

Telling Our Selves: Claiming Belonging in the Information Ken

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Abstract

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Editorial

The intersection of power, justice, and agency in information settings and contexts is an ongoing theme in library and information science (LIS) research that reports developments in equity, diversity, and inclusionary research. This theme comes up repeatedly, and I believe it is because we, as humankind who are information researchers and practitioners, constantly remind ourselves that our stories exist, count, and matter; and that they matter as information work and historical record. Moreover, this truism never gets old. Thus, in this powerful issue of the *International Journal of Information, Diversity, & Inclusion*, the contributors boldly assert that libraries, archives, and information institutions are not neutral terrains—they are lived, contested spaces where identity, memory, and justice converge. As a collection, the articles form a vibrant mosaic of global perspectives, challenging dominant narratives and offering inclusive, equity-oriented practice models across identities, geographies and methodologies.

Sarah Beth Nelson opens the issue by framing reality storytelling as a brave, transformative act where orality contextualizes brave spaces. Nelson explores ways free speech and bravery practices create brave spaces for “reality storytelling” in American communities. Her work invites us to consider how vulnerability and truth-telling can subvert traditional authority and institutional norms, setting the tone for the following papers in this issue. For example, **Alicia Long and Denice Adkins** echo this challenge by examining LIS professional associations and the lived experiences of librarians of Latine heritage, tracing how affiliation and belonging are shaped within—and sometimes despite—our organizational homes.

Edwina Dei Ashie-Nikoi shares her autoethnographic exploration into African diaspora archives, from the infamous Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in Harlem, New York, to Ghanaian artefacts revealing how emotion and transnational solidarity animate archival encounters. Similarly, the work of **Josiline Chigwada and Patrick Ngulube** in Zimbabwe

highlights the persistent digital divide and the radical potential of school libraries as agents of social equity.

The *Innovative Methodologies* and *Reports from the Field* sections underscore our field's current creative and ethical demands. **Seth Knievel's** proposal of an innovative methodology called *Nuanced Archival Triangulation (NAT)* expands methodological possibilities in visual culture archival research, while the Hispanic/Latinx Inclusive Terminologies Project, led by **Aidy Weeks and colleagues**, showcases how critical cataloging can directly support social change. This issue also enriches our theoretical base. **B. Ramin Naderi's** integrative literature review considers public libraries through the lens of immigrant community development—essential reading for practitioners navigating demographic change and public policy tensions.

Finally, this issue features two book reviews that reinforce the issue's themes: that information work is, at its core, relational, political, and deeply human. Irvin's review of *Methods for Community-Based Research: Advancing Educational Justice and Epistemic Rights* by **Maria Ghiso and Gerald Campano** (2024) highlights the authors' decade-long work developing a decolonized, participatory research model rooted in community partnerships. The community-based research (CBRE) model emphasizes epistemic justice, ethical collaboration, and community leadership in educational research. Rich with examples, the text offers practical tools for scholars—especially those in the education and library science sectors—seeking to co-create knowledge with cultural/heritage-based communities. Challenges include the required deep time and relationship investments, but the book sets a transformative vision for equity-driven research. Wagner's review of *Queer Data Studies*, edited by **Patrick Keilty** (2024), brings queer theory into urgent dialogue with data studies, unsettling assumptions of neutrality, objectivity, and utility in data practices. Across chapters, contributors explore queer refusal, opacity, and embodiment through lenses like surveillance, HIV data, and digital sex work. Though largely outside LIS, the collection calls on librarians and archivists to reconsider how queerness is (or is not) represented in data. The anthology offers not just critique but ethical frameworks for resistance, care, and survival.

This issue powerfully illustrates that information work is inseparable from the social and political realities that shape our lives. The authors gathered here do not merely describe injustice—they intervene in it, offering visions and practices rooted in care, resistance, and radical possibility. Their contributions remind us that LIS is not just a discipline but a responsibility: to listen deeply, act ethically, and reimagine our institutions as spaces of belonging and justice. The papers and reviews form an information ken - an epistemic range within an information landscape that conveys how broadly and deeply we LIS folk grasp how information functions in social, cultural, and community-based settings. The information ken is a powerful concept for thinking about access, awareness, discernment, and situated knowledge. As members of the information ken, we LIS scholars and practitioners insist that inclusion is not a checkbox or afterthought but a daily practice of courage, imagination, and reparation.

Journal News

Submissions for *The International Journal of Information, Diversity, & Inclusion (IJIDI)* are paused for the 2025 calendar year as the Editorial Board and Editorial Team prepare for the journal's 10th year anniversary, in 2026. Please be on the lookout for a reflective volume 10 (2026) to

celebrate the IJDI's ongoing journey of publishing innovative research, reports, editorials, creative contributions, and book reviews that centers and honors the beautiful diversity of information services and research in libraries, archives, museums, schools, and information centers worldwide.

For more information on the journal, visit:
<https://jps.library.utoronto.ca/index.php/ijidi/about>

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