Understanding Power, Identity, and Oppression

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Definitions:

Equity is not the same as formal equality. Formal equality implies sameness. Equity, on the other hand, assumes difference and takes difference into account to ensure a fair process and, ultimately, a fair (or equitable) outcome. Equity recognizes that some groups were (and are) disadvantaged in accessing educational and employment opportunities and are, therefore, underrepresented or marginalized in many organizations and institutions. ([Source: ALA]())

Diversity can be defined as the sum of the ways that people are both alike and different. Visible diversity is generally those attributes or characteristics that are external. However, diversity goes beyond the external to internal characteristics that we choose to define as 'invisible' diversity. Invisible diversity includes those characteristics and attributes that are not readily seen. When we recognize, value, and embrace diversity, we are recognizing, valuing, and embracing the uniqueness of each individual. ([Source: ALA]())

Inclusion means an environment in which all individuals are treated fairly and respectfully; are valued for their distinctive skills, experiences, and perspectives; have equal access to resources and opportunities; and can contribute fully to the organization's success. ([Source: ALA]())

Privilege operates on personal, interpersonal, cultural, and institutional levels and gives advantages, favors, and benefits to members of dominant groups at the expense of members of target groups. ([Source: Vanderbilt)]()

Oppression is the combination of prejudice and institutional power which creates a system that discriminates against some groups (often called "target groups") and benefits other groups (often called "dominant groups"). ([Source: Vanderbilt]())

Power is having influence, authority or control over people and/or resources. ([Source: Life, Love and Literacy Blog]())

Social justice refers to the ability of all people to fully benefit from social and economic progress and to participate equally in democratic societies. ([Source: Libraries and the Academy]())

Articles and videos:

Privilege 101
https://everydayfeminism.com/2014/09/what-is-privilege/

Unconscious Bias
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dVp9Z5k0dEE

Danger of a Single Story
https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story

White Savior Industrial Complex
https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/03/the-white-savior-industrial-complex/254843/

Libraries Taking Action to Advance Racial Equity (Part 1)
http://www.racialequityalliance.org/2017/10/11/libraries-take-action-advance-racial-equity/

Libraries Taking Action to Advance Racial Equity (Part 2)
http://www.racialequityalliance.org/2017/10/11/libraries-take-action-advance-racial-equity-part-3-3/

Libraries Taking Action to Advance Racial Equity (Part 3)
http://www.racialequityalliance.org/2017/10/11/libraries-take-action-advance-racial-equity-part-2-3/

Additional Resources

Libraries are for Everyone (poster)
https://hafuboti.com/2017/02/02/libraries-are-for-everyone/

Everyone is Welcome Here (poster)
https://www.micahbazant.com/buy-art/everyone-is-welcome-here

Resist racism and bigotry (posters and curriculum)
https://www.afsc.org/resource/posters-resisting-racism-and-bigotry

Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)
http://www.racialequityalliance.org/tools-resources/

Allyship Guide
http://www.guidetoallyship.com/

Feral Librarian Blog (Chris Bourg, MIT Libraries)
chrisbourg.wordpress.com

Social Justice In/Through Libraries Framework:
https://chrisbourg.wordpress.com/2016/09/17/talking-at-harvard-about-libraries-and-social-justice/

PLA Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Initiative
http://www.ala.org/pla/initiatives/edi

PLA EDI Contact/Newsletter Sign Up
Email pla-edi@ala.org to contact the Task Force or be added to our newsletter distribution list.

Discussion Questions

- What opportunities do you have in your library to address equity and social justice?
- Who could you partner or collaborate with to take your library's EDI work to the next level? (Could be staff or a community partner)
- How will you share what you learned in today's webinar with your colleagues?
- What 'single stories' do we tell ourselves about our patrons and the communities we serve?