Diversity Work: Exploring Worldviews & Practicing Dialogue

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Bridging Borders, Succeeding Together Pre-Conference
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Group Agreements

- Be here
- Be respectful while sharing honestly
- Ask genuine questions
- Everyone gets a fair hearing
- Share “air time”
- One person speaks at a time. Speak for yourself, not others
- Everyone help the facilitators keep us moving and on track
- Personal stories stay in this room unless the group decides it’s OK to share
Equity is not the same as equality

- Equality implies sameness
- Equity assumes difference and takes those into account to ensure a fair process or a fair (or equitable) outcome

KNOWLEDGE BASE: DIVERSITY

Merriam Webster’s Definition of Diversity:  
“The condition of having or being composed of different elements.”

ALA’s Definition of Diversity:  
Diversity can be defined as the sum of the ways that people are both alike and different. Visible diversity is generally those attributes or characteristics that are external.

KNOWLEDGE BASE: INCLUSION

- an environment in which all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully
- are valued for their distinctive skills, experiences, and perspectives
- have equal access to resources and opportunities
- can contribute fully to the organization’s success

KNOWLEDGE BASE: IDENTITY

How do you define yourself?

Visible vs Invisible Identity

KNOWLEDGE BASE: INTERSECTIONALITY

Kimberlé Crenshaw
American Civil Rights Advocate
Professor, UCLA School of Law and Columbia Law School
"Privilege, simply put, is societally granted, unearned advantages accorded to some people and not others.”

KNOWLEDGE BASE: OPPRESSION

"The combination of prejudice and institutional power which creates a system that discriminates against some groups and benefits others."

Source: "Power & Privilege Definitions." Vanderbilt University.
*Based on the work of Iris M. Young
KNOWLEDGE BASE: IMPLICIT BIAS

- Subconscious stereotypes
- Unintentional
- Brain automatically makes quick judgments based on experience
- Implicit Association Test (IAT)

Source: Vanderbilt University Office for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.
https://www.vanderbilt.edu/diversity/unconscious-bias/
KNOWLEDGE BASE: MICROAGGRESSION

- Subtle, brief, commonplace insults and indignities
- May be intentional or unintentional
- May be verbal, nonverbal, or environmental

KNOWLEDGE BASE: INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

- Policies and practices of institutions that create opportunity and safety for the benefit of white people and disadvantage people of color
- Anyone within an institution, regardless of race, can perpetuate because inclusion within the institution requires enforcement
  - Example: Residency requirements for obtaining library cards
KNOWLEDGE BASE: STRUCTURAL RACISM

- Encompasses history, culture, societal norms, and institutions to create a framework of power that benefits white people at the expense of people of color in the United States.

Example: War on Drugs

Video retrieved from http://www.drugpolicy.org/issues/brief-history-drug-war
KNOWLEDGE BASE: WHITE SUPREMACY

- Preferences white people (and nations) over people (and nations) of color
- Baked into history, systems, and institutions
- Maintains systems of wealth, power, and privilege

http://www.pittsburghartscouncil.org/storage/documents/ProfDev/what-is-white-supremacy.pdf
Directions:

1. Fill in your answer for each category. There are two blank spaces to make your own category as well.

2. Make a star next to each identity you think about the most.

3. Make a check mark next to each identity you think about the least.

4. Make a # next to identities you choose.

5. Make a dot next to identities you do not choose.
1. What were the most challenging points for you to name? Why might that be?

2. What is significant about naming the identities you think about the least?

   Power can mean our experiences are validated, we have access to resources, security, visibility/voice, authority, influence, agency, we may expect respect and can have the ability to define norms.

3. What are pieces of your identity where you can extend power?
I TELL YOU WHAT... WHY DON'T YOU TAKE A LUNCH BREAK?
As we go forward please keep in mind a few things:

● This exercise is not in any way intended to shame anyone or call anyone out. Having privilege is not bad. Feeling guilty about privilege is unproductive. Find ways to use your privilege to help others.

● Whenever you don’t have to write a minus, take a moment to think about how your life might be different if you were impacted by that statement.

● Whenever you write a plus take a moment to think about someone you know in your community who wouldn't be able to write a plus. Who in your community would end with more minuses than pluses. Someone on your staff? Your library users? The people in your community who never come to your library, and you never knew why?
Privilege Awareness Exercise: Discussion

- After adding up your plus column and minus column, do you have more pluses or minuses? How does this make you feel? Are you surprised by the outcome?
- Do some experiences work as both an advantage and a disadvantage?
- What other statements would you add to this exercise?
- How can you use the understanding of your own privileges in your library or work environment?
Privilege Awareness Exercise: Sources


Penn State University. [https://edge.psu.edu/workshops/mc/power/privilegewalk.shtml](https://edge.psu.edu/workshops/mc/power/privilegewalk.shtml)


University of Nebraska-Lincoln. [https://unl.libguides.com/c.php?g=598072&p=5020374](https://unl.libguides.com/c.php?g=598072&p=5020374)

Our own experiences and suggestions from colleagues.
The Danger of a Single Story
Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie
Attributes of Empathy

1) perspective taking
2) staying out of judgment
3) recognizing emotion in others
4) communicating that emotion

Attributes of Empathy: Scenario

A patron of color expresses concern to a white library director that only families of color are being asked to quiet down in the children’s area. The director immediately denies that any staff would single families out like that.
Hmmm? What’s that?

Oh it’s break time!
Identifying Bias in Practice

Image Source: How to Evaluate Information Sources: Identify Bias. New Jersey Institute of Technology
https://researchguides.njit.edu/evaluate/bias
What Does My Headscarf Mean to You?

Yassmin Abdel-Magied
You are visiting the public library in a new city, where you don't know any of the librarians. The person at the front desk looks young, has tattoos, and is wearing a t-shirt with the name of the city. You approach them and ask to speak to the library director, and they tell you they are the director.

What assumptions did you make about that person?

Identifying Bias in Practice: Scenario

You are preparing to select candidates to interview for a library staff position. You are aware of many studies showing that foreign-sounding names and "black-sounding" names were less likely to be chosen over "Anglo-sounding" names, even with identical resumes.

How can you counteract this bias?

Identifying Bias in Practice: Scenario

An African-American student is seeking information on Black Americans. You know this student and have read their social media post about a previous interaction in which a white librarian was unhelpful and made them feel dumb.

How would you work with this patron?

Synthesis

● Think of some demographic group in your service area that does not use the library often. How can you make your library more inviting/welcoming/appealing/inclusive?

● Did you learn something new about privileges you have or something new about your identity? How will this information affect your librarianship going forward?

● What is one thing that has stuck in your mind from today’s work. Do you think this will change your interactions at your library? Why? How?

● What is one action you can take in the next month to continue today’s work/conversation?
Articles, Websites, and Other Resources

Ever-growing list compiled by the NLA Diversity Committee

https://docs.google.com/document/d/15c3IC3EGunKQAbKXawvuQx3Oztj0bcw4ZrjSK2m2eLA/edit?usp=sharing
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