



Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy:

Strengthening the LIS Response to Diverse
Populations in Our Classrooms

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“A child cannot be taught by anyone that despises him, and a child cannot afford to be fooled. A child cannot be taught by anyone whose demand, essentially, is that the child repudiate his experience, and all that gives him sustenance, and enter a limbo in which he will no longer be black, and in which he knows he can never be white.”



James Baldwin, “If Black English Isn’t a Language, Then Tell Me, What Is?”

Western



- Today, white teachers (88%), white librarians (86%) + Multicultural Student Body
- Monolingual → Monocultural
- No Child Left Behind (NCLB) → Race to the Top (RTTT); Testing culture
- U.S. Education = Deficit approach to teaching culturally different students

Global

- Multilingual → Multicultural → “Teaching to, and through” students’ cultures (Gay, 2010).
- Cognitive Justice Framework (If you don’t know about this framework, look into it)

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy: A Background

- 1970s-1990s movement in multicultural education: Deficit approach and difference approach
- Gloria Ladson-Billings + Geneva Gay + Lisa Delpit; K-12 Education; African American students
- Culturally Relevant Pedagogy + Culturally Responsive Instruction + Critical Race Theory + Black Feminist Theory

Concept

Critical Information Literacy

- (James Elmborg, 2006 + 2012; Critical Library Instruction, 2010)
- “Neutrality is not an option” (p.193). Elmborg asks us to pick a side.

Theoretical Framework

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy

- (Django Paris + H. Samy Alim; Education, Anthropology + SocioLinguistics)

Approach to Critical Library Instruction: Critical Information Literacy + Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy



Critical Information Literacy

Schools need to work with students and their “evolving selves,” “information and literacy are always in flux, always contextual, always in process, always evolving.” (Elmborg, 2012, p. 92; Jacobs, 2008, p. 260)

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy

Incorporates features of youth culture; “cultural fluidity,” “culturally sustaining pedagogy encompasses the present and the future” (Paris, 2012, p. 95).



Thoughts and Potential Solutions from the LIS Classroom

Cooke, N. A. (2018). Creating mirrors and doors in the curriculum: Diversifying and Re-Envisioning the MLIS. In L. C. Sarin, J. Percell, P. T. Jaeger, and J. C. Bertot (Eds.), *Re-Envisioning the MLIS: Perspectives on the Future of Library and Information Science Education* (Advances in Librarianship Series) (pp. 27-48). Emerald Group Publishing.

Educators should be well informed and celebratory of other cultures, be compassionate and concerned, and be critically self-reflective. Culturally responsive practitioners should be engaging with students, addressing race and other difficult issues in the classroom, and conscious of their students' potential and prospects for the future. (pp. 32-33).

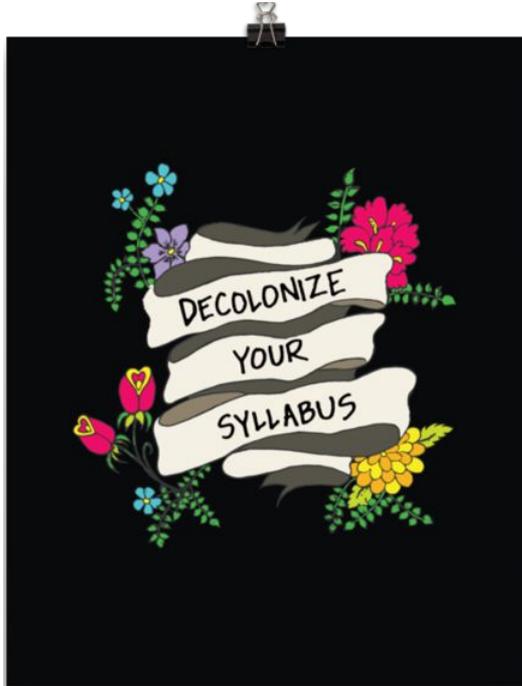
Content Reboot

How can we talk about CSP in the LIS graduate classroom, and do it in such a way that learners can then take these lessons into ***their own*** classrooms?

In an effort to reflect on my own pedagogy, I decided to tell more stories, provide more context, and work harder to involve students in their own learning process. I talk a lot more about:

- Stereotype threat
- Feminist pedagogy
- Ethics of Care
- Microaggressions
- Privilege and marginalization
- Empathy

(Implicitly) Incorporating CSP Into Syllabi & Instruction

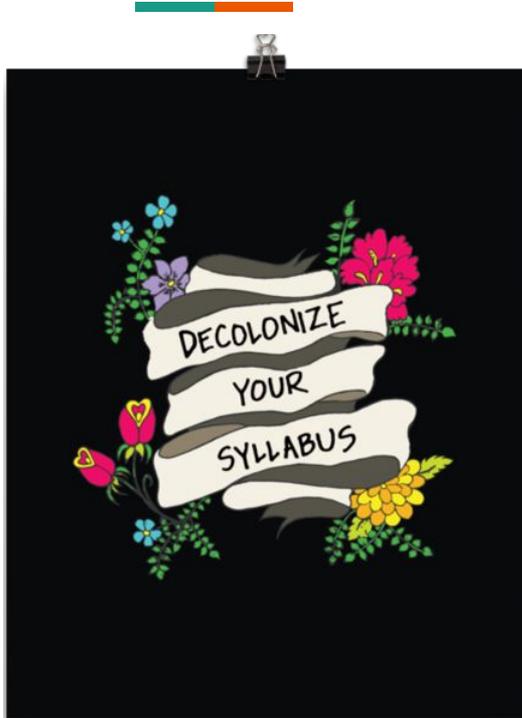


<https://yvettedechevez.com/>

- Communicate the authors' backgrounds without ever actually discussing them, or why authors from these backgrounds were chosen.
- Using full names will likely convey the author's gender and possibly their racial background.
- Include author photos on your lecture slides or the reading list.
- Link to authors' institutional profile pages on the electronic version of your syllabus and handouts.

<https://blog.apaonline.org/2016/09/01/the-teaching-workshop-diversifying-the-syllabus/>

(Explicitly) Incorporating CSP Into Syllabi & Instruction



<https://yvettedechevez.com/>

- Spending some time discussing the field's diversity problems and drawing the students' attention to the composition of the syllabus/lesson plan.
 - Challenges are:
 - Having the discussion time to spend
 - Feeling competent enough to discuss the topic(s)

Diversity is not only including non-stereotypical authors, but also ensuring that the chosen texts are not all on topics stereotypically associated with a particular group.

<https://blog.apaonline.org/2016/09/01/the-teaching-workshop-diversifying-the-syllabus/>

CSP In Action: IS 537, Documenting your Critical Journey

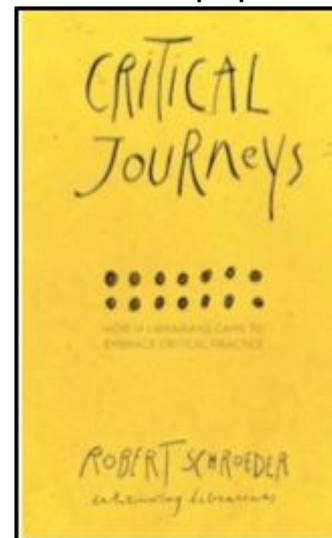
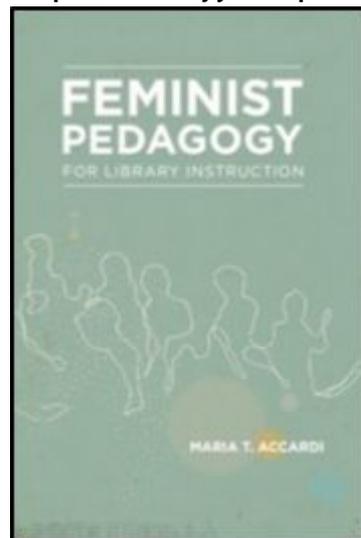
The Tool: *StoryCorps*

<https://storycorps.me>



Inspiration: *Library Juice Press*

<http://libraryjuicepress.com/index.php>





Working with Instructors

A faculty workshop held on
April 29, 2018 at the
School of Information
Sciences

[https://publish.illinois.edu/
ischoolincolor/indaba/](https://publish.illinois.edu/ischoolincolor/indaba/)

Session 2: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in Action – A Panel Discussion

[Dr. Tonia Sutherland](#), Assistant Professor, College of Communication and Information Sciences at the University of Alabama

[Dr. Malaika McKee-Culpepper](#), Visiting Assistant Professor, African-American Studies at the University of Illinois

[Kellee E. Warren](#), Instructor & Special Collections Librarian, Daley Library, University of Illinois at Chicago

Moderator: [Nicole A. Cooke](#), iSchool

[Watch](#) the recording of this session

11:30 am-12:30 pm – Lunch

12:30-2 pm

Session 3: Workshop – Working session with syllabi and brainstorming applications of culturally responsive pedagogy in our classrooms

Facilitated by [Sandra L. Osorio](#) and [Nicole A. Cooke](#)

(This session was not recorded)

Challenges

- Student and Teacher Resistance...Both think “Why do I have to learn about others?” “You are not qualified to teach this.” “It’s not my fault.”
- Many students and instructors are ‘OK’ with the way things are
- We need more studies and assessment that include Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy in practice
- Few studies/reports on practice in higher education, but there are some and Inclusion of disabled students is limited (1 article found.)

Questions and Discussion

Thank you for your time today!