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## Information Literacy at the Intersection of Scholarly Communications and Social Justice

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# Information Literacy at the Intersection of Scholarly Communications and Social Justice

## Abstract

Undergraduate outreach about Open Access (OA) lies at the intersection of information literacy and Scholarly Communications. Reframing undergraduates as current and future scholars allows us to treat them as agents within the Scholarly Communications network. Students who have mastered fundamental research skills are prepared to view them through the critical lens of Scholarly Communications in order to learn both how to locate resources and how those resources are created. This educational approach highlights the various barriers scholars can face in the research process, as well as provides an awareness of information privilege.

This poster will provide a model for how OA can be integrated into information literacy instruction by describing a one-shot session delivered to a 300-level Women and Gender Studies (WGS) course. For librarians looking to integrate OA into their teaching, WGS courses are a logical starting point. There is a moral imperative for WGS scholars to be aware of OA due to its corresponding values of equality, justice, and the belief in the capacity for all people to be participants in the scholarly conversation. Advanced WGS students are prepared to apply high level critical thinking to their own research practices. Situating their scholarly activity in the greater ecosystem of scholarly communications reveals how these students are agents within this system whose choices can have an impact on the larger network.

## Keywords

scholarly communications, social justice, information literacy, women and gender studies, open access, publishing, Musselman Library, values

## Disciplines

Feminist, Gender, and Sexuality Studies | Information Literacy | Library and Information Science | Scholarly Communication | Scholarly Publishing

## Comments

This poster was presented at the ALA Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. on June 22, 2019 as part of the ACRL Women and Gender Studies Section Research Poster Session and the WGSS General Membership Forum.

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## Premise

There is a moral imperative for Women, Gender, and Sexuality studies scholars to know about and participate in Open Access publishing.

## Class Context

- WGS 300: Feminist Theory
- 13 undergraduates
- Juniors and seniors
- All WGS majors/minors
- 75-minute, one-shot presentation with participation

## Learning Goals

- Define Scholarly Communications as a department and a network in order to contextualize your work within the larger system of academic publishing.
- Articulate how Open Access is one response to the inequality implicit in traditional academic publishing in order to apply the concept of information privilege to your own lives and practices.
- Relate the values of WGS to the goals of Open Access in order to see the relationship between Open Access and other social justice movements studied and championed by WGS as a discipline.

## Values of WGS Student Responses

Equity/Equality  
Empowerment  
Equal opportunity  
End systemic oppression  
Privilege  
Raising up marginalized groups  
Intersectionality  
Anti-capitalism  
Social Justice  
Education  
Activism  
Identity

## Values of Open Access Student Responses

Equality  
Access to knowledge  
Equal Opportunity  
Social Agency  
Affordability  
Highlighting underrepresented groups  
“Myth of meritocracy”  
Anti-capitalism  
Social Justice  
Education  
Autonomy  
Scholarship

Critical  
Information  
Literacy

## Outcomes & Next Steps

- Well received by students
- Professor reduced cost of course materials for intro class
- Invited back to speak to WGS 120: Intro to WGS in Spring 2019
- Integrating Scholarly Communications into formal Information Literacy program
- Hiring a teaching librarian in Scholarly Communications to work with Research & Instruction on developing instruction sessions around issues in Scholarly Communications

## Conclusion

High-level WGS students are a logical starting point for integrating issues of Scholarly Communications and social justice into an Information Literacy program to achieve critical information literacy skills.

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