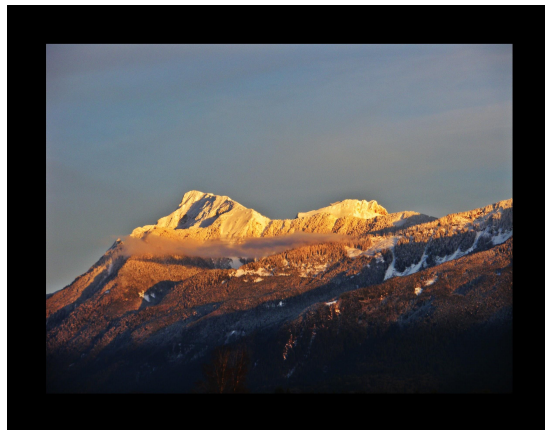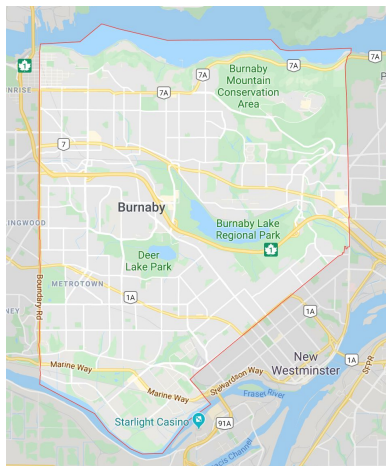# Becoming a Librarian Amidst a Professional Identity Crisis

FIP 2020
Ashley Edwards

Where I'm from…

Taanishi, hello. I want to thank the conference organizers for having me speak today, and Dr. Samek for her support with this topic.

Before starting I want to acknowledge the shared, unceded, current and traditional territories that I am fortunate to be on. For the past seven years I've been living in Burnaby, BC, which is about 30 minutes east of Vancouver, this is the map on the left. Burnaby is located on the homelands of the həńqəmińəḿ and Skwxwú7mesh speaking peoples, including the Tsleil-Waututh, Stó:lō, Qayqayt, Stz'uminus, Musqueam, and Kwikwetlam First Nations.

I was born and raised in the Fraser Valley, in Stó:lō territory. The image you see on the rights is of Mt Cheam and Dog Head, two important mountains in Stó:lō history. Mt Cheam's name is Lhilequay, and she is a woman transformed into the mountain peak by Xaxals, and given the responsibility to look after the Stó:lō people. Her dog was transformed too, and sits next to her. Known locally as Dog Head, the mountain's English name is Lady Peak.

It's important to, as part of my decolonization journey, to know whose territory I'm on. Most of BC is on unceded territory, meaning it was never bought, or won in a battle, but the residents were all displaced, moved onto reserves to make room for settlers. It's an ugly part of our history, but it's important to learn about it.

Who I am…

Positionality is the social and political context that creates your identity in terms of race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability status.

Positionality also describes how your identity influences, and potentially biases, your understanding of and outlook on the world.

Positionality. (n.d.). Retrieved from
https://www.dictionary.com/e/gender-sexuality/positionality/

Before delving into the complex topic of intellectual freedom and our professional identity, I want to take a moment to position myself within this research. An important aspect of any research is understanding and naming your positionality. This doesn't mean my position on the topic, as you'll see I'm struggling with that still, but how who I am influences my work. In Indigenous Research Methodologies, this is my relational accountability - who I am accountable to. In this case not only my family, but also my fellow librarian students, and my colleagues at Simon Fraser University.

Part of this is recognizing, or trying to, my own biases when I'm doing research. The question often then is what to do about them - ignore them, or allow them to guide my work? I'm still unsure about that answer.

According to Shawn Wilson (Opaskwayak Cree, 2008), it's an Indigenous paradigm to create a relationship with your topic and the ideas you are working with as a researcher. Wilson also says it's a Western tradition to "amputate" yourself during your work, that is remove emotion from intellect, be professional not emotional. If you don't compartmentalize things, your research will influence all aspects of your life - it changes you.

I'm approaching this work with a decade of library experience, mostly in an academic library, as a library technician. There are LGTBQA2S+ people in my family and friends. My heritage is Metis-settler, though I didn't grow up within community. I'm the oldest of four children, and my parents divorced when I was 12.

Okay, so that's a very brief introduction to me and how I'm trying to approach this work.

The controversy

Third Party Room Bookings
&
Intellectual Freedom

Vancouver Public Library, Toronto Public Library, and Seattle Public Library have all allowed events to be booked by organizations who are bringing Meghan Murphy in to speak.

___

To set the context, the controversy is public libraries permitting third party room bookings by groups questioning transgender - specifically trans women - rights to proceed. Each group is bringing in a speaker; Meghan Murphy, founder of the website the Feminist Current. Murphy has been banned from twitter due to her refusal to use preferred pronouns, and deadnaming individuals (Goodyear, 2019). She is concerned about trans women using women's change rooms, playing sports on female teams, being in female prisons, and accessing services such as transition houses for those leaving abusive relationships (Murphy, 2019; Nickle, 2019). She also repeatedly states that men cannot be women, but also that she's not anti-trans ("Event featuring Meghan Murphy", 2019; "Hundreds protest", 2019; Murphy, 2019).
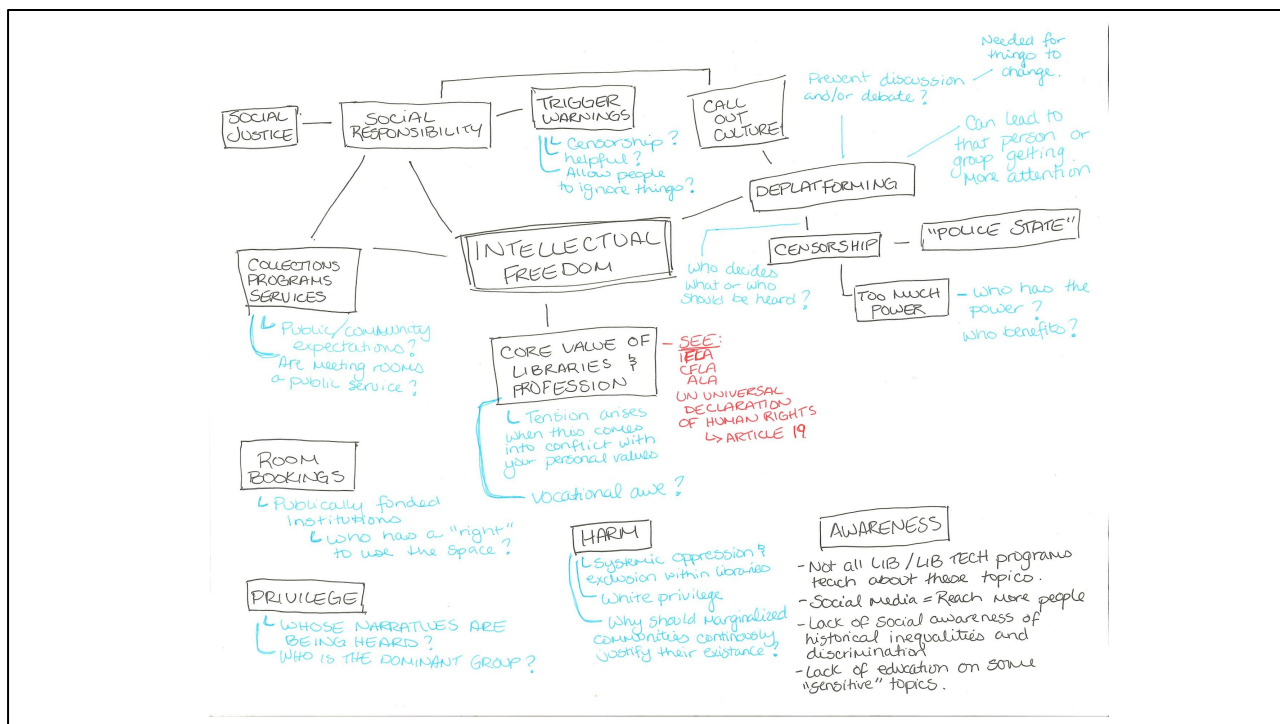
What she speaks out against is Bill C-16 (passed by Senate and House of Commons in 2017), which added gender expression and gender identity as being protected under the Canadian Human Rights Act against discrimination. In her view it jeopardizes women's rights. ("Event featuring Meghan Murphy", 2019; Goodyear, 2019; "Hundreds protest", 2019; Murphy, 2019; Nickle, 2019)

Murphy has been invited to speak at several events held in public libraries; the Vancouver Public Library, the Toronto Public Library, and the Seattle Public Library.

The transgender community, and their allies, are naturally upset about these events. People have claimed what Murphy is saying is hate speech, and should not be allowed in a publicly funded institution ("Event featuring Meghan Murphy", 2019). It's claimed that public libraries have been chosen to add legitimacy to the speaker and

topic (Slaughter and MacLeod, 2019). The libraries state they have allowed room bookings based on intellectual freedom.

The question is, should libraries be denying these radical feminist groups their room booking? Is that in conflict with the value of intellectual freedom? Or is intellectual freedom in conflict with other values, such as diversity and inclusion? What does this mean for the professional identity of library staff?

Concept Map (handwritten):

SOCIAL JUSTICE — SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY — TRIGGER WARNINGS
- Censorship? helpful?
- Allow people to ignore things?

CALL OUT CULTURE

Needed for things to change.

Prevent discussion and/or debate?

Can lead to that person or group getting more attention

DEPLATFORMING

CENSORSHIP — "POLICE STATE"

TOO MUCH POWER — who has the power? who benefits?

INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM

Who decides what or who should be heard?

COLLECTIONS PROGRAMS SERVICES
- Public/community expectations?
- Are meeting rooms a public service?

CORE VALUE OF LIBRARIES & PROFESSION

SEE: IFLA CFLA ALA UN UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS → ARTICLE 19

- Tension arises when this comes into conflict with your personal values
- vocational awe?

ROOM BOOKINGS
- Publically funded institutions
- Who has a "right" to use the space?

PRIVILEGE
- WHOSE NARRATIVES ARE BEING HEARD?
- WHO IS THE DOMINANT GROUP?

HARM
- Systemic oppression? exclusion within libraries
- White privilege
- Why should marginalized communities continuously justify their existence?

AWARENESS
- Not all LIB/LIB TECH programs teach about these topics.
- Social Media = Reach more people
- Lack of social awareness of historical inequalities and discrimination
- Lack of education on some "sensitive" topics.

My presentation shows my authentic exploration of intellectual freedom, the controversy surrounding room bookings, and professional identity. This is a huge topic, one that could be studied for years rather than the months I've been working with Dr. Samek on this as part of my Graduate Research Assistant position. This exploration is leading to to my graduation with my MLIS degree in June. Rather than leaving the program full of "answers," I'm leaving with more questions. I think that's okay. I'm starting my career aware of some of the challenges faced by the profession.

This topic is one that I'm still learning about, probably always will be since during the course of this research one thing I have learned is how these conversations are cyclical.

Over the past few months, I've read books on the history of intellectual freedom and social responsibility in libraries, followed media reports on the booked events, and began learning more about critical and intersectional librarianship. I looked into topics like call out culture, deplatforming, and gender identity.

As you can see from this concept map, this is a complex topic. Throughout the reading I've done for this presentation, it became very obvious that the profession is divided, if not polarized, on this issue. One librarian put forward that the divisiness we are seeing is a divide between those in management (aka, those with power), and those on the front lines who may be members of a marginalized community themselves (Neigel, 2019). A trio of academic library deans and university librarians called out the Canadian Federation of Library Associations for using an outdated and

simplified definition of what intellectual freedom means, urging for an updated policy that reflects a balance between intellectual freedom and human rights (Bird, Lew, and Mundle, n.d.). Others question why this is the issue that's singled out and gaining people's attention, and not other events centred on equally questionable behaviour (Beaudry, 2019). Along with these there have been highly charged media accounts, sometimes with personal attacks, that have become the norm for this situation. For myself, and my MLIS cohort, to what extent are we prepared to for these nuanced conversations and challenges? Our education hasn't always taught us the ways in which libraries have not been 'neutral'. Add with the fact that library work (professional and paraprofessional) is often thought of as a feminized profession, and the reality of the gendered nature of being a female in a management role (Gluckman, 2018; Smith, Rosenstein, & Nikolov, 2018), there is a lot to consider.

Libraries and Intellectual Freedom

"Intellectual freedom is the right of everyone to seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction." (p. 168)

~ Keeler, 2016

- 1938-39: Library Bill of Rights
- 1948: Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- 1967: ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom
- 1968: ALA's Social Responsibility Round Table
- 1972 CLA Code of Ethics (first directive is to support intellectual freedom)
- 1974: CLA Statement on Intellectual Freedom (revised 2015 and then taken up by CFLA)
- 1999: IFLA Statement on Libraries and Intellectual Freedom
- 2008 CLA Statement on Diversity and Inclusion (taken up by CFLA)
- 2012 IFLA Code of Ethics (taken up by CFLA)

In 1939, the ALA took an ideological stance in the adoption of the Library Bill of Rights, and defined intellectual freedom as "the library's responsibility to society." (Samek, 2001, p. 33). This was a response to common placed practice of censorship within libraries at that time.

Who or what was being censored? At various times throughout library history challenges have been from the political left and from the political right. Reading the literature about this history, it really is like a pendulum swinging back and forth, depending a lot on the political climate of the time. In her 2007 book, Dr. Samek wrote that "Building librarianship on a solid foundation of human dignity, freedom, social justice and cultural diversity requires that library and information workers worldwide constantly and relentlessly tackle social, political, cultural, legal, economic, technological and ideological issues." (Samek, 2007, p. 43). According to Shockey (2015) Intellectual freedom "should be understood as a value informed by specific historical struggles that has led to its current interpretation as advanced by ALA" (p. 103).

Sanford Berman, in the introduction to *Intellectual freedom and social responsibility in American librarianship, 1967-1974* states that libraries are "distinctly biased towards property, wealth, bigness, and mainstream "culture," and established authority. He claims that professional associations also carry these biases; what does that mean for marginalized communities? Are libraries a welcoming place for them? Are policies designed to uphold them? Examining aspects such as classification and cataloguing, and even collection development, it becomes clear that libraries are not, and have

never been neutral. This was a large part of the activism in the late 1960s, when librarians questioned the notion that people can be professionally neutral (Samek, 2001). Within her work, Dr. Samek has illustrated a 30 year cycle of library activism. What was seen in the 1960s was a repetition of activism in the 1930s, correlating with the progressive era and when there was a call for more voices to be heard, including of new generation librarians. In the 1990s controversies relating to internet access policies and filters were the focus of library activists. Thirty years later, and today's debates on intellectual freedom and diversity and inclusion continue the cycle. It's only by learning our history can we see this trend. Should we be reading more history? How many of us know our field's history well beyond the chronological milestones?

Because this is a current controversy, there is a gap in the scholarly literature about the subject. There's a lot available about intellectual freedom and collections or internet filters, but searching for libraries and "room booking" mostly just brings back media reports on the current situation.

What is common throughout the readings I've done is that intellectual freedom is only possible if a full range of information is available; "When a full spectrum of opinion is not fairly represented, forms of censorship occur." (Samek, 2001, p. 29). One question I have about this current issue is when it comes to room bookings, is the library balancing out the discussions - and is that even their responsibility? Should these libraries have arranged for a counter discussion to the ideas put forward by MM and the group that brought her in? Or is it enough that these libraries have proven records of supporting LGBTQA2S+ communities through collections, programs and services and have stood strong in the face of challenges to LGBTQA2S+ materials, to drag queen storytime programming, and so on?

MM spoke at TPL on October 11, 2019 (invited by WoLF), yet an answer to the request by trans activists to hold a trans "teach-in and open dialogue" (Rancic, 2020) at the library kept being postponed. It's reported that the TPL Board wanted to consult community space policies and their Pride committee before committing. The event was held at a the 519 Community Centre after being unable to secure the library.

The event proposed by Gender Identity for YVR for March 21 at VPL has been approved, and a week later the library is hosting Adrienne Smith, a non-binary lawyer, who's talk is titled "Hate Speech, Freedom of Expression, and Transgender Human Rights."

These examples show that both "sides" of this issue are willing to host events, yet these events are not a dialogue or debate between two groups of people. They are a group inviting a speaker in with similar ideals or values, to discuss them. That is not a balanced exchange of information, as often described in definitions of intellectual freedom such as the one you see here.

It's worth noting that an event scheduled at the New York Public Library for January of this year was cancelled, with no explanation given.

Something to keep in mind is that the mission of libraries is not to persuade anyone of anything.

Libraries: Diversity and inclusion

"Despite the claim of neutrality, most libraries and archives support the dominant culture and marginalize those who fall outside it through invisibility."

~ Ettarh, 2014

"It became clear that librarians' traditional approach to library services did not adequately address the needs of socially excluded community members."

~Williment, 2009

How information is organized and described "construct[s] a reality wherein whiteness is default, normal, civilized, and everything else is Other."

~ de jesus, 2014

Much of today's library activism is centered around diversity and inclusion. Does intellectual freedom come into conflict with the values of diversity and inclusion? Reporter Megan Burbank, writing about the Seattle Public Library event, said that there is "tension between the library's responsibility to honor free speech and to support marginalized communities." She said this specifically when discussing the SPL Board meeting where the event by WoLF was being debated.

It is not enough to claim diversity, to make it a token objective with some collection development and/or programming. That simply continues the status quo, the idea of neutrality, which in effect perpetuates negative harm and associations between marginalized groups and the library. According to the Social inclusion audit toolkit, available through the Canadian Urban Libraries Council, "social inclusion is the manner in which institutions understand and engage their communities, as well as how they explore, view, and challenge barriers, values, and behaviours." (2010, p. 10). There will not be true diversity without inclusion.

Libraries have played a role in the "concessions, absences, omissions, bias, negations (e.g. misrepresentation of racialised and immigrant cultures), broken cultural protocols" (Samek, 2007, p. 13) of groups. This is in addition to not representing people they way they represent themselves within subject headings and classification systems. Ettarh states this continues since harm may be done when "giving voice to hate speech" is interpreted as neutral, or when neutrality "is interpreted as giving equal voice" to both sides of a perspective.

Despite the polarization today, it seems evident most people in the field want to find a way to balance a commitment to intellectual freedom with a commitment to diversity and inclusion - and not to eradicate intellectual freedom. That is part of what makes it so complicated. We certainly won't graduate in June in a field or a broader society that has this figured out.

LIS Education in Canada

- 2 graduate programs with a dedicated course on Intellectual Freedom
- 3 graduate programs with a dedicated course on Social Responsibility
- UofA is the only one where the topics are combined in the course title "Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility in Librarianship"
- No dedicated courses in the Library Technician programs, yet these colleagues are on the front lines and working in cataloguing.

Of course these topics are of importance throughout the whole curriculum and there are pros and cons to dedicated courses.

As we move from SLIS into our futures to what extent are we prepared to discuss these issues confidently? Are we, as new graduates, prepared to participate in these conversations? Have we been sufficiently exposed and have we sufficiently engaged ourselves in the background knowledge of - to quote Alvin M. Schrader - the "interlocking societal, cultural, demographic, professional, institutional, and constitutional and legal parameters" that public libraries operate in?

To what extent could our education have more content on how libraries have never been 'neutral', and have in some cases caused harm and engaged in exclusionary practices? And how much have we studied intellectual freedom in all of its complexity? Can we readily engage in discourse of LIS and social justice without a background in intellectual freedom and social responsibility or librarianship and human rights?

Environmental scan of Librarian and Library Technician programs in Canada found: Info based on course title and outline

2 graduate programs with a dedicated course on Intellectual Freedom
3 graduate programs with a dedicated course on Social Responsibility

UofA is the only one where the topics are combined (LIS 592, Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility in Librarianship). SLIS also has a dedicated course on diversity and inclusion, and a special topics course on Indigenous Librarianship - being offered online for the first time this summer. These three courses are

considered 'sister electives' in that they compliment each other.

No Library Technician programs include these topics - and these are our colleagues who work on the front line, in public service roles, and with cataloguing. I have a Library Technician diploma, and have worked as a technician for ten years. I don't recall in my education conversations that ever encouraged us to challenge the status quo. It was more of a "this is how things are done" approach.

Without seeing reading lists, and interviewing instructors, it is difficult to say for certain that topics around intellectual freedom are not being brought up in any other classes, including those in the core.

All LIS students should be learning to engage critically within the profession, not passively uphold status quo. Is this happening? If no, why not? Should or could we as students push back on our instructors and programs, to evolve? I ask this question with decolonizing LIS education in mind, where very few of my classes have had content related to Indigenous people's knowledge management, or related concerns such as intellectual property and copyright. Yes, advancing curriculum is hard work, but it's so important to have graduates prepared to engage as leaders - one day we will be your colleagues - maybe even your supervisors.

Shockey (2015) puts forward that there is a lack in LIS education on social responsibility, stemming from "the rhetoric of neutrality underlying ALA's conception of intellectual freedom, which limits librarians' agency." (p. 103). He also questions how much influence ALA holds over LIS curricula since the programs are beholden to the ALA for accreditation. In both her books, Dr. Samek illustrates how resistant ALA is to change. In a chapter on feminist learning and leadership, Maura Smale states that what is being left out of our LIS education is the history of libraries pushing European values and culture on people.

One thing I read over and over was how important dialogue is in any controversial topic. It's how people will learn from each other, and maybe see a different point of view. So one question that has come up for me during this work is whether or not these topics should be in dedicated courses, or included in others, or both. But whatever the approach taken in the programs, members of our field both need to listen and need to be heard. These are actions are inherent to intellectual freedom.

One aspect of our education that I don't have time to get into detail about is the barriers faced by people from marginalized communities, and how this has shaped librarianship into being a predominantly white profession. A topic that drew great interest the year's OLA Superconference.

Why now?

Should this question even matter?

Richard Beaudry (Centre for Free Expression, Dec. 16, 2019) asks this question, and provides examples where librarians did not stand up in arms about either preserving intellectual freedom or siding with the person who has said/done something offensive. Neither of those events occured in a library.

Is it the rise of critical librarianship? Or community librarianship? A result of traditional voices and narratives are being challenged in today's 'woke' society. Are there connecting threads to other library movements?

I don't know, and I'm not sure if asking why this conversation now matters. What matters is these conversations are happening, and the profession is taking a hard look at their history of being "neutral," protecting the status quo, and exclusionary policies and practices. Part of that is looking at how intellectual freedom is being defined, redefined and confined.

In an episode from season two of her podcast, Secret Feminist Agenda, Dr. Hannah McGregor discusses the idea of "rupture events" specifically in relation to Can Lit. These events are the "sort that tear the world apart" such as the movements of #metoo, or the UBC accountable.

Is this controversy, and the discussions stemming from it, librarianship's rupture event?

Consider: Intersectional librarianship

"Intersectionality is a tool for studying, understanding, and responding to the ways in which axes of identities intersect and how these intersections contribute to unique experiences of oppression and privilege."

~ Ettarh, 2014

In an article published on the In the Library with a Lead Pipe website, F. Ettarh writes about intersectional theory and librarianship. This theory states "that various categories of marginalization and identity interact on multiple (and often simultaneous) levels." Meaning, that pieces of a person's identity cannot be looked at separately because they intersect and influence each other. As such, people cannot be looked at through one lens - you won't get the full picture.

Is this also true of an institution, such as a library?

It's well documented that librarianship is dominated by white, privileged people, and it can be risky, dangerous or impossible for someone in a marginalized community to speak up. If we want intellectual freedom within library culture, if we want workplace speech, if we want academic freedom for academic librarians - what are the risks in eroding intellectual freedom?

Ettarh shares some examples of how libraries are not neutral; our foundations - collections policies, classification, categorization - have all been written with the dominant culture in mind. This is especially powerful when you consider treatment of works by and about Indigenous people in Canada (or according the LC Indians of North America). Is the library full of microaggressions?

Ettarh writes that libraries may cause harm when "giving voice to hate speech" is interpreted as neutral, or when neutrality "is interpreted as giving equal voice" to both sides of a perspective. Meanwhile intellectual freedom allows for giving witness to

violations of human rights.

Consider: Critical librarianship

> "Critical librarianship takes an ethical and political approach to library work, using critical theory to expose and question the historical, political, and social bases of our assumptions and practices."
>
> ~ ACRL, 2017

Critical information literacy seeks to remove the concept of neutrality. (Shockey, 2015).

In an article published in 2016 on In the Library with a Pipe, Eamon Tewell writes about critical information literacy and how it "aim to understand how libraries participate in systems of oppression and find ways for librarians and students to intervene upon these systems." This article, and indeed much of the literature about this topic, is primarily about information literacy practice and instruction. However at its root is the need to examine the power structures that exist within libraries, and how information is organized. Tewell says that "critical librarianship must be informed by diverse perspectives."

A next step for libraries then is to recognize and actively work against their foundations of oppression and white supremacy. To what extent can they do so without intellectual freedom?

Consider: White fragility

They will, however, spend a considerable amount of time wringing their hands about white privilege, decolonizing libraries and the lack of diversity — that is the "whiteness" — of their book collections.

"You can add librarianship to the list of professions that respected Canadian academic Jordan Peterson has noted have gone into crackpot, ridiculous and divisive post-Marxist/intersectional theory," the librarian wrote

~ Levy

"White Fragility is a state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves. These moves include the outward display of emotions such as anger, fear, and guilt, and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and leaving the stress-inducing situation."

~ DiAngelo, p. 57

I had added this, then taken it out, and now it's back in. I think talking about the lack of diversity and what it means is important in relation to library work. Full stop. It's important to the huge segment of Canada's population who does not identify as white or within the dominant narrative.

The reason I decided to include, even just this little snippet, is because of an article a colleague sent me about the Ontario Library Conference program, and the reactions by a reporter, who learned about it from a retired librarian. The article is in the Toronto Sun, published on January 30 by Sue-Ann Levy, and titled *Librarians denounce white privilege*. I've included two quotes from it. Hopefully it's clear from these two quotes that the journalist was not supportive of librarians examining their profession critically. She states that library PD should be looking at seniors, and the disenfranchised, tackling digital literacy, and e-collections, rather than focusing on "the sheer madness of this– the stereotyping, the obvious white guilt and anti-white racism" that is the OLA Superconference program. Okay, so that's actually three quotes. This article made me a little mad.

Is this journalist, and her retired librarian source, representative of an 'old guard' way of thinking?

Can we take Robin DiAngelo's concept of White Fragility and modify it to be Cisgender Fragility? Or Privileged Fragility? If we do that, we need to use critical theory to examine both the library profession and this controversy.

Our profession is in negotiations about it's identity, just as we are shaping our professional identities. These identities are going to be shaped based on what is being heard, and what is being said.

The controversy: Where do we go from here?

> "To narrow or restrict this value based on a group's beliefs or affiliations would put at risk the hard-fought past efforts of, and future support for, other groups who need these same values and laws on their side."
>
> ~ Seattle Public Library Chief Librarian, Marcellus Turner

I was going to end by showing an image of the TPL Room Booking Policy, with some language highlighted around reasons for refusal. It's interesting, I recommend people look it up and then think about what these groups are saying and how libraries are responding.

Instead, I wanted to share this quote from the Seattle Public Library Chief Librarian. It comes from his statement about allowing the event to use library space. Unlike statements from VPL and TPL, which focused on risk management and that MM hasn't been charged with hate speech, Mr. Turner expresses understanding about the difficulty of making a decision like this, "when viewpoints challenge us in uncomfortable ways." (2020).

In May of 2019 I attended the BC Library Conference Hot Topics panel, titled Messy Moments: Libraries and Intellectual Freedom. This was post the VPL event with Meghan Murphy, and nobody on the panel was from VPL. In fact, the situation was not explicitly named, rather the panel was made up of an academic librarian, public librarian, CUPE representative, and a representative from the VPL Board. As you can imagine, it was a tense room with a lot of heavy discussion.

A couple points stood out to me that have been in the back of my mind while working on this project:
- The manager from the public library said that she is only morally and legally responsible for her staff, not the community. I question this, since libraries are publicly funded institutions, and wonder if they would survive without

- community support.
- Sometimes with intellectual freedom, it's about whose voices are being privileged.

This controversy is tough. So, where do I go from here? How do I begin my career as a librarian, what values do I believe in both professionally and personally? Where do they intersect, and where do they come into conflict with each other? If we begin to censor room bookings now, what happens down the road when that decision is used to take away voices who have fought for the right to be heard?

The library community is polarized on this topic; there are people for censoring these groups, and those who are standing behind intellectual freedom. Three library Deans and University Librarians have released an open letter, calling for an update of the CFLA Intellectual Freedom Policy, "to include more nuance and a contemporary understanding of the balance between human rights and intellectual freedom." (Bird, Lew, Mundle, 2019).

I don't have any answers, and am looking forward to more conversations about this nuanced topic.

My questions

- Who is being consulted on policies? What is the underlying power structure?
- Is the harm being caused by allowing these groups to book space in the library worth it?
- What about all the programming and services the library offers to LGTBQA2S+ folks? Do they suddenly not count as working towards inclusivity?
- Why does TPL need to consult with a Pride community about a trans teach in but not when it allowed the room booking for the WoLF event?
- Intellectual freedom champions providing balanced collections and services, offering information from multiple sides. Are events exempt from that?

Through our discussions on this, Dr. Samek and I have talked about how this is a key moment in the history, and future, of libraries. As a student, this controversy and subsequent identity crisis made apparent how many of my courses could have talked about the nuances of librarianship, and addressed the darker or contested history of libraries. While I have enjoyed this program, and am looking forward to beginning my new career, if I was starting it now I would hope for more uncomfortable conversations, outside of the course Intellectual Freedom and Social Responsibility (LIS 592). Going forward, after graduation this June, these topics will be ones I pursue in my professional development. This program, and graduate research assistant position, has been an introduction to them, but my education doesn't end here.

Maarsii, thank you.

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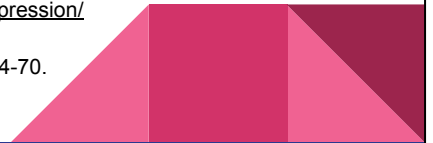
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