



Peer-Reviewed Article

Belonging in the Urban Information Specialist Program

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ABSTRACT

The Urban Information Specialist Program lasted only one year, from 1970-1971, at the University of Maryland School of Library and Information Service (SLIS). While short lived, the program raised big questions that resonate still today about who could become a librarian and what role a librarian plays. The program sought to diversify librarianship by 1) recruiting students with experience working and serving BIPOC communities and 2) eliminating barriers such as the requirement of a Bachelor's degree. The program's end was met with protest and debate about racism within the university and in the SLIS. This article looks at contemporary student publications to better understand how library science programs can improve to promote diversity within a primarily white profession and in Primarily White Institutions (PWI).

KEYWORDS

Library and Information Science Education, Gatekeeping, Belonging, Racism

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Diversity within librarianship has faced scrutiny for decades, yet underrepresentation persists even as greater attention is paid to it. With programs throughout the profession seeking to recruit, develop, and retain BIPOC librarians, it is critical to understand the history that caused librarianship to arrive at its present state. Understanding historical efforts towards these goals is helpful to develop best practices and new initiatives. It is similarly important to highlight and learn from past missteps. One such historical program, the Urban Information Specialist Program (UISP) at the University of Maryland School of Library and Information Service (SLIS), sought to recruit minoritized individuals. It recruited students in urban environments poor and Black students to develop librarians to serve these populations. The program lasted one year from 1970 to 1971. Loss of funding and disputes within the SLIS led to the program's elimination. Earlier work has explored the program's controversial end, focusing on program leaders and the SLIS, but this article will center on the student experience, using student publications produced in response to a student protest supporting the UISP. The protest was met with criticism by white students, largely unchallenged, who argued that the UISP students did not belong at a university. By examining this event, we can better understand how well-intentioned programs to promote diversity within librarianship may still place minoritized students in harmful environments and detract from the program's mission unless attention is paid to the larger organizational culture and the experience of the students.

Background

Literature Review

Caroline Sotello Viernes Turner popularized a metaphor to describe how BIPOC students feel in historically white institutions, "a guest in someone else's house. Her work, "Guests in Someone Else's House: Students of Color," focused on the University of Minnesota and explored the experiences of African American, Hispanic, Native American, and Asian American students. Turner demonstrates that a positive climate on campus is important for retention, and an unwelcoming culture is bad both for retention and the students. (Turner, 1994, p. 361) If students in library programs and librarians working in a library are made to feel like guests in someone else's house, it will be difficult to retain them.

Dr. Nicole A. Cooke in "The GSLS Carnegie Scholars: Guests in someone else's house" picks up Turner's metaphor to focus on how BIPOC students in the University of Illinois Graduate School of Library Science's (GSLS) Carnegie Scholars program, a program developed in 1970 to increase Black and Hispanic representation within librarianship by providing financial support to students (Cooke, 2017, pp. 46–47. She documents how they were made to feel othered and unwelcome:

These circumstances that render guests uncomfortable and unwelcome in their hosts' home are tantamount to those experienced by students of color. Campus climate issues at primarily white institutions (PWI) and, subsequently, the climate of individual

schools, colleges, and departments can be hostile, unwelcoming, demonstrate a distinct lack of support or isolated support for students of color, and suffer from a lack of representative faculty and staff. (Cooke, 2017, pp. 47–48)

Even if a college seeks to diversify its student body, there is a lot of other work that needs to be done outside of simply recruiting students to ensure students feel like they belong and are not driven away.

Researchers and librarians have found troubling trends regarding representation within libraries and library schools. The Spectrum Scholarship Program is the largest initiative to recruit BIPOC students to librarianship, yet data on this large, national program is limited. Two major surveys are found on the Spectrum Scholarship Program's reports webpage. The first "Bridging Boundaries to Create a New Workforce" (Roy et al., 2006) surveyed Spectrum Scholars who participated in the program starting in 1998 and through 2004. The survey had a response rate of 64%. The webpage also cites Dr. Nicole A. Cooke and E. Chisato Uyeki's survey performed in 2012 with a 54% response rate (Cooke & Uyeki, 2013). Roy et al found that 85% of participants who graduated from their LIS program were currently employed full-time in an LIS setting while 4% worked part-time (Roy et al., 2006, p. 16), yet Cooke and Uyeki found in 2012 that the total percent of graduates working in LIS environments was 80%. These studies demonstrate an apparent 9% drop in the share of Spectrum Scholars working in the library field. While percentages may mask an overall net increase of Spectrum Scholarship graduates working in libraries, the fact that the share of graduates employed in the LIS field declined is a concerning trend.

Kyung-Sun Kim and Sei-Ching Joanna Sin use data from the Association for Library and Information Science Education (ALISE) in their article, "Recruiting and Retaining Students of Color in LIS Programs: Perspective of Library and Information Professionals." They found that, "the ratio of librarians of color among credentialed librarians has actually dropped from 12% in 1990 to 10% in 2000" (2006, p. 81). More recently, JungWon Yoon and Kathleen de la Peña McCook found that LIS programs are graduating more BIPOC students, increasing "from 6.79% to 17.47% over the past 30 years. They do note that "but this trend is still outpaced by national trends (2021, p. 111). The authors also found that minority representation in top-rated library school programs is lower than the average across library science programs, and that "the ratio of LIS minority graduates (17.43%) is lower than the ratio of LIS minority students (20.7%)."(Yoon & McCook, 2021, p. 115) Dr. Theresa Byrd reported that Gwendolyn Prellwitz, Assistant Director, Office for Diversity, Literacy and Outreach Services and Spectrum Scholar Coordinator at the American Library Association, informed her in 2018 that 20% of Spectrum scholars leave librarianship because of racial trauma (Byrd, 2023, p. 4). While librarianship is seen some gains, scholars have suggested that they are not in pace with demographic changes within the United States.

One solution to the lack of representation is providing mentorship to minoritized library school students as studied by Vivian Bordeaux and Jahala Simuel (2022, p. 227). They point out, however, that systemic roadblocks still exist on the path to librarianship, such as GRE testing requirements, lack of representation in the field, and experience requirements (Bordeaux & Simuel, 2022, pp. 226–228). Dr. Aisha argues that programs designed to support Black librarians have been in decline due to lack of financial support. She points to how North Carolina Central University is the only HBCU that offers a library science degree (Johnson, 2022, p. 44), while programs that were early leaders in educating Black librarians such as the Hampton Institute and Clark Atlanta University (CAU) closed due to a lack of financial resources to maintain the programs (Bordeaux & Simuel, 2022, p. 47; Rollins, 2018).¹ Kung et al. found that many diversity initiatives are supporting librarians of color to enter the field, but they found little support for retaining mid- and late-career librarians of color (2020, p. 103). These findings support Boyd et al.’s conclusions that, while academic library residency programs may increase diversity within librarianship, larger organizational and cultural changes within libraries are still required to create inclusive spaces and retain BIPOC librarians. They argue that residency programs are not recruitment tools for librarianship because they are available only to people who have graduated from a graduate library program, so library science programs are an essential site for improvement (Boyd et al, 2017, 497). Maurice B. Wheeler and Jaqueline Hanson recommend that libraries and LIS programs should “Market the profession to minority students in high school and early in their college education, offering financial incentive as well as close interaction with information professionals” to increase the number of students of color pursuing librarianship. (Wheeler & Hanson, 1995, p. 141). There is agreement among scholars that greater work is needed to support Black librarians and students.

University of Maryland Historical Context

What is now known as the University of Maryland, College Park was founded by Charles Benedict Calvert in 1856 as the Maryland Agricultural College. Calvert inherited slaves and a plantation from his father, George Calvert, and most of the first university trustees were slaveowners (Truss-Williams, 2020). The university exclusively admitted white students until 1950 when Esther McCready and Parren Mitchell were admitted because of their lawsuit against the university (“Trailblazers: Integration at the University of Maryland (Part 2),” 2014). While the 1970 Census reported that about 18% of Maryland’s population was Black, (U.S. Census Bureau, 1973, pp. 22–140) research into the demographics at the University of Maryland, College Park estimate that the student population was about 4% Black and 5% of the graduate student population was Black at that time. (Brooks, Jr. & Sedlacek, 1972, p. 2) While the

¹ The closure of CAU’s School of Library and Information Science is a more complex situation which additionally includes institutional communication problems and a conditional accreditation from the ALA. For more information on the closure of the CAU closure, see

university and state have sought to improve equitable access to the university, it is important to understand this history of UMD as a Primarily White Institution (PWI): the university was originally established for white people.

The University of Maryland's library science program has focused on the issue of diversity since its founding in 1965 under the leadership of its first dean, Paul Wasserman. In "The Arc of Activism: The James Partridge Award in the Context of 50 Years of Attempts to Influence Diversity and Inclusion in the Field of Library and Information Science by the University of Maryland," Paul Jaeger, Diane Barlow, and Beth St. Jean outline some of the major programs at the University of Maryland's library school, including a Black recruitment office, the Urban Information Specialist Program (UISP), and the creation of a public information center in partnership with the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore. (Jaeger et al., 2016, p. 23) The program Jaeger et al. focus the most attention on is the High John Library project. The library was founded in 1967 and represents the first time a library school operated its own public library to train students. The library was in Fairmount Heights in Prince George's County, Maryland. While Prince George's County is known as a majority-Black county today, it was majority-white at the time the High John Library was established, but Fairmount Heights was a majority-Black town. During the 1960's the county's population was getting blacker, growing from 8% to 14% 1960 to 1970 with 31,011 Blacks living in the county in 1960 and 91,808 Blacks in 1970 (Wright Jr., 2019). Anti-black politics was practiced by the county government which was accused of ignoring the maintenance of county infrastructure in Fairmount Heights and withholding county funding, including the closure of the town's public library in 1961, replacing services with a bookmobile (Cress, 2022, p. 70). The High John Library was created by Paul Wasserman and Mary Lee Bundy, who received funding from the United States Department of Education and the Prince George's County Memorial Library System (PGCMLS) (Cress, 2022, p. 70). The program's goal was to provide students (largely white and middle class) with the skills necessary to serve as public librarians to Black, impoverished communities. The program is considered unsuccessful by scholars today because the students had little experience or training to work with the community (Jaeger et al., 2016, p. 24) which was exacerbated by the faculty having limited experience or familiarity with the community of Fairmount Heights (Cress, 2022, p. 74). By 1970, the PGCMLS absorbed the library and the experiment ended.

The UISP

The UISP followed the High John Library experiment under Bundy's leadership. She secured funding for the UISP from the U.S. Office of Education through a grant under Title II-B of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (M. L. Bundy et al., 1971, p. 1). She appointed James Welbourne as the director. Welbourne was a Black graduate of the SLIS who had been working as the Black recruiter for the school. Welbourne had also been involved with the High John Library. (Welbourne, 1971, p. 2) The program was developed during a time of increasing

awareness of the need to serve socio-economically disadvantaged and minoritized communities. UISP leadership believed that existing strategies developed to serve those communities misunderstood the core problem, locating the problem at the individual level rather than at the systemic level. The UISP intended to empower marginalized communities to navigate and utilize complex information systems (M. L. Bundy et al., 1971, p. 7). Bundy and Welbourne saw the ability to access and use information as a critical component for people to participate in society and represented the work librarians should be doing for their communities.

The end of the UISP in 1971 was complex and contentious. The US Office of Education jeopardized the program by denying a second year of funding for the program. The UISP planning committee turned to the university and the SLIS for support. The SLIS agreed to support the program, stipulating that the college would have greater control over the program, which Bundy and Welbourne opposed. They viewed the demand as an incursion of white oversight into a largely Black program (“Of Note,” 1971, p. 230; Yamauchi, 2018, p. 44). Deciding not to relinquish control to the SLIS, the UISP ended. James Welbourne, the director of the program, argued that white supremacy was the ultimate cause for the end of the program:

Necessity, not choice, dictated that the program assumes a “survival mode” early in its operational phase. The conditions of existence for the program participants came to approximate those of oppressed people hopelessly trapped in ghettos, surrounded by and dependent for its future on a hostile and suspicious larger culture. ... For nine almost unbearable months, the participants in this program lived a way of life which gave them a sensitivity to the plight of ghetto residents in a way that no theoretical course in sociology could ever have. Isolated from their broader community of the school, left without peer relationships, they waged a constant battle against the power of institutional racism, always present, always ready to be utilized to stop them; always requiring of them explanations they should not have had to make. It is not surprising that they began to articulate the response of oppressed people for self; their right to direct their own destiny. For there is no other response to continual exploitation and disadvantage by people who are not a part of one’s community and are hostile to its existence except on the most marginal and always “inferior” basis and in the case of this project not at all. It is not fantasy to suggest that white America would similarly like to keep its Black population confined and dwindling numbers. (Welbourne, 1971, pp. 58–59)

Welbourne describes how the politics around the program affected the students because of the treatment by their peers outside of the program and by the institutional environment, comparing their treatment to the treatment of marginalized communities within the United States. Even before the program met its financial trouble, the students were already struggling, according to Welbourne, with the SLIS and the university culture.

Student Response

Protest

During the final days of the UISP, word spread among students that the program might be cut, so the Black Student Union and other supporters of the UISP organized a demonstration in support of the program. The protest was held on March 1st, 1971. The following day, the *Diamondback*, the University of Maryland's student newspaper, published an article on the frontpage reporting that:

About 100 Black students marched on the main administration building yesterday to gauge administration support of a proposed urban studies program. According to a Black student who refused to identify himself, the demonstration was staged to express support of the urban program 'which has come under fire in this racist institution.' Dan Kitt, Black Student Union president, added the marchers wanted to 'voice dissent against efforts of some of the faculty in library sciences' who do not want the program approved. (Neighbor, 1971)

The Black Explosion, the university's Black student newspaper, covered the protest in their March 1971 issue. One editorial gives another account of the protest:

At noon the marchers went to the Student Union Ballroom to organize. Sisters marched in two's on the inside, while the brothers marched on the outside to protect them in case of trouble. Everyone carried signs such as 'Kill the two-faced snake' and 'when you hurt one Black, you hurt them all.' They left the ballroom and proceeded to the library singing "Revolution is here" and chanting "Nation Time." After a very evasive remark by some of the flunkies on the committee, some of the marchers left signs by every office on the fourth floor. Then they filed out of the library and proceeded to the administration steps. They marched in a circle as members of the steering committee went inside to discuss the program. The marchers religiously chanted "Power to the people. Black, Black power to the African people" until members came from the building. The marchers returned to the Student Union Ballroom, received reports on the meeting and ended with the Black National Anthem. ("The Editor Speaks... Blacks Protest Racist Treachery," 1971)

A separate editorial in the issue reported that the university administration "remarked that for us to ask for support for the Urban Information Specialist Program wasn't fair." ("The Editor Speaks... Carousel Confrontations," 1971) The back of the issue includes four images of the protests. While Black students were rallying in support on campus to support the program, white students were not as supportive.

The Reaction

In response to the demonstration, the SLIS's official student newspaper, the *Bibliophile*, published an issue dedicated to the protest. This special issue, named the "rabble-rouser edition" featured two pieces on the protest, both in opposition to it. While it would be an error to assume that this issue is representative of the whole SLIS, the fact that the official student newspaper for the school published such an issue, and the views therein, provides insight into

the culture of the SLIS at the time and suggests how the UISP students were treated by their peers.

The issue's front and back covers feature satirical content criticizing the protests. The front cover features a cartoon of a mouse, a character used by the editor, Lorna C. Wilkie, named Bibelot. In the image, Bibelot is carrying a sign reading "EVERYBODY IS UNFAIR!" and is reading a book inscribed with "THE RED BOOK" on the cover. The back cover features a satirical form for a facetious company, Demonstrators, Inc., that purported to provide protestors. It includes a section where someone could select their conflict of choice such as "Black vs. White," "White vs Black," and "Students vs Teachers." There is another section for selecting the type of protest, such as violent, non-violent, and sit-in. The form also contains slogans such as "Our banner painters can misspell anything" and "Organized confusion is best!" ("Now: No More 'Amateur' Demonstrations," 1971). The front and back covers downplay the protests as an absurd, if not silly, demonstration, further establishing that the *Bibliophile's* opposition to the protest.

The first piece of the issue is an editorial by Wilkie. She starts by quoting a 1967 convocation address by university president, Dr. Wilson H. Elkins: "university is to perform at a high level in all of its endeavors and to elevate the individual and society.... It should lead in the discovery of the truth and in the orderly discussion of controversial issues" (Wilkie, 1971b, p. 2). Wilkie uses the passage to frame the protest as antithetical to the idea of a university:

What ironic words... Even the most part-time of part-time students cannot have failed to notice some of the very unacademic occurrences of recent weeks--sign-carrying demonstrations, posters on the door of the Urban Information Specialist Program, raised voices coming from the faculty meetings in 405M, instructors coming to classes unprepared to teach, unable to devote time to their students, unwilling to discuss problems with students because they are engaged almost full-time in meetings and are so tired of discussing, discussing, discussing. (Wilkie, 1971b)

Wilkie makes two criticisms: 1) the activity of the students supporting the UISP proves that those students are unfit to attend a university, and 2) the department politics around the program is negatively impacting the students outside of the UISP.

The second piece on the protest is a letter to the editor by another SLIS student, Susan Ellsworth. Her letter articulates a similar position as Wilkie, arguing that the UISP students' demonstration proves they are not fit to be at the university. Ellsworth describes a "confrontation outside the offices of the Urban Information Specialist Project," but she does not provide details on what the confrontation was exactly. It is unclear if she is referencing activities that were part of that day's protest or a separate incident. What she does provide are examples of three posters that were outside the door with slogans such as "Stamp out Racism." Ellsworth argues that the posters are nothing more "than verbalized temper tantrum" going on to argue that "anyone unable to articulate needs and ideas does not belong in a university setting, much

less a graduate school program” (Ellsworth, 1971). Like Wilkie, Ellsworth argues that protest is unfit speech at a university:

We are discovering the absolute folly of inviting (nay, recruiting!) those onto campus whose main qualification seems to be the color of their skin. Not every Black student on campus was invited solely on that basis; but when organized temper tantrums flare up in the U.I.S.P, those looking on begin to wonder. Frankly, the program begins to look like a guilty white liberal’s apology. And as long as the program aims to recruit those whose main qualifications are skin color, rather than genuine ability, the library school will experience scenarios of the type we saw on Monday. (Ellsworth, 1971)

Ellsworth argues that college admissions should be based on merit and that UISP students were admitted without any sort of merit, so they did not belong at a university.

Ellsworth continues with a reverse racism argument: “Why is it that ‘Stamp out Racism’ is slowly evolving into Black supremacy? To those who participated in that organized temper tantrum, I say: Look again at yourself and ask, ‘who is being racist?’” (Ellsworth, 1971). Ellsworth is arguing that opposing racism is somehow Black supremacy. Going further, she argues that the Black students in the traditional program should be the most insulted by the UISP:

To those obviously academically qualified students (whether Black, white, Oriental, Indian, or a mixture) on campus, the U.I.S.P has offered the back of its hand. And most insulted of all are the academically qualified Black students who were admitted on the basis of scholastic performance, not solely on the color of their skin. (Ellsworth, 1971)

Ellsworth takes the argument that the UISP students are unfit a step further, arguing that the program negatively affects other Black students, pitting the minoritized students perceived to be playing by the rules against other minoritized students. Overall, Ellsworth echoes Wilkie’s views that the students in the UISP do not belong in a university, and that the program is negatively affecting the students outside the program. Ellsworth does take the additional step by arguing that the protestors were themselves racists.

A letter was published in the next issue of the *Bibliophile*, signed anonymously as from “the ‘bunch of Blacks’ in the regular program,” referring to Ellsworth’s letter, criticized the rabble-rouser issue. The letter was addressed “to the Editor and all contributors to the ‘rabble rouser’ issue” (“To the Editor and All Contributors,” 1971, p. 1). In addition to expressing solidarity with the UISP students and protestors, the piece points to numerous other kinds of activities happening on campus and nationally which the *Bibliophile* did not criticize in the same way, including gay rights, women’s rights, and peace protests. The letter’s authors conclude that because only the UISP was targeted “that this implication is for ‘bunches of Blacks’ only” (“To the Editor and All Contributors,” 1971, p. 1). The authors understood the issue’s focus on Black protest as a condemnation not of protest but of Black protest.

The letter is followed by a response by Wilkie. She argues that she did not criticize Black people, the UISP, or argue for the abolition of the right to demonstrate. Seeking to clarify her

position, she explains that her issue with the protest is that the demonstration in support of the UISP was “pointless because the only reason for it seems to have been that the UISP faculty had not gotten their way 100 percent” and it was “ill-timed because it polarized feelings at the very time when a compromise was being worked out” and it was “inappropriate as well” (Wilkie, 1971a, p. 2). Wilkie argues that the protests were inappropriate because the SLIS student body chose against protesting against the SLIS’s decision to revoke student representatives from having voting privileges in faculty meetings (Wilkie, 1971a, p. 2). She also argues that the protests were inappropriate because the UISP students could have made their voices heard in a different way and that “it implied that the UISP students were so oppressed that they could only express their views through a demonstration” (Wilkie, 1971a, p. 3). Wilkie also criticizes UISP students for their lack of involvement within the SLIS reporting that:

Only four of the seventeen UISP students even cared enough to vote in the last student election, none ran for office, and none have ever bothered to air their views in the *BIBLIOPHILE*, which, unscholarly though it may be, is still the major communication medium for the SLIS student body. (Wilkie, 1971a, p. 3)

Wilkie seems to only consider that UISP students do not actually care about the program or the SLIS because they do not engage with the school’s institutions, such as elections and its official newspaper. She does not seem to consider that the students may be made to feel unwelcome or even unsafe. She then returns to her argument from her editorial arguing that the students participating in the protest demonstrated that they were not acting like real graduate students at a university:

Furthermore, graduate students are supposed to be able to select the most effective action for a given situation. The fact that other groups are holding demonstrations (and rightly so) does not make a demonstration the most appropriate reaction for all circumstances. The UISP students selected the most dramatic, rather than the most responsible while creating the maximum antagonism and making themselves look emotional rather than rational. This was the wrong approach for a group of graduate students on a university campus. (Wilkie, 1971a, p. 3)

While Wilkie attempts to argue that her comments in the special issue were not racist, she ends up using several racist tropes, like suggesting that the Black students are not acting responsibly or rationally. She also fails to consider why UISP students may not participate in the institutional and majority-white outlets such as the *Bibliophile* and student elections.

The rabble-rouser issue offers insight into the culture of the SLIS at the time. The college’s Black recruitment efforts and the UISP resulted, as Welbourne describes, in the school having the second largest Black student population in a library science program, second only to Atlanta University, the successor of the Hampton Institute (M. L. 1927- Bundy et al., 1974, pp. 7–8). However, a culture of white supremacy still existed within the school. A Black student at the SLIS may have found more students like them there than many other library schools, yet they still would find themselves subject to a variety of microaggressions and macroaggressions.

Absence in the Archival Record

There is a notable lack of representation of the UISP students in the archival record. Neither *the Diamondback* nor the *Black Explosion* published interviews with students or supporters of the program; they mostly reported on the events. While the *Bibliophile* does include the one letter anonymously signed by Black students in the school, the students were not participants in the program. One source that does exist is a collection of three short essays published by students in the report, *The Urban Information Specialist Program: First Year*. The first two essays focus on the program in general terms. The first, "Need to Know in the Ghetto" by Alfred Nero focuses on the need for black communities to be empowered and have more agency (Nero, 1971). The second, "The Role of the White Information Specialist in the Black Community," discusses the author's view of how the program prepares white students to serve Black communities (Miller, 1971). The third essay, "Reflections by a Student as N*****," is authored by a Black student. His essay focuses on the argument that "The white man in his effort to protect that which he so dearly loves (his white world) has built in safety mechanisms to ward off unwanted elements. He has created a devious system which he calls education"(Jones, 1971). The student concludes, "contrary to all the purported reasons for the harassment suffered by the Urban Information Specialist Project it is my sincere belief that much of the harassment was a direct result of the project's bypassing many of these educational safeguards"(Jones, 1971). This student argues that the opposition to the UISP comes from the program's attempt to evade and dismantle tools of white supremacy. While limited, these accounts demonstrate that the program was positively regarded by its students, with an impression that systemic racism was the reason for negative reaction to the program.

Conclusion

Leaders within libraries and library science programs need to understand the history of librarianship in the United States to understand the profession and their programs in context. Deans and chairs are not responsible for the actions of students and faculty in the past, but the history of white supremacy within programs needs to be fully reckoned with to understand how the culture of librarianship and library schools continues to center on whiteness. While gains have been made, data collected by researchers continues to demonstrate that there is some force pushing back in favor of the status quo. Program directors should inquire into both the student experience and the overall student culture in their programs. While it may be unlikely that we would see a publication like the Rabble-Rouser edition of *the Bibliophile*, what microaggressions are going on in programs and libraries that deter and reject BIPOC and lower-income future librarians? Are programs developed to recruit and develop a more diverse librarian workforce also ensuring the participants feel safe and that they belong? Are diversity initiatives developed with the full support of the institution? Are there ways that library school students and

librarians from underrepresented backgrounds continue to be told that they do not belong in a university setting?

The library community needs more data to inform decisions to create more equitable and inclusive learning and workplaces for BIPOC librarians and students. The ALA and other organizations promoting BIPOC inclusion in librarianship, should focus on developing community infrastructure that may create space for BIPOC librarians not found elsewhere in the profession and then act as a base for these librarians and students to report on their own experiences, stories, and studies. In an article originally published in 1999, Teresa Neely expressed concern that the term for Spectrum Scholarship recipients as Spectrum Scholars might misrepresent that the program requires some degree of research or scholarly production (Neely, 1999). Over a decade later, maybe we will discover that there have been latent research opportunities there that just needed support.

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