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Hopeful Visions, Practical Actions: Cultural Humility in Library Work, edited by Sarah R. Kostelecky, Lori Townsend, and David A. Hurley

Carol A. Leibiger (iD)

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Book Review: *Hopeful Visions, Practical Actions: Cultural Humility in Library Work*

Carol A. Leibiger

University of South Dakota

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In their classic article, clinicians Melanie Tervalon and Jann Murray-García describe cultural humility as "incorporat[ing] a lifelong commitment to self-evaluation and critique, to redressing the power imbalances in the physician-patient dynamic, and to developing mutually beneficial and non-paternalistic partnerships with communities on behalf of individuals and defined populations" (1998, 123). Additionally, Carol Leibiger and Alan Aldrich recognize cultural humility as a set of dispositions that must be mobilized in professional practice (forthcoming). This impressive book comprises case studies and thought pieces illustrating how librarians can enact cultural humility within a variety of academic library contexts, resulting in both authentic service to their communities and personal and professional growth.

Part I, "Origins," notes the benefits of incorporating cultural humility into library practice. For instance, Black librarians Xan Goodman and Twanna Hodge engage in self-reflection informed by Critical Race Theory, revealing instances of systemic racism they have encountered in their work. They suggest ways that cultural humility can unmask and rectify assumptions, policies, and procedures that underlie and support oppressive library practices. Additionally, library educator Sarah Polkinghorne and student Liliana Montoya examine librarian behavioral standards such as the Reference & User Services Association's *Guidelines for Behavioral Performance of Reference and Information Service Providers*, noting that they omit the self-reflection and other-orientation that necessarily undergird openness to patrons' identities and ways of knowing. The authors champion the inclusion of cultural humility in reference training as a way of becoming genuinely approachable to all patrons. While this chapter focuses on education for reference work, the benefits of cultural humility

warrant inclusion in other areas of library learning, as demonstrated by Goodman and Hodge.

In Part II, "Reflective Practice," case studies report innovations resulting from librarians' individual reflective practice. The most interesting chapters relate positive changes benefiting both users and librarians. Instructional Librarian Michael Mungin recounts how self-reflection enabled him to reject false notions of librarian neutrality and create an online resource centering American films featuring queer and trans people of color. He notes that institutional support is essential for librarians to engage in and act on the fruits of reflective practice. Chief Librarian Silvia Lin Hanick and Instructional Librarian Kelsey Keyes offer advice for culturally humble practice in selecting books for young readers, noting three essential commitments: "accuracy, decentering [one]self, and mitigating power imbalances by rejecting self-focused responses such as tradition, nostalgia, and inertia" (63). Noting that literature "reflects and reinforces existing power structures," the authors advocate disruption of power imbalances through championing accurate, culturally sensitive works (78). Health Sciences Librarian Jerrod Irwin describes the application of cultural humility to the revision of an online, asynchronous course on healthcare grant proposal writing. He notes how collaborating with organizations assisting marginalized groups provides opportunities to decentralize power and build trusting relationships between libraries, partners, and communities, ensuring meaningful stakes in projects for all. It is essential that libraries engaged in this work be open to learning and changing behavior to ensure positive, welcoming, and equitable partnerships.

Part III, "Community," includes case studies demonstrating how authors have examined library practices and policies through the lens of cultural humility, implementing changes that center other people and communities and their needs. Diné Instructional Librarian Rhiannon Sorrell describes the self-reflection and learning she underwent as she returned to work for the Navajo Nation. These changes resulted in library services that acknowledge and meet community needs in culturally appropriate ways, achieving trusting relationships. In separate chapters, Library Director Carrie Valdes and Access and Metadata Services Librarians Melanie Bopp, Tricia MacKenzie, and Kimberley Edwards identify traditional library practices such as fines and cataloging and metadata tagging that perpetuate inequities and impede access and trust. Noting that "[h]istory is a lousy excuse to continue doing what we are doing" (129), these librarians have eliminated fines and are engaging in reparative cataloging and metadata practices in order to make their libraries truly accessible and inviting to their communities.

In Part IV, "Hopeful Visions," authors anticipate the future of cultural humility in libraries. In one of the book's most engaging and challenging chapters, Arts

and Humanities Librarian nicholae cline and library worker Jorge R. López McKnight examine cultural humility as a theory of change. They contrast it with institutionalized theories of change in libraries such as the American Library Association's EDI framework, which "[g]iven its engagement and entanglement with the structure (that it is designed to improve), … can actually further exclude, subjugate, and oppress" those whom it seeks to uplift (181-82). The authors express the hope that cultural humility will not become "contained within librarianship," but rather remain "a form or part of a larger project of and toward justice" (185).

This book is an important contribution to the library literature on cultural humility. The chapters illustrate the breadth of possibilities for enacting cultural humility in academic libraries, as authors highlight the benefits that accrue to libraries, communities, marginalized people, and librarians when librarians engage in reflective practice, redress power imbalances, and build trusting relationships. In addition to the well written, interesting case studies, each chapter contains questions for reflection and discussion, a list of resources, and references, reinforcing the self-reflection and learning that are tenets of cultural humility. This book should be essential reading for all libraries and library workers that seek to engage deeply and authentically with their patrons and communities in creating spaces where "folks from all walks of life can celebrate their individual and collective identities … [by] honoring the validity and humanity in one another" (202).

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