



STS SIGNAL

Science and Technology Section
Association of College and Research Libraries

Volume 35 , Number 2

Fall 2020

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ACRL 2021 is going virtual!

ACRL invites you to share your research and creative endeavors with your colleagues at the ACRL 2021 Virtual Conference. Details about the ACRL 2021 Virtual Conference, including the full Call for Participation, are online. See page 6 for more information.



Letter from the Chair

Greetings fellow STSers!



Rachel Borchardt

STS Chair

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I'm sure we're all sick of hearing that these are unprecedented times! The enormous impact of COVID has changed every one of us, personally and professionally. It shouldn't come as a surprise that STS's work has also been enormously impacted. However, I couldn't be more proud of the tremendous amount of work that has been put into what has been a nimble transition, particularly in the wake of

ALA Annual 2020 going entirely virtual. Committees and task forces that had been planning to deliver in-person content were able to, within a relatively short timeframe, pivot to offering virtual programming. This effort is even more tremendous when we consider the time and effort every volunteer has dedicated to STS in spite of the other, often more pressing, challenges we all face. I could not be more proud to be chairing a section with such a dedicated, thoughtful, and determined group of professionals.

As a result of our efforts, STS was able to offer a robust set of programs in the weeks before and after Annual, from a panel of government information professionals discussing COVID resources, to a poster session combining short synchronous presentations with asynchronous posters available for viewing, and an EDI workshop where participants engaged with prompts via live-edited Google Docs. As a result, we saw participation far exceed our typical counts for in-person ALA sessions, with uniformly positive feedback.

As reported in the last newsletter, our STS EDI task force released a report earlier in the year, outlining EDI priorities as indicated by a survey of STS members. This report has since helped guide the task force as they transitioned into the EDI Implementation task force, responsible for implementing the 13 high-priority immediate and short-term priorities identified in

the report. This task force is currently hard at work, and we will continue to see the effects of the task force's efforts throughout the year as we strive to make our section a place where librarians and other professionals see STS as an including and welcoming space for professional service and leadership opportunities. In August, the STS Council approved the formation of an EDI standing committee, as well as an EDI Officer which will join the STS Executive Committee, both of whom will continue to implement EDI initiatives as serve as a resource for EDI-related issues, programs, ideas, and concerns.

In addition to the STS EDI task force, STS Council approved the formation of two new task forces. The Communications task force is looking into ALA's planned listserv migration and exploring possibilities for our own listserv's future. The Vendor/Publisher Relations task force will be codifying the ways in which STS partners with vendors and publishers. One or both task forces may solicit input from the STS community as they carry out their charges, so keep an eye out for opportunities to provide feedback that will help inform their work!

Looking ahead, our committees, discussion groups, and task forces are hard at work to follow up on our successes throughout the year. However, as ALA sunsets the current Midwinter conference structure, **STS will NOT be delivering Midwinter programming in 2021**. Instead, we intend to continue hosting online content throughout the year, so be on the lookout for listserv announcements regarding future programming.

Looking further ahead, STS is currently planning to offer programs both in person and online during and in the weeks surrounding ALA Annual 2021 while we await further news from ALA and ACRL. As of this writing, STS plans to focus more on social-type events

Continued

Letter from the Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect

Letter from the Chair Continued

should an in-person Annual take place, which the majority of our traditional programming taking place online. Again, updates on this will be communicated via the STS listserv, so keep an eye out as you consider your conference plans for Summer 2021.

Finally, ALA itself is in the midst of some upcoming decisions regarding their financial and structural future. We don't know yet how this will impact STS, but are doing all we can to advocate on behalf of our members and stay on top of developments as they occur.

This period holds a lot of uncertainty, but I am confident that STS will continue to demonstrate remarkable levels of resilience and fortitude. In addition to the tremendous support provided by the volunteers who continue to make STS the professional society it is, I would also like to acknowledge the tremendous support provided by our STS sponsors, who help us achieve our goals. Their financial support helps fund the Oberly Award, scholarships to attend the ACRL conference, and in-person social events where we have the opportunity to meet and learn from each other (events we are all sorely missing in our current online environment!), events that help STS feel like a home to so many of its members. Our STS sponsors include AAAS, ACS, CRC, Elsevier, GOBI, IEEE, IOP, Morgan & Claypool, and SPIE. Thank you, sponsors!

To conclude, we're seeing a lot of rapid changes in our world, and we're still seeing the many ways in which they have and will continue to impact STS. But, there isn't a professional society I'd rather be associated with to navigate these waters together, and I'm so grateful to every one of you that's helped and is continuing to help shape STS's future.

Best,
Rachel

Letter from the Vice-Chair

Happy Fall!

My fall has brought many changes that I'm guessing you're experiencing too. One of those changes is that the circle of people I see face-to-face has been drastically reduced. But my connections online have become more frequent and often more meaningful. I have had the privilege of seeing some of your home office spaces (aka - bedrooms) and hearing your children or pets in the background. I have interacted with more of you this summer and fall than I would have during what for a few of us was the "normal" conference cycle of MidWinter and Annual (but which for many of us was never a real possibility). What many of us miss about in-person conference gatherings is the ability to conversationally network about science librarianship, but also to get to know each other as humans. But I see that we have begun creating those formal and informal connections online! We are sharing ideas about teaching, collections, outreach, and hiring practices AND sharing recipes (my current guilty pleasure is dirty fries, which our household makes with Beyond Meat) and book suggestions (I've just started *Real Life* by Brandon Taylor). And we are learning to be gracious with each other and ourselves when technology doesn't behave the way we want it to, or when our days become overly full of Zoom.

STS is working to build online community by making much of our programming available online. This past summer many of you were able to attend STS' virtual programming,



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continued

Letter from the Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect

Letter from the Vice-Chair Continued

including discussion groups, poster sessions, research talks, EDI discussions, Hot Topics conversations on research metrics and developing vendor relationships, and the STS Forum on barriers and limitations to OER implementation. All of this online programming took a lot of work to pull off, but the result was the ability for more people to engage on topics of interest to science and technology librarians.

The current circumstances also allow STS to try new things. One example is the STS Book Club. I've enjoyed joining with fellow STS-ers to read and discuss two books over the summer: *The Tangled Tree: A Radical New History of Life* by David Quammen and *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teaching of Plants* by Robin Wall Kimmerer. These two books are very different. *The Tangled Tree* was a deep dive into evolutionary genetics. My favorite quote from this book was from scientist Ford Doolittle speaking about being willing to dream and experiment: "if you're not wrong half the time, then you're not being brave enough." *Braiding Sweetgrass* called for healing between humans and nature. Reading this book reminded me to engage in the practice of gratitude, which has been helpful during this tumultuous time. But Kimmerer encourages us to move beyond a culture of gratitude to developing cultures of reciprocity where we not only think about what we can take, but what we can give.

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Letter from the Vice-Chair Continued

I hope that you will be encouraged by the different virtual options currently available to think of what you're thankful for in your community (including, hopefully, your STS community!). But I also encourage you to be experimental and try something new. Perhaps you'll be emboldened to try out the [Science Information Literacy Chat](#), to suggest joining STS to a new colleague, or if you have new ideas for how STS can improve or create more equitable and inclusive communities - to send those my way. There's nothing I like more than a good brainstorm - even when the ideas don't always work out.

I also hope that you will help STS build a culture of reciprocity. Consider joining a committee or volunteering as a co-chair. The [STS LibGuide](#) describes these committees, and I am more than happy to help you with questions or to walk you through the structure, roles, and responsibilities of STS committee work (or if you want to tell me about a book you've read or a great recipe you've made - that's great too). Just email me!

Thank you for all you do to further the work of making STS a more open, inclusive, and flexible community. But thank you also for your work at your library over the past months holding virtual office hours, making physically distanced spaces available, scanning materials, transitioning your teaching online, and generally making information available. Now step away from your computer and take a brief break!

Best,
Hannah

STS
Science & Technology Section

STS Committee and Discussion Group News

STS Government Information Committee

Government Public Health Information During the COVID-19 Pandemic Webinar

August 6, 2020

Speakers:

Zoe Pettway Unno, Ph.D., MLIS, Network of the National Library of Medicine

Renu Lal, PharmD, U.S. Food and Drug Administration

Joey Nicholson, MLIS, MPH, CPH, New York University Langone Health & Grossman School of Medicine

Attendees: 81

Notes: Our first speaker was Dr. Zoe Pettway Unno, who began her presentation with an overview of the Network of the National Library of Medicine and its relationship to the National Library of Medicine and the National Institutes of Health. Much of the work that Dr. Unno and her colleagues at the NNLM perform requires travel to provide training, and they quickly shifted their focus in March 2020 with the recognition of the COVID-19 pandemic to providing ready online access to NIH and CDC information on COVID-19 to the US public. One important area of information that the NNLM calls attention to on their website relates to reducing health disparities, which have come to national attention during this pandemic. Dr. Unno particularly highlighted the Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) page, which provides information about and links to data on health disparities. Additionally, she shared information on where to find CDC and NIH data on COVID-19 and how to keep up-to-date on the information available via the COVID-19 weekly surveillance updates published online at the NLM. Dr. Unno demonstrated how to find COVID-19 clinical trials on Clinicaltrials.gov and the online trainings that the NNLM provides on how to use this tool. She further provided three links to webinar attendees, <https://svi.cdc.gov/Documents/Data/A%20Social%20Vulnerability%20Index%20for%20Disaster%20Management.pdf>, https://nmlm.gov/classes/clinical_trials, and <https://nmlm.gov/regions>.

Our second speaker was Renu Lal of the FDA, and she began her presentation by helping attendees understand how to find FDA information and what its role in the COVID-19 pandemic is. FDA has multiple product centers, and they are all involved in the fight against COVID-19. She then demonstrated some ways a user might navigate through information on the FDA website and its product centers. The FDA provides a vast amount of information to the public. There is the FDA website, but they also have many listservs that push out relevant information to the public via email. Additionally, they hold webinars, produce podcasts, maintain social media pages, and issue press releases to help disseminate FDA information throughout the country. Dr. Lal particularly called interest to the various types of data FDA is both making available and collecting. She navigated through CDER's COVID-19 webpage, and highlighted items of interest to consumers, healthcare professionals, researchers and industry. She pointed out the COVID-19 Treatment Hub website that focuses on COVID-19 treatments, vaccines, and drugs that are under review related to COVID-19 and also spoke about where to find information about the FDA Sentinel System's COVID-19 activities. Finally, she reviewed consumer information available from FDA, including information on hand sanitizer recalls and more, and she asked that librarians help in the FDA's quest to get information on COVID-19 to the general public as it is one of the major challenges for the FDA.

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STS Committee and Discussion Group News Cont'd

Government Information Committee (Continued)

Our final speaker was Joey Nicholson, and he talked to attendees about the NYU Health Sciences Library's response to COVID-19 from an on-the-ground library professional's perspective. Patient care information was one of the major areas that NYUHSL librarians supported work at the NYU Hospitals, and this included questions related to direct patient care, clinical trial protocols, and clinical practice guideline development. The librarians relied on their experience with supporting systematic reviews, including their well-honed clinical appraisal skills, to support this great need for patient care information during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic in New York City. The NYUHSL also provided a greatly increased calendar of educational sessions, including on topics such as clinical appraisal, RedCAP and eConsent, and R and RStudio. Several thousand students and employees were trained in RedCAP and eConsent as part of this surge in educational sessions. Additionally, Mr. Nicholson discussed NYU's Data Catalog, a part of the Data Discovery Collaboration (DDC). The NYUHSL is cataloging COVID-19 research data being produced by researchers at NYU as well as publicly available COVID-19 data as a contribution to the DDC. Finally, he addressed the challenges that he and his staff faced in supporting the clinical and research work being conducted at NYU, and he made recommendations for other health sciences libraries in how to face such challenges.

Webinar attendees asked questions such as how best to monitor documents pertaining to COVID-19 regulations and guidance for facilities such as clinics, nursing homes, and hospitals; what information is freely available in NYU's Data Catalog, (<https://datacatalog.med.nyu.edu/>); and what databases NYUHSL librarians use to search for patient care information in the COVID-19 rapid response environment.

Submitted by Kara Whatley

Publications Committee

The STS Publications Committee met recently, and has begun planning for a new STS website. STS Executive has approved the migration of our Section-specific content from the ACRL site to a new open source platform, most likely WordPress. An open website will greatly improve our ability to promote STS content and activities, and to recruit new members. We hope to launch it before Annual 2021.

Submitted by Elizabeth Wallace

STS Communications Task Force

The Task Force recently held its first meeting, and has begun the process of researching future listserv options, following the recommendation of the *STS Statement on ALA's Proposal to Migrate Listservs from Sympa to ALA Connect* to select a public/non-member option as a replacement for STS-L. We will coordinate with the EDI Task Force chairs in soliciting feedback from STS-L members over the next few months, with a report and recommendations to be presented to STS Executive by Annual 2021.

Submitted by Elizabeth Wallace

ACRL NEWS

ACRL 2021 is going virtual!

ACRL invites you to share your research and creative endeavors with your colleagues at the ACRL 2021 Virtual Conference. Today's higher education environment calls for innovative ways to support student, faculty, and institution success. Submit your ideas for presentation at the ACRL 2021 Virtual Conference, where we will explore the theme *Ascending into An Open Future*. Through the work of talented library workers like you, and ACRL's commitments to equitable and open scholarship as well as equity, diversity and inclusion, today's academic and research libraries are providing more open and inclusive collections and services. Share your ideas with your colleagues as we work together for an open future.

The deadline for Lightning Talk, Poster, Roundtable, TechConnect, Webcast submissions has been extended to Monday, November 9. As a reminder of the new [Participation Limits](#), all submitters (even those that already submitted in the spring) are eligible to be included as a presenter or co-presenter on a maximum of two additional proposals for the revised fall submission deadline, and can ultimately present a maximum of two times during the ACRL Conference.

More details about the ACRL 2021 Virtual Conference, including the full [Call for Participation](#), are online.



ACRL Diversity Alliance – Join or Renew for 2021!

The [ACRL Diversity Alliance](#) program unites academic libraries committed to increasing the hiring pipeline of qualified and talented individuals from underrepresented racial and ethnic groups. By working together and thinking more broadly, ACRL Diversity Alliance institutions will help diversify and thereby enrich the profession. The commitment of each library leader to create one or more residency positions will expand the opportunities available to individuals from professionally underrepresented groups to gain knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary to thrive in an academic context. Renewals will go out this fall for 2020 institutional members. If your institution is not a current member and you're interested in joining the ACRL Diversity Alliance, please contact ACRL Program Manager for Strategic Initiatives Allison Payne at apayne@ala.org.



ACRL NEWS Continued

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/>.

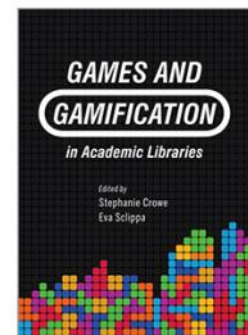
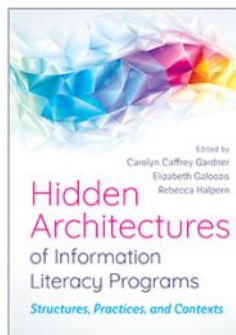
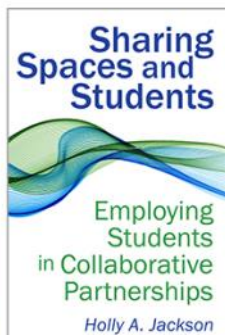


ACRL Books

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, providing timely, thought-provoking, and practical content and research to academic and research librarians worldwide. Some recent titles:

- [Get the Job: Academic Library Hiring for the New Librarian](#)
- [Sharing Spaces and Students: Employing Students in Collaborative Partnerships](#)
- [Hidden Architectures of Information Literacy Programs: Structures, Practices, and Contexts](#)
- [The Engaged Library: High-Impact Educational Practices in Academic Libraries](#)
- [Games and Gamification in Academic Libraries](#)

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.



About the Signal

STs SIGNAL

We're on the Web!

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STS Signal is published twice annually in May and November. Editorial deadlines for each issue are March 1st and September 1st of each year.

Signal is made available to all section members at no charge on the [STS Web site](http://www.ala.org/acrl/sts).

ISSN: 0888-6563

Issues in Science and Technology Librarianship is also available to all section members on the [ISTL Web Site](http://www.istl.org).

STS SIGNAL is a biannual publication of the Science and Technology Section of the Association of College & Research Libraries, a division of the American Library Association, 225 N. Michigan Ave. Ste. 1300, Chicago, IL 60601 800-545-2433 ext. 2523. It is designed as a communication vehicle to the members of the Section and other interested parties. Electronic transmission of materials is preferred, and instructions for transmission are available on request. Inquiries should be made to the Editor: [Melissa Johnson](mailto:melissa.johnson@augusta.edu), Reese Library, Augusta University, 1120 15th Street, LIBR 138., Augusta, GA 30912, Phone: (706) 667-4907.