



The Library Association of the City University of New York

Information Literacy to Empower: Theory and Practice

April 4, 2014

The Graduate Center, City University of New York

Room 9205-07 (9th floor)

“In these days of mass surveillance and the massive transfer of public goods into private hands, citizens need to know much more about how information works. They need to understand the moral, economic, and political context of knowledge. They need to know how to create their own, so that they make the world a better, more just place.”

— [Barbara Fister](#) (“Practicing Freedom in the Digital Library: Reinventing Libraries,” *Library Journal*, August 26, 2013)

Information Literacy has long been a key concept for information studies and it occupies a central place in the mission of libraries and in librarians’ practice as educators. But there has never been a true consensus among information professionals and educators about what it means to be information literate. The recently developed concept of critical information literacy demands that information literacy instruction be recast much more ambitiously as a pedagogical program that encourages students and the public more generally to explore and understand how information is produced, disseminated and consumed. It also seeks to situate that mechanism as an integral and even constitutive part of contemporary society, so that students not only learn how to ‘use’ information productively, but also so that they are motivated and empowered to change or improve upon those information structures. Ultimately, critical information literacy seeks to be a central part of an education that empowers students not only to succeed in the world as it exists, but also to recast and reshape that world into something more just, peaceful and hopeful.

Program

Room 9205-07 (9th floor)

8:30-9:15 - Breakfast

9:15 - Introduction: Ian Beilin, New York City College of Technology

9:30 – Keynote address: Barbara Fister, Gustavus Adolphus College

Questions & Comments

10:30 – break

10:45 – 12:00 – Morning Panel - Theory

1. Karen Nicholson, University of Guelph: “Not Far Enough: Critical IL as a Situated Practice Within the Neoliberal University
2. Emily Drabinski, Long Island University: “Teaching in Time: Toward a Kairos of Library Instruction”

12:00-1:00 – Lunch

1:00 – 2:15 - Afternoon Panel I: Method

1. Annie Downey, Reed College, “Teaching Critical Information Literacy: Methods and Content”
2. Jessica Critten, University of West Georgia, "Disrupting the Discourse: Ideology and Cultural Studies in the Information Literacy Classroom"

2:15-2:30 – coffee break

2:30 – 4:00 - Afternoon Panel II: Practice

1. Yasmin Sokkar Harker, CUNY School of Law, “Critical Information Literacy: Legal Information and the Non-lawyer”
2. Mandy Swygart-Hobaugh, Georgia State University, “It’s 1955, I’m a Teenager, and I Think I’m Gay: Students Exploring LGBTQ Issues in Information Retrieval and Consumption Across the Decades.”
3. Eamon Tewell, “Using Television in the Classroom to Enable Critical Information Literacy,” Long Island University, Brooklyn