“They Don’t Even See Us”: Intersectional Approaches to Understanding Disability in LIS

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ABSTRACT

Although the field of library and information science (LIS) has long claimed an interest in equity, its theorization of disability, race, and gender has largely ignored critical intersectional frameworks (e.g., Crenshaw (1989) and Hill Collins (2012)). LIS education has also largely ignored complex critical examinations of identity - especially critical examinations of race and disability (Gibson, Hughes-Hassell, & Threats, 2018). This poster summarizes a portion of the findings from the authors’ ongoing study about the information seeking and sharing experiences of autistic people (https://autisticadvocacy.org/about-asan/identity-first-language/) and their families in North Carolina. Using Gibson and Martin’s (2019) information marginalization framework the authors explore how issues such as endemic lack of Spanish-speaking staff, lack of material and service support for disabled people, over-policing disabled people of color, and biases related to race, parenting, and disability work to marginalized disabled people of color in public information spaces, rendering them both invisible and hyper-visible. The authors integrated these findings into a new course on disability and information which, among other things, addressed the implications of disciplinary and individual frameworks for understanding, researching, and practicing at the intersections of race, gender, ability/disability, nationality, economic status, and language in information spaces and systems.

TOPICS

critical librarianship; information rights; social justice; community engagement

REFERENCES


