

# Learning about Diversity: The Roles of LIS Education, LIS Associations, and Lived Experience

Symposium on Diversity in LIS Education

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Don't save these dates! Save March 31-April 4 instead....

Witnessed this amazing example of diversity on Jeopardy!  
tonight!



# How do librarians learn about diversity?



# What type of [diversity]training should LIS provide to future librarians?

Subramaniam, Rodriguez-Mori, Hill, & Jaeger, “The Implications of a Decade of Diversity-Related Doctoral Dissertations (2000-2009) in LIS, *Library Quarterly*,

# Lori Mestre, *Librarians Serving Diverse Populations: Challenges & Opportunities*, 2010.

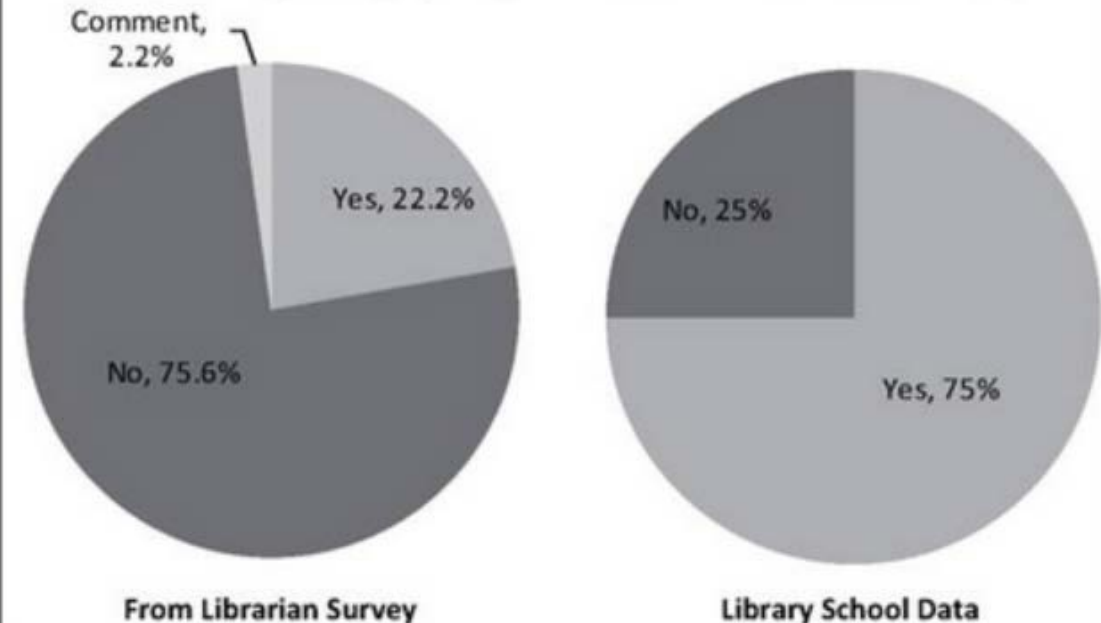
**TABLE 2.2**

Answers to Question 4: Do you feel that your library school program prepared you for working with multiple cultures? (Multicultural Librarians Questionnaire)

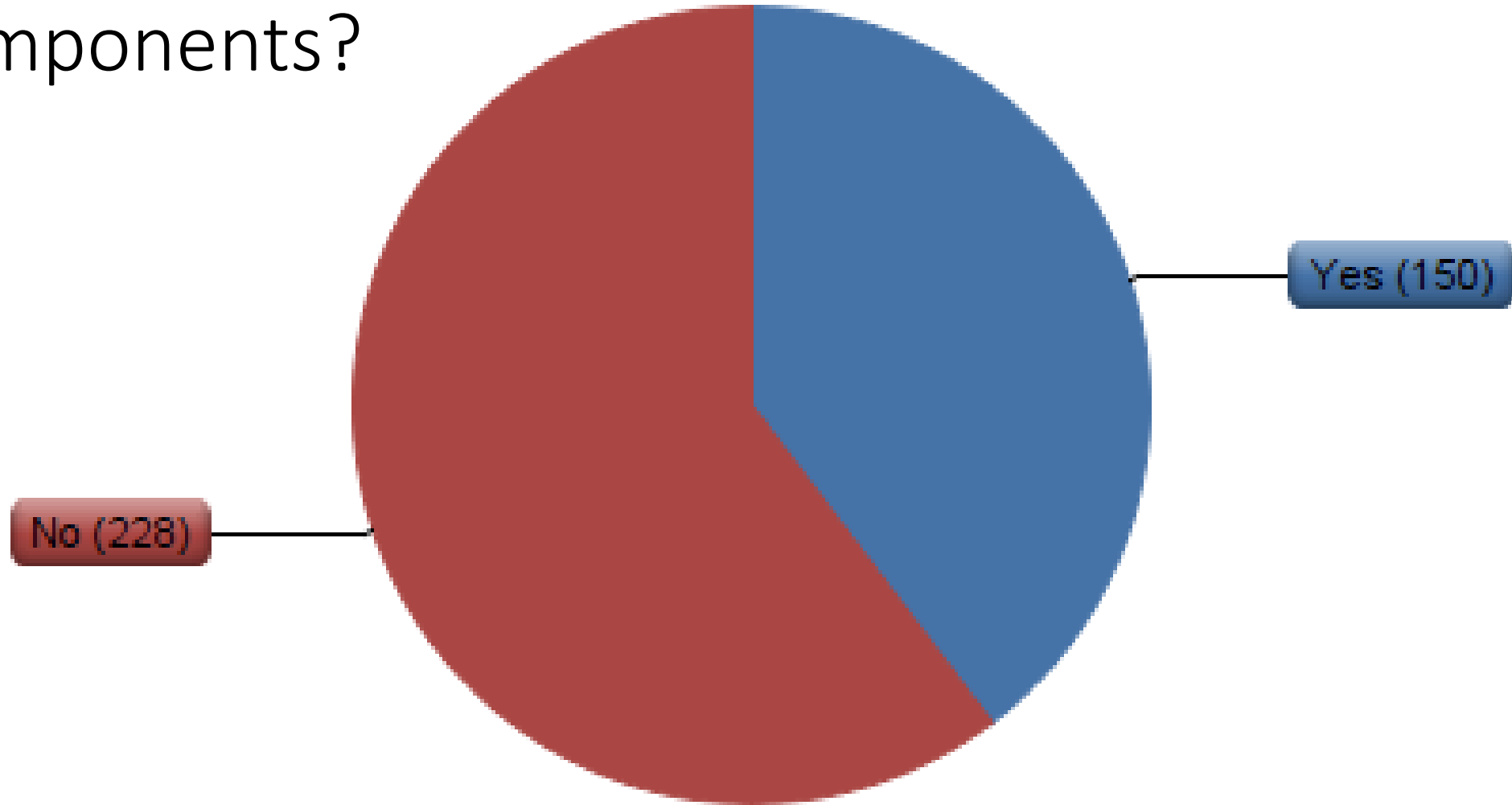
Yes	21.3%
Somewhat	44.7%
No	27.7%

**FIGURE 2.2**

Answers to Question 5: Did your library school offer a specific course related to multicultural librarianship? (Multicultural Librarians Questionnaire) and Question 6: Does this library school offer a specific course in multicultural librarianship (or something similar)? (Library School Administrators Questionnaire)



Did you take courses in your LIS program that focused on diversity or included diversity components?



# Students want it but don't see it....

- A class on diversity should be a requirement for everyone regardless of field or track.
- I wish my MLIS program included more diversity topics and multiculturalism services in libraries...
- Unfortunately, there were none offered, nor did we focus very much on diversity in our courses.
- It's embarrassing how little we discuss diversity in our curriculum at the iSchool



# They appreciate it....

- Dr. Naidoo's Outreach to Diverse Populations class at UA SLIS-great course
- UCLA Ethics & Diversity Course
- The University of Washington included some great classes about indigenous knowledge systems
- FSU Grad School offers a class "Information for Diverse Users" that was very informative on this subject.
- It was the most engaging, thought-provoking course in my LIS program.

# And employers also want it....

The identified qualifications and skills from the content analysis suggest that employers for the most part are searching for information professionals with some form of experience in multicultural settings; that have the ability to work with faculty, students, and staff from diverse backgrounds; and/or who have demonstrated skills related to various cultural attributes.

Al-Qallaf & Mika, “The Role of Multiculturalism and Diversity in Library and Information Science: LIS Education and the Job Market,” *Libri* (2013).

# Coverage increasing over time....

- My library degree was earned in 1970. There were no diversity programs then.
- I went to library school in 1973. I don't think they had diversity as a topic then.
- I went to library school in the mid 1980s and there was not much discussion of diversity then.
- it should have been a part of LIS education, but was not in any real sense when I got my degree (1980s)
- I graduated in Fall 1991 -- this was not really emphasized back then
- It was the early 1990s and some discussion of looking at texts other than by "old white guys" was just beginning.
- It's been over 10 years but yes I did take courses related to learning about Native American and Hispanic library users and reaching out to non-traditional library users

How do LIS associations  
contribute to librarians' diversity  
knowledge?

# American Library Association

- ALA recognizes the critical need for access to library and information resources, services, and technologies by all people, especially those who may experience language or literacy-related barriers; economic distress; cultural or social isolation; physical or attitudinal barriers; racism; discrimination on the basis of appearance, ethnicity, immigrant status, religious background, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression; or barriers to equal education, employment, and housing. (Policy Manual, section B.3.1)
- Diversity and Equitable Access as “Key Action Areas”  
(<http://www.ala.org/aboutala/>)

# Other Associations

- Neely (2009) assessed ARL Leadership & Career Development Program
- Mestre (2011) looked at diversity on ARL web sites
- Puente & Cleveland (2011) list various travel and scholarship programs offered by “special” library associations

# Library associations mentioned by participants

- ALA Spectrum Institute and Joint Conference of Librarians of Color
- BCALA Listserv
- Mid-America Library Alliance Live Workshops and Webcasts
- Social media ... APALA
- the recent brouhaha with the ALA Code of Conduct

The words we use to talk about  
diversity

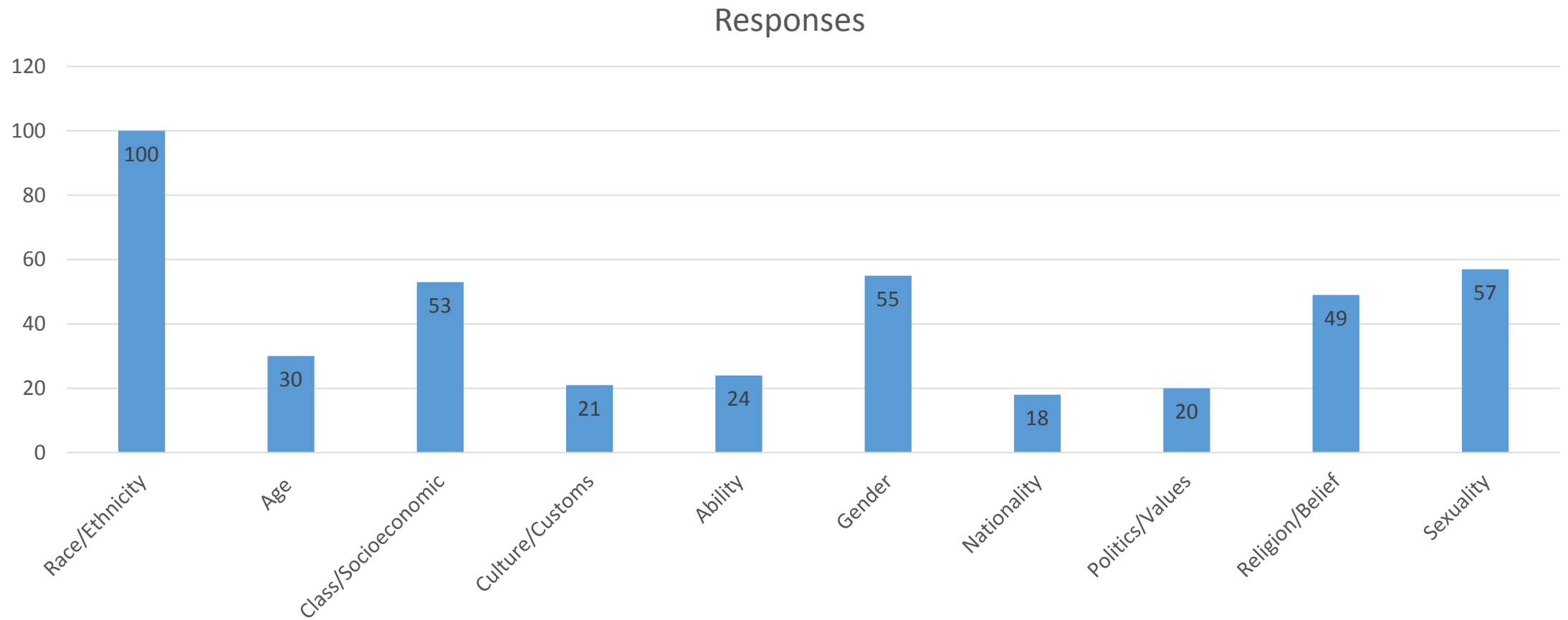


“Racial diversity has traditionally received the most focus in LIS literature....”

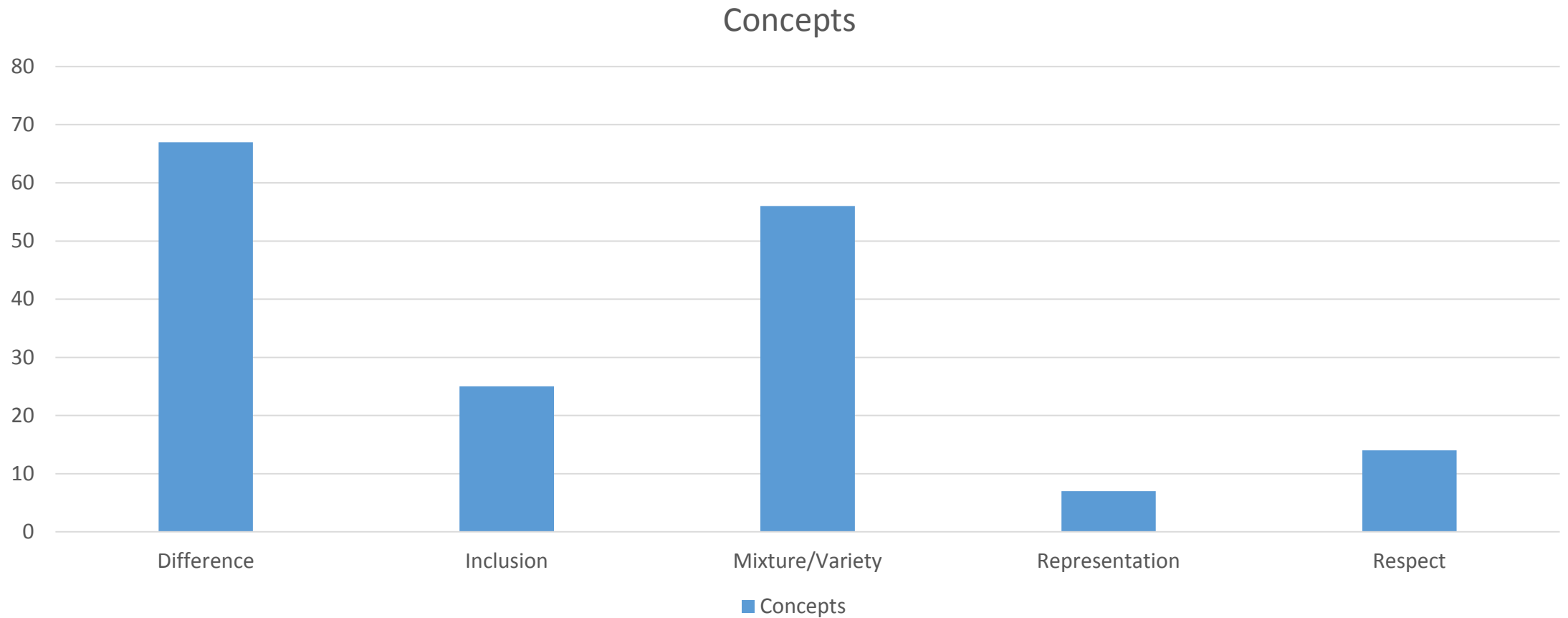
Subramaniam, Rodriguez-Mori, Hill, & Jaeger, “The Implications of a Decade of Diversity-Related Doctoral Dissertations (2000-2009) in LIS, *Library Quarterly*, 2012.



# Descriptions of Diversity



# Concepts of Diversity



Librarians need to understand how the dominant terms and language restrict boundaries of sex, gender, and sexual orientation to a sticky matrix of conflated terms. We can begin to untangle the language and learn new ways to include patrons who are often excluded and provide access to much needed information.

Lang, "Library Rhetoric: The Canadian Library Association Statement of Diversity and Inclusion and LGBT Advocacy," *Progressive Librarian* (2009)

Accepting and respecting difference in all its forms, functions, and mannerisms - including those differences which society as a whole often marginalizes or maligns for a variety of reasons. Equality through philosophy and practice.

# Project Design

# Research Questions

- How do librarians learn about diversity?
- How do librarians talk about diversity?
- How does LIS education contribute to librarians' diversity knowledge?
- How do LIS associations contribute to librarians' diversity knowledge?



# Project Overview

- Review of literature
- Survey design
- Survey pretest and redesign
- Survey release – 395 responses as of March 31, 2014
- Review of survey results
- Interview protocol design
- Interviews conducted – 6 interviews complete & coded as of March 31, 2014
- Coding of survey responses and interviews

Who responded?

Survey invitations to participate sent to electronic lists and posted on social media sites

- Missouri Library Association
- New Members Round Table
- Reference & User Services Association
- Library Research Round Table
- ALA Student Chapters
- Ethnic Caucuses (BCALA, REFORMA, CALA, APALA, AILA)
- Librarians without Borders
- Non-English Speakers



# Library Types Represented

