

August 12, 2020

# Community-wide dialogue on inclusion of Black voices in library collections

*Indiana Library Federation leads, educates, and advocates to advance library services for the benefit of Indiana residents.*



# Ad Hoc Committee on Racial Justice and Inclusion

ILF Strategic Vision adopted in 2017; efforts since

2020 – Black Lives Matter

June 12, 2020 – ILF Board message to members

July - Ad Hoc Committee on Racial Justice formed, meets 2x/month

## Primary Goals

- Take a look at ILF internally to improve
- Provide tools and resources to support members
- Help libraries be authentically inclusive (staff, leadership, patrons/students, collections, practices/policies)

Intentional focus on Black lives; may evolve into broader EDI committee

<https://www.ilfonline.org/page/racialjustice>

# Creating the Culture for Dialogue

Show respect for each other, acknowledging that we all have different upbringings and perspectives

Encourage frank and honest dialogue. Ideas, not people, will be criticized. Practice civility.

Actively participate in discussion.

People take turns speaking, raising hands or placing "I" in the chat for facilitator to know you want to speak.

*Actively listen, seek to understand, recognize that our views may change as we go through this journey together*

# Auditing Collection; Including Black Voices

Lots of lists circulating on listservs

Indiana Humanities (and other?) grant opportunities to expand collection of Black authors/narratives

Where do we start? Think broadly.

- What are the resources that can help libraries?
- How do librarians and library staff improve their own understanding?
- If staff are limited on time or resources, what quick resources can we provide to get them started?

# Document compilation

Intended to be broad but not exhaustive starting point

With each, a short description of what it includes

Book compilations

Books & Multimedia lists

Book Clubs

Blogs & Websites

Podcasts

Action Items

Broaden Your Perspective articles

# Switch to Draft Document

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# Moving to dialogue - Aim to cover 4 questions

- 1. Given limited resources, how do you decide which books of a long book list of Black authors should be prioritized for purchase?**
- 2. Many libraries include diverse voices. What strategies have you found most effective in getting diverse perspectives checked out?**
3. What have been your challenges with acquiring Black perspectives in your collection? What other challenges do you face in auditing the collection, making selections, and finding ways to increase circulation of Black authors and narratives?
4. What support can ILF give you in developing diverse collections?

# Questions received in advance

Can we discuss the pros and cons of separating BIPOC titles from the regular collection?

How to effectively market the collection so the public will actually use the collection?



# Challenges (as submitted in advance)

What challenges do you face in auditing the collection, making selections, and finding ways to increase circulation of Black authors and narratives?

- *Ensuring that I am choosing authentic voices*
- *I only collect Indiana Authors. Since black voices are underrepresented in publishing, it can be hard to identify them.*
- *auditing 2 M items, diversifying a 50 yr+ coll, floating issues, disparate demographic communities, developing buy-in,*
- *Fear of making uninformed choices, unfamiliarity with relevant auditing tools.*
- *Funding*
- *Identification of diverse authors/titles within the collection beyond subject headings.*
- *We serve a population that is primarily White, with a large Hispanic population, but very few Black residents.*
- *Where to start in auditing collection, how to analyze collection without having to handle every book*
- *Own voices picture books. So many times I'll order a picture book with a black MC only to find out the author is white.*
- *I have a fairly homogenous, white community. The Amish might be our largest "other" ethnic group. In my book groups and lecture series, I have tried to expand their reading horizons.*

# Let's start with question 1

- 1. Given limited resources, how do you decide which books of a long book list of Black authors should be prioritized for purchase?**

# Next steps

We will take the feedback from today's discussion back to the committee to determine future activities.