

Femifesto: Feminist Framework for Radical Knowledge Collaboration



Background

Our team was a participant in the [2019 Triangle Scholarly Communication Institute](#). The theme for the institute in 2019 was “Equity in Scholarly Communications.” Our team members were and continue to be active in the field and committed advocates for diversity, equity, and inclusion in Scholarly Communications. The original members of the team are Gimena del Rio Riande, Sandra Aya Enimil, Sharon E. Farb, April Hathcok, Ivonne Lujano and Charlotte Roh.

Initially, our team was planning to develop a Feminist-Centered Collaborative Scholarly Communication Living Toolkit/Caja Viva de Herramientas para la Comunicación Académica, Collaborative y Feminista. As we stated in our 2019 application, “each of us has experienced the inequities inherent in the scholarly communications landscape on a number of fronts. We know what it means to operate in a scholarly communications system rooted in inequity and oppression, and we are committed to bringing an intersectional –taking account of multiple levels of oppression (Kimbererle Crenshaw, 1991)- feminist approach to bear in our work.”

Our goal at the outset was “to create and disseminate the first ever multilingual feminist centered toolkit to address challenges and opportunities in the broad field of scholarly communications that has practical use in local contexts. In the time after commencing our work at SCI in 2019, through reflection and discussion, our focus evolved into creating a framework for thinking through equitable collaboration in knowledge work with a feminist lens. We rebranded our project and work to reflect the change in focus to *Femifesto: Feminist Framework for Radical Knowledge Collaboration*.

The Femifesto has been translated into several languages including Spanish, Portuguese, Simplified Chinese and English using Open Source github platform tools <https://femifesto.github.io/Femifesto/>.

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Continuing the Conversation

We are returning to SCI to discuss the Femifesto with a broad audience. COVID disrupted the work we hoped to do but the tool remains critical. We look forward to connecting with colleagues in scholarly communications who might make use of the framework.

The project and work continue. Following the conclusion of SCI in 2019 our team continued to meet via zoom quarterly. April Hathcock shared the highlights of the team and work in her blog *At the Intersection* <https://aprilhathcock.wordpress.com/tag/femifesto/>. We also posted our work in progress using Open Source tools on [etherpad](#). The etherpad site was repeatedly trolled and hacked so we decided to move to github <https://femifesto.github.io/Femifesto/>. The Femifesto is made available under a Creative Commons, [CC-BY-SA 4.0 license](#).

We had plans to share our work at conferences and through social media when COVID shut down nearly all in-person gatherings so we regrouped and made several virtual presentations including to [University Information Policy Officers](#). This group includes librarians, archivists, lawyers, and scholarly communication experts in North America (and now the United Kingdom). The Femifesto was also presented at the College and Research Libraries and the [FORCE11 Scholarly Communication Institute](#). We have been asked to conduct workshops and have provided tools and guidance for others to host their own Femifesto workshops. Additionally, several people have contacted us about utilizing the Femifesto in their collaborative work and processes.

Since working on the Femifesto, we have expanded membership based on open calls to also include: Lingyu Wang, Mantra Roy, Hope O' Keefe and Molly Keener. Lingyu developed badges that can be used online: <https://femifesto.github.io/Femifesto/femifesto-badge/>. The new members represent North, Central and Latin America and have physical, emotional and familiar ties to Mexico, U.S., Argentina, Ghana, China, Korea and Southeast Asia.

We are connected to members of the Femifesto through a listserv. As April expressed in her blog, "ultimately, we wanted to build something that would help others think through and engage with collaborative work centered on the radical empowerment of the collective and the dismantling of oppressive systems and practices."

We are open to expanding our team and community and to continue to present and engage with those interested in equity and anti-oppressive practices in scholarly communications. We would also like to develop and expand outreach and training and perhaps work with instructional designers and others to make this work more accessible to communities of practitioners around the world.

Femifesto Framework

Crucial to the success is the Femifesto framework itself including the introductory reflection that includes 3 questions:

- 1) How has the patriarchy affected you?
- 2) How has the patriarchy impacted your work?
- 3) how have you been complicit in perpetuating the patriarchy?

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Following the reflection, the framework relies in a set of overarching principles still very relevant today including: Ethics of Care/ Ethical Approach, Intersectional Lens, Radical, Inclusive, Language matters/ lenguaje se importa, Not one size fits all, Process more important than product or deliverables, Importance of repatriation. The framework then focuses on three main areas of knowledge work all still of critical importance today and for the future including: 1) Building and empowering relationships, 2) Developing anti-oppressive description and metadata, and 3) Engaging in ethical and inclusive dissemination and publication. The Femifesto includes each area followed by a set of principles, some examples, and best practices.

The interruptions caused by COVID shutdowns slowed down our progress but, the work is as relevant today as it was in 2019. We are also interested in implementing lessons from COVID and post-COVID times. We are eager to reconnect with SCI colleagues and teams and recharge our efforts and solicit new feedback and suggestions and interest. We also hope to expand our community.

Starting out as a project at the 2019 Triangle Scholarly Communications Institute, the Femifesto has grown into a global, multilingual, feminist- centered community and framework for a variety of international as well as local scholarly communication contexts.

Original Members of the Femifesto team

Jimena del Rio Riande is a researcher at the Seminario de Edición y Crítica Textual (IIBICRIT) of the National Scientific and Technical Research Council (CONICET. Buenos Aires, Argentina) and Professor at the University of Salvador in Buenos Aires (USAL).

Sandra Aya Enimil is the Director for Scholarly Communication and Collection Strategy at Yale University Library.

Sharon E. Farb is retired, she is a former Associate University Librarian at the University of California, Los Angeles.

April Hathcock is the Associate Dean for Open Knowledge and Faculty Affairs at New York University Libraries.

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