

Building Community: The Social Justice and Libraries Open Conference

Reed Garber-Pearson, Marisa Petrich, and Allison Reibel
University of Washington Information School, Master of Library and Information Science Program

Learn more: www.sjlseattle.org

Sponsors & Special Thanks:



C. Davida Ingram, Wayne Au, Megan Rebel, Althea Lazzarro, Amanda Hornby, Tony Fader, Megan Watson, Dave Ellenwood, Alyssa Joelson Porter, Elaine Harger, Suzanne Fletcher-Petrich

About

The first-annual Social Justice and Libraries Open Conference was an unconference-style event for library workers and students focused on dismantling structural oppression.

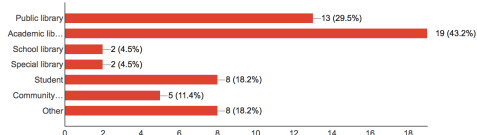
Objectives:

- Create space for local library workers to connect around topics of social justice
- Build local critical community

Schedule:

- 10:00 am: Registrations and pitch session 1
- 10:30 am: Keynote speaker C. Davida Ingram
- 11:00 am: Breakout session 1
- 12:00 pm: Lunch and pitch session 2
- 1:00 pm: Keynote speaker Wayne Au
- 1:30 pm: Breakout session 2
- 2:30 pm: Closing and reflection

SJL by the Numbers



- 90 participants from different sectors of the community (above)
- 31 institutions from 5 states, including University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, Seattle Public Library, and OCLC
- 2 keynotes and 16 discussion topics
- 56 sunflower butter and jelly sandwiches

At the Conference



Participants suggested discussion topics and voted on them at the event (right).



"How can libraries be sites of liberation? What would restorative and/or transformative librarianship look like?"
– Wayne Au

Lunch (upper left) included sunflower butter and jelly sandwiches, community zine making (below), and labling by Social Justice Fund NW, Books to Prisoners, and local indie comic and zine artists.



"...when we talk about social justice we mean addressing hundreds and hundreds of years of disconnection."
– C. Davida Ingram

Select Sessions

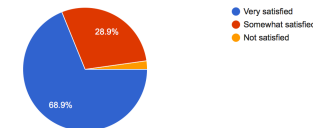
- Community Activism & Outreach
- Supporting Homeless Patrons
- Talking About Social Justice with Youth
- The Myth of Neutrality
- Preservation as a Tool for Social Justice
- Inclusive Library Programming
- Tools for Allyship

Outcomes

Participants were invited to take a six-question exit survey. It had 45 respondents.

Survey Highlights:

97.8% of respondents (44 people) were satisfied with the event.



Will your practices change as a result of this conference? If so, how?

"For starters, I have an action plan for some ally-building in my organization (the result of which I hope will be some changes in collection and practice), and I plan to email and keep in contact with some of the folks that I met at the conference."

Any additional comments?

"I found this to be one of my more professionally challenging and rejuvenating experiences in recent memory and am so appreciative of all the work done to make it happen!"