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Why Diversity Matters: A Roundtable Discussion on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Librarianship

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- **Why Diversity Matters: A Roundtable Discussion on Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Librarianship**

by [Juleah Swanson](#), [Ione Damasco](#), [Isabel Gonzalez-Smith](#), [Dracine Hodges](#), [Todd Honma](#) and [Azusa Tanaka](#)
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In Brief:

After presenting together at ACRL 2015 to share research we conducted on race, identity, and diversity in academic librarianship, we reconvene panelists Ione T. Damasco, Cataloger Librarian at the University of Dayton, Isabel Gonzalez-Smith, Undergraduate Experience Librarian at the University of Illinois, Chicago, Dracine Hodges, Head of Acquisitions at Ohio State University, Todd Honma, Assistant Professor of Asian American Studies at Pitzer College, Juleah Swanson, Head of Acquisition Services at the University of Colorado Boulder, and Azusa Tanaka, Japanese Studies Librarian at the University of Washington in a virtual roundtable discussion. Resuming the conversation that started at ACRL, we discuss why diversity really matters to academic libraries, librarians, and the profession, and where to go from here. We conclude this article with a series of questions for readers to consider, share, and discuss among colleagues to continue and advance the conversation on diversity in libraries.

Introduction

Earlier this year, at the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) 2015 conference, the authors of this article participated in a panel discussion entitled “From the Individual to the Institution: Exploring the Experiences of Academic Librarians of Color”¹ which covered research the panelists had conducted on institutional racism, structures of privilege and power, and racial and ethnic identity theory in academic libraries and among academic librarians. The hour-long, standing-room only session scraped the surface of conversations that are needed among academic librarians on issues of diversity, institutional racism, microaggressions, identity, and intersectionality. It was our intent with the ACRL panel to plant the seeds for these conversations and for critical thought in these areas to further germinate. We saw these conversations begin to take shape during and after the panel discussion on [Twitter](#), and overheard in the halls of the Oregon Convention Center. As Pho and Masland write in the final chapter of *The Librarian Stereotype*, “we are now at a point where discussions about the intersectionality of gender, sexuality, race, and ethnicity in librarianship are happening among a wider audience . . . These difficult conversations about diversity are the first steps toward a plan of action” (2015, p. 277). These conversations must

continue to grow.

The discussion of racial and ethnic diversity in libraries is a subset of the larger discussion of race in the United States. For anyone participating in these discussions, the experience can be difficult and uncomfortable. Such discussions can be academic in nature, but very often they are personal and subjective. In the United States, our long history of avoiding difficult and meaningful conversations about race has made it challenging for some people to perceive or comprehend disparities in representation and privilege. Fear often plays a significant role as a barrier to engaging in these conversations. Fear of the unknown, fear of rejection, fear of change, and the perceived possibility of losing control can complicate these discussions. Participants in these conversations have to be willing to concede a certain amount of vulnerability in order to move the discussion forward, but vulnerability makes many people uncomfortable, which in turn makes it easy to just avoid the discussion altogether.

What follows is a virtual roundtable discussion where we speak openly about why diversity really matters, what actions can be taken, and suggest questions for readers to consider, share, and discuss in honest and open conversations with colleagues. At times, authors reveal the very real struggle to articulate or grapple with the questions, just as one might encounter in a face-to-face conversation. But, ultimately, by continuing this conversation we work to advance our profession's understanding of the complexity of race and ethnic diversity in librarianship, and to strive toward creating sustainable collaborations and lasting change in a profession that continues to face significant challenges in maintaining race and ethnic diversity.

Before launching into the roundtable discussion, we acknowledge that an additional challenge when talking about race is the use of terminology and language that intellectualizes some of the real-world experiences and feelings we face. Terminology is useful due to its ability to create precision in meaning, but it also can alienate and turn away readers who use different language or terms to express similar experiences, feelings, or concepts. Yet in order to have a critical discussion of race and diversity, it is important that we engage in the use of particular terms that help us to identify, explain, and analyze issues and experiences that will help us to advance the conversation in deeper and more meaningful ways. In this article we do use terms that draw from a common critical lexicon, and we have made an effort to define and/or footnote many of these terms for readers who might be unfamiliar with these terms.

Why does diversity matter?

Juleah: *Why does diversity matter?* This question was posed to the audience at the end of our ACRL panel (Swanson, et al., 2015), as something to reflect upon. For our virtual roundtable, I'm re-asking this question, because this question warrants meaningful discussion. Let's go around the "table" and start with Ione.

Ione: When the question was first posed to us, I struggled with articulating a response that was more than just an intuitive reaction. My first thought was that diversity matters because we don't live and work in a vacuum of homogeneity. But I realize that's both a naïve and inaccurate answer, as there are many places where people still live in segregated areas in terms of race, and that there are work environments that for many reasons, tend to have a homogeneous pool of employees. It's not enough to say that diversity matters because the world is diverse.

Isabel: Ione's initial comment about wanting to respond beyond her intuition reminds me of Isabel Espinal's "A New Vocabulary for Inclusive Librarianship: Applying Whiteness Theory to our profession" piece where she discusses Sensate Theory, an anthropology framework in discussing whiteness. I agree with Ione's reaction of wanting to articulate why racial and ethnic diversity is important, how painful prejudice and discrimination can feel, and the need for acknowledgement of the disparities that exist in different communities' experiences and history due to race/ethnicity. Discovering Espinal's exploration of sensate theory was thrilling for me because she says that the theory emphasizes gut reactions – emotion and the senses (Espinal, 145). Librarians of color may react with "a very angry or very tearful reaction or both...the experience of encountering whiteness in the library setting is one that is felt in the body; it is more than an intellectual abstraction." (145) This really resonated with me because I consider myself an intelligent, composed person but when my colleagues or I experience discrimination due to our race/ethnicity, I can't help but feel an initial overwhelmingness. This is then immediately followed by a process of checking my emotions to find ways to articulate myself in an intellectual way as a means to be acknowledged and understood. As a person of color, this is what discussing the relevance and meaning behind diversity means to me – a struggle between gut reaction and articulation.

Dracine: This question is a challenge. Nevertheless, most people who come into this profession want to be of service directly or indirectly to others. Libraries of every variety exist to serve their respective constituents through access to information and spaces for collaboration.

With that in mind, I think diversity matters in relation to the relevance of services being provided to meet practical and extraordinary needs. Needs that are diverse not only because of ethnicity and race, but also because of religion, gender, socioeconomic status, physical ability, etc.

With recent headlines related to racism and violence, it is easy to see the connectivity of libraries in the pursuit of social justice ideals. So much of the conversation we've been having pertains to administrative and cultural constructs that frustrate diversity. These are large and lofty issues in scope. I often think their enormity makes us dismissive of the tangible impacts of diversity in the commonplace work performed in libraries every day.

I've heard many anecdotal stories from colleagues, both of color and white, who were able to customize or enhance instruction for an individual or group because of personal insights and experiences related to issues like English as a Foreign Language and format accessibility. Perhaps mountains were not moved, but to the individuals who benefitted hills were climbed.

Isabel: Dracine's example of instructors tailoring their sessions for a particular class of students based on factors like language is a great example of how librarians are tuning into the identity aspect of the communities they serve. Juleah, Azusa, and I have been using identity theory to think about diversity initiatives from an angle that takes into account the individual experience at a more fundamental level. Because identity is so dynamic and in constant flux, it is often constructed from the internal sense of self as well as the external, social level. Consider it like the messages we internalize from what we see on tv, read in history books or who possesses roles of authority in our institutions, who sits at the reference desk. It makes sense that your colleagues customize their instruction because we intuitively sense that people respond positively to another person who is like themselves. That's why the library ethnic caucuses are important – they establish a sense of community which provide some individuals with a sense of community and belonging. Ethnic identity theory helps us understand this phenomenon.

Azusa: As Dracine says above, diversity matters because the libraries must accommodate diverse user groups as well as librarian population. Ione mentioned during our panel how the field of Library and Information Science (LIS) and higher education in general views diversity as a problem to be solved (Swanson, et al., 2015). Diversity, in race, ethnicity, sexuality, age, social background, and more, will bring power to the libraries where balanced views and all kinds of possibilities are inevitable for successful research and teaching. Diversity is not a problem, but an asset for the institution.

Juleah: When we talk about diversity and why it matters in academic libraries, I think what we're really trying to get at are two different concepts: 1) diversity in relation to the library profession's role in social justice (Morales, Knowles, Bourg, 2014) and 2) diversity in relation to organizational culture within libraries.

To be honest, I think our profession, librarians as a whole, but more specifically academic librarians, are in the midst of a professional culture crisis. I think this stems from the homogeneity within our professional ranks. What we get to do as academic librarians today is incredible, from pushing our campuses into open access models for research output to being active participants in conversations about managing massive amounts of data. But are we proud of the homogeneity and the stagnant racial and ethnic diversity within the profession? I don't think we are.

I think diversity matters because, right now, it allows us the opportunity to reinvent our organizational and professional culture into something that is not reliant on homogeneity of people and ideas, but rather looks toward what we bring to the future of higher education.

Ione: Juleah's comment about diversity in academic libraries being two separate concepts are actually intertwined, and are worth exploring at the same time. I think her first point about libraries and social justice poses difficult questions for us as a profession—how far do we take social responsibility as academic libraries? As academic librarians? How do we reconcile social responsibility with the missions of our institutions, and what do we do when they are out of alignment? Connecting these to her second point, internally, how far do we take a social justice concept of diversity in terms of our daily work as librarians? Can we even agree upon a definition of social justice in terms of diversity? I think Todd raised an important question during the panel (Swanson, et al., 2015) when he said, "The question is, is diversity a social justice? Is racial equity part of an institutional mission? If it isn't, then we have to interrogate that."

If we think of our libraries as microcosms of the world around us, I don't think we can ignore the fact that oppressive structures of power which exist in our culture are reproduced within the structures that exist in higher education, in our universities and colleges, and in our academic libraries, often unknowingly and sometimes with the best of intentions. Numbers aren't everything, but the lack of positive movement in terms of racial demographics in our field

is a cause for concern. And just adding more people of “diverse” backgrounds does nothing to address structural problems with an institution. I think as we move as a society to undo oppression of marginalized identities, libraries, as places that serve larger communities, do bear a responsibility to undo their own oppressive structures and question why things have stayed the same over the years in our profession.

Isabel: You’re right, Ione. Like I said at our panel at ACRL, you can’t just hire a person of color and call it diversity (Swanson, et al., 2015). If we’re going to pursue diversity initiatives at the student and professional level, we need to identify what long-term success looks like for our field and what resonates with individuals. What Juleah, Azusa, and I found in our research was that racial and ethnic identity theory helps us understand why librarians of color may respond well to ethnic causes or liaisons for students of color groups and how they may feel a sense of loneliness in a predominately white institution or perceive their race/ethnicity is used to pigeon-hole their professional responsibilities.

Diversity matters because we all play a part in the messages we disseminate, regardless of how we identify. Librarians contribute towards the preservation and accessibility of information, representations of authority in the intellectual sphere, and advocating against censorship. What is the message that our collections, library staff representation, research, or programming gives to the communities we serve? And what are we doing to serve our patrons in ways that take into account their race and/or ethnicity?

Todd: To add to what Isabel said about the librarian’s role in the preservation and accessibility of information, I think at a profound foundational level, libraries are involved in an epistemological project. In other words, as an institution that collects, preserves, and distributes information, libraries serve the function of helping to create and circulate knowledge in our society. How institutions construct and curate information, and how users access and synthesize that information, are not outside the realm of the political. Especially in the case of academic libraries, which encompass a scholarly mission of furthering intellectual growth and scholarly communication, thinking carefully and deeply about the types of knowledge that is both included and excluded is crucial to the mission of the library and its relation to broader society.

Isabel: NPR recently recently featured Michelle Obama’s commencement speech to the predominantly African-American class of Martin Luther King Jr. Preparatory High School in the south side of Chicago where she mentions how the famous American author Richard Wright was not being allowed to check out books at the public library because he was black (Obama, 2015). I instantly thought of Todd’s point when I heard it on the radio – that the American library’s past was once a place of exclusion, and how it still remains political. The First Lady’s point was to inspire the graduating class to persevere beyond their struggles towards achieving greatness – a message intended to resonate with the students because it was coming from an accomplished, powerful, fellow South Sider of Chicago.

Todd: That example also reminds me of how E.J. Josey, writing in 1972, identified academic libraries as having a unique role to play in the black liberation movement. Even today, as higher education continues to be a site of privilege for some and exclusion for others, diversity and educational equity is something that we still need to work on. Thus, in relationship to libraries and higher education, diversity is important to consider in how we think about all aspects of the ‘life cycle of information,’ particularly when it comes to the ways in which historically underrepresented groups and historically underrepresented forms of knowledge and practices have not been included in – and at times, systematically excluded from – collection building and user services.

Ione: Many of us who work in academic libraries have encountered “diversity training” at one point or another, and in the course of that training, we may have been presented with statistics from both business and higher education that demonstrate the value of diversity in specific ways. For example, many businesses highlight the importance of being able to work effectively in a global market, and higher education has followed that line of thinking in terms of promoting diversity as a way of building student competence in intercultural interactions as a key component of their college education. Another reason diversity is often touted as a component of an effective workplace is that studies have shown that more often than not, more diverse work teams have proven to be highly productive. But I find these market-driven motivations for promoting diversity to be very superficial and highly problematic.

Todd: The approach to diversity that Ione describes is part of a growing concern regarding the “neoliberalization of the library” (Hill, 2010; Pateman, 2003), including increased privatization, a shrinking public sphere, and a market-driven approach to issues like diversity. Failure to think about how diverse communities have been and continue to be impacted by such trends, and along with it the perpetuation of the implicit race and class privileges, will only lead to the further homogenization and privatization of places, practices, and services.

When considering issues of race and racial representation in the library, I think it’s important that we move beyond an additive model and think about the epistemological. People of color (as well as other disenfranchised groups) are

more than just laboring bodies, more than just token representatives of a diverse workforce under the conditions of capitalism, but also possess, practice, and embody different ways of understanding and inhabiting the world, which as Juleah points out, can help to reinvent the culture of the library, and higher education, more generally. It is this possibility of transformation that I think is why diversity matters.

Juleah: This has been a captivating discussion so far, addressing themes from homogeneity in the profession, organizational culture, race and identity, issues of social justice, and ultimately critically examining our role as librarians to the communities we serve. We could spend more time on this question, but similar to a time limit in a real world discussion, we have a word count. So, let's move on to the next question.

Where do we go from here?

Juleah: Often times, after engaging in critical discourse, when the conversation ends, we are left wondering what to do next. Rather than leaving this for the reader to consider after finishing this article, let's address this issue here. Now that we have touched about why diversity matters, where do we go from here?

Ione: Participating in the ACRL panel really challenged me to think about my own approaches to researching diversity, which had previously been focused on understanding the experiences of individuals of color. However, as Todd had pointed out during the panel (Swanson, et al., 2015), I think we all need to be more versed in critical perspectives around identity (and intersectionality)² in order to have more effective conversations about how racism and other forms of oppression continue to be produced and reproduced in our organizations. Listening to the experiences of those who have been marginalized³ may motivate us to move towards a more socially just world, but developing critical competencies and deepening our knowledge base in critical theory can give us the tools to actually dismantle those structures that have marginalized them in the first place.

Dracine: During the panel, I made a comment regarding my own relief upon hearing my director say diversity was not my issue (Swanson, et al., 2015). For me this was important because even as a librarian of color my professional expertise is not diversity. However, if you want to talk about getting Arabic language books through U.S. customs, then sure, I might have some thoughts. I care about diversity for the very reasons that have been discussed and definitely want to leave the profession better than I found it. I think it's important to acknowledge that how that happens may look different for each individual. The biggest takeaway for me was the obvious need for a reset or a refresh on the question of diversity in libraries. We've begun to have what feels like genuine conversations that will hopefully combat the diversity fatigue felt by both librarians of color and perhaps our white counterparts.

Ione: Arm yourself with knowledge, and then have the courage to use that knowledge to start dialogues with your colleagues, administrators, faculty, and staff, not just in your library but across your campuses to examine existing policies and practices that have left far too much room for discrimination (both implicit and explicit) to occur. And I mention courage because these are not easy conversations to have, or even to initiate. It's easy for defensiveness to arise in these conversations, and for emotions to get rather heated, but I think it is possible to move through those communication barriers and get to a place of actual growth.

Juleah: When talking about diversity in academic libraries with colleagues of varying racial and ethnic backgrounds, acknowledging that institutional racism⁴ does exist, regardless of intent and well-meaning, can, in fact, be very freeing in a conversation, because institutional racism is not about us-versus-them, or you-versus-me, but instead it's a collective outcome to be analyzed and critiqued collectively by an organization. The question becomes not, "What are we doing wrong?" but instead, "How can we change our outcomes?"

Ione: Another thing I would recommend is seeking out other campus partners with expertise in mediating these types of conversations. For example, a few years ago, our campus hosted a series of "Dialogues on Diversity" that brought together small cohorts of faculty and staff from different units to attend a series of dialogue sessions mediated by trained facilitators to try to build a better sense of community across differences. It was a very small step, and it did not transform our campus culture overall, but I do think it helped create a network of people across the university who obviously cared about bridging differences in order to improve our overall campus climate. Through that program, I met people with whom I have since worked on initiatives and programs related to diversity.

Isabel: Great suggestions Ione. My institution did diversity dialogues in collaboration with campus partners and the sessions include the perspectives from people of different experiences and backgrounds. It's a productive way to navigate through the uncomfortable tension between the personal and the systemic contributions towards diversity. I would also suggest that librarians, regardless of race/ethnicity or hierarchy in their institutions, pay attention to

recent discussions in our profession regarding microaggressions, which are often unintentional comments “that convey rudeness, insensitivity and demeans a person’s racial heritage or identity” (Sue et al, 2007). The [LIS Microaggressions tumblr project](#) reminds us that we are all capable of demeaning someone despite our best intentions, but we also have the opportunity to truly listen when we are being called out, being humbled by the experience, and learning from it. At a personal level, this one thing we can and must all do – listen.

Todd: One of the important points that was discussed at the panel and that we continue to discuss here is trying to come up with ways to transform both the profession and the various institutions that we work at. Crucial to such a consideration is identifying where power lies. Of course, we all exercise power in different ways. The key is to figure out how to exercise our power to make lasting, sustainable change at the structural level. And we can’t just be acting alone. We need to create movements and build alliances, and this often entails creative forms of coalition building. (Although I suppose all forms of coalition are creative.)

Ruth Wilson Gilmore (2007) makes a point of stressing that we need to identify both likely and unlikely allies. We need to be better about doing that in the LIS field. At the ACRL panel, one of the audience members noted that ALA is 98% white (Swanson, et al., 2015). Obviously, change in terms of the percentages of people of color in ALA, or the LIS field in general, is not going to happen overnight, so how do we work with that 98% so that we are creating coalitions with people who can be good allies.

A helpful way of thinking about institutional alliances is what Scott Frickel (2011) calls “shadow mobilizations,” which entails creating informal networks of activism among diverse stakeholders within the constraints of the institution. I think such a strategy can be effective in building alliances within and between different constituent groups in the LIS fields. One of the points that I raised in the ACRL panel was that we need to recognize the complexity of people’s identity, how our positionalities encompass intersectional identities and affiliations that are not always immediately visible and legible (Swanson, et al., 2015). So even though ALA or the profession is predominantly white, that whiteness is not monolithic. It is inflected through categories such as class, gender, sexuality, religion, ability, etc. By understanding diversity, including racial diversity, through a framework that is sensitive to how it is always already constituted through these other intersections, we can forge multiple coalitions in ways that are complex, nuanced, and durable. Ultimately, this would mean that we are constructing a movement based on a diversity politics that is founded on a quest for social justice and social transformation rather than token representation or inclusion.

Ione: In terms of higher education and academic libraries, I think we really need to question hiring practices, and tenure and promotion practices. As I mentioned during the ACRL panel (Swanson, et al., 2015) back in March, the idea of “organizational fit” is a problematic concept in terms of search committee discussions. While it is never an official criterion for an applicant, I think search committees reinforce the status quo when they use language to deny an applicant a position because of their perceived inability to fit the existing organizational culture. I think we also need to take a closer look at how we write our position descriptions, how we write our mission statements, essentially, what do we convey about ourselves as organizations to potential applicants?

Todd: This requires all of us to take a critical, self-reflexive look at our complicity in maintaining the status quo and our roles in facilitating the goals of social change. For example, we can take some lessons from those working in other fields—like the STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) fields—that are also struggling to recruit and retain historically underrepresented groups. Attention is being given to how to make STEM more culturally relevant to people of color and other marginalized groups so that there are alternative pathways to pursue it in terms of scholarship and profession (Basu & Barton, 2007; Lee & Buxton, 2010; Lyon, Jafri, & St Louis, 2012). As we continue to build on efforts to diversify the LIS field, I think looking at other strategies, interrogating the current field and its practices, and asking questions such as how do we make LIS more culturally relevant and what alternative pathways can be developed to increase recruitment and retention of people of color and other marginalized groups are important facets for us to consider.

Azusa: The [ACRL Diversity Committee’s Diversity Standards: Cultural Competency for Academic Libraries](#) may be a good guide for some libraries to develop local approaches in diversifying populations and recruiting and maintaining a diverse library workforce. University of Washington Bothell and Cascadia Community College Campus Library Diversity Team was formed with the guidelines in the Diversity Standards and adapted some of the eleven standards in it to develop training sessions in cultural awareness and cross cultural communication (Lazzaro, Mills, Garrard, Ferguson, Watson, & Ellenwood, 2014). The outcome was quite positive, and their assessments indicates that structured opportunity to think and learn about diversity and cultural differences by sharing and hearing personal experiences from their colleagues, which can be odd otherwise, was particularly helpful. If your institution has staff members from different cultures, developing cultural awareness from each other is one good way

to start.

Questions for our readers

Juleah: Emphasized throughout this article, a continued conversation on diversity, particularly racial and ethnic diversity in the profession, is needed. As we conclude this roundtable discussion, what questions do you offer to reader that will carry this conversation forward?

Todd: As many people have noted, there is a very noticeable racial disparity in the LIS profession, and this has been something that has been talked about for a while now (Espinal, 2001; Galvan, 2015; Honma, 2005; Peterson, 1996). I think a useful way of framing it so that we move beyond the “deficit model” that targets individuals or communities, is to flip the question and ask:

- Is there a particular deficit in the LIS profession itself that is not attractive to people of color to pursue?
- Are there ways that the LIS field (and all of us who work in that field, whether as librarians, faculty, administrators, etc.) promotes, intentionally or unintentionally, structures and cultures that may be deemed exclusionary to those who have been historically marginalized and underrepresented?
- How can we (as individuals, coalitions, institutions) create change?

Ione: We need to start asking some big questions in LIS education and higher education in general. In terms of LIS education:

- Do current curricular offerings at ALA-accredited library schools address critical theories of identity and how they intersect with theories of information and the practice of librarianship?
- How do we encourage faculty teaching in LIS to develop coursework that addresses these issues?
- For LIS students who plan to pursue academic librarianship as a career path, are tenure and promotion issues raised in their courses so that these new librarians come into their academic workplaces prepared to take on the challenges of earning tenure?

In terms of higher education:

- If we truly value diversity in all its forms, are we doing everything we can to really show that?
- Do we talk about valuing different leadership styles, different communication styles, or innovative ways of looking at existing practices?

Azusa: Other questions I would like to ask the readers are:

- Why diversity among LIS matters particularly for academic library?
- How is it related to many academic libraries’ vision and mission—supporting the faculty and students’ teaching and learning?
- Is it because diversity among librarians encourage the users to approach us?
- Is it because diversity encourages the users to think out of box which is fundamental in researching, teaching, and learning?

Dracine: Ever practical, I would ask readers to contemplate the context of their environment and remember the difficulty we all have with engaging this topic. Discussions about diversity should be diverse. Diversity urgencies may be different from one institution to the next. With that in mind, I think it is important to consider:

- What is the signal to noise ratio? A discussion about diversity could fill an ocean and after awhile it becomes white noise. However, a meaningful discussion should start by focusing on aspects that are critical and tangible to your specific community/organization.
- Also, what are the rules of engagement? This seems like a mundane question, but it is a rather important one in terms of creating the space for real and penetrating dialogue.

Juleah: A great deal of what we’ve discussed are learned concepts, either through reading and research, or through lived experiences. Yet, these concepts are complex and cannot simply be conveyed through a sound byte of information.

- What innovative ways can we educate and teach colleagues and students about complex issues like microaggressions, institutional racism, and privilege, reflecting both traditional means of teaching such as

lectures and readings, and through learned experiences?

Isabel:

- Evaluate the culture at your organization/institution. To what degree is the issue of diversity upheld at your institution and how does it differ to that of your library?
- If your institution's mission actively values diversity, what is the campus or community doing about it? Who are the key players and how can you partner with them?
- From your personal experience, what are the biggest stumbling blocks in the discussions pertaining to diversity? How does it impact how you are able (or not) to dialogue with someone of a different experience than yours?
- Change can occur at every level – personal, institutional, and professional. As a librarian, where do you feel most empowered to enact change? Where do you find the greatest obstacles?

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