Calling In vs. Calling Out: Conflict Resolution in Polarized Times
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Case studies for discussion
Scenario #1: Yearbook takedowns
You are an archivist and your university has an institutional repository that houses digital copies of all of your yearbooks. You get a call from the university president to take down several of the yearbooks from the 1950s and 1960s because there are photographs that show students wearing blackface. How do you respond to the president’s request?

Scenario #2: Can I see some ID?
You are the director of a college library that is open until 2 a.m. but requires an ID to be admitted after 10 p.m. It is 10:30 p.m. and you have been called because one of the evening student workers, a white female, has called campus police because a Black male student has refused to show ID upon entering the library, stating “his white friends never have to show their ID to get in.” He is upset that she won’t let him in, and refuses to leave. You arrive and campus police are on site already, and he has shown his valid college ID to them. How do you respond to the student seeking entry into the library? How do you respond to the student worker?

Scenario #3: Meeting microaggression
You are in a meeting with colleagues discussing a facilities issue that needs funding in order to address it. The person describing the issue uses the word “ghetto” as an adjective and makes eye contact with you, the only person of color in the room, as if to affirm her use of that term. Her nonverbal communication towards you makes you uncomfortable. How do you spotlight or address this presumably unconscious bias?

Consider the following as you discuss strategies:
● How can we honor the validity of each person’s lived experiences?
● How can we connect accountability to managing white fragility?
● When does being an “ally” mask counterproductive virtue-signalling?
● Are there “soft” forms of communication that can be used to mitigate conflict?
● What are ways we can create spaces for sharing personal stories?
● How can we use intergroup dialogue principles to create spaces for learning, growth, and collaborative conflict resolution?

Community Guidelines
● Confidentiality
● Our primary commitment is to learn from each other
● We will not demean, devalue, or “put down” people for their experiences, lack of experiences, or different interpretations of those experiences
● We will trust that people are always doing the best they can
● Speak your discomfort
● Expect and accept a lack of closure
● Monitor your airtime