

Still Struggling to Breathe: Another Conversation on Libraries and Communities in Crisis

SIG Sponsor(s):

Equity and Social Justice (Mónica Cólón-Aguirre and Nicole A. Cooke, University of South Carolina, USA)

Presenters:

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ABSTRACT

In this lightning talk session, panelists will share brief statements regarding the roles of libraries in times of crises, including ideas such as navigating difficult conversations around anti-racism and other “controversial” topics; strategies for community resilience; the legal boundaries between free and hate speech; and how LIS education may play a role in preparing future LIS professionals for this type of crisis management. We also wish to interrogate the idea of the library as a place of neutrality. The remaining time will be spent facilitating an interactive discussion with the audience to strategize tangible action steps.

Our initial work on this topic yielded several publications, which are listed below. Ironically, this work was not well received by the profession, but given the “supposed” racial reckoning that began after the death of George Floyd in the summer of 2020, we will reintroduce our work to the profession, which remains behind the curve on race relations, genuine and lasting inclusion, and anti-racism. We continue our advocacy for ourselves, as BIPOC (black indigenous and people of color) faculty members, and for the future generations of the BIPOC information professionals we teach.

Cooke, N. A., & Sánchez, J. O. (2019). Getting it on the record: Faculty of color in library and information science. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science*, 60(3), 169-181.

Gibson, A. N., Chancellor, R. L., Cooke, N. A., Dahlen, S. P., Patin, B., & Shorish, Y. L. (2020). Struggling to breathe: COVID-19, protest and the LIS response. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*.

Gibson, A. N., Chancellor, R. L., Cooke, N. A., Dahlen, S. P., Lee, S. A., & Shorish, Y. L. (2017). Libraries on the frontlines: Neutrality and social justice. *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion: An International Journal*.

ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS

Social justice; Critical librarianship; Pedagogy.

AUTHOR KEYWORDS

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