots of photographs
Listen when people express their learning styles

Starting someone on a topic, explaining relevance ranking
Why are they seeing a particular list?
Do you have strategies for explaining why there are different results?
Brief! The interview is sometimes too short to fit in this explanation.
How do you get people to drill beyond the top three results?

It's important to know how these databases and searches work.
When you teach info lit sessions, let them know that there's a lot underneath the pretty display/discovery layer.

WorldCat WS as a catalog - subject headings are helpful and sometimes annoying.
Google - for profit results
Saying this is a company.
when people make things versus when an algorithm makes something.

Step-by-step demos during info-lit allow opportunities to make comments on relevancy, comparison of searches

Making things more Google-like in searches. Trying to look like Google makes the difference less clear.
Using Boolean tricks - they no longer work because the system is like Google.

Subject headings - teaching moment opportunity!
Latina vs. hispanic in results
challenge how you're using and challenge the way people are using subject headings
Zapatistas and anarchy - starting to have a discussion - asking them, "is this an autonomous community"
The politicization of subject headings
Rebellion vs. uprising.
Why are the naming and categorizing it in that way.

LOC Subject headings - it takes forever and a lot of work to update them.
Jenna Friedman - does she update us on when they update?

http://jennafreedman.tumblr.com/

Terms in class versus real terms to talk with other people.
Semantics of searching versus the semantics of classroom terms and discussion

Search log analysis - recording what people type into your search box.
Natural language searching that people use!
Database responds with keyword searches.
EBSCO is working on NLP.
Discovery is getting better. Being on EDS.
It gets students what they need. (2 people agree)

FIrstSearch of WorldCat (1997! Throwback!) Librarian doesn't see it, but the 19 year old student sees it as OLD.

As interfaces become similar...
Hopping databases - it makes it easier on the librarian, is it easy on the student too? Is this a good thing?
Being interested in the systems as systems.
Hope that interfaces being similar would make people start having discussions about evaluation, structures of systems.
One bucket disappointment. The hope has not been realized.

Show how the system works vs. getting them to results.
ACRL Exhibit Hall - unveiling new databases and searches - librarians can look at it and figure it out - just because of our backgrounds and education.
Reference interviews - mostly talking about the results themselves.
Reusing old presentations - :(Interfaces change!
Seeing things right away - that a NLP didn't work here.
ACTUALLY SAY "UGH" IN THE INFO LIT SESSION.

knowing that Congress dropped the term chicano and added hispanic.

When NLP doesn't work - coming up with a question that gives really off results.
Example: History of retail organizing (shirts organized for marketing) - patron was really interested in the actual labor force organization.
Scheduling hiccups versus improving as hiccups come along.
When you get things that are "on the money"
doing this in historical newspapers
1962 "Computers in Your Home"

Limits - what do we want to say in a reference interview? interaction?
What are you willing to say on your perspective on hispanic/latina - "That shit's racist"
Just saying that this is complex.
When is it appropriate to delve deeper? Time and relationship with patron play a big role in deciding this.
Acknowledge what they're starting to think. You have to reinforce their gut feeling.
Are we legitimizing it by not saying anything about it?

Neutrality -
Questioning what's not showing up in the database
Our systems are not neutral
Google - synonymization
If you google hispanic it adds latino/a into the mix.
Racist structures in databases and subject headings

Sophia Noble - Sveta will tweet out an article. Black women and Google searching.

Neutrality - political viewpoints
Addressing bias and privilege is a part of our role as a librarian.
Knowing the way you'll be perceived (as a white person, as a white male)

Patron - when he smokes pot, his memory gets better - wanted to write a paper that argued this.
marijuana versus cannabis in the search results in a database.
Imperial literature vs. the patron's experience - the database was throwing up barriers.

Having a gun in the house - argument that guns
What evidence - asking them about their sources and defense of their subject

When students don't find their things in the library, they Google and find something that meets their opinion.
The time limit is the big constriction you have about 10 minutes
Classroom - more time but your attention is divided, and you have an activity more than you have a discussion.

Changing a perspective is a long process, and it starts with a conversation.
Accept and have faith that you have planted a seed, as a librarian.

Coaching on topics - send them back to the professor when you need to.
Is it a doable topic?
Having a controversial research appointment - encourage students to go to office hours
Professor didn't see the students, they were coming in to the librarian.
Separation and authority.

30 minutes in the classroom, right after a tour. (yuck)
Tours give you the opportunity to be approachable.

Emphasize that you are not a judge.