

Shifts of Labour: The Ever-Changing Contexts of Our Information Worlds

Vanessa Irvin, Co-Editor, IJDI

Vanessa Reyes, Co-Editor, IJDI

Abstract

This paper introduces Volume 7, Issue 3/4 of *The International Journal of Information, Diversity, & Inclusion* (IJDI). In this section, the IJDI Co-Editors-in-Chief, Vanessa Irvin and Vanessa Reyes, discuss the theme, ‘shifts in labour,’ as the concept is exhibited in the expansion of the journal’s editorial team and via the papers in this issue that cover libraries as inclusive workplaces, focusing on women and labour in both visible and intangible contexts.

Keywords: labour; librarians; libraries; social inclusion; women

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Introductions

The *International Journal of Information, Diversity, & Inclusion* (IJDI) has expanded its editorial team with positive labour shifts since the last issue. We have developed our team to 20 librarians and information professionals worldwide, working collaboratively to heighten the quality of our production processes so that authors’ papers are published with the best presentation possible. Labour has shifted with shared work across timelines, contexts, and time zones. The cover art for this issue conveys how we envision the ways in which the articles are threaded through the topics of the library workplace, social inclusion within the flow of information, and women’s connection to labour. We view these connections as multi-faceted: visible yet intangible, fluid in intensity, and organic in motion.

In tandem with this issue’s theme of ‘shifts of labour,’ the IJDI editorial team has evolved with new members. Case in point, the IJDI has added a second Editor-in-Chief, Dr. **Vanessa Reyes**, Ph.D., who is a new faculty member with the journal’s sponsor, the East Carolina University (ECU) Master of Library Science Program (USA). Joining Dr. Vanessa Irvin as Co-Editors, together as Irvin and Reyes (or, as some colleagues are starting to call us, “The Vanessas”), we are enjoying working together alongside Senior Managing Editors **Laina Kelly** (Alberta, Canada) and **Mona Elayyan** (Ontario, Canada) to optimize the journal’s structure and workflow so that the IJDI’s voice in library and information science discourse is stronger than ever.

Dr. **Travis Wagner** of the School of Information Sciences at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (USA) signs on to the team as the journal’s new Book Review Editor, as this is the last issue for the amazing Book Review Editor team, librarians **Stephanie Robertson** (BYU-Hawaii, USA) and **Halie Kerns** (SUNY-Binghamton, USA) as their tenure ends. We are grateful for a full roster of Managing Editors who hail from various parts of the globe:

Canada: **Michelle Albrecht**, **Kelly Dickinson**, **Jennifer McDevitt**, and **Emily Villanueva**

Iran: **Elaheh Hassanzadeh**

United States: **Elizabeth Gross, Vernita Irvin, Dunyau Maqsoudi-Moreno, Zach Motts, Caterina Reed, Cara B. Stone, and Lori Wienke**

Our copyeditor, **Caitlin McCann** (who is a graduate student in the ECU library science program), is an excellent editor and collaborator, and our long-term colleague, **Leah Brochu** (Canada), continues to grace us with her creativity and technical knowledge to render beautiful graphics for our compiled issues. We are profoundly grateful for such a talented, committed editorial team. Likewise, our editorial board sustains our foundation for the journal with its ongoing support for reading new papers for peer review and sharing its knowledge to keep the vision of the journal vibrant and relevant during these geopolitically challenging times.

The work of the IJIDI thrives because the editorial board and team have created a culture where work/labour is collaborative, communal, and shared. We all share in the labour of passionate service to ensure that IJIDI's voice remains ever-present in library and information science (LIS) discourse. This labour crosses and intersects with many boundaries: geographically, technologically, socially, and culturally because we perform all our work virtually across multiple time zones, regions, languages, and cultures. Our common thread is that we are all librarians and information professionals possessing a joy for research and community building in the LIS field.

Shifts of Labour

The papers presented in this issue share synchronicity with the concept of the multilayered ways in which labour shifts based on intersecting contexts and information worlds (Barton & Hamilton, 1998; Feng et al., 2023; Jaeger & Burnett, 2010). This shift is salient in communities of practice: the scholars and practitioners whose papers are featured highlight shifts in community building while bringing forth new knowledge about ongoing shifts in LIS practice and community membership.

Laura Schelenz's research about the digital experiences of Afghan refugee women in Germany argues that Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) solutions for the social inclusion of Afghan refugee women must be centered on their experiences. Furthermore, digital literacy training is required to help them adapt to German communication practices. However, Schelenz also argues that ICT-based social inclusion constitutes an unjust strategy of one-sided integration and that structural change in the German migration management infrastructure is needed. **Melina Ghasseminejad, Anneke Sools, Luc Herman, and María-Ángeles Martínez** present a study of urban readers in a European context. The authors argue that previous research on readers has turned to hermeneutic shortcuts like Iser's "implied" or Fish's "informed" reader but that these shortcuts cannot be seen as studying "actual" readers. The authors propose a participant sampling strategy for empirical reader response research with Antwerp as the location for a study of urban readers in a European context. They suggest using a social milieu rather than traditional descriptive markers by recruiting from different neighbourhoods.

Yanli Li, Maha Kumaran, Allan Cho, Valentina Ly, Suzanne Fernando, and Michael David Miller share their research on experiences of racial microaggressions among visible minority librarians in Canada. The authors found that 69% of respondents experienced at least one stated racial microaggression. They also found that librarians with less than five years of work experience

encountered microaggressions less frequently than those with 11-15 years of experience. The authors argue that professional library associations and libraries can strengthen education about racial microaggressions and offer support to visible minority librarians when they are confronted with microaggressive behaviours. **Silvia Vong, Allan Cho, and Elaina Norlin's** study reports on the experiences of academic librarians who identify as racialized. The authors found that these librarians often engage in emotional, interpretive, and identity labour, as well as racialized labour and aspirational labour. They argue that these forms of labour are often oversimplified, unacknowledged, or unquantifiable. The authors conclude that it is essential to unpack the complexity of the work to demonstrate how to support better-racialized librarians who engage with this work.

Katy Miller and Kristine J. Shrauger's case study conveys the equitable, diverse, and inclusive efforts of an interactive exhibit created by librarians at the University of Central Florida, USA. The exhibit was designed to give students a platform to express themselves on topics related to inclusion and diversity. The exhibit was very popular with students and received over 3,000 individual responses. The authors argue that this exhibit can be valuable for promoting DEI on campus. **Wanda S. Thomas** reports on her experiences as a clinical librarian who served as a chief diversity officer promoting DEI in healthcare and medical education. Thomas posits that clinical librarians are uniquely positioned to promote DEI in healthcare by providing culturally responsive resources to healthcare professionals and patients. The author also discusses the benefits of appointing a clinical librarian as a chief diversity officer.

We feature three book reviews by **Kael Moffat, Lilly Ho, and Stephanie Robertson**. The reviews are three recent works in library and information science scholarship that explore the layers of diversity, equity, inclusion, and cultural humility and competency in the LIS workplace.

Conclusion

These texts comprehensively cover the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in communities where libraries serve citizens and where librarians practice. The authors present the multilayered ways labour shifts based on intersecting contexts. Our team encourages readers to benefit from these remarkable works and anticipate the next thematic issue with a forthcoming call for participation. Stay tuned as we continue to honor DEI and all its nuances and complexities within LIS. We are continuously excited about the thoughtful research and field reports that come our way to share with the LIS world.

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Vanessa Irvin (irvin22@ecu.edu) is the co-editor-in-chief of *The International Journal of Information, Diversity, & Inclusion* (IJIDI). Dr. Irvin is an associate professor in the Master of Library Science Program at East Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina, USA.

Vanessa Reyes (reyesv23@ecu.edu) is the co-editor-in-chief of *The International Journal of Information, Diversity, & Inclusion* (IJIDI). Dr. Reyes is an assistant professor in the Master of Library Science Program at East Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina, USA.

