

Links, Tips and Takeaways from the March 15-16, 2016 CODES CONVO on Diversity

Diversity Awards

- [Anisfield-Wolf Book Awards](#) - The Anisfield-Wolf Book Awards recognize books that have made important contributions to our understanding of racism and our appreciation of the rich diversity of human cultures. For over 80 years, the distinguished books earning Anisfield-Wolf prizes have opened and challenged our minds.
- [Amelia Bloomer Project Book List](#)- The Amelia Bloomer Project, a committee of the Feminist Task Force of the Social Responsibilities Round Table, compiles the Amelia Bloomer List, an annual annotated book list (or bibliography) of well-written and well-illustrated books with significant feminist content, intended for young readers (ages birth through 18).
- [American Indian Library Association Youth Literature Award](#)- An affiliate of the American Library Association, the American Indian Library Association is a membership action group that addresses the library-related needs of American Indians and Alaska Natives. The American Indian Youth Literature Award (AIYLA) was created as a way to identify and honor the very best writing and illustrations by and about American Indians. Books selected to receive the award will present American Indians in the fullness of their humanity in either past or present contexts. Nominations may be fiction or non-fiction. There may be up to three awards given every two years - Best Picture Book, Best Middle School Book, and Best Young Adult Book. (2016's winners here: <http://ailanet.org/2016-aiyla-announced/>)
- [Asian Pacific American Award for Literature](#) – Founded in 1980, the Asian Pacific American Librarians Association (APALA) was formally affiliated with the American Library Association in 1982. The goal of the APALA Award for Literature is to honor and recognize individual work about Asian/Pacific Americans and their heritage, based on literary and artistic merit. Awards are given in Adult Fiction, Adult Nonfiction, YA, Children's, and Picture Book.
- [Ezra Jack Keats Book Award](#) - Known collectively as the Ezra Jack Keats Book Awards, categories are New Writer Award, New Illustrator Award, and Honor Books. To new authors and illustrators who work “reflects the multicultural nature of our world.”
- [Stonewall Award](#) and [Rainbow Book List](#) – The first and most enduring award for GLBT books is the Stonewall Book Awards, sponsored by the American Library Association's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Round Table. Since Isabel Miller's *Patience and Sarah* received the first award in 1971, many other books have been honored for exceptional merit relating to the gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender experience. The Rainbow Book List contains books with significant gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or queer/questioning content aimed at youth through age 18. It is intended to aid youth in selecting high-quality books and as an aid in collection development or readers' advisory for librarians.
- [The Walter Dean Myers Award for Outstanding Children's Literature](#) - New award given by the We Need Diverse Books organization.

ALA Youth Media Awards:

- [Coretta Scott King Awards](#) - The Coretta Scott King Book Awards are given annually to outstanding African American authors and illustrators of books for children and young adults that demonstrate an appreciation of African American culture and universal human values.
- [Mildred L. Batchelder Award](#) - This award honors Mildred L. Batchelder, a former executive director of the Association for Library Service to Children, a believer in the importance of good books for children in translation from all parts of the world.

- [Pura Belpré Award](#) - The award is named after Pura Belpré, the first Latina librarian at the New York Public Library. The Pura Belpré Award, established in 1996, is presented annually to a Latino/Latina writer and illustrator whose work best portrays, affirms, and celebrates the Latino cultural experience in an outstanding work of literature for children and youth.
- [Schneider Family Book Award](#) - The Schneider Family Book Awards honor an author or illustrator for a book that embodies an artistic expression of the disability experience for child and adolescent audiences.

Encouraging more diversity in the industry

- [Lee and Low Survey on Diversity in Publishing](#)
- Seattle Public Library - [Send Us a Story: Door to a Pink Universe](#)
- [The Publishing Triangle](#): the association of lesbians and gay men in publishing
- PW: [Why Publishing Is So White](#)
- Put out the word about scholarships to library school available – [Wayne State University list of diversity scholarships available](#)
- Encourage new writers
 - Seattle Public Library - <http://shelftalkblog.wordpress.com/2016/01/28/send-us-a-story-door-to-a-pink-universe/>

Reviews of and lists of best of diverse books:

- [Disability in KidLit](#) – has a Tumblr account with booklists, a blog, books recommendations, a Goodreads account and more
- [ALA's Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgender Round Table Blog](#) – includes reviews
- [Mighty Girl](#) - for finding books about women/girls in history, science, technology, etc. (Caveat: some of these titles are older).
- [American Indians in Children's Literature](#) – has lists of best books by year plus a blog
- [People of Color in European Art History](#) – list of books
- [BookLust Book Reviews](#) – blogger Aarti is a Chicagoan who has been posting reviews since 2005
- [We Need Diverse Books Summer Reading Series](#)
- The Publishing Triangle – the association of lesbians and gay men in publishing – [The 100 Best Lesbian and Gay Novels](#)

- [We Need Diverse Books Read-Alikes Recommendations](#). The posts all have images with book covers and text like: “If you liked John Green’s and David Levithan’s WILL GRAYSON, WILL GRAYSON, read Eric Gansworth’s IF I EVER GET OUT OF HERE because both feature teens whose difficult lives are somehow, somewhat alleviated by the power of good music.”
- [We Need Diverse Books Summer Reading Series](#)
- [We Need Diverse Books End of the Year Booklists](#)
- Seattle Public Library Shelf Talk blog – [Reading Race](#)
- [Goodreads Listopia Diversity Book Lists](#)
- [Books by Black Authors to Look Forward to in 2016](#)
- [2016 Books from Coretta Scott King Winners](#)
- [A New Year, A New List of Books: At Least 45 New Latin@ titles Releasing in 2016](#)

Websites, Tweets, and Blogs:

- [PFLAG](#) – Parents, Families, Friends, and Allies United with LGBTQ People
- [American Indians in Children's Literature](#) – Provides critical perspectives and analysis of indigenous peoples in children’s and young adult books, the school curriculum, popular culture, and society.
- [ALA Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Round Table](#)
- [Children's Book Council Diversity Blog](#) – also has a Goodreads bookshelf.
- [BookLust](#) – Blogger Aarti has a “Diversiverse” reading challenge yearly.
- [We Need Diverse Books](#) – lots of resources, including [Where to Find Diverse Books](#)
- [Rich in Color](#) – dedicated to reading, reviewing, talking about, and otherwise promoting young adult fiction starring or written by people of color or people from First/Native Nations.
- [I’m Your Neighbor Books blog](#) – children’s books and reading projects building bridges between “new arrivals” and “long-term communities.”
- [OMG, We Do Exist!](#) – blog
- [Tor.com](#) does a good job of highlighting diversity; one example – [In History and Fantasy, Diversity Is the Tradition](#)
- #ReadinColor and #ReadinColour
- Some authors to follow: Nnedi Okorafor, John Scalzi, Mary Robinette Kowal, Tobias Buckell, Daniel José Older, Kelly Sue DeConnick, Saladin Ahmed.
- [Latinos/as in Kid Lit](#)
- [Book Riot](#)

- [Early Word](#)
- [Smart Bitches, Trashy Books](#)
- [The Guardian Books](#)
- [Entertainment Weekly Books](#)

Publishers of Note:

- [Lee and Low](#) publish some great diverse books.
- [Bold Strokes Books](#) – gay and especially lesbian fiction; includes some Stonewall winners
- [Amistad Press](#) – an imprint of HarperCollins
- [Dafina](#) – an imprint of Kensington
- [Walk Worthy Press](#) – African American Christian fiction
- [Kensington](#) - Gay and Lesbian Books
- [Triple Crown](#) – Urban fiction
- [Urban Books](#) – Urban fiction
- [Salaam Reads](#) – an imprint of Simon & Schuster

Tips:

- [PW: How Independent Booksellers Hand-Sell and Merchandise Diverse Books](#)
- “To try and broaden my reading I’ve gotten involved with annual reading challenges. For example, this year I’m trying [Book Riot’s Read Harder Challenge](#) and a couple of the [Challenges at Worlds Without End](#) all of which are introducing me to new and fabulous authors--in fiction and non-fiction.”
- [Grace Lin Blog “A Cheat Sheet for Selling Diversity”](#) - in 2014 Grace Lin created and shared a “selling diversity cheat sheet” focusing on aspects of stories that were universally appealing without making the diversity aspect the only thing the librarian or bookseller knows about the book.
- [African American Literature Book Club](#) – Discussion boards, book club reading lists, more.
- For me supporting diverse lit looks like doing booklists like these:

<http://library.booksite.com/6196/nl/?list=CNL1&group=EB23>

<http://library.booksite.com/6196/nl/?list=CNL1&group=EB30>

- Should diverse books be pulled into separate sections? "It's a hard question! My own position has evolved from "OMG, you're breaking my heart, STOP DOING THIS" to "yeah, okay, I get why you do it. I don't like it, but that's just my opinion. (but think about not doing it, please?) People tend to have really strong feelings...which is why I asked, actually. Good points on both sides."
- CBC Radio – [Books About Muslim Kids Needed "urgently"](#)
- Seattle Public Library [Spanish language Facebook page](#)
- If you have NoveList, do a keyword search for "Diversity" and then selected the "Lists & Articles" tab for a nice range of recent content on the topic.
- Regardless of what their official position is in the library hierarchy, if you have diverse staff members, if you're making booklists, ask their opinion. Ask who they'd love to see at a library program. Ask what they're loving on tv, or in music, or what graphic novels they're reading, or what podcasts they're listening to. So much of the diversity issues can start to be solved by just diversifying your circles."
- Worldview can affect nonfiction RA as well. If a patron wants to read a bio of a world leader, do you skew Ghandi and Jimmy Carter or Steve Jobs, or Condie Rice, or Genghis Khan?
- "A strategy that I find speaks directly to the importance of community and customer service in relation to urban fiction is to be aware of multiple facets of searching and committing a few authors, publishers and search terms to memory. I have many stories of customers going from hesitant to at home in the library when I have been able to rattle off authors like Wahida Clark, Treasure Hernandez, Ashley and JaQuavis Coleman, as well as being able to spell K'wan without assistance. They expected me to know Sista Souljah and Zane because they are closer to mainstream, and show appreciate and comfort that they don't have an uphill battle as we discuss their next reading adventure."
- "The most important thing I think we need to start teaching is the difference between Urban Fiction and Urban Fantasy. I see this error all the time and it bothers me."
- "My job, as I see it, is to applaud their preference in whatever it happens to be, do a few name drops so they know I grok their preference and further express my acceptance of them and anything they might be about to tell me by asking open ended questions with wide-eyed fascination and open body language. A white-haired 4'2" bedazzled customer once leaned in close and confessed, "I read trashy books" to which I replied, "We all do. How trashy do you like them?" Her shoulders relaxed, her face beamed and after a deep breath, she proceeded to give me 2-3 minutes of a beautiful map of advisory sign posts that led us to a whole new author for her that she is still devouring."
- "Speaking from more of a collection development point of view, I think it's key that if we expect public services staff to promote collections and perform readers advisory, that we do everything we can to build collections that will appeal to every community."
- "The Census Bureau says that by 2020, only four years from now, a majority of the children in this country will be part of what is now a minority race or ethnic group. And that's not even counting gay children."
- "Perhaps because we're a largely white field, or because our culture normalizes a white viewpoint as a "neutral" viewpoint, when we talk about diversity it's often presumed the direction is from white to POC."
- "Last year we did a summer book bingo for adults, which was really successful and a great experience I think. One of the squares was #WeNeedDiverseBooks, and we had an African American patron who came up to the desk and asked what that meant for her. Did it mean she read a book by a non-white author or non cis gendered author? Or an author who wasn't from her background?" "We're still treating the white experience and voice as the default."

Worth Reading or Watching or Listening To:

- Daniel Jose Older Podcast - http://ala.adobeconnect.com/_a1087453682/p5yipzvrsfi/?launcher=false&fcsContent=true&pbMode=normal
More about Daniel – <http://ghoststar.net>
- The new issue (Jan-Feb, 2016) of *Public Libraries Magazine* is dedicated to Diversity.
- Walk Boldly Toward Your Biases TED Talk - http://www.ted.com/talks/verna_myers_how_to_overcome_our_biases_walk_boldly_toward_them
- Bitchmedia - [Do Girls of Color Survive Dystopia?](#)
- Lee and Low Books - [Where are the People of Color in Dystopias?](#)
- The Show Me Librarian - [Selection Is a Privilege](#)
- Ellen Oh - [Dear White Writers](#) – plus a [follow up post](#), and [Libba Bray wrote a response](#) as well.
- Collection Reflection – [The Black Shelves Are Over There](#)
- Book Riot - [5 Reasons Straight Women Should Read Lesbian Books](#)
- The Guardian – [Science Fiction and Fantasy Look Ahead to a Diverse 2016](#)
- Wired – [Sci-fi's Gamergate - How the Hugos were torn apart over diversity](#)
- Jezebel – [Inside the Push for a More Diverse Romance Genre](#)
- Pam Noles - [Shame](#)
- Keren Dali – [Immigrant Readers](#)
- Kate Gramlich, Lawrence Public Library - [Why I'm Actively Avoiding Books by White Dudes](#)
- Los Angeles Times – [Book club helps immigrant mothers find joy in reading and support their kids' education](#)
- Rudine Sims Bishop – [“Mirrors, Windows, and Sliding Glass Doors”](#)
- Claire Vaye Watkins – [“On Pandering”](#)

Issues, Tips, Quotes, and Takeaways:

- What if you live in a small town where patrons may feel they can't relate to diverse authors?
 - Proactively include diverse books in any displays you make.

- Talk up the book first...what it's about, the characters, etc. Once the reader is hooked on the book, the ethnicity becomes incidental.
- "There is so much crossover in media. Before I was born, Motown records were selling across racial lines. Everyone watched The Jeffersons in the 70s/80s. The Cosby Show/ A Different World in the 80s/90s. The Wire. Now Empire and Scandal. Shonda Rhimes owns most people's Thursday nights, regardless of ethnicity. Why on earth should books be any different?"
- Choosing books with diverse characters
 - Make sure they are not actively oppressive or offensive to marginalized readers. Not just diverse books, but books that are affirming of diversity.
 - Look beyond best of lists and read reviews from sources that reflect the audience you want to reach.
 - Don't forget the illustrations. Do they show diversity?
 - Make sure the collection reflects your community. Analyzing neighborhood demographics should be something we all do.
 - Make sure your collection is about the readers, not yourself. Are we by default looking at books through the eyes of older white ladies? Millennials now outnumber Baby Boomers.
- Don't just wait for the designated heritage month to promote diverse books.
- The Blush Factor: would you be embarrassed if the mayor or someone else pointed out a huge gap or a particular title missing from your collection?
- Read or listen to articles, blogs, reviews, op-eds, podcasts, and recommendations from a diverse group of writers and presenters, and sources.
- How diverse is your collection in nonfiction like science, health, and business, or job search information?
- To try and broaden my reading I've gotten involved with annual reading challenges. For example, this year I'm trying Book Riot's Read Harder Challenge (<http://bookriot.com/2015/12/15/2016-book-riot-read-harder-challenge/>) and a couple of the Challenges at Worlds Without End (http://worldswithoutend.com/rollyourown_challenge.asp) all of which are introducing me to new and fabulous authors--in fiction and non-fiction.
- When you struggle to keep a balance between circulation and diversity, remember that you can add a great book and then help it find its reader by promoting it in a blog post or staff communication or display.
- For YA and juvenile, I tend to seek out #WeNeedDiverseBooks in all its online homes (tumblr, twitter, and their website.) They have an [awesome resource list](#) on this topic as well! A [speech given by Jewell Parker Rhodes](#) at last year's ABA Children's Institute might inspire further conversation.
- "I think the collection's role is not just to reflect the local community—yes, that's important—but is to not assume that homogeneity of populace equals homogeneity of interest. As we know from LGBTQ literature and civil rights literature, these works made people feel less alone, especially in communities where this was not the accepted 'norm' of the time."
- "I'm gonna push on the idea of the collection should look like the community. I think that was a great starting point, but I think we're ready to move ahead a little bit and say that diverse books (racial, sexual preference, gender identity, religion) are for everyone, regardless of the populations that make up the community. Being able (or given the chance) to live in a fictional world with diverse people, to empathize with, and to fall in love with diverse characters written from a diverse perspective is KEY to humanizing people. I think that's valuable to everyone, not just to diverse communities."
- Ursula K. Le Guin once said this:

"I have received letters that broke my heart, from adolescents of color in this country and in England, telling me that when they realized that Ged and the other Archipelagans in the Earthsea books are not white people, they felt included in the world of literary and movie fantasy for the first time." — Speech to the Book Expo America children's literature breakfast, June, 4, 2004.
- "One thing that has come up for me is how readers of color might feel about white authors writing characters of color. While publishing has still not caught up with demand and is not signing enough writers of color, do books by white authors featuring POC characters count?"
- "Ben Aaronovitch has a series, Rivers of London, that has a fabulous diverse cast. He is a white British writer. I certainly still handsell this book like crazy, but I don't put it on booklists or displays. I feel like it doesn't "count."

- Helen Haines one of my librarian heroes wrote in "Living with Books" that: Reading novels written in other countries allows the reader to "realize the kinship of the human family and see our own emotions and experiences repeated or interpreted in the emotions and experience of others." An openness to all sorts of writing both builds a stronger readers' advisor as well as a stronger community.
- "If I see things are 0 circ at a branch, especially if it's one of our remote branches, I'll pull it in and send it to a bigger location, add it to a booklist, try and give it some sort of tie in to something popular (Hamilton inspired list, for instance) ANYTHING. Because visibility is a big reason why circ stats may not reflect the interest. When you're surrounded by books all the time, it's hard to remember that most people DON'T have a chance to see what we see, and that most people don't spend all day researching what's new. They have a finite amount of time to spend on browsing (in person or online) and they can only check out what they know about. Which is why circ stats tell a story, but not the entire story."
- "I struggle with the concept of special months because they always smack of tokenization for me."
- Diversity in programming: "The first year we had a great lineup of local writers teaching classes, and after it was all planned we did some reflecting and realized that all of our teachers were white women. Fantastic white women, but still. In the past two years, we've made a concentrated effort to seek out more diverse excellent local talent."
- "Maybe by starting small, like encouraging some of our library book clubs to read outside their comfort zone, we can get those readers to start talking about books featuring diverse characters or by authors of color."
- "Also, look at which authors you're bringing in to do readings/talks."
- NovelList Search Strategy – [Finding Books That Have Diverse Characters](#)

Favorite Authors:

- Octavia E. Butler
- Jhumpa Lahiri
- Ellen Hart
- Laurie King
- Lori L. Lake
- Sandra Scoppettone
- Joe Lansdale
- Val McDermid
- Nnedi Okorafor
- N.K. Jemisin
- Nalo Hopkinson
- L.A. Banks
- Nalini Singh
- Linda Rodriguez
- Chris Culver
- Beverly Jenkins
- Sara Sue Hoklotubbe
- Samuel R. Delany
- Nisi Shawl
- Walter Mosley
- David Anthony Durham
- Kimberla Lawson Roby
- Matt Ruff – *Lovecraft Country*
- Gar Anthony Haywood
- Courtney Moran
- Rachel Howzell Hall's "Elouise Norton" series
- L. Penelope's "Earthsinger Chronicles" books starting with "Song of Blood & Stone"
- Elliott Kay's "Poor Man's Fight" series. Military SF
- Charles Saunders – Imaro
- Melissa Blue's Under the Kilt series

- Tasha Harrison's Lust diaries series
- Piper Hughley -- historical Af-Am romance
- Alisha Rai (also erotic romance, heavy on both)
- Sonali Dev - Nana Malone
- Nadia Hashimi - A House Without Windows
- K.J. Charles
- Joanna Chambers
- Heidi Cullinan
- Miyuki Miyabe - *Brave Story*
- Find more diverse mystery authors here: <http://www.stopyourekillingme.com/DiversityCats/index.html>
- Flavorwire - [10 Diverse Sci-Fi Authors You Should Know](#)