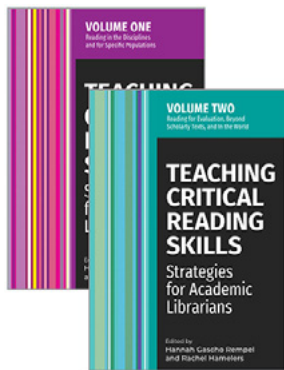


While *Embracing Change* achieves its goal in exploring alternatives to research writing assignments, the book's brief introduction fails to introduce the ACRL *Framework for Information Literacy*, which many chapters reference. Given the applicability of *Framework* outside the scope of libraries (such as inquiry or research writing faculty, curricula support staff, or really any academic staff without an MLIS), it could have been a helpful gloss in the introduction. Furthermore, given the brevity of the introduction, the editors missed an opportunity to ground their book and its contributions within the relevant discourse of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning. But these are relatively minor concerns. Overall, readers of this text will gain an understanding of actionable ideas to inspire their own methodologies for modern information literacy instruction. —Nicole Doro, McMaster University

Teaching Critical Reading Skills: Strategies for Academic Librarians. Hannah Gascho Rempel and Rachel Hamelers, eds. Chicago, IL: Association of College and Research Libraries, 2023. 2v. 256p. Paper, \$120.00 (ISBN: 978-0-8389-3961-1).



This two-volume set contains forty-five invited contributions that offer examples of how individual academic libraries are supporting the teaching of critical reading at their institutions. According to the editors, the project is inspired by the 2015 essay collection *Critical Reading in Higher Education: Academic Goals and Social Engagement* (Manarin, 2015), which “provided the theoretical basis for these volumes and helped us explore what critical reading could look like as practiced and interpreted by academic librarians” (v. 1, XIII).

This theoretical basis for defining and understanding critical reading as adopted by Gascho Rempel and Hamelers is built on the notion that “reading has purpose.” In academia, therefore, there are two major forms of critical reading. One is disciplinary or academic reading, which features “learning to read in order to work, understand, or create new knowledge in a discipline.” The second is socially engaged reading, which involves the ability to “understand a different perspective, empathize with those whose experiences are different from [one’s] own, or create change in their community” (Ibid.).

The structure of the set matches this theoretical framework. Volume 1 features twenty-four entries focused on disciplinary/academic critical reading, offering tips and examples for teaching students strategies and techniques for doing so. The second volume includes twenty-one additional entries covering socially engaged reading, offering methods and advice for how academic librarians can offer instruction in evaluating sources, critically assessing non-scholarly sources, and more broadly applying critical reading skills.

Each entry includes descriptions of how the authors have taught critical reading skills in one form or another to their students, including guiding principles and copies of actual assessments administered to their classes. Topics in volume 1 include teaching critical assessment of primary sources and scholarly articles from disciplines as diverse as English, science, health, and engineering, as well as examples of teaching these skills to specific populations such as first-year students, transfer students, community college students, and at-risk students.

Volume 2 offers similar examples for teaching students to evaluate sources as diverse as statistics, opinion polls, memes, images, media articles, and even graphic novels. Overall, this compilation will prove quite useful for academic librarians seeking new methods for

teaching their students how to analyze and evaluate sources, as well as how to think more deeply about what they read.

There are a few conceptual issues with this work that are important to note. One is the way the editors and contributors address the idea of “critical reading.” The term itself is not new; a cursory search revealed references to the concept in educational writings as far back as DeBoer (1946). While the editors note that the preexisting literature has been “primarily focused on skills-based approaches for K–12 students,” it isn’t clear how their definition differs from previous ones, if at all (v. 1, XIII). Their analysis would benefit from a richer exploration of the term’s history and evolution.

A second question is just how teaching critical reading differs from traditional approaches to library instruction. According to Gascho Rempel and Hamelers, some of the specific skills involved in critical reading include “identifying patterns in the text, determining main and supporting ideas, evaluating credibility...comprehension, analysis, interpretation, and evaluation.” (Ibid.) These are of course essential skills. For that reason, instructional librarians have long been teaching such skills in the form of information literacy.

The editors might also have addressed the relationship between text and format, and how particular formats might or might not be more conducive to acquiring and applying critical reading skills. There is substantial evidence that how you read, either deeply and at length or employing a sort of power browsing/skimming, is affected by the technology you use to read. The former, dubbed by some linear reading, tends to be easier to do from the printed page, while most digital devices foster the latter, or what has been called tabular reading. While several of the contributions do reference the difference between deep or linear reading versus skimming/tabular reading, and a number discuss teaching critical reading using digital media formats, a more thorough analysis of how reading format ties into critical reading is an issue that bears further exploration. This is also something for academic libraries to consider not only in instruction but in terms of how they structure their collections and physical spaces. While teaching and enabling critical use of digital text and non-text formats is important, print books seem especially suited not just for teaching critical reading skills but also for sustaining them.

These caveats, however, in no way detract from the usefulness of this compilation. If anything, they show this work to be a starting point for further theoretical and applied research on the topic. One point I should note is this book’s emphasis on reading as a communal activity. Overall, the efforts of Gascho Rempel, Hamelers, and their contributors will be of great interest to anyone interested in how academic librarians can teach their students critical analytical reading skills. —*David Durant, East Carolina University*

Works Cited

- DeBoer, J. J. (1946, October). Teaching Critical Reading. *The Elementary English Review*, 23(6), 251–4.
Manarin, K., M. Carey, M. Rathburn, and G. Ryland. (2015). *Critical Reading in Higher Education: Academic Goals and Social Engagement*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Academic Librarian Burnout: Causes and Responses. Christina Holm, Ana Guimaraes, and Nashieli Marcano, eds. Chicago, IL: ACRL, 2022. 370p. Paper, \$98 (ISBN: 978-0-8389-4856-9). Like other “helping” professions at this time in history, librarians live and work in a context of diminishing resources, vanishing support systems, challenges to our profession’s values,