

Yelana Sims and Nina Lorenz

Additional authors: Nina Cartier, Melissa Phruksachart, Tony Tran, Aju Basil James, Crystal Camargo, Nathan Rossi, Terri Ginsberg, Michael M. Reinhard, Cynthia Baron, TreaAndrea M. Russworm, and Samantha N. Sheppard

Looking Back, Thinking Forward: A Digital Humanities Assessment of Equity, Diversity, and Representation in Twenty Years of Publishing in *Cinema Journal* and *JCMS*

ABSTRACT

This article shares the result of a digital humanities analysis of the *Journal of Cinema and Media Studies*’ (*JCMS*) last twenty years of publication regarding possible historic inequities. The project was a collaborative effort of two external researchers, the editorial team, and nine caucus volunteers. The basis for the analysis was the author biographies, in which information on pronouns and academic rank were computationally extracted. Racial information was not provided at publication, so a research process was formed to get the most viable results. In addition to the analysis regarding the authors,

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the project also analyzed published content. Here, the caucus volunteers analyzed the contents of each article with a focus on the relevancy to their caucus's interests. They provided further analysis by identifying subtopics of the articles. From this information, the authors performed a variety of intersectional analyses based on the authors' information, topical subsets, and representation.

INTRODUCTION

Since it began publishing in 1961, four years after the founding of the Society of Cinematologists (now Society for Cinema and Media Studies [SCMS]), the *Journal of the Society of Cinematologists* (eventually *Cinema Journal* and now the *Journal of Cinema and Media Studies* [*JCMS*]) has been a foundational destination for humanities-centered media studies scholarship. For more than five decades, the journal has inarguably introduced and shaped key discourses in cinema and media studies, but there has never been a comprehensive examination of *who* has published in the journal—in terms of race, nationality, preferred pronouns, institutional affiliation, or areas of expertise—or a broader consideration of the scholarly lacunae that have been exacerbated by inequities in academic journal publishing. This article is an attempt to redress that problem.

In terms of purpose, style, and methodology, this article differs from the scholarship typically published in *JCMS*. Instead of offering critical perspectives on film or other media, this project aims to analyze the journal itself. From the onset, the authors' primary objective has been to come to a fuller understanding of who has published in *JCMS* and on which topics. This objective was generated out of collective concerns expressed among the SCMS membership, particularly the concern that since its inception, the journal has inadequately reflected the diversity of its members, both in terms of disciplinary interests and the scholars themselves. In an effort to address these disparities, *JCMS* Associate Co-Editors of Outreach and Equity TreAndrea M. Russworm and Samantha N. Sheppard convened this study in June 2020 to analyze twenty years of the journal's publication ethos and history. Using digital humanities (DH) techniques, this article takes a quantitative and qualitative look at the journal's publication record to assess whether there are, in fact, themes or trends in its recent production history that can be addressed and improved in terms of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Russworm and Sheppard were particularly motivated to analyze the journal's publication history by the insights they gleaned from a previous study that Nina Cartier conducted for the African/African American Caucus (now Black Caucus) in 2011 and 2012. Cartier's project analyzed how much of *Cinema Journal's* published content was written by Black scholars, as well as how many articles centered questions and concerns about African or African American film and media, up to 2012. That nearly a decade ago the Black Caucus deemed a study such as Cartier's necessary indicates that concerns about representation in the journal have been ongoing for quite some time.¹

1 See Jacqueline Stewart's "The Scholars Who Sat by the Door," *Cinema Journal*

In fact, this earlier examination of the journal's publication history revealed gross inequities when it came to the interests and expertise of African/African American Caucus members. Upon the study's conclusion, two of the journal's subsequent In Focus dossiers were devoted to addressing the underrepresentation Cartier's study revealed.² With the ambitions of this pioneering study in mind, Russworm and Sheppard convened the present study by commissioning DH scholars Yelana Sims and Nina Lorenz to spearhead the project. Along with collaborators from each of SCMS's seven caucuses, we performed topical and demographic analyses of twenty recent years (Fall 1999–Spring 2020) of the journal's publication history. Our principal concern was whether the information gathered about authors and article content reflects the interests and identities of the organization's caucuses. As such, the grounding questions for the 2020–2021 DH study included the following: What do we know about the race, preferred pronouns, and nationalities of published authors? Have junior scholars (e.g., assistant professor, lecturer, research fellow, postdoctoral fellow) and precariously employed authors published as often as senior scholars (e.g., associate, full, or distinguished professors)? Has the journal published a wide range of topical and regional diversity that represents the interests of SCMS's caucuses?

To answer these questions, we developed a robust and specific method for cataloging and assessing the biographies of published authors. We also developed our own method for identifying topical elements in the journal's publication record. As a project of this scope and magnitude requires a collective effort, we both trained and worked closely with collaborators from each of the following SCMS caucuses: Asian/Pacific American Caucus, Black Caucus, Caucus on Class, Latino/a Caucus, Middle East Caucus, Queer and Trans Caucus, and Gender and Feminisms Caucus. Our collaborators used a manual coding technique to review every published article from the last twenty years in order to analyze how well each article resonated with their caucus's interests and disciplinary concerns. In what follows, we further explicate the study's methodology and parameters by focusing on our collaborative data analysis process. After articulating our methods, we will present a big picture analysis of what we discovered about the demographics of authors and explain how these findings relate to the authorship over the twenty volumes. In the sections following our broader analysis, our caucus collaborators offer their detailed reflections on the journal's publishing history as it relates to their caucus's interests. The article ends with Russworm and

49, no. 1 (2009): 146–153; and the In Focus dossier edited by previous leaders of the SCMS Black Caucus: Beretta E. Smith-Shomade, Racquel Gates, and Miriam J. Petty, "Introduction: When and Where We Enter," In Focus: African American Caucus, *Cinema Journal* 53, no. 4 (Summer 2014): 121–127.

- 2 Cartier's study was formulated at the 2011 Black Caucus meeting at the Cinema and Media Studies Annual Conference. Then a doctoral candidate at Northwestern University, Cartier used digital access to the journal to review the 152 issues it had published since its inception in 1961. Similar to this study, Cartier focused on full articles, leaving out In Focus dossiers, conference proceedings, and book reviews. She found that out of 734 articles, only fifty-six (7.6 percent) covered topics relevant to the caucus or had Black or African American authors. In this way, Cartier's method differs from Sims and Lorenz. In the current study, author identity and article topic are deemed two separate analyses, and relevance for a caucus depends only upon topical coverage.

Sheppard's discussion on the study's insights, limitations, and significance for pathways forward.

CREATING COLLABORATIVE DH METHODS TO ASSESS EQUITY AND REPRESENTATION

Although we were convinced DH approaches would be helpful in examining the journal's publication record, we wanted this project to contribute to a narrower body of digital humanities scholarship that has been committed to interrogating the exclusion of women, people of color, queer and gender-nonconforming people, and socioeconomically underprivileged populations in academia.³ We were not certain how prominent DH approaches are within SCMS, but our backgrounds and research interests in computational analysis and race and ethnic studies made such approaches and tools appealing. As a field, DH's own disciplinary biases have often been critiqued for being exclusionary and compounding inequities. DH scholars such as Catherine D'Ignazio, Lauren Klein, and Tara McPherson affirm the importance of prioritizing intersectionality in DH methods that draw from social science and data science.⁴ As much as possible, we wanted to integrate similar values in our method and try to produce analyses that account for various intersections, in terms of both identity and the various subfields of cinema and media studies.⁵

Collaborative analysis is a cornerstone of DH methodologies, and it was also important to the vision Russworm and Sheppard articulated when convening this project, so we emulated key examples of team-led data analysis DH projects, particularly those that culminated in multi-authored articles.⁶ The collaborative part of the process began with our consultations with Russworm and Sheppard and led to their call to the SCMS caucuses for interested parties to join the project. This outreach resulted in a total of thirteen co-authors: Russworm and Sheppard, nine collaborators from the caucuses (including Nina Cartier, who represented the Black Caucus once again), and ourselves. Collaborators were not required to have any experience with DH

3 See Laura E. Heath-Stout, "Who Writes about Archaeology? An Intersectional Study of Authorship in Archaeological Journals," *American Antiquity* 85, no. 3 (July 2020): 407–426; Elizabeth DeVilbiss et al., "Assessing Representation and Perceived Inclusion among Members of the Society for Epidemiologic Research," *American Journal of Epidemiology* 189, no. 10 (October 2020): 998–1010; and Manuel Goyanes et al., "A Mathematical Approach to Assess Research Diversity: Operationalization and Applicability in Communication Sciences, Political Science, and Beyond," *Scientometrics* 125, no. 3 (December 2020): 2299–2322.

4 See Catherine D'Ignazio and Lauren F. Klein, *Data Feminism* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2020); Tara McPherson, "Why Are the Digital Humanities So White? or Thinking the Histories of Race and Computation," in *Debates in the Digital Humanities*, ed. Matthew K. Gold (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012); Dorothy Kim and Jesse Stommel, eds., *Disrupting the Digital Humanities* (Earth, Milky Way: punctumbooks, 2018); and Roopika Risam, *New Digital Worlds: Postcolonial Digital Humanities in Theory, Praxis, and Pedagogy* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2019).

5 See Herbert W. Marsh and Samuel Ball, "The Peer Review Process Used to Evaluate Manuscripts Submitted to Academic Journals: Interjudgmental Reliability," *Journal of Experimental Education* 57, no. 2 (1989): 151–169; and Mark Ware, "Peer Review in Scholarly Journals: Perspective of the Scholarly Community—Results from an International Study," *Information Services and Use* 28, no. 2 (2008): 109–112.

6 Oceanic Exchanges Project Team, "Tracing Global Information Networks in Historical Newspaper Repositories, 1840–1914," *Oceanic Exchanges* (2017): <https://oceanicexchanges.org/>.

methods or in performing internal reviews of academic journals. We trained all participants in August 2020, providing an introduction to the particularities of coding-based projects. During these sessions we introduced our data set, demonstrated some best practices for annotation, and discussed some of the larger goals of the project. Two major project-level innovations occurred at this time. First, Lorenz discovered that she could create individualized visualizations for each caucus, depending on which aspect of their findings each caucus wanted to emphasize. Second, because we were also trying to get a sense of the race of published authors, we asked the caucus collaborators to help us with the subjective task of identifying the race of authors who published articles they flagged as relevant to their caucus's interests. All of this helped us build our unique Authors' Race Data Set.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY DATA AND DATA SET?

Our primary data were twenty years of journal article abstracts and author biographies. Our techniques for working with the data set included blending data analysis, computational analysis, social science approaches, and humanities data science approaches. For instance, we used three distinct parameters to assess who has published in the journal: pronouns, race, and author's rank. This type of information ideally would have been readily available as its own preexisting data set. However, databases and digital records for an organization that has been as long-running as *Cinema Journal/JCMS* require significant monetary and labor-based resources. While *JCMS* is stored and archived digitally, the journal did not have extensive digital tracing and backing until recently; the specific biographical information we were seeking was also not easily accessible over a longer period of time. Lacking this comprehensive archive of information, we had to manually index the aforementioned information we could find into a massive editable spreadsheet, our data set, which compiled the abstracts and relevant information from authors' biographies.

All of the caucus collaborators worked from the same data set of author and article information and annotated and tagged their own versions of the data set. Specifically, that spreadsheet included information for all peer-reviewed articles published between volume 39, no. 1 (Fall 1999) and volume 59, no. 3 (Spring 2020). We archived the year, volume number, and issue number for each peer-reviewed article as an identifier in the spreadsheet. Each row contained the information for one article, including author, title of the article, author bio, and full abstract. Each caucus collaborator returned to us an annotated data set after tagging all articles deemed relevant to the subject matter of their caucus. For every flagged instance, they tagged subtopics and keywords. The information for year, relevancy, topics, author's pronouns, author's rank, and author's race were subsequently combined into one data frame.⁷ Based on this frame, title duplicates were filtered out to avoid counting the same article twice. The remaining number provided the set for counting each caucus's representation both in total and grouped by year. This set also provided the basis

7 A data frame is a way of organizing information that contains unique rows and columns.

for topical overviews. Special cases, where certain groups of subtopics are highlighted in a narrower view, are shown in some of the caucus write-ups. This exercise served multiple purposes: it allowed the caucuses to see which topics were over- or underrepresented within the journal; it pushed the caucuses to clearly delineate how subjects would be understood and counted by their caucus; and it provided another data point for visualization. We asked the collaborators to quantitatively and qualitatively analyze the outcomes of this exercise in their sections below, but we want to underscore that the subtopics exercise was created solely for the caucuses. In our initial approach to this study, we did not plan to chart out articles according to any type of content analysis. The subtopic analysis became possible through this study's collaborative efforts and the caucus collaborators' intimate knowledge of *Cinema Journal*, *JCMS*, and their respective subfields.

The decision to only include peer-reviewed articles was necessary to keep the results clean, consistent, and manageable. For example, *JCMS* publishes a guest-edited, non-peer-reviewed section, In Focus, that offers more demographic and disciplinary diversity through its discussions of special topics. In considering whether to include this material, we were concerned that the In Focus essays could skew the rest of the data set since they are often directly solicited for publication. A biographical analysis of In Focus authors could also show an inclusionary trend that is not reflected in the peer-reviewed articles, the journal's traditional publishing genre. In addition, we were aware that peer-reviewed articles have a certain cachet in academic publishing that is often distinct from non-peer-reviewed works.

WHICH TOOLS AND PROGRAMMING LANGUAGES DID WE USE?

In order to collate the journal's data into our custom spreadsheet, we used a simple algorithm that first noted the occurrence of the author's preferred pronouns and recorded them in a separate column. We labeled this parameter *pronouns* instead of *gender* because pronoun usage does not always directly correlate to gender identity, and the gender identity of published authors would have been more difficult to try to verify. Due to the static nature of author biographies, we could not account for authors who changed gender identity after publication in the journal, and our work here will not account for this type of pronoun usage variance over time. Similarly, we used the same algorithm to identify the academic rank by using named entity tags from the Python package spaCy. Any variance in institutional affiliations over time was also not possible to track, and therefore we only noted authors' affiliations at the time of publication.

In general, our coding approach relied on the Python package pandas to navigate the data set described above. We applied standard natural language processing (NLP) data cleaning methods. This means that the author biographies were stripped of contractions and punctuation, set to lowercase letters, and lastly tokenized.⁸ After cleaning the author biographies, we first copied

⁸ In the natural language processing context, *tokenizing* refers to the separation of a piece of text, also referred to as a *string*, into smaller units called tokens. The units used in this study are words and bigrams.

in the pronouns. With a parser, the algorithm checked for the presence of *she, her, hers, they, their, them, theirs, he, him, and his*. For every encounter, a label was added in a separate column; the first occurrence was prioritized as the biographies mostly started with the appropriate self-description. When no pronoun was included in the text, the default was set to *not specified*. When it came to trying to discern author biographical details such as institutional affiliation and rank, we created the denotation *rank* via bigrams, a two-term sequence, which were parsed for a list of common job titles within academia. Remaining open cells were proofread, and, if needed, the code was adjusted to accommodate all titles. Authors who published more than once and did not significantly change their biographical information (pronoun, rank, and so on) were counted only once. From here, frequency tables provided the groundwork for the pronoun, rank, and race visualizations, as well as the intersectional overviews, for pronoun and race, rank and race, and rank and pronoun. The institutions that authors were affiliated with at the time of publication were found in a similar fashion, specifically using the word entity recognizer from spaCy.

HOW DID WE ACCOUNT FOR GLOBAL UNDERSTANDINGS OF RACE IN OUR DATA SET?

The caucus collaborators' last task in data set annotation was to attempt to identify the race and/or ethnicity of authors of the articles they tagged as relevant to their respective caucuses. Initially, what we called the Authors' Race Data Set was created by Sims through a time-consuming review of each author's online presence. We augmented this research with the collaborators' annotations regarding race and ethnicity.

But how could we accurately and fairly assess racial identity in the first place? We understood this demography factor to be a complex, subjective, and critically insolvent task. Despite the evident pitfalls in doing this work, the central concerns regarding representation that inaugurated this study in the first place seemed to call for some kind of assessment of race. As a team, we settled on the messy, yet meaningful, work that blends human bias and limitations with computational bias and limitations to arrive at some understanding of the race and/or ethnicity of published authors. In coming up with the tags for race to use in our spreadsheet, Sims initially used racial designations as set out in the 2020 US Census. This was almost immediately complicated by the Latino/a Caucus's designation of some authors' race as "Latinx," a designation that has no equivalent in the US government's official racial schema. Also, the Asian/Pacific American Caucus's racial and regional annotations of published authors were specific to the country of origin of authors, distinguishing Chinese, Korean, and Japanese authors from Chinese American, Korean American, and so on. Such nuances are also not always apparent in American racial designations, in which Asians and Asian Americans may be thought to belong to a single group.

To further address the challenges of using DH and data science to describe people's racial identities and their lived realities, we decided that the individualized caucus visualizations should use the designations provided by the caucuses to prioritize racial and regional specificities and field-

specific nuances they deemed important to highlight. The visualizations of the overall data set (rather than the caucus visualizations of articles each caucus noted as relevant) would use an expanded racial and ethnic schema, to nuance global understandings of race and ethnicity as well as provide critique on the restrictive nature of US racial designations. If multiple caucuses declared an article relevant to their contribution, there would be multiple caucus volunteers researching an individual author. If all caucuses and Sims agreed, the designation was formatted for clarity but not content. If there was disagreement, subsequent research may have ended with a designation of *undeterminable* or with a final round of research and one determination chosen as the most accurate. In the end, we know that the team's attempts to give some idea of the racial breakdown of published authors were not perfect, but we hope that this information provides some basic insight with regard to questions about representation.

BIG PICTURE ANALYSIS: RACE, PRONOUNS, AND RANK OF PUBLISHED AUTHORS

Now that we have offered some summary of our collaborative process, the tools we used, and our goals in looking at the journal's history, what were our broad findings for this study? The twenty volumes the team examined include 408 unique authors who collectively wrote 411 articles. Out of these articles, the caucuses identified 225 unique articles (54.7 percent) as relevant to their various interests, leaving 186 (45.3 percent) as considered not associated with any given caucus's interests. In this section, we will first provide a basic demographic analysis of the 408 authors by focusing on the key parameters of *race*, *pronoun usage*, and *rank*. We will also offer an overview of the distribution of caucus interests by examining when these interests overlapped (where multiple caucuses flagged an article as relevant) across these 225 caucus-relevant articles.

Our findings in terms of race are startling, though also somewhat expected. As you can see in Figure 1, the majority of authors published in *JCMS* in the last twenty years are white (approximately 79 percent). Though we expected white scholars to be the majority, we were not expecting such a large discrepancy. The number of Black or African American scholars (about 1 percent of the total) was also surprising. All other racial and ethnic groups are underrepresented, with Asian and Asian American scholars accounting for about 7 percent of total authorship, the highest percentage of any non-white group.

Looking at the data over time and by journal issue, it quickly became apparent that there are numerous issues of *Cinema Journal* and *JCMS* that only include white authors. These all-white issues occur both at the beginning of our twenty-volume review and within the last five years, showing a long-standing overrepresentation at the issue level that reflects the journal's broader disproportion. Though these authors may be diverse by other metrics, such as gender, sexuality, or region (e.g., a white woman scholar published in an all-white issue), the racial breakdown of authors within *JCMS* shows the largest discrepancy among author metrics. No other variable, including rank or pronoun (or even the intersections between the two), is

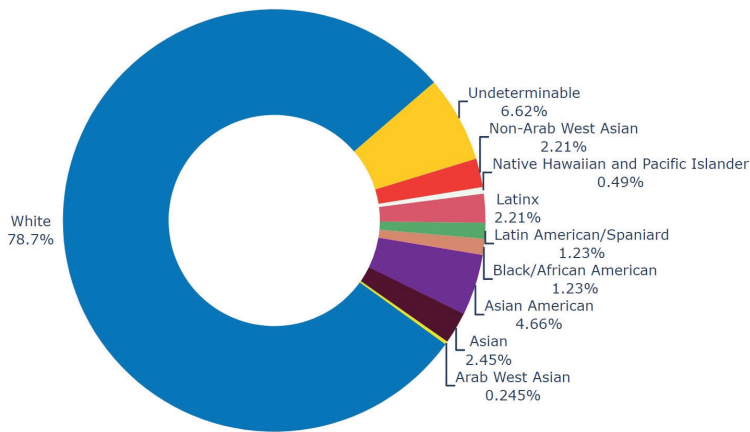


Figure 1. Visualization of published authors' race and ethnicity. Visualization by Nina Lorenz.

as distinctly disproportionate as the racial composition of authorship. In this way, concern about the races of published authors should remain at the center of *JCMS*'s commitment to dismantling academic publishing inequity. As we indicated above, the global understandings of race will have consequential effects on this demographic information and will further complicate delineation of racial and ethnic identity. We do think, however, that Figure 1's general visualization of racial diversity is an apt starting point for a conversation about this aspect of the journal's history.

Though racial demographics are a cornerstone in conversations about diversity and academic publishing, the statistics discussed here cannot give a full picture of the journal without other information. We explored indicators of pronoun use and institutional status both together and separately to offer a more complex sense of who has published in the journal. Although the number of scholars who use he/him pronouns is higher across all ranks, we found that senior scholars have an almost even number of scholars that use he/him and she/her pronouns. With author bios in which the author did not specify a rank, or described themselves as an independent scholar, the numbers were also quite close, with twelve authors using he/him and thirteen using she/her pronouns. Figure 2 offers a visualization of the correlations among pronoun use and status.

We found that the designation of *junior scholar* makes up more than 50 percent of authors during the study's period. Among all of the positions we included in *junior scholar*, assistant professors account for the vast majority. This is not to say that senior scholars do not often publish in the journal, as they were the second largest group, constituting 25 percent of all authors over the last twenty years. Graduate students have consistently been the smallest group of contributors, representing under 10 percent of published

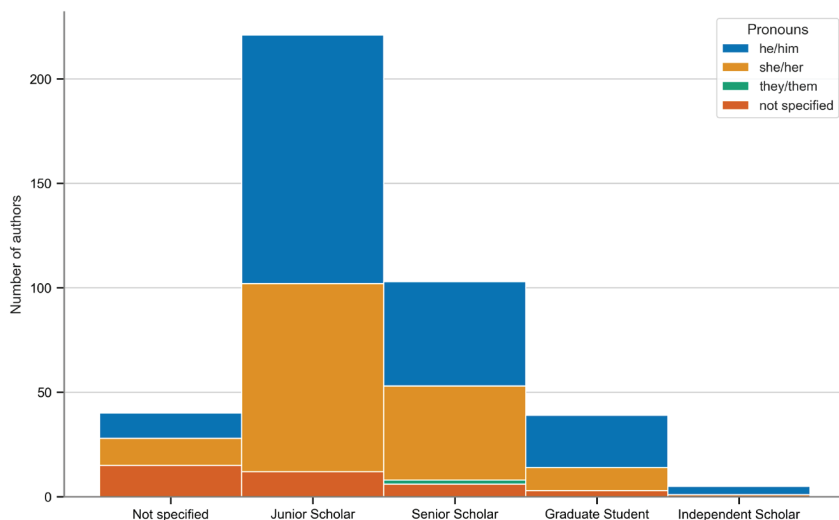


Figure 2. Authors' statuses and pronouns. Chart by Nina Lorenz.

authors. Finally, as the visualization indicates, 10 percent of authors did not name their academic standing. Though the distribution could be more balanced and nuanced, these outcomes were expected to a certain degree, since junior scholars likely have more pressure to publish peer-reviewed articles for career advancement. The data in Figure 2 allow us to highlight some other trends as well. For example, more than 50 percent of the authors overall used he/him pronouns in their biography; 39 percent introduced themselves with she/her pronouns; less than 1 percent used they/them in their biographies; and 9 percent of published authors did not use any pronouns in their submitted bios.

Although it was beyond the scope of this study, it would be helpful to know if this demographic breakdown would be similar in other journals dedicated to film and media studies. The fact that more authors who use he/him pronouns have published in the journal is likely to be an issue for the discipline as a whole. Notable in this study was the underrepresentation of authors using gender neutral pronouns; only two of all 408 authors used they/them, and these two authors were senior scholars. A possibility here is that senior scholars might be more apt to use formal writing in their bios, which often uses *they* as a nonbinary singular to connote respect or prestige (similar to the royal *we*). However, as this study provides a snapshot of the authors in a specific moment in time, it does not account for changes in preferred pronouns after publication. For example, during our research on authors' racial identities, we found that one author changed their name and pronouns following publication. Such examples highlight why we chose to label this analysis as *pronoun usage* rather than *gender* and to indicate the limitations of a study of pronouns when identities are fluid and shift over time.

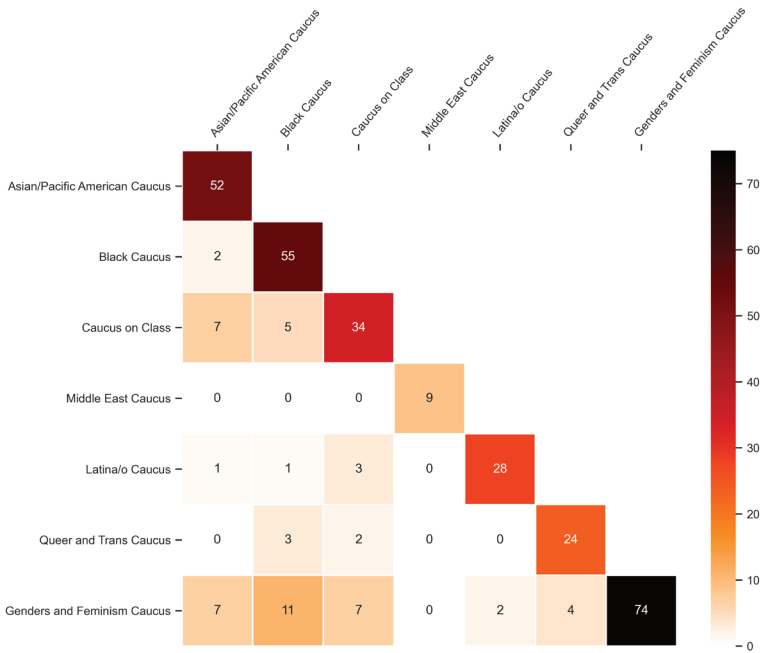


Figure 3. Articles with overlapping caucus interest. Visualization by Nina Lorenz.

The final big picture analysis we performed was to represent the number of published articles that evinced overlapping caucus interests. The heatmap visualization in Figure 3 depicts how frequently published articles were relevant to more than one caucus. Since heatmaps can be tricky to read at a glance, we offer some instructions for making sense of this data visualization. Each cell of the heatmap shows the number of articles that were marked as relevant by both caucuses. These appear at the top and along the side of the visualization. For example, starting at the top left, the first cell represents the overlap of the Asian/Pacific American Caucus with itself, or the total number of articles that the caucus identified as relevant, which is fifty-two articles. The entire diagonal axis represents the total number of relevant articles for each caucus. We left this number in the heatmap because this metric is a useful reference number when estimating the overlap and for comparing the caucuses with one another. The cells below the diagonal axis are the values for the overlaps between the caucuses. Generally speaking, the darker the color, the greater the overlap. As the number of articles marked relevant by any caucus was relatively small, representing the overlaps can perhaps show a greater need to publish more truly intersectional and interdisciplinary work in *JCMS*. The heatmap also shows which fields and caucuses seem to invite the most intersectional and interdisciplinary work, at least when it comes to *JCMS*.

Figure 3 gives us ways of seeing not only how few articles have been published that relate to the interests of a given caucus but also how much opportunity there is for greater disciplinary connection (and perhaps

collaboration) between and among the caucuses. Caucuses centered on regions had barely any overlap with one another, which is to be expected as few authors approach varied regional cinemas within the same article. Even still, these regional caucuses were expected to have some overlap with other caucuses. This was not always the case. For instance, with only nine published articles that speak to their interests, the Middle East Caucus's relevant articles do not overlap with any other caucuses, regional or topical. Both the Gender and Feminisms Caucus and Black Caucus had the highest number of published articles and the highest frequency of overlapping interests. Indeed, the greatest overlap is between the Gender and Feminisms Caucus and Black Caucus.

The visualization also shows that although the Latino/a Caucus has overlap with four other caucuses, the numbers are quite low for each, to the extent that only six out of their twenty-six relevant articles share relevancy with another caucus. The Asian/Pacific American Caucus and Black Caucus are unique in that they are the only regional or ethnicity-based caucuses with overlap with all of the non-regional or ethnicity-based caucuses: Queer and Trans Caucus, Gender and Feminisms Caucus, and Caucus on Class. The largest takeaway from this particular visualization exercise is that there remains a great need for more articles that relate to the interests of caucus members and articles that provide interesting and new avenues for intersection.

The seven caucus analyses that follow contend with questions about white authorship, regional biases, and other demographic disparities. The caucus representatives analyze not only the author-based metrics we've discussed here but also the content of the articles they've deemed relevant to their caucus's interests. Many of them offer specific suggestions for improving the direction of the journal going forward. Along with Russworm and Shepard, we encouraged each caucus to focus on aspects of the data set that were most interesting and relevant to them. We did not attempt to standardize or influence the types of questions or concerns each caucus had when looking at the journal's history. As a result, there are vastly different styles, questions, and arguments evident in the caucus reflections. We embrace the ways these disparate approaches became a part of an adaptive and critical DH methodology that is unique to this study.

ASIAN/PACIFIC AMERICAN CAUCUS **by Melissa Phruksachart and Tony Tran**

Categories such as *Asian*, *Asian American*, and *Asian Pacific Islander* are dynamic terms describing diverse communities who are constantly shifting in relationship to multiple cultures, identities, and politics.⁹ Acknowledging these categorical limitations, we produced a bird's-eye view of the larger trends and areas of focus related to Asian and Asian American media in *JCMS*. The data and findings are a starting point for reflecting on the journal's publication history and are open for further investigation.

9 See Peter Feng, "In Search of Asian American Cinema?," *Cineaste* 21, nos. 1–2 (1995): 32–35; Lisa Lowe, *Immigrant Acts: On Asian American Cultural Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1996); and David Palumbo-Liu, *Asian/American: Historical Crossings of a Racial Frontier* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999).

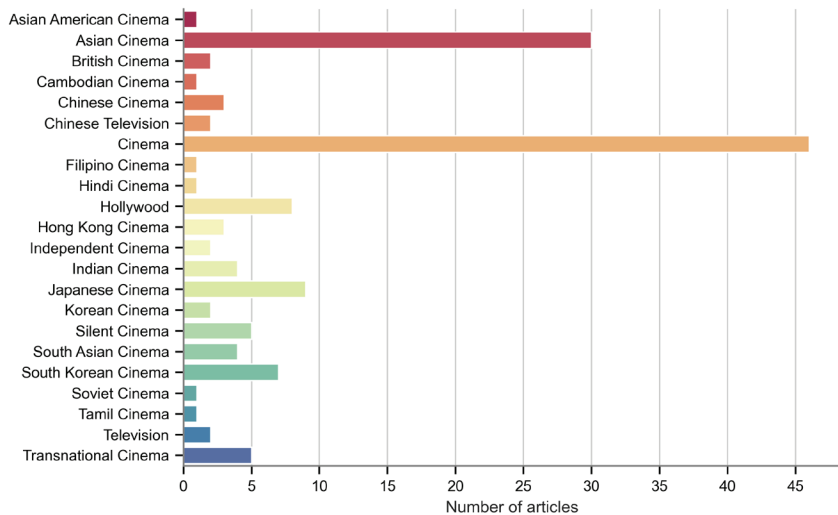


Figure 4. A regional review of Asian American and Asian subtopics. Visualization by Nina Lorenz.

We designated articles that addressed topics involving Asian American media, Asian media, or Asian racialization as most relevant to the Asian/Pacific American Caucus (APAC). This included media and directors from Asia and Asian diasporas, representations of Asian Americans, and theoretical frameworks of Asian Americanist critique, such as orientalism. For this study, *Asia* included the regions of East, Southeast, and South Asia and the Pacific Islands (with West Asia covered by the Middle East Caucus).

We also assigned subtopic tags to help us further categorize the data set. As Figure 4 shows, we tagged specific regions and nations that highlighted the quantitative differences between articles on Asian American and Asian topics. Other subtopic labels included medium (e.g., film and television) and author demographics (including race, home department, and university region).

Using our criteria, we found approximately 13 percent (52 of 411) of the peer-reviewed articles published in the last twenty volumes of *JCMS* to be relevant to our caucus, with 60 percent of those articles published between Fall 1999 and Spring 2009 and 40 percent published between 2010 and 2020. Through the subtopics, we found that within these fifty-two relevant articles, 88 percent focused on cinema. The remaining articles looked at television, non-theatrical film, and piracy. East Asian topics clearly predominated the sample at 63.5 percent: Japanese and South Korean cinemas each represented 17 percent of the relevant scholarship; Chinese and Hong Kong cinemas each represented 5.8 percent; Southeast Asian films made up 5.7 percent; and South Asian cinema, with all articles focused on India, constituted 7.7 percent of the fifty-two articles. Alarming for us, only five articles of Asian Americanist scholarship have appeared in *JCMS* since 1999.

Reviewing the data set focused specifically on the identity of authors, we found more than 35 percent of the authors were white. In terms of affiliation at time of publication, 42.3 percent of the authors were employed by cinema studies or cultural or visual studies departments in the United States, Canada, United Kingdom, or Israel. Furthermore, 34.6 percent were employed by area studies, languages and literatures, musicology, or anthropology departments in Western universities, and 23.1 percent were employed by departments in Asian universities (primarily in Singapore, Hong Kong, Japan, and Korea).

We conclude that at present, *JCMS* does not reflect the diversity of Asian and Asian American media scholarship beyond East Asian cinema. Despite the relatively low publication rate in *JCMS* during the last twenty years, Asian and Asian American media scholarship continues to be published in other journals. There are several possible reasons why scholars select other journals: (1) these scholars may not find *JCMS*'s readership to be relevant interlocutors; (2) scholars may be more rewarded for publishing in area studies or ethnic studies journals; (3) scholars may have received more interest or may anticipate higher quality, more specialized peer review feedback from other journals; or (4) their work may have been rejected by *JCMS*. Not surprisingly, Asian Americanist media scholarship is present in journals with an Asian or international scope, such as the *Journal of Asian American Studies*, *Journal of Chinese Cinemas*, *Journal of Asian Studies*, *South Asian Popular Culture*, and *International Journal of Cultural Studies*. However, additional quantitative inquiry into journals similar to *JCMS*—such as *Feminist Media Histories*, *Camera Obscura*, *Film Quarterly*, *Communication, Culture and Critique*, and *Media, Culture and Society*—would be a productive site of future comparative analysis.

We close by noting that the presence of Asian media studies scholarship in *JCMS* does not equate to anti-racism; indeed, the (over)representation of Asianness in academia is often marshaled by institutional leaders to obscure the paltry support given to Black, Latinx, and Indigenous people and projects. The Asian/Pacific American Caucus rejects any readings of this data that use familiarity with Asia as a celebration of diversity and cosmopolitanism in lieu of redistributive politics.

BLACK CAUCUS

by **Nina Cartier**

The original data set I created in my review for the African/African American Caucus (which spanned the entire history of the journal up to 2012) and this new 2020 data set (which covered only Fall 1999–Spring 2020) overlapped by over a decade. Other similarities between my original work and this study include some of the same restrictions, as neither includes In Focus, conference proceedings, editorials, or book reviews. In my initial study, I found that out of 734 articles, only fifty-six articles (7.6 percent) covered topics relevant to the African/African American Caucus. In this new study, of the 411 articles included in the data set, I found only fifty-five (a mere 13.4 percent) that seemed related to interests represented by the Black Caucus.

At first glance, compared to my original study, there seems to be an increase of 5.8 percent in the number of articles relating to the interests of

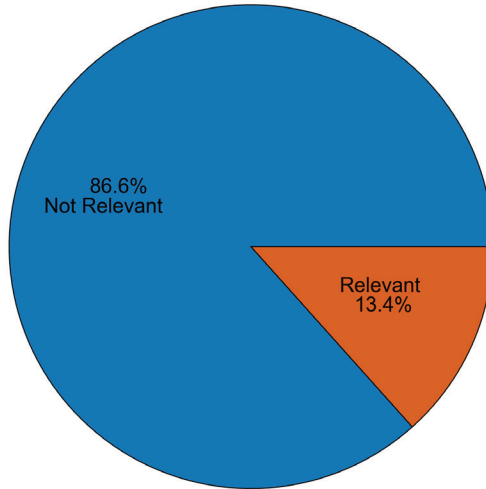


Figure 5. Black Caucus article relevancy. Visualization by Nina Lorenz.

the Black Caucus (see Figure 5). Looking more closely at the overlap between the studies, however, it seems that there were nineteen Black/African diasporic articles published in the journal between 2012 and 2020. Given that there was a total of 183 articles published during that same time span, that means that only 10 percent of the articles in those years addressed Black and African diasporic concerns, which actually reflects only a 3 percent increase from my last study (not the 6 percent increase that might be assumed).

In my analysis of this data set, I also discovered that the bulk of the Black and African diasporic articles of the last twenty years had *Africa* as a main keyword and that most of the other articles focused on well-known Black films, Black directors, or Black actors. The largest number of articles (fourteen) were written by lecturers, with assistant and associate professors tied at twelve articles each. To some extent, the fact that lecturers published the greatest number of relevant articles disrupts the anecdotal concern that mostly senior faculty publish in the journal. Likewise, in thinking about gender or pronoun use, I noted that most (thirty) of the authors publishing on these topics were women.

Of the fifty-five articles under consideration here, the majority of authors (thirty-five) who published articles related to the interests of the Black Caucus were white. In short, topical representation does not reflect racial diversity. While it may seem somewhat significant that 13.4 percent of *JCMS*'s articles from the last twenty years were topically relevant to the Black Caucus, we have to also keep in mind that only a minuscule 1.23 percent of *all* published authors over the same time span were identified as Black. This

is one of many racial discrepancies that indicates the scope of the problem that needs to be addressed regarding representation and equity in academic publishing in general and in *JCMS* specifically.

Like Jay-Z's song "Reminder" says, "women lie, men lie, numbers don't lie." In this case, with my second opportunity to review the journal's history, I have found that the numbers here depict a plain truth. Since my original study—the results of which were shared with the *Cinema Journal* editor at the time—there still has not been a significant increase in the publication of Black or African diasporic articles, nor has the journal become a place where Black scholars are widely published. Although diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives are now being launched by the journal and Society (leading to more racial and subfield diversity on SCMS's executive board and *JCMS*'s masthead team and editorial board, for example), these changes have not resulted in significant systemic change at the publication level.

I played the numbers game when I presented a similar analysis for the first time back in 2012. Although both then and now the numbers were and are incriminating, it is clear that presenting the numbers is not enough. The question of what else can and will be done remains the same.

CAUCUS ON CLASS

by Aju Basil James

Out of the 411 unique articles published between Fall 1999 and Spring 2020 in *JCMS*, I marked thirty-four articles as *directly* addressing the topic of class. Among the thirty-five authors of these articles, twenty-five were identified as white, one Black, one Asian, one Asian American, one non-Arab West Asian, and two Latinx, while four scholars remained undeterminable.¹⁰ Furthermore, twelve scholars used feminine pronouns, seventeen used masculine pronouns, one used gender-neutral pronouns, and five did not use any. Assistant professors accounted for just over 30 percent of the published authors; associate professors, 14 percent; lecturers, 14 percent; full professors, 11 percent; and postdoctoral and independent scholars, 6 percent each. Given that tenured and tenure-track professors make up 55 percent of all published authors considered here, we should consider how these publishing demographics are also a reflection of who has the time and resources to publish in the first place.

However, as Figure 6 shows that the most obvious disparity among these demographics is race, I would like to reflect in more detail on this particular trend. Broadly speaking, the fact that 72 percent of the authors are white aligns with what we know about racial biases and imbalances in academic hiring and publishing in general.¹¹

10 The Caucus on Class had originally used different racial designations within their research. The designations here and in the following visualization represent an agreement between the collaborators and the main authors for continuity and clarity.

11 Colleen Flaherty, "(More) Bias in Science Hiring," *Inside Higher Ed*, June 7, 2019, <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2019/06/07/new-study-finds-discrimination-against-women-and-racial-minorities-hiring-sciences/>; KerryAnn O'Meara and Dawn Culpepper, *Inclusive Hiring Pilot Materials*, ADVANCE Program, University of Maryland, College Park, 2018; and "Fast Facts: Race/Ethnicity of

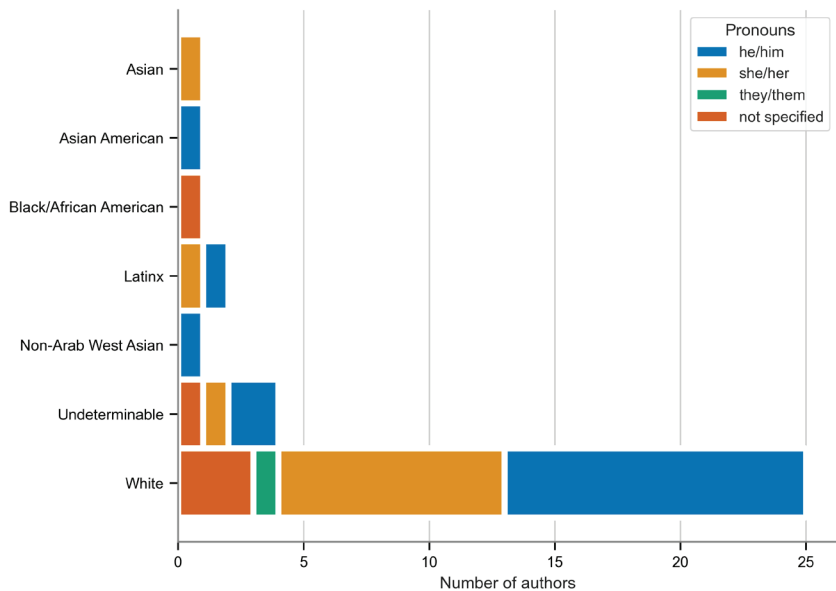


Figure 6. Caucus on Class intersections of authors' race and pronoun usage. Visualization by Nina Lorenz.

What would conversations on class look like in *JCMS* if there were greater representation from Black scholars and other scholars of color? In reading the abstracts for these articles, one gets the sense that any in-depth research on certain topics (such as race and class) would not exist were it not for particular scholars and their identity locations. For example, East and South Asian authors writing in *JCMS* have developed transnational or global frameworks to understand how media technologies produce political and social subjects. In addition to uncovering the specificities of mediation in colonial and postcolonial Asian states, these articles show how the struggle over media production by various classes have shaped national and regional identities. Thus, they deepen our understanding of class struggle by emphasizing contexts of colonialism, national identity, and globally dispersed media production.

I suggest that representation is the first step to producing scholarship that explicates the work of media in reproducing class societies. Pearl Bowser and Louise Spence offer one example of this type of work in their article on Oscar Micheaux.¹² The article weaves together racial imaginaries in the United States and emerging class stratifications among Black people in the first decades of the twentieth century. By contextualizing media productions in wider social and political relations that structure our shared realities, this

College Faculty,” National Center for Education Statistics, accessed July 31, 2021, <https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=61>.

12 Pearl Bowser and Louise Spence, “Oscar Micheaux’s *Body and Soul* and the Burden of Representation,” *Cinema Journal* 39, no. 3 (Spring 2000): 3–29.

study positions media commodities as relationships between classes. Focusing on how class is lived and reproduced in specific places and times helps us recognize, as Stuart Hall famously wrote, that race “is the modality in which class is lived” and the “medium in which class relations are experienced.”¹³

While suggesting approaches that prioritize considerations of race for scholars of class, I must recognize a potential pitfall in my own methodology for this survey. I marked articles as relevant if they explicitly addressed issues of class in their titles or abstracts. This narrow scope could have excluded work by scholars who have contributed greatly to understanding class relations. I am particularly thinking here of scholars who wrote on various struggles for civil rights and racial justice. History shows us that these movements were certainly class-conscious. They developed a sophisticated analysis of how the concentration of the means of production among the ruling class goes hand in hand with racial oppression and its deleterious effects on the working class. Perhaps this shortcoming can emphasize the need to foster a scholarly environment in which work on how race structures contemporary societies would be the rule rather than the exception in scholarship on class. Pushing our intellectual community in that direction could be one way to strengthen the diversity of contributions that appear in *JCMS*.

LATINO/A CAUCUS

by Crystal Camargo and Nathan Rossi

When we first undertook this project, our excitement was quickly tempered by the study’s enormity and questions of precisely what constitutes a “Latinx-related topic” in *JCMS* (formerly *Cinema Journal*). Ultimately, we decided on four critical subtopics to examine, in addition to the authors’ racial and ethnic identities. These four subtopics are medium specificity (represented in Figure 7), geographical locations, media texts’ language, and identity politics covered in articles. While we understand that these subtopics cannot encompass the caucus’s diversity or its fields, these parameters led us to identify and examine twenty-eight articles on Latinx-related topics and identify thirty authors who have published in the journal over the last twenty years. This write-up reflects on these findings.

Given *JCMS*’s mission to foster debates and rigorous thinking among humanities scholars of film, television, digital media, and other audiovisual technologies, we focused on medium specificity to see how these dynamics affected Latinx-related topics covered in the journal. Out of all four subtopics, this category was the most surprising, with twenty-six out of the identified twenty-eight articles focusing on film. While there is a diversity of analytical approaches to film—including cultural history, audience reception, and content analysis—it is undeniable that *JCMS* and *Cinema Journal* have published significantly more journal articles on Latinx-related topics in film than any other medium. The outliers include one article on Cuban television and another on a Brooklyn-based Puerto Rican organization’s multimedia use.

13 Stuart Hall et al., *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order* (London: Macmillan, 1978), 394.

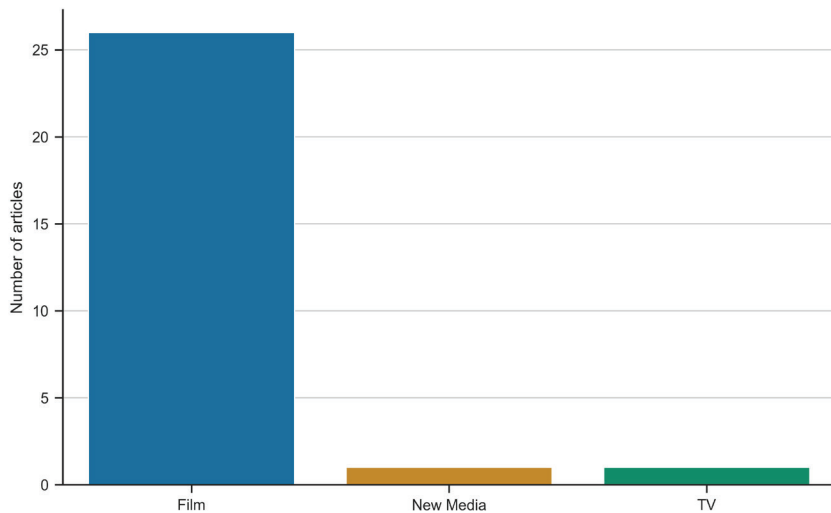


Figure 7. Latino/a Caucus medium specificity visualization. Visualization by Nina Lorenz.

In terms of geographical focus, the published articles overwhelmingly focused on Latin America, compared to Spain or the US Latinx region. Specifically, twenty out of the twenty-eight articles centered on Latin American productions or media markets, with five articles focusing on Mexico, five on Cuba, three on Brazil, three on Argentina, and one on Uruguay. Only three articles considered Spanish productions or media markets, with precisely two from the Catalan region. Out of the three geographical locations, articles that fit in the US Latinx category were the most abstract, broad, and vague. For example, one focused on Mexican filmmaker Alejandro González Iñárritu’s US-Mexico co-production *Babel* (2006), and another featured a white American filmmaker’s late-1940s border film. Lastly, five articles out of the twenty-eight included some transatlantic co-production elements.

We also wanted this study to reflect on the linguistic diversity of these geographic regions. In this regard, thirteen of the articles focused on Spanish-language media texts, while eight articles analyzed English-language media texts. Brazilian Portuguese is featured in only two articles’ media objects, and an analysis of a francophone film was the only other type of linguistic diversity we noted.

Considering that different metrics of identity are vital to most, if not all, members of the Latino/a Caucus, our last and final subtopic under examination considered how often different markers of identity were discussed in the journal articles themselves. For example, out of the twenty-eight articles, four centered on analyses of race, two were about gender (namely cisgender women’s representations), three articles discussed class politics, and only one examined sexuality. It is also important to us to highlight that six of the articles addressed several aspects of coloniality, and eleven discussed geographical factors—such as how Brazilian and Span-

ish film markets reimagine geographical media markets to challenge the global Hollywood industry.

Aside from our shocking findings regarding the lack of diversity in medium specificity, the other most troubling trend we noted relates to the racial and ethnic identity of the published authors. As we discovered, eighteen out of the thirty authors are white Americans, Canadians, or non-Spaniard Europeans. Only six authors are Latin Americans: two Brazilian, one Argentine, one Colombian, one Uruguayan, and one Venezuelan. We found only one Spanish scholar out of thirty possible authors. The remaining five authors are US Latinx scholars; specifically, two are Puerto Rican, two are Mexican American, and we are unsure of one author's Latinx-subgroup ethnic identity.

Over the last twenty years, Latinx-related topics made up less than 7 percent of all journal articles in *JCMS* and *Cinema Journal*. While there is a slight increase in the number of journal articles published in the last year, these newer articles have a 93 percent probability of focusing on film, 72 percent probability of focusing on Latin America (although not all countries in Latin America), and a 60 percent probability of having a white American or non-Spaniard European author. We hope that this study's findings can help disrupt this trajectory and evident inequalities of publishing trends regarding Latinx scholarship in *JCMS*.

MIDDLE EAST CAUCUS

by Terri Ginsberg

Articles published in *Cinema Journal* and *JCMS* since Fall 1999 that represent topics and interests of concern to the Middle East Caucus are few and far between (see Figure 8). There are nine relevant articles out of a total of 411—not including a Fall 2012 In Focus dossier in *Cinema Journal* titled “Middle Eastern Media,” edited by a white European and comprising five articles, and a Summer 2004 In Focus dossier on US military intervention in the Middle East, edited by two white Americans and containing only one relevant article out of seven. More than 50 percent of the articles published in the 2012 dossier were written by white persons of European or North American background or descent. The relevant article published in the Summer 2004 In Focus was written by an Ashkenazi Israeli. All of the other articles in that In Focus were written by white persons of European or North American background or descent, with the exception of one Chinese American. Notwithstanding their testament to efforts to foreground less visible topics and subjects, these In Focus dossiers neither represent consistent content nor necessarily reflect a core change in the direction of the discipline.

The scant number of articles relating to the caucus's interests allows for an exacting assessment of the work published in the journal. Among the nine relevant research articles published in *Cinema Journal/JCMS*, Israeli cinema is represented more than any other Middle Eastern national cinema: a full one-third of the articles focus on Israeli film and are written by Israelis. One of these articles concerns stereotypical representations of Palestinians from a soft-Zionist perspective that is critical of orientalism but refrains from questioning the settler-colonial nature of Israel or its cinema industry. A second

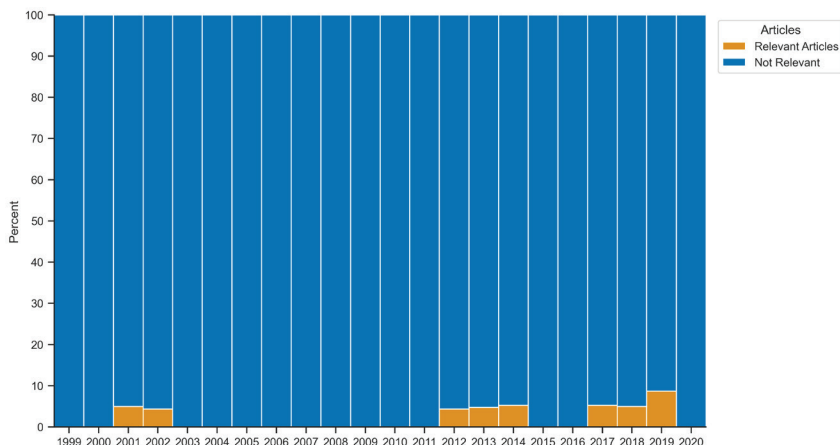


Figure 8. Percentage of Middle East Caucus articles by year. Visualization by Nina Lorenz.

article focuses on Israeli memory and trauma exclusive of Palestinian expressions of such phenomena, thus offering an implicitly Zionist perspective. A third article, co-authored by a white American, focuses on stereotyping within horror films produced by the Israeli film industry. Each of these articles engages in a recentering of Westernized analytic contexts and therefore fails to advance the mission of the Middle East Caucus, which is to decenter and decolonize critical and theoretical methodologies and epistemologies, particularly regarding cinemas of the Middle East region.

This recentering of Western narratives is also evident in the minimal attention to Arab cinema within the selected period of study. Of the nine relevant articles, only two concern Arab cinema, one of which appreciates a Tunisian director renowned for his perceived orientalist aestheticization of Sufism, whereas the other purports to problematize the representation of Americans in Egyptian cinema. Although their authors are Middle Eastern (Iranian and Yemeni, respectively), both of these articles were written by scholars hailing from area studies, an interdisciplinary field that has provided a space for developing a kind of research that film studies alone would not have made possible but that is known critically for its ongoing and historical role in fostering US cultural imperialism within the educational sphere.¹⁴ Not a single article within the selected parameters focuses on Palestinian cinema; the only article concerning the Palestinian struggle is written by a white European and engages a French *nouvelle vague* film directed by a white European. Important national film industries such as those of Syria, Morocco, and Lebanon, which have produced significant and innovative films, are also entirely ignored.

Re-Westernization is also evident in two articles that focus on American cinema. One article, a co-authored work, exposes CIA-influenced Holly-

14 See, for example, Hossein Khosrowjahi, "A Brief History of Area Studies and International Studies," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 33, no. 3–4 (Summer/Fall 2011): 131–142.

wood films that perpetuate ideological perspectives on the Middle East, while another—written by yet another non-film expert, a linguist—concerns American cinematic orientalism vis-à-vis Arabs and the Middle East. Re-Westernization is complicated, however, in each of two articles within the selected parameters that focus on non-Arab, non-Israeli cinema of the region. The first, written by an author of Turkish background, examines the Turkish reception of a Canadian-French co-production concerning the Armenian genocide, directed by a Canadian of Armenian-Egyptian background. The other challenges re-Westernization in Iranian cinema and its national-commercial iterations.

It bears mentioning that, excluding the Israeli film articles, only three articles within the selected parameters concern films actually produced in the Middle East region. Furthermore, not one of the subject films was directed by a woman, and less than half of the eleven authors are female, two of whom served as co-authors with men—an irony considering the vast attention within Western contexts to patriarchy in the Middle East.

QUEER AND TRANS CAUCUS

by Michael M. Reinhard

I studied the data set to draw conclusions about the representation of queer and trans media research in the journal. Out of 411 unique articles published between Fall 1999 and Spring 2020, I identified only twenty-four articles relevant to queer media studies (approximately 5.84 percent of all articles published). Figure 9 is a visualization of the traditional subtopics of analysis in our subfield. It is my hope that this graph recognizes existing critical strengths within the journal while spurring new research agendas on underexamined subjects in queer media studies.

Gay media studies accounted for fourteen of the twenty-four articles (58.3 percent), while lesbian studies accounted for only four (16.7 percent). There were no articles published on trans media, despite increased representation of trans characters in US media over the last decade. Overlapping with gay and lesbian categories, ten articles touched on aspects of queerness or queer identity specifically (41.7 percent). No articles touched on bisexuality, asexuality, or intersexuality. This suggests that while queer media studies were not well represented within the journal, gay subjects were relatively overrepresented compared to other subtopics relevant to the Queer and Trans Caucus.

Scholars publishing queer media studies within *JCMS* were more likely to be early career researchers. Six of the identified twenty-three authors were PhD students at the time of publication (approx.. 26.1 percent), while three authors each held the title of assistant professor or associate professor (approximately 13 percent each). Professors and authors of unspecified rank included two each (approx.. 8.7 percent each), while the roles of director, distinguished professor, postdoc, and research fellow accounted for one author each (approximately 4.3 percent each).

While reviewing authorship data, I grappled with several issues that challenged my analysis. For example, *JCMS* does not record the gender identities of its published authors. Authors' gender identities were determined through

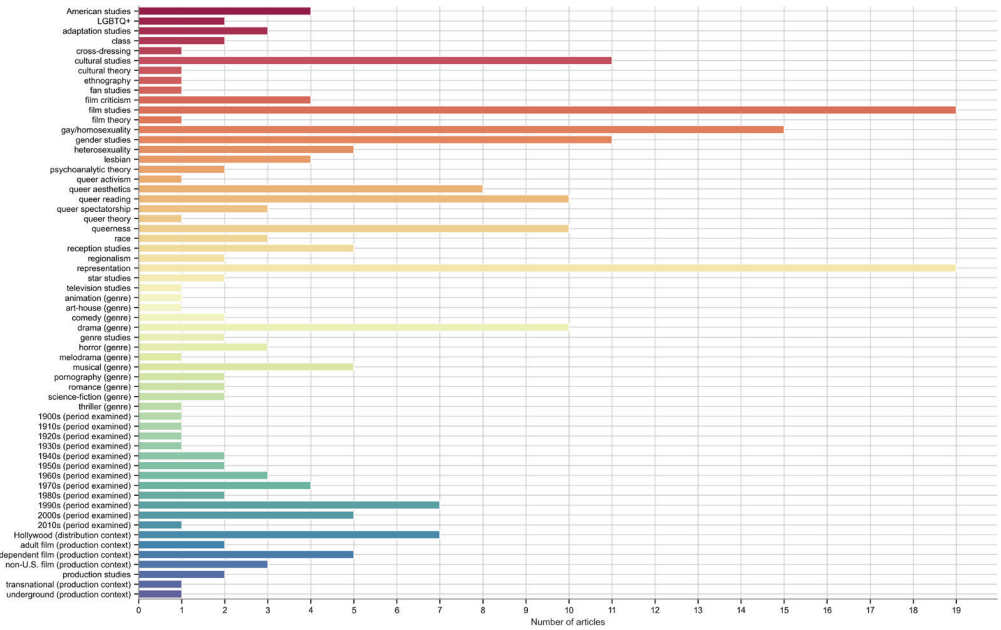


Figure 9. Frequency of queer media studies subtopics. Visualization by Nina Lorenz.

an analysis of pronoun usage and images used in online biographies. As queer scholars, we understand, among other issues here, the fallibility of determining gender identity according to momentary linguistic or socially constructed visual paradigms. Acknowledging these limitations, I found that thirteen of the twenty-three authors in this sample used masculine pronouns (56.5 percent), and authors using feminine pronouns accounted for roughly six (26.1 percent) of the published authors. Further complicating this analysis, however, is that no gender pronouns were used by the remaining four authors (17.4 percent). Consequently, a clear and non-problematic breakdown of cisgender, nonbinary, or trans identities could not be established. Methodological problems aside, journal data likely feature an overrepresentation of male-identified authors in its publishing of queer media studies.

In terms of race, similar issues were encountered due to this study's limitations. Out of the twenty-three authors examined, around 83 percent, or nineteen of these individuals, were determined to be white. Using US Census designations, one of these authors was of Middle Eastern descent (4.3 percent); Latinx authors accounted for 8.7 percent of these authors, whereas only one author (4.3 percent) was identified as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. Published queer and trans media research in *JCMS* featured clear racial biases, particularly given the absence of any African American or Black queer/trans authors. This lack of racial diversity among authors was mirrored in the sparse attention to race as a topic among those relevant articles

included in the journal. Only three of the twenty-four articles paid specific attention to issues of race (12.5 percent), and likewise only 12.5 percent of the articles focused on non-US media.

Despite methodological limitations, queer and trans media scholarship forms a smaller proportion than expected in *JCMS*. The data generally support the conclusion that queer and trans studies accepted for publication have over-indexed white, male-identified, and US authors as well as gay media studies. I recommend that *JCMS* review submission data to determine if editorial decisions in the submission process shape these biases. To provide more equity, the *JCMS* editors should strengthen planned efforts to increase the inclusion of trans, bisexual, asexual, and intersex media studies while encouraging submissions from non-white queer authors and research on non-white queer media subjects.

GENDER AND FEMINISMS CAUCUS

by Cynthia Baron

The Gender and Feminisms Caucus, formerly known as the Women's Caucus, strongly supports the intersectional approach of leading-edge feminist scholarship and is keenly interested in collaborating with the Asian/Pacific American, Black, Class, Latino/a, Middle East, and Queer and Trans Caucuses. To reflect those perspectives, I took an intersectional approach in this study, identifying articles on representations of women and masculinity as relevant to the caucus and relating each relevant article to two, sometimes three of the subtopics listed in the visualization (see Figure 10). Of the 411 articles published between Fall 1999 and Spring 2020, seventy-four (18 percent) are relevant to the caucus. The percentage of relevant articles per year varies, with the lowest percentage (9 percent) appearing in 2002 and the highest (31 percent) in 2017. The difference between 2002 and 2017 does not represent a general trend; the second highest percentage of relevant articles (28 percent) is in 2000, while the second lowest (9.1 percent) is in 2020.

The data set reveals that whiteness is the naturalized norm in the relevant articles. This finding has two components. The first is related to author demographics. There are 408 separate authors whose work was published between Fall 1999 and Spring 2020. Due to instances of co-authorship, the seventy-four relevant articles involve seventy-seven authors; 87 percent are non-Hispanic white. There are five Asian or Asian American authors (representing 6.5 percent of the scholars with relevant publications) and even fewer from other races or ethnic backgrounds. Relatedly, the high percentage of non-Hispanic white scholars coincides with that of journalists writing about film and television. For example, the University of Southern California Annenberg Inclusion Initiative examined 19,559 reviews and found that “white critics wrote 82 percent of the reviews and critics from underrepresented racial/ethnic backgrounds authored 18 percent.”¹⁵ There is one key difference between the results of the Annenberg and the *JCMS* studies. The

15 Marc Choueiti, Stacy L. Smith, and Katherine Pieper, “Critic’s Choice? Gender and Race/Ethnicity of Film Reviews across 100 Top Films of 2017,” *USC Annenberg School: Inclusion Initiative* (June 2018): 1, <https://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/critics-choice-2018.pdf>.

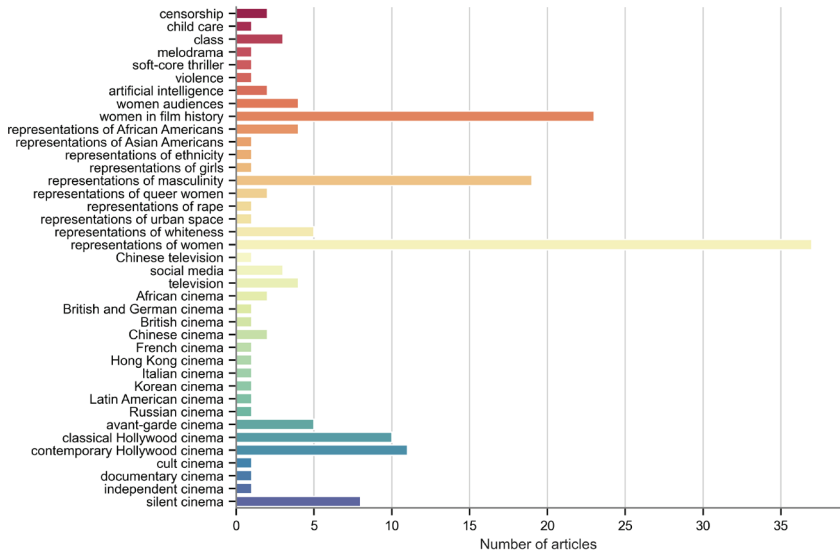


Figure 10. Gender and Feminisms Caucus article subtopics. Visualization by Nina Lorenz.

Annenberg study found that, of the reviews evaluated, “22.2 percent were written by females, with 77.8 percent crafted by male critics.”¹⁶ By contrast, in the *JCMS* study, of the seventy-six authors with publications relevant to the Gender and Feminisms Caucus, forty-three of them (59 percent) used feminine pronouns, twenty-six of them (34 percent) used masculine pronouns, one scholar used gender-neutral pronouns, and there is no data for six authors.

The second component of the articles’ naturalized whiteness concerns the scholarship itself, which rarely took an intersectional approach in the analyses of gender or film history. Figure 10 is a visual representation of the subtopics covered in all of the relevant articles. As mentioned, each of the seventy-four relevant articles fell into two and sometimes three subtopics; consequently there are 159 subtopic entries in total. The subtopics visualization also shows that thirty-six of the seventy-four articles focus on representations of women and that another nineteen discuss depictions of masculinity, making almost 75 percent of the relevant articles about gender representation.¹⁷ A large portion of the other relevant articles concern actual women in film history. However, there are only five articles that interrogate questions of whiteness and thirteen that consider representation or cinema history in ways that tacitly decenter whiteness. This means that 77 percent of the publications relevant to the caucus allow whiteness to be the naturalized

16 Choueiti, Smith, and Pieper, 1.

17 A few articles concerned representations or audience activities of girls; these were grouped with ones about women; some articles might have considered trans or non-binary gender expression, but those inquiries were not highlighted in the article titles or abstracts.

norm. Put another way, publications relevant to the caucus have only limited connections to work aligned with the Asian/Pacific American Caucus (six articles), the Black Caucus (five articles), the Caucus on Class (three articles), the Queer and Trans Caucus (two articles), the Latino/a Caucus (one article), and the Middle East Caucus (no articles). In other words, only 24 percent of the publications involve the type of intersectional research valued by active members of the caucus.

Figure 10 also shows that publications relevant to the caucus often concern Hollywood, with ten articles on contemporary Hollywood, ten on classical Hollywood, and seven on silent Hollywood cinema. Thus, 40 percent of the articles relevant to the caucus analyze mainstream American cinema. This emphasis means there are limited relevant publications on avant-garde cinema (five articles) or television (five articles), for example. The focus on mainstream American cinema also contributes to whiteness being a naturalized norm in the research. The relevant articles analyze films dating back more than a century, yet the research reflects and replicates dynamics dominant even in the twenty-first century. As the Annenberg Inclusion Initiative found in its study of 1,300 popular films released between 2007 and 2019, “[n]early two-thirds of the speaking or named characters assessed were White (65.7%).”¹⁸

As the data show, there are parallels between articles relevant to the caucus and white-dominated cinema and criticism. At the same time, there is a gap between trends in existing publications and contemporary caucus members’ commitment to intersectional feminist scholarship. Building on the official transition to the Gender and Feminisms Caucus, initiatives to coordinate with other caucuses, and current members’ intersectional research and teaching reflect that commitment. The caucus looks forward to fostering multidimensional feminist research and expanding members’ contributions to the outreach and equity initiatives of *JCMS*.

CONCLUSION: LIMITATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, PATHWAYS FORWARD

by TreaAndrea M. Russworm, Samantha N. Sheppard, Yelana Sims, and Nina Lorenz

As the preceding big picture and caucus analyses suggest, this modest study of the journal exposes a range of inequities. As Associate Co-Editors of Outreach and Equity, the major lessons for us from the data compiled and assessed are that 79 percent of published authors are white, 51.5 percent of authors used he/him pronouns, 50 percent of all peer-reviewed published articles are written by junior scholars, and only nine published articles in twenty years have been relevant to the interests of the Middle East Caucus. Even though we are left with a number of unanswered questions and no satisfactory immediate solutions for addressing these inequities in the journal, these conclusive insights about racial, gender, and topical disparities chal-

18 Annenberg Inclusion Initiative, “Inequality in 1,300 Popular Films: Examining Portrayals of Gender, Race/Ethnicity, LGBTQ and Disability from 2007 to 2019,” *USC Annenberg School: Inclusion Initiative* (September 2020): 3, https://assets.uscannenberg.org/docs/aii-inequality_1300_popular_films_09-08-2020.pdf.

lunge us to approach our work with the journal with a renewed, and more specific, sense of purpose.

Along with the other collaborators, we grappled with imperfect options for trying to tell a fuller story about the journal's enduring relationship to inequities and bias in academic publishing. We wanted to perform a longitudinal study to create a more definitive account of the journal since its inception in 1961. We had hoped that a broader study would either corroborate or refute the more anecdotal notion that *Cinema Journal* and *JCMS* mostly published white male authors who primarily wrote about canonical European and American films. Although we lacked the resources and means to do a more comprehensive study, the results of this twenty-year study indicate that these suspicions are, at least in recent years, not entirely true.

We wanted the team to prioritize discerning more about the identities of published authors, but we recognize the imprecision of figuring out specifics—especially in terms of race and ethnicity. This inexactness is dissatisfying even as the data has been illuminating. Indeed, as we discussed with Sims and Lorenz ways to get a better sense of who has published in the journal, we readily acknowledged that there are some thorny politics and values inherent in trying to read for race, nationality, and regional location. Yet, without a process already in place that tells us more about who submits to or publishes in the journal, their only option was to pull available information from Project Muse and online biographies. While many of the caucus collaborators knew more than we did about the identities of the published authors that they identified in their data sets, we also knew that there is no objective way to figure out this information. Future solutions to this problem might include hardwiring demographic data collection into the article submissions and peer-review process. This type of data collection will no doubt raise new questions about what happens to the information and whether or not disclosing information about race, gender, rank, and so on would unduly influence the process. It is entirely possible that scholars of color, women, gender-nonconforming scholars, and independent scholars will be concerned that this very type of data collection will only lead to increased gatekeeping and discrimination. To that end, we recommend that authors be given the option of voluntarily disclosing information such as race, gender identity, and professional status; authors should also be assured that such information will be separated from the articles before the internal and blind peer review process begins. We suggest making this study readily available to all SCMS members and potential *JCMS* authors, as well as information about how any demographic data collected will be used to facilitate systemic change. This will help explain the value of such data collection.

Work published in the journal only provides a sliver of information about the journal's publishing pipeline, since it does not reflect the vast number of articles submitted to but not published in the journal. With that in mind, we initially intended for this study to examine aspects of the peer review process in greater detail. We were specifically interested in learning more about articles that have been submitted for peer review but not published. Are the author demographics of who *submits* to the journal consistent with who actually *succeeds* in publishing in the journal? Are there

high submission rates of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) scholars who are ultimately rejected in the review process? What about the topics and themes—are certain topic areas rejected more often than others, either during desk review or peer review? And what might we learn by analyzing the demographic profiles of peer reviewers? These questions remain unanswered for now, due in part to a key structural limitation with data collection. It was not until 2017 that *JCMS* introduced a database and submission management platform for storing data about submissions and peer reviewers. For this reason, information on submissions (both accepted and rejected) was unavailable for most years of our analysis. We strongly recommend that the journal maintain a system that can collect this kind of information going forward. We also recommend collecting and analyzing the information that already exists. Once there are more consistent records of submissions, it would be extremely helpful to compare the journal's demographic information about reviewers, accepted authors, and rejected authors to studies of other journals and disciplines.

Some of the other limitations that shaped the data and analyses include the fact that we looked only at peer-reviewed articles over a relatively short period of time. We also know that the seven SCMS caucuses represented here do not reflect the totality of SCMS members, their backgrounds, and their varied interests in film and media, nor does SCMS represent all film and media scholars. However, we prioritized working with the caucuses because they were intended “to provide advocacy, fellowship, and networking opportunities for those who have been historically un- or underrepresented within SCMS, professional organizations, and the academy, based on race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or marginalized economic status.”¹⁹ Given those objectives, collaborating with the SCMS caucuses allowed us to better understand how well the journal has served and represented marginalized members. Even with SCMS's organizational focus and commitment to the caucuses, we noted that there remains an evident need for greater inclusiveness in *JCMS* as well as in the Society overall. Additional caucuses could speak to the interests and needs of other underrepresented groups, such as Indigenous scholars. Not only would having more caucuses dedicated to inclusion better support studies like this in the future, but the current limited number of caucuses could also deter non-members who are assessing whether the organization and its journal are truly committed to their stated missions of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Other ways to improve on this study involve including more collaborators who could add new and dynamic research questions to the project. Representatives from SCMS's Scholarly Interest Groups (SIGs), for example, would have been able to offer more thematic and topical analyses that stretch beyond and intersect with what the caucuses were able to consider here in this study. One approach that might be more manageable than seeking collaborators from each of the thirty-six current SIGs would be to invite volun-

19 “Caucuses,” Society for Cinema and Media Studies, <https://www.cmstudies.org/page/caucuses>.

teers from the organization as a whole, who could self-identify specific questions, trends, and issues to explore. Obviously, a collaborative writing project of an even larger scope that includes many more people introduces new challenges to navigate that are not always familiar to humanities-centered scholars, ourselves included.

Regarding the relationships among the SIGs and caucuses, we also would have liked to consider the ways the journal reflects or reinforces existing relations—hierarchical, intersectional, and otherwise—among the various membership units. Given that nearly all of the caucus collaborators reflected on an obvious need for more interdisciplinarity and intersectional scholarship in the journal, we wonder to what extent there are opportunities and concerted, supported efforts for numerous groups to collaborate on their publishing endeavors, specifically. We know that there are often co-sponsored panels and workshops at the annual conference, but how often do those efforts influence the content of published works or lead to collaborative approaches to academic writing?

Since we were unable to analyze the journal's In Focus dossiers—which might showcase more intersectional collaborations—we stop short of fully recommending that *JCMS* begin publishing themed special issues. The publication of peer-reviewed special issues might be a partial solution, but we are also aware that special issues could adversely affect the submission-to-publication timeline for all authors. Instead of shifting to a special issues model of publication, the journal's editors might continue to seek out more nuanced approaches to studying the journal's history and content, including In Focus dossiers, to better address questions of intersectionality and involve more members at the planning, data set creation, and analysis stages of the study.

While we ultimately share many of the frustrations that many caucus collaborators (particularly Nina Cartier) expressed regarding both the efficacy and impact of data-based assessments like this one, Russworm and Sheppard have been active in trying to change the culture of the journal irrespective of the numbers. As *JCMS*'s first (and hopefully not last!) Associate Co-Editors of Outreach and Equity, Russworm and Sheppard have worked independently and in collaboration with the *JCMS* masthead team, including Editor Caetlin Benson-Allott; SCMS's Antiracism, Equity and Diversity Committee; and the SCMS Board of Directors to make lasting, structural changes that support underrepresented scholars and scholars working in marginalized fields. The new publishing and facilitated peer review initiatives have been highly successful in this regard. We intended this study to be another route to address equity issues, in that it would concretize disparities in order to hold *JCMS* and SCMS accountable to make positive changes in the future.

Finally, as we were inspired by preceding studies, we encourage other journals to engage in similar self-studies in ways that may identify other inequities in academic publishing and enable future comparative studies across fields. We hope this study's findings, the caucus collaborators' reflections, and our recommendations inspire readers to imagine new ways in which the journal can better represent a wide range of interests and

become a flagship destination for publishing the work of scholars who have been historically excluded.

Yelana Sims is a doctoral candidate in the W.E.B. Du Bois Department of Afro-American Studies at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Her research interrogates Black women's historical and current relationship to technology and innovation in the American racial and capitalistic state.

Nina Lorenz holds an MA in English from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. Currently, she is an analyst for data and analytics at the Business Application Research Center (BARC). She is co-author of blog posts, articles, and research studies within the field of data and analytics.