

1B—Whiteness and Academic Librarianship

Unmasking Whiteness: An Anti-Racist Approach to Reference Services, Dave Ellenwood (University of Washington Bothell and Cascadia College)

Grounded in critical race theory and critical whiteness literature, this paper will examine the ways in which whiteness and racism shape reference services in academic libraries. Through a discourse analysis of key professional reference guidelines, this paper will interrogate three primary areas in which the culture of whiteness appears in reference services: approachability, responsiveness, and objectivity. By identifying the limitations of current conceptions of these principles and by applying social justice-oriented communication and service models, this paper will articulate the foundations of an anti-racist reference practice.