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An Investigation of Anti-Black Racism LibGuides at ARL Member Institutions

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Abstract

This study sought to analyze anti-Black racism LibGuides created by ARL member institutions to determine strengths and weaknesses of the guides based on LibGuides best practices. Institutional and LibGuide author demographic information were also gathered to determine correlations or trends, if any. Rubric evaluation of LibGuides found that guides were strongest in areas related to guide design, materials included on the guides, and links to resources. Guides were weakest in areas related to the framing of social justice and pedagogy. Results from this study have the potential to inform the structure and revision of social justice LibGuides at a time when librarianship is grappling with issues of neutrality, racism, and becoming more anti-racist.

Keywords: social justice, anti-black racism, LibGuides, assessment

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An Investigation of Anti-Black Racism LibGuides at ARL Member Institutions

From 2012 to 2021 there have been many cases of Black bodies and death paraded in the media. A constant barrage of 24-hour media loops of police brutality have been immortalized then shared across various social media platforms (Lewis, 2020). The mockery, gaslighting, and then miscarriages of justice in courts of law regarding these deaths became a powder keg that ignited amidst the stress of the COVID-19 shutdowns, finally reaching its zenith in the Minneapolis riots on May 26th, 2020. Black Lives Matter (BLM) protestors organized at the national level, creating a unified resistance that had not been seen in America since the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s (WBUR, 2020). Access to information and its role in social justice emerged as a key thread following the national and global BLM protest movement.

In the wake of BLM, there have been discussions and changes implemented across various areas of librarianship. These are in sectors dealing with metadata (Berdini, 2019), the application of GIS software and technologies (Babinski, 2020; Esri, n.d.), the ethics of big data collection and analysis (Hawn Nelson et al., 2020), and the focus on open access and publishing in scholarly communications (Batterbury, 2020; Mudditt, 2020; Peters, 2021) to give a few specific examples. In addition to these areas, librarians and archivists have been discussing what to include and exclude in digital and physical archives from this moment of living American history (Archives for Black Lives, n.d.; Gorman, 2007). At the national level, the Society of American Archivists (SAA), the American Librarian Association (ALA), the American Association of Law Libraries (AALL), and the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) are engaged in widespread reflection around their own internal praxis related to DEI, antiracism, and engagement with social justice (e.g., Association of College and Research Libraries, 2021; American Library Association, 2020; Huderson-Poydras & Wheeler, 2020; Vagts, 2021).

Immediately following the death of George Floyd in 2020 and the subsequent breakout of national protests, the authors had a realization that their own institution had remained largely silent before delivering a brief solidarity statement with BLM more than a week later. Not until that moment did the authors realize their institution did not have a social justice, DEI, or an anti-racist guide of any sort to assist patrons. Many faculty and students

at the authors' institution are directly impacted by state violence and were also participating in the protest movements held locally in response to George Floyd's death. In response to this gap, and out of a need to do more than provide just a solidarity statement, the authors constructed a social justice LibGuide which focused on resources that could be used to promote anti-racist strategies in the classroom as well as act as a central pulse point for research on the pervasiveness of anti-Black sentiment across several major areas in society. As part of the authors' LibGuide creation process, they did an informal assessment of other DEI-focused LibGuides and realized that, holistically, LibGuides related to social justice/DEI topics were lacking in several areas.

The informal assessment led to the current research project involving a formal evaluation of LibGuides on this topic. What is the current landscape of LibGuides focusing on anti-Black racism? What can libraries do to create meaningful LibGuides on social justice, DEI, and anti-racism? Following a literature review unpacking the idea of information neutrality through the lens of libraries and librarianship, the authors evaluate LibGuides and, finally, present a framework and set of best practices to help address the problems they observed. The authors highlight trends and themes in social justice LibGuides at Association of Research Libraries (ARL) member institutions by evaluating them with a rubric and comparing institutional and guide author demographics. Notably, the study found that many of the libraries' social justice LibGuides seemed uncomfortable framing issues related to DEI, social justice, and anti-racism. Information in guides is often presented in a passive, neutral manner, for example, omitting solidarity statements with BLM tenants. This "uncomfortableness" manifests in how LibGuides dedicated to this topic are presented and what context or purpose is provided.

Literature Review

Information Has Never Been Neutral

Since the advent of ethnic and gender/sexuality studies in the late 1960s/early 1970s, the role of libraries in targeted efforts to support the cultural assimilation of immigrants has been highlighted (Honma, 2005). Additionally, the methods used by library systems for ordering and enabling access to information has also been used to suppress topics considered "controversial" (e.g., LGBTQIA Studies, non-Christian religions, African American Studies, etc.) via the use of generic or outdated subject headings and classifications, directly affecting the discoverability of these resources in both digital and physical collections (Adler, 2012; Howard & Knowlton, 2018). Yet many librarians cling to

the concept of neutrality as being of foremost importance for maintaining unfettered access to information. One factor attributed to the disciplinary stubbornness is that “LIS professionals value neutrality because they value such things as equality, justice, and service. LIS is the discipline that seeks to design systems and services that link people to information” (Mathiesen, 2015, p. 204). The same stance on neutrality is possible because “the field of LIS has inherited two problematic paradigms in the study of race: unacknowledged whiteness and celebratory multiculturalism, both of which elide critical discourse on race and racial inequality” (Honma, 2005, p. 15). These two factors result in a focus on “representational” inclusivity that remains disconnected from the interrogation of critical information needs impacting marginalized communities dealing with national violence and the deliberate intent to cause physical harm.

Social or distributive justice, on the other hand, is defined as the equitable access to goods and services, equality under the law, as well as the preservation of human rights (“Distributive justice,” 2021). BLM arose in direct response to the violence done to African Americans and their communities and is part of a longer tradition of grassroots movements for social justice. As Mehra (2021) reflected of the moment, “LIS [as a field] largely continued its limited political confrontation and inaction by issuing only declarative ‘feel good’ statements against the mistreatment” (p. 141). The political avoidance of many libraries also trickled into the arena of information access. Most libraries avoided organizing and making accessible resources that could potentially be seen as supporting the BLM movement, which in the then-hostile political climate was framed as an extremist rather than human rights group (Bump, 2020). Instead, many libraries turned their focus towards performative acts, which, “in LIS [are] motivated by a political will to influence perceptions and develop trust without acknowledging that a majority of its constituents stayed neutral as passive bystanders to racism in historical and modern practice” (Mehra, 2021, p. 139). As a wave of Black deaths from police brutality and other incidents of racial violence dominated news coverage in popular media from 2012 to 2020, most libraries were slow to abandon a position of neutrality as it related to the collecting and accessibility of social justice resources.

Information Access is Social Justice

Informational and social justice have come together more readily within the world of archiving, as the concept of *archival justice* (Wallace et al., 2020). Within this concept emerges a clear professional understanding of the connection between the preservation of

the historical records within an archive and procedural justice as well as the facilitated access to these historical records. A corollary concept within the world of LIS is that of *informational justice*. Kay Mathiesen (2015) proposed “that access to information should also be included among the primary goods. Information is an essential all-purpose resource, much like income (van den Hoven & Rooksby, 2008)” (p. 210). Indeed, access to information is of critical need as “informational injustice produces and reinforces other forms of social injustice, while information justice undermines systems of social injustice” (Mathiesen, 2015, p. 204). Within this dynamic of institutional knowledge making, “academic librarians are perhaps uniquely equipped and empowered to define and redefine systems of knowledge that convey 'truths' about what we know about the world and how that knowledge is organized and evaluated” (Morales et al., 2014, p. 445). The immediacy of a need for informational justice has been demonstrated by the informational artifacts produced in lieu of active library support for the ongoing BLM social justice movement.

African American communities across the United States demanded remediation under procedural law immediately followed by a request for information pertaining to similar historical events, as well as aggregated data metrics, that could support the call for outside legal investigation into state-level policing systems. When the call went out for information, it is notable that librarians were not the ones responding. Rather, the call and response were generated by individuals in affiliated African American studies and history departments across the United States. For example, following the death of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, assistant professor of history, Dr. Marcia Chatelain, created the #FergusonSyllabus (Georgetown College, 2014). This led to one of the first crowdsourced reading guides, which garnered attention from the media and the public (e.g., Fernando, 2021; Hsu, 2020; Schuman, 2014). This pattern of first the cry for social justice followed by an outcry for information to contextualize surrounding events was repeated a year later when nine African American churchgoers were killed amidst their worship service. African American studies professor, Chad Williams, trended #CharlestonSyllabus in response to the Charleston Church Massacre, crowdsourcing resources related to the history of racial violence within South Carolina, which resulted in a collection of research and readings that was subsequently published as a classroom reader in 2016.

Social Justice LibGuides Emerge

Since 2007, LibGuides have become widely adopted information dissemination tools for public and academic libraries (Springshare, n.d.). Their ubiquity can be attributed to factors including their uniform look which adds to website consistency, ease of editing without the need for IT support, and affordability (Neuhaus et al., 2021). LibGuides serve as easy access points to library resources for patrons and can be customized for a variety of purposes, such as for individual course instruction, subject- or topic-specific development, or highlighting specific collections (Emanuel, 2013). More subtly, LibGuides also play a key role in the transmission of institutional values and culture to the public. They can also influence design, which does have drawbacks (see Hicks, 2015). LibGuides evolved out of the pathfinder and research guide models of contextualizing information on a set topic or subject for further study (see Vileno, 2007, for a history of the pathfinder). However, it was not until after the #FergusonSyllabus that both Michigan State University and the University of Arizona Libraries were among the first to use LibGuides to respond to the informational justice aspects of the BLM movement. Pagowsky and Wallace (2015) explained that “[a]t the UA Libraries, critical pedagogy—the incorporation of social justice and critical theory into instructional praxis—informs our instruction librarians’ practice and guiding philosophy” (p. 197). Besides the need for internal reflection on their instructional praxis an additional point that needed to be raised was that “positioning biased perspectives about people of color as value-free, authoritative, and anything but a source that requires further investigation is detrimental. Trying to remain ‘neutral,’ by showing all perspectives have value—even those that violently disregard Black existence—is harmful to our community and does not work to dismantle racism” (Pagowsky & Wallace, 2015, p. 198). The University of Arizona’s (2014) “Ferguson Research Guide” LibGuide became a prominent and widely copied model of how libraries can structure resources related to social justice movements (for example, Georgia Southern University, Northfield Mount Hermon, and Wellesley). The creation of the University of Arizona’s LibGuide was possible *only* after internal reflection done within the context of their academic library. Now, across many academic libraries there are a plethora of social justice guides, but there has been little to no research evaluating these LibGuides.

Methods

To fill this gap, the initial goal of this study was to review research guides, usually LibGuides, with a focus on anti-Black racism and social justice in academic institutions in the United States. However, as of May 2021, the LibGuides Community (<https://community.libguides.com>) listed 1,943 academic libraries in the United States. Initial evaluation indicated that many libraries have created social justice guides. In the interest of time and for a manageable sample of guides, the authors decided to narrow the scope to the 124 members of the Association of Research Libraries. Five institutions (Center for Research Libraries, Library of Congress, National Agricultural Library, National Archives of Records Administration, and National Library of Medicine) were excluded because they are a library consortium or federal government library.

For the guides, the authors used the following inclusion and exclusion criteria. Guides were included for review that were: general subject or topic guides; focused entirely or at least in part on anti-Black racism; and whose primary purpose was as an outward facing educational tool to inform. Guides were excluded if they met any of the following criteria: focused exclusively on African American history (e.g., Black History Month); focused on general diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) issues; course guides or guides that were designed specifically for students to find resources to do research on a topic; guides specifically for programs (e.g., Master's in a discipline); guides linked to specific events (e.g., a book reading group, a public presentation); guides related to a narrow aspect of the issue (e.g., COVID, health care, racism in architecture).

Searches were done through the ARL list of libraries as well as the LibGuides Community between May 17 and June 3, 2021. Using the LibGuide search page of each library, the following terms were searched to determine if a guide existed: Black lives; racism; racist; and social justice. Of the 119 libraries, 37 had no guides matching the search criteria, 19 had guides that were excluded due to the exclusion criteria, and one did not have any publicly available guides. Five institutions had two guides each that met the inclusion criteria and search terms. In total 66 guides from 61 libraries were evaluated.

Guides were evaluated using a rubric developed in part using the social justice bullet points from Hodge (2020) as the rubric criteria (see Table 1). Hodge's content was used as it provided nicely framed bullet points sufficiently covering the topic on which to build rubric criteria. Regarding the rubric criteria, framing of social justice was important for the type of guide this study was evaluating, anti-Black racism. Although LibGuides do not always have

pedagogical goals, the authors chose to include it as a criterion for educational and social justice reasons. Regarding education, the authors feel that all outward facing objects academic libraries create should at least be mindful of pedagogical goals. The literature supports LibGuides as learning objects (Hicks, 2015) and has found that LibGuides designed pedagogically, rather than as strict pathfinders with lists of links without explanation, lead to learning and self-efficacy (Lee & Lowe, 2018; Sinkinson et al., 2012; Stone et al., 2018). Regarding social justice, there is a learning aspect to social justice and, to do it effectively for growth, there must be self-reflection which connects to education and metacognition (Adams, 2016; Adams & Zuniga, 2016; Desautel, 2009). Additionally, material suggestions, links, and common design practices build on LibGuides best practices (Bergstrom-Lynch, 2019; Goodsett, 2020).

Table 1: Rubric for Evaluating Anti-Black Racism LibGuides

Content Criteria	Defining Elements
Framing of Social Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solidarity statement (e.g., BLM tenants) • Definition of social justice or anti-racism • Institutional or library diversity statement that they connect to in the framing of the LibGuide
Pedagogy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline of pedagogical goals related to the LibGuide • Inclusion of either antiracist or social justice theory • Interdisciplinarity of social justice is emphasized
Material Suggestions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical format and e-materials listed are available at institution • Off-site resources, those not in the collection holdings, should be openly accessible • Option for requesting culturally relevant materials via purchase request form or a message to contact the subject specialists
Resource Linkages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Links to cultural institutions/local or national organizational groups • Cross links to other relevant guides at the library • Identification of common resources for social justice/anti-Blackness
Common Design Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LibGuide structuring best practices (i.e., multimedia incorporation, technological, theoretical, or pedagogical considerations) • Resources/links provide a rationale, explanation, or context for why a resource is listed • Overall movement or connection between subtopics is established via header titles, section names, etc.

Each content criterion had three defining elements, and each guide was scored on a scale of 0 to 3 based on the presence of the defining elements. For example, if a guide had all three defining elements of a content criterion, it received the full 3 points; if a guide had no defining elements, it received 0. The authors normed the rubric by each scoring the same two guides and coming to agreement on points of difference. The norming session led to

slight changes to the wording of defining elements in “Resources Linkages” and “Common Design Practices.” After norming, the 66 guides were divided equally among the three authors. Each guide was evaluated by one author.

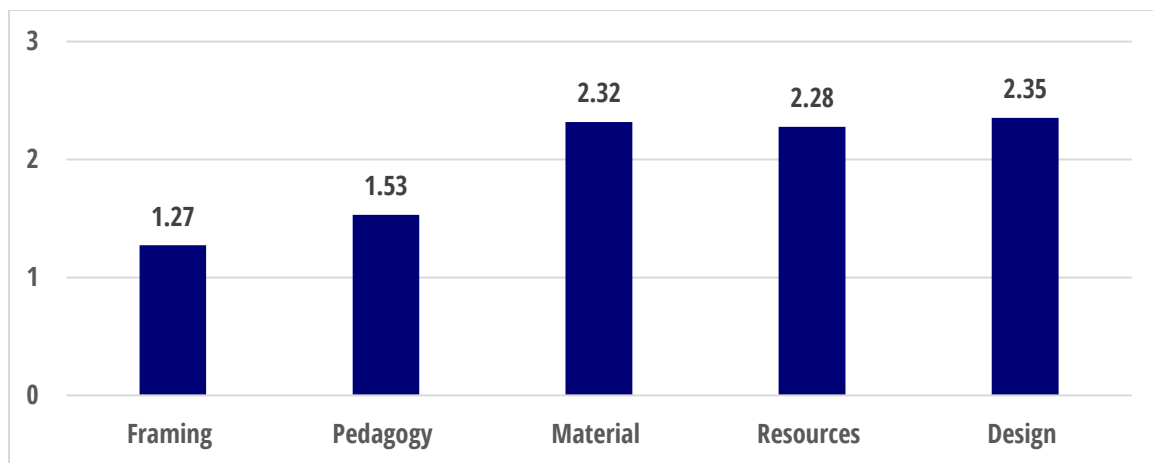
The authors also compiled demographic information on guides as well as the institutions. For institutions, the percentage of white and Black students was recorded using the Look Up an Institution tool from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) data on Fall 2019 enrollment (National Center for Education Statistics, n.d.). Each guide was reviewed to determine, if possible, the race and gender of the guide owner(s) as well as their role, subject liaisons, or job title. The authors recognize that race and gender are not always clearly identifiable from a photo on a LibGuide and that guide authors may not identify with the race or gender with which they were coded.

Results

Rubric Scores

LibGuide rubric scores were highest for design ($M = 2.35$ out of 3, $SD = 0.76$), material ($M = 2.32$, $SD = 0.77$), and resources ($M = 2.28$, $SD = 0.93$). Guides scored significantly lower in pedagogy ($M = 1.53$, $SD = 1.06$) and framing ($M = 1.27$, $SD = 1.14$) (see Figure 1). These guides often missed the “outline of pedagogical goals related to the LibGuide,” and the “interdisciplinarity of social justice is emphasized” elements from the pedagogy criterion and the “solidarity statement (e.g., BLM tenants)” and the “definition of social justice or anti-racism” from the social justice framing criterion.

Figure 1: Mean LibGuide Rubric Scores



A single factor ANOVA was performed on the rubric scores ($F(4, 323) = 19.19$; $d = 0.19$) and was statistically significant at $p < 0.005$ (see Table 2). Cohen's d is above 0.1 indicating a large effect size.

Table 2: Rubric ANOVA Analysis

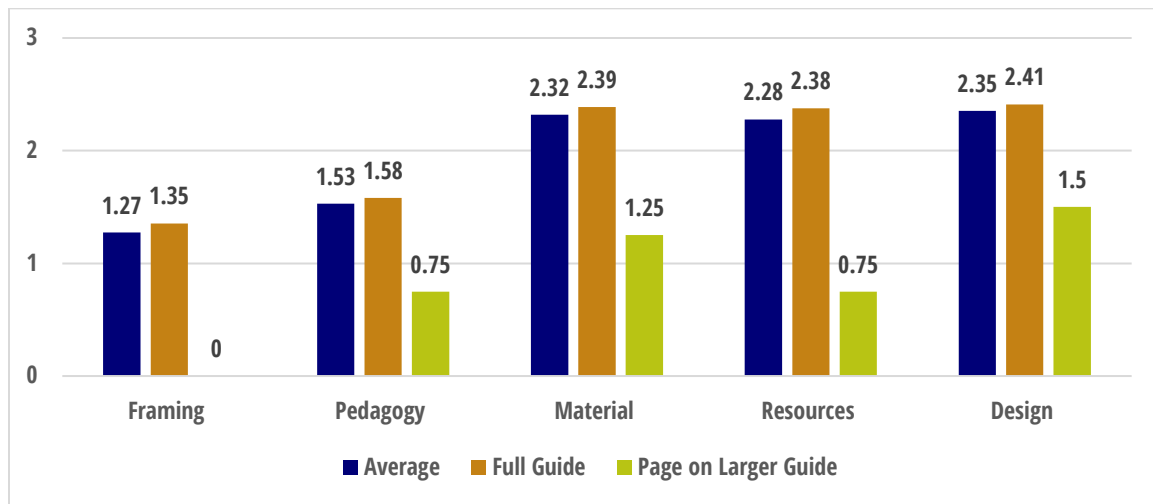
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	68.39	4	17.1	19.19	<0.0001	2.3996
Within Groups	287.7	323	0.891			
Total	356.1	327				

Analyzing the rubric criteria using two-tailed equal variance t -tests found statistically significant differences ($p < 0.005$) for framing and material, framing and resources, framing and design, pedagogy and material, pedagogy and resources, and pedagogy and design. Conversely, these differences were not statistically significant at $p > 0.05$: framing and pedagogy, material and resources, material and design, and resources and design. The statistically significant t -tests indicate that there was a greater difference between those rubric criteria that is likely not due to chance. In other words, framing and pedagogy are consistently underdeveloped aspects of LibGuides in contrast to the better developed material, design, and resources.

Some anti-Black racism guides ($n=4$) were a single page on a larger guide with a broader scope beyond anti-Black racism. Those pages tended to score lower on the rubric. When those pages were excluded from the analysis, the average score goes up slightly for all categories (see Figure 2): design ($M = 2.41$, $SD = 0.74$), material ($M = 2.39$, $SD = 0.66$), resources ($M = 2.38$, $SD = 0.84$), pedagogy ($M = 1.58$, $SD = 1.05$), and framing ($M = 1.35$, $SD = 1.13$). A single factor ANOVA was performed on the rubric scores ($F(4, 303) = 19.86$; $d = 0.21$) and was statistically significant at $p < 0.005$ (see Table 3). Cohen's d is above 0.1 indicating a large effect size. Using two-tailed equal variance t -tests, the differences between full guides and a page on larger guides were statistically significant at $p < 0.005$ for the framing, material, resources, and design rubric criteria. The difference was not statistically significant for pedagogy with $p > 0.05$.

Table 3: Rubric ANOVA Analysis Full Guides Versus Page on Larger Guides

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Between Groups	64.8	4	16.20	19.86	<0.0001	2.4014
Within Groups	247.1	303	0.82			
Total	311.9	307				

Figure 2: Mean Rubric Scores for Full Guides Versus Page on Larger Guides

Demographics

Of the 61 libraries with guides, 72% (n=44) were at public institutions and 28% (n=17) were at private institutions. This is similar to the 58 libraries without guides or guides that were out of scope (74%, n=43 public, 22%, n=13 private, n=2 were public libraries).

Of libraries with guides, at their institutions, the mean percentage of white versus Black students was 51% to 6%. Standard deviation between the percentages of white students was 14.93 while standard deviation between the percentages of Black students was 4.42. For libraries without guides or guides that were out of scope, the mean percentage of white versus Black students was similar to those with guides, 50% to 7%. However, the standard deviation was larger for both (white students SD = 18.69, Black students SD = 10.41).

According to the July 1, 2019, U.S. Census population estimates, white people are 76.3% of the U.S. population versus 13.4% for Black people. ARL libraries with or without relevant LibGuides have a lower percentage of both white and Black students than the U.S. population.

When examining guide authorship and their subject area, white women were authors 59% (n=26) of the time, followed by Black women (14%, n=6), and women of other ethnicities such as Asian or Latinx (11%, n=5). Black men and white men each created 7% (n=3) of guides, respectively. Men of other ethnicities created 2% (n=1) of guides. Authorship was unable to be determined in 56% (n=37) of guides. Because multiple authors can contribute to a guide, the total number of authors examined (n=44) does not equal the number of guides. For subject, position, or title affiliation of guide authors, 21% (n=8) had some

connection to African American studies, 8% (n=3) to DEI, and 72% (n=28) were not related to either of those.

Discussion

Libraries continue to present information as objectively and neutrally as possible in their LibGuides as seen in the absence of solidarity statements and definitions of social justice or anti-racism in many guides. The lack of a definition could be because the authors believe that their audience understands the terms, that the terms should be universally known, or that the users should determine their own definitions based on the suggested materials on the LibGuide. Whatever the reason, providing definitions and avoiding jargon are LibGuides best practices (Bergstrom-Lynch, 2019; Goodsett, 2020). Regarding the solidarity statement, while Black Lives Matter should be an apolitical statement, a coordinated misinformation campaign has negatively politicized the movement and therefore it is not neutral (Corley, 2021; Samuels, 2021). Although institutions provided links to readings and resources, many seemed to maintain neutrality by not providing a statement in support of BLM. As addressed in the literature review, neutrality is a stance that should be forcefully rejected by libraries (Hodge & Williams, 2021).

The bulk of social justice LibGuides created by ARL institutions focus on providing access to the information, devoid of the social justice context driving the creation of the guides as seen in the lack of pedagogical goals and the absence of emphasis on the interdisciplinarity of social justice. The lapses in the guides in the area of pedagogy are not necessarily surprising since the body of literature on LibGuides best practices often emphasizes usability studies (e.g., Alverson et al., 2015; Conerton & Goldenstein, 2017; Courtois et al., 2005; Ouellette, 2011; Sonstebly & DeJonghe, 2013). As Bergstrom-Lynch (2019) noted “best practices are user-centered but not necessarily learner-centered” (p. 205). Bergstrom-Lynch (2019) presented a set of pedagogical best practices which includes establishing clear learning outcomes and clearly stating the purpose of the guide. These best practices align with outlining pedagogical goals in the rubric and can help users understand the purpose of the guide as well as provide structure and context for guide development. Emphasizing the interdisciplinarity of social justice is aligned with scaffolding and connecting content to address learning objectives as well as reducing cognitive load (Bergstrom-Lynch, 2019). Although anti-Black racism LibGuides for an external audience are not traditional guides

targeted exclusively towards an internal audience of faculty, staff, and students, they are still LibGuides and, as noted earlier, should follow pedagogical best practices when possible.

Aligning with much of the literature on LibGuides best practices, guides scored highest in the rubric areas of “Material Suggestions,” “Resource Linkages,” and “Common Design Practices.” Perhaps due to the nature of the topic, overall, guides were strong in labeling and inclusion of multimedia content, both best practices (Goodsett, 2020). Guides that scored lower in these rubric areas were missing the option to request materials, cross links to other relevant guides, and/or did not follow best practices. Additionally, 55% of guides had undetermined authorship, which means they did not follow the best practice of providing contact information (Goodsett, 2020) and did not have the option for requesting materials through a librarian. For common design practices, three issues were observed more often than others: not providing information or descriptions of resources explaining what they were about or why they were chosen for inclusion on the guide; numerous pages; and long lists of resources. The literature on guide best practices states content should be labeled, pages should be minimal, and lists of resources should be shorter to reduce cognitive load (Goodsett, 2020). However, with a topic like anti-Black racism, the tendency to include all relevant resources is perhaps understandable.

The racial disparity in guide owners is an important (though not unexpected) finding in the demographic analysis. According to 2017 data, the library profession is 83.5% female, 16.5% male, 81.3% white, and 6.38% Black (Data USA, n.d.). Of librarians at ARL libraries, an Ithaka S+R survey found the demographics to be 61% female, 38% male, 71% white, 8% Black or African American (Schonfeld & Sweeney, 2017). However, in this study, Black women made up 14% of guide owners and Black men 7%. This would indicate that Black librarians are contributing disproportionately to social justice and anti-Black racism guides. The discrepancy calls attention to emotional labor and its impact on BIPOC people, especially BIPOC women, an issue which has been documented in librarianship (Chou & Pho, 2018) and higher education in general (Buckingham, 2018; Kelly et al., 2021; Matthew, 2016; Social Sciences Feminist Network Research Interest Group, 2017).

Limitations & Future Research

As with any research, there are limitations to this study. Due to workload constraints and the large number of academic institutions with LibGuides and social justice LibGuides, the sample was narrowed to ARL institutions. This limits the sample to a very specific type of library, affiliated with a large research institution and usually with a large budget. The

results of this study may have been different if guides from a wider variety of libraries had been evaluated. The authors also were not able to determine the budget a library might have for purchasing anti-Black racism resources. The lack of resources and an option for requesting materials might have been a result of lack of funding, rather than deliberate omissions. The final limitation is basing the racial and gender identification of guide owners on their LibGuides photo. People may identify as a different race and/or gender than what the authors perceived from the photos, leading to incorrect categorization.

Because it was outside the scope of the present study, the authors did not compare anti-Black racism or social justice guides to typical guides. The study also did not compare externally facing guides to those intended for an internal audience such as students. These two comparisons would be interesting additions to the literature as would comparisons of different types of social justice guides beyond anti-Black racism. Additionally, examinations of guides from a wider range of institutions would add more depth to this discussion.

Conclusion

This study begins to quantify the strengths and weaknesses of social justice LibGuides, specifically those focused on anti-Black racism. Evaluated against a rubric, guides were strongest in the areas of material suggestions, resource linkages, and common design practices. Guides were weakest in framing of social justice and pedagogy. Many guides struck a neutral tone which weakened their support of BLM tenants. Libraries need to recognize that, in this context, neutrality is unsustainable and unhelpful to BIPOC colleagues.

For librarians considering creating social justice LibGuides or revising existing guides, the rubric can hopefully provide a succinct overview of areas to focus on in addition to wider best practices (e.g., Bergstrom-Lynch, 2019; Goodsett, 2020). The authors also encourage white colleagues to consider the emotional labor of their BIPOC colleagues when deciding who will author DEI guides.

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