

WSA Response to Open Letter from Iatropoulos and Nadkarni, 1 July 2020

Dear WSA Members,

Last week two long-time members of the Whedon Studies Association posted a letter detailing the ways in which they had witnessed or experienced the WSA participating and/or being complicit in systematic racism and white supremacy. The board and officers of the WSA acknowledge that as an academic institution the association is inevitably steeped in whiteness, white privilege, and white supremacy.

The WSA acknowledges and apologizes for the harm caused by the organization or its individual members through our silence, inattention, actions, or inaction. This includes the silence of our scholarship in not doing enough to foreground racism and other representational problems in the work of Joss Whedon. This includes not speaking loudly enough in support of those members who identify those silences. This includes not recognizing the harm and pain caused by operating within exclusive, white spaces (both physical and virtual) that are unsafe for members of colour but might be comfortable and friendly to white members. This includes mistakes made in how we have responded to the letter.

We commit to doing and being better. We are currently considering courses of action. Undoubtedly, we will make mistakes. Whatever the future holds for the WSA, it will be one determined by principles of inclusion and justice.

Sincerely,

The WSA Officers and Board Members