

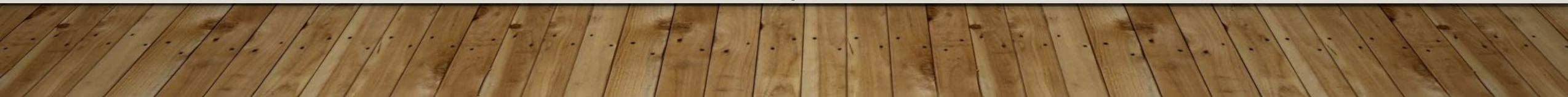
# UNPACKING OUR INNER DIVERSITY

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LIBRARIANS LEARNING FROM WITHIN, AND WITHOUT, THE SYSTEM

PacRim International Conference on Disability and Diversity  
October 9-11, 2017

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# ALOHA

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## Research:

- Librarian identity
- Critical inquiry
- Lifelong learning

## Teaching:

- Public services
- Reading response
- LIS Cultural Comp

## The Librarians' Inquiry Forum (LINQ)

African American = 5.2%

Disabled = 3.7%

Latino = 3.1%

Asian, Pacific Islander, Native Hawaiian = 2.7%

Native & Alaskan American = .1%



## WHO ARE THE LIBRARIANS?



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# AGENDA

Conceptual Framework

Methodology & Design

Data Outcomes: Inner Diversities revealed

Implications:

Reflective, collaborative practice = “Better-best” practice

# CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK: LIBRARIAN CRITICAL INQUIRY

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# LINQ'S INQUIRY STANCE

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- “Who am I in this space? In this place? At this time?”
- “In what ways can I shift ‘seats at the table’ of information exchange, knowledge, and power?”
- To borrow Peggy McIntosh’s famous phrase, “How do my “invisible knapsacks” co-create social interactions in the public sphere?”





# METHODOLOGY/DESIGN: THE LIBRARIANS' INQUIRY FORUM (LINQ)

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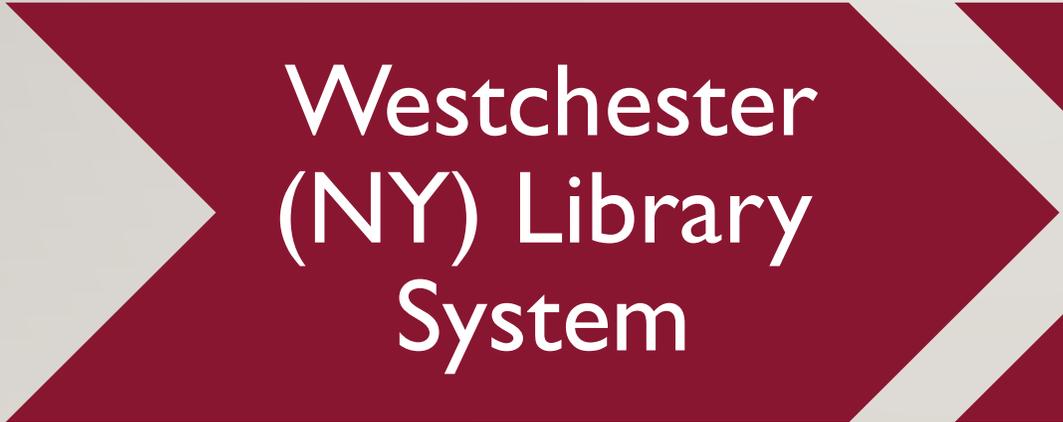


- Public librarian community-of-practice
- Community of practice within a digital space
  - Group work online, at work, in real time (synchronous)
  - Group work via email + scheduled meetups (asynchronous)
- Negotiating roles of inquiry

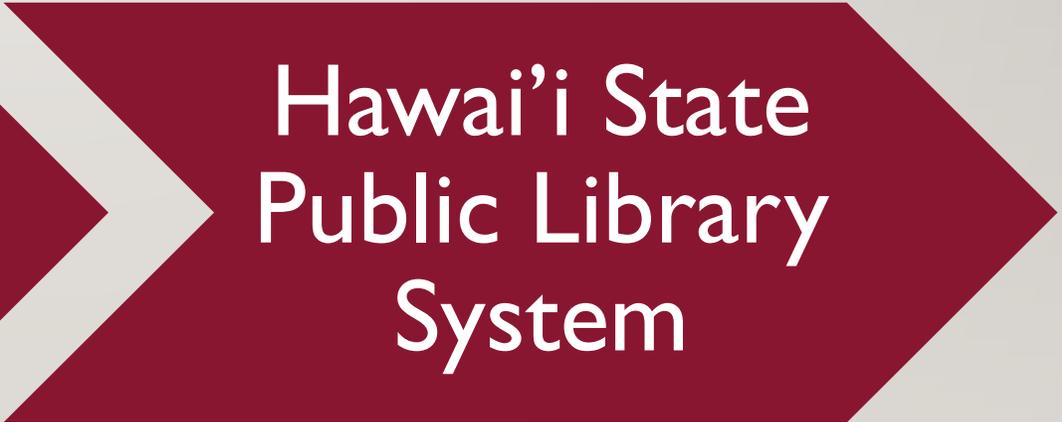


# SAMPLE DATA: INNER DIVERSITIES REVEALED

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Westchester  
(NY) Library  
System



Hawai'i State  
Public Library  
System

# DATA: WESTCHESTER

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**Inquiry Question: What are your diversities?  
In what ways do you self identify?  
What groups do you identify with?**

“I don’t know what you mean.”

#silence

#confusion

“I just always thought of myself as American.”

“I’m just white.”

#perplexed

The one participant who was a woman of color = writing, writing, writing

# DATA: WESTCHESTER

## Inquiry Question (take two):

**What countries are your grandparents and great grandparents from?**

**What kinds of traditions does your family follow during holidays?**

**What hobbies do you enjoy?**

Lebanese recipes  
at holiday time

Israeli grandparents  
who immigrated  
to U.S.

Lesbian  
identity

Knitting  
club

German traditions  
(i.e. gift giving)

French  
ancestry

Spanish  
ancestry

Church  
hats

Birthdays

Travel

# DATA: HSPLS

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**Inquiry Question: What are your diversities?  
In what ways do you self identify?  
What groups do you identify with?**

“Portuguese/German/Japanese”

#immediateresponse

“I’m German and Filipino. My mother is ...”

#aknowingness

#open

“I’m Hawaiian and British;  
I’m a 3<sup>rd</sup> generation librarian.”

“I’m white, born  
and raised here.”

“Hawaiian and Korean. My parents  
are gone, but my Korean aunties  
are still here.”

# DATA: HSPLS

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**INQUIRY QUESTION: “Is Hawaiian culture in our practice?”**  
**“In what ways is Hawaiian/Polynesian culture a tenet of our professional practices and services in our libraries and/or within the HSPLS as a whole?”**

“This is an interesting question.”

“Did you know that the Aloha Spirit is written in to our Hawaii Statutes?”

“presenting leis to special program performers in the library.”

“I get called “Aunty” a lot.”

# DATA: HSPLS

## INQUIRY QUESTION:

**“Do you get reference questions for diverse books, specifically Hawaiiana?”**

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“I've noticed that *Kirkus Reviews* is really good about noting the ethnicities of main characters in books. Like they'll mention that a character is white or Caucasian too, which is unusual because it's often assumed that they are and only minority characters are mentioned.”

“It would be great if we could have a professional review source for books published in Hawaii.”

“This is a bit off, a bit on topic. Does anyone know any nursery rhymes or action rhymes that come from the cultures in your community? Mostly, I hear about adapted English ones (i.e. Hawaiian mother goose).”

“...several families who come to our storytime are from other countries, so I've asked them to share a nursery rhyme from each of their countries (Japan, Czech Republic, I think Mexico too). We're trying it for the first time next week.”

The mom from Japan presented the song she selected (“Hige Jiisan”) this morning, and it went really well! The song she chose was just right-- ... It was nice to honor her home country's culture and language, and use her ability to speak Japanese to expose the other families to another world language. ... She e-mailed me afterwards to say that she enjoyed sharing the song too.”



# IMPLICATIONS: QUESTIONS = INQUIRY = LEARNING

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Questions create response that creates (re)action

Local culture (or not) is reflected in librarian professional identity and practice

Librarians learn from one another and from their community

Considering the diverse identity construction of “professional” alongside “personal”

Collaborative co-constructing and de-constructing of inner diversities in real-time,  
inspires immediate reflection >> ignites immediate shift in practice

# MAHALO

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