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Agents of Diversity and Social Justice: Librarians and Scholarly Communication

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Chapter Six

Agents of Diversity and Social Justice

Librarians and Scholarly Communication

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[6.0] Scholarly communication is central to the academic endeavor. For researchers, publishing is the vehicle through which they contribute new knowledge to the scholarly record. For faculty members, their record of scholarship is a measure of their efficacy as researchers and their scholarly impact. The ability of faculty to participate in scholarly communication and add to the scholarly canon is central to the development and continuation of their careers.

[6.1] The importance of publishing is reflected in the tenure and promotion process. A 2006 survey by the Modern Language Association found that "demands placed on candidates for tenure, especially demands for publication, have been expanding in kind and increasing in quantity" (4), demonstrating that the cliché "publish or perish" is more true than ever.

[6.2] Unfortunately, the current scholarly communication environment in both academia and publishing includes barriers that limit the diversity of authors and topics represented in the published literature. By submitting papers for publication, scholars seek to add new knowledge to their disciplinary literature. Through peer review, the work of these scholars is validated and accepted, or rejected. Though there is a great deal of idealism in the pursuit of scholarly excellence, the profit motive of much of traditional scholarly publishing and the centrality of peer review as a gatekeeper to publication serve to reinforce traditional methodologies and discourses as normative, making it difficult for divergent voices to enter the scholarly record. The result is a scholarly record that has been called a "master narrative," which "often defines and limits what is valued as scholarship and who is entitled to create scholarship" (Stanley 2007, 14).

Changes in technology and modes of scholarly communication present librarians with the opportunity to "envision, shape, and articulate their future role in scholarly communication" (Carpenter et al. 2011, 661). The academic library's increasing role in scholarly communication and the development of library publishing programs provides opportunities for librarians to become agents of diversity and social justice, ensuring that a wide range of voices and perspectives can access the scholarly record, both as authors and as readers. [6.3]

This chapter considers diversity broadly to mean a variety of perspectives, whether grounded in race, gender, sexual orientation, ability, socioeconomic status, or disciplinary study. It begins with a description of the current environment of scholarly communication, looking at the demographics and state of affairs in academia, publishing, and librarianship, including how biases present in all three fields affect scholarly communication. It then moves to a consideration of how librarians and library publishing programs can transform scholarly communication. By adopting a social justice perspective—actively working against ignorance and indifference to reduce systematic biases and injustice in academia, publishing, and librarianship—academic libraries can make their collections and products more reflective of the breadth of knowledge and experiences found in society and make their processes more welcoming to a diversity of participants. [6.4]

THE ENVIRONMENT OF SCHOLARLY COMMUNICATION [6.5]

Academia [6.6]

In 2013, 21 percent of faculty members in the United States self-identified as a racial or ethnic minority (US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics 2015), in contrast with the estimated 37.2 percent of Americans who identify as a racial or ethnic minority (US Census Bureau, n.d.). Clearly the demographics of the American academy are not representative of American society. [6.7]

Research has identified barriers to entry for women and individuals of color at all levels of academia, from undergraduate admission to tenure and promotion. It has been shown that implicit biases privilege white and male identities in both hiring (Bertrand and Mullainathan 2004) and promotion (Heilman et al. 2004; Rudman and Glick 2001); they also place societal pressures on individual career choices (Stout et al. 2011), an added burden in an already tricky landscape. The Modern Language Association (2007) found that in the humanities, "the number of departments that reported cases of junior faculty members other than non-Hispanic whites coming up for tenure is small, in some categories fewer than a dozen" (59). For tenured and tenure-track faculty, diversity decreases as rank increases. Where 36 percent [6.8]

of assistant professors identified as white males, 58 percent of full professors did. The percentage of nonwhite faculty decreases from 24 percent of assistant professors to 16 percent of full professors (US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics 2015).

[6.9] Shaw and Stanton (2012) have found that the largest gender gaps in progressing through the stages of an academic career occur in the transition to undergraduate studies and in the transition from postdoctoral to faculty positions. They note,

[6.10] > It is perhaps telling that the two most problematic transitions are associated with the largest shifts in institutional roles. Transitioning to university from high school and seeking a faculty position involve taking on novel roles and responsibilities, making them stages at which positive role models and societal pressures can be particularly important. (5)

[6.11] If the higher ranks of professorship are less diverse than lower ranks, then it means there are fewer role models to mentor students and junior faculty for success in academic careers as members of an underrepresented population. This mentoring and knowledge gap includes a lack of information about the importance of publishing in academia and how to navigate the process.

[6.12] Delgado Bernal and Villalpando (2002) point out that minority faculty tend to be concentrated in lower-prestige universities, at lower faculty ranks, and in social sciences and humanities, which are typically undervalued by universities compared to science and technology disciplines. This leads to an "apartheid of knowledge," where the "dominant Eurocentric epistemology is believed to produce 'legitimate' knowledge, in contrast to the 'illegitimate' knowledge that is created by all other epistemological perspectives" (177). Since many editorial boards are constructed with an eye to prestige and reputation, the concentration of minority faculty in lower-prestige universities adds to the challenges they face in traditional scholarly publishing venues.

[6.13] Interdisciplinary programs, including gender, sexuality, race, and ethnic studies programs, are often overlaid on a university organizational structure that places faculty in interdisciplinary programs in discipline-specific departments, with the departments holding administrative authority (i.e., hiring, tenure, and promotion) over faculty. This can create significant barriers for faculty members conducting interdisciplinary research, whose scholarship is evaluated by departmental members—and in the publishing process, by peer reviewers—who may neither understand nor appreciate the interdisciplinary methodologies employed in their research.

Publishing [6.14]

There is no doubt that these societal biases have an impact in the publishing world as well. In 2013, Alice Meadows wrote a blog post in the *Scholarly Kitchen* titled "Why Aren't There More Women at the Top in Scholarly Publishing?" In it, she examines the lack of female representation at the highest levels of leadership in scholarly publishing, a field that attracts more women than men. The comment thread was illuminating in its gender divide: women agreed that there was a problem, while several men pointed out examples of female leadership to show the lack of any issue. For example, commenter Michael Clarke listed publishing organizations that currently have, or have had, female heads of publishing or CEOs, and stated, "I'm not suggesting the industry is equal, but Macmillan is not the only exception," in an attempt to downplay Meadows's claims of a lack of female leadership at senior levels of scholarly publishing. Meadows responded that "considering the number of women working in our industry and the contributions they make, there should be many more." [6.15]

In a panel session at the 2015 Society for Scholarly Publishing (SSP) annual meeting, Kane et al. reported that while 58 percent of SSP members are women, only 24 percent of the sixty-eight organizational members have female CEOs and only 17 percent of fifty-four organizations have a female chairperson on the board (SSP 2015). This gender imbalance at the top is common to other female professions, such as nursing, teaching, and librarianship, and is a symptom of the systemic biases held by both men and women. "The issue of the gender gap is very clear," said Lauren Kane of BioOne. "What is less clear is what we are going to do about it" (ibid.). [6.16]

How does one go about eliminating gender bias? Is it possible to do so when the game itself is rigged? Two examples will shed light on this question, the first from outside the publishing industry. In the 1970s and 1980s, many orchestras in the United States began to implement "blind" auditions, using a screen in order to eliminate gender bias. The results were shocking and immediate: women began to advance through the first round of auditions at 50 percent, the rate expected without bias (Goldin and Rouse 2000). The results are now visible in many symphonic orchestras that have instituted the practice. While women still encounter difficulty, this effort to eliminate bias not only created change, but it also countered those who claimed that the move was not necessary—that auditioning musicians in the past were judged solely on their abilities. The use of a screen showed that the system was not a meritocratic one and that bias against women was actually keeping the best musicians out of orchestras. [6.17]

The second example is from the Association of American University Presses (AAUP). In 1979, a majority of nonclerical university press staff was female, at 65 percent, but only 13 percent of university press leadership was [6.18]

female. AAUP founded a group called Women in Scholarly Publishing and engaged in career development through meetings, mentorship, and partner programming with other women's organizations. It established best practices for gender-free language, and by 1996 the AAUP board had transitioned to half men and half women. Women now make up about one-third of university press directors (Colestock, n.d.). Again, while women still encounter difficulty rising in the ranks, change in the demographics of publishing is possible, and necessary, lest valuable talent be overlooked.

[6.19] These two strategies acted in different ways—the first to hide or remove the bias by making the decision blind and the second by surfacing the bias and equipping people to move beyond it. Both strategies are necessary, but unfortunately gender imbalance is not the only problem in publishing. Alice Meadows, director of communications for ORCID, said in response to a question from the audience at the SSP annual meeting,

[6.20] > We all acknowledge there are other sorts of diversity, racial diversity which I think we all would acknowledge is a huge problem in our industry. . . . There's a problem with racial diversity overall in terms of representation. There's a teeny tiny number of ethnic minorities working in scholarly publishing, it's terrible. (SSP 2015)

[6.21] Her comments are supported by statistics; according to a 2014 salary survey published by *Publishers Weekly*, the demographics in the publishing industry are 89 percent white/Caucasian, 3 percent Asian, 3 percent Hispanic, and 1 percent African American (Milliot 2014). A study is hardly needed to confirm these results. One need only take a casual glance at any publishing company to determine that the staff and leadership are shockingly homogenous, not just in terms of gender and ethnicity but also in terms of class, sexuality, and able-bodied status.

[6.22] Librarianship

[6.23] Welburn (2010) points to collection development efforts in identity studies and the appointment of subject specialists in those areas as examples of the progress made by academic libraries in supporting diversity over the past forty years. The work to increase the diversity of the profession extends well beyond the work of individual libraries. Professional organizations and library and information studies programs have initiated scholarships and recruitment and leadership development programs to diversify the profession, including the Spectrum Scholarship Program of the American Library Association (ALA) and the Initiative to Recruit a Diverse Workforce of the Association of Research Libraries (ARL). There are also five ethnic affiliates of the American Library Association dedicated to supporting librarians from minority groups and providing services to minority communities: the

American Indian Library Association, the Asian/Pacific American Librarians Association, the Black Caucus of the American Library Association, the Chinese American Librarians Association, and REFORMA: The National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish Speaking. Librarians of color have also been elected to the presidency of the American Library Association, with Courtney Young, Camila Alire, and Loreine Roy serving as ALA presidents in the past decade.

[6.24] Despite these efforts and the progress made, the demographics of librarianship have remained homogenous. The ALA's Member Demographics Study reports that the racial composition of its membership is 87.1 percent white, 4.3 percent black or African American, 3.7 percent other, 3.5 percent Asian, 1.1 percent American Indian or Alaska Native, and 0.3 percent Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander; 3.9 percent of the membership listed their ethnicity as Hispanic or Latino. The gender distribution is overwhelmingly female, 81 percent to 19 percent, and 2.8 percent of respondents to the survey reported having a disability (American Library Association 2014)

[6.25] The leadership of research libraries is even less ethnically and racially diverse. Only 6 percent of ARL directors self-identified as a racial or ethnic minority, as did 8 percent of non-ARL directors of research libraries. And despite the overwhelmingly female makeup of the profession, men are overrepresented as deans and directors of academic libraries, representing 34 percent of ARL directors and 41 percent of non-ARL directors (Puente and McGhee 2015). For various reasons, these studies and others do not report on sexual orientation and ability, but these are clearly an important part of understanding diversity representation (or the lack thereof) in librarianship as well.

[6.26] The lack of diversity in the scholarly record and the library profession's complicity in the problem cannot be resolved by a profession that is not representative of society. By purchasing and subscribing to the products of scholarly communication, by creating systems of classification and organization that readers rely on to find publications, and by educating users in all aspects of scholarly communication, librarians can have great influence on the methods and products of scholarly communication.

Intersections of Academia, Publishing, and Librarianship [6.27]

[6.28] The lack of diversity in publishing and librarianship has serious implications for the academic environment. Publishing is essential to both the individual actors and the scholarly ecosystem as a means of disseminating scholarship and establishing academic credibility and reputation. Publishing is particularly important to promotion and career growth—an entry-level professor cannot advance to a tenured position without it. For example, scientific journals were launched, in part, to allow scientists to claim "ownership" over intellec-

tual creation, resulting in an evolving record of knowledge and "a co-opting system that bestowed various degrees of worth upon natural philosophers" (Guédon 2001). From the beginning of journal publishing, the ability to publish and claim ownership over scientific advances served as a marker of excellence for scientific researchers.

[6.29] Consequently, academic authors who are told by publishers that there is no audience for their work are not simply being told that there is no market—they are being told that their work has no value in the scholarly canon and that their careers as scholars and researchers might not continue. While blind peer review is often seen as an imperfect but working method for impartially evaluating scholarship,

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> even if a publication is making every effort to metaphorically audition orchestra members behind an opaque screen, it is not helpful if the editors and publishers who are handling the paperwork, assigning reviewers, determining schedules, recruiting editorial boards, and ultimately making policy and article level decisions are not in fact representative or even cognizant of injustices they perpetuate as biased people in a biased system. (Roh, Drabinski, and Inefuku 2015)

[6.31] In fact, "blind" peer review can be a mere formality in niche fields, where subject expertise is easily recognizable, so that reviewers might be able to surmise the identity of the author.

[6.32] Through the peer-review process, editors and peer reviewers hold significant influence over the shape of the scholarly record. Frey (2003) likens the scholarly publishing process to prostitution, where authors have to either submit to the demands of editors and peer reviewers in order to get published (and further their careers) or withdraw their articles to maintain their "intellectual purity." Frey goes on to note that the peer-review system has "evolved into a 'censuring' system, making it most difficult to have unconventional ideas accepted" (212). If the editorial board, representing the master narrative, selects reviewers who from their perspective are qualified, the results are likely to reflect the same perspectives. This result is even more likely when one considers that the pool from which editorial board members and peer reviewers are drawn consists of full professors, who are, as mentioned previously, 84 percent white. (It is not clear if the publishing survey respondents did not include additional ethnicities or the survey itself did not include them as options, which itself demonstrates a problem of bias in the form. In any case, both librarianship and publishing clearly demonstrate similar demographic patterns. See table 6.1.)

[6.33] The perpetuation of the master narrative is continued by librarians. A comparison of the demographics of publishing and librarianship shows that both fields are homogenous, and homogenous in the same way. As selectors,

[T06_01.t1] **Table 6.1. Demographics of the United States, Academia, Publishing, and Librarianship.**

	United States (%)[1]	Academia (%)[2]	Publishing (%)[3]	Librarianship (%)[4]
Female	50.8	45	74	81
Male	49.2	55	26	19
White/Caucasian	73.8[5]	72.7	89	87.1
Black or African American	13.7	5.5	1	4.3
Asian	5.9	9	3	3.5
American Indian or Alaska Native	1.7	0.4	—	1.1
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.4	0.2	—	0.3
Other	5.2	—	—	3.7

[1] US Census Bureau, n.d.

[2] US Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics 2015.

[3] Milliot 2014.

[4] American Library Association 2014.

[5] When considering Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, an estimated 62.8 percent of the American population identifies as white alone, not Hispanic or Latino.

librarians might recall Asheim's classic 1953 article "Not Censorship but Selection," which states,

> When libraries discuss the matter among themselves, they are quite satisfied with the distinction between censorship and selection, and are in smug agreement that the librarian practices the latter, not the former. . . . The librarian also feels an obligation to select in terms of standards—and there are some books that he would not buy even if money were no problem. Unfortunately, some of our standards are sufficiently subjective, sufficiently vague, and sufficiently imprecise to serve the uses of the censors as well as of the selectors. Merely to cite the standards does little to prove our claim that ours is not a censoring function. [6.34]

An example of this censoring function can be seen outside the academic ecosystem, in the broader publishing ecosystem. In recent years, the We [6.35]

Need Diverse Books campaign has pointed out the dearth of representation in the publishing industry at every level—publishers, editors, marketers, agents, authors, illustrators, and reviewers—except for readers, who are offered a limited selection of voices (Myers 2014).[1] Authors hear from industry representatives that there is no market for their book, and this claim has no actual basis in market statistics. In fact, in 2013 the Pew Research Center found that the percentage of black American adults who had read at least one book in the previous year was 81 percent, while for white readers it was 76 percent (Zickuhr and Rainie 2014). The question must be asked, Are the selection biases of bookstore and library buyers limiting the market for certain narratives? It is entirely possible that, like the rest of the publishing ecosystem, the traditional scholarly communication system is a closed feedback loop that justifies the decisions of publishers (who might say, This won't sell) and librarians (who might say, Nobody will read this) (Reid 2014).[2] We might well ask just who publishers and librarians are imagining when they think of their readers.

[6.36] Systemic bias thus reinforces the existing paradigm and disadvantages scholars who (1) do not recognize themselves in the master narrative, and (2) must struggle to create new knowledge without the resources of a historic scholarly canon, simply because it is inaccessible to them. It is important to remember that librarians, as customers of academic publishers, have the power to censor (a negative function) or select (a positive function). Our biases, as people of privilege, can have real impact on the very communities we are trying to serve.

[6.37] Certainly, the academic publishing record bears out this problem. Researchers at the University of Montreal and Indiana University found that between 2008 and 2012, a whopping 70 percent of the authors of 5.4 million peer-reviewed scientific articles were men (Larivière et al. 2013). In yet another study, researchers looked at gender composition across the natural sciences, social sciences, and humanities and found that while the percentage of female authors nearly doubled from 1990 to 2011, it still only reached a paltry 27.2 percent of authors (West et al. 2013). This gender gap does not hold true across all fields, but it shows that many disciplines do not reflect the true diversity of authors, readers, and scholarship. Ethnicity, sexuality, and ability are more difficult to study than gender, but similar patterns are likely present.

[6.38] Internationally, the dominance of North American and European presses in academic publishing has led to a preponderance of North American and European authors being published. In 2013, Das et al. used 76,046 empirical economics papers to show that papers written about the United States were more likely to be published in the top five economics journals, with only 1.5 percent of all papers written about other countries published in first-tier journals. This statistic is shocking, yet not surprising. Those who followed

the growth of Hindawi Publishing, founded in 1997 in Cairo, Egypt, saw a similar bias: it was placed on Jeffrey Beall's list of predatory publishers, then taken off after discussion and controversy (Butler 2013). More recently, Beall called the Latin American publishing aggregator SciELO a "publication favela," claiming that many "North American scholars have never even heard of these meta-publishers or the journals they aggregate. Their content is largely hidden, the neighborhood remote and unfamiliar" (Beall 2015). Fortunately, the tone-deaf cultural biases in his post were refuted by many who pointed out the importance of local and regional publishers, the fact that SciELO is indexed and in the core collection of Web of Science and Scopus, and the inappropriate use of the word "favela." In the *Scholarly Kitchen*, Jones (2015) took the opportunity to speak more broadly, commenting,

> The way in which we think about academic excellence is slowly but surely changing over time. There has been a lot of talk about alternative metrics, socio-economic impact of research, data publishing and even changing how authorship works. Almost all of the talk has been based around the needs of markets like North America, Europe and Australia. As the Leiden Manifesto attests, in the field of infometrics, there is a consensus that local excellence should be preserved and encouraged but so far, many publishers and librarians haven't entered that discussion. . . . There is a real danger that the current tone in the discussion of predatory publishing could lead to a guilt by association of all publishers based in the non-English speaking world and that would not only be entirely unfair, but damaging to the public good. [6.39]

What damage are we doing to the public good by discounting, and thereby censoring, alternative narratives in scholarship? There is an imbalance in representation, in scholarship that is published, as well as in access to scholarship that might be valuable or relevant. There is also the personal impact on scholars whose careers do not progress, particularly when university funding in some countries depends on the impact factor—a flawed measure—of the journals in which research articles are published. Whatever impact this marginalized scholarship might have had, both on individual scholars and on society, is lost as well. [6.40]

THE LIBRARIAN'S ROLE IN SUBVERTING TRADITIONAL BIASES [6.41]

Because academic librarians interact with a wide range of constituents—students, faculty, staff, and the public—they are uniquely positioned to promote the benefits of diverse narratives. All academic librarians, in their professional roles, can contribute to social justice efforts in scholarly communication. [6.42]

Effective advocacy for social justice and diversity in scholarly communication requires intentionality on the part of librarians in all spectrums of [6.43]

academic librarianship. Their efforts can be aligned with diversity statements by academic institutions and library associations, if not with library mission statements. Reference and instruction librarians can use their networks of faculty and students to ensure the greater university community is cognizant of its role as producer and consumer of knowledge and the biases inherent in the knowledge system as part of their teaching. Institutional repository managers must work to ensure that the diversity of the university community, socially and in disciplinary study, is reflected in their repositories. Collections managers should leverage their purchasing power to push commercial publishers toward more open practices and ensure that the efforts of librarian publishing programs to diversify the scholarly record are reflected in their collections. Metadata and cataloging librarians need to examine their descriptive standards critically to ensure that controlled vocabularies and library catalogs do not continue to marginalize and misrepresent underrepresented voices.

[6.44] Librarians with scholarly communication outreach responsibilities can further imbue their scholarly communication outreach efforts with attention to social justice by highlighting the inequities to access (for both reader and author) present in traditional publishing systems. In previous years, much work in scholarly communication has been related to the politics of access, but we can also turn a lens onto content creation and the entire life cycle of knowledge production and access.

[6.45] ## Facilitation

[6.46] As libraries continue to expand their support for scholarly publishing services, a wider range of authors can participate in the creation, claiming, and sharing of knowledge. Library publishing programs are disruptors, introducing new models of scholarly communication into academic publishing. Royster (2014–2015) identifies five shortcomings in traditional scholarly publishing that library publishing programs can address: copyright transfer requirements, high rejection rates, slow publication processes, high prices, and limited distribution. By providing some remediation for these shortcomings, library publishing programs can increase opportunities for authors and readers to participate in scholarly communication.

[6.47] As an increasing number of libraries launch publishing and hosting programs, there are more opportunities for voices marginalized by traditional academic publishing to enter the scholarly record. Advances in networked technology and the development of electronic journals provide opportunities for more members in a disciplinary community to participate in scholarly discourse (Harrison and Stephen 1995). At the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, the journal *Landscapes of Violence* (*LoV*) purposefully engages a diverse editorial board, a broad base of authors, and different media formats,

with the goal of giving voice to the human experience in a scholarly context. Its "About" page states, "One of the primary goals of this new journal is to create an inclusive platform designed to reach a broad audience including scientists, academics, policymakers, and the public. To that end, *LoV* is an open-access journal." This is an example of scholars perceiving how the forces at work in the scholarly communication ecosystem impact our opportunity to hear the many voices necessary for a full understanding of the world we live in.

[6.48] According to Chan and Kirsop (2001), open archiving initiatives give scientists in the developing world a greater ability to contribute to the global scholarly record, as well as "an increasingly available means to distribute local research in a way that is highly visible and without the difficulties that are sometimes met in publishing in journals (e.g. biased discrimination between submissions generated in the north and south)." For Royster (2014–2015) and Beatty (2013), library publishing programs are able to publish content that would not be published by traditional publishers, providing an invaluable service to faculty members whose research would otherwise be excluded from the scholarly canon.

[6.49] Traditional publishing operations, whether academic or commercial, operate in the realm of commerce. Their decisions to publish or decline publication, though tied to academic values, ultimately stem from the perceived salability of the works in question. Because library publishing programs, by contrast, are not typically in the business of seeking profits, they can pursue and publish scholarship without a primary focus on perceived commercial value. This potentially allows authors working in emerging disciplines to claim a space in the scholarly record; it also corrects for biased standards regarding what is publishable and provides access to scholarship that, while not considered commercially viable, is certainly of value to many who would normally be blocked by a paywall.

[6.50] For students and faculty—including minority, interdisciplinary, and emerging scholars—who have felt marginalized by traditional publishing venues, library-based publishing programs can provide a space to create their own communities of discourse. The *Journal of Critical Thought and Praxis* (*JCTP*), based in the School of Education at Iowa State University, was launched by graduate students who were frustrated by the difficulties they encountered with publishing as scholars in the interdisciplinary field of social justice. Having created their own journal, the editors of *JCTP* are able to address the shortcomings they see in traditional journal publishing: a lack of space and appreciation for interdisciplinary research, critical but unconstructive peer review, and barriers to publication for new and nonacademic authors. The founding editors envisioned a social justice journal that would provide "a critical counterspace for emerging scholars, educators, practitioners, and activists to have conversations about social justice that lead to ac-

tion, advocacy, and praxis" (Torres-Gerald 2012). For these graduate students, working with the university library as a publishing partner provides a sense of legitimacy and credibility, as well as an indication of higher-level institutional support. It also allows the journal's editors to tap into librarians' publishing expertise (Roh, Drabinski, and Inefuku 2015).

[6.51] **Participation and Interrogation**

[6.52] In addition to serving as educators and guides to the knowledge record, academic librarians are also producers of scholarship. As the profession examines the diversity and openness of the scholarly literature in other disciplines, it must also pay attention to its own house and examine the diversity and openness of its own literature.

[6.53] How diverse is the scholarly record in librarianship? A 2014 editorial in *Code4Lib Journal* explored the question "How inclusive of different populations have we been?" It found that out of twenty-nine editorial committee members, only eight were women, and this gap had persisted over the history of the journal. Women also made up less than 40 percent of the authors published. "The most striking thing about the [authors by gender by issue] graph to me is that many of the issues have almost no participation from female authors," commented Ron Peterson, ~~the editor in chief~~ one of the editors. Gender is easier to investigate than ethnicity, sexuality, or ability, but it is clear that librarianship as a field needs to take a look at how inclusive it is in publishing across all of these variables.

[6.54] What steps has the profession taken to move its own literature toward open access? There are many library and information science (LIS) journals that impose significant barriers to open access. In a 2014 study of open access and LIS journals, Bowley and Vandegrift found that a "significant percentage of our professional literature is still owned and controlled by commercial publishers whose role in scholarly communication is to maintain 'the scholarly record,' yes, but also to generate profits at the expense of library budgets by selling our intellectual property back to us" (13). In order to publish open access articles, LIS journals published by commercial publishers require payment of publication fees that are unaffordable to most librarians—sometimes as high as $3,000 (Bowley and Vandegrift 2014).

[6.55] In 2010, Joe Branin, editor of *College & Research Libraries News*, advocated for open access in library and information science so that the profession could practice what it preached. The journal, which already provided open access to articles older than six months and permitted authors to self-archive the published versions of their articles, went fully open access the following year. In 2013, the editorial board of the *Journal of Library Administration* resigned over publisher Taylor & Francis's restrictive licensing terms (Schwartz 2013a). Then editor in chief Damon Jaggars stated, "We

needed Taylor & Francis to provide less restrictive licensing terms not tied to an author fee. An author fee for the LIS author community is a nonstarter. . . . These authors wanted control over their own intellectual property—a more fundamental concern [than open access writ large]" (Schwartz 2013b). We can also pose a further challenge with regard to the LIS literature: even if librarians publish in non–open access journals, their manuscripts should be made available via institutional repositories or by other means.

[6.56] Beyond reflecting on the publishing practices of our own profession, academic librarians can advise and even serve on the editorial boards of journals in other disciplines. For example, as managing editor of *Radical Teacher*, a socialist, feminist, and antiracist education journal, librarian Emily Drabinski worked to convince the rest of the editorial board to move to an open access publishing model. Drabinski commented,

> [6.57] As Marxists, I assumed they would understand how much the means of one's own production matter. I was wrong. They didn't see themselves as part of a market or as part of a capitalist mode of knowledge production. We could say this about academics everywhere, including those making knowledge that could benefit society in really practical ways if published in open access models. . . . We signed a contract with the University of Pittsburgh as part of their open access publishing program. We've now published four issues on the platform, and while we're still working out kinks and arguing about bugs, the magazine has gone from having to shut down unless it could raise $17,000 from a combination of bake sales and wealthy friends, to a lively, vibrant online journal that looks to be sustainable for the long haul. We don't talk about money at meetings anymore; we talk about politics. (Roh, Drabinski, and Inefuku 2015)

[6.58] Certainly subject expertise for many librarians can mean greater involvement with the editorial boards of journals, whether as members or as advisors to faculty who serve on them or are looking to start their own journals. Keele and Pearse (2012) advocate for law librarians to take on an advisory role with journal editors, leading them to adopt flexible and transparent copyright agreements that give both journals and authors flexible rights to reuse and reproduce articles.

Education and Advocacy

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[6.60] Scholarly communication librarians engage in almost continual education and advocacy, with established scripts about the price of subscriptions, the rights of authors, and the benefits of open access to citation impact. In the process of disrupting the business of scholarly communication, librarians can also make an effort to educate and advocate to and on behalf of populations that are underprivileged in the traditional structure. At the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, the scholarly communication department has made

a special effort to partner with the Graduate School Office of Professional Development on educational programs about publishing and authors' rights, including a special panel for the Graduate Students of Color Association. This is part of an effort to address the gaps in knowledge, mentoring, and publication behaviors that disadvantage minority faculty candidates.

[6.61] Academic librarians can also cultivate an open access–oriented mind-set in the next generation of scholars by integrating open access journal publishing into the curriculum. In its "Introduction to Scholarly Journal Publishing" course, Pacific University "anticipated the potential for the course to serve as a powerful advocacy tool, giving students the opportunity to actively interrogate scholarly communication issues, such as open access and author rights" (Gilman 2013, 83). By teaching courses on scholarly publishing and advising student journal editorial boards, academic librarians are in an ideal position to guide students toward viewing themselves as knowledge producers rather than as mere consumers and to educate them on complex publishing issues. Students' involvement in the journal publication process can help them understand complex intellectual property rights issues from the perspective of both publishers and authors (Buckland 2015) and examine the structural biases in the system and how they can be addressed.

[6.62] Gilman and Davis-Kahl speak to the engagement of undergraduate students in scholarly communication from an advocacy perspective. Davis-Kahl (2012) advocates for academic librarians to engage undergraduates in discussions about scholarly communication so that they "can become effective advocates for access to their own work, or for access to research that can aid them in becoming informed and critical researchers, consumers, and citizens" (212) at a time in their lives when they are passionate about having a positive impact on social justice issues. It is important to include not just some kinds of systemic injustice in this education (i.e., commercial influences and open access) but also discussion of systemic bias as an integral part of the curriculum.

[6.63] Academic librarians also need to recognize that "open access" and "universally accessible" do not always equate. Are the repositories we design, the journal and conference platforms we build, and the research guides we organize accessible to individuals with low vision and other impairments? Does the impetus to build robust institutional repositories impact our ability to deliver captioned media files and digitized textual documents with accurate OCR or transcriptions? How does the digital divide impact access to library publishing programs and institutional repositories?

[6.64] Within the United States, black and Hispanic households are less likely to have a computer or Internet than white and Asian households; the same is true for households with lower incomes and in nonmetropolitan areas (File and Ryan 2014). Globally, Chan and Kirsop (2001) point to a lack of awareness of open archiving initiatives among scientists in developing countries

a situation exacerbated by the lack of a stable technological infrastructure. Academic librarians can work to ensure that the content being published through library-based publishing programs is also accessible to individuals without Internet connections at home or work. Efforts may include marketing content to public libraries and participating in projects like e-Granary, which preloads hard drives with digital content, enabling students in developing countries to access electronic resources without Internet connectivity. "Through technology such as the e-Granary, the knowledge economy and the information age can at least partially reach developing regions regardless of a digital divide" (Williams 2009).

ALTERNATIVE VOICES, ALTERNATIVE FORMS [6.65]

Academia is often criticized as being an ivory tower, separate from and ignorant of the practical concerns of society. Indeed, events that occur outside a university's walls are not necessarily addressed in traditional scholarly publishing and are often better addressed via nonscholarly platforms. Twitter, Facebook, blogs, and other social media can be considered emerging forms of scholarly communication that allow scholars, activists, dissenters, and other voices to participate in real-time discourse on controversial issues. In August 2014, Michael Brown, an unarmed African American teenager, was shot and killed by a white police officer, Darren Wilson. Protests ensued, and school was delayed, but there were no tools to address the questions of students in the classroom. As a response, professors and teachers started contributing to the #FergusonSyllabus campaign, organized by Georgetown University professor Marcia Chatelain. Works ranged widely, from Radley Balko's *The Rise of the Warrior Cop: The Militarization of America's Police Forces* to Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's TedTalk titled "The Danger of a Single Story" (Chatelain 2014). The #CharlestonSyllabus followed in the same vein, after a young white man shot and killed nine African American participants in a church Bible study. Significantly, the high-profile contributors and organizers were professors and librarians who considered themselves both scholars and activists and their work as an intersection of scholarship and activism. [6.66]

> Social media and the blogosphere have emerged as vibrant spaces for both the production and dissemination of knowledge about African American history and its relation to our contemporary racial environment. . . . #CharlestonSyllabus was not merely imagined as a way to create a virtual community. *This endeavor is a work of serious historical scholarship firmly rooted in the African American intellectual tradition . . . foundational to the study of the black experience and the meaning of race in modern history.* (Williams 2015, emphasis in original) [6.67]

[6.68] We see in these examples the clear awareness, the insistence, that these efforts should not be left out of the scholarly canon. Scholars have long known that there are formal and informal modes of scholarly communication, but new technologies have brought informal modes to a new level of visibility and importance ~~that was heretofore neglected.~~ The fact that these modes are considered social media rather than scholarly media does not detract from the value of the dialogue. The Postcolonial Digital Humanities website, for example, takes full advantage of alternative modes of scholarly communication, including articles, blogs, an online course, and even a webcomic. Its mission statement describes an Internet culture that includes "changing digital practices by eliding boundaries between media producers and consumers" and digital scholarship that is "grounded in the literary, philosophical, and historical heritage of postcolonial studies and invested in the possibilities offered by digital humanities" (dhpoco.org, n.d.). The #dhpoco community of scholars is passionate and intelligent and is creating groundbreaking, relevant scholarship that would otherwise be overlooked by traditional scholarly communication venues. One of the main goals of the community—to "write alternative genealogies of the digital humanities" (Risam and Koh, n.d.)—is possible because there are alternative platforms on which to create and make public (publish) these narratives. It is important to note that #dhpoco is committed to open access as well—there is a clear awareness of the politics and business of scholarship.

[6.69] These formal/informal scholarly communication conversations are happening in the world of librarianship as well. The Twitter chat #critlib meets online every Tuesday evening, with suggested readings and themes every week such as tenure track and social justice work, environmental and labor implications of library technology, and critical perspectives on data, surveillance, and the privatization of higher education (Critlib.org, n.d.). This discourse is grounded in progressive movements and is concerned about human rights and social justice, yet exists outside—perhaps alongside—the traditional scholarly communication arena. It is a combination of academic rigor and contemporary activism that aligns with traditional librarian values and is open to everyone.

[6.70] ## CONCLUSION

[6.71] Courant and Jones (2015) position scholarly publishing as a public good, tied into higher education's mission to "advance knowledge, both within and beyond university walls" (19). This public good, however, has been commodified by the academic and publishing industries. (Lawson, Sanders, and Smith 2015). Morales, Knowles, and Bourg have called on librarians to recognize the agency conferred by their roles as purchasers, providers, and

organizers of knowledge to "acknowledge the ways in which library practices frequently contribute to inequity, marginalization, and injustices; and commit to transforming our practices and standards in ways that leverage the power, expertise, and responsibility of academic librarians and libraries as forces for social justice" (2014). Academic libraries' engagement with scholarly communication stems from advocacy—a push against the commodification of the scholarly record and the predatory pricing of commercial publishers. This engagement, however, has much broader impacts than on the library's budget alone. By being involved in scholarly communication, institutional repositories, and library publishing programs, libraries become deeply engaged in redefining who is able to produce and access knowledge. This is a powerful position.

A transformation in the production and consumption of scholarly communication requires a broad and sustained commitment by the library profession. The growth in academic library scholarly communications and publishing programs means that librarians can serve as agents of change at all stages of the scholarly communication life cycle, from research to publication to consumption. [6.72]

NOTES [6.73]

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[6.131]

NOTES

[6n1] 1. Myers (2014) called this "the apartheid of children's literature" in the *New York Times*, citing a Cooperative Children's Book Center at the University of Wisconsin study finding that only ninety-three of thirty-two hundred children's books published in 2013 were about black people.

[6n2] 2. Unfortunately, while the campaign has drawn media attention, within the industry change is slow. Reid (2014) reports, "The people with the power to address the issue of diversity in the industry are not making it a priority."