Department of Library and Information Studies Presents:

The 2016 Fall Seminar Series

Lisa K Hussey, Ph.D.

Associate Professor, School of Library and Information Science (SLIMS) at Simmons College

lisa.hussey2@simmons.edu

(617) 521-2852

White Privilege in LIS: How do we Define It?

Wedenesday, October 26, 2016 | 12:00 p.m. | 200 G Baldy Hall

ABSTRACT - Diversity is a term that is both important and often misunderstood. Yet, despite this very nebulous understanding, it has been a continuous focus in the LIS professions, particularly in regard to recruitment and retention initiatives. According to the latest Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data, librarians are predominately Caucasian, with just over 13% of professionals identifying as African American, Asian American, or Hispanic/Latino (BLS, 2015). Archives and museums report even lower levels of diversity. Hence, as a predominately Caucasian profession, the concept of White Privilege and the role of White Culture in the profession should be important discussion points. However, as a profession, LIS tends to not discuss race and racial issues, but rather focus on diversity and multiculturalism. As the majority that makes up the professional body and the decision makes, the experiences, views, and attitudes of individuals and groups from White Culture and who have experienced White Privilege are strongly influential in decision making for the profession as a whole and in the establishment and delivery of programs, such as diversity initiatives. Hence, this research begins by considering the possible influence of White Culture/White Privilege and what does it mean for the ways in which LIS is presented and understood?

Bio: Dr. Lisa Hussey is an Associate Professor at the School of Library and Information Science (SLIS) at Simmons College. Prior to her time at SLIS, Lisa worked as an academic librarian, a school librarian, and a prison librarian. She also served as program manager for the University of Arizona School of Information Resources and Library Science. Lisa received a BA in History from the University of Miami, a MA in IRLS from the University of Arizona, and a Ph.D. from the University of Missouri. Her research focused on mentoring in LIS and diversity in LIS.

University at Buffalo
Department of Library and Information Studies
Graduate School of Education