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Book Review

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Chan, L. et al (2002) *Budapest Open Access Initiative*. New York: Open Society Institute.
<http://www.soros.org/openaccess/read.shtml> (Retrieved 22 January 2007)

Cook, D. and Sittler, R.L. (ed.) 2008. *Practical Pedagogy for Library Instructors: 17 Innovative Strategies to Improve Student Learning*. Chicago, Il.: Association of College and Research Libraries. 184pp. ISBN: 978-0-8389-8458-1. £23.50

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Don't let the word "pedagogy" put you off as the emphasis of this book is very much on the "practical". Chapter 1 does cover pedagogy, for which the authors apologise, but it does serve as an excellent primer if you have not had much of a grounding in educational theory. This first chapter also explains the two pedagogical paradigms that underpin the book:

1. Direct Instruction Strategies (Objectivism) – for when you need to present information to students as efficiently and effectively as possible.
2. Student-Centered Learning Strategies (Constructivism) – for when you want to stress student engagement with learning.

Chapters 2-8 provide examples of Direct Instruction Strategies, with ideas on how to present large amounts of information or complex concepts to students. Chapters 9-18 are representative of Student-Centered Learning Strategies, with examples of how to engage students in the discovery of knowledge.

The editors begin the introductory chapter ("Why should librarians care about pedagogy?") with the following words of wisdom:

"When you get a call for a library session you need to think about what you want your students to learn. You should not begin thinking about what you want to teach or how you want to organize your presentation until you do so." (p.1)

The beauty of this book is that you could just flick to a relevant chapter to find a strategy, which you could utilise or adapt to meet the learning needs of your own situation and students. There are a good variation of strategies to suit different circumstances, such as orientation / induction, the 'one-shot' session, plagiarism, ESL and international students. The structure of the book is helpful as each of the chapters 2-18 follows the same pattern, blending theory with some excellent instructional examples.

There is not a bad chapter in the book but there were some personal favourites:

Chapter 2 - "How Cephalonia can conquer the world (or at the very least, your students!): a library orientation case study from Cardiff University" by Nigel Morgan and Linda Davies. This is a favourite because of the fact that I have used this method of teaching and found it to be extremely effective, not just for orientation but also to liven up Academic Integrity presentations.

Chapter 6 – "Making meaning: using metaphor as a tool to increase student understanding" by Susan Avery and Jim Hahn; and Chapter 7 – "Analogical storytelling as a strategy for teaching concept attainment" by Anna Montgomery Johnson. These are two strategies that were new to me but I am considering how and when I could utilize them to best effect in the classroom.

Some of the chapters are very light-hearted but are still underpinned by a sound theoretical base. It is an American publication (apart from the Welsh contribution) but the US terminology and colloquial references are not a distraction from the content (although some of the editors' comments can be a bit cheesy!). Many of the chapters have good references to further reading in the Notes at the end. I have no hesitation in recommending this book to you, as I have done already to many colleagues with an interest in student learning!