Where are the technical services librarians of color?

IDEAL 2019

Presented by
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Land Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge that the land we are meeting on today has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, specifically the Shawnee, Miami, Wyandot and Delaware Nations. We honor and respect the diverse Indigenous peoples connected to this territory on which we gather and we are grateful to have this opportunity to work in the community.

Adapted from Melissa Beard Jacob from the OSU Student Life Multicultural Center (MCC)

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Agenda

Presentation (30 mins)
Discussion (10 mins)
Report back + large group discussion (15 mins)
Wrap-up (5 mins)
Understanding racism & white supremacy

- Racism is ordinary
- Racism is a vast set of societal structures and systems
- Racism can be intentional or unintentional; it manifests not through intents, but through impacts on people of color

Characteristics of white supremacy culture

- Perfectionism
- *Sense of urgency*
- Defensiveness
- Quantity over quality
- Worship of written word
- Paternalism
- *Either/or thinking*
- Power hoarding
- Fear of open conflict
- *Individualism*
- *Objectivity*
- Right to comfort
Framing Questions

- What is meant when we say that each of these is a characteristic of white supremacy?
- How does it manifest in library technical services?
- What are some of the impacts that it has on library services, workplace culture, or on people of color working in library technical services?

Sense of urgency

- Continued sense of urgency that makes it difficult to take time to be inclusive, encourage democratic and/or thoughtful decision-making, to think long-term, to consider consequences
**Either/or thinking**

- Things are either good/bad, right/wrong, with us/against us
- No sense that things can be both/and
- Creates a zero-sum mentality
- Increases conflict and creates a false sense of urgency

**Objectivity**

- The belief that there is such a thing as being objective
- The belief that emotions are inherently destructive, irrational, and should not play a role in decision-making or group process
- Impatience with any thinking that does not appear logical to those with power
### Individualism

- Value on those who can get things done on their own
- Functional specialist culture = Responsible for solving problems
- Isolation: “I'm the only one”
- Recognition and credit at individual level

### Recruiting library workers of color in technical services

- Considering paths into technical services
- Considering professional development opportunities
Retaining library workers of color in technical services

- Mentorship
- Paths for advancement and leadership

Discussion

- Split into groups of 4-6
- Spend 10 minutes discussing the questions that are distributed on paper. You are not required to cover them all.
- Share the salient aspects of your discussion with the room (10 minutes total for all groups)
Discussion

The following question is exclusively for the library workers of color in the room:

What brought you to technical services librarianship, and what keeps you here?

References


Further resources

- Bibliography: https://bit.ly/2Ohzm8i (creator: Sandy Rodriguez, shared with permission)
- Discussion notes: https://bit.ly/2Opcsf2

Thank you

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