

Resolution to Condemn White Supremacy and Fascism as Antithetical to Library Work

Whereas libraries have upheld and encouraged white supremacy both actively through discriminatory practices and passively through a misplaced emphasis on neutrality¹²³⁴⁵;

Whereas these practices and arising environments have prevented equity, diversity, and inclusion in libraries as workplaces⁶⁷⁸⁹¹⁰;

Whereas ALA's Code of Ethics asserts that libraries will safeguard the welfare of all employees and coworkers, "We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions"¹¹;

Whereas Interpretations of ALA's Library Bill of Rights notes that "libraries should embrace equity, diversity, and inclusion in everything that they do," and to do so we must reject practices, movements, and groups that oppose equity, diversity and inclusion¹²;

Whereas ALA has committed to acknowledging the past harms of racism¹³¹⁴ and to work to encourage diversity through activities including ALA's Spectrum Program;

Whereas the realization of specific ALA Core Values of Librarianship (such as democracy, diversity, and social responsibility) is contingent on putting those values in practice and accountability to integrating those values;

Whereas libraries have a crucial obligation to provide access to accurate information which refutes white supremacist rhetoric¹⁵;

Whereas moving forward with the trust of our communities requires address of past harms along with decisive action and restorative practices¹⁶; and

Whereas it is vital for ALA to manifest the courage and candor required by libraries and library workers around the world to reject and denounce white supremacy and fascism¹⁷¹⁸; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, that the American Library Association (ALA), on behalf of its members:

1. acknowledges the role of neutrality rhetoric in emboldening and encouraging white supremacy and fascism;
2. apologizes for past harm caused by the profession and within the Association, and the Association's repeated failures to address white supremacy and fascism;
3. charges the Working Group on Intellectual Freedom and Social Justice, with a representative from the Committee on Diversity, to review neutrality rhetoric and identify alternatives, sharing findings by July 1, 2021;

4. will provide confidential communication channels for past and current BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) members, staff members, community members, and others to provide direct feedback;
5. informed by that direct feedback and previous ALA Task Force on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion work¹⁹, commits to explicitly incorporating existing and developing antiracist and antifascist frameworks, in internal and external communications, advocacy, events, and organizational design efforts moving forward;
6. will establish a working group to review these areas with ODLOS to provide a list of recommendations for implementation that will explore opportunities for restorative and reparative measures;
7. will provide a preliminary plan by January 1, 2022 to implement the resulting recommendations; and
8. will provide regular implementation updates at intervals no longer than 6 months to the full ALA membership for the duration of the project and beyond.

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¹ Honma, Todd. "Trippin' Over the Color Line: The Invisibility of Race in Library and Information Studies." *InterActions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies*. 2005. Accessed January 19, 2021. <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/4nj0w1mp>

² Sierpe, Eino. "Confronting Librarianship and its Function in the Structure of White Supremacy and the Ethno State". *Journal of Radical Librarianship*. May 27, 2019. Accessed January 19, 2021. <https://journal.radicalibrarianship.org/index.php/journal/article/view/39>

³ Knowles, Em Claire. "Can Libraries Be Neutral? Should They Strive To Be Neutral?". March 26, 2018. Accessed January 19, 2021. <http://slis.simmons.edu/blogs/emclaireknowles-publications/2018/03/26/can-libraries-be-neutral-should-they-strive-to-be-neutral/>

⁴ Scott, Dani and Saunders, Laura. "Neutrality in Public Libraries: How Are We Defining One of our Core Values?". *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*. June 30, 2020. Accessed January 19, 2021. doi: [10.1177/0961000620935501](https://doi.org/10.1177/0961000620935501)

⁵ Ferretti, Jennifer A. "Neutrality is Hostility: The Impact of (False) Neutrality in Academic Librarianship." Medium. February 13, 2018. Accessed January 19, 2021. <https://medium.com/@CityThatReads/neutrality-is-hostility-the-impact-of-false-neutrality-in-academic-librarianship-c0755879fb09>

⁶ ASERL Webinar. "Why Did I Leave the Profession — The DEI Perspective." December 10, 2020. Accessed January 19, 2021. <https://vimeo.com/489791999>

⁷ Kelley, Michael. "Diversity Never Happens: The Story of Minority Hiring Doesn't Seem To Change Much." *Library Journal*. February 20, 2013. Accessed January 19, 2021. <http://lj.libraryjournal.com/2013/02/opinion/editorial/diversity-never-happens-the-story-of-minority-hiring-doesnt-seem-to-change-much/>

⁸ Hathcock, April. "White Librarianship in Blackface: Diversity Initiatives in LIS." *In the Library with the Lead Pipe*. October 7, 2015. Accessed January 15, 2021. <http://www.inthelibrarywiththeleadpipe.org/2015/lis-diversity/>

- ⁹ Frederick, Jennifer K., and Christine Wolff-Eisenberg. "Ithaka S+R US Library Survey 2019." Ithaka S+R. April 2, 2020. Accessed January 19, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.18665/sr.312977>
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- ¹¹ American Library Association. "Code of Ethics." January 22, 2008. Accessed January 19, 2021. <http://www.ala.org/tools/ethics>
- ¹² American Library Association. "Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights." Accessed January 19, 2021. <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations>
- ¹³ American Library Association. "ALA Takes Responsibility for Past Racism, Pledges a More Equitable Association." June 26, 2020. Accessed January 19, 2021. <http://www.ala.org/news/press-releases/2020/06/ala-takes-responsibility-past-racism-pledges-more-equitable-association>
- ¹⁴ American Library Association. "ALA Takes Responsibility for Past Racism, Pledges a More Equitable Association." June 26, 2020. Accessed January 19, 2021. <http://www.ala.org/news/press-releases/2020/06/ala-takes-responsibility-past-racism-pledges-more-equitable-association>
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- ¹⁸ United Nations. "The Universal Declaration of Human Rights." December 10, 1948. Accessed January 19, 2021. <https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>
- ¹⁹ American Library Association. "Final Report of the ALA Task Force on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion." June 2016. Accessed January 19, 2021. http://www.ala.org/aboutala/sites/ala.org.aboutala/files/content/TFEDIFinalReport_ALA_CONNECT.pdf