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Exploring Epistemological Lineages:

Using the Gallery Walk with Students and Instructors of a First-Year Seminar Course

Gina Schlesselman-Tarango

Introduction

This chapter explores how the gallery walk, an activity that mimics the experience of exploring work on display in a museum or art gallery, can be used in credit-bearing courses with a focus on information literacy and in accompanying instructor professional development. According to the Science Education and Resource Center at Carleton College, the gallery walk is a “technique that gets students out of their chairs and into a mode of active engagement,”¹ and it incorporates vital elements of individual reflection and group discussion.

In their exploration of social constructivism in library instruction, Jessica Critten and Andrea G. Stanfield note that “group work and class discussion ...fundamentally involve processing information through talking, questioning concepts, resolving gaps in knowledge, and contextualizing information by way of being exposed to different perspectives.”² The gallery walk is a way to facilitate this type of learning as it gives students the opportunity to reflect, react, question, interact, and engage with new ideas and with each other. In addition, it is a fitting tool for instructors interested in integrating critical information literacy methods and content into their courses. Not only is it informed by active learning and social constructivism, but the collaborative nature of the gallery walk allows for what

Maura A. Smale and Stephen Francoeur describe as the acknowledgment of “students’ prior experiences ...decenter[ing] the library instructor as the sole ...expert in the room. This practice can actively work against the banking approach to learning ...and grant students more agency in their education.”³ Though Smale and Francoeur are outlining their work with online collaborative documents, the potential they describe can apply to any semi-anonymous collaborative artifact, such as those created via the gallery walk.

In *Feminist Pedagogy for Library Instruction*, Maria T. Accardi tells us that feminist pedagogy is “concern[ed] with gender injustice, sexism, and oppression against women.”⁴ The gallery walk is a way to highlight content that makes explicit the ways in which gender injustice manifests in information production and in the academy, and sexism is but one example. Because the gallery walk allows instructors to present as much or as little content as they would like, one can choose to highlight various forms of power and oppression or focus on a single manifestation, oppressor, or marginalized group.

Perhaps the most transformative characteristic of the gallery walk is that it is an excellent tool for complication. As Stephen A. Sanders writes, “power is knowledge, [and] power is a process that becomes visible in several different ways.”⁵ The gallery walk can render those processes visible and, in turn, create space to complicate participants’ understanding of how knowledge is produced, disseminated, and accessed in our world. If an instructor wants to muddy a process like peer review by presenting both its limitations and affordances, for example, the gallery walk allows them to do just that. The ability to present multiple examples, perspectives, or arguments alongside one another in the same visual space creates room for ambiguity, uncertainty, and irresolution—or, as I tell students, it presents the opportunity to explore and perhaps even linger in the “gray area.”

While Heidi E. Buchanan and Beth A. McDonough assert that the gallery walk is one that “lends [itself] to one-shot instruction,”⁶ the fact that it can function as a powerful assessment tool and as a way to build upon past class assignments, activities, and discussion or to introduce new material to be covered in subsequent classes also makes it an ideal tool for credit-bearing courses. In this way, the gallery walk, if planned accordingly, can do the important work of bridging prior knowledge or past learning to new ideas or concepts. Using the gallery walk in a credit-bearing course

also means that if students don't fully grasp the material during the walk, instructors have the time—a luxury often lacking in one-shot library instruction—to return to it in subsequent sessions, teaching and assessing the content in new and different ways.

In the following, I first provide instructions for how to best facilitate a gallery walk, including potential modifications. I then present a case study of how this pedagogical tool was used to encourage both instructors of and students in a first-year seminar course to trace epistemological lineages, locating various forces that drive the direction of bodies of knowledge that are too often seen as transcendent and cerebral rather than material and historically produced. In turn, participants are given room to problematize the academy that produces these knowledge genealogies. For beginning students, in particular, the gallery walk allows them to question the purity and objectivity of the academy (and what it produces) during their first year on campus. By providing this critical lens, librarians can hopefully provide a foundation for students to successfully engage with the information and ideas they will encounter in college and beyond.

Gallery Walk: The Logistics

To facilitate an effective gallery walk, you will need the following materials:

- Content that aligns with course outcomes (text excerpts, comics, graphs, etc.) affixed to poster paper. I suggest a total of five posters for every twenty students. I have found that visual content elicits richer responses than text. Large blocks of text also create traffic jams and put unnecessary pressure on participants to read and comprehend quickly and in front of their peers. Posters can be prepared ahead of time or with students in class.
- Digital copies of the posters (optional).
- Sticky notes and writing utensils.

The entire exercise will run approximately sixty minutes, which includes describing how to participate in the walk, the walk itself, and the following group discussion and independent reflection. To begin, inform participants that they'll be engaging in a viewing of various posters, and they should approach this silently just as they would be expected to do in an art gallery. Stress that they'll be engaged with a variety of modes of text, and a quiet room allows for every type of reader or viewer to successfully

contemplate what they see and participate in the silent conversation; they'll have time after the walk to discuss what they encountered. At each poster, participants must use their sticky notes to either (a) comment on or react to what they see, (b) pose a question, or (c) respond to another sticky note. I've found that approximately twenty minutes is adequate for a group of twenty. Space is key for a successful gallery walk. Posters should be spaced out enough so that participants have room to read, view, and explore. If your classroom is too small or if you don't have enough wall space, consider using a quiet hallway or even a building exterior. Participants should return to their seats when they have completed their walk.

When all are seated, the instructor facilitates a group discussion about the posters and comments, questions, and responses. Displaying digital copies of the posters can help remind participants of what they encountered at each stop. Example discussion prompts include: I saw that X asked about X, what do you think? What surprised you? What didn't make sense? Would anyone like to respond to someone else's question or comment? Before participants leave, provide a final independent reflection question that asks them to consider and summarize their learning.

Another strength of the gallery walk is that it is highly modifiable. While I generally prepare posters ahead of time, some choose to split participants into small groups to create the posters at the beginning of the class or workshop; a group then travels together to view and comment on the others, spending a specific amount of time at each station. When the group cycles back to their original poster, they then trace and synthesize the silent conversation evidenced through the sticky notes and report out to the larger group. Instead of providing or having students create content, others pose a single question on each poster, and student responses are collected via the walk. The group discussion too can be facilitated in a variety of ways.⁷

The First-Year Seminar Course: Background

The first-year seminar course, while not mandatory for all students at my institution, is meant to be an introduction to the university, including the information it produces and values and with which students will be expected to engage. It also provides an opportunity for students to reflect upon

and think critically about their own learning and worldview and about the variety of perspectives they will encounter in their classes and while on campus. Four course outcomes, agreed upon by a committee that includes librarians, were developed for the course:

1. Metacognition: Understand how to reflect upon academic processes and products and take responsibility for learning.
2. Diversity: Explain how your knowledge, strengths, and life experiences influence your worldview and relate that worldview to others inside the university and the community at large.
3. Integrative learning: Become aware of connections and differences across disciplines and learning experiences in order to frame and address ideas and questions you encounter in your life.
4. Critical information literacy: Begin to develop a critical understanding of the information environment.

While each instructor is free to select a unique theme for their course, the committee recognized the importance of developing rubrics that instructors could use to assess student progress toward these outcomes. Librarians created a critical information literacy rubric that breaks that objective into four sub-outcomes:

- I can compare and contrast the audience and purpose of popular and scholarly sources. I can analyze how their content differs and how these differences influence which source I select for the purpose at hand.
- I can describe peer-reviewed sources in terms of both the review process and the scholarly conversation. I can reflect on whose voices are not represented within the community of scholars.
- I can compare and contrast the open and deep Webs, reflect on why some information is not free, and use my student access to the deep Web to locate scholarly journal articles.
- I can explain my access to information, discuss the way in which this access is indicative of privilege, and reflect on how to use this privilege responsibly both in college and in my community.

During a professional development session, the rubric was introduced to instructors and was subsequently modified to reflect their feedback. Because the majority of the instructors are university staff and are less likely to have published their own work and experienced scholarly communication in the extended and immersive ways that full-time faculty do, the

committee determined that additional engagement with ideas presented in the rubric was in order, and a second librarian-led professional development exercise was scheduled.

The Gallery Walk and Critical Information Literacy

Professional Development for Instructors: Reviewing and Building Upon the CIL Outcome

Because instructors already had some level of familiarity with the critical information literacy outcome, I determined that the second professional development session would include a review of previously covered content, which would also serve as an assessment to gauge understanding. I also wanted to introduce new concepts that would allow for deeper understanding of and engagement with the sub-outcomes so instructors would be well-equipped to teach the material. I had had successful experiences covering a variety of topics via the gallery walk with both high school and college students and was consequently confident the exercise would meet all of these pedagogical needs. Though employing the gallery walk in this way would essentially be a one-shot instructor workshop, the idea was to set the stage for how instructors would then weave these concepts throughout their own credit-bearing courses. As a member of the teaching community and first-year seminar committee, I also knew I would be available to follow-up on any questions or concerns and be able to provide additional resources and support after the gallery walk.

I wanted to ensure that the content and discussion would provide a way of thinking about all of the course outcomes as connected, for one of the instructor concerns the committee received in previous years was that the critical information literacy outcome felt disconnected from the others. The professional development exercise following the gallery walk would focus on course outcome two, diversity. Therefore, I decided to be explicit about highlighting the connections between information inequality and privilege, something that certainly colors life experiences and worldview. I was also intentional about connecting the critical information literacy content to issues surrounding social justice, as the teaching community had previously agreed that this was an important lens through which to approach the course.

Because only about ten instructors were able to attend this second professional development session, I created three posters for the walk. I was given an ample amount of time and decided to modify my typical approach to the walk (as outlined previously) and begin with some small-group work. I broke participants into three groups and gave each approximately fifteen minutes with a poster to write or draw their initial reactions and questions directly alongside the provided content, which included images, facts, figures, and one- to two-paragraph excerpts. The posters were then displayed, and participants engaged in the walk before coming back together to discuss what they read and saw.

The first poster, labeled Information Inequality, contained the following:

- our library's materials budget for the academic year
- an excerpt on social stratification from the *Encyclopedia of Sociology* that focuses on the unequal distribution of resources⁸
- an excerpt from Char Booth's "On Information Privilege" in which she discusses how a friend "circumvent[ed] information *under-privilege*"⁹

And, in an effort to complicate the idea of information inequality and information privilege:

- an excerpt from David James Hudson's "On Dark Continents and Digital Divides: Information Inequality and the Reproduction of Racial Otherness in Library and Information Studies" that illuminates how our construction of some as information underprivileged can position them as "outside histories of information production"¹⁰
- the average amount of debt students at my institution graduate with, prompting us to challenge the idea that our students are somehow "privileged" because they are in college, when in fact inclusion in the institution increasingly demands that students acquire massive amounts of student loan debt

This poster elicited some intriguing comments, questions, and discussion. One instructor researched an ivy league university's materials budget and found that it far exceeded our library's, which sparked a conversation about class and institutional privilege. Others asked whether it is wrong to circumvent barriers to information access, leading the group to contemplate information ethics. Finally, we reflected on the concept of infor-

mation privilege and concluded that it was perhaps “fuzzier” than we first thought.

The second poster, labeled Privilege, contained the following:

- an excerpt on privilege from the *Encyclopedia of Communication Theory* that highlights how privilege is often unseen and unexamined by those who have it¹¹
- a word cloud highlighting different axes of identity (sexuality, religion, class, ability, race, etc.) to illuminate the different ways in which privilege manifests in our lives
- a comic portraying two people on a starting line, one of whom is faced with considerable hurdles and has a weight around her ankle. The other has a clear path to the finish line, and the caption reads, “What’s the matter? It’s the same distance!”¹²
- an excerpt from “Defensive Reactions to White Privilege” detailing the phenomenon of “competitive victimhood”¹³
- a quotation: “There will come a time when someone with real stakes will ask you to use your privilege to contribute to the pursuit of human freedom, and when time comes, if you have truly listened, you will know what to do”¹⁴

This poster too led to an in-depth and multifaceted discussion. In addition to making connections to the Information Inequality poster, the group brought up ways in which privilege manifests in the classroom, from microaggressions to “Oppression Olympics” and blaming the victim. We also discussed equity and equality and how these different mindsets can impact how we interact with various types of students. One sticky note asked why privilege matters, and though we did not have time to address the question, in future sessions I would like to draw attention to the limitations of anti-oppressive pedagogies that focus solely on privilege and highlight the importance of connecting privilege to oppression’s more structural character.¹⁵ The quotation brought the discussion back around to the critical information literacy learning outcome, particularly the sub-outcome that prompts students to use their information access responsibly in college and in their local communities.

The third poster was labeled Scholarly Conversation and included:

- a graph of the racial makeup of full-time faculty showing that white faculty made up 72.7 percent of the national total in 2013¹⁶
- an excerpt from Charlotte Roh’s “Library Publishing and Diversity

Values: Changing Scholarly Publishing through Policy and Scholarly Communication Education” that addresses the consequences of a lack of diversity among editors and publishers¹⁷

- an excerpt from Sara Ahmed’s “Making Feminist Points” that highlights how citation can be a way “of making certain bodies and thematics core to the discipline, and others not even part”¹⁸
- an excerpt illustrating how drug companies often choose not to publish unflattering results of medical trials¹⁹
- an excerpt from “Faculty Performance of Research and Scholarship” from the *Encyclopedia of Education* outlining the various factors and motivations that influence who and what gets published²⁰

After engaging with this poster, the group reached some valuable conclusions about the nature of academic authority and how the peer-review and publishing processes can act as gatekeeping mechanisms. We also discussed the profit incentive behind scientific experimentation and how funding too affects information production. Further, we explored how professional status—who constitutes full-time versus part-time faculty—is reflective of systemic and structural issues that shape our educational institutions and larger society. There were also a number of comments about faculty demographics on our campus, whether or not they reflect the makeup of our student population (they do not), and the implications of this misalignment.

The most learning came from this poster, as many instructors were not fully aware of the politics of information production and dissemination, and the content we explored indeed exposed how what we know over time, our epistemological lineages, are crafted by sociopolitical dynamics that are often hidden from students. This realization led one participant to contribute a sticky note that read “conspiracy theory”; another perhaps more accurate commenter suggested that the scholarly conversation is more akin to an exercise in scholarly conservation.

In a Credit-Bearing Course with Students: Reviewing and Introducing CIL Content

I built my course around the four outcomes and decided to spend the first few class meetings introducing the concepts of intersectionality and privilege and how they mark identity and worldview. The focus then shifted to critical information literacy, beginning with an exploration of the in-

formation cycle and the various forces that affect how and why different types of sources are produced, disseminated, and accessed.²¹ This included a discussion of how the peer-review process works and why it can be a valuable tool. We also explored the ways in which this process is one that signals authority and credibility in academia, which is different from the ways they are communicated in other venues. We discussed who typically produces scholarly content (faculty at colleges and universities or experts working for companies or organizations) and why and how that is different from who produces popular content and why.

I then turned to the gallery walk exercise, which would function as a key activity strategically scheduled for mid-quarter. I intended to use it as a tool to revisit and expand upon the content described above and to assess understanding; it also would serve as a way to link this understanding to related concepts that we would explore more deeply in the second half of the course, including issues of inclusion in the scholarly conversation and privilege in the information cycle. At this point, I also wanted to complicate students' understanding of the value of the peer-review process, which we had discussed at length. Pausing here would also allow me to return to the idea, introduced through the information cycle activity, that external forces have an effect on who is included in scholarly conversations, what information is produced, and, subsequently, what we know. Given that I have always had positive teaching and learning experiences with the gallery walk and knew I could modify much of the content I had used for the instructor professional development session, I decided to offer a similar but adjusted gallery walk experience for students focusing on sub-outcome two.

Because I had twenty-five students, I created six posters, which again included images, facts, figures, and brief excerpts of text. Two focused on peer review, the first revisiting basic ideas we had previously discussed:

- a bulleted list of the ideal functions of peer review (ensures validity, improves quality, guards against bias, etc.)
- a comic showing a diverse group of people in white lab coats closely inspecting one another's research²²

In an effort to address the more human dimension of peer review, the second included two more comics:

- the first shows a group of professional-looking people brawling with one another and reads: "It started with a simple case of peer review"²³

- the second shows a man, clearly frazzled, as two colleagues look on and comment, “Poor soul. Beaten down by peer reviews”²⁴

Students responded rather predictably to the first poster—they celebrated the functions of peer review, agreeing that it ensured quality and filtered out “bad” research. However, one student asked about reviewers’ potential bias, and another wondered what happens when peer reviewers disagree with one another about a particular manuscript. These questions served as a bridge to a discussion surrounding the second poster. Some noted that peer reviewers’ bias or personal motivations could censor good or even groundbreaking scholarship and stunt scholars’ desire to continue their work. Students pointed to how a negative experience with peer review might lead to feelings of inadequacy and how, if you do not get published, the entire process might feel like a waste of time. Others, however, saw in this poster evidence of the rigor of the review process.

The third poster featured the experiences of scientist Fiona Ingleby and included the following:

- Ingleby’s Tweet describing a peer reviewer’s suggestion to include a man’s name on the manuscript in order to improve it²⁵
- this reviewer’s more detailed comment²⁶
- an excerpt from *The Scholarly Kitchen*’s “Sexism in Peer Review” outlining the ways in which sexism plays out in review processes²⁷

The sticky notes left on this poster demonstrated that the students were upset about the sexist nature of the reviewer’s suggestion, many pointing to how it was “unfair.” One student did thoughtfully comment that having perspectives from both men and women would be beneficial but not necessary. We were able to connect this and the discussion it evoked to our earlier class explorations of privilege, identity, and worldview, and how these play out in academic processes and products.

The next poster focused on faculty demographics and included the following:

- a graph of the racial makeup of full-time faculty showing that white faculty made up 72.7 percent of the national total in 2013²⁸
- because the instructors viewed this same graph in their gallery walk and asked about our institution’s makeup, I included a breakdown of instructional faculty on our campus by gender, nationality, part- and full-time status, and whether or not they are members of a minority group²⁹

The majority of student comments were related to the disproportionate percentage of white faculty on both the local and national levels. A number expressed the opinion that favoritism toward white people led to this misalignment, and many stated the need to hire a more diverse faculty. Again, this discussion touched on issues of identity and privilege, though students were unable to make the connection between faculty demographics and information production without prompting. I reminded them that when we explored the information cycle, we discussed who creates the majority of scholarly sources—full-time faculty at colleges and universities—and asked how faculty demographics affect whose voices are included in the scholarly conversation and who creates the information so valued in academia. We were then able to relate this understanding to our previous discussion about sexism in review processes, discovering yet another way in which the scholarly conversation is limited and incomplete when only select voices are included and others excluded.

The fifth poster also touched on what is excluded from the scholarly record and included a single item (also used for the instructors' gallery walk):

- an excerpt illustrating how drug companies often choose not to publish unflattering results of medical trials³⁰

This proved to be the most challenging content for students. Based on the comments and questions on the sticky notes, it was clear that a number of participants did not fully comprehend the excerpt, and another asked for examples of the clinical trials the text refers to in order to improve their understanding. Indeed, I had to first summarize the excerpt before students were equipped to engage in a group discussion. Once I explained, it “clicked,” and they were able to formulate thoughtful responses and questions. In the future, I plan to include additional items—perhaps a visual or re-worded excerpt—to better support them in understanding this content.

The last poster provided examples of peer review's failures. It included:

- a brief summary of the retraction of the 1998 *Lancet* article that suggested that vaccines cause autism, as well as an image of the article³¹
- a brief summary of the retraction of two papers published in *Science* (2004 and 2005) on cloning and human stem cells that used fabricated data, with an accompanying image³²

This poster led students to question the credibility of reviewers specifically and scholarly information more generally. One insightfully wrote that

these examples illustrate how not everything we encounter in life, including scholarly sources, will always be entirely correct and “true.” Students were challenged to think about these limitations—what is included in the scholarly conversation but probably shouldn’t be—alongside the rest of the poster content they encountered during the gallery walk—who and what is left out of the scholarly conversation and why, and the benefits, limits, and consequences of peer review.

To wrap up the class period, students completed a written reflection on how their understanding of the scholarly conversation changed after completing the gallery walk (this allowed them to engage in a metacognitive exercise, a technique used throughout the class to meet course outcome one). Because I suspected that some students might have parroted other comments or questions that they had seen on their peers’ sticky notes rather than critically engage with the content themselves, I assessed individual learning by also prompting them to describe how they would respond if someone asked about the authority, credibility, and potential bias of scholarly information.

Students concluded that scholarly processes and products, while they endeavor to ensure and document objectivity and accuracy and “truth,” are not immune from the sway of structural inequalities and individual bias. In other words, we unveiled the ways in which epistemological lineages are shaped by a number of external forces, many of which reflect the times and society in which we live. To be sure, students were exposed to a great amount of content, some of which was introduced previously and some of which was new and would be expanded upon later in the course. By presenting all of this content together visually and in one class, students were better able to make connections, contextualize their learning, ask informed questions, and were equipped to answer others. I was confident that if students did not fully grasp some of what was introduced, the activities, discussion, and homework throughout the rest of the quarter would not only allow any persistent misconceptions to surface but also give students additional opportunities to master these ideas.

Building Upon the Gallery Walk

In the following class meetings, we engaged with material that built upon ideas presented in the gallery walk, particularly the ways in which privilege and power mark the information cycle. For example, students were

challenged to think more critically about information access, learning that external forces like corporate interests often affect not only what information is produced, but also shape who can access it and how. They were able to consider their own access to particular types of information while in college, situating it as temporary yet valuable and reflecting on how they can use access to information responsibly in college and in the world.

Due to the content they explored in the gallery walk, students had a fairly good grasp of scholarly conversations and the dynamics that shape them. The final weeks of the course were meant to hit course outcome three, integrative learning, and students would explore the various academic disciplines they could expect to encounter in college. Understanding disciplines as “containers” that define the boundaries of the literature in a specific field, students were exposed to yet another force that shapes the direction of scholarly conversations.

Students also came to better understand that scholarly conversations serve as a way to discover the concerns, debates, and major players of these disciplines. As a way to connect our learning to and expand upon issues of inclusion we touched on in the gallery walk, we explored the ways in which the knowledge of marginalized disciplines can be contested and even invalidated by those in power, and the class viewed the 2011 documentary *Precious Knowledge* that chronicles the struggle of Tucson High School students and teachers to protect their Mexican American Studies program.³³ We looked at how similar struggles have taken place in higher education by exploring the advent of ethnic and Chicano studies and how the development of formal scholarly communication channels (professional organizations, meetings, and publications) often provide a level of disciplinary legitimation necessary for institutional inclusion.³⁴

The course wrapped up with a final project that included both a group and individual component. Through this work, students selected and engaged with both popular and scholarly sources and were asked to reflect upon not only the content of their sources, but also the authority of the creator, intended audience, creation and review processes, access, and potentially missing perspectives. This summative assessment allowed them to synthesize learning from the gallery walk and other activities and apply it to information sources and topics of their choosing.

Conclusion

Reflecting upon the design and execution of the gallery walk in both the professional development and course contexts, I have come to more fully appreciate the importance of the discussion component of the activity. For both groups, discussion made crucial room to answer questions and clarify misconceptions, some that were conveyed on the sticky notes and some of which surfaced only during the conversation.

Perhaps because they were seasoned learners or because most knew one another, the instructors were very comfortable asking questions, many of which were answered by others in the room. For example, the few full-time faculty who were present were able to explain some of the concepts and ideas specifically related to research and share personal experiences of dealing with publishing pressures and politics. A number of the university staff instructors were also enrolled in a doctoral program focusing on diversity in higher education and contributed their own valuable perspectives. This type of learning environment allowed me to move from the center to the periphery and call upon the expertise of others in the room. It was during this discussion too that instructors were able to relate what we explored back to the critical information literacy rubric and their own assignment design. Such participant engagement led to what I took to be increased investment in teaching the learning outcome.

As with the instructors, providing ample time for group discussion and debrief is absolutely critical when working with students. Since I scheduled our gallery walk for mid-quarter, this meant that students were comfortable talking to one another, and we used up all of our allotted discussion time. If in the future I am scheduled for a shorter class time (which is quite possible), I will certainly split this activity into two meetings—first doing the walk, then following with group discussion and individual reflection.

Further, I learned that it is important to pose questions in a way that ensures students connect new learning to content covered in past meetings. Additionally, what might not only increase comprehension and focus student thinking, but also support the discussion piece, would be to present open-ended questions on the posters alongside the content (for example, on the poster that featured faculty demographics, include “Who is included in the scholarly conversation? Who is seen as authoritative?”). This would allow for students to not only link what they’re looking at to prior knowledge and class content, but also act as a way to introduce or

reinforce new vocabulary (for example, scholarly conversation). If nothing else, simply titling the student posters as I did for the instructors would provide additional context and direction.

While I was encouraged by the individual reflection and group discussion immediately following the gallery walk and felt that most students met the sub-outcome the exercise was meant to support, the fact that a number of students uncritically praised the peer-review process in their final written component makes me less confident that all students retained what they learned. In fact, some expressed that scholarly articles were “good” and credible because of peer review but failed to problematize the process as we had in class. It is possible that despite our robust discussion following the gallery walk, students still felt uncomfortable with ambiguity and desired to provide me, an authority figure, with a “correct” and clear-cut interpretation of the ideas we covered, some of which were contradictory and open to interpretation.

As I reflect on the follow-up to the gallery walk, then, I realize the importance of being *even more* intentional in returning to and stressing what we learned in the activity throughout the rest of the quarter. This seems particularly important since in their other classes it is quite possible that first-year students are asked to uncritically use peer review as a marker of quality, as the scholarly=good and popular=bad pedagogical shortcut unfortunately persists. Perhaps this can serve as a lesson in the necessity of critical information literacy pedagogy in credit-bearing courses for first-year students, a group new to the university setting and likely presented with resource evaluation methods that, unless interrupted, could thwart their ability to engage critically with the information they encounter in their lives.

Endnotes

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