2019 ACRL President’s Program
Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Blog Series

Prepared by Hallie Clawson
With Lauren Pressley, Rebecca Miller Waltz, Jason Sokoloff, Natasha E. Johnson, Rachel Rubin, and Leo Lo

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Table of Contents

Foreword ........................................................................................................................................... 3

Background on ACRL’s EDI Core Commitment .................................................................................. 3

2018-2019 ACRL President’s Program Planning Committee ............................................................. 3

Recognizing All Contributors ............................................................................................................ 4

ALA Midwinter 2019 ACRL President’s Forum .................................................................................. 6

Climbing the Stairs to Diversity & Inclusion Success ......................................................................... 6

Dr. Terryl Ross ..................................................................................................................................... 6

ALA Annual 2019 ACRL President’s Program ................................................................................... 7

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion... and Leadership: Where Do We Go from Here? ................................. 7

Dr. Angela Spranger ........................................................................................................................... 7

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Blog Series ....................................................................................... 8

Introducing the ACRL President’s Program EDI Discussion Series ................................................. 8

Incorporating Intergroup Dialogue into the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Conversation ............... 9

The Role of Empathy in Improving Academic Library Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives .................. 12

From Safe Spaces to Brave Spaces ...................................................................................................... 16

Climbing the Stairs: a New Model for Organizational Change from Dr. Terryl Ross . 18


Fostering Inclusivity Through Improved Recruitment Practices ....................................................... 23

“It’s not me, it’s you”: The Problem of Retention in Librarianship ...................................................... 27

Metadata Justice: At the Intersection of Social Justice and Cataloging .......................................... 31

Let’s talk theories!: Incorporating queer, feminist, and critical theory into our teaching practice ........................................................................................................................................ 35

More than a Thought Experiment: Designing Anti-Oppressive Events and Instruction ..................... 38

Spotlight on EDI in Community Colleges ......................................................................................... 42

Five Ways to Foster Individual Responsibility and Transform Libraries ........................................... 46

“Walking the Walk” of Inclusion: Assessment Resources that Support Equity in Learning, Teaching and Mentoring ........................................................................................................ 48

What Does EDI Work Look Like in LIS Education? .......................................................................... 51
New Day, New Way: Engaging HBCUs and Students of Color in Diversity Recruitment and Collaboration ................................................................. 54
Counting down to Annual .............................................................................. 58
Realizing Inclusive Work Environments .......................................................... 59
Reflection and Conclusion of the EDI Discussion Series ............................... 61
Featured Authors ............................................................................................... 63
Ione T. Damasco ............................................................................................... 63
Downing, Munson, Clowney-Robinson, Nichols, & Look .................................. 63
Samantha Hines ................................................................................................. 65
Jensen, Stoner, & Castillo-Speed ...................................................................... 65
Kathryn Kjaer ................................................................................................... 67
Adriene Lim ....................................................................................................... 67
Amanda Meeks .................................................................................................. 68
Powell & Zepeda ............................................................................................... 68
Tina D. Rollins .................................................................................................. 69
Edith Scarletto .................................................................................................. 69
Kellee E. Warren ............................................................................................... 70
Helene Williams ................................................................................................. 70
Katherine Yngve ............................................................................................... 71
Compiled Reading List ...................................................................................... 72
Foreword

Background on ACRL’s EDI Core Commitment
ACRL has long recognized that equity, diversity, and inclusion work has a place in academic libraries. The ACRL Diversity Committee, and the Diversity Alliance, have done and continue to do great work over the years. It has become apparent, however, that diversity work must be woven into the foundation of an organization, or else those who fight for social justice, underrepresented people throughout libraries, and the entire profession are at a disadvantage. During 2018 and 2019, ACRL has moved to formalize an organizational commitment to EDI which permeates and is supported at all levels of the organization.

At the 2018 ALA Midwinter Meeting in Denver, CO, the ACRL Board of Directors voted to add a signature initiative focused on incorporating EDI principles throughout the organization to the ACRL Plan of Excellence. The signature initiative format was chosen as opposed to adding a goal area, to counteract the possibility of this work being “siload”. It also gives added legitimacy to ACRL’s social justice efforts. The eventual language of the initiative was changed to a Core Commitment, as follows:

“ACRL is dedicated to creating diverse and inclusive communities in the Association and in academic and research libraries. This core commitment permeates the work of the Association, cutting across all ACRL sections, committees, interest and discussion groups, and communities of practice. The Association will acknowledge and address historical racial inequities; challenge oppressive systems within academic libraries; value different ways of knowing; and identify and work to eliminate barriers to equitable services, spaces, resources, and scholarship.”

2018-2019 ACRL President’s Program Planning Committee
The ACRL President’s Program provides an opportunity for the current ACRL President to address a library issue of professional interest that may benefit the field. Traditionally, the Program is an event at the ALA Annual Conference, organized by the President’s Program Committee and financed by ACRL. Lauren Pressley, who served as President from 2018-2019, asked her committee to take the new Core Commitment to heart as we planned her Program. To emphasize importance of the Commitment, she chose a theme of organizational change in support of EDI.

The Committee supplemented the usual single event with a discussion forum at ALA Midwinter 2019 and a series of blog posts. Our program aimed to provide resources for learning and advocating for improvements across academic libraries. Our goal was to learn and grow together, and reiterate our belief that a more welcoming, more supportive, and safer academic library world is possible for all.
The Planning Committee included: Lauren Pressley, ACRL President; Rebecca Miller Waltz, Committee Chair; Hallie Clawson; Mrs. Natasha Elizabeth Johnson; Leo S. Lo; Dr. Rachel G. Rubin; and Jason Sokoloff.

We established the following learning outcomes for library workers who chose to engage with our program, either by attending the events or by reading our blog series or both. By the end of the series, followers should be able to:

- Identify and use resources for learning about topics related to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI);
- Reflect on organizational change in support of EDI and advocate for improvements within the profession and at your home institution;
- Engage with colleagues across the field in a discussion about EDI and the changing future of academic libraries.

**Recognizing All Contributors**

This Program owes its existence to whole communities, not the Planning Committee alone. Inspired in part by the ACRL Open and Equitable Scholarly Communication report (Maron & Kennison, 2019), we would like to offer our gratitude to the following individuals and groups who have contributed to or shared this work with us.

First and foremost, our two conference speakers and nineteen featured authors who contributed posts to the EDI Discussion Series all shared their time, experiences, and knowledge. There would have been no Program without them. In addition, ACRL staff members gave us the behind-the-scenes support to create the LibGuide and promote the blog series through ACRL communication channels. We would especially like to thank David Free, Megan Griffin, and Mary Ellen Davis.

We are grateful to those who have prepared the ground for this work. This includes Trevor Dawes, whose leadership shaped the 2019 ACRL Conference, especially the theme of “Recasting the Narrative” and the slate of EDI-focused speakers and events. The proactive work of Margot Conahan and Tory Ondrla enabled the success of that conference and its programming. The ACRL Diversity Committee members, especially Federico Martinez-Garcia, Derrick Jefferson, and Tarida Anantachai, have invested tirelessly in the future of the field, especially for library workers of color. Other ACRL scholars and librarians who have inspired, challenged, and walked with us this year include Wanda Brown and Kaetrena Davis Kendrick.

The support of the ACRL Board for the Core Commitment and for Pressley’s focus on EDI has been indispensable. They have participated in extensive EDI training during Pressley’s tenure as president, to demonstrate and realize the ideals to which they have committed. Cheryl Middleton’s program at the 2018 ALA Annual Conference, which discussed ways that institutions can care for their employees, was an ideal gateway into our theme of organizational change towards EDI. We are excited to see how current
ACRL President Karen Munro will continue this theme, with a focus on inviting library users into the conversation.

Of course, this work is not happening only at ACRL but throughout ALA. The Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services remains a staunch champion for diversification within and of libraries. Past President Loida Garcia-Febo has been gracious in calling attention to our blog series as well as other EDI resources, in addition to creating her own initiatives.

Our Program would not be possible without the dedicated leaders and thinkers within ALA and ACRL who have been doing diversity and equity for decades. Nor can we discount the member volunteers who are committed partners in improving the inclusiveness and transparency of the field through division and section engagement. We have inevitably forgotten many others who deserve credit and gratitude, so we offer our humble thanks and sincere apologies to all those we have certainly left out.

Finally, we would not be able to do this work without the support of family, friends, and colleagues at home, within our own institutions, and across the field.

Thank you.
ALA Midwinter 2019 ACRL President’s Forum
This Committee organized an additional President’s Program event for ALA Midwinter 2019 in Seattle, WA. Reproduced here is the event description and a link to the official ALA scheduler. Hallie Clawson summarized the workshop in a blog post for the EDI Discussion Series on February 6th.

Climbing the Stairs to Diversity & Inclusion Success
Discussion Forum with Dr. Terryl Ross, Assistant Dean of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, University of Washington College of the Environment.

This interactive workshop will present a new diversity and inclusion organizational model. Together, we will discuss all five levels of this model and what it takes to realistically move your organization to the next level.

Saturday, January 26, 1-2 p.m.
Location: Grand Hyatt Seattle, Princessa 1

Dr. Terryl Ross

Dr. Terryl Ross is the Assistant Dean of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at the University of Washington College of the Environment. He collaborates with College of the Environment stakeholders to envision diversity, equity and inclusion efforts across the College. He works to accomplish these goals through empowering the College’s diversity champions, his commitment to environmental justice and focusing on efforts that will make the biggest impact.

Dr. Ross has worked in EDI for well over 30 years, including at University of Washington Bothell, Oregon State University, and Green River Community College. In 2012, he also traveled the country with his film project MOSAIC Nation Tour.
Equity, Diversity, Inclusion... and Leadership: Where Do We Go from Here?

Issues of equity in diverse workplaces, and the trend towards more inclusive language and policies, often leaves leaders in the difficult position of navigating the needs of the organization and the need to help the organization accommodate today's workforce. How can leaders effectively influence and motivate their teams, when the individuals on those teams struggle with the challenges of poor communication, collaboration, culture, change and conflict? Dr. Angela Spranger, author of *Why People Stay: Helping Your Employees Feel Seen, Safe, and Valued* addresses contemporary issues around diversity, leadership, and inclusiveness throughout the employment lifecycle. Through intensive dialogue, shared narrative, and humor supporting the theoretical material, Dr. Spranger shares an approach to inclusive leadership that leaves participants energized and engaged.

Saturday, June 22, 10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.
Location: Walter E. Washington Convention Center (WCC), 146A
[Click here to view this session on the ALA Annual calendar and add it to your schedule.](#)

Dr. Angela Spranger

Dr. Angela Spranger, SPHR, SHRM-SCP, is an Assistant Professor in Management at the Luter School of Business, Christopher Newport University, as well as the owner of StepOne Consulting LLC. She provides consulting services in management, human resources, and labor/management relations, as well as doing scholarly work on these topics. Her book *Why People Stay: Helping Your Employees Feel Seen, Safe, and Valued*, was published by Routledge in 2018.
Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Blog Series
Our EDI blog series has been the biggest expansion of the 2019 ACRL President’s Program. This series was announced at the end of 2018 through ACRL Insider and is hosted on an ACRL LibGuide. The main page is accessible here: https://acrl.libguides.com/c.php?g=899144&p=6468805.

In late 2018, the Committee solicited blog posts from presenters at the 2018 Joint Conference of Librarians of Color and through our own professional networks. Once submitted, they were edited and uploaded by the committee members and released to the public, with new posts typically every week or two. Also released at the same time were short biographies and photographs of each guest author.

The blog series is reproduced here as published, in chronological order for ease of reading. Following the posts, we have also reproduced the Featured Author list. A feature unique to this document is the compiled reading list, which includes the full bibliographical list from the entire seven-month series; this can be found on page 71.

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Introducing the ACRL President’s Program EDI Discussion Series
December 19th, 2018

URL: https://acrl.libguides.com/c.php?g=899144&p=6468942&t=31788

*To introduce our blog series, we are reprinting here ACRL President Lauren Pressley’s announcement of the beginning of this series, originally released on ACRL Insider:*

The ACRL President’s Program provides an opportunity for the current ACRL president to address a library issue of professional interest that may benefit the field. The program has traditionally involved an event at the ALA Annual Conference. This year we are aiming to supplement this event with an additional event at the ALA Midwinter Meeting and a series of blog posts to facilitate discussion throughout this year. My presidential program focuses on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) in support of ACRL’s [Core Commitment] to EDI.

The discussion starts with this blog, where the program planning committee and invited authors will provide insights on a variety of EDI topics and issues facing our profession. The goal is to provide resources for learning and advocating for improvements. We hope to learn and grow together, and reiterate our belief that a more welcoming, more supportive, and safer academic library world is possible for all.
While these posts aim to reach a wide audience, ALA conference-goers will have the opportunity to attend two scheduled events focused on organizational change in support of EDI:

- **2019 ALA Midwinter Meeting / Saturday, January 26, 1-2 p.m.**
  - Discussion Forum with Dr. Terryl Ross, Assistant Dean of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, University of Washington College of the Environment
  - This interactive workshop will present a new diversity and inclusion organizational model. Together, we will discuss all five levels of this model and what it takes to realistically move your organization to the next level.

- **2019 ALA Annual Conference / Saturday, June 22, 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m.**
  - “Equity, Diversity, Inclusion... and Leadership: Where Do We Go From Here?” with Dr. Angela Spranger, Christopher Newport University.
  - Dr. Spranger, author of *Why People Stay: Helping Your Employees Feel Seen, Safe, and Valued* addresses contemporary issues around diversity, leadership, and inclusiveness throughout the employment lifecycle. Through intensive dialogue, shared narrative, and humor supporting the theoretical material, Dr. Spranger shares an approach to inclusive leadership that leaves participants energized and engaged.

I also want to thank the ACRL President’s Program Committee for all their work to support this series and our events. I have been inspired by their enthusiasm and work towards these goals: Hallie Clawson, Natasha Johnson, Leo Lo, Rebecca K. Miller (chair), Rachel Rubin, Jason Sokoloff, and Megan R. Griffin (staff liaison). I look forward to sustained conversation and work in support of making our field a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive community.

**Lauren Pressley**
**ACRL President 2018-2019**
Director of the UW Tacoma Library and Associate Dean of University Libraries
University of Washington, Tacoma

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Incorporating Intergroup Dialogue into the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Conversation
January 4th, 2019

URL: [https://acrl.libguides.com/c.php?g=899144&p=6468942&t=32314](https://acrl.libguides.com/c.php?g=899144&p=6468942&t=32314)

Our first post comes from **Ione T. Damasco**, Coordinator of Cataloging & Professor at the University of Dayton Libraries. Learn more about our guest authors on our [Featured Authors](#) page.
The words equity, diversity, and inclusion get used a lot these days, in our libraries, in our professional associations, and in higher education. Sometimes these words get lumped together as a catchall phrase—or its “EDI” shorthand. But there is one more crucial phrase missing from this string of connected concepts: social justice. What is social justice? Education scholar Lee Anne Bell defines social justice as both a goal and a process. As a goal, social justice is the “full and equitable participation of people from all social identity groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs.” As a process, reaching that goal should be “democratic and participatory,” respectful of human diversity and difference, inclusive and affirming of our capacity to collaborate to create change.

Achieving socially just outcomes requires the ability to engage across differences in honest, authentic, and meaningful ways. But we live in an era of divisive rhetoric, superficial one-way monologues on social media (asynchronous message threads, 140-character strings, and anonymous posts), and a 24-hour news cycle that provides a barrage of information—often biased—with little depth or context. How can libraries play a role in facilitating the kind of engagement that can lead to socially just outcomes for the communities of which we are a part? In order to do this work at an institutional or systemic level, what kind of self-work at the individual level do we need to do? Current initiatives at ALA such as the “Libraries Transforming Communities: Models for Change Initiative” demonstrate how academic libraries can develop dialogue-based programming to increase community engagement, especially during politically charged and socially divisive times. The LTC initiative focuses on the model of deliberative dialogue, but I would like to introduce another dialogue model, intergroup dialogue (IGD), that explicitly connects dialogic praxis to social justice outcomes.

Intergroup dialogue (IGD) was originally developed in the 1980s at the University of Michigan during a period of heightened racial tension on its campus. IGD encourages intergroup communication as a means of mitigating conflict that occurs as a result of social group identity differences. IGD also brings people from different social identity groups together in sustained, facilitated learning experiences in order to advance social justice, equity, and peace. IGD is unique among other dialogue frameworks because it intentionally surfaces issues of power, privilege, and systemic oppression around social identities as being central to both the content (what we talk about) and process (how we talk about it) of dialogue. In other words, who we are matters—our identities shape the ways in which we communicate, the dynamics of how we relate to one another, and how certain issues show up in our lives.

Formal implementation of IGD (at the University of Michigan and other colleges and universities) has often occurred in the form of a semester-long course for college students who self-identify as holding specific social identities. For example, an IGD course focused on race would have roughly equal numbers of students who identify as white and students who identify as persons of color. Over the course of the semester, these participants are guided through a process of experiential learning within group dialogue settings where they examine their individual social identities, then situate
those identities within the larger dynamics of systemic and structural privilege and oppression that create stratification among social identity groups. Along the way, participants develop dialogic skills such as active listening and affirmative inquiry that allow for sustained communication even in the face of challenging topics. By the end, the hope is that participants from seemingly oppositional social identity groups develop alliances to find ways to resist and undo oppressive structures and systems that have been identified as part of their learning experience.

Much has been written about IGD, and there are many resources that provide thorough description of the four stages that comprise the formal IGD framework, as well as numerous case studies of IGD use in curricular and co-curricular programs. While developing a credit-bearing course focused on IGD might not be a viable option for you at your institution, there is much we can adapt from the IGD framework that can be incorporated into the work we do in libraries. At my institution, the University Libraries hosted a half-day professional development workshop that gave library employees the time and the space to explore their own social identities, and then make connections among power, privilege, and oppression. We used small group and large group discussions to engage in authentic dialogue around our different lived experiences. These conversations were challenging and at times uncomfortable, but creating a dedicated space with skilled facilitators conversant in issues of equity, diversity, inclusion and social justice encouraged everyone to think about privilege and oppression at the individual level, the institutional level, and finally at the larger systemic and societal levels. We closed the workshop with a prompt for everyone to consider: Now that we have a foundational understanding of identity, power, privilege, and oppression, what can we do as individuals, as a work group, and as a library to ensure we are making our campus more inclusive and equitable?

These are not conversations typically had by librarians and library workers, which is ironic, considering how often we host programs for the public that touch upon these issues. How often do we partner with units on campus like those in multicultural student services, or campus diversity offices, to host events such as film screenings and discussions on diversity-related topics? But we often don’t take the time to do the work on an individual level to understand the very same topics we offer to others for consideration. In order to make changes at the systemic level (and this is the heart of social justice work), we have to start with understanding ourselves. We have to make the time and space to be reflective, to be challenged, to listen to those who have been oppressed, and to strategize ways to be real allies in resisting oppression to ensure equity for all.

The Role of Empathy in Improving Academic Library Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives
January 16th, 2019

URL: https://acrl.libguides.com/c.php?g=899144&p=6468942&t=32747

This post comes from Adriene Lim, Dean of Libraries and Philip H. Knight Chair at the University of Oregon (UO). Learn more about our guest authors on our Featured Authors page.

At this point, most academic librarians are well aware of the lack of proportionate racial and ethnic diversity in the US library profession; this has been documented and examined in numerous studies and articles in our disciplinary literature. This disappointing state should motivate us to achieve better results as we embark on the new year. We know that continuing to address these issues is the right thing to do from a moral standpoint, in terms of demonstrating our commitment to our library values and the equitable treatment of our colleagues, but the effectiveness of our programs and services also depends upon including more people of color in our organizations and at our leadership tables.

Through our institutions and associations, we have tried to address these racial and ethnic diversity gaps for more than two decades, but our diversity and inclusion initiatives have not yet significantly changed the levels of underrepresented groups in our profession. A 2017 report on diversity released by the College and University Professional Association for Human Resources (CUPA-HR) found that the administrative leadership composition of academic libraries was among the least diverse, racially and ethnically, of other units on U.S. campuses. Academic libraries fared better only when compared to groups charged with fundraising and public relations. This stark picture again illustrates the powerful, systemic forces that maintain our society’s racial hierarchies, helped along by the reluctance of some in our profession to grapple with the racism affecting our community. Yet, for those of us who attribute such outcomes to unwanted supremacist ideologies and systems of inequality, we must not be deterred from trying new approaches. We must strengthen our resolve to counteract these negative forces, by asking: What can we do differently to improve the equitable recruitment and advancement of colleagues of color in our organizations? How can we improve the retention of colleagues of color, especially once they have advanced to leadership positions and face new obstacles and racialized pressures in the
monolithic academy? How can we move beyond serving as mere advocates for diversity and inclusion to becoming actively anti-racist in our approaches?

Before we can tackle these questions in a meaningful way, I believe we must do a better job of infusing interpersonal empathy into our discussions and approaches. A good definition of empathy comes from Michael Ventura in his book *Applied Empathy: The New Language of Leadership*:

> Empathy is about understanding. Empathy lets us see the world from other points of view and helps us form insights that can lead to new and better ways of thinking, being, and doing. Empathy... is a skill that each of us can make a part of our daily practice and ultimately bring into the organizations we serve.³

Learning to have more empathy for others can help us become better leaders and more caring, ethical librarians. We need to infuse diversity and equity into our professional and organizational interactions, because it is the connections we make with real people and their experiences and stories, that deepen our understanding and inform our strategies for the much-needed change in our profession.

One personal action we can take to become more empathetic is to engage in continuous learning about the intractable racist frames that affect the way we engage, work, and respond in our environments. This understanding is not easy to incorporate into long-standing paradigms but tackling these forces with fewer euphemisms and with stronger theoretical backgrounds will enable us to empathize at deeper levels with our colleagues of color about the barriers and differential treatment they face on a daily basis. It can also lead to fewer reactions of defensiveness, emotional distress, umbrage, and denials from white colleagues. This is key to our ability to achieve transformative change.

I call upon all of us to read and/or revisit the scholarship about critical librarianship and the passionate calls to action about race that can be found in our disciplinary literature.⁴ I also encourage colleagues to read Robin DiAngelo’s *White Fragility: Why It’s So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*, Derald Wing Sue’s *Race Talk and the Conspiracy of Silence: Understanding and Facilitating Difficult Dialogues on Race*, Ijeoma Oluo’s *So You Want to Talk About Race*, and to consider all of the seminal works listed on Zeba Blay’s “16 Books about Race That Every White Person Should Read”, to expand the foundational underpinnings about the systemic nature of the situation at hand. Let us think of this as a massive, intensive common-reading initiative in which we can absorb, reflect, and come to the table well prepared to devise the more-effective strategies we need to affect substantial, lasting change in the years ahead.

Another step toward interpersonal empathy is to improve our capacity to listen to and consider the perspectives of colleagues of color in our library gatherings. As an Asian American woman who has served as the appointed library leader at three universities, I have witnessed the myriad ways in which colleagues in the academy and our profession reinforce the racial status quo. If a leader of color is perceived to have crossed a racial
boundary in a discussion, then silencing behaviors, institutional exclusions, and
differential treatment often ensue. In my experiences, leaders of color, both inside and
outside the library, have learned to share their personal perspectives on race or describe
their encounters with macro- and micro-aggressions with care and caution, and only on
rare occasions — such as meetings intentionally focused on the topic of diversity, or in
situations where the experiences can be addressed in as non-personal, analytical, or
abstract a manner as possible. Too many of us have experienced professional and
political fallout from attempting to communicate honestly about race in our
predominantly white libraries, institutions, and associations. This is not to imply that
leaders of color are silent on all such occasions, but when we do speak up, we know it
will likely cost us in some way, so we pick our battles prudently. My observation has
been affirmed anecdotally by several other library leaders of color. Improving our ability
to seek out and listen to the hard truths about racism in the academy and the library is
paramount, and is a key component to deepening our empathy.

We cannot continue to bring leaders and colleagues of color into our profession and
hope to narrow the glaring racial and ethnic gaps in our ranks, while trying
simultaneously to keep all of our structures, systems, and approaches exactly the same
as they have always been. If we do, we should not be surprised ten years from now when
significant changes in the racial composition of our profession continue to elude us. For
our New Year’s resolution then, I propose we commit ourselves to joining library
colleagues who are far ahead of us in understanding the systemic, insidious impact of
racism on otherwise well-meaning attempts to increase diversity and inclusion in our
academic libraries. I propose we embark on an intensive self-learning and reflection
journey, and then re-examine and redesign our educational programs, retention efforts,
early-career initiatives, and institutions, to demonstrate our love and support for the
relatively few colleagues of color we already have. We need to enhance our empathy and
change the ways we work together to truly transform our profession and our academic
institutions. These are the commitments that our library values of diversity and social
justice demand, and they are crucial resolutions worth keeping.

1 For examples, see:

(blog). https://chrisbourg.wordpress.com/2014/03/03/the-unbearable-whiteness-of-
librarianship/

Morales, Myrna, Em Claire Knowles, and Chris Bourg. (2014). "Diversity, Social Justice,

to Action,” In the Library With The Lead Pipe.
http://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2016/quest-for-diversity/;

Schonfeld, Roger C., and Liam Sweeney. (2017). “Inclusion, Diversity, and Equity:
Members of the Association of Research Libraries: Employee Demographics and


4 For recommended titles, see:


5 For an example, see:


Further Reading


Like a lot of white people, I had to be whacked over the head with issues of race before I had the “aha” moment. For me, that moment came at a leadership institute I attended in spring of 2016, during a 90-minute safe-space discussion on diversity in the library profession. By its end, the two white men in attendance had held forth for several minutes on how they were the ones truly discriminated against in librarianship, while a white woman proclaimed that hiring for diversity in librarianship is “just reverse racism.” I was aghast, completely speechless, without any tools for responding other than a weak insistence that the demographics proved otherwise. I vented my frustration on Twitter, and was called out the next day of the institute for violating the safe space of the discussion. Now, I recognize this as a classic silencing move born out of white fragility, but at the time it made me determined to find a tool for talking about race in an open and accountable way.
Shortly thereafter, I discovered “From Safe Spaces to Brave Spaces,” an article by Brian Arao and Kristi Clemens. This article taught me that safe spaces are manifestations of dominance and privilege—that the only people safe in a safe space conversation are those from the dominant culture. Further, safety is not a reasonable expectation in an honest conversation about social justice issues such as diversity in the library profession. This is a conversation that needs to make people uncomfortable, because the facts around diversity in the library profession are uncomfortable. The article provided actionable guidance on creating and facilitating a brave space, and I couldn’t wait to try it out.

Unfortunately, the first time I tried it out it fell flat. The participants didn’t get it, and it was, objectively, my fault. I lacked skills as a facilitator, and I also lacked a good understanding around issues of race in general as a middle-aged white woman. It could be called a tremendous learning experience; in that it was very painful and uncomfortable. I really, really wanted to give up and pretend I never had this crazy idea to change the way we talk about race in the profession. However, I talked about this experience as part of a “fail talk” panel at the ACRL-Washington/Oregon joint conference in 2017, and the process of sharing my failure oddly enough inspired me to try again.

I did three more workshops around brave spaces, took some courses in understanding race in America, and started to feel somewhat competent in addressing the issues. A colleague at one of my workshops suggested I propose presenting my workshop at the third Joint Conference of Librarians of Color. “Great idea!” I thought, and put in the proposal. It was accepted, and my attendance and presentation there was an amazing experience.

It was also a tremendous learning experience, in that painful and uncomfortable way I mentioned above. I had to reckon, and am still reckoning, with the fact that I took up space at a conference intended for my colleagues of color. There are so few spaces in librarianship just for people of color, and in my white-centered way, I assumed it would be no problem for me to take part in something that wasn’t for me. Everyone at the conference was wonderfully inclusive and welcoming, but looking back I realize that I didn’t take the time to consider what my presence there meant. This would have been a great opportunity to partner with a colleague of color who had an interest in sharing about brave spaces, to develop a new iteration of my workshop for that audience.

Learning about brave spaces has definitely helped me find my personal voice around issues of race in the library profession. It is a stellar tool which, when used by a skilled and knowledgeable facilitator, elevates discussions around diversity and social justice issues, which our profession sorely needs. Even when it’s used by a less-skilled facilitator, it can help open up avenues of thought that a safe space will never encourage. The outward and progressive focus of brave spaces allow us to think about race in librarianship as a structural issue as opposed to safe spaces’ focus on internal values and experiences. This is a step we need to take. I encourage others to give this framework a
try in their own libraries, communities, and professional development experiences when talking about issues of equity, diversity and inclusion. Hopefully your learning experiences will be less "tremendous" than mine. I would be thrilled to hear how brave spaces work for you!

Resources:


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**Climbing the Stairs: a New Model for Organizational Change from Dr. Terryl Ross**

February 6th, 2019

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*This post is written by Hallie Clawson on behalf of the ACRL President's Program committee. Our thanks to everyone who attended our Discussion Forum with Dr. Ross at ALA Midwinter. We hope it was informative and useful!*

At ALA Midwinter 2019 in Seattle, Lauren Pressley invited Dr. Terryl Ross to lead a discussion forum around his model of organizational change towards equity. As part of our commitment to making the President’s Program accessible, we are reporting back for anyone who was unable to attend or wants to share these concepts with their institution. Dr. Ross is a Seattle local with over thirty years’ experience in this field. He is currently the Assistant Dean of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at the University of Washington College of the Environment. He has previously done similar work at University of Washington Bothell, Oregon State University, and Green River Community College.

As I summarize Dr. Ross’ presentation, I want to mention that he spoke twice during Midwinter - not only at the discussion forum on Saturday but also during the ACRL Leadership Council meeting. Portions of this post will reference both presentations. Pressley has emphasized the need for ACRL leadership to do antiracism training and self-reflection to better guide the organization as a whole towards equity and inclusivity. This included an intensive workshop led by DeEtta Jones and Jerome Offord at the ACRL Board’s Strategic Planning and Orientation Session last fall, and was reiterated in
the recent ACRL Board Statement Against Racism, Harassment, and Discrimination in the Profession.

In academic fashion, Dr. Ross began by giving us citations about United States demographics - which are included at the end of this post. These works provided context for the generational, racial, and cultural shifts we are seeing in this country. We have slowly moved over the decades from a white-and-male status quo to one where many kinds of people are allowed to “sit at the table of opportunity” and have a voice. He singled out certain dates as relevant to that shift; one that stuck out was 2014 - the year that students of color became the majority in public schools. As academic librarians, we should pay attention to the fact that in less than twenty years, that group of racially diverse students will be attending colleges and using libraries.

He gave us his vision of what an organization would look like if we took the principles of EDI to heart:

A 21st century organization that leads with diversity and inclusion. Everyone feels welcomed and included. You accomplish your mission and are a destination of choice for the region’s best talent.

Then Dr. Ross described his model, Climbing the Stairs to Diversity Success. He envisions a staircase of five steps which can describe your organization - each one having particular characteristics. He emphasized “no judgments”! Wherever your organization starts on this staircase is fine, the goal is just to move the group as a whole up to the next step. If you actively engage with diversity from leadership to entry level, Dr. Ross believes it is possible to move any group up one step in two years.

The steps are:

- **Hostile** - Most people in the organization are actively hostile to the idea of diversity. At this step you’ll find outright anger, confusion, and obvious white fragility. There will be no commitment to diversity work.
- **Visitor** - Most people pay lip service to the importance of diversity. Dr. Ross used the example of people who come to an MLK Jr. Day event and sit in the front row to be seen and lauded, then don’t think about diversity at all until next year’s event. There is no commitment to doing consistent work. He pointed out that despite white folks’ best intentions at this stage, people of color can easily tell when efforts are only “token”.
- **Citizen** - In a citizen organization, people are honestly committed to doing the work but may not know how. There may be an enthusiastic diversity committee, which spends a lot of time in planning and discussion. During our small group discussions, most attendees felt their organizations were on the citizen step.
- **Diplomat** - When your organization reaches the diplomat step, people are not only committed but also know what to do. They are implementing plans, and have a deep understanding of issues like equity and identity being central to the work.
• **Ambassador** - This step is the goal. Ambassadors are exemplars, models of how to succeed at doing this work. They have implemented a culture of accountability, focus on daily teachable moments, and they not only do the work but also empower others. Dr. Ross described ambassadors as the people you’ll never see, because they are out in your community getting things done.

After sharing his model and having us discuss in small groups, Dr. Ross clarified and defined our terminology. He differentiated between equality, in which everyone gets the same thing regardless of what they need, and equity, where each person gets what they need to be on the same level. One point that stood out is that equity is inherently unfair because people are not going to get the same amount of resources; historically undersupported people are going to get more. This makes many of us uncomfortable because we value fairness. Dr. Ross argued that we have to embrace unfairness in order to correct the history of inequity affecting people of color and underrepresented groups in this country.

He also emphasized the importance of taking action. We must be proactive rather than reactive, talk about where we’re going to rather than where we’re coming from, and place value in work rather than words. As he put it, 40% of people are going to criticize no matter what you do, so accept that criticism is inevitable and move forward anyway. Don’t wait for an impossible “perfect” solution, and don’t let one person stop the group. That doesn’t mean ostracizing that one person - you should go back and address their concerns later - but ask for their support in taking the action the group thinks is best. And if you are that one dissenter, don’t set the rest of the group up for failure! Instead, stand in solidarity with them so that some kind of change can be made.

In summary, diversity work takes everyone pulling together in order to create change, and it also takes strong leadership to enforce action and make the tough decisions. That change doesn’t have to be tremendous, and it’s not going to happen overnight. But if you focus on what action you can take with the organization you have, it is possible to climb the stairs together.

Citations from the presentation


Being Multiracial in a Mono-racially Organized World: What Does the Growing Interracial Population Mean for Academic Librarians?  
February 13th, 2019  

URL: https://acrl.libguides.com/c.php?g=899144&p=6468942&t=34283

This week's post comes from Karen Downing, Tashia Munson, Marna Clowney-Robinson, Darlene Nichols, and Helen Look, all from the University of Michigan. Learn more about our guest authors on our Featured Authors page.

A faculty member researching interracial families goes to the library shelf and finds that the books she needs are sandwiched between titles on incest and the criminally insane. She is unsettled.

A doctoral student is researching interracial identity for his dissertation and has a difficult time identifying mixed-race students to interview for his study because there are no student groups on his campus through which to call for participants.

These scenarios may seem like isolated incidents, however the accumulation of frustrations and the lack of an overall welcoming campus climate for many people of color is a daily reality for many mixed-race students, staff, and faculty in a world that revolves around mono-racial norms. The study of what it means to be multiracial in a mono-racially organized world is called “critical mixed race studies” (CMRS). Academic librarians should know that both the numbers of mixed-race students and of those engaging in CMRS research are growing rapidly throughout the U.S. A recent search in ProQuest Research Library on the terms “mixed-race OR biracial OR multiracial” returned 359 results in 1980, and 20,242 results in 2010-19.

Background  

Multiracial Americans are at the cutting edge of social and demographic change in the U.S. — young, proud, tolerant and growing at a rate three times as fast as the population as a whole. (Pew Research Center, 2015, p.5).

In its “Multiracial in America: Proud, Diverse and Growing in Numbers” study cited above, the Pew Research Center (2015) reports that the demographics of our nation are changing in remarkable ways. They found that 6.9% of all Americans eighteen years and older identify as being multiracial (p.5), a percentage larger than many mono-racial categories on our campuses. This trend will only increase: Pew (2017) also found that


one in six marriages is interracial. As surprising as this statistic may be, the demographics point to a surging multiracial population in children under three years old, meaning that our campuses are seeing, and will continue to see, increasing numbers of mixed-race students, staff, and faculty. Are we prepared? Do we possess the cultural competencies to meet the needs of growing multiracial populations? The authors believe there is a pressing need to work toward a more nuanced and intersectional understanding of mixed-race social identities and how they may influence individual perspective, life experiences, opportunities, and choices.

Why Does it Matter?
The expression of social and cultural identities matters to people in myriad ways that are important to how we think about library collections, services, programming, and staff. While not every multiracial person will conduct research on multiracial issues, seeing one’s self reflected in the collections and programming within the library is important for any group or individual.

At our Midwest university, 1,800 students identify as “two or more races” in our current academic year (’18–’19). This is up from 1,200 in 2010. Nationally, in the 2016 academic year, approximately 3.6 percent of all postsecondary students identified as “two or more races” (Chronicle, 2018). On many of our campuses, there are no programs or student groups to support their growth and development as there are for other groups, and many of our collections are hidden due to a lack of standardized vocabulary to describe mixed-race people.

As more CMRS scholars enter the professoriate, curricular and research needs are changing with them. Stories of frustration and difficulty in finding authoritative mixed-race information are common. Health sciences, social sciences, and arts and humanities researchers who are interested in studying topics related to mixed-race phenomena are stymied due to a lack of infrastructure that makes it difficult to identify existing literature, find research funding, have their research approved by Institutional Review Boards, and find and contact potential study participants. As researchers and research partners, this is a shortfall we in libraries need to address.

Resources on Interracial Topics
Each one of the authors of this post, being either mixed-race and/or interracially partnered, has experienced the difficulties involved in working with researchers of interracial issues. To ease access for others, we developed a few resources that can assist our users in the area of CMRS:

- A [research guide](#) that facilitates discovery
- [Programming ideas](#) that signal to your community that you have relevant resources and welcome them in the library.

These resources may also be helpful:

- [Critical Mixed Race Studies](#)
This week’s post comes from Edith Scarletto at Bowling Green State University. Learn more about our guest authors on our Featured Authors page.

Fostering Inclusivity Through Improved Recruitment Practices
February 20th, 2019

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Recruitment committees, or search committees, serve several functions: reviewing applications, conducting interviews, giving tours, and summarizing information for administrators and departments to review before hiring new job candidates. The recruitment process, though, is fraught with ways in which implicit bias and traditional thinking can perpetuate the white, middle-aged, cis, female, abled majority in our profession. I am part of that majority, and I feel the imperative that my similarly privileged colleagues and I have to recognize that privilege and to decenter ourselves in order to improve our recruitment processes and the inclusive climate of our workplaces. I owe these concepts to the countless people of color who have the patience to write on this topic, a select group of which is cited here.

Accepting that whiteness should be decentered is the first step to moving toward recruiting from a place of inclusion and not just diversity (Brook, Ellenwood, & Lazzaro, 2015). Diversity can be defined as a variety of racial, ethnic, religious, gender, and binary/non-binary people who work in our libraries. Inclusion represents the culture of
the organization and its willingness to acknowledge structural systems that affect positions of privilege or provide supportive space and open environments where discussions and examination of that privilege can take place. As Ferretti (2018), Bourg (2018), Drabinski (2018), and others have argued, libraries are not neutral spaces, and recruiting from a position of neutrality negates the experience of people of color and other marginalized people in our libraries and workplaces. Similarly, Hathcock (2015) reports the often-fruitless efforts of white women doing diversity work in libraries, due to a failure to critically examine whiteness itself.

Implicit bias can manifest itself in the way that we, as white and/or cis women librarians, center ourselves in the posting locations for positions, the way that phone and in-person interview questions are constructed, and the ways we present our institutions to candidates. “Centering ourselves” here refers to implicit assumptions we make about the lived experience of a candidate. Are we working from the assumption that they are “like us”, have similar life experiences, are generally of the dominant gender, orientation, race, and ability in our profession? Any of these components could impact the inclusiveness of a search process. Do we assume white/cis/female, and then request that candidates discuss their approach to working with diverse populations? One way my organization attempted to address this was to change our previous interview question from “Describe your experience or work with diverse populations”, to “Describe your experience advocating with underrepresented groups or working with individuals from diverse populations”. The new question attempts to be inclusive of experiences of non-white, non-cis, or differently-abled librarians (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2017). Are we aware of the accessibility of our campuses, our library spaces, and the hotel rooms and transportation we offer to candidates? Some of these “centerings” are less obvious than others, but the current state of our profession requires us to not only to check our biases, but also to question each stage and process we conduct throughout recruitment.

My 2018 ACRL Immersion experience included a design thinking process (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005), listing and considering the impact of our assumptions about students at each stage of instructional design. We need to approach our recruitment for staff in libraries with this mindset. We will always have institutional constraints for how we conduct searches, but we also have considerable flexibility in the way we work within them by questioning our presumptions:

- What are the assumptions we make about the pool of candidates or about our expectations at each stage? Are we privileging the traditional path to graduate programs (and the MLS) when we look at experience and education in our review committees or position requirements?
- Are those traditional measures the only way to achieve the outcomes that we expect for our successful library staff? Are there alternative paths and experiences that can illustrate the same depth of commitment and preparation for the profession?
• How much and what kind of work experience is reasonable for an entry-level position? For instance, how does the expectation that candidates will work unpaid internships, regardless of the hours, favor economically- and otherwise-privileged candidates?
• What are we weighting when we consider additional skills that candidates possess?
• Are we considering where the gaps are in our organization’s skill set? Alternatively, are we looking for candidates who are “just like us”?

As described in a recent Joint Conference of Librarians of Color session that I co-presented (Bosch, Look, & Scarletto, 2018), one way to work through these processes and assumptions is by adapting the Liberating Structures - TRIZ (Lipmanowicz) activity that asks participants to consider the worst possible outcome of a new search. Then, working backwards through the stages of the search process, identify structural changes could affect that outcome. By moving backwards from an unsuccessful outcome, participants are able to question what they can change during the process and how they might be perpetuating the same hiring practices and sabotaging inclusion efforts. Conducting this exercise with a potential search committee or department at the beginning of the process can help to check those assumptions about what we continue to do in library hiring practices.

There are a number of questions for a library to consider when working toward a more inclusive recruitment and hiring experience:

• Does the institution choose traditional professional email discussion lists or websites for job postings? Would targeting less formal organizations or social media sites reach a more diverse applicant pool? Potential candidates may be building professional networks on these alternate platforms rather than attending conferences or choosing membership in professional organizations. Professional organizations with predominantly white members may be less welcoming than online communities of librarians of color. Professional organizations and their conferences can be expensive to join and attend.

• Many libraries now have diversity statements and are intentional in asking candidates about their credentials or experience with diverse populations. These questions assume a white, cis candidate. Committees should broaden the questions they ask candidates about their experience advocating either within or for systematically marginalized groups or persons. This creates space for candidates to talk about their actions instead of their philosophy for how to serve diverse populations.

• Be prepared to talk to candidates about the inclusive climate of your community. During a search in which I was involved, one candidate stated their identity during an interview and wanted an honest answer about their safety in the local area and on campus. Some committee members were caught off-guard by this question. We talked about it afterward, strategizing how to answer these questions in the future. Prepare to answer as honestly as possible so the candidate can make an informed choice about interviewing at your institution.
and considering a move. If no one on your committee knows what community and campus resources are available, learning about them is another step toward cultural responsiveness.

Recruiting offers many opportunities for intentionally reorienting academic library spaces toward a more inclusive culture and diverse staff. Each effort at restructuring the traditional processes can move the organization toward these goals. Recognizing one’s role in the process and the outcome is the first step.

Citations


“It’s not me, it’s you”: The Problem of Retention in Librarianship
February 25th, 2019

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This week’s post comes from Kellee E. Warren, Assistant Professor and Special Collections Librarian at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Learn more about our guest authors on our Featured Authors page.

Imagine an African American library and information science (LIS) graduate student working at the main reference desk of an academic library. Now imagine that over a two-year period this student witnesses four African American and other librarians of color decamp from the library. Between 2014 and 2016, that African American LIS student was me.

My career began at a community college library and I am now in my fourth year as an information professional, in my dream position as an assistant professor and special collections librarian. In those four years, I have consistently navigated microaggressions and intellectual violence.

Between 2014 and now, there have been incidents of Black LIS students having law enforcement called to have them removed from academic and public libraries. In an even more extreme case at a public library, there was a long-term conspiracy to terminate an African American librarian’s position. There are also complexities inherent in some public library open meeting room policies, where white nationalist groups would not be easily identified as racially exclusionary, but a Black Lives Matter group would.

These examples do not present libraries or archives as desirable spaces for the marginalized to work. Furthermore, early career professionals of color with various marginalized identities experience hostility from co-workers — specifically microaggressions — that take an emotional and physical toll.¹ When public libraries invite hate groups in, they expel LIS students or professionals who identify as Black,
Indigenous, or other people of color (BIPOC). The culmination of these experiences leads to a lack of retention in the profession.

Libraries and archives have proactively created incentives and diversity programs such as the Minnesota Institute for Early Career Librarians, ALA’s Emerging Leaders and Spectrum Scholarship programs, ARL/SAA Mosaic Scholarships, and academic residency programs hosted at myriad universities and colleges — the list is long. These programs have seen many BIPOC students graduate into professional positions and take on leadership responsibilities in the field. Professional organizations also provide membership opportunities for students and early-career professionals to gain valuable experience serving on committees, taking on leadership roles, providing professional expertise to their communities, or writing scholarly articles or blog posts (like this one!). However, there are critiques of this structure as well.²

Along with the inherent instability of a temporary position, academic residency programs rarely provide a structured career plan outside of the one-to-three years offered to the new professional. Usually, there is a requirement to move, sometimes across the country. New professionals are often introduced to the entire library in the first year, and then there might be a possibility of working in a specialized area for the last part of their program. In some cases, BIPOC librarians observe white veteran librarians mentoring white new professionals, while residents of color are left on their own to navigate an unfamiliar and unwelcoming work environment.

Our professional organizations and institutions are now well practiced in the corporate language of diversity, while still maintaining the status quo.³ BIPOC librarians are aware that we are often hired to introduce equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) to the library or archives. We are hired with no political capital or resources and are required to serve as exemplars of whatever group we are supposed to represent. This puts additional labor on these vulnerable individuals, straining their ability to succeed in their workplace and inhibiting their desire to stay at the institution.

We are exhausted from conversations about diversity. These conversations take us away from our work. We want leadership to listen to us, believe us, and advocate for us. You cannot come up with creative solutions without listening to the very people that you have hired for EDI — it is a critique that I offered in my first scholarly article, “We Need These Bodies, but Not Their Knowledge.” Listening should then lead to action.⁴

Solutions to address the problem of retention must come from leadership and administration: policy, vision and mission statements, professional development opportunities, and training.⁵ It simply cannot be a one-shot compulsory diversity training program or a series of uncomfortable conversations that involve and rely upon BIPOC librarians. These actions inevitably create resentment among white librarians, which can be directed toward us. That is: once you hire us, we need to be supported and protected.
In the long term, to actually increase retention, it is also necessary to move us into leadership positions — positions of power — where change happens. Recognize the leaders coming up behind you. Learn the difference between individuals who could use professional development programs in leadership, and those who simply need onsite guidance. This type of intelligence comes from talking to and learning about your BIPOC librarians.

In 2017, I presented on culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP) at a local information literacy summit in Illinois.⁶ As an instructional approach, CSP calls for the inclusion of different knowledge systems. After the presentation, an attendee requested more resources for this particular pedagogy. Like a good presenter, I provided a reference list, but I think that the librarian was seeking something more. So, I told her about a 2014 article I had recently read about 75% of white peoples’ networks being white. I continued to say that there are plenty of publications to read and learn from (see selected bibliography in this post), but what white library administrators and librarians need to do is to open up their personal lives to other types of people and diversity.

In Octavia Butler’s Dawn, the main character, Lilith, asks, “What will we be, I wonder?” Scholar Justice Lewis Mann argues that this question defines the concept of pessimistic futurism. “It reveals the impulse to look to tomorrow … but to do so with caution and care.”⁷ For now, I offer the concept of pessimistic futurism that many BIPOC LIS students and professionals already live by — hopeful for the future, with a heightened awareness of the present and past. Retention is an ongoing project that takes care and investment over time.


³ Wade, Cheryl L. "We are an equal opportunity employer: Diversity doublespeak." Wash. & Lee L. Rev. 61 (2004): 1541.


⁵ Cooke, Nicole A. “Managing Diversity”. Information services to diverse populations: developing culturally competent library professionals. ABC-CLIO, 2016.
Selected Bibliography


Cooke, Nicole A. Information services to diverse populations: developing culturally competent library professionals. ABC-CLIO, 2016.


Wade, Cheryl L. "We are an equal opportunity employer: Diversity doublespeak." Wash. & Lee L. Rev. 61 (2004): 1541.

Metadata Justice: At the Intersection of Social Justice and Cataloging
March 25th, 2019

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This week's post comes from Sine Hwang Jensen, Asian American and Comparative Ethnic Studies Librarian; Melissa S. Stoner, Native American Studies Librarian; and Lillian Castillo-Speed, Chicano Studies Librarian; all from the Ethnic Studies Library at the University of California, Berkeley. Learn more about our guest authors on our Featured Authors page.

Since the #BlackLivesMatter movement erupted in 2013, bringing racialized police violence to the national spotlight, there has been renewed interest on the part of librarians and archivists to challenge neutrality (Pagowsky & Wallace, 2015) and understand the importance of social justice in their work (Drake, 2016). While this has gained momentum in the last few years, the Ethnic Studies Library at the University of California, Berkeley has been working to incorporate racial justice into librarianship for almost fifty years, since its inception in 1969. In September of 2018, we led a round table discussion at the 3rd National Joint Conference of Librarians of Color in Albuquerque on the topic of “metadata justice.” The term emerged through discussions of our work at the library, as a way to characterize a broad set of initiatives to bring social justice to the world of metadata and cataloging.

As an umbrella term, metadata justice can mean many different things in many different contexts. Broadly, it entails incorporating social justice into metadata work and using terms and philosophies that acknowledge and center historically oppressed communities. While the term may be new, the concept is certainly not. Librarians such as, but not limited to, Sandy Berman (1971) and Hope Olson (2002) have written on the bias in Library of Congress Subject Headings in particular, and the whiteness of libraries (Schlesselman-Tarango, 2017) and archives (Brilmyer & Caswell, 2016) has been well documented. In our roundtable, each Ethnic Studies Library librarian introduced a few ways that they have incorporated the idea of metadata justice into their work. This blog post will provide a summary of our remarks.

We start by looking back at the small libraries (the Asian American Studies Library, the Native American Studies Library, and the Chicano Studies Library) that were formed in the late 1960s and that merged in 1997 to become our Ethnic Studies Library. Why were they established? Why were they needed?

The Chicano Studies Library helped create the Chicano Thesaurus, the first and only controlled vocabulary for the discipline of Chicano Studies. It was a direct alternative to the Library of Congress (LC) Subject Heading list. The Chicano Studies Library’s classification system was a modified scheme that allowed it to use all the LC classes and not limit itself to E184 (United States — Elements in the Population). The early staff of that library saw these as tools that they could use to challenge Eurocentric classification:
to change perspectives, undo assumptions, defy stereotypes, challenge racism, and affirm Chicano culture.

We can imagine how powerful this was from their perspective. If you were a staff person in the Chicano Studies Library, would you choose the Library of Congress term “Illegal Aliens?” Or would you rather use “Undocumented Workers”? Would you be inclined to use the term “Chicanas” rather than “Mexican American Women”? Creating ethnic and culturally specific cataloging practices was important to the early staff, but fundamentally they saw the entire library (and probably all three libraries) as tools to organize for social justice. To think of a library as an organizing tool and not just a collection of materials puts the role of a library in a different light. The library itself was not as important as the goal of organizing for social justice; if it became ineffective, organizers would move on and look for a better tool. Creating and using relevant, specific and correct metadata should be the goal of all libraries and archives, however, in the case of the Chicano Studies Library staff, it was a path toward social justice. Today, the Chicano Thesaurus is still used as the controlled vocabulary of the Chicano Database, the bibliographic database which continues to be produced by the Ethnic Studies Library.

The 2018-2019 academic year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Third World Liberation Front student strike that resulted in the creation of African American Studies and Ethnic Studies at San Francisco State University and UC Berkeley. Native American, Asian American, African American, and Chicanx students, staff, faculty, and community members demanded a Third World College that would foster an intellectual and organic community where the stories and worldviews of people of color would be centered. The knowledge generated by this college would benefit and bring justice to their home communities. These disciplines were founded in the understanding that Western knowledge had been developed in the context of colonialism, imperialism, and slavery, and that people of color had their own worldviews, lexicons, and epistemologies. They challenged traditional fields like Anthropology and Area Studies with the phrase: “Nothing about us, without us.” They no longer wanted to be shown a mirror in which they were reflected as problematic, poverty-bound, culturally-deprived, criminal, or a burden to the dominant society. This student-led movement led to a revolution in higher education and new academic disciplines never before conceived. For fifty years, these disciplines have produced knowledge that challenges the dominant Eurocentric and white supremacist perspectives on communities of color and centers our own languages, perspectives, and worldviews. But despite their contributions, the knowledge produced from these fields often remains marginalized from other traditional disciplines.

As one of the attendees in our roundtable pointed out, we cannot forget that the Library of Congress is just that, the library of the Congress of the United States. As such, it has an obligation to follow the vocabularies and logics of the state. This may often put it in opposition to movements for social justice. Those looking to change the Library of Congress subject headings often face an uphill battle (Hawkins, 2017) — as the fight to replace the subject heading “illegal aliens” with “undocumented immigrants” has shown
Adding local subject terms has been one way that the Ethnic Studies Library has been able to break out of the restrictions of the Library of Congress. But as language continues to evolve and shift, where can catalogers, librarians, and archivists go to learn about new vocabularies and lexicons?

In the last few years, there has been a growing number of what are called “keywords” texts. These texts invite scholars to contribute definitions to emerging vocabularies in particular disciplines and can be used somewhat like glossaries. New York University Press has published eight books in its Keywords Series in the last few years. Other independent and leftist presses such as AK Press have put out their own keywords texts (Fritsch, O’Connor, Clare, & Thompson, 2016). Keywords texts are particularly useful in critical fields such as Ethnic Studies, African American Studies, Disability Studies, and Gender and Women’s Studies. These texts offer an introduction to the vocabularies generated or used in these fields and the meanings and debates behind them. We encourage catalogers, librarians, and archivists to explore these resources.

Another way that we engage with metadata justice is to develop collective practices for generating metadata. In 2017, the Ethnic Studies Library received a CLIR Recordings at Risk grant to digitize hundreds of reel-to-reel tapes from the H.K. Yuen Social Movement Archive. These recordings document the social protest activities in the Bay Area and on Sproul Plaza at UC Berkeley from the 1960s to the 1990s. As part of the grant, the library has also been improving the metadata for more than 100 recordings that were digitized and added to the Internet Archive. Rather than having a lone cataloger or librarian generate the metadata, we have chosen to hire several students with an interest in social protest who are listening to the recordings and providing detailed descriptions. We have trained them on Library of Congress subject headings and other metadata standards. The process has taught us much about the educational impact of working with non-librarians to develop metadata and we will continue to develop ways to include students and eventually, other community members, in helping to develop our metadata.

In turn, the metadata that the students are providing will also enhance our digital collections with local, controlled vocabularies such as place names, organizations, and names of individuals that are not in the Library of Congress Name Authority File but are important to the local area and its history. Through these efforts, we acknowledge the history and story behind each item and treat the item with as much care as the community would. This is another reason the Keywords Series is so important; it allows the reader to recognize terms that also have culturally significant meanings. The metadata provided by our students will promote the discoverability of collections that are meaningful to the communities we serve. However, with discoverability comes access. One of the goals of our digital collections is to promote respectful access while also promoting a fair representation of topics that are not usually requested in digital collections.
As we continue our work at the Ethnic Studies Library, we are mindful of those communities — especially students — who fought in the 1960s and who continue to fight today to change the status quo. Because of them, the Ethnic Studies Library and its collections exist and continue to grow. It is our responsibility to continue to push the margins, making the stories of communities of color known while respecting their self-determination. While these are just a few of the ways that we engage in metadata justice at the Ethnic Studies Library, we encourage each reader to think about what the concept of metadata justice could look like in their own work and to take action. It can be as simple as finding out who your cataloger is and introducing yourself or reading a few online articles. The goal is metadata justice.

Citations


Keywords Series: NYU Press. (n.d.). https://keywords.nyupress.org/


Let’s talk theories!: Incorporating queer, feminist, and critical theory into our teaching practice
April 5th, 2019
URL: https://acrl.libguides.com/c.php?g=899144&p=6468942&t=36589

*This week’s post comes from Charissa Powell, Student Success Librarian for Information Literacy, and Lizeth Zepeda, Diversity Resident Librarian and Research Assistant Professor, both at the University of Tennessee. Learn more about our guest authors on our Featured Authors page.*

Today’s blog post is the edited transcript of a conversation between two teaching librarians! Charissa Powell and Liz Zepeda met in November 2017 and immediately bonded over the fact that they both have Women’s Studies undergraduate degrees and Library Science Master’s degrees. They both love to think, talk, read, and write about queer, feminist, and critical theory. By reading this blog post, they hope that you will learn a little bit about these theories and how to incorporate them into your teaching practice. For further reading, see the list at the end of the post.

**Where did you first learn about some of these theories (critical, queer, feminist, etc.) and why do you use them in your professional life?**

**Liz:** In my women’s studies classes in undergrad at Cal State, Long Beach. I’ve always had these theories in the back of my brain as a form of survival. As a queer, Chicana, first-generation, transfer college student, I didn’t feel connected to the histories, professors, and spaces I was studying until I found women’s studies. Coming into the Library and Information Science field, I was dissatisfied with the notions of neutrality within librarianship but was inspired by how feminist and queer theories could be embedded in my work. My personal interpretation of neutrality means that folks are satisfied with the status quo and avoid doing the work to incorporate inclusive practices within the profession. It felt natural to me to be critical of librarianship and to incorporate these theoretical frameworks into the field, to make students like me feel like they belong.
**Charissa:** I also majored in women’s studies for my undergraduate degree and spent a lot of time thinking, reading, and writing about mostly feminist theory and queer theory. I didn’t learn about critical theory until graduate school — shout out to [Rachel Gammons](#) who introduced me to #critlib and handed me the book, *Critical library instruction: Theories and methods*! I have found these theories to be essential to my librarianship. I think being a truly student-centered teacher means that you’re doing everything you can to make students in the classroom feel seen, included, welcome, and heard. I think part of the effort involves recognizing that students have different experiences based on their identities in the world.

**How do you incorporate these theories into your teaching?**

**Liz:** I think that every moment (inside and outside the classroom) is a teachable moment. There is already a lot of anxiety for students to do research using library databases; you don’t want to also add to their anxiety by misgendering them or having assumptions about them. Keep that in mind when you’re teaching. One example of how I incorporate theoretical frameworks within the classroom is with the examples I use to help students brainstorm their topics. For example, if they have a general topic about food, I will give it a social justice twist by using examples that incorporate topics of food justice, food deserts, and the cost of food.

**Charissa:** Liz has taught me how to incorporate queer pedagogies into teaching by introducing myself with my pronouns whenever I teach. As an ally, introducing myself with my pronouns is a small intervention in the classroom to disrupt heteronormativity. It is also important to not assume the gender of your students! Instead, I try to take the time to learn students’ names. This can be harder in one-shots, so a suggestion I have is to use gender-neutral ways to identify students. My favorite is when I ask a student to volunteer is to refer to this student as “our friend.” Example: “thank you to our friend in the front row who volunteered their topic for our brainstorming!”

**Liz:** Pronouns, like language, are fluid and constantly evolving; for example, she/her/hers, they/them/theirs, he/him/his, or ze/hi (Astra). It is important to incorporate pronouns in your language so once folks do disclose their pronouns to you, it will be a part of your language and you’ll be less likely to misgender students. But if you do mess up, own up to it. For more information, see the [resources provided by Adolpho](#) (2018).

**What lessons have you learned from using these theories?**

**Liz:** Because I don’t want to out anyone, I don’t require my students to explicitly state their pronouns when I’ve only just met them—especially in one-shot instruction where it is difficult to build relationships with students. Be mindful that asking students to state their pronouns can be seen as outing themselves.

**Charissa:** As someone who has taught both one-shot and semester-long classes, I used my [syllabus](#) during my semester-long class to make a names/pronouns and [self-identifications statement](#) (LGBT Equity Center). I let students know that they can share
with me what they would like to be called or referred to by. This sets the tone that if they wish to disclose their pronouns to me, they can. I also include my own pronouns in my syllabus. Although I don’t want to force my students to be explicit, I myself am as explicit as I can be as an ally.

Keeping the Conversation Going
We hope that this post, while short, has sparked some thinking for you! In summary, theories can be your friend and help inform your practice in librarianship.

What is one change you could make to your teaching practice to incorporate one of these theories?

Suggested Reading & Resources


More than a Thought Experiment: Designing Anti-Oppressive Events and Instruction
April 15th, 2019
URL: [https://acrl.libguides.com/c.php?g=899144&p=6468942&t=36708](https://acrl.libguides.com/c.php?g=899144&p=6468942&t=36708)

*This week’s post comes from Amanda Meeks, Teaching, Learning, and Research Services Librarian at Northern Arizona University. Learn more about our guest authors on our [Featured Authors page](https://acrl.libguides.com/c.php?g=899144&p=6468942&t=36708).*

As a profession, we are overwhelmingly homogenous — cis, straight, white women make up the majority (Schonfeld & Sweeney, 2017). When we design instruction, events and other outreach around this homogeneity instead of seeking out and celebrating difference, we render many in our communities invisible. As we begin the reflective process of redesigning our practice to make it explicitly anti-oppressive, we can more intentionally acknowledge the ways our institutions were not designed for, or with, marginalized groups within our society and how this design flaw has had a greater impact. This is an issue that needs to be continuously addressed on both individual and collective levels, instead of perpetuating a homogenous culture and continued oppression of those groups and individuals. In this blog post, I am providing an activity and zine I developed, based on design thinking practices, that can help guide those involved in creating events, programs, and instruction sessions within libraries.

Design thinking has impacted the way many libraries write mission and vision statements, create strategic plans, and carry out service and user-design initiatives. I know I have seen my fair share of Post-It notes and whiteboard exercises in my library and at library conferences. However, these strategies are rarely examined critically by library workers who employ them to guide design processes and may come off as superficial thought experiments if done without care. It is problematic that these processes originated with, and are still often centered on, selling “products” over people. We need to foster a practice that pushes us to consider how we work within communities of individuals with different identities and experiences from our own. Empathy and reflexivity are the primary components of design thinking that I have found most useful in my own efforts to intentionally offer both formal and informal learning opportunities that are anti-oppressive and prioritize agency. Through careful
event facilitation and instructional practices, the aim is to reflect on and fix power imbalances.

I recently co-presented two national workshops about incorporating student experiences in the learning environment: the Joint Conference of Librarians of Color (JCLC) and the Critical Librarianship and Practice Symposium (CLAPS). The goal of both workshops was to look at learners’ needs in an event or classroom setting while also considering who they are and their myriad experiences. It is critical to start thinking about how we, as librarians, can truly support and care for students with different (sometimes very different) experiences from our own. When we design events and instruction, I believe libraries and librarians often design for the majority and dominant culture without realizing it, instead of groups and individuals who have been historically marginalized. What if we radically shift our practice to focus on the most vulnerable learners in our classrooms and on our campuses and start designing for them, as well as with them? This is a process has informed my work in developing intentionally affirming events such as Womxn/Trans/Femme Maker Nights and Thinking Through Making (Pringle, 2019) programs as well as information literacy lessons and course instruction.

Inclusive library events and affirming instruction will look different in each context. The zines presented here were used in the workshop settings mentioned above, but they may be utilized in other contexts as well. The activity and zines rely on personas, or fictional characters, archetypes, and potential learners alongside a narrative or common bias. This is meant to situate them within our contexts, challenging librarians to reflect on how our events or instructional practice impact learners on a personal level. The activity might be used as an individual and ongoing process, as you plan events and instruction; or it may also be used within your department or organization to spark conversations around improving the way we design for inclusivity. In your context, this may look like increased representation across learning materials, incorporating narratives that learners identify with, and using their interests and values to work with them and make learning empowering and more accessible.

Event and instructional design are iterative processes that neither start nor end with this reflective activity, but this can be used when and where it makes sense for your practice and planning. Additionally, I encourage you to remix these materials for your own purposes, create new personas, and remember that this process is multifaceted, incremental, and will take time. You will make mistakes and you will run into barriers, but the more often we practice this individually or collectively, the more it will become the norm and the easier it becomes.

To use the zines:

1. Each zine can be printed and used with a group or individually. If you are interested in events, particularly those related to makerspaces, the Making on Purpose zine will be useful. If you are interested in information literacy
instructional design, then the Empathic Design zine will be relevant. Download the PDF that best meets your needs.

2. To print, use 11”x17” paper, select the double-sided print setting and flip the print along the short edge when printing.

3. You’ll then fold your sheet of paper according to one page zine instructions, making sure the cover of the zine is oriented correctly.

4. INDIVIDUALLY: read through the zine and all five personas. Choose one persona to advocate for and reflect on how you would advocate for this person through your work.

5. IN GROUPS: discuss the questions on the last page of your zine, as they relate to the personas you are individually advocating for.

6. As you finish, unfold your zine to find more opportunities for self-reflection, including questions and prompts and a VENN diagram, that you may discuss with others or write about.

Making on purpose
Designing Inclusive Events & Spaces

We will spend the next part of the workshop using empathic design to determine ways we can create inclusive spaces and events.

Every person in our respective communities is a complex individual with multiple overlapping identities. To help illustrate that, each persona in this exercise has a name, some hard facts about their identity, a few interests and values, and a specific type of bias that we want you to consider and reflect on. In the real world of space and event planning we don’t typically have access to this much information about individuals, often rendering those we most want to include invisible.

For our purposes, we will define empathy as being intentional and aware of another person as a complete, holistic self that is both like and unlike oneself while being not-oneself.

As you read through the following personas, consider how you are like and unlike each person. Consider how they may experience the particular type of bias named with regard to specific aspects of their identity.
Additional Resources
If you would like to explore this work further, the National Equity Project provides resources and tools to work towards equity in educational settings and the Inclusive Design Guide can be used to develop services, built environments, workshops, and physical products.

Citations


Spotlight on EDI in Community Colleges
April 29th, 2019
URL: https://acrl.libguides.com/c.php?g=899144&p=6468942&t=36793

This week’s post was written by Hallie Clawson, Special Projects Assistant at the University of Washington Tacoma Library, on behalf of the ACRL President’s Program Planning Committee.

We often hear about EDI (equity, diversity, and inclusion) initiatives at large academic libraries, where they are more likely to have correspondingly large budgets, outreach staff, and equity centers on campus. This week, the ACRL President’s Program Planning Committee wanted to recognize that important work is happening at smaller institutions as well, often without any fanfare. This post is dedicated to the important EDI work happening in community colleges.

I’m lucky enough to see a bit of both worlds working at the University of Washington Tacoma Library. We are part of an extremely large research institution and benefit greatly from tri-campus resources. But UW Tacoma prides itself on being an urban-serving campus: embedded in the city of Tacoma, serving a diverse student body, and devoting energy not only to UW but to Tacoma as a vibrant urban center. Despite being a small team, my colleagues do so much every day to embed social justice principles into their work. They, and the community college librarians I have been fortunate enough to meet, are the inspiration for this post.

In partnership with the ARCL Community and Junior College Libraries Section, the President’s Program Planning Committee conducted a short survey to surface the ways that community college library staff incorporate equity and social justice into their work. I have synthesized the survey responses below. As a note: I’ve pulled specific quotations from the responses and cited the authors only with their permission; some of our respondents preferred to be cited anonymously.

**Question 1: What does it mean to be diverse in your community?**

Diversity is a slippery, complex term in EDI work. In some cases, as previous guest authors have pointed out, it’s a corporate buzzword distracting attention away from an actual lack of change. Most times, “diversity” becomes a list of societal labels for classifying people, with a vague charge to include “all” of those classes in your workplace.

Unsurprisingly to me, then, intersectionality was the most consistent theme among responses to this question. Any labels based on race, origin, ability, sexuality, gender, etc., overlap with and inform each other. As Nancy Persons from Santa Rosa Junior College said: “Our past, present, and future represent the wealth of difference and
community that we each possess.” Acknowledging and serving each individual with all their myriad complexities becomes paramount.

Another theme across the responses was the differing expectations that people have because of their varied backgrounds—sometimes involving fear, mistrust, or apathy towards the library. We must acknowledge the validity of people’s experiences and advocate for those who may not know how (or want) to follow traditional pathways. One respondent focuses their advocacy with “an explicit focus on racial justice, because in our community, racial injustice has the most harmful impact on the largest portion of our population.”

**Question 2: How does your organization demonstrate its commitment to equity?**

With this question, I should probably have included the caveat that not every organization is actively committed to equity. Among those who did respond, one noted that community colleges “provide affordable educational access to a largely poor and working-class population, and that includes a lot of students of color.” Another respondent cited committees for student success, an institute on campus working for cultural change, and equal employment opportunity advisory committees.

In one case, a college's strategic plan includes explicit language to “eliminate institutional racism.” It is described as a commitment, which “shows up in our pedagogy, class offerings, hiring practices, and programming.” UW Tacoma Library uses similar language in our [Equity Statement](#), pledging “to be an active partner in combating systemic discrimination on our campus and foster skills and resources that students, faculty, and staff can use to confront discrimination in our world.”

**Question 3: In what ways do you target your lessons, reference work, and practices to best reach your students and faculty?**

This question garnered so many great ideas! Many, like Ryan Randall of the College of Western Idaho, focused on the need to serve ESL students, being mindful of “widely disparate comfort levels with computer use,” and empowering students to question their circumstances and research ways to improve society.

Specific ideas for cultivating an inclusive learning environment included:

- Partnering with ESL departments/student organizations to provide tours, instruction sessions, and other library services specifically “tailored to the language level of each class” (Persons).
- Exploring “flipped” instruction settings, which allow students to engage with material first at their own pace before being expected to perform in a classroom setting - where they may feel linguistically, socially, or technologically out of their depth (Randall).
• Using teaching examples that are socially conscious and relevant to the lives of the students. Avoid assuming knowledge of Western canon and explain your references.
• Letting students choose the research topics that interest them; allow their passions to drive the direction of instruction and research.
• Investing time and resources to learn anti-racist pedagogy practices and then implement them. Even or perhaps especially those of us for who learned some tools in library school, there’s always so much more out there to know.
• Support students who want to make changes in their community — on campus or off. Encourage their critical thinking and engagement and demonstrate ways you can be their ally.

**Question 4: What unique challenges does your community face as opposed to more “traditional” universities?**

Answers to this question took two major tracks: reiterating the wide range of student experiences, or lamenting the lack of resources available at the community college level.

To address an exceptionally diverse student body without making assumptions (be it language, past academic experience, familiarity with technology, etc.) requires special responsiveness from library workers, faculty, and everyone in your institution. Ryan Randall describes it thus: “We routinely work with go-getter 15-year-old high-school students taking college credits, 50-year-old students who might be savvy with or scared of computers, and students who do 40 hours a week of construction on top of working for their college education.”

Another challenge is lack of resources on both sides of the reference desk—students are often economically disadvantaged for a variety of reasons, and the community college library can only do so much to help. Small, old buildings can engender conflicts because of insufficient room to study and rising noise levels. Lack of renovation can result in ADA-noncompliance and unreliable equipment. Inadequate staffing can lead to overwork, projects getting back-burnered, and limited operating hours.

One respondent eloquently expressed the frustration felt in their library: “It is infuriating because our students are brilliant, interesting, focused, motivated learners who don’t deserve to have so much working against them. And yet, they still engage more fully with their learning than the students who I worked with at the flagship university in the state.”

**Question 5: What value do you think EDI has for you, your community, and librarianship as a whole?**

For themselves, respondents report feeling that their lives are enriched by working with a diverse student body, and that their community is stronger. For students, library workers perform EDI work to help remove barriers that are keeping them from engaging fully with their education and improving their lives. By defying the idea that we must remain “neutral” and instead embracing EDI, we are better able to relate to and support
the people in our community whose lives have never been neutral. All of this moves us towards justice and equity.

**Question 6: What other experiences can you share about EDI work at your college?**

One thing is clear from this question: EDI is not going away anytime soon! These principles are becoming embedded in every part of librarianship. Respondents described initiatives like providing food at evening workshops, adding children’s books to the collection so that parents can borrow them and read to their kids, and purchasing textbooks so that lower-income students can participate fully in their coursework, all as examples of incremental steps that libraries take.

A more powerful and lasting change is made when the entire library staff is engaged toward transformative justice. This change requires a great deal of trust and vulnerability on the side of library workers as well as the campus. Transforming means pushing through the inevitable conflicts, misunderstandings, and growing pains that will arise when people from different backgrounds negotiate how to work together. If done well, the effort can foster healing and change lives no matter the size of our community.

**Discussion**

Knowing your community—students, faculty, and fellow library workers—is key. Respecting diversity begins with acknowledging the ways that varying identities intersect and continues by addressing the injustices relevant to each person’s unique situation.

I see immense value in making sure official library and institutional policies explicitly call out the systematized inequality embedded in academia, and commit to ameliorating that inequality. This can be done with an established strategic initiative (like ACRL), a public-facing equity statement, a goal area in your strategic plan, or other options. I’d love to hear from more library workers how your library demonstrates a commitment to equity!

The EDI strategies mentioned earlier can be mixed, remixed, designed, and deconstructed to apply to your students and other patrons. I’d like to add from my brief experience: learn from and share with others within your library, across your campus, and through national and international professional organizations. ACRL has given me chances to meet people from across the country and internationally, which I value highly. Granted, the financial cost of conferences and organizational dues can make involvement impossible - one reason why this committee chose to make our blog series free and available online. Social media, for all its ills, can sometimes provide resources, as can free webinars, local conventions, and state organizations. Whatever works to connect you with other colleagues, pursue those avenues.
I was thrilled to hear from community college library workers as I worked on this blog post, but I know there are so many more of you out there! On behalf of the committee, I invite you to continue the conversation and help us all move the needle towards equity, no matter the size of our libraries.

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Five Ways to Foster Individual Responsibility and Transform Libraries
May 13th, 2019

URL: [https://acrl.libguides.com/c.php?g=899144&p=6468942&t=38123](https://acrl.libguides.com/c.php?g=899144&p=6468942&t=38123)

*This week’s post comes from Kathryn Kjaer, Head of Library Human Resources, University of California, Irvine Libraries. Learn more about our guest authors on our [Featured Authors](https://acrl.libguides.com/c.php?g=899144&p=6468942&t=38123) page.*

Transforming academic libraries into truly equitable, diverse, and inclusive organizations will require ongoing, intentional efforts by individuals of all identities and at all levels. Within our profession, many diversity initiatives have been instituted over the last decade or so. We have implemented mentoring and career development programs to increase professional opportunities for colleagues from traditionally underrepresented groups. ACRL, ARL, and other professional organizations have sponsored symposia and educational programs to increase awareness of EDI issues. Academic libraries have incorporated EDI mission statements and diversity plans into their broader strategic goals. We have empowered diversity committees to serve as catalysts to develop programming, learning, and ongoing dialog around EDI topics within our organizations. All these initiatives are important building blocks that are helping us create the transformation we seek. However, awareness of these initiatives should not lead any of us to be complacent and assume that somebody else is taking care of equity, diversity, and inclusion. The transformation of our libraries into equitable, diverse, and inclusive organizations depends on individuals stepping up to the challenge.

Those of us who have benefited from a system of white privilege have a huge responsibility to learn about and understand the historical and sociological factors that have contributed to a lack of equity, diversity, and inclusion in the systems and structures of our organizations. The burden of transforming our libraries cannot be borne solely by those who traditionally have been marginalized. We must educate each other about the legacy of racial, LGBTQ, and ableist biases, acknowledge where barriers to inclusion exist and work to break down these barriers. Read, research, and listen to the voices of those who have been underrepresented in our profession to identify the systemic practices that may be excluding certain individuals from full participation.
If you serve on a search committee, make it your responsibility to **incorporate EDI values into the recruitment process**. Make sure that the search committee, and all those involved in the recruitment, learn about implicit bias and how to minimize its influence when reviewing applications and evaluating candidates. Study guidelines, such as the *Tool for identifying implicit bias: awareness of common shortcuts*, to develop unbiased recruitment practices. In addition, think about what is really required to be successful in the position. Many hard skills can be taught or learned on the job while other behavioral and value-oriented characteristics are developed over a lifetime. Do your standards favor years of experience over things like a passion for teaching and learning, the capacity to interact effectively with a diverse student population, or the ability to collaborate in a team setting? When evaluating applications, consider the value of transferable skills and real-life experiences which can be outstanding measures to gauge someone’s potential to succeed. Also, make sure that a commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion is treated as a core requirement for the position. Be an advocate for individuals who bring different life experiences and cultural insights and whose participation will enrich your organization. During the interview process, be open and welcoming to candidates who may be apprehensive about relocating to your area. Provide opportunities to connect diverse candidates with affinity groups on campus and to learn about religious, cultural, and social organizations in the community. Help each candidate see the possibilities that exist to develop a rewarding work/life balance when joining your organization.

Whether a new hire chooses to remain with your organization or not is contingent to a great extent upon that person’s interactions with other individuals in the workplace. Inclusion is about much more than numbers and percentages. It goes beyond compliance and demographics. Inclusion is about people feeling that they belong; that their contributions are valued; that they are respected; and that they have agency within the organization. You can contribute to an inclusive environment by initiating a positive relationship early on. **Reach out to a new hire to get acquainted and welcome them to the library** whether you have a formal working relationship or not. Showing your support and camaraderie may contribute a lot to the retention of that new hire.

**Be an ally when negativity emerges.** If you witness a microaggression in which someone is being disrespected for who they are – speak up and support the person who is being mistreated. Don’t look the other way for fear that you might not say the right thing. Trust your instinct for basic human kindness, empathy, and fairness. Showing your support as an ally in the face of disrespect will help to build a culture in which EDI values are pervasive. An environment where microaggressions go unchecked undermines employee engagement and morale and undercuts an employee’s desire to stay.

If you are in a leadership position, **look for ways that you can foster EDI among your staff**. Promote training and learning opportunities that contribute to a culture of equity, diversity, and inclusion. Incorporate EDI principles into your goal setting process. Find ways to hold people accountable for participation in diversity training,
skill building, and other EDI activities as part of performance reviews. Above all, model EDI principles in your own work, your interactions with others, and the standards you expect of others. Use your leadership position to challenge organizational practices that may be hampering equity, diversity, and inclusion in your organization and find ways to implement new activities that will advance EDI values.

The transformation of libraries into models of equity, diversity, and inclusion will not happen without the ongoing, daily efforts of many individuals. What will you do?

References


“Walking the Walk” of Inclusion: Assessment Resources that Support Equity in Learning, Teaching and Mentoring
May 27th, 2019
URL: https://acrl.libguides.com/c.php?g=899144&p=6468942&t=38713

This week’s post comes from Katherine Yngve, Associate Director of Learning Outcomes Assessment at CILMAR, Purdue University. Learn more about our guest authors on our Featured Authors page.

Equity is advanced in higher education when personal intercultural incompetence is reduced and replaced by the ability to value and honor the advantages of diversity. At Purdue University’s new Center for Intercultural Learning, Mentorship, Assessment and
Research (CILMAR), our work focuses on helping faculty, students and staff move along the hierarchy of proficiency from unconscious incompetence to unconscious competence when it comes to working inclusively across difference (i.e., walking the walk of inclusion).

As CILMAR’s Associate Director of Learning Outcomes Assessment, I propose here some of my favorite resources for helping ourselves and others work towards inclusive and equitable educational and work practices.

In their superb “Moving Towards Culturally Responsive Assessment” white paper, Montenegro and Jankowski (2017) correctly point out that if assessment does not proceed from a mindset of equity, it can and will reinforce learners’ fears that they do not belong in higher education or in certain professions. One of the best tools that I know for proceeding from an equity mindset in one’s higher education assessment practice was introduced to the CILMAR group by team member Florence Adibu. The Integral Evaluator Self-in-Context Model, developed by Hazel Symonette, is a four-quadrant self-assessment model for reflecting upon and improving both one’s self-empathy and social empathy in multicultural contexts. Use of the instrument is fully described in her “Culturally Responsive Evaluation as a Resource for Helpful- Help,” a chapter published in Continuing the Journey to Reposition Culture and Cultural Context in Evaluation Theory and Practice (Hood, Hopson and Frierton, 2014). This book belongs in every library that cares about equity!

Does the struggle for greater inclusivity and equity in education sometimes lead you to feel discouraged and frustrated? Emotional resilience — the elasticity or “grit” that allows an individual to sit in discomfort, suspend judgement, and/or shoulder the burden of speaking truth to power — is essential to intercultural competence (and thus inclusivity and equity), but very rarely taught in higher education settings. Spearheaded
by CILMAR team member Annette Benson, the Intercultural Learning Hub is a free, virtual community of practice in which sharing with and learning from other EDI advocates can emotionally sustain you in tough times. Searching the Hub on the term “Emotional Resilience” yields three assessment tools for helping individuals understand their level of emotional resilience plus a host of activities, curated collections and mindfulness readings for teaching and practicing emotional resilience with others. There are also 30 resources under the related heading “Empathy,” 15 resources to help learners unpack and move beyond “Stereotyping” and 42 activities for teaching “Openness.” For helping groups learn to move beyond stereotyping without polarizing around race, gender or politics, I myself am particularly in awe of the lesson plan and materials developed (well before CILMAR existed!) by Benson and her colleague Wilfrido Cruz to bring noted diversity consultant Mark Williams’ 2001 book (and self-assessment tool) 10 Lenses to higher education audiences. You can find Benson’s collection, entitled “Diversity and Inclusion: The 10 Lenses” (2018) on the Intercultural Learning Hub.

Finally, a shout-out to an “oldie but goodie” in the intercultural competence assessment world. Most of the tools that educators use in our attempts to address unconscious incompetence are designed to measure attitudes or changes in attitude. Yet the ultimate goal of attitude change is something rarely measured: behavior shift! In 1976, Brent D. Ruben, then the director of the Institute for Communication Studies at Rutgers University, published an article entitled “Assessing Communication Competency for Intercultural Adaptation,” in which he reported on the use of behavioral observation as a technique for assessing interactive competence in social settings of cultural difference. This article includes, as an appendix, the full text of the Behavioral Assessment Inventory he developed and validated for measuring six different aspects of intercultural competence. If you’re like me, this instrument will have you humming Aretha Franklin hits, since it measures R-E-S-P-E-C-T along with empathy, interpersonal problem-solving behavior, ambiguity tolerance and more. Check it out!

Apart from curating and supporting the Hub, the CILMAR team’s primary mission is to facilitate intercultural learning opportunities for Purdue faculty, staff and students. If you are a member of the Boilermaker West Lafayette community, you may want to check our calendar of events for information about on-campus trainings and workshops. If you are a member of the greater community of inter- and multi-cultural learning specialists, you may be interested to know that CILMAR has offered an annual institute or workshop for university-based learning professionals regularly since spring 2018 — and we look forward to doing so again in the spring or summer of 2020! You can review the agenda of the 2019 event here, and keep an eye on our Facebook page or Twitter feeds for updates on future outreach events of this sort. Our team members can be reached at cilmar@purdue.edu.
Resources

Center for Intercultural Learning, Mentorship, Assessment and Research (CILMAR) - Purdue University. (2015). Retrieved from https://www.purdue.edu/ippu/cilmar/


What Does EDI Work Look Like in LIS Education?
June 3rd, 2019
URL: https://acrl.libguides.com/c.php?g=899144&p=6468942&t=38912
This week’s post comes from Helen Williams, Senior Lecturer at the University of Washington Information School. Learn more about our guest authors on our Featured Authors page.

“We challenge you to be the instructors our students need.”

Thus Nicole Cooke and Miriam Sweeney end their edited volume, Implementing Social Justice in the Classroom (2017). That’s a succinct explanation of why I left academic librarianship about a decade ago to teach MLIS students at the University of Washington Information School. In that time, I have worked to systematically change pieces of the LIS curriculum to better prepare incoming librarians, based on the concepts reflected by Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion. EDI is a mindset, not a goal or one-off course module.

Social justice, equity, diversity, and inclusiveness are essential elements of the University of Washington’s Information School mission statement, and are becoming more integral to the curriculum. While an “Information and Society” course has been required for many years, we recently formalized a new range of classes on social justice topics — including, among others, “Intellectual Freedom in Libraries,” “Information and Social Justice,” and “Cultural History of Children’s and Young Adult Literature”. The impact of each revamped or new EDI-centered course is visible: student evaluations (though problematic in other senses) and alumni responses are enthusiastic as students see themselves and their patron demographics better reflected in coursework.

It is vital that EDI components pervade the entire program, however, which is where my efforts are focused. My work is greatly aided by the research, writing, and practice of current and previous iSchool MLIS students including Nicola Andrews & Jessica Humphries (2016), Twanna Hodge and Beth Lytle (2015), as well as data available from researchers such as Cooke and Sweeney, and Ana Ndumu and Crystal Betts-Green (2018). They aptly point out where programs are not meeting EDI goals, and create a blueprint of areas that need attention.

Integrating critical engagement and content in the LIS curriculum builds on my years as an information literacy and subject librarian; my hope is that those values and concepts feed back into the work of new academic librarians. My EDI work in the curriculum and in mentoring acknowledges that I will and do make mistakes, that I am always learning, and that I learn tremendously from my students. To do that, I give up a lot of control in my classroom, as the students and I investigate issues and posit solutions together. I acknowledge that ultimately, I am in a position of power, but I share that privilege, and responsibility, with them.

What does that look like on the ground? I provide a framework, and scaffold materials and assignments so that students are prepared to tackle difficult topics, but letting them tell me what they want, and need, to learn provides everyone with a more meaningful experience. Conceptual as well as practical elements of EDI are present in all of my courses and assignments. The syllabi reflect a broad range of writers as well as
materials; I’m using fewer scholarly articles and increasingly more blog posts, Twitter threads, and news reports to connect concepts with the on-the-ground reality. Most weeks I have a last-minute-updated section of reading called “What’s on Fire?” to bring in current events, such as the UC system’s decision to walk away from their Elsevier Big Deal. From these headlines, we dive into the issues of equity and representation in scholarly communication, the tenure and promotion system, and ramifications for selectors and liaisons.

In the introductory course “Information Resources, Services, and Collections,” students do in-depth examinations of multiple fee-based databases. For many, this is their first foray into non-Google-type searching, and we spend time examining content, functionality, and provenance (including vendors). The accompanying assignment includes issues of accessibility: can databases hosted by EBSCO operate with screen readers? Is the ProQuest platform functional on mobile devices, for users without other internet connectivity options? How representative or biased are images and is alt-text provided?

One assignment in my Collection Development class has students evaluate selection tools ranging from the traditional — Library Journal, Booklist, Choice, etc. — to newer venues, such as Book Riot and Diverse BookFinder. In all cases these resources are examined with an eye to inclusion. What is the representation of non-mainstream materials? Are resources reflective of multiple perspectives? Are underrepresented voices included, in both the titles reviewed as well as the reviewers? In the Digital Humanities Librarianship course, we examine the feminization of labor involved in DH projects, and how patriarchal infrastructures set up many DH scholars and librarians for failure — and we discuss how to disrupt that system. The major DH project assignment must reflect and amplify underrepresented voices; there’s no mapping of picnics in Jane Austen or visualizations of trees mentioned by Walt Whitman. Rather, students are now creating timelines of LGBTQ+ characters in video games, decolonizing bibliographies in Wikipedia, and mapping dance camps for middle schoolers of color.

For the Directed Fieldwork course, the equivalent of credit-earning internships, students and site supervisors have always created a set of expected learning outcomes to structure the quarter’s activities and goals. I have added a requirement that one of those learning outcomes include a social justice aspect. For students doing fieldwork in traditional library settings, this requirement is simple: they may be cataloging music by women composers, building finding aids for the archives of an immigrant resettlement center, or creating story times for non-native English speakers. However, the most surprising result of this requirement has been the uptake by corporate fieldwork host sites. From tech giants to health insurers, the response has been positive, with several sites noting that the social justice focus provides their work with a new perspective. There have been only two sites in the past two years which have refused the requirement, and both were, notably, archives asking for students to help with the papers of deceased, cishet, white men.
Positive student responses to EDI work have helped create momentum programmatically, from increased student representation on the MLIS Program Committee to the design of an alumni network with goals including recruiting and retaining more people of color in the profession. In faculty meetings, we regularly showcase ideas and examples of EDI concepts in our classrooms, office hours, research, and professional development. The process of implementing EDI both in the classroom and throughout the program has not been completely smooth; some students and faculty are uncomfortable with the difficult conversations and other challenges that EDI work encompasses, and we are working to provide context, training, and support. Every time I see a student or colleague have an “aha!” moment due to a reading, discussion, assignment, or chance hallway encounter, however, I know our efforts have been worth it, and that we will be sending out better-prepared information professionals who can continue to create positive change in libraries and society.

References


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New Day, New Way: Engaging HBCUs and Students of Color in Diversity Recruitment and Collaboration
June 10th, 2019

URL: https://acrl.libguides.com/c.php?g=899144&p=6468942&t=38914
Each year at almost every conference in our profession, the themes of diversity and inclusion are discussed. No matter from which angle it is viewed or how many people speak about or conduct research on this topic, the results always remain the same. Our profession still lacks racial diversity, and nothing really seems to change. Additionally, despite the best efforts of popular diversity programs by both ALA and ACRL, the number of librarians of color still remains significantly low. This could be due to persistent historical preconceived notions and stereotypes about librarianship. People are also consistently unaware of the available opportunities that intersect with many aspects of society and technological advancement.

These thoughts aren’t new, but the question still remains: How do we recruit librarians of color and truly achieve our goals of diversity and inclusion within the Library and Information Science field?

Here’s my answer: direct contact with undergraduate students of color! One of the best ways to garner interest in the profession is by introducing students to the field during their undergraduate studies. This can be done through various methods of outreach, networking and collaboration with HBCUs. Additionally, there are various opportunities for formal and informal outreach to explore at your home campus to aid in the recruitment of students of color.

**Historically black colleges and universities** — commonly called HBCUs — are defined by the Higher Education Act of 1965 as any historically black college or university that was established prior to 1964, whose principal mission was, and is, the education of Black Americans, and that is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association determined by the Secretary of Education (Smithsonian NMAAHC, 2019). There are currently over 100 HBCUs designated by the U.S. Department of Education. HBCUs provide an array of academic programs across both liberal arts and sciences. Students come from the U.S. and abroad to study, learn and grow on our HBCU campuses. In 2017, there were 298,000 students in HBCUs across the U.S. (National Center for Education Statistics). The schools are conducting groundbreaking research in STEM and many other academic areas. “9 of the top ten baccalaureate institutions of African American STEM doctorate recipients from 2010 to 2014 are HBCUs” (National Science Foundation, 2017). HBCU graduates receive a holistic and scholastic education which prepares them to promote and understand diversity, inclusion and cultural awareness.

Our profession constantly touts itself as one that welcomes all majors. This assertion is rooted in the fact that the duties of our profession and functions of our libraries are continuously advancing in service, technology and research. So if these needs are changing, shouldn’t we also change the way that we approach diversity recruitment?
Let’s consider the following practical strategies to connect HCBU students with LIS programs:

- **Establish initial outreach to an HBCU Library Director.** Library and Information Science programs should consider making contact with HBCU Library Directors. This contact creates an avenue for campus collaboration and networking. Through this relationship, programs in LIS education can be promoted through campus presentations and visits at events such as campus job fairs. This recruitment strategy can help to inform students about opportunities within the field. A listing of HBCU Library Directors can be found at [http://hbculibraries.org/libraries-schools.php](http://hbculibraries.org/libraries-schools.php).

- **Tour an HBCU.** It is important that the rich tradition and history of HBCUs is explored. To build relationships, take time to tour an HBCU and meet with faculty and librarians. The visit will help you to explore the unique treasures held within HBCU libraries. It can also serve as an avenue for collaboration on grants and recruitment strategies. If funding for travel is an obstacle, connect with an HBCU librarian by phone to begin networking.

- **Partner with HBCU libraries on grants and funding opportunities, including training and internships for undergraduate students.** When funding opportunities arise for diversity recruitment and retention opportunities, consider reaching out to HBCUs to partner. One successful program has been the [Winterthur/University of Delaware Program in Art Conservation](http://winterthur.org), in partnership with the HBCU Library Alliance. This program provides HBCU undergraduate students interested in the humanities, arts, and sciences the opportunity to learn and practice hands-on library preservation skills during this full-time, fully-funded, eight-week internship under the mentorship of professional conservators and library staff at a host site. 2019 is the second year of funding for the program which provides seven summer internships in library and archives preservation at seven nationally recognized library preservation/conservation laboratories.

For those who do not work in LIS education or at an HCBU, you can still do your part to invite students of color to join our field. Follow these suggestions to reach out to the populations on your own campus:

- **Engage Student Campus Groups.** Research student groups on campus with racially diverse membership. Groups such as ethnic student alliances, international student associations and subject-specific affinity groups are excellent avenues of outreach to students of color. Contact these groups and collaborate on a presentation to discuss librarianship and other available opportunities such as internships and fellowships available to undergraduates. Invite other librarians to allow students to hear from different voices within the field.

- **Partner with Campus Faculty.** Another recruitment strategy is to partner and engage with campus faculty. Efforts can be made to reach out to instructors teaching ethnic studies courses to discuss librarianship with students. Activities
such as webinars, brief presentations, or email discussion lists will help to teach and engage students about the profession. Additionally, faculty members can help share information regarding diversity recruitment scholarships and awards within the field. This method helps students to explore available opportunities and learn more about the profession.

Although these ideas might seem simplistic to some, they are actionable strategies to promote recruitment. But the key word is “action.” Our field will never advance in diversity if we don’t become proactive in recruitment. As librarians, we must become a collective force and actively recruit students of color through engaging in the strategies mentioned. If students of color don’t know about the profession, how will they know about the opportunities? If we truly want diversity it is up to librarians to connect, inform, recruit and welcome future librarians into the field.

Further Reading


Counting down to Annual
June 17th, 2019
URL: https://acrl.libguides.com/c.php?g=899144&p=6468942&t=39433

This week's post was written by Hallie Clawson, Special Projects Assistant at the University of Washington Tacoma Library, on behalf of the ACRL President’s Program Planning Committee.

ALA Annual 2019 is now less than a week away, and with it this President’s Program Planning Committee — and our blog series — will conclude our year of service. Through the creation of this site, the workshop with Terryl Ross at ALA Midwinter, and the upcoming ACRL President’s Program with Angela Spranger, we have had a single goal: to reinforce ACRL’s Core Commitment to Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion by providing resources, information, and an opportunity for discussion around this vital topic.

Huge thanks are due to the twenty amazing guest authors who have shared their experiences, insights, and practical tips throughout the past year. Please check out our Featured Author page to learn more about them (and revisit their blog posts)! This series has covered empathetic and dialogic ways to approach the EDI conversation, getting new professionals on board with EDI through LIS education and recruitment, how to evaluate your own organization’s messaging, hiring, and retention policies, and how to incorporate EDI in your daily work from cataloging to instructional design to welcoming new colleagues. Our gratitude also goes out to our readers, who have come with us over the past months as we have learned and discussed. Whoever you are, whatever your role, this series is meant for you.

This project is, of course, only one small contribution to the ongoing discussion in libraries. I hope only to place a tiny pebble in Justice’s scales, tipping our profession slightly closer to equity. ACRL President Lauren Pressley’s decision to center this program around organizational change is part of a greater shift libraries need to make in order to embed equitable and antiracist principles throughout their praxis. There has been a lot of investment in the pipeline, in recruitment and residencies, and as we’ve discussed most recently in LIS education. This investment is important! As our profession has grown in diversity, including increasing numbers of BIPOC (Black and Indigenous People of Color) information professionals, we also need to support their ability not just to get a foot in the door, but to have ongoing, meaningful support from their colleagues, their bosses, and their professional organizations throughout their daily lives and work.

Last year, then-ACRL President Cheryl Middleton selected Beyond Resilience: Crafting a Caring Organization as her program theme, specifically focusing on “how library administration and workers can make libraries and librarianship more equitable and caring for all members of the organization” (Slebodnik, 2018). We’ve tried to continue that conversation by discussing ways that organizations can fundamentally change their culture. Why can’t organizations adapt to the increasingly diverse world around us?
Why shouldn’t “old dogs” — library directors, university administrators, Boards of Directors — learn new inclusive tricks? We hope that through this series we have offered some ideas for how to make that idea a reality.

I also want to emphasize that the process of changing your organization to be more inclusive does, in fact, mean changing the organization. This is not simply a matter of bringing the “underrepresented” to the same table that white folks have dominated for so long. In the long run, it means decolonizing, breaking down barriers, and shifting the narrative. It means making a new table – or getting rid of the table entirely to find something better.

Looking forward to Annual, I hope you will join us in Washington D.C. at our capstone event for this series: Lauren Pressley’s ACRL President’s Program. Dr. Angela Spranger is a Lecturer in Management at the Luter School of Business, Christopher Newport University, as well as the owner of StepOne Consulting LLC. She provides consulting services in management, human resources, and labor/management relations, as well as doing scholarly work on these topics. She will discuss her book, *Why People Stay: Helping Employees Feel Safe, Seen, and Valued* (published by Routledge in 2018), and how we can utilize her principles in library work. We are thrilled to invite her, and hope you will welcome her in D.C.! The program will be in the Walter E. Washington Convention Center (WCC), Room 146A, from 10:30am to noon on Saturday, June 22nd. Click here to see the event on the official ALA Annual scheduler, and add it to your calendar.

Now of course, the work is far from done. There will be more posts coming out on this platform before the blog series is declared finished, including a follow-up on the program at Annual and a reflection from Lauren Pressley. Incoming ACRL President Karen Munro has also indicated her commitment to EDI issues, with a focus on inviting library users into the conversation. I’ll be excited to see what comes next from her and from ACRL. Stay tuned after ALA Annual for more!

[Edited 6/18/19 to add details on Karen Munro's planned ACRL Presidential theme.]

References


Realizing Inclusive Work Environments
July 5th, 2019
This week’s post was written by **Nastasha E. Johnson & Jason Sokoloff**, on behalf of the ACRL President’s Program Planning Committee and ACRL College & Research Libraries.

To a packed room of more than 250 attendees, Dr. Angela Spranger presented “Equity, Diversity, Inclusion... and Leadership: Where Do We Go From Here?” a talk about inclusive leadership and why diversity initiatives fail. The session was the culminating event of the yearlong ACRL President’s Program on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI).

A business-school faculty member at Christopher Newport University and management consultant, Spranger described how workplace behaviors and biases affect people’s decision to join and stay in organizations. She described how, despite professed efforts and articulated priorities, the inherent interest in maintaining the status quo, confirmation of groupthink, and diversity fatigue all have an impact on employee recruitment and retention.

Engaging attendees through small-group discussions, Spranger offered ways of thinking about recruitment and organizational culture that strive towards inclusion and innovation:

- Rather than hiring someone for their perceived “fit,” we should be hiring for what the organization needs now and in the future.
- Workgroup effectiveness depends on different cultural norms represented by the group. While cultural communication differences can be a hindrance, diverse groups can yield innovation.
- Leading inclusively requires emotional and cultural intelligence, self and social awareness, self and relationship management.
- Progressing into equity requires inviting people to change (without coercion or shame) and consciously responding to that change.
- Foster belongingness and value uniqueness by sharing the spotlight, rotating responsibilities, empowering others, and seeking opinions.

Emphasizing that we are all leaders who can create safe and inclusive places for people to work and succeed, Spranger described EDI work as messy, necessary, and complicated. She advocated for moving beyond our best intentions toward realizing inclusive and effective work environments.

**Nastasha Johnson, Purdue University and School of Information Studies, nejohnson@purdue.edu**

**Jason Sokoloff, University of Washington, jksok@uw.edu**
Reflection and Conclusion of the EDI Discussion Series
July 31st, 2019

URL: https://acrl.libguides.com/c.php?g=899144&p=6468942&t=39435

This week’s post was written by Lauren Pressley. This will be our final post in this blog series and serves to conclude and reflect on the work we have done. Thank you to all the readers of this blog, for discussing EDI in academic libraries with us over these past months.

The ACRL President’s Program provides an opportunity for the current ACRL president to address a library issue of professional interest that may benefit the field. The program has traditionally involved an event at the ALA Annual Conference. Readers of this blog know that my President’s Program Committee supplemented this event with an additional discussion forum at the ALA Midwinter Meeting and a series of blog posts to facilitate conversation throughout the year focusing on organizational change in support of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI).

This theme is personally important to me, but is also a focus for ACRL. As the higher education association for librarians, ACRL is dedicated to creating diverse and inclusive communities in the association and in academic and research libraries. This Core Commitment permeates the work of the association, cutting across all ACRL sections, committees, interest and discussion groups, and communities of practice by acknowledging and addressing historical racial inequities; challenging oppressive systems within academic libraries; valuing different ways of knowing; and identifying and working to eliminate barriers to equitable services, spaces, resources, and scholarship.

We lived this commitment in a number of ways during my term in office. The theme of the ACRL 2019 conference, “Recasting the Narrative,” directly supported our core commitment, offering featured programming throughout the conference on EDI issues. The conference included its first land acknowledgment and provided a variety of EDI resources on the conference website and onsite in Cleveland. We have also made changes to the ACRL committee appointment process to make it more transparent and inclusive. We are continually seeking ways to build a more equitable and inclusive association through providing training for association leaders, elevating diverse voices and perspectives, and revising systems and processes to be more equitable and inclusive.

The President’s Program Committee facilitated this powerful blog, which featured posts on topics such as engaging HBCUs, EDI in LIS education, EDI in Community Colleges, and more. I want to express deep appreciation to the featured authors who shared their expertise and knowledge in order to foster conversations to grow a more equitable and inclusive profession.
I am grateful for the work of this Committee, chaired by Rebecca Miller Waltz. Rebecca, Hallie Clawson, Natasha Elizabeth Johnson, Leo Lo, Rachel Rubin, and Jason Sokoloff committed to engaging membership in an ongoing conversation about organizational change in support of equity, diversity, and inclusion, and found ways to weave this conversation into programming at the Midwinter and Annual conferences as highlighted in previous posts. ACRL staff, especially Megan R. Griffin and David Free, have been important partners in this work as well. I owe a debt of gratitude to this team, and would like to especially thank Hallie Clawson who has served as a member and as a special project assistant to me throughout my term.

It has been a pleasure, and the honor of my career, to serve as ACRL president. The association, though its members, is doing significant and meaningful work and I know that this drive towards embodying EDI will continue. Though I’ll be doing so from a different role in the field, I look forward to sustained conversation and continuing this work in support of making our field a more equitable, diverse, and inclusive community for our students, faculty, staff, library colleagues, and communities.

Lauren Pressley
ACRL Past President 2019-2020
Director of the UW Tacoma Library and Associate Dean of University Libraries
University of Washington, Tacoma
Featured Authors
Ione T. Damasco
Author of *Incorporating Intergroup Dialogue into the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Conversation*

Ione T. Damasco, M.L.I.S., is Coordinator of Cataloging and Professor at the University of Dayton. She chairs the University Libraries Diversity and Inclusion Team, collaborating with campus and community partners to foster greater awareness of equity, diversity, and inclusion issues. Her recent research explores intergroup dialogue as a form of social justice experiential learning. View her researcher profile: https://works.bepress.com/ione_damasco/

Downing, Munson, Clowney-Robinson, Nichols, & Look
Authors of *Being Multiracial in a Mono-racially Organized World: What Does the Growing Interracial Population Mean for Academic Librarians?*

Karen E. Downing (kdown@umich.edu) is the Education Librarian at the University Library, University of Michigan. In addition to that role, she is currently serving a three-year term as an elected member of the American Library Association’s (ALA) Executive Board. She received her Ph.D. in Education in 2009 from the Center for the Study of Higher and Postsecondary Education and her M.I.L.S. in 1989, both from the U-M. In past positions she coordinated the social sciences, directed the nationally renowned Peer Information Counseling program (a retention program for underrepresented minorities), served as Assistant to the Dean for Cultural Diversity, and as Coordinator of Academic Outreach. In 2009, she received the ALA Equality Award, and in 2010 she was named the first Diversity Research Center Visiting Scholar at Rutgers, Newark. She is the co-editor of *Multiracial America: A Resource Guide on the History and Literature of Interracial Issues*, published in 2005 by Scarecrow Press, and more recently, *On Being a Multiracial Librarian in a Mono-racially Conceived Library World* (2017), in Race as multidimensional: The personal shaping the professional in the library and information field. Advances in Librarianship, 42, 155-170.
Tashia Munson is the Access Services and Outreach Librarian for the University of Michigan. She represents the available services of the library to the campus and surrounding community. Her research interests include management and leadership, diversity, outreach, and ways institutions of higher education can evolve to meet the needs of underserved and underrepresented populations. In 2017, she co-presented "Youth Empowerment through Community Partnerships" at the National Conference for African American Librarians (NCAAL). She is a member of ALA and BCALA and currently serves as a Editorial Board member for ACRL CHOICE and an associate member of the ALA Information Technology Advisory Committee (ITAC).

Marna Clowney-Robinson (clownm@umich.edu) currently serves as the Information / Access Services Librarian at the University of Michigan Library. She holds a MLIS from Wayne State University School of Library and Information Sciences; and an MSW from the University of Michigan School of Social Work. In her librarian role, she performs a variety of managerial and operational duties to assist patrons in the use of library resources and services the library offers and has assisted with providing instruction support. In addition to her librarian role, she is also a therapist with Catholic Social Services and Amplify Colectivo where she specializes in Identity issues; eating disorders; trauma issues, and mixed race identity issues. Marna has been featured on National Public Radio (NPR) discussing issues related to eating disorders in minority populations and has extension lecture experience on mixed race issues. Marna currently serves as secretary for ALA Ethnic & Multicultural Information Exchange Round Table (EMIERT). Current interests include identifying strategies for multicultural community-based research and practice, multicultural education for social work practice, and trauma informed librarianship.

Darlene Nichols (dpn@umich.edu) currently serves as the Social Work Librarian at the University of Michigan Library and has been liaison librarian to several social science schools and departments during her career. She was the first coordinator of the University of Michigan Library’s Peer Information Counseling, launching and shaping the program’s early days. Some relevant publications and presentations include “Developing Inclusive Research Libraries for Patrons and Staff of All Abilities”, Research Library Issues: A Report from ARL, CNI, and SPARC, with Anna Ercoli Schnitzer,
Helen Look, MSI-LIS, (hlook@umich.edu) is the Collection Analyst for the University of Michigan Library. She supports the assessment of the Library’s collection development programs and the strategic allocation of library resources. Her research interests include collection development, multiracial families, DEIA, library assessment, and public health. Ms. Look is the co-author of a chapter published in Multiracial America: A Resource Guide on the History and Literature of Interracial Issues. She has published and presented on multiracial issues and literature. Ms. Look currently serves as the Jury Co-Chair for the Asian/Pacific American Award for Literature and an elected board member of the Michigan Academic Library Association.

**Samantha Hines**
Author of *From Safe Spaces to Brave Spaces*

Samantha Schmehl Hines, Associate Dean of Instructional Resources for Peninsula College in Port Angeles, WA, got her MS in library science from University of Illinois in 2003 and has worked in a variety of libraries in higher education institutions across the US. A prolific scholar and frequent conference presenter on issues of library instruction, copyright and publishing, and management, Samantha is also a PhD candidate in Ethical and Creative Leadership at Union Institute and University.

**Jensen, Stoner, & Castillo-Speed**
Authors of *Metadata Justice: At the Intersection of Social Justice and Cataloging*

Sine Hwang Jensen is the Asian American and Comparative Ethnic Studies Librarian at the UC Berkeley Ethnic Studies Library. Before becoming a librarian, she worked as a
racial justice facilitator in Baltimore, MD. After earning an M.L.S. in archives and M.A. in History from the University of Maryland, College Park, she has worked at the intersection of social justice, libraries, and archives. She was a coordinator for the Igniting a Model Minority Mutiny: AAPI Communities and the Movement for Racial Justice network gathering and the Radical Archives, Libraries, and Museums track at the Allied Media Conference in Detroit, Michigan. She was also a contributor to the anthology Asian American Librarians and Library Services: Activism, Collaboration, and Strategies (Clarke, Pun, and Tong, 2017).

Melissa Stoner (Diné) is the Native American Studies Librarian at the University of California, Berkeley Ethnic Studies Library. Previously, she worked in the University of Nevada, Las Vegas Library Digital Collections Department as Project Workflows Manager for the National Endowment for the Humanities funded National Digital Newspaper Program for the state of Nevada. Melissa also worked as Digital Projects Librarian for Nevada State College on a Institute of Museum and Library Services grant to digitize oral histories. Melissa graduated from San Jose State University Masters of Library and Information Science, with a focus on emerging technologies, and the digitization practices of historical and ethnographic materials that contain culturally sensitive information and/or restricted tribal knowledge. She was a 2016 American Library Association Emerging Leader.

Lillian Castillo-Speed began her career on campus as the Coordinator of the Chicano Studies Library after earning her Master’s degree in Library Science at the University of California, Berkeley Library School in 1983. She was the Managing Editor of several reference books published by that library, including the Chicano Periodical Index. In 1997, the Chicano Studies Library, the Asian American Studies Library and the Native American Studies Library merged into the Ethnic Studies Library and she became the Head Librarian. She continues to manage the Chicano Database, the online version of the Chicano Periodical Index, and she is a founding member of the Latino Digital Archive Group. She has compiled and published several bibliographies as well as the reference work Chicana Studies Index: Twenty Years of Gender Research, 1971-1991. She is the editor of Latina: Women’s Voices from the Borderlands (Simon & Schuster, 1995). In 1996 she received
the Librarian of the Year Award from REFORMA, the National Association to Promote Library and Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish Speaking; and in 2012 she received the Distinguished Librarian Award of the Librarians Association of the University of California, Berkeley Division.

Kathryn Kjaer
Author of *Five Ways to Foster Individual Responsibility and Transform Libraries*

Kathryn Kjaer is Head of Library Human Resources at the University of California, Irvine. She received her MLS from the University of Iowa and has had experience in technical services, public services, and collection development at Iowa State University, the University of Iowa, Colorado State University, and UC Irvine. In her current role as Head of Library Human Resources, she plays a lead role in addressing equity, diversity, and inclusion in the UC Irvine Libraries. She is active in ALA and ACRL and has been the facilitator for the LLAMA Diversity Officers Discussion Group.

Adriene Lim
Author of *The Role of Empathy in Improving Academic Library Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives*

Adriene Lim, PhD, MLIS, is the Dean of Libraries and Philip H. Knight Chair at the University of Oregon (UO). Her research interests include managerial leadership, organizational development, technology, and diversity, and she has been active in ALA, LITA, and ACRL, most recently serving as the two-term chair of the ACRL Professional Values Committee. She currently serves as a Board member for the Association of Research Libraries.
Amanda Meeks
Author of *More than a Thought Experiment: Designing Anti-Oppressive Events and Instruction*

Amanda Meeks is a Teaching, Learning, and Research Services Librarian at Northern Arizona University. Her instruction and outreach efforts focus on developing an intentionally reflective, feminist and critical praxis in order to integrate information literacy and social justice. She is interested in cultivating meaningful relationships and collaboration with faculty and students, mentoring new professionals and finding new ways to make librarianship her creative outlet, as well as her professional one.

Powell & Zepeda
Authors of *Let’s talk theories!: Incorporating queer, feminist, and critical theory into our teaching practice*

Charissa Powell (pronouns: she/her/hers) is the Student Success Librarian for Information Literacy at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. She is also a co-founder and editor of *The Librarian Parlor*, a community for library researchers. You can find her on Twitter [@CharissaAPowell](https://twitter.com/CharissaAPowell) or through email: charissa@utk.edu.

Lizeth Zepeda (pronouns: she/her/hers), is a Diversity Resident Librarian and Research Assistant Professor at the University of Tennessee in Knoxville, Tennessee. She was formally an Outreach Archivist and Librarian at the Arizona Historical Society in Tucson, Arizona. Her research and archival interests include working with traditionally under-documented communities, outreach programming, Spanish-language materials, and queer(ing) archives and pedagogies. You can find her on Twitter [@LizZepeda714](https://twitter.com/LizZepeda714) or through email: Lzepeda@utk.edu.
Tina D. Rollins
Author of *New Day, New Way: Engaging HBCUs and Students of Color in Diversity Recruitment and Collaboration*

Tina D. Rollins is the Director of the William R. and Norma B. Harvey Library at Hampton University. She completed her B.S. degree in Criminal Justice at Old Dominion University and her M.L.S. degree at North Carolina Central University. While at NCCU, she was a member of the Diversity Scholars Program which was an Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) funded program to recruit students of diverse backgrounds into the library and information sciences field. This experience led to an interest in promoting and researching diversity within librarianship. Rollins has committed herself to bringing awareness to the lack of diversity within all facets of the LIS field. She currently serves as principal investigator on an IMLS grant awarded to Hampton University. This award entitled the Hampton University Forum on Minority Recruitment and Retention in the LIS Field, an August 2018 national forum convened to discuss effective strategies and action planning. The grant continues to support virtual meetings and training sessions for LIS professionals. Tina Rollins holds various memberships in both regional and national organizations and is a dedicated mentor to both new and seasoned librarians. Additionally, she volunteers in literacy outreach organizations and initiatives in the region.

Edith Scarletto
Author of *Fostering Inclusivity Through Improved Recruitment Practices*

Edith Scarletto, Reference and Instruction Librarian at Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH, got her MLIS at Kent State University in 2002. She is a co-chair of the Academic Library Association of Ohio Diversity Committee and she has been active in ALA and ACRL. Her research interests have included map and GIS services in libraries with recent scholarship centered on rethinking recruitment processes for diversity in academic libraries.
Kellee E. Warren
Author of “It’s not me, it’s you”: The Problem of Retention in Librarianship

Kellee E. Warren is Assistant Professor and Special Collections Librarian at the University of Illinois at Chicago. Her article “We Need These Bodies, but Not Their Knowledge: Black Women in the Archival Science Profession, and Their Connection to the Archives of Enslaved Black Women in the French Antilles” was published in the Spring 2016 edition of Library Trends. Her research interests include critical information literacy and culturally sustaining pedagogy in the Special Collections classroom, online learning, digital humanities, Twitter social media platform, oral histories, and connecting underrepresented groups to their cultural heritage through traditional and non-traditional archival source materials.

Helene Williams
Author of What Does EDI Work Look Like in LIS Education?

Helene Williams is Senior Lecturer at the University of Washington Information School. A longtime academic librarian, she worked in instruction, reference, e-resources, and collections at a diverse range of institutions ranging from Seattle Central College, Michigan State, University of Washington, Northeastern, and Harvard, before transitioning full time to training the next generation of library leaders. Social justice, diversity, and equity values are the backbone of her curriculum, and she collaborates across disciplinary boundaries to bring that work to other departments and organizations. A tireless advocate for students in both the residential and online MLIS programs, she is currently working with students to create an alumni mentoring network to recruit and retain students of color to the profession.
Katherine Yngve
Author of “Walking the Walk” of Inclusion: Assessment Resources that Support Equity in Learning, Teaching and Mentoring

Katherine Yngve, a “recovering” Senior International Officer, now co-directs Purdue’s new Center for Intercultural Learning, Mentoring, Assessment and Research (CILMAR). As a fulltime assessment professional for Purdue, she specializes in scaling up evidence-based intercultural learning on campus and abroad and supports the use of over 20 validated instruments, many of them free. In 2017 alone she provided intercultural pedagogy training to more than 120 Purdue faculty and staff. Prior to Purdue, Katherine founded the first Office of International Programs at the American University of Beirut, often considered the #1 research university in the Arab world. As a doctoral student under R. Michael Paige, she was one of the first instructors to operationalize online intercultural mentoring for semester-abroad students, an experience that led to the creation of intercultural pedagogy workshops for Purdue faculty in 2016. Katherine received her M.A. from the University of Chicago and B.A. from Indiana University.
Compiled Reading List


http://learningoutcomesassessment.org/occasionalpapertwenty-nine.html


Powell, C. (2018). *FYS 129 Information Privilege Syllabus Fall 2018* [PDF]. Retrieved March 19, 2019, from [https://drive.google.com/file/d/11Ln4mNkGi6WmdrxRznfiz1w6nTP6tD/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/11Ln4mNkGi6WmdrxRznfiz1w6nTP6tD/view)


Various (Eds.). (n.d.) Keywords Series: NYU Press. https://keywords.nyupress.org/


