

CLINTON-MACOMB PUBLIC LIBRARY



PICTURE BOOK DIVERSITY AUDIT REPORT

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ABOUT THE PROJECT

CMPL Diversity Collection Audit Statement of Purpose

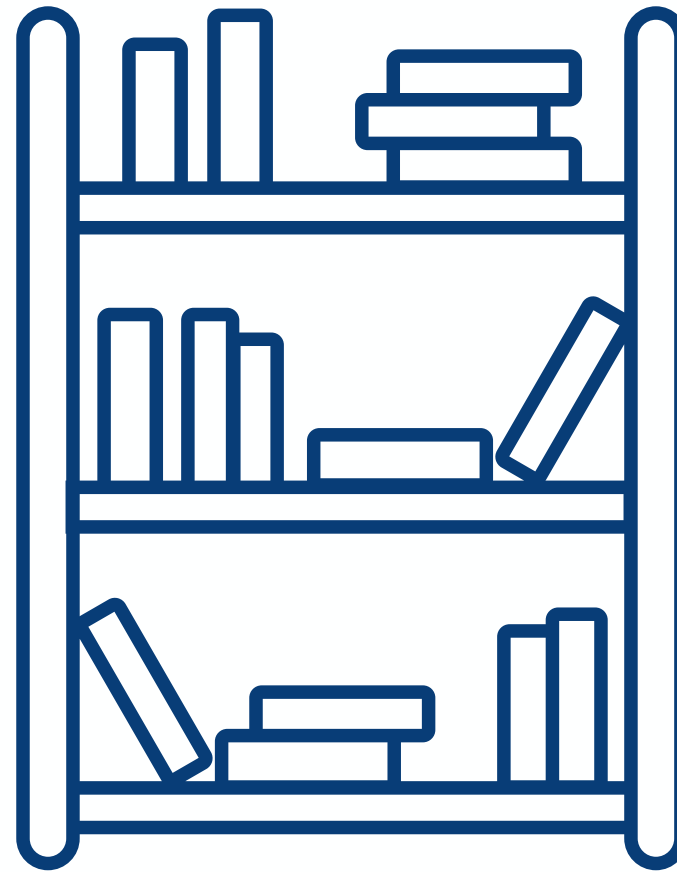
"Our purpose in conducting a diversity audit is to develop a baseline understanding of how our collection does or does not represent our local and global communities and to pinpoint areas for improvement in collection development."

ABOUT OUR WORK

Using their Picture Books data set, we analyzed the data collected, created data visualizations and researched best practices and recommended future actions. Ideally, the Clinton-Macomb Public Library will be able to replicate our process for the remaining categories to complete their DEI Report for library staff and the management team.

ABOUT DIVERSITY AUDITS

"A diversity audit is basically doing an inventory of a collection to determine the amount of diversity within the collection. It's a way of analyzing collection data to make sure that we include a wide variety of points of view, experiences and representations within a collection. Our goal is to provide a well-balanced collection that can be both a mirror (reflect a reader's experience) and a window (so readers can experience different experiences and points of view)" Jansen (2020).



"The goal isn't to work towards achieving certain numbers; instead, the goal is to collect measurable and usable data that helps us better focus our efforts and do some serious self/system analysis so that we can continue to grow and improve in intentional ways to serve our patrons" Jansen (2020).

A well-conducted Diversity Audit allows libraries to concretely measure the representation of marginalized identities and experiences in their collections and also examine the nature of representation in those materials.



WORKING WITH THE AUDIT DATA

377

**Picture Book
Titles**

**INFORMATION
COLLECTED ABOUT:**

Authors

Illustrators

Main Characters

Side Characters

Race/Ethnicity

Gender

Religion

Sexual Orientation

Human/Animal/Object

Circulation Statistics

"Own Voices"

AN IMPORTANT NOTE:

Though 377 titles were audited, you may notice that in some of our graphs, the numbers don't add up to 377. This could be due to a number of reasons: comprehensive information could not be found by the auditors, certain demographic information did not apply (i.e. race/ethnicity for a book with an inanimate object for a main character), etc.

Therefore, when considering our findings, it is important to keep in mind the context of the data and the limitations we were working within. Though not all our findings were "conclusive," they still offer valuable insights about CMPL's picture book collection.

IMPERFECT DATA

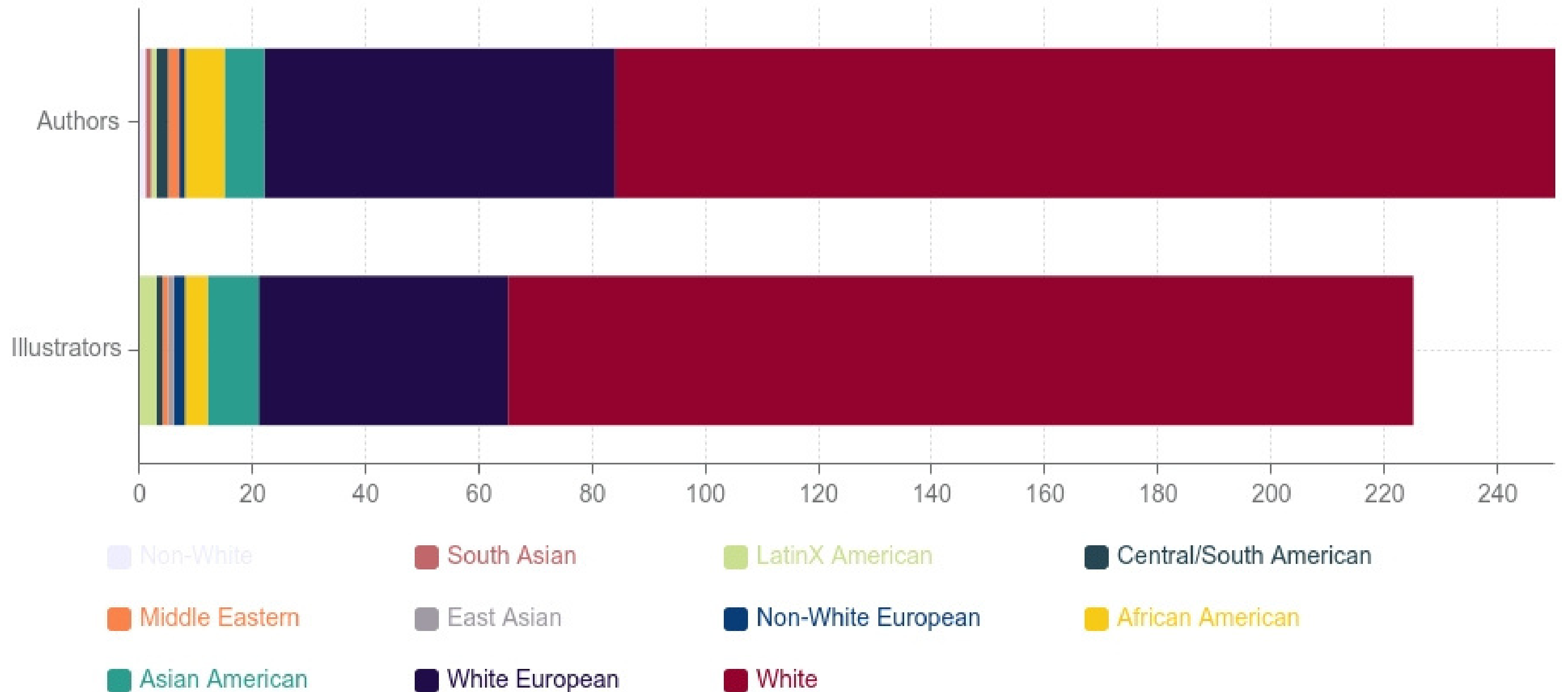
IS BETTER THAN

NO DATA AT ALL.

WHOSE VOICES DO WE HEAR; WHOSE IMAGINATION DO WE SEE?



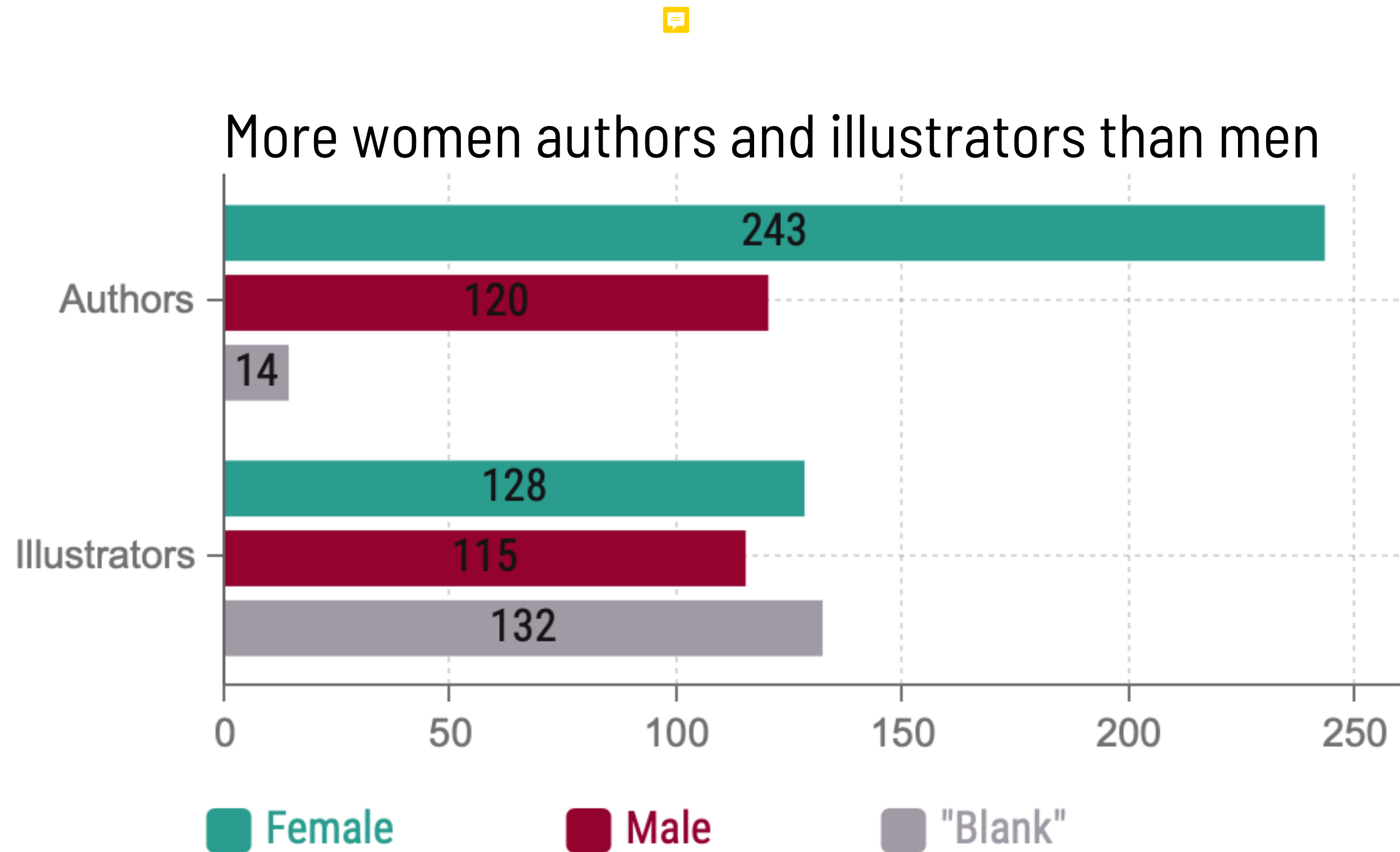
Lack of racial/ethnic diversity in picture book author and illustrators



Picture book authors and illustrators are more often women than men, and are overwhelmingly white, with very few BIPOC voices represented. The graphs on the following slides illustrate the racial/ethnic and gender breakdowns of authors and illustrators.

WHOSE VOICES DO WE HEAR; WHOSE IMAGINATION DO WE SEE?

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9

TITLES
CATEGORIZED
AS "OWN VOICES"



2

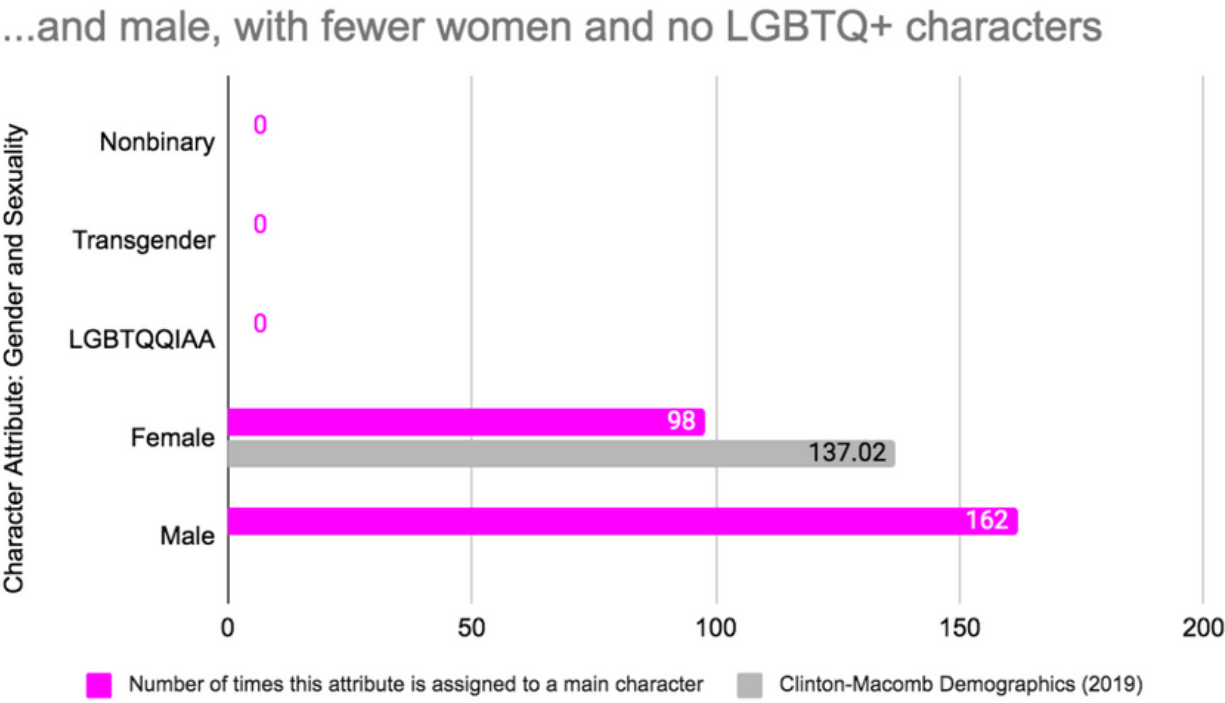
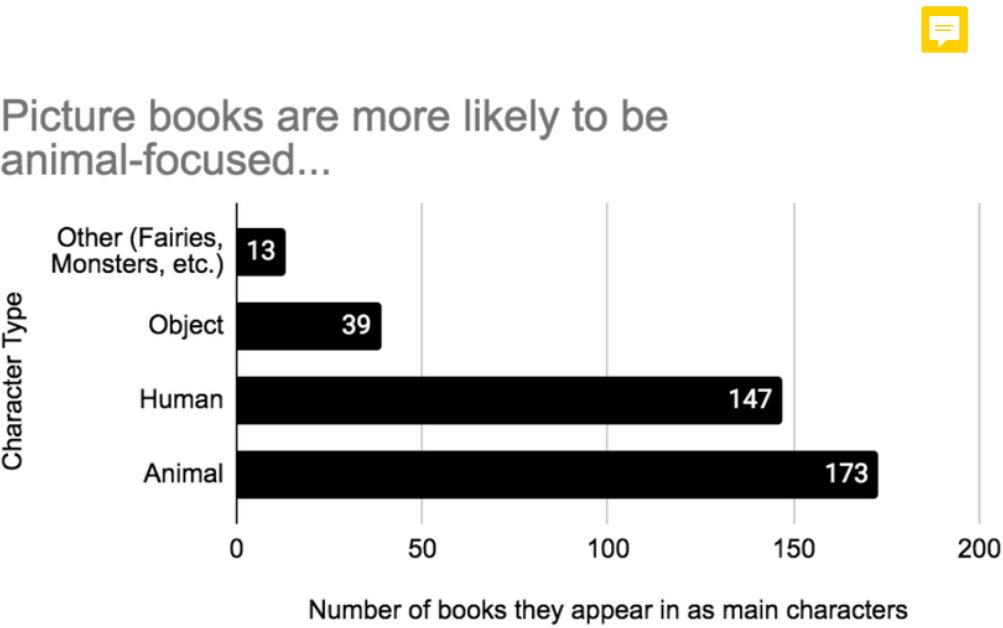
TITLES MET
"INTERSECTIONALITY"
CRITERIA



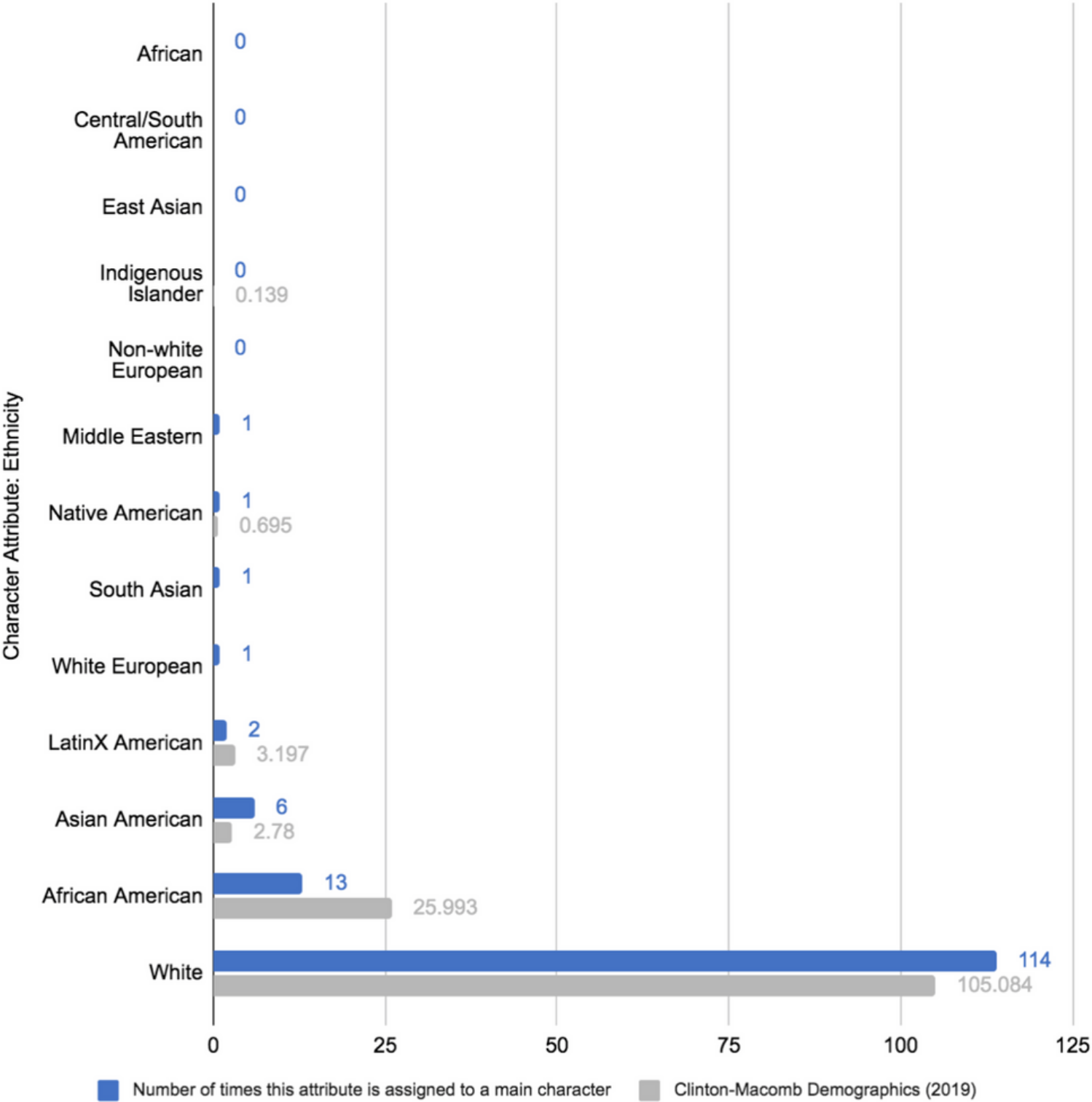
"Own Voices" refers to characters with marginalized identities being written or drawn by authors and illustrators holding those same marginalized identities. "Intersectionality" in the audit was met if a character held two or more marginalized identities.

THE MAIN CHARACTERS: WHO TAKES CENTER STAGE?

While picture books are more likely to have animals as main characters, when they are human, the majority of these characters are white and male. No LGBTQ+ characters were represented, and only 5 characters were associated with any religions (2 Christian and 3 Jewish.)

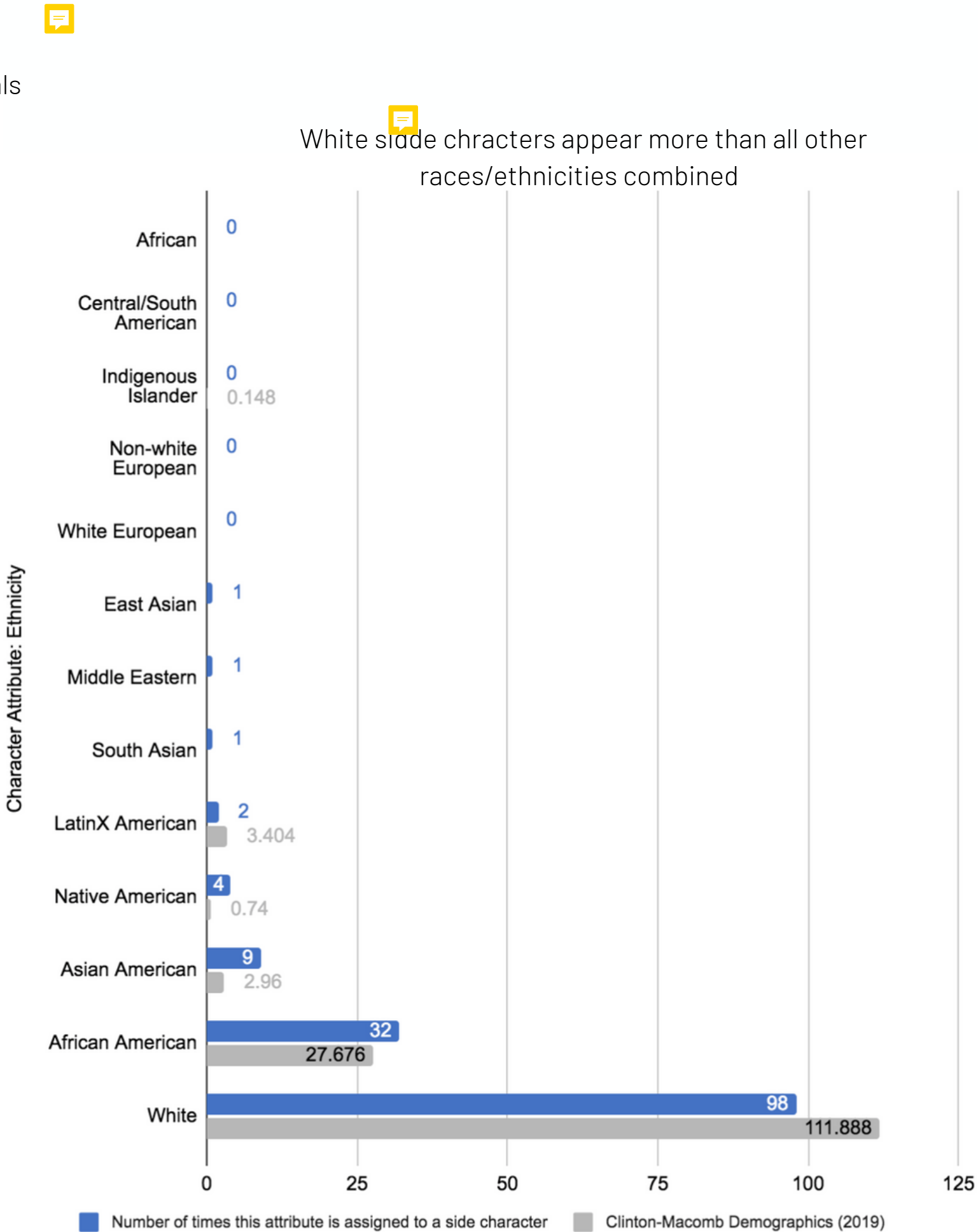
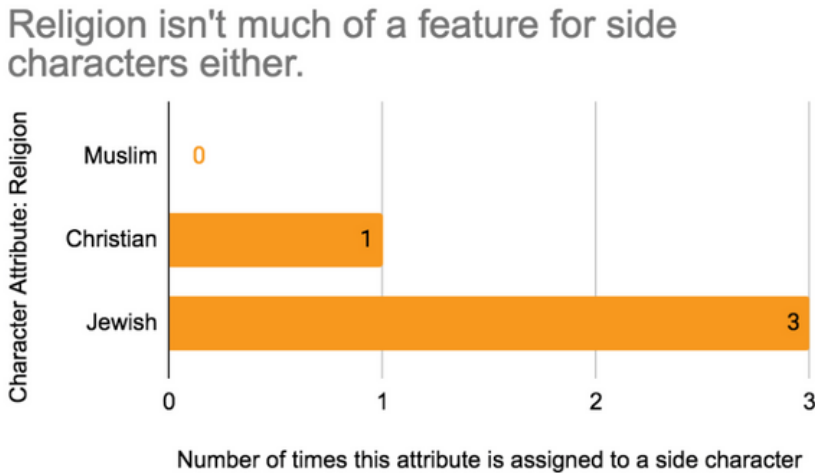
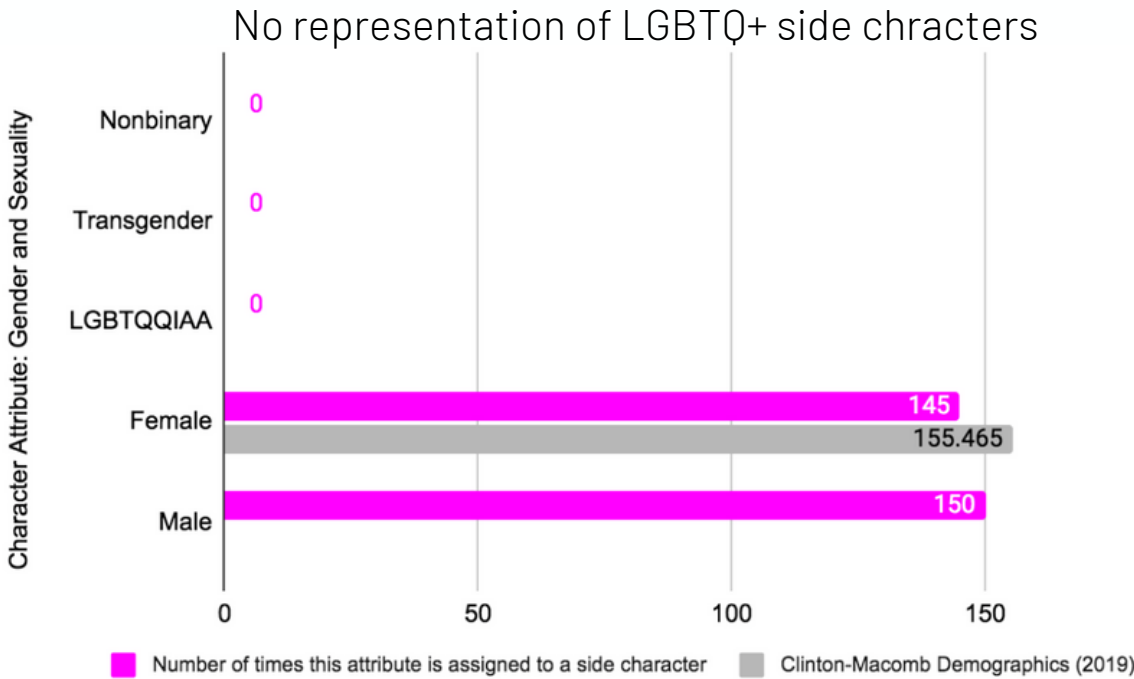
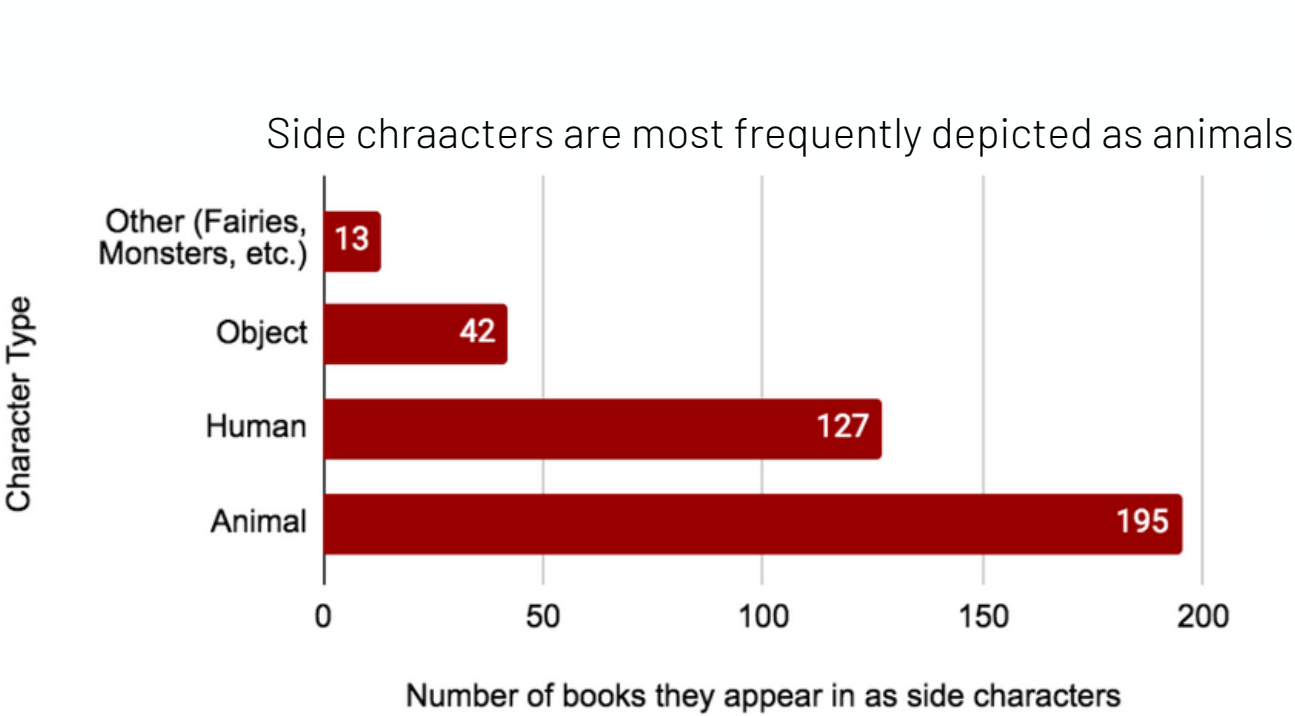


Picture books' main characters are overwhelmingly white...



NOT THE HERO OR THE STAR, JUST ALONG FOR THE RIDE...

The diversity of side characters (or lack thereof) was similar to that of main characters. While the (cis)gender characters are more evenly balanced, there are no LGBTQ+ or religious side characters, and they are also almost all white.





TWENTY-FIVE MOST CIRCULATED TITLES

ALL
authors,
illustrators, and
(human) main
characters
are white

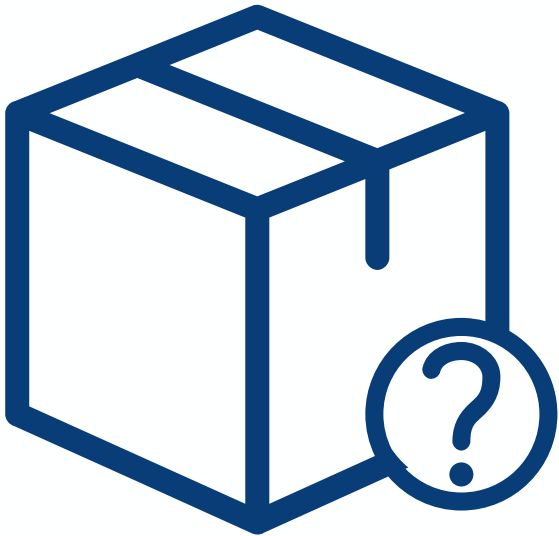
Characters tend to
be animals, and are
more often male than
female

Non-white characters
only show up as side
characters, and are
still outnumbered by
white characters

There are no LGBTQ+
characters
represented.

RECOMMENDATIONS: PATRONG ENGAGEMENT

"Blind Date with a Book"



Another option that is popular around Valentine's Day (but could be done at any time of the year) is a "Blind Date With a Book" display. Because the books are wrapped and patrons make selections based on the descriptions staff write on the cover, patrons have no way of knowing exactly what book they've selected until they check out. Patrons may be more open-minded about the book selected, since the element of uncertainty is part of the appeal of participating.

Book Club Kits



Many libraries also offer "book club kits" that contain multiple copies of a book (with different offerings for different reading levels and/or interests) as well as discussion questions and other resources to guide book club meetings. This is another potential way to introduce patrons to more diverse literature and supplemental materials could support their understanding and engagement, as well.

Readers' Advisory



Diversifying a collection does not mean ignoring or getting rid of such books, and they can even be a useful starting point to showcase more literature. Consider which books are popular with your patrons, and offer other, more diverse books with similar themes, plots, or topics that patrons might otherwise not know about (i.e. "If you loved X, then you might like Y.")

Cultural Calendars



Referencing and planning around various calendars to know when heritage, awareness and acceptance months; religious and cultural holidays; and significant historical dates would bring a global perspective to concepts of "diversity" and creates space for literature that is not US-centric. This can be used to plan displays and programs for patrons, as well as planning educational and professional development opportunities for staff.

RECOMMENDATIONS: LIBRARY STAFF OPPORTUNITIES



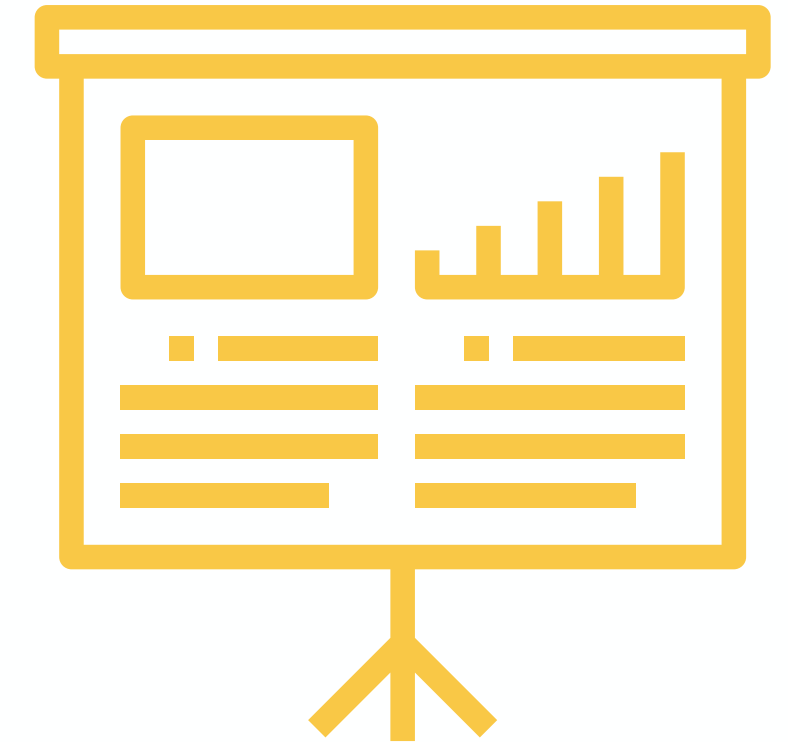
Lunch and Learn Sessions

These are usually voluntary, informal conversations or presentations that happen during a lunch hour, and can be a good way of bringing together different groups of people (such as staff members in different departments that may not interact with each other often) to learn about or discuss a particular topic. These can be “brown bag” sessions where participants bring their own lunches, or catered by the library.



Intergroup Dialogues

Intergroup dialogue is a specific dialogic process that utilizes a trained (usually peer) facilitator to help a group explore and reflect on the ways in which their own social identities and experiences have shaped their values and perspectives, and how all of these fit into a larger social narrative. Intergroup dialogues are longer-term commitment, as they are typically multiple sessions and do require participant investment.



Workshops and Trainings

While knowledge about DEI concepts and social justice issues is very important, being able to engage with different members of the community in respectful and productive ways is just as essential to creating more inclusive and equitable spaces. Workshops or trainings around “soft skills” such as interpersonal communication, cultural competence, conflict resolution, etc are professional development opportunities that provide space for such learning.

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