



SRRT

Social Responsibilities
Round Table

EST. 1969

June 2023 • Issue 222

Newsletter



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE



ADVOCACY & TASK FORCES

All SRRT members are encouraged to volunteer for groups in which they have an interest. Personal members may choose to join groups or form their own for specific purposes, in line with the goals of the Social Responsibilities Round Table. These groups may be Task Forces (usually long-term) or project groups (usually of a very short duration).

If you're interested in being involved in an active task force, please feel free to contact the Task Force's chair.

Feminist Task Force (FTF)

Coordinator: Katelyn Browne

Provides feminist perspectives and initiates action on issues related to libraries, librarianship, information services, and ALA. Subscribe to the Feminist discussion list.

Hunger, Homelessness, and Poverty Task Force (HHPTF)

Coordinators: Lisa Gieskes and Julie Ann Winkelstein

Fosters greater awareness of the dimensions, causes, and ways to end hunger, homelessness, and poverty.

International Responsibilities Task Force (IRTF)

Coordinators: Al Kagan and Tom Twiss

Advocates socially responsible positions on issues of international library concern.

Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Task Force (MLKTF)

Chair: LaJuan Pringle

Supports and advances the observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday as an American celebration.

New! Diversity in Organizations Task Force

Chair: Mark Winston

Supports and advocates for diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) efforts in libraries and other organizations.

Connect with SRRT

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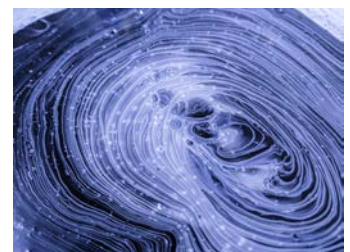
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SRRT Action Council Coordinator

April Sheppard

I'm happy to introduce SRRT's newly elected Action Council Members-At-Large! Their terms will begin July 1, 2023 and run through June 30, 2026 and I look forward to working with them all:

- Ian Bogus
- Al Kagan
- Charles E. Kratz, Jr.
- Olivia Scully

Virtual Access to Meetings

I also want to give credit and kudos to everyone who worked on and supported last year's Resolution on [Continuing Virtual Access to ALA Membership Meetings](#). The resolution passed the Membership Meeting at Annual in 2022 and then was referred to the Budget Analysis and Review Committee (BARC) for review. BARC met in December 2022 and determined that there were modest fiscal implications in providing virtual Membership Meetings and that those could be absorbed by ALA. The resolution was returned to Council and passed at LibLearnX. Thank you, again, for everyone who helped make this happen. It's very rewarding to see the hybrid Membership and Council Meetings at Annual and feel that we helped make that happen.

SRRT Membership Numbers

In the last year, SRRT has lost some members, but remains the largest round table:

<u>Largest ALA Round Tables</u>	<u>Membership Numbers</u>
Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT)	1,743
Library Instruction Round Table (LIRT)	1,620
Intellectual Freedom Round Table (IFRT)	1,553
Rainbow Roundtable (RRT)	1,476
Sustainability Round Table (SustainRT)	1,390

SRRT has a large number of student members. We hope that these students will be future regular SRRT members. To help us understand more about LIS students and ALA engagement, the SRRT Membership Committee has developed a survey that has been deployed to LIS students. So far, 138 students have taken the survey. Action Council is also working with the ALA Membership Office to create coupon codes for free student membership once the new ALA bylaws go into effect on September 1st.



Letter to the Editors

The Problem With "We Are All Immigrants"

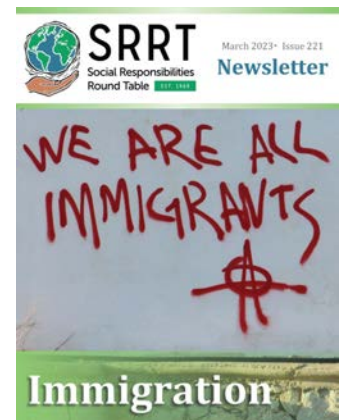
Violet Fox, Cataloging & Metadata Librarian
Northwest University

Thank you for the work you put into the SRRT Newsletter, it's a valuable resource for keeping up with current trends and for preserving our work into the future. I was dismayed by the cover image of issue 221 (March 2023), which featured a photograph of graffiti reading "We are all immigrants." I understand the good intentions in supporting current-day immigrants who are frequently criminalized and othered, but that slogan leaves many people out. African Americans are descendants of people who did not immigrate, but were bought, sold, and transported as slave labor. Indigenous peoples arrived in the Americas at least 15,000 years ago, and have a significantly different relationship with the land than the descendants of white settlers who arrived here 500 years ago. Saying "we're all immigrants" glosses over the brutal consequences of colonization and enslavement and provides a tidy narrative that allows white people to elide our history in order to continue upholding white supremacy and colonial oppression.

For a more thoughtful discussion of this topic, check out the 2006 CounterPunch post by Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, "Stop Saying This is a Nation of Immigrants!" <https://www.counterpunch.org/2006/05/31/stop-saying-this-is-a-nation-of-immigrants/>.

Thanks for your consideration,

Violet Fox
Cataloging & Metadata Librarian
Galter Health Sciences Library
Northwestern University



Cover of March 2023
SRRT Newsletter



Letter to the Editors

San Francisco Public Library Branch Discourages People Experiencing Homelessness

Sara Miles

It's not just red states and conservative cities that are threatening to limit access to libraries. In San Francisco, staff at the Eureka Valley/Harvey Milk Memorial branch library have been told to shut off the free Wi-Fi at night—in order to keep people experiencing homelessness from using it.

For years, San Francisco librarians have worked hard to ensure equitable access for all library users. Round-the-clock free SFPL internet access is particularly important for people experiencing homelessness, poor people without computers or connectivity, students and low-income workers without enough bandwidth at home, and all who depend on using libraries for online job searches, applications for benefits, communication with health care providers, and connecting with their families.

Growing discontent from neighbors upset by people experiencing homelessness on the streets, though, has led to political pressure on libraries to discourage their patrons experiencing homelessness. In 2017, according to [Mission Local](#), the Harvey Milk branch was asked by the district's then-supervisor to limit its internet availability, in order to deter unhoused encampments and reduce crime. The SFPL's Research Strategy and Analytics team responded by making a study of Harvey Milk and other branches that found "the connection between Wi-Fi access and criminal activity is not readily apparent," and decided to keep nighttime Wi-Fi turned on. In 2021, SFPL's then-Chief of Branches cited the study to push back on cutting internet access when a neighbor again conflated people experiencing homelessness's use of the library with crime.

But the library changed its position last August, after local supervisor Rafael Mandelman met with City Librarian Michael Lambert to discuss turning off the Wi-Fi. The day after that meeting, Harvey Milk's Wi-Fi was shut off at night. It remains the only branch in the city that does so.

According to a story by local public radio station [KQED](#), Lambert emailed library staff to address their concerns about limiting Wi-Fi hours at Harvey Milk. He cited "individuals camping on the roof of the Branch, hacking into the Branch's electrical power, and breaking into a small closet on the exterior perimeter of the building," to justify the change. In fact, the incidents of vandalism Lambert mentioned took place in 2015, years before requests to limit the library's Wi-Fi.

Lambert responded to an email about the issue by saying that the SFPL "is committed to providing robust access to connectivity for our patrons."

News stories:

<https://www.kqed.org/news/11951980/what-happens-when-libraries-stop-sharing-wi-fi>

<https://missionlocal.org/2023/05/eureka-valley-library-wi-fi-after-hours-encampment-homeless/>

Sara Miles is a writer living in San Francisco.



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Ethical, Social Responsibilities, and Privacy Concerns

What We Talk About When We Talk About Artificial Intelligence: Reflections on the Social Influence of Our Dialogue

**Suzanne Maguire, Research & Instruction Librarian
San Diego State University**

I've been thinking a lot lately about the dialogue around chatbots and other new and trending AI technologies. Like many topics these days, the conversations can be contentious. We've all seen the headlines, the quick takes. AI is an enemy or a savior. It will render all of our jobs obsolete. Machines will replace humans! The dialogue is full of dire warnings.

Research is an inherently social activity. When I'm talking to students about developing a research question from a topic, I often start with the prompts "what are people saying about it?" "What sparked your interest in this topic?" I don't start with "please identify 3 scholarly sources on this topic." That may or may not come later. First, I want to start with their gut reaction, the overall impression that has come through what they've heard and read, both inside and outside of the classroom. These impressions will influence these students just as much, if not more, than the academic scholarship they will read on the topic. It will impact their enthusiasm for the topic. I encourage students to think critically about what they already think they know about a topic, and how their own biases affect their research, as well as the research and scholarship of others – but it is unavoidable to approach most topics without some type of implicit or explicit bias. How we talk about a topic shows how we internalize social norms, and it demonstrates to others what our values are. How we talk about AI matters. So, what's my overall impression from reading the headlines, scanning social media, reading the think pieces, and participating in and overhearing conversations?

All AI is Good/All AI is Bad

There is a lack of nuance and a whole lotta hyperbole in most headlines and articles. Some of this is to be expected. Sensational headlines are clickbait, appealing to our emotions and curiosity. But

even without "taking the bait" we are influenced by the headlines. AI is used for the citation generators on library websites and databases. It is used by companies that sell products to grocery stores. Health officials use it to forecast flu seasons. We should avoid conflating all uses of AI, as well as avoid conflating all uses of specific AI technologies.

Technology is Evil/Technology is Good/Technology is Neutral

This is closely related to the previous impression. This type of talk distorts and simplifies the argument into a false binary. Those who support any or all uses of AI believe that technology is good. Those who question any or all uses of AI believe that technology is evil. Those that "know better" believe technology is neutral. I disagree with discussions on emerging technologies that attempt to divorce the motivations and ethics of those who operate the tools, from the tools themselves. People are involved in all aspects of the creation, maintenance, and use of these technologies. Technology is not neutral.

How we talk about a topic shows how we internalize social norms, and it demonstrates to others what our values are. How we talk about AI matters.

Considering the Human Impact of New Technologies is Naïve and Beside the Point

There are many documented problems with the data being used by AI chatbots. In "Inside the Secret List of Websites that Make AI Like ChatGPT Sound Smart," the authors detail the data sets used by several large language models.¹ There are major issues of racism, sexism, plagiarism, and privacy concerns. Websites used by these models include many that are expected, such as

Wikipedia, but also websites known for Russian propaganda, white supremacy, anti-Muslim bias, anti-immigration, and other misinformation. People are also worried about their jobs. Those that believe their jobs are not under threat sometimes portray anyone that is afraid, leery – or merely cautious – as technophobic Luddites. But new technologies have replaced jobs. They've also created new jobs. Advances in technology have reshaped industries and have real implications for workers in countless ways far beyond hiring and firing.

The Most Important Work We Do in Education Can be Measured By the Products We Produce

AI can write a paper; therefore, students no longer need to write papers. The end product is valued above the process of learning to read texts closely, think through ideas critically, and synthesize and express those ideas in your own voice. This demonstrates a clear misunderstanding of the purpose of education. Or, maybe it demonstrates one belief about education. Either way it is not one that I subscribe to.

The Imagined or Predicted Zenith of Any Given Technology is Inevitable

Futurists are not terribly good at predicting the future. There are plenty of pop-culture and academic examples of unfulfilled predictions. In an interview with the *Washington Post*, technology

writer Edward Tenner describes three problems with making predictions about technology and the future: reverse salient or systemic bottlenecks, the unpredictable success of rival technologies, and most significantly what he describes as “social, cultural, and psychological factors”- or, more simply stated, people.²

If we want to be able to discuss the wide variety of uses and applications of AI technologies, we need to eschew hyperbolic and polarized thinking, and embrace complexity and deep reflection. In library instruction sessions, I bring up small instances of AI that we already use in our everyday lives. On one hand I'm trying to demystify AI for those who won't continue on to careers or fields of study in which they are directly involved in its development. On the other hand, I want them to understand the basic functions so that they can think critically about where the data comes from and how it is used. I want to help students to develop a more nuanced perspective.

1. Schaul, K., Chen, S. Y., & Tiku, N. (2023, April 19). Inside the secret list of websites that make AI like ChatGPT sound smart. *The Washington Post*. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/interactive/2023/ai-chatbot-learning/>
2. Flam, F. (2022, December 28). Why the future of technology is so hard to predict. *The Washington Post*.

UPDATES

What's happening at SRRT and around ALA



Feminist Task Force (FTF)

Submitted by Katelyn Brown, Coordinator

The Feminist Task Force met via Zoom on April 28th at 1:00 PM Central. Eight people attended, which I consider a success for a type of meeting we have not held recently! We received an update from the Rise: A Feminist Book list committee, then discussed past and possible future projects for the task force. Some attendees were able to provide information about FTF's efforts in decades past to support childcare offerings at ALA conferences and to offer insight as to why this work may have been laid down. We also discussed past work to require salary ranges for job postings on ALA's platforms and the continued importance of this information. All interested attendees were encouraged, and all interested persons reading this update are similarly encouraged, to attend the monthly meetings of SRRT Action Council for information about SRRT's projects as well as updates from ALA Council and other bodies. Finally, we congratulated past FTF coordinator (and past SRRT Action Council coordinator) Sherre Harrington on her upcoming retirement from her work at Berry College. FTF met during the All Task Force meeting at ALA Annual, though I did not attend in person. Anyone who is interested in getting involved with FTF, but who was not able to attend the All Task Force meeting, is welcome to e-mail me: [krebrowne@upei.ca](mailto:krbrowne@upei.ca).

The Rise: A Feminist Book List committee is hard at work considering books published between July 1, 2021, and December 31, 2022, for their annual list of recommended feminist books for young readers (birth to 18). If you have read something you think they should know about, you can submit a field recommendation. The form is available at <https://risefeministbooks.wordpress.com/about/field-recommendations/>.



International Responsibilities Task Force (IRTF)

Submitted by Al Kagan, Co-coordinator

The [International Responsibilities Task Force](#) sponsored a speaker and a film at the Chicago ALA Conference. Our speaker was be Trita Parsi, co-founder and executive vice president of the [Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft](#), as well as the co-founder and former president of the [National Iranian American Council](#). The Council is "dedicated to strengthening the voice of Iranian-Americans and promoting greater understanding between the American and Iranian people. Trita Parsi is an award-winning author and the 2010 recipient of the Grawemeyer Award for Ideas Improving World Order. He is an expert on US-Iranian relations, Iranian foreign policy, and the geopolitics of the Middle East. He has authored three books on US foreign policy in the Middle East, with a particular focus on Iran and Israel. His articles have appeared in many major newspapers and he is a frequent guest on major news networks and Democracy Now! In 2021, he was named by the Washingtonian Magazine as one of the 50 most influential voices on foreign policy in Washington DC, and preeminent public intellectual Noam Chomsky calls Parsi "one of the most distinguished scholars on Iran." He has served as an adjunct professor of International Relations at Johns Hopkins University, New York University, and George Washington University, as well as an adjunct scholar at the Middle East Institute and as a Policy Fellow at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in Washington DC. He currently teaches at Georgetown University in Washington DC. For more background information on the history and politics of Iran and US-Iran relations, please see the [reading list](#) provided by our speaker on the website of the SRRT International Responsibilities Task Force.



Trita Parsi. Creative Commons License courtesy of James Duncan Davidson



The film was *Boycott*, produced by Just Vision. *Boycott* follows the stories of a news publisher in Arkansas, an attorney in Arizona, and a speech therapist in Texas, who, when forced to choose between their jobs and their political beliefs, launch legal battles that expose an attack on freedom of speech across the US. The film traces the impact of state legislation passed in 35 states designed to penalize individuals and companies that choose to boycott Israel due to its human rights record. Several of these state laws have been declared unconstitutional, but the Arkansas law has been upheld in court. (For over 200 examples of how this legislation has impacted libraries, see SRRT's webpage [Anti-BDS Legislation: The Library Connection](#).) The state anti-boycott laws discussed in the film were drafted by the rightwing organization ALEC (the American Legislative Exchange Council). Since 2021 ALEC has also utilized this legislation as a template for bills banning state contracts with companies that engage in boycotts of fossil fuels and the firearms industry and bills banning state investment in companies that practice responsible environmental, social, and corporate governance (ESG). All this legislation is part of a general assault on free speech and on movements for a healthy environment, gun safety, social justice, and progressive social change. The film showing was followed by a Q&A with Just Vision's Public Engagement Manager, Kate Schwartz.

I AM LIBRARY: AI, Literacies, & Academia

Danielle Hassan, Assistant Professor, Systems Librarian and
Brooke Becker, Associate Professor, Liaison to Social Sciences and
Communication Studies, The University of Alabama at Birmingham



As we navigate the ever-evolving digital landscape, the influence of artificial intelligence (AI) continues to shape the academic realm in profound ways. From research tools to intelligent tutoring systems, AI has become an integral part of the academic experience.

The need for AI literacy in academic libraries arises from the rapid integration of AI technologies into scholarly research, teaching, and learning practices. As custodians of knowledge and information, academic libraries have a vital role in fostering AI literacy among their patrons. By providing resources, services, and expertise, libraries can help bridge the gap between AI technology and academic practice, ensuring learners can embrace and engage with AI-driven tools and methodologies.

One essential aspect of AI literacy in academic libraries is promoting an understanding of the fundamental concepts of AI within specific disciplines. Libraries can curate subject-specific resources, offer workshops, and collaborate with faculty to integrate AI concepts into the curriculum. By providing access to relevant books, journals, and databases on AI and its applications in various academic fields, libraries can facilitate a deeper understanding of how AI is transforming research and scholarship.

Furthermore, academic libraries can be at the forefront of addressing the digital divide in AI literacy. By ensuring equitable access to AI tools, technologies, and training for all students and researchers, libraries can help bridge the gap and ensure that AI literacy is not limited to a privileged few. Collaboration with academic departments, campus technology centers, and student support services can help promote inclusivity and provide the necessary support for learners from diverse backgrounds to develop AI literacy skills.

Looking ahead, AI literacy in academic libraries will continue to evolve alongside advancements in AI technologies. It is imperative for academic librarians to stay informed and adapt their services and resources to support the changing needs of their patrons. This may involve establishing partnerships with AI researchers and experts, participating in professional development opportunities, and continuously updating AI-focused resources.

If what you just read felt a bit...unoriginal and a tad redundant, you are right. We freely admit that it is, as the text is a compilation of words, phrases, descriptions taken from a vast array of material scraped from the internet and reinterpreted through artificial intelligence. With only a bare bones description, ChatGPT wrote the first section of the article. Is the information correct? Yes, but the technology used in this manner raises as many questions as it helps answer. ChatGPT and many other AI tools are now being used to change the face of productivity and how content is created. What does this mean for libraries?

Is AI generated text the end of the world? Technological changes often bring out naysayers. After Wikipedia was introduced, the academic world ran rampant with headlines like “Surviving Wikipedia,” “Wikis Ready or Not,” and “Something wiki this way comes” addressing fears about the new tools. Similar headlines dot the academic and public landscape now as artificial intelligence takes center stage. I think we can safely say the world has not yet fallen under the pressures of such dire warnings and is unlikely to do so now, but the changes do require attention and, perhaps, a measure of oversight.

Let’s start with the obvious. Evolving technologies require new, or, at the very least, modified, literacies. What was once simply known as “information literacy” must now incorporate data, digital, visual, and media literacies. All bring with them modes of analysis and elements that may go unnoticed without evaluation for researchers and laypersons alike. As in the first part of this article, ChatGPT and its ilk give us a wealth of information, but what questions should we be asking? Who created the original intellectual property? Where did it originate, and for what reasons was it created? Given that the data sets are currently drawn mostly from openly accessible, electronic data, what knowledge is lost from those works hidden behind a paywall or not available digitally? How do students and researchers handle citations involving artificial intelligence given that they cannot cite “original resources,” or is the AI itself now known as the original creator? Finally, how do we combat bias in the data delivered through these systems without being able to trace the information back to the original author/s?

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Current and Ongoing US Government Regulation of Artificial Intelligence Ethics, Privacy, and Transparency: How to Participate

Wilhelmina Randtke, Head of Libraries Systems and Technologies, Georgia Southern University

The United States federal government is currently in the process of regulating artificial intelligence (AI). The federal rulemaking (i.e., regulation) process involves a notice and comment period in which federal agencies request feedback or input from the public and must review and consider any comments received. Right now, the US government is formulating an approach to AI policy, and ongoing participation is possible by regular citizens responding to notices for comment.

Why should librarians participate?

Librarians are uniquely positioned to understand and clarify issues related to data quality and how it affects a larger system. Current AI is based on machine learning, or looking at large amounts of data in a training process, recognizing patterns in that data, and inferring new information based on past patterns in the data used to train the AI. Librarianship overlaps with this field in terms of assessing information, for example with standards like the [Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education](#), and with background in metadata and search. Librarianship is a strong framework to quickly understand ethical issues in AI, such as biased data leading to biased systems.

Often, the ethical issues with machine learning are as simple and easy to grasp as Amazon implementing an AI for a resume screening tool to identify promising job

applicants, training it on past hires who were overwhelmingly men, and the resume screening AI picking up on cues to exclude resumes from women. (See Dastin, J. (2018, Oct. 10). "Amazon scraps secret AI recruiting tool that showed bias against women." Reuters. <https://www.reuters.com/article>

For anyone following AI ethics, there is a current opportunity to give feedback that must be considered and that may shape the future of AI ethics.

[/us-amazon-com-jobs-automation-insight-idUSKCN1MK08G](#).) The data going in represented men as more successful than women, and the AI learned from that data to prefer men.

Libraries are also grounded in privacy as a value, and current machine learning based on processing large amounts of data collected from the real world normalizes data collection and privatization by large corporations.

Core ethical issues of machine learning overlap with long standing concerns in the library field.

What is going on right now related to regulating AI?

In January 2021, the US passed the National Artificial Intelligence Initiative Act of 2020. (The National Artificial Intelligence Initiative Act of 2020, Pub. L. 116–283, 134 Stat. 3388 (Jan. 1, 2021). Available at [\[.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/National-Artificial-Intelligence-Initiative-Act-of-2020.pdf\]\(#\).\) This goal is to have a cohesive federal AI initiative, and part of that is safety, ethics, and transparency. The act includes funding appropriations for 2021-2025, and roll out might take place in that timeframe.](https://www.ai</p></div><div data-bbox=)

In light of this and in implementing this law, there is recent and ongoing activity to regulate AI in the US.

When Congress makes a law, that's effective without public participation. The public participates at election time, and that's it. Laws take a long time to pass or alter and tend not to have a high level of detail. Instead, details are delegated to federal agencies by giving authority to regulate and broad instructions on the scope of regulation. Because agency employees are not elected, public participation is a part of the process of making regulations. Where we are at right now in the US is that AI regulations are being considered, and each of those involves an opportunity to participate through a notice and comment process.

Recent requests for comment about AI ethics include:

- [Request for Information; National Priorities for Artificial Intelligence, 88 FR 34,194](#) (May 26, 2023). (Comments close July 7, 2023.)
- [Request for Information to the Update of the National Artificial Intelligence](#)

Research and Development Strategic Plan, 87 FR 5,876 (March 4, 2022). (Comments closed.)

- Request for Comment on AI Accountability Policy, 88 FR 22,433 (April 13, 2023). (Comments close June 12, 2023.)
- Request for Information; Automated Worker Surveillance and Management, 88 FR 27,932 (May 3, 2023). (Comments close June 15, 2023.)
- Notice of Request for Information (RFI) on Public and Private Sector Uses of Biometric Technologies, 86 FR 56,300 (October 8, 2021). (Comments closed.)

More are being posted as agencies collect information, determine a big picture strategy, and eventually finalize regulations. Because things are in the early stages now, requests for comments, like the ones above, include requests for big picture feedback rather than overly technical feedback.

How to participate?

Because federal agency employees aren't elected, the public must be given a chance to participate in the rulemaking process (a

formal name for passing regulations). There are two calls for written participation: the request for information, and the request for comment. As it so happens, both are labeled as "Notice" in the online Federal Register, which is where federal agencies communicate about changes to regulation. Generally, either a request for information or a request for comment will give a deadline of anywhere from a 30-day minimum which is hard and fast to up to 3 months (the maximum time is the agency's choice).

A good way to find new requests as they come out is to go to [federalregister.gov](https://www.federalregister.gov), search for "artificial intelligence", use the facets on the left hand side to facet to "Notice", then use the buttons at the top of the search results to sort by "Newest". This link should bring up a list of recent and open activity related to AI: <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/search?conditions%5Bterm%5D=%22artificial+intelligence%22&conditions%5Btype%5D%5B%5D=NOTICE&order=newest>.

Then look through the search results and read the names of recent requests for

information/comment, and see whether any fit your background and concerns.

Once you have clicked into a request for information/comment, you can look in the right column on a page to see an entry for "Comments Close." If that date is in the past, the comment is closed, but there likely will be follow up action by the same agency. If the "comments close" date is in the future, then the top right hand of the request for information/comment will have a big green button labeled "SUBMIT A FORMAL COMMENT". Comments tend to be made public either immediately when submitted or after the comment period closes. For each submitted comment, an agency employee has to read the comment, and comments are typically summarized and described in follow up activity, such as when a finalized strategy or regulation is published.

Right now, the US is in early stages of determining big picture issues. For anyone following AI ethics, there is a current opportunity to give feedback that must be considered and that may shape the future of AI ethics.

Continued from page 10

For academics, it's time now, perhaps more than ever, to be wary and make sure students are knowledgeable about valid criticisms surrounding AI. Chief among them is the spread of misinformation, and it's a great example of why literacy skills are crucial to the wider adoption of these technologies. And while techniques (like grounding, the process of tying AI models to factual data) are being used to combat misinformation, there's still a long way to go.

Techniques, such as reinforcement learning, are only as good as the human filter carrying them out; which means inherent bias is still very much a risk. Additionally, guardrails instituted by the various AI companies regarding content filters have an affinity for censorship and bias, which brings the larger question of regulation and how AI should be handled.

That's not to say that all these criticisms make it an ineffective tool; we simply need to be aware and keep apprised of these changes in a way that is as ethical and equitable as possible. In order to bridge the digital divide regarding AI literacy, we'll need to present both sides of an argument just as we instruct students to do in their introductory composition classes.

As librarians, specifically in academia, we'll need to employ new strategies applied to foundational concepts. Students will use these tools, whether it be for simple idea formation or for the actual writing/creation process. By harnessing AI literacies, we can empower our students with the critical thinking skills necessary to navigate the ever-changing landscape of this and future new technologies.

Libraries and Artificial Intelligence: Addressing Equity and Social Responsibility Concerns

April Sheppard, Assistant Library Director, Arkansas State University

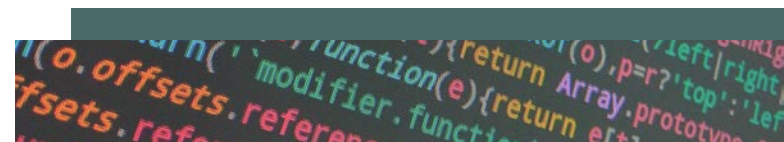
Many of us are familiar with the term “digital divide,” or the unequal access to technology and the internet due to socio-economic factors such as race, gender, age, ability, income, and education levels. Students and adults with limited access to technology are less prepared to live, work, and compete in the 21st century. Historically, one tool in addressing the digital divide has been libraries. ALA has stated that libraries “play a key role in providing equitable access to technology for all.”¹ But what do libraries do when OUR access to technology stops being equal? And how do we balance the need to help our patrons remain competitive in a quickly changing technology landscape while also helping to protect privacy and fight misinformation?

AI Divide

With the rise of artificial intelligence (AI), we are already seeing the beginnings of an “AI divide.” AI applications will “permeate global, organizational, and individual interactions” and its benefits will be experienced in an impartial manner due to the same socio-economic factors that impact the digital divide. It is estimated that the demand for low-level digital skills could fall by as much as 10% in the next 10 years with the demand for high-level skills to grow even greater, leading to increased wealth inequality. Companies that adopt AI are likely to outperform their competitors while countries that adopt AI are expected to see economic and social welfare benefits.²

AI is also likely to exacerbate inequalities in high speed internet access essential for the rapid transfer of data required by AI programs. Access is difficult in rural areas and tribal lands where up to 50% of people do not have access to any broadband internet and up to 67.1% do not have access to speeds of 25 Mbps or

AI applications will “permeate global, organizational, and individual interactions” and its benefits will be experienced in an impartial manner due to the same socio-economic factors that impact the digital divide.



greater.³ In low income countries, average internet speeds can be as low as 1 Mbps. Libraries in these areas will likely struggle to make use of AI applications and their patrons will “not be able to make the most from models such as ChatGPT due to the unavailability of high-speed internet.”⁴

Ethical Concerns of Artificial Intelligence

Much has already been written regarding artificial intelligence and concerns of bias, misinformation, privacy, and copyright. Chatbots, such as ChatGPT, are populated with words scraped from the internet through books, articles, reviews, and websites. Professor Uri Gal states that, “If you’ve ever written a blog post or product review, or commented on an article online, there’s a good chance this information was consumed by ChatGPT.”⁵ This leads to several problems. First, none of us agreed to have our text or art scraped by AI nor were any of the companies, authors, and artists scraped compensated. Second, there is no way for someone to remove their work from an AI database nor are there any privacy protections while using the programs.

Third, because these programs rely on unreviewed human-generated language, human biases are often reflected in the outputs. In an extensive review of ChatGPT, Partha Pratim Ray identified 24 different biases, including gender, racial, cultural, language, and ideological bias.⁶ Adoption of AI without addressing these biases could worsen existing biases and increase discrimination, including within “invisible” AI applications such as automated job application screenings.

In addition to perpetuating biases, artificial intelligence can spread misinformation. Famously, ChatGPT will create citations for materials that do not exist. Worse yet, these fake citations are already being indexed in bibliographic resources.⁷ Equally troubling is that AI chatbots cannot distinguish between legitimate information and “fake news” and may be susceptible to leaning towards misinformation based on patterns of user behavior. ⁶ Thus the more misinformation a chatbot consumes, the more likely it is to generate it.

Addressing Equity and Social Responsibility

Librarians face a tough balancing act in regards to artificial intelligence. One cannot deny its potential benefits, but there are issues that need to be addressed before we can advocate that our patrons embrace it.

AI “godfather,” Yoshua Bengio advocates for governmental regulation and audit of AI companies to ensure that no “bad actors” make use of it. He further suggests that those who work with artificial intelligence be required to receive ethical training.⁹ I would also recommend bias training for data labelers and copywriters working on the backend of AI programs as well as the hiring of diverse workers.

Companies themselves can help make access more equitable by offering free or low-cost access to low-income countries.⁴ Another solution could be for companies to “pre-train” AI models that could then be reused or customized by users, eliminating the high-level skills needed to create AI from scratch.⁹ Companies also need to develop ways for copyrighted and private information to be removed from their platforms.

Librarians can help by fact-checking and adding citations to knowledge bases such as Wikipedia.⁷ And since many AI programs are self-learning, we can also help train the AI programs through our own interactions and feedback. Finally, we need to work with our patrons to help them develop the skills needed to identify and fight misinformation while library leadership need to make the case to their administrators and boards for the needed funding and staffing to fight AI-generated misinformation.

1. Rosa, K. (2017). The state of America’s Libraries 2017: A report from the American Library Association. *American Libraries*, 1-27.

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Graphic: GDI.



A Resolution Honoring the Life of Daniel Ellsberg

Whereas, Daniel Ellsberg, the untiring peace activist and courageous advocate of free speech and government transparency, died at his home on June 16, 2023;

Whereas, in 1971 Daniel Ellsberg performed a vital service for his country and the world by leaking to major newspapers, at enormous personal risk, the top-secret Pentagon Papers that documented decades of lies employed by U.S. government officials to support their brutal war against Vietnam; and

Whereas, the resulting public uproar intensified and widened the anti-war movement which, along with the fierce resistance of the Vietnamese people, ultimately compelled the U.S. to withdraw from Vietnam; and

Whereas, in subsequent years Daniel Ellsberg continued to be a leading voice for peace, most notably in his opposition to what he described as the "criminal, terrorist, murderous, and unacceptably reckless" U.S. war against Nicaragua,[1] the "clearcut aggression" of the U.S. against Iraq,[2] and the "unjustified homicide" of the U.S. war against Afghanistan,[3] and in his urgent warnings about the "Doomsday Machine" of the world's nuclear arsenals; [4] and

Whereas, Daniel Ellsberg's heroic disclosure of the Pentagon Papers inspired numerous whistleblowers of U.S. government wrongdoing, including Thomas Drake, Chelsea Manning, Jeffrey Sterling, John Kiriakou, Edward Snowden, and Daniel Hale, thereby promoting urgent reforms and government transparency; and

Whereas, Daniel Ellsberg was an outspoken defender of the actions of those whistleblowers; and [5] Whereas, since 1971 Daniel Ellsberg was a tireless advocate for a free press, most notably in his support for the publication of leaked government documents by WikiLeaks, and in his founding of the Freedom of the Press Foundation in 2012; and

Whereas, Daniel Ellsberg graciously and generously shared his insights with members of the American Library Association in two programs and smaller discussions at the ALA annual conference in 2011; now therefore be it

Resolved, that, recognizing the enormous contributions of Daniel Ellsberg to the causes of peace, freedom of the press, government transparency, and democracy, the American Library Association mourns his death; and

Resolved, that ALA offers its deepest condolences to Daniel Ellsberg's family, friends, and all those who have been inspired by his life's work; and

Resolved, that ALA pledges to honor Daniel Ellsberg's memory by recommitting itself to work uncompromisingly on behalf of peace, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and government transparency.

1. <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/14672715.1989.10404458>

2. https://www.iraqtribunal.org/daniel_ellsberg

3. <https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2011/07/26/daniel-ellsberg/>

4. <https://www.amazon.com/Doomsday-Machine-Confessions-Nuclear-Planner/dp/1608196704>

5. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2023/apr/19/jack-teixeira-pentagon-leaks-leakers-ellsberg-snowden-assange;>
[https://theanalysis.news/drone-whistleblower-hale-is-a-hero-ellsberg-and-chomsky.](https://theanalysis.news/drone-whistleblower-hale-is-a-hero-ellsberg-and-chomsky)

Passed at ALA Annual 2023



An ALA Memorial Resolution Honoring Susan Hinojosa

Whereas the American Library Association (ALA) and REFORMA lost a valued colleague on June 21, 2023, with the death of Susana Hinojosa;

Whereas Hinojosa was a reference librarian and worked with government documents over her long career; Hinojosa was hired in 1971 in UC Berkeley's Moffitt Undergraduate Library and Reference Department and Government Documents and retired in 2009 after 38 years;

Whereas Hinojosa received her undergraduate degree in Spanish from UC Santa Barbara; Hinojosa received her Master of Library Science from UC Berkeley while working there as an assistant in the general reference service;

Whereas Hinojosa served as 2001-2002 President of REFORMA: The National Association to Promote Library & Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish Speaking; Hinojosa was a mentor, and role model for many in the field; Hinojosa was a supporter of the union; Hinojosa promoted mentorship and advocacy work; Hinojosa received the Arnulfo D. Trejo Librarian of the Year Award from REFORMA in 2010;

Whereas Hinojosa was actively involved in the American Library Association; Hinojosa served in the Intellectual Freedom Committee and the Racial and Ethnic Diversity Committee in the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Division of ALA; Hinojosa was a member of National Association for Chicana and Chicano Studies, the California Library Association (CLA) and served in CLA's Minority Concerns Committee; Hinojosa was a lecturer for many years at UC Berkeley's School of Library and Information Science, where she inspired generations of librarians in her multicultural studies and outreach librarianship classes;

Whereas Hinojosa was recognized by the 150 Years of Women at Berkeley project; Hinojosa was dedicated to her work and dedicated her career to equity, mentorship, and teaching; Hinojosa was supportive of unions focused on library worker rights and equity in libraries; she was a kind mentor, colleague, and friend to many; now therefore be it

Resolved, that the American Library Association (ALA) and REFORMA on behalf of its members:

1. recognizes the significant contributions and accomplishments of Susana Hinojosa over the course of her career and mourns her death; and
2. extends its sincerest condolences to her friends and family.

Mover: Raymond Pun, ALA Councilor at Large

Seconder: Adriana Blancarte-Hayward, ALA Councilor at Large

Passed at ALA Annual 2023

VOICES FROM THE PAST

In every issue, we offer excerpts from past newsletters. This month, we offer two excerpts. The first excerpt is from the March 1998 newsletter, issue 127. Taken from Ken Thompson's article on Internet filters, we felt the following words were relevant to both AI concerns and current anti-library legislation and movements.

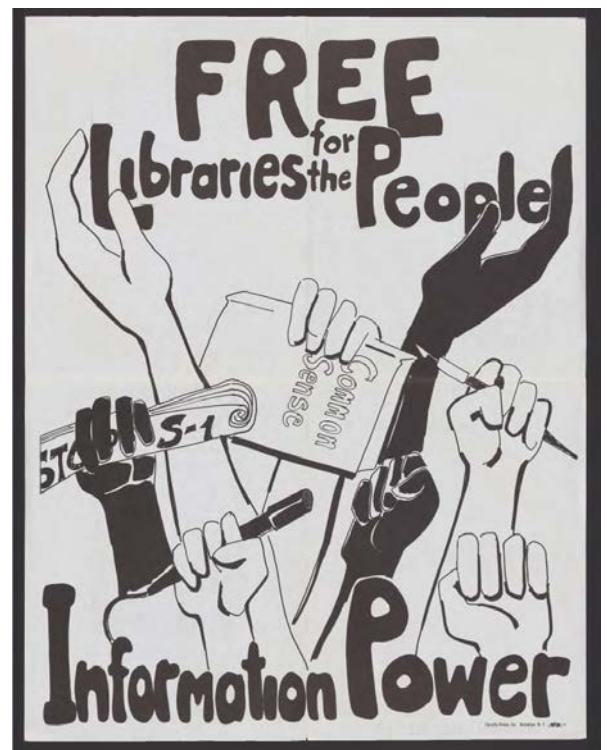
The second excerpt, is a graphic from the July 1976 newsletter, issue 40.



When in Doubt...

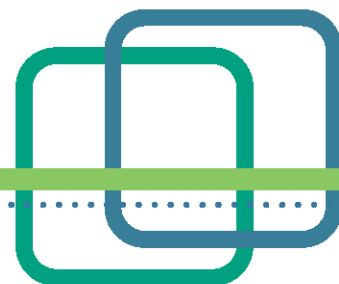
Filter! Filter! Filter!

"The targets of filters are those concerns close to SRRT generally, especially gay/lesbian/bi and feminist issues. More generally, filters eliminate from discussion anything that society might feel even slightly squeamish about...For those of us invested in protecting the voices of those outside of the mainstream, this is an important fight. Contrary to popular belief, the US was not founded on majority rule, but rather on the opposite: the protection of minorities from the unfair oppression of the majority. The right to have yourself heard in public spaces (which surely an internet terminal in a public library qualifies as) is a fundamental right, one which no private corporation should have the final word on."



The second excerpt, is a graphic from the July 1976 newsletter, issue 40.

Call for Submissions



The SRRT Newsletter is always looking for good articles, essays, and letters to the editor. The next submission deadline is **September 30, 2023**. Our theme will be labor and unions.

The SRRT Newsletter invites submissions from library and information workers, students, educators, and all others who recognize the critical importance of libraries in addressing community and social issues. Submissions should be 500 to 1,000 words and should include the article title, author's name and title, and school or place of work (optional). Graphics are encouraged. If using images that are already on the Internet, the URL of the image and a caption or description may be added to the text of the submission.

Please submit your articles via our online form: <https://forms.gle/28sJ5nc5igev63ZP7>

Please send any questions and graphics to the SRRT Newsletter Co-Editors April Sheppard and Mark Winston at srrt.newsletter.content@gmail.com, indicating "SRRT Newsletter" within the subject line of your email. A confirmation of receipt will be sent in a timely manner.



Submit an article!

Submissions to SRRT Newsletter Reviews

Submissions for book or media reviews should be sent to Laura Koltutsky, SRRT Newsletter Reviews Editor, at laurakoltutsky@gmail.com, indicating "Reviews" in the subject line of your email.

Submissions should be sent electronically in MS-Word format or a Word compatible format. Reviewers should keep their reviews to 300-500 words; any length much shorter or longer should be discussed with the reviews editor prior to submission. Reviewers should avoid conflicts of interest. Full disclosure should be made to the reviews editor when appropriate.

Submissions to SRRT Newsletter Letters to the Editors

The Newsletter invites readers to submit letters to the editors relating to social responsibilities and libraries. The letters should be respectful and thoughtful, either respond to specific content in the newsletter or include suggestions for topics of interest to SRRT members to be addressed in future issues. We will only publish letters of more than 200 words in exceptional circumstances.

Letters may be edited for length, grammar, and accuracy. You will be notified if your letter will be published.

Submit your letters to Laura Koltutsky at laurakoltutsky@gmail.com. Please indicate "SRRT Newsletter Letter to Editors" in the subject line of your email. You may submit your letter as an attachment in one of these formats: .doc, docx; or in the body of your email message.

Letters must include your full name, address, a telephone number and email address if you have one. This is for us only -- we don't share this information.

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The editors reserve the right to edit submitted material as necessary or as whimsy strikes.