Dear WGSS Members and Friends,

Above all, I hope that you’ve been receiving kindness and understanding from your communities as you navigate the many challenges and changes the pandemic has brought to our campuses. I understand that volunteer work may need to take a back seat as you tend to the needs of your families and loved ones, and that is more than OK. I hope and trust that the WGSS community can continue to offer support and camaraderie through this difficult time.

Our Committees worked hard over the past few seasons to offer programs and community-building opportunities amidst the pandemic. Our 2021 Conference Program Committee delivered a virtual program entitled *Transforming Our Libraries for Everyone: Trials, Tribulations, and Successes*. The program was viewed by 378 attendees! Our Membership Committee organized a much-needed and smashing fun virtual social, *Drag Queen Bingo* with Chandalier and our Research Committee planned a vibrant ALA Annual poster session featuring nine posters which are now available on our website.

Laura Bonella is leading a taskforce to update our volunteer orientation guide and bylaws which will include descriptions of the responsibilities, expectations, and time commitments for each of our Officer positions and Section committees. We hope this updated documentation will assist in recruiting volunteers by making transparent the commitments required as well as the opportunities offered by service to WGSS. Thank you, Laura! In related efforts, Past Chair Sharon Ladenson, in collaboration with the 2020-2021 Nominating Committee, developed a list of recommendations for inclusive leadership recruitment that future Nominating Committees will draw upon.

I’d like to welcome our new officers: Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect Caitlin Shanley, Secretary Erin Hvizdak, ACRL Board Liaison Yasmeen Shorish, and Member-at-Large Monica D. Porter. I’d also like to extend a heartfelt thank you to our Past Chair Sharon Ladenson, previous Past Chair Tara Baillargeon, outgoing Secretary Cindy Ingold, outgoing ACRL Board Liaison Jeanne Davidson, and all members of the 2020-2021 Executive Committee. Thank you also to our many committee members, Chairs, and volunteers!

I’m honored to serve as WGSS Chair for the 2021-2022 cycle. Feel free to reach out to me and/or the Executive Committee anytime with questions or concerns. The Executive Committee can be reached at ALA-ACRL-WGSSExec@connectedcommunity.org.

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The Women & Gender Studies Section Newsletter is published semi-annually by the Women & Gender Studies Section of the Association of College & Research Libraries, a division of the American Library Association, 225 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60601, 1.800.545.2433, ext. 2523. The WGSS Newsletter is available to all section members at no additional cost.

EDITOR
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The WGSS Newsletter welcomes contributions from its members. Please send articles, items of interest, and news to the editors in electronic format.

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LibLearnX: The Library Learning Experience
January 21-24, 2022 | VIRTUAL
LibLearnX is the event you told us you wanted — a completely new conference experience — built from the ground up based on years of research, exploration, and most importantly, input from library professionals like you.

- “Learn by doing” in hands-on workshops, “bite-sized” offerings, and other formats to match your learning style with an emphasis on experiential learning.
- Participate in 120+ live and on-demand education sessions in a wide variety of topics that will offer solution-based education for immediately actionable insights.
- Be inspired by featured speakers, learn from subject matter experts, and enjoy beloved authors (new and established).
- Celebrate your colleagues, favorite authors, and books at the award ceremonies.
The Program Planning Committee is partnering with the Anthropology and Sociology Section (ANSS) program planning committee to collaborate on a joint session at Annual 2022. The program being proposed will explore the work still needed to rid Library of Congress Subject Headings and other schemas of sexism, racism, and prejudicial language. This panel presentation will explore the longstanding harm of how we categorize people and identities in classification systems. Presenters will also discuss actions all librarians can take to further the work of critical cataloging, regardless of their day-to-day work with resource description. We have submitted our proposal and will hear back in December regarding acceptance.

Renee Kiner Committee Chair

ACRL’s Awards program will be on hold for the 2021-2022 award season, during which time nominations will not be accepted or juried and no recipients will be chosen for any ACRL awards.

The Women & Gender Studies Section awards are given annually to honor distinguished academic librarians who have made outstanding contributions to women & gender studies through accomplishments and service to the profession. The awards recognize those who have made long-standing contributions to the field during a career (the Career Achievement award) and those who have made significant one-time contributions (the Significant Achievement award). The awards are sponsored by Duke University Press and each winner will receive a check for $750 and a plaque. The awards are presented at the ALA Annual Conference. To submit a nomination or to see a list of past award winners, please see the links below:

Countering Misinformation about Abortion

Check out the new AJPH publication on how librarians can address misinformation about abortion, in the context of state laws that require providers to give patients medically incorrect info. Our paper explores how we as librarians, working to share evidence-based information with our users, have often played a role in opposing misinformation and how we can be a powerful force for these efforts in the future. To read more, visit the link below:

Counteracting misinformation about abortion: the role of health sciences librarians (+OA version)

Jill Barr-Walker | she/her
Clinical Librarian, ZSFG Library
The following 9 posters were exhibited as part of the WGSS poster session at ALA Annual, June 23rd – 28th, 2021.

To read the abstracts and see the posters, go to the Research Poster page.

- **Beyond “Viuda de”: Practical Approaches to Promoting Mexican Books Printed at Women-Owned Businesses**
  - Colleen Barrett and Taylor Leigh, University of Kentucky
- **Building BIPOC Library Collections: Tools and Resources for Library Selectors**
  - Colleen Seale and Stacey Ewing, University of Florida
- **Bullying in a Woman-Led Profession: Lessons for Librarians from Nursing**
  - Megan Palmer (Clemson University), Maggie Albro (Clemson University), Jenessa McElfresh (Clemson University), and Rachel Keiko Stark (Cal State Sacramento)
- **Creating a Culture of Belonging: Challenging White Supremacy Culture in Our Work**
  - Brooke Gilmore, Mount Wachusett Community College
- **Gendered Artificial Intelligence and Opportunities to Deconstruct Sexism and Gender Binarism in Libraries**
  - Laila Brown, Hawaii Pacific University
- **Not So Angry White Men: Understanding the Experiences of British Male Academic Librarians**
  - Kristen Schuster, King's College, London
- **The Virtual Academic Library & Equitable Access to Information**
  - Jennifer DeVito, Stony Brook University
- **Tracing Transgender Awareness on a University Campus through Content Analysis of its Campus Newspaper**
  - Stacey Ewing and Colleen Seale, University of Florida
- **Women's Voice in Library Technology Publications**
  - Sharon Whitfield, Rider University
Considering Equitable, Diverse, and Inclusive Representation in Images and Avatars

At the University of Waterloo Library, like many other academic libraries, we were tasked with moving much of our instruction online during the COVID-19 pandemic. Luckily, this coincided with an overall push by the Library toward the creation of asynchronous online instructional materials. As part of this effort the Library’s Instructional Design Team wanted to ensure the created materials, to the extent available, were reflective of equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). As a result, they worked to develop a set of guidelines around representation in images and avatars based in literature and meant to guide practice in selection of visual elements of online instruction. This article provides a synopsis of the relevant literature and some recommendations for other academic libraries engaged in EDI work and similarly wishing to look at their online presence to ensure representation.

When selecting images or designing avatars, librarians should consider all aspects of diversity including ethnicity, ability, body size, gender, age, and style of dress. Some key questions to guide selection include: Are the people in the image representative of the diversity in your institution and community? Does the image perpetuate common stereotypes? Are there subtle ways diversity is being represented including icons or messaging on clothing or accessories of depicted individuals?

Beyond these initial considerations about the individuals depicted, it is also important to consider the settings and contexts in which people appear. For instance, are instructors in the images only or largely depicted as White males? Are students shown in science labs only or primarily of Asian descent? Are Indigenous students only found in Indigenous centres or settings designed to reflect Indigenous cultures? Likewise, are individuals with identifiable disabilities only found in support centers or depicted as being helped by someone visibly able-bodied? The range of images and avatars chosen should take special care to show people of colour and people with visible disabilities as multifaceted with different interests, skills, and accomplishments. Similarly, librarians should consider including a range of names, pronouns, character vocabulary, and voice in descriptions of images and avatars to reflect the community (Roth, Turnbow, & Singh, 2020).

The order in which individuals appear and how they appear to be interacting with one another can be another important factor. Who is central to or prioritized in the image? Who is being shown as having authority? Additionally, librarians should consider if the image is current or has been widely used and recirculated over the years as the repurposing may dilute the intention. Librarians should also be cautious of using images that incorporate the same student or group of students repeatedly. All of this said, images that align with EDI goals should still represent the overall community and should avoid tokenism. In all circumstances, librarians should consider if the image or avatar is meaningful and relevant to the information being presented or circumstances being depicted. Choosing an image only for diverse representation will be perceived as inauthentic (Jones et al., n.d.).

Librarians wishing to incorporate EDI into their selection of images and avatars for instructional materials and websites will be best served by not selecting the first image found that fits the context. As we recommend to our students, finding three or four possible options and then choosing the one that best fits the context and is representative of the campus and local community will help acknowledge and incorporate EDI into the visual representations of our spaces, supports, and services.

References:


Kari D. Weaver, Learning, Teaching, and Instructional Design Librarian at the University of Waterloo and Vicki Friesen, MLIS Candidate at Western University
ACRL Books
ACRL publishes a range of books to assist academic librarians in developing their professional careers, managing their institutions, and increasing their awareness of developments in librarianship. ACRL books provide timely, thought-provoking, and practical content and research to academic and research librarians worldwide. Some recent titles:

- *Mind, Motivation, and Meaningful Learning: Strategies for Teaching Adult Learners*
- *Envisioning the Framework: A Graphic Guide to Information Literacy (ACRL Publications in Librarianship No. 77)*
- *Teaching About Fake News: Lesson Plans for Different Disciplines and Audiences*
- *Stories of Open: Opening Peer Review through Narrative Inquiry (ACRL Publications in Librarianship No. 76)*
- *The Teaching with Primary Sources Cookbook*

Interested in writing for ACRL? Contact Erin Nevius, ACRL’s Content Strategist, at enevius@ala.org for more information, or visit www.ala.org/acrl/publications/publishing to learn more about our book publishing program and submit a proposal.

Project Outcome
Project Outcome is a FREE online toolkit designed to help libraries understand and share the impact of essential library programs and services by providing simple surveys and an easy-to-use process for measuring and analyzing outcomes. Participating libraries are also provided with the resources and training support needed to apply their results and confidently advocate for their library's future. Project Outcome’s standardized surveys allow libraries to aggregate their outcome data and analyze trends by service topic, program type, and over time. Sign up today at https://acrl.projectoutcome.org/.

New Virtual Workshops from ACRL
Bring robust online learning directly to your library, chapter, or consortium with ACRL’s virtual Off-RoadShow workshops! Led by expert presenters over multiple days, these online workshops are based on our popular in-person RoadShow workshops and support academic library professionals in tackling the greatest issues facing the profession.

Current virtual workshops cover topics including: open educational resources and affordability; using the Standards for Libraries in Higher Education to communicate your library’s impact; engaging with the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education; and building your research data management toolkit.

Schedule a virtual workshop for your library or organization today. Organizational members of ACRL receive a 10% discount off the hosting cost!