



Now what? Lessons Learned from a Diversity Audit

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abstract: Diversity audits are frequently used as an assessment method to measure the diversity of a library collection. Yet, there is not frequent research on the aftermath of diversity audits, especially in the context of comparing data from several audits to assess the difference in the makeup of a library collection. In this article, the author discusses the changes a small academic library made in response to a diversity audit conducted several years before, as well as the results of a new, smaller audit to confirm that the initial audit had an impact. This article shares the results of the new audit and reflects on the lessons learned during the process.

Introduction

Libraries are constantly evolving. They offer an abundance of different programs, services, and spaces to accommodate various needs. Many libraries adapt their services to respond to their users' needs and concerns. In recent years, the issue of collections and inclusivity (or lack thereof) has received more attention. To establish a clearer understanding of a library's collection, more academic libraries are conducting diversity audits, which helps them assess how representative a collection is based on identities of authors, characters, publishers, or subject matter. While it is important for institutions to conduct diversity audits and to review collection development policies and processes, it is equally important to know whether changes made because of audits impact the makeup of library collections.

In the spring of 2021, librarians at Tredway Library at Augustana College conducted an audit of the library's print collection of books published between 2000-2020.¹ The purpose of this audit was to see if there were gaps in author representation, focusing specifically on the identities of race and ethnicity, gender, and sexuality. The results of the audit showed a collection of predominantly white authors, with a higher percentage of male authors (determined by pronouns used by the author); the data for sexual orientation was largely unknown. This information showed the library staff at Augustana College



that the collection was not as diverse as they had thought, and that the library needed to make changes to the acquisition process in order to build a more diverse collection.

After the library implemented a new acquisition process and changed the language in the Tredway Library strategic plan, the author of this article and one of the Augustana College librarians conducted a follow-up diversity audit, reviewing new materials purchased after the first diversity audit. They wanted to determine whether there was any

improvement in creating a more diverse collection.

In this article, the author shares the results of the follow-up diversity audit, discusses its impact and what it means for the future, and reflects on the lessons learned from both diversity audits.

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Literature Review

In recent years, diversity audits have expanded outside of public and school libraries and are now frequently conducted at academic libraries. Yet what librarians have done with the information they learned from their audits is not yet frequently discussed. Diversity audits are time- and labor-

intensive, but they factor into multiple facets of librarianship and provide a robust and detailed understanding of library collections at different institutions. This section of the article reviews diversity audit examples, but also addresses the gap in literature about steps taken after diversity audits are complete. It also highlights how diversity audits can tie into a student's sense of belonging.

Library Diversity Audits

Viewing library collections through a diversity, equity, and inclusion [DEI] lens has received more attention in recent years, and libraries have conducted diversity audits to understand and evaluate the gaps in their collections. Although diversity audits were originally more common in public and school libraries, some academic libraries understood the importance of this work before others. Matthew P. Ciszek and Courtney L. Young wrote about various methods for conducting a diversity audit in large academic libraries in 2010, but there is very little in the literature before this time frame that focused specifically on diversity audits rather than diversity in other areas, such as in hiring practices.² The year 2020 marked a significant increase in diversity audit literature, particularly in academic libraries.

Although the goal of diversity audits is to gain a better understanding of the content of a library collection, each library has different ways to approach that information. There are a variety of methods for auditing the diversity of a collection, as well as choosing how libraries define diversity in the context of their audits. Examples of different methodologies include auditing the identities of authors, using diversity award lists, assessing the identities of characters in a book, focusing on specific collection areas such as LGBTQIA+ content, or comparing title lists to peer institutions' collections.³ The majority of libraries



conducting audits have discovered that there is a lack of diversity in their library collections, and that there needs to be more intentionality in the acquisition and weeding process in order to become more inclusive and representative of United States society. It is essential for collections to include diverse thoughts, topics, and authors, because they provide materials that share an identity or experience with the users. However, when there are gaps in different areas of the collection, library users may feel a sense of erasure, leading to a decrease in the sense of belonging among students who do not see themselves represented in the resources of their library.⁴

Diversity audits can help gauge whether students feel represented in their library collections, but the importance of representation is more often viewed through the lens of school libraries. One example is Kelsey Bogan’s work in her high school library, in which she audited many different aspects of the library collection, including author and character representation.⁵ Sarah Jorgenson and Rene Burress also audited the identities of the main characters from the top 100 checkouts of a high school library, focusing on gender, race, and sexual orientation.⁶ Both of these audits were conducted to better understand what type of representation was available to their students and whether students were able to see themselves in positive ways in the collection. Jorgenson and Burress highlighted the importance of diverse collections by stating that if a library collection does not have wide representation, then the library “does not allow for understanding and learning of other races, cultures, and abilities, nor does it allow for students of minority groups to see themselves represented in books.”⁷

Diversity Audit Follow-up Studies

While diversity audits of all library types are now more frequently covered in academic literature, there is a definite gap in research when it comes to evaluating the progress of diversity in library collections after librarians make changes as a direct result of diversity audits. However, there is some literature that looks beyond present audits and discusses changes in library practices to help address the inequities in their collections.

One such article details how the University of Colorado Boulder considered a diversity audit for their library collections, but chose not to conduct it since they already knew the collection would represent predominantly white voices; they also felt that the audit would not assist in learning how to develop a systematic anti-racist approach to their collection.⁸ Instead, the librarians there reviewed the literature on diversity audits and whiteness studies, and contextualized scholar Diana Lynn Gusa’s concept of White Institutional Presence (WIP) in collection management practices.⁹ As a result of this work, the librarians at the University of Colorado Boulder designed a workbook for librar-

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ies that serves as a guide “through the concepts of WIP and discusses how whiteness is embedded in several parts of the collection building process.”¹⁰ The workbook also includes reflection questions for collection selectors to consider as they make purchases to add to their library. The workbook will continue to be shared to generate conversation that “must lead to action and progress in building and maintaining anti-racist collections.”¹¹ The work of these librarians is thoughtful, reflective, and understanding of the danger of using a diversity audit as a sort of checklist that makes DEI work a one-time effort. Reflective work is critical to implementing anti-racist practices in collection development. Despite this, the lack of a diversity audit that provides information about the makeup of their library collection means there is not a way to determine whether the workbook, conversations, and reflection have made a difference in progress toward a more inclusive and diverse collection.

While the University of Colorado Boulder focused on developing a workbook and learning about collection management practices, Ze’ve Schneider and Karen Norman conducted an audit that focused on Indigenous language learning and reference material for the Library of Parliament in Canada.¹² The authors created an original bibliography that included information for both speakers and learners of Indigenous languages in Canada and compared this bibliography to their library’s holdings. This comparison showed a significant gap between the bibliography and local library holdings. Schneider and Norman requested that the library purchase missing materials from the bibliography, as well as develop a subject guide to highlight newly acquired materials, including online resources. The librarians designed their report to focus on “building, developing, managing, and promoting a responsive collection of Indigenous language learning and reference resources at the Library of Parliament.”¹³ This is an example of a library conducting an audit with the intent of producing meaningful and corrective changes as a direct result of their work.

In contrast to the previously discussed audits that focused on collections as a whole, Scott Stone focused on comparing the growth in the University of California Irvine’s acquisitions of works by diverse playwrights between two fiscal years (2011 and 2019).¹⁴ Stone discovered an increase in representation of playwrights of color and female playwrights between these years. While the results are encouraging, this audit is merely a comparison of two separate fiscal years and not a follow-up audit that compares data about a collection after changes were made. There are other examples of libraries that conduct diversity audits through a variety of methods, as well as discussion about future changes in use of publishers, reflection, and other acquisition processes, but there is not literature that focuses on follow-up diversity audits and implemented changes in library acquisitions practice.¹⁵

Why Diversity Audits Matter

One way that libraries connect with their communities is through their library collections and the resources available to their users. The American Library Association’s (ALA) statement on diverse collections says “[l]ibrary workers have an obligation to select, maintain, and support access to content on subjects by diverse authors and creators that meets—as closely as possible—the needs, interests, and abilities of all the people the library serves.”¹⁶ However, when the profession is predominantly white and, in the



case of academic libraries, may be part of a predominantly white institution (PWI), it is easy for a homogeneous collection to emerge. Myrna Morales, Em Claire Knowles, and Chris Bourg highlight the importance and impact of library collections by stating that “the collection development decisions made by academic libraries and librarians have profound impacts on who and what is represented in the scholarly and cultural record.”¹⁷

Diversity audits are one way to analyze the representation of a library’s collection. However, diversity audits are also important because collections can impact a student’s sense of belonging. Do students see themselves represented on the shelves of their libraries? Do they see themselves in research, or in recommended and required reading? Students see the collections that their libraries have to offer them and will connect with some materials over others, for many different reasons. The term “sense of belonging” was defined by Abraham Maslow in his work “A Theory of Human Motivation,” and it is categorized as the emotion humans feel when accepted and valued by a group of people (in the case of college students, accepted by their peers, institution, faculty, and so on).¹⁸ This impact contributes to an individual’s physical and mental well-being. Different studies show that students who experience a strong sense of belonging are more likely to complete their degree and have stronger grades and engagement with peers.¹⁹ Library collections can increase a student’s sense of belonging if they see authors from similar backgrounds and identities, which demonstrate that the library sees value in their voices. Robust representation in collections also shows that groups from specific identities are not monolithic and come from a variety of backgrounds, experiences, and beliefs.

Some diversity audits from school libraries also discuss the sense of belonging in library collections. Rebecca E. Haslam’s article about representation and belonging for students of the global majority relates to college students and their perception of their library collection.²⁰ Haslam focuses on positive representation in children books instead of stereotypes of different underrepresented backgrounds; however, Haslam also states that “Lack of representation, omission, and erasure are harmful, and for those who do not experience it, it can also be hard to notice.”²¹ Predominantly white institutions and professions need to work even harder to recognize and address the gaps that students are impacted by every day, and which can lead to a decrease in sense of belonging. Haslam highlights the lack of belonging that library collections can contribute to, saying “a lack of accurate, affirming, positive representation sends a different yet powerful message about the extent to which someone’s story is worth telling, or how much they are de/valued by society.”²²

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Paolo P. Gujilde echoes Halsam's claims in his discussion of how diversifying library collections increases a student's sense of belonging. He writes that library collections should be viewed "as 'living beings' with which our students, our patrons, interact and connect to satisfy the basic need for belongingness."²³ Gujilde provides suggestions for libraries to take when working on library collections, such as diversity statements, purchasing book award winners, using library programming to promote books, and more. While Gujilde discusses library environmental scans, he never specifically mentions diversity audits, yet audits are another way for academic libraries to contribute to a student's sense of belonging and connect with an increasingly diverse student body.

Gujilde highlights how academic libraries increase a sense of belonging through their collection, but that is just one way that academic libraries contribute to a student's experience of community and belongingness. Elizabeth Ramsey and Deana Brown argue that "Academic libraries that create inclusive atmospheres can help enhance a sense of belonging in their students," which can be done through connecting with campus resources, offering different types of support, and helping students not feel like a fraud in an academic setting.²⁴ Juliann Couture et al.'s article about first-generation students' use of academic libraries also proves how academic libraries contribute to that population's sense of belonging, particularly for students from marginalized racial identities or lower socio-economic statuses. Couture et al. state that "Students saw inclusivity of their identities as an essential part of a useful study space."²⁵ Similarly, Samuel Museus, Varaxy Yi, and Natasha Saelua discuss how culturally validating environments can make "students feel that their cultural knowledge, backgrounds, and identities are valued by their respective campuses."²⁶ Their research highlights how culturally engaging campus environments impact students' sense of belonging, especially within the context of cultural familiarity, culturally relevant knowledge, holistic support, and more. A library's collection is one place where students can see their voices and experiences valued and viewed as credible, not only as something that belongs on the shelves of their library, but also as resources used in their research.

The original diversity audit

This article compares two diversity audits conducted at the same institution and library. To prevent any potential confusion, throughout this article the author refers to the first diversity audit as the original diversity audit, or original audit. The smaller, subsequent diversity audit is referred to as the follow-up diversity audit, or follow-up audit.

In direct response to the data from the original diversity audit, Augustana College librarians made changes in multiple areas of work at Tredway Library. However, to provide a better understanding of these changes, and how they impacted the results of the follow-up audit, it is helpful to contextualize the original audit. The information provided here is a general summary of the original diversity audit, which the author published with co-author Lauryn Lehman.²⁷

Tredway Library, where the diversity audit was conducted in the spring of 2021, is located in the heart of Augustana College's campus, and is home to over 100,000 volumes. Tredway Library's vision for the library is to serve as "the living room of the campus," a place where students can feel welcome to socialize with friends, or study in



a group or independently.²⁸ The librarians conducted the original audit in a span of six months, and they focused on print, single-author books that were part of the permanent, circulating collection and were published since the year 2000. The parameters of the audit resulted in a total of 6,465 print books. The librarians assessed the collection in the context of author demographics instead of diverse topics because co-authors of the original audit study posited that “if the majority of a library’s materials are from authors with similar experiences and backgrounds, it excludes other equally valid experiences and perspectives.”²⁹

While there are many different identities, the original audit assessed three characteristics of the authors of the works: race and ethnicity, sexuality, and gender, which the librarians determined by pronouns the author uses. If possible, the librarians collected information for the audit from author self-identification and used social media accounts, personal websites, interviews, and other similar types of sources. If information could not be found in primary sources, they then searched for clues in secondary sources wherein the author of the materials could reasonably request revisions and edits, such as a faculty biography page. Although this required more time, the leaders of the original audit did not want to use methodologies such as lists for prize winners, or methods such as viewing photos of the authors. They found these approaches to be problematic where the process could easily become a checklist of DEI work without looking at the structural problems behind the issue, or a method where user bias would be prominent, and identities could unintentionally be erased.

Auditing author identity can be uncomfortable and is an imperfect process, but the librarians took steps to avoid accidentally misidentifying individuals. For example, sexuality was particularly difficult to assess as this identity facet is a spectrum and is not always easy to identify or define. To avoid making assumptions, librarians indicated if a person was in a opposite-sex or same-sex relationship. If an author identified as LG-BTQIA+, then the librarians indicated this in the sexuality section of the original audit. There were also instances in which the librarians could not locate enough information to establish the different identities of the author. In these cases, the librarians categorized the author’s identity as “unknown” to avoid any misidentification.

The results of the audit reflected a largely homogenous collection, with 71.4 percent of authors as white (non-Hispanic or Latinx), and 64.3 percent of authors using he/him pronouns.²⁶ Sexual orientation remained largely undetermined, but a large number of authors indicated a relationship with someone of the opposite sex (36.55 percent).³⁰ The results showed that librarians need to take more direct and intentional steps to create a more inclusive collection, in which students could see themselves reflected.

This is only a summary of the original audit, but it does present the foundation upon which the follow-up audit was conducted. For a more comprehensive and detailed exploration of the original diversity audit, consult María Evelia Emerson and Lauryn Grace Lehman’s article.³¹

Follow-up Audit Methodology

One of the reasons the leaders of the original diversity audit initiated the project at Tredway Library was to help increase a sense of belonging for students from marginalized



backgrounds via the library collection. A diversity audit allowed the librarians to have a better understanding of the makeup of the collection that Augustana College students interacted with and used as resources in their assignments. Upon seeing the data from the original diversity audit of 2021, Tredway Library made changes in their acquisition process and some of their other library policies to build a more diverse collection that provided better representation of the student body at Augustana College.

After Tredway Library implemented the new acquisition process, librarians collected data over a period of almost two years to determine whether the changes made a difference in the makeup of the newly added authors. Although this sample was much smaller than in the original audit, it provided informative data to the librarians at Tredway Library. The changes that Tredway Library made to its acquisition process, as well as other parts of librarianship (such as teaching, service, and more), are discussed in the following sections of this article, and the data collected from the time period of January 2021-August 2022 are included in the results section.

Workflow changes

After reviewing the results of the original diversity audit, it was clear that Tredway Library's acquisition process needed to change. Before the audit was complete, the library did not have a formal procedure in the acquisition process that considered the background of the authors when selecting materials. Since Augustana College is a small college and Tredway Library is a small library, requesting new materials was a simple process of emailing the technical services librarian, who placed the order through Amazon, another publisher website, or the American Library Association. Background information was not provided aside from the basics such as title, format, price of the material, and subject area. However, after the completion of the original diversity audit, the Tredway librarians created a new standardized purchasing form to make sure everyone was consistent in how they requested acquisition purchases and what information was provided. The new form also prompted those requesting materials to consider the background of the author.

Tredway librarians now complete the new acquisition process through a Google form and submit one form for each item requested. The language on this form replicates the categories used in the original diversity audit, but also includes an additional question that asks if the author self-identifies as transgender. The form requires the following information from the librarian submitting the request:

- Author
- Title
- Publication date
- Gender
- Sexuality
- Race/ethnicity
- Self-identified (Y/N)
- Self-identified as transgender (Y/N)
- Notes from the librarian (if needed)

Librarians follow the same protocol as during the original audit and find author information by seeking author self-identification from sources like social media accounts,



author websites, interviews with the authors, or other places where authors disclose parts of their identity. If they cannot find author self-identification, the librarians then turn to secondary sources where the author can reasonably request changes from the source if incorrect information is used. For each category of author identity, there is a drop-down menu with the different options collected during the original diversity audit. If librarians discover new information, such as pronouns not previously used before, it is added to the Google form. As stated earlier, one change from the original audit is the new category for transgender authors. Before, transgender was included in the sexuality section of the original audit. Even though transgender identity is not a sexuality, it was included in that category because it falls under the LGBTQIA+ umbrella. The new Google form changed that by adding a separate section that asks whether an author has self-identified as transgender, which places that identity outside of the sexuality section.

While the new form asks for more author information than the former, it only adds a few minutes of time for the librarian to fill it out. It also creates more intentionality when considering the identities of the authors when ordering materials. So that this work does not become another box to check, Tredway Library avoids quotas, like a fixed percentage or number of authors with a specific identity, to determine whether their collection is more inclusive. Still, if a group of materials selected for purchase are predominantly written by authors of similar backgrounds, it does indicate that the library should pursue other areas of material recommendations to provide more heterogeneous author representation in its collection. In addition to the Google form encouraging librarians to think more intentionally about author representation, the form also allows for data collection at the time of purchase. Tredway Library can easily import this information into a spreadsheet at the end of the semester to provide a thorough overview of the new purchases. This allows the library staff at Tredway Library to see whether there is progress in making the collection more diverse and representative each year or if there are areas of concern to consider, such as large gaps or exclusions of specific identities and perspectives.

Policy Changes

When enacting changes to strive toward inclusivity, consideration of how and why a problem originally developed is necessary. Tredway Library clearly needed to adjust its collection development policies, but the library staff also needed to be aware of the origins of the largely homogeneous collection. Some reasons behind a lack of diversity are due to problems that are not completely in a library's control, such as the lack of diversity in the publishing industry.³² Despite the lack of control over some factors like publishing, Tredway Library identified areas that could be easily changed to help the library become more inclusive in their collection as well as other aspects of librarianship.

Before the original diversity audit was conducted, the Tredway Library strategic plan lacked actionable steps toward creating a more diverse collection. Following the original audit, librarians reviewed the strategic plan language and made changes to become more action-oriented, not only in collection development but other areas such as teaching and service. During the original diversity audit, the library strategic plan contained one bullet point about intentionality, while the 2022 strategic plan includes multiple points about the importance and necessity of intentionality in multiple areas of librarianship.³³



Some examples of changes to the strategic plan are as follows:

- Intentionally add more inclusive materials to collection and evaluate progress against ongoing diversity audits in order to support student identities.³⁴
- Increase visibility of diverse and inclusive materials to improve student access.³⁵
- Be more intentional about finding ways to incorporate critical information literacy skills and social justice awareness into instruction.³⁶
- Brainstorm approaches to meeting the unique needs of specific student populations, such as international and ELL (English Language Learner) students, students with disabilities, first-generation students.³⁷
- Promote a sense of belonging in the library among students who self-identify as people of color or multiracial, as well as other underrepresented students.³⁸

Another new commitment was to annually review the progress in the library collection by evaluating the new acquisition data and comparing it to former diversity audit results.³⁹ While it is still critical not to require a quota or threshold that needs to be met, there should be a goal of having a collection more representative of the society that Augustana College students will interact with upon graduation.

New Data

The follow-up diversity audit covers the time frame of January, 2021 through August, 2022. The author of this article and her colleague gathered this data from the new Google form that Tredway Library implemented in August 2021 and the lists that the library's integrated library software (ILS) system generated for materials added before the Google form was created. While the original diversity audit began in January 2021 and concluded in June 2021, the librarians that worked on the original audit did not review any of the new materials purchased during that time frame, which is why it was added to the follow-up audit.

As in the original diversity audit, materials for the follow-up audit needed to meet the following criteria:

- A physical book;
- Written by a single author;
- Published 2000-present (no reprints); and
- Part of the permanent, circulating collection.

One new piece of criteria was that the library needed to have purchased the material during the period from January, 2021 to August, 2022. Like the original audit, materials that matched these criteria were put in a report created by the library's ILS and entered into a Google spreadsheet, where the same categories used in the original audit were replicated. The author of this article and her colleague added 200 new items that fit the required criteria to the permanent circulating collection at Tredway Library during this time frame.

While the original audit had a total of twelve auditors and included librarians, staff, and student workers, only the author and her co-lead from the original audit analyzed the data from the follow-up audit. Since the sample for the follow-up article was much smaller than in the original audit and the process for information-gathering was the

same, the process was easier and faster to complete. In total, it took eight hours to audit 200 books.

Follow-up Audit Results

The author and her co-lead wanted to see whether the changes in acquisition workflow and library policies made as a result of the initial audit created a noticeable difference in the makeup of newer purchases. The data in this section represents less than two years. Although this is not a substantial amount, the comparison of the two audits presents enough information to show whether there has been a noticeable effect.

It is important to remember that there is data from 6,465 books in the original audit, while data from only 200 books was collected in the follow-up audit. While the recent data represents just under two years' worth of acquisitions, the original audit collected information from twenty years of purchase records. More information about this is found in the "Limitations" section of this article.

Race and Ethnicity

The race and ethnicity categories saw the largest improvement in author representation. Of the 200 books audited, 113 (56.5 percent) of the authors were white (non-Hispanic or Latinx), and 76 (38 percent) of the authors were Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), biracial, or multiracial. In the original audit, 4,615 (71.38 percent) of the authors reviewed were white (non-Hispanic or Latinx), and only 865 (13.38 percent) of authors were BIPOC, biracial, or multiracial. There was also a decrease in the "unknown" category, where there was enough information found to determine the author's race and ethnicity. In the original audit, 985 authors (15.24 percent) had "unknown" identities, while only 11 (5.5 percent) authors were in this category in the follow-up article (See Figure 1).

Gender

Of the 200 books reviewed in the follow-up audit, 104 authors (52 percent) used he/him pronouns, 94 (47 percent) used she/her pronouns, and just two used they/them pronouns. This showed a decrease in the proportion of authors using he/him pronouns and an increase in she/her pronouns, since the original audit had author representation of 64.3 percent and 33.8 percent respectively. While nine authors in the original audit used they/them pronouns, this still only accounted for .14 percent of the materials audited, compared to 1 percent in the follow-up article (See Figure 2).

Sexuality

As discovered in the original diversity audit, sexuality is the most difficult part of an author's identity to determine. Many of the materials audited in the follow-up audit provided inconclusive information, resulting in 53.5 percent of the authors with unknown sexuality or relationships. This accounts for over half of the new materials, which was also true of the original diversity audit with 61.42 percent of authors falling into the "unknown" category for sexuality.

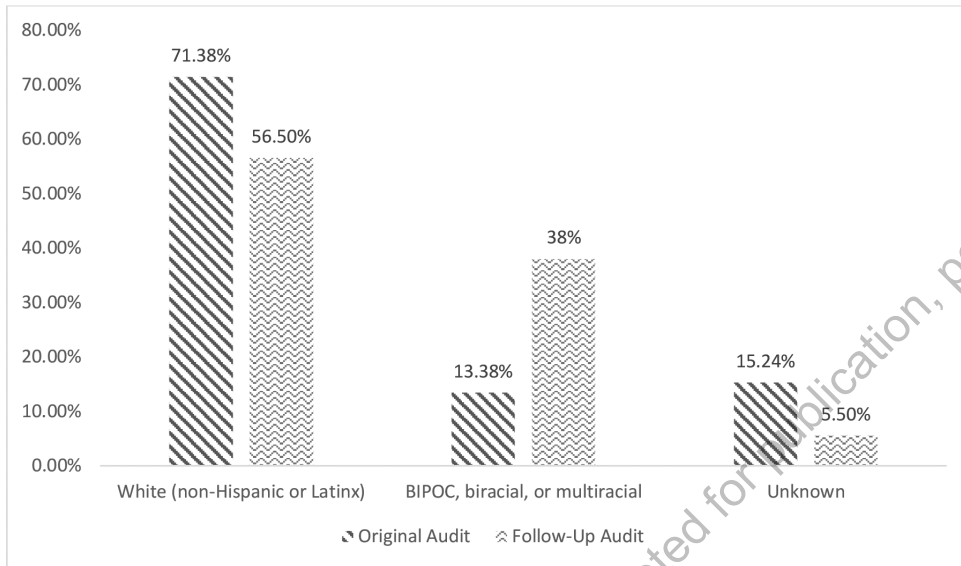


Figure 1. Data comparing race representation from both audits shows an increase in representation in the library acquisitions from the time of the first audit to the follow-up audit.

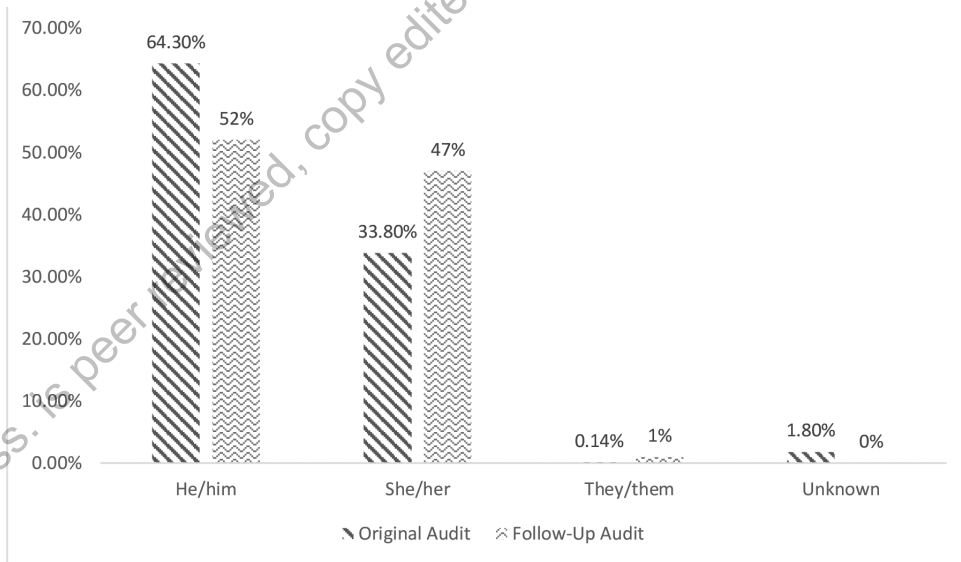


Figure 2. Data comparing gender representation from both audits shows an increase in representation of authors using she/her and they/them pronouns.



Of the 200 books reviewed in the follow-up audit, 42 percent of the authors were in opposite-sex relationships, which is an increase from the original audit, which had representation 36.55 percent of authors in opposite-sex relationships. There was also an increase in authors who identified as LGBTQIA+, which accounted for 4 percent of the authors in the follow-up audit, compared to only 1.11 percent in the original audit. The follow-up audit included only 1 author who was in a same-sex relationship, a decrease from the original audit which included 59 authors (0.91 percent) in a same-sex relationship (See Figure 3).

Although the data gathered for the follow-up audit is a much smaller sample, it does show that the steps the library has taken to create a more diverse and inclusive collection made an impact on the makeup of author representation, particularly regarding race and ethnicity. For example, using the representation of authors who identify as BIPOC, biracial, or multiracial, Tredway Library increased the overall representation in all analyzed materials (original audit *and* follow-up audit) from 13.38 percent to 14.11 percent. This percentage increase is significant and informative, and helped the author see that with a longer time frame, these statistics will eventually become more reflective of the 2020 census.⁴⁰ While the makeup of society is not stagnant and there will be future population shifts, the data from the follow-up audit shows that even with a small sample of 200 books acquired in just under two years, there is a difference in the diversity of author identities, and the library can continue to build on this.

This information only reflects Tredway Library's print, permanent collection. Other libraries will have different rates of change depending on their resources, budget, staff, and original representation in their collections. Nevertheless, this information shows that intentionality, change in practices, and constant effort is important across the library, and work such as diversity audits are not a "one and done" task. It is an example of how

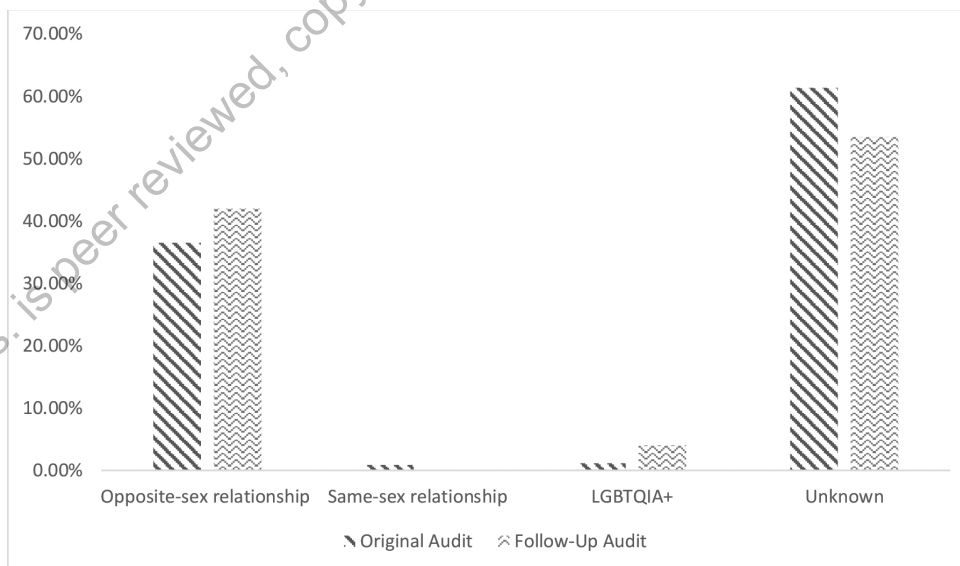


Figure 3. Data comparing relationship status of the authors included in each study.



change can be small, and not always visible, but with time, consistency, and work, that small change develops into something bigger. Simply because a change is taking time does not mean it is not working.

Limitations

While the follow-up audit was informative and showed a more diverse makeup of authors in the new purchases, there are limitations in the follow-up audit methodology, most notably with the sample size difference between the original diversity audit and the follow-up diversity audit. The original diversity audit reviewed all print books written by single authors and published in the time frame of 2000 to the present. This resulted in 6,465 items, which represents 6.465 percent of the roughly 100,000 volumes in the Tredway Library collection. The follow-up diversity audit only reviewed the new materials purchased in a time frame of just under two years (January 2021 to August 2022), which resulted in 200 items, representing only .2 percent of the overall library collection.

Since there is such a difference between the audit sizes and the time span collection, the follow-up audit is not an exact replication of the original audit. The author of the article considered adding the new purchases to the original audited materials so there would be a second full assessment. As shown toward the end of the "Results of follow-up audit" section of this article, the author demonstrated how the overall representation of BIPOC, biracial, or multiracial, authors increased in all analyzed materials (original audit *and* follow-up audit).

However, the researcher decided against doing a second full assessment for all the categories. Two hundred is a small number compared to 6,465, and the author knew that any improvement in the diversity of the authors of the new materials would be diluted if added to the statistics of the original audit. The author felt the information of the follow-up audit provided enough evidence of progress as a result of the changes the library implemented. Even a couple years of data show that there is a difference in the makeup of author identities in acquisitions purchased after the original audit.

Aside from audit size, time frame, and the change of creating a separate category for transgender identity, the rest of the follow-up audit is a replication of the original audit. The categories audited, how the data was gathered, the time spent reviewing each author, and the sources consulted to determine identity of the author, are consistent with the methodology of the original diversity audit. In the future, an additional audit that encompasses a longer time period and larger sample size would help address some of these limitations, as well as show whether the trend of improvement in diversity among the race and ethnicity, sexuality, and gender of authors continues.

Discussion

The diversity audit and follow-up studies at Tredway Library work to address a critical gap in library and information science scholarship and analyze whether policy and practice changes made an impact in collection representation. They also present an example of one way libraries might undertake periodic review of library collection diversity. There are many layers to librarianship. Each librarian has different responsi-



bilities, strengths, perspectives, passions, and ideas. Despite librarians having different roles and positions, every librarian and library needs to review best practices and procedures to consider whether a change is needed to evolve with a library's target audience, which can increase a sense of belonging for their students (either in public-facing ways or behind the scenes). The follow-up diversity audit at Augustana College is an example of the way one facet of librarianship, such as collection development, ties into other parts of a library, such as acquisitions, teaching, and service. All of these parts of librarianship contribute to a student's sense of belonging. The changes Tredway Library made to their acquisition process after the original audit proved that change was necessary, especially when it helps the library evolve with the needs of all its students.

The changes Augustana College made to collection development as a result of the original diversity audit proved that intentionality could make an impact, even if slowly. Much of the information the librarians learned from conducting a diversity audit, reviewing its comprehensive results, and adapting previous procedures and policies, can transfer to other areas of librarianship.

Lesson 1: Always be Intentional and Patient

Change can be slow, and seeing significant results during the transition phase can be even slower. It can be easy to believe that implementing a new path is not making a difference at all, and it is often tempting to return to previous procedures because they are easier and familiar—there is comfort in the familiar. Still, even if one cannot see an immediate difference, it does not mean that change is not occurring.

As shown in the results of this study, the percentage of change in representation of different author identities in the Tredway Library collection will not reflect the diversity of American society as seen in the 2020 census for a long time. This also will not account for the increase in diversity of the United States in coming years, as the country becomes less homogeneous.⁴¹ However, despite the time it will take to develop a more heterogeneous collection, the work needs to continue. This project is a perfect example of how change can take a long time, but that does not mean it is not worthwhile to pursue. The data the author collected for just under two years after the original audit showed that the new acquisitions form helps librarians at Tredway Library be more intentional and reflective on the choices they make when curating materials. The change in the acquisition form not only allows library staff to easily track new materials, but also makes librarians consider author representation each time they fill out the form. They have to search for and include information about the author's race and ethnicity, gender, and



sexuality each time they purchase a new item. With consideration of author identity at the forefront of the process instead of being considered later, there is evidence that there is a shift toward a more diverse makeup of authors. The materials the library purchased during the two-year period were closer to being representative of the United States census data than the earlier library collection, and it is due to selectors thinking more about the makeup of the chosen materials.

Being intentional about choices and being patient when enacting change are both necessary when approaching and adapting other forms of librarianship. For many people, change can be difficult because it often implies that something is not working. In many cases, this is correct, especially when encouraging change in matters directly relating to DEI work in libraries. Yet sometimes change is not always reflective of a process that is not working. Sometimes change is taking something and asking, "Can it be better?" Collection development procedures need to be periodically reviewed to assess whether additional changes can be made to make the collection and acquisition processes better. Reviews of policies and procedures should also be applied to other areas of librarianship.

Diversity audits highlight how libraries of all types are not as diverse or inclusive in their collections as previously thought. Although diversity audits are often time consuming, the detail and consideration that goes into them helps present comprehensive information about the makeup of a library collection, which in turn helps librarians understand how their collections appear to students. This is especially true for under-represented students who are engaging with predominantly white, heteronormative spaces, resources, and staff (such as libraries).

Lesson 2: DEI work is All Librarians' Work

Often the burden of work that relates to diversity, equity, and inclusion will rest on librarians with certain roles, interests, or backgrounds. However, for academic libraries to successfully create a more inclusive library, all librarians need to do DEI work and incorporate this into their roles. Different parts of campus life contribute to a student's sense of belonging, and that includes the library. For this reason, it is essential for academic libraries to have a variety of resources, spaces, workshops, instruction styles, programs, and partners visible in the library for students to use. By providing a plethora of tools and spaces for students to engage with, libraries will increase the chances for a student to feel a stronger sense of belonging in their library and institution.

This article focuses specifically on a diversity audit as one way to better understand the resources available to students in a library. Yet there are other ways to gauge how inclusive not only library collections are, but other components of libraries. Students notice things like who libraries partner with on campus, the different types of library spaces provided, how accessible their technology or building is, and what types of displays the libraries promote. They notice what is taught in information literacy, what sources are presented as more authoritative, and what types of resources are on the shelves. Students notice what rules and policies are enforced and why, and they notice how much their library strives to create a safe and welcoming place.

Libraries have a longstanding history of whiteness and heteronormativity, so there is a lot of work to be undone. When considering all the different ways that libraries



can connect with their users, there are many steps, even small ones, that can start this work. As stated in Lesson One, the work will require time and patience, but students will take note even if they see small changes. They will notice when buildings are more accessible, or offerings of workshops covering different personal and professional topics are increased. Students will view the library as more welcoming if librarians curate resources that are not only from major publishers but present a variety of voices and experiences. They appreciate it when the library asks for their opinions and thoughts, and then implements them.

The diversity audit at Augustana College was conducted by the majority of the librarians on staff and several student workers. The importance of the audit was emphasized from the start of the development stage, which encouraged people to participate in this DEI work and not have it fall to one of two librarians. Since the majority of the staff were involved, it helped everyone see first-hand the work that the library needs to do to revamp the collection and better understand the reasons previously held policies and procedures needed to change. It also helped librarians approach different areas of librarianship with a DEI focus, such as making more intentional decisions when selecting materials, developing lesson plans for instruction, or designing displays and outreach events.

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Conclusion

Diversity audits, like much of librarianship, are not a simple box to check off once complete. Collections, as well as other programs and services, need to be consistently revisited in order to stay abreast of current trends and make sure that libraries strive to be as inclusive as possible. Although this requires time (something few librarians have an abundance of), without consistent check-ins, reviews, and feedback, collections and services are at risk of going back to what they once were: buildings that cater to a specific group of people, without taking into account the variety and differences of experiences and needs that comprise our society.

Although the results after the first two years' data from the diversity audit showed definite improvement in representation, it will take time for library collections to better reflect United States society. However, when looking at only the data from the two years of the follow-up audit, and comparing it to the original audit, there was measurable improvement in many of the author identity categories. The library's change of workflows and mindset about which voices they are including in their collection, brought a noticeable difference.

Work relating to diversity, equity, and inclusion needs to be the work of all and not a select few. Success, diversity, inclusivity, and building a community are all aspects



of academic librarianship that contribute to, and impact, the experiences of students. Public-facing positions are not the only ones that contribute to this type of work, and it is impossible for those in the more “designated” roles that relate to this work to do it all on their own. Building more intentionality into everyday librarianship is essential for success and helps librarians think critically about their work and actions. Tredway Library saw a definitive impact from the changes made in workflow practices, policies, and strategic planning goals. Although there is still work to be done, the results from the follow-up audit showed a more diverse collection with regards to authorship.

Libraries of all kinds need to be vigilant to make their buildings and services more inclusive. The audit conducted at Augustana College highlighted the importance of reviewing best practices and work policies, as well as having the full library staff work toward building a more inclusive space, rather than focusing on one part or one librarian. Libraries adapt to the needs of their communities, and for academic libraries, that means students. Students’ needs are always evolving, and academic libraries should evolve with those needs.

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