

Impact of Food on the Environment – Classroom Implementation

As a faculty librarian, I'm in the agreeable position of recommending resources to our students. Accordingly, I can incorporate food/environment books, databases, and other resources in my BI (bibliographic instruction) classes and thus make our students, in learning about the Library, aware of the issue of food and environmentalism, and introduce them to the means to educate themselves about it. While I am cognizant of not foisting my particular hobby-horses on my students, food and environmentalism is as valid and pressing topic as any that I might choose, arbitrarily, to introduce my students to the Library.

I can incorporate the awareness of food and the environment in three ways (amongst others):

I. CATALOGUE

In explaining how to best utilize our catalogue I can use, for example, any of our collections' food /environmental books. Michael Pollan's books are a wonderful introduction:

http://catalog.linccweb.org/F/C57A2CPDKVHA35Y42I649S2PLRPSQVFL4AY569DT3ECCJGFA3C-13962?func=find-b&find_code=WAU&request=pollan,%20michael&adjacent=N&local_base=MDCKE&filter_code_4=WTP&filter_request_4=BK&filter_code_1=WLN&filter_request_1=&filter_code_2=WYR&filter_request_2=&filter_code_3=WYR&filter_request_3=

Likewise, when, as an exercise, I send my students into the Library to practice the retrieval of books via call numbers, I have the opportunity to include Pollan's or McKibbens or others relevant books.

II. DATABASES

In demonstrating the 100+ rich and vast databases available to our students, I can use those articles that highlight our impact of food on the environment. Here, for example, are three databases and the titles of the full-text articles available to our students:

A) **Academic OneFile – Gale:** [The Carbon Cost From Farm To Fork.\(Periscope: Food\)\(Brief article\)](#). Tony Dokoupil. *Newsweek* 151.11 (March 17, 2008): p12. (221 words) Reading Level (Lexile): 1250.

B) **NewsBank: FreshDirect Will Limit Idling Time For Trucks -- New York Times, The (NY) - Saturday, April 25, 2009 -- Author: JAMES BARRON**

C) **GreenFILE:** [The Role of Food-Security Solutions in the Protection of Natural Resources and Environment of Developing Countries](#). Preview By: Lashgarara, Farhad; Mirdamadi, Seyyed Mehdi; Hosseini, Seyyed Jamal Farajollah; Chizari, Mohammad. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, Oct2008 Supplement 1, Vol. 1140, p68-72, 5p; DOI: 10.1196/annals.1454.047; (AN 34909639)

III. ENHANCED WEB SEARCHING

Many students, though growing up in a web/ google era, still don't know how to undertake reliable web searches. I have the opportunity to employ environmental concerns indemonstrating efficient searches. For example, a Google search employing the terms "food environment pollution" renders 12,600,000 hits, many of them helpful, but many untrustworthy.

Using those same terms put adding –com [minus com] renders 1,800,000 hits, an elimination of 11,000,000 hits – admittedly many good ones, but also many questionable sites of which the unsuspecting student is often aware.

Furthering that search, by adding "+edu" to "food environment pollution -com" so that it now reads "food environment pollution –com +edu" we now have a return of 154,000 hits, an elimination of 1,646,000 sites, the search now focusing on sites about food and the environment as issued by educational institutions, not an iron-clad guarentee of reliability, but a selection more specific and trustworthy.

Conclusion: By using the opportunity to highlight environmental concerns (when allowable – Bibliographic Instruction classes are often crafted around the the professor's particular topic at-hand) I am able introduce the topic of food and environmentalism and resources about food and environmentalism.