Finding and Fostering Creativity, Care & Community in Client Experience & Engagement work

Lessons from non-traditional journeys to frontline services

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Introduction

Fun(gi) inspiration for librarianship and life

"What a beautiful inspirational model for how human beings might live: In a shared economy based not on greed but on nurturing relationships and mutual cooperation."
— Paul Stamets, Fantastic Fungi: How Mushrooms Can Heal, Shift Consciousness, and Save the Planet

" The commons is a space of empathy, a knowledge that we are all interconnected with the gifts and abundance that the earth has to offer…The promise of the commons is what drew me to libraries to begin with, and it is the vision that keeps many of us working toward a more equitable future." -Jennie Rose Halperin, The Library Commons: An Imagination and an Invocation -

See also 'Hope is an embrace of the unknown': Rebecca Solnit on living in dark times

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Meet Louis

Client Experience Team
at Burwood campus

Luxury hospitality

Onboarding/Training

Crisis support for
individuals experiencing
homelessness

Meet Clare

Client Experience Team at Geelong Waterfront campus

Liaison librarian and related academic support experience

[Stop normalizing overwork | Meredith Farkas | Information Wants To Be Free (wolfwater.com)](wolfwater.com)

Australian Queer Archives

Deakin Library strategic priorities co-designed with Deakin communities

- Accelerating Deakin's global reach and impact
- Nurturing a vibrant scholarly community
- Advancing human-centred and inclusive knowledge systems and spaces
- Leading the stewardship of Deakin's information and data resources
- Building a strong, diverse and future-focused library organisation

"Deakin Library will enable a vibrant, rich and inclusive ideas eco-system to flourish within Deakin, and contribute to the creation of a more informed, progressive and socially-just society globally."– Deakin Library Plan 2022- 2025

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Creativity

Creativity

A creative mindset paves the way for opportunities in both self-growth and team strengthening

Crucial ingredient for:

- Problem solving
- Relationship building

"Creativity requires input, and that's what research is. You're gathering material with which to build" - Gene Luen Yang

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Creativity

Teaching critical digital literacies in co-curricular contexts with and to instil a creative mindset:
- Build safety (together)
- Experimental and experiential
- Learner-centred
- Non-prescriptive

Learning together: four principles for digital literacy learning in libraries - Ahearne

"In creating a teaching score, you can predetermine your goals and intentions, while also identifying how students will contribute important choices.11 For example, they might choose areas of emphasis and the order of the discussion. In this way, students are acknowledged as co-creators of each instruction session. This can help to create an environment where more engagement becomes possible." - Sarah Polkinghorne in Unpacking and overcoming "edutainment" in library instruction

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Care

Care

- Equity, diversity and inclusion
- Health, safety and solidarity across silos
- Staff working conditions are student learning conditions

"A librarian can create a learning environment that fosters a student's sense of belonging during research consultations. Incorporating an ethic of care reminds us that we can and should receive reciprocate care while paying close attention to the student's expressed need. Relational-cultural theory, when applied to individual consultations, gives us permission to be our authentic selves as librarians and to invest in a student's life and circumstances." - Symphony Bruce in Teaching with Care: A Relational Approach to Individual Research Consultations

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- The ultimate transferrable skill

- Caring for: others, ourselves and the workplace

- Care as the catalyst of success

Community

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Community

- Modelling community for students (more important than ever in a post lockdown university environment)

- Care is the intention: Community the action

"A rising tide lifts all ships"
-John F Kennedy

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Community

- Peer learning
- Partnerships
- Punk pedagogy
- Open pedagogy and practice

"By reflecting on our experiences in DIY punk, we were able to identify several strategies that we also utilize in implementing critical information literacy: community building, sharing power, and explicit messaging." - Edward Gloor and Kevin Adams in Building community: DIY punk strategies for the library classroom

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Further queries, clareifications, and il-lou-mination

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Deakin Library Plan:
https://www.deakin.edu.au/library/about/library-plan
Slides:
https://members.caval.edu.au/frontlineservices
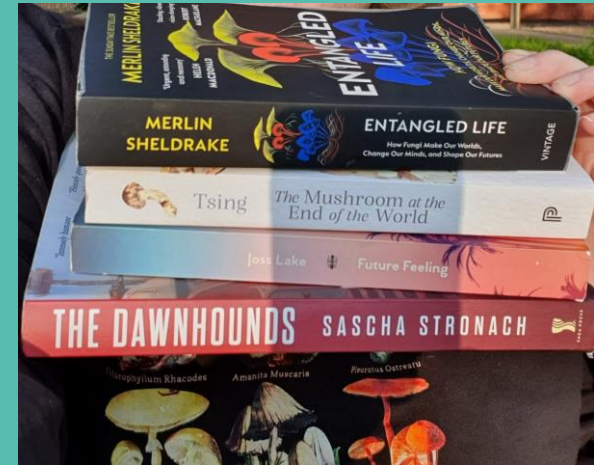
References and more resources

Monash University Library Inclusive Teaching Toolkit

Critical Library Pedagogy in Practice – An open access edited volume with chapter contributions from teaching librarians

Teaching with Care: A Relational Approach to Individual Research Consultations - Symphony Bruce

Putting Critical Information Literacy into Context: How and Why Librarians Adopt Critical Practices in their Teaching - Eamon Tewell

Building community: DIY punk strategies for the library classroom - Edward Gloor & Kevin Adams

Opening Up Information Literacy : Empowering Students through Open Pedagogy -Erin Fields & Adair Harper

Leading from below: Making time and space for critical and collective reflection

Learning together: four principles for digital literacy learning in libraries – Teishan Ahearne

The Social Mission of Academic Libraries in Higher Education - Sheila Corrall

Intersubjectivity and Ghostly Library Labor - Leo Settoducato

Informatics of the Oppressed - Rodrigo Ochigame

'Hope is an embrace of the unknown ': Rebecca Solnit on living in dark times

Unpacking and overcoming "edutainment" in library instruction – Sarah Polkinghorne

Taking a step back to move forward: understanding communication skills and their characteristics in the workplace – Anna K Touloumakos

Building community: twelve principles for a heathy future – James S Gruber

The Library Commons: An Imagination and an Invocation - Jennie Rose Halperin