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DEIMAGAZINE.UK

DEI magazine

HOW CAN YOU IMPLEMENT DEI?

Interview with Noorie
Yasmin

TRANSGENDER EQUALITY

Interview



#PublishingPaidMe

DIVERSITY IN PUBLISHING

EDITOR'S NOTE



Marcella Rielli (she/her)
DEI Magazine

 /marcella-rielli
 @DEIMagazine

We need to be the best version of ourselves and be an example to younger generations to become unbiased adults. We're all responsible for doing our part every day.

It's time to make a change

It's time to change. Actually, it's overdue. I'm from the early 80s, which means my generation experience childhood and even University without the internet, social media and smartphones.

When I reflect on that, I feel lucky because my generation had transitioned to the digital age when we were still young adults. It gave us enough time and a suitable platform to start acknowledging the many elephants in the room and being able to make a change.

I know we won't change the world in a day. Still, we planted the seed and grew to be more understanding and acceptable to changes. Everyone has the right to be whom they want to be, make their choices, be happy and be accepted.

If we start educating the adults now, they will pass it on to the children, our future unbiased adults. Well, that's the hope and what we're fighting for, equality, a world where everyone belongs without prejudice, hate, and violence. A world where you can just **be you**.

Marcella Rielli
Editor, DEI Magazine

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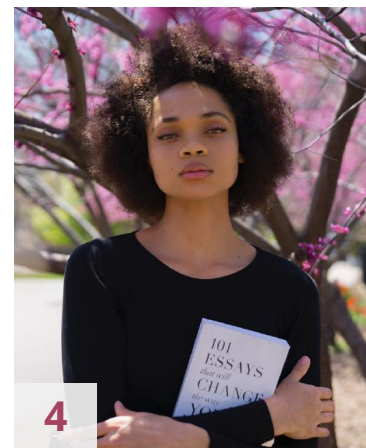
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DIVERSITY IN PUBLISHING

Is it time to re-think diversity in Publishing? What's happening to this predominantly white industry, and how to make a change?

BY MARCELLA RIELLI

The creator of [#PublishingPaidMe](#), L.L. McKinney, is an American author of young adult literature. In June 2020, McKinney created the hashtag to highlight racial disparities between Black and non-Black authors' advances payments. She claimed the hashtag was intended to start **"an uncomfortable discussion of what [non-Black authors] make compared to us"**.

The campaign showed in numbers how biased the industry is and has always been. If publishers choose to invest in white authors only, this affects which books will succeed. Whilst unknown white authors were receiving hundreds of thousands in advances, sometimes up to 800k, well-known black authors and award winners like Jesmyn Ward were getting 25k advances.

Inequality is rampant through publishing at every stage. The pay is so extraordinarily unequal and the #PublishingPaidMe hashtag really showed us the inequality that exists, where a Black writer with even a big following might be getting three, five, ten times less than a white author that isn't equal at all in terms of audience

Rebekah Borucki

Is it time to re-think diversity and inclusion in Publishing?

Transparency is key to disrupting the cycle of inequality. Rebekah Borucki, the Founder and President of [Row House Publishing](#), an independent publisher with a mission to create equitable publishing representing the diversity of the authors, has spoken to [Forbes](#) about the lack of representation in the industry and how accountability is crucial to change a company's culture.

At Row House, all authors are offered the same \$40k in advance and 40% of the royalty profit share. **"Accountability is really about shedding lights on what's dark. We've already seen how disruptive and game-changing it can be when your intention is to truly be inclusive. We welcome the challenge to do better,"** Borucki said.

[Penguin Random House](#) and [Hachette](#), revealed that only 2.7% of their (both) staff are black. In 2020, The Guardian reported that just [5% of children's books](#) have BAME main characters, which is an improvement from 1% in 2017. There are more animals as lead characters than children from minority ethnic groups.

There is a clear correlation between the number of white people working in the industry compared to the number of people of colour and the number of Black authors with books published. The [Publishers Association](#) released

a diversity survey of the publishing workforce in the UK in 2020 with over 14k employees from over 71 businesses. It turns out that the representation of people from Black Asian and minority ethnic groups has remained the same at around 13% since 2017.

LL. McKinney said she's heard the phrase, "We already have our Black girl book for the year." She also remembered comments suggesting books wouldn't sell well if they had a Black person on the cover. "It's amusing to me when publishers say that they follow the market," said McKinney. "They're doing it because of tradition. And the tradition is racism."

One way to start changing these demographics is by employing a more diverse workforce. The Publisher's Association has developed an [action plan for publishing house workers](#) to tackle inclusivity in the industry to represent the UK population better. The aim is to ensure progress in raising the numbers of ethnic groups and women's leadership in the next five years.

“It’s amusing to me when publishers say that they follow the market. They’re doing it because of tradition. And the tradition is racism”

LL. McKinney

THE "T" IN LGBTQI+

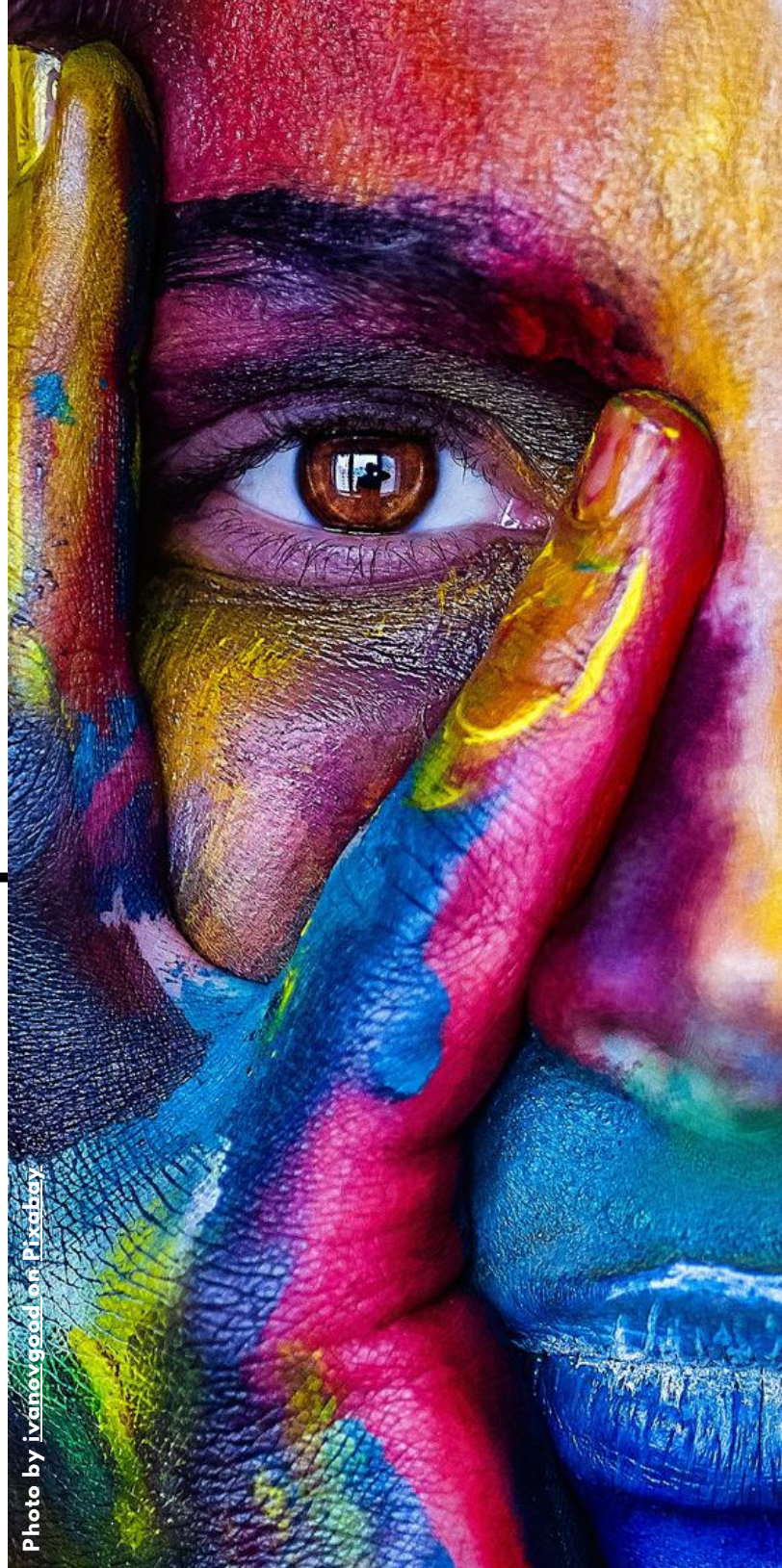
This month's focus in the LGBTQI+ community will be on transgender equality. I spoke to a transgender woman who chose to remain anonymous, and she shared a few insights from her experience.

BY MARCELLA RIELLI


"I am transgender, and I am a woman". J.P. stated to raccont when she decided to transition. "I was afraid to come out at work, and it took me years to finally have the courage to be my true self. I wanted to ensure the company and my colleagues would also accept the 'new' but real me," J.P. said.

"Coming out at an older age isn't easier as some people believe. Imagine your entire life your family, friends, colleagues have known you as man, even though I never felt like one. For me it's a burden I carried my whole life, but for them it's a brand new information."

J.P. has been working in the same technology company for almost six years. She mentioned that when everyone started engaging in DEI activities being implemented, she felt secure to finally fully transition and stop having a double life as she described. "I was ready to face that part of my life that was also so important to me. I now don't need to live two lives anymore, I feel free."



J.P. knew she was different during her whole childhood, but because her parents never spoke about it and she didn't know anyone like her, she felt confused and an aberration. "I was scared to say something to a friend and be laughed at or called a freak," she said. "When you are a child in the early 80s, this isn't a conversation topic for a child to have."



TRANSGENDER EQUALITY

Luckily for J.P., although of age, her parents were very understanding and said they just wanted her to be happy. She mentioned that her mother had told her that she somehow knew J.P. was dealing with something, but she just didn't know how to approach her. **"I understand my mother's position as her generation is very conservative, so I'm just feeling blessed for knowing they're both on my side,"** J.P. said.

I asked J.P. if she would be willing to share about her relationships or talk about the surgeries, which are topics many people have questions about regarding being a transgender woman or man. She told me that although she has done top surgery, she isn't certain about bottom surgery. "I believe that at my age, there is a lot more to consider and I have also gone through many challenges in my life. It's a very personal decision for every transgender person, so I still haven't decided about bottom surgery, even though I know it would truly make me feel complete as a woman. I assure you if I were in my teens I would have gone through it."

Regarding being in a relationship, J.P. laughed that it is a 'project on hold' because of the judgmental looks and questions due to her appearance. "I always wonder what they expected by being with a transgender woman. Because I transitioned long after puberty, I don't have feminine traces and my voice is deep, so when they see me, they usually look surprised and uninterested. It's hard but I came to terms with it and taking a break for now."

"I was ready to face that part of my life that was also so important to me. I now don't need to live two lives anymore, I feel free."

In reality, J.P. told me she had faced many more challenges with her family. "I'm not welcome at some of my relatives' homes, which means I can't for example spend Christmas with everyone at the same time. This isn't easy but if they can't accept and love me for who I am then I guess I also cannot accept their discrimination anymore."

TRANSGENDER EQUALITY

I asked J.P. if there was anything else she would like to address or add to the conversation. She said she wanted to talk about acceptance and respect. "We, transgenders, are not asking everyone to understand who we are. **We're only asking for acceptance and respect.** You don't need to talk to me at work, for example, but respect the fact that having a gender-neutral bathroom as an addition might be important not only for transgender people but for non-binary people as well." With the *Bathroom Bill* in place in the United States, explained in this feature, this has been debatable in many universities and workplaces worldwide.

"Not everyone agrees with a gender-neutral bathroom. When I say everyone, I mean the cisgender people. I understand, that's why we're pledging at work for an additional bathroom as part of the inclusion implementation. Luckily for me, I can use the female's bathroom for now but imagine in the United States, where they're not allowed in some states. It's unbearable to think about it."

"Also, be mindful of the person's pronouns. It feels really good when people address you by the pronoun you assigned yourself and not by what they think your pronoun should be. **I would encourage all companies and universities to recommend that everyone add their pronouns to their virtual calls or email signatures. It makes a massive difference and we feel we have allies supporting us. There's no better feeling than being accepted and loved.**"

I asked her if she had any advice she would like to share or if there is anything she would tell her younger self if she could:



Photo by Dean Shim on Pexels

“Don't be afraid of who you are; love yourself, and talk to your family and friends. You need them by your side, and they deserve to know the real you, and so do you. By transitioning, you will become your own true happy self.”



Photo by Steven Pisano on Flickr (Grand Marshall Jazz Jennings), Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0)

Understanding Being Transgender with Jazz Jennings

Have you heard of Jazz Jennings? She is a transgender woman who knew that she was a girl since she was two years old. At six years old, she went on YouTube to tell her story. Today, she's a Harvard student, and although she went through several challenges, she's still advocating for transgender equality joining the Black Trans movement and Protect Trans Kids.

Jazz also had her American reality show on TLC for seven years named *I am Jazz*. Her story and the way her family supports her, as expected, create many controversies. At the same time, you truly connect with her daily struggles and learn more about the LGBTQI+ community.

Why do we need to learn about being transgender or the LGBTQI+ community? For instance, it allows the young LGBTQI+ youth to feel less isolated and safe to talk about it with their parents. In addition, non-LGBTQI+ children and teens can become allies to their peers from a young age. The more adults are educated and talk to their children, the higher the odds for bias-free behaviour in the future. Schools and universities have the responsibility to offer a safe space for all.

The [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) website provides with some "lessons learned" from LGBTQI+ history, which is a good resource. You can read more about the Bathroom Bill mentioned earlier, UK Gender Act, and hiring advice on the next page.

UK Gender Recognition Act 2004 (GRA)

Under the GRA, UK adults can legally change their gender if they meet specific criteria and provide medical forms as proof of gender dysphoria diagnosis and evidence they have lived full-time in their acquired gender for at least two years.

In 2018, the Government led by Theresa May, launched a consultation on reforming the GRA because she wanted to “see a process that is more streamlined and de-medicalised - because being trans should never be treated as an illness”. Over 100k responses were received, with 64% agreeing there shouldn't be a requirement for diagnosis and a two-year wait. However, in September 2020, the Government decided no changes would be made.

The fight isn't over yet. For more detailed information, you can access the [Reform of the Gender Recognition Act](#) report by the House of Commons committee.

United States Bathroom Bill

This legislation defines access to public toilets according to the gender a person was assigned at birth, preventing transgender individuals from accessing gender-defined bathrooms. Supporters of the bill believe the legislation is necessary to maintain privacy and avoid assault, molestation and rape, even though there haven't been reports of violence against cisgender people. [The Human Rights Campaign \(HRC\)](#) is fighting for equality in court as over 250 anti-LGBTQI+ bills were introduced in many states, from which 24 were enacted. [Read more](#) about their active cases and updates and how you can [get involved](#). You can read more about active cases and how to assist below.



Image by pixelshot on Canva Pro

How can a company support their LGBTQI+ candidates?

Interviewing Transgender Candidates

A diverse and inclusive company presents a more accurate representation of society with employees from different backgrounds and cultures. However, inclusion must be present in the hiring process as well, which isn't always easy for transgender people going through an interview. The [National Gender Training](#) has provided three tips for recruiters when interviewing transgender candidates:

1. Ask the candidate what pronoun they prefer to use at the beginning of the interview.
2. Keep your interview questions focused on work-related topics, not their personal life or gender identity.
3. Use the name the candidate tells you, even if it is different on official documents.

[Read in full](#) on their website and contact them if you have further questions about recruiting transgender people.

ALLYSHIP - THE POWER OF DIVERSITY

What's allyship and how can you become an ally to underrepresented minorities.

BY MARCELLA RIELLI

It's undeniable that there has been an increase in awareness of racial equality in the past couple of years and with it, diversity and inclusion of all underrepresented classes have emerged. Becoming an ally is a hard job, but it's such an important one for any person to have.

What makes someone a good ally?

First of all, get educated and keep yourself informed by asking questions and getting out of your comfort zone. Bring people from diverse backgrounds to the decision-making table, for meetings and discussions and let them speak freely. Stand up for your colleague, friend or classmates if you're in the presence of hate speech or bullying. Take serious action and put a lot of energy into these actions.

Can anyone be an ally?

Yes. We often find ourselves in a position of privilege in some situations, and in others, we feel discriminated against. Your job as an ally is to provide support and have a listening ear, being prepared to listen to others. Allys have a significant role in universities, schools and the workplace and can be the source to change society's behaviour.

Would you like to hear more about allyship and how to implement it in your workplace?

[Skills Boosters](#) produce engaging and effective films for professionals and businesses worldwide for inclusion, leadership and teamwork. They have kindly provided DEI Magazine with their allyship introductory training video, which gives you more details on your role as an ally.



[Guide to Allyship](#) provides insights and a clear explanation of how to be a good ally, apologies, dos and don'ts, and how to handle mistakes.

“Saying you’re an ally is much easier than actually being an ally. Saying you’re an ally looks good on paper, especially if you’re never questioned about your inaction.”

Guide to Allyship, Owner

HOW WE'RE MAKING A CHANGE

Noorie Yasmin, Enterprise Account Executive at Multiverse, talks about how the company supports universities and corporations with their diversity, equity, and inclusion implementation.

BY MARCELLA RIELLI

Multiverse is a tech startup founded in 2016. Its mission is to create a diverse group of future leaders by providing high-quality apprenticeship programmes that combine work, training and community.

Noorie, tell me about yourself and what brought you to Multiverse?

I've been working in the telco/tech space for over 9 years and was starting to feel as if I needed a change of dynamic and energy. Not only in what I was doing but the work environment that I felt engaged, challenged and aligned with my own views and goals.

How do you believe you can help other companies become more inclusive and diverse?

Multiverse exists because we saw 2 main issues in the modern workforce.

1. The digital skills gap
2. The lack of diversity in boardrooms

We pair early talent candidates, particularly those who have decided university isn't for them (due to funding, access, learning style etc.) - teach them digital skills to become either Data Analyst/Scientist, Software Engineer etc. and place them with a company who will value them as an individual and the potential they bring. At the same time, the candidates we place are always 52%

"It's the employer's responsibility to ensure they're retaining these people, respecting the value they bring, and start promoting them to shift what our boardrooms are also looking like."



Photo provided by interviewee, Noorie Yasmin

Female/Non-binary and 58% from an underrepresented minority. We're also hugely focused on neurodivergency, along with contextual flags such as being on free school meals, growing up in an underserved borough, refugee, migrant status etc.

The workforce is hugely under-resourced when it comes to tech talent, and not as diverse as it needs to be, so in effect, we're solving 2 problems at once. It's then the employer's responsibility to ensure they're retaining these people, respecting the value they bring, and start promoting them to shift what our boardrooms are also looking like.

What about the candidates? How does the selection process work?

Our selection process is collaborative and multi-pronged - that's what I love most.

Let me explain, as we have 2 main functions:

For early talent, we advertise our roles straight into schools, colleges, and social media, through our community channels as well as partnering with initiatives like Apprentice Nation. From there, candidates go into our platform and build a profile. We don't believe in CVs, so you're invited to upload a short video on things like your goals, objectives, what you love doing outside of work and what gets you out of bed in the morning and so on. The idea is to get to know the person. These are people at the start of their careers, so experience isn't as important as their motivations, mindset and the potential of a person.

The second part of what we do is to work with a company that wants to upskill their workforce in digital, data, leadership etc, skills and make sure they're retaining and developing the awesome talent they have already in house. For this part - they are usually welcome to self nominate!

In your opinion, what do you think companies need right now to become a more inclusive workplace? Many say they have a diverse environment, but the stats say otherwise.

The problem is multifaceted, which means there isn't only one, clear, answer. It's a more symbiotic shift, and making sure we're always open to the idea that we won't always get it perfectly right, too.

- Listen to your teams. Employers are no longer on the front foot. The Great resignation has signalled that workers will pick and choose their hours, and really only work for a company that speaks to them personally
- Companies need to be more representative of the environment and society in which we all operate in this day and age. There isn't enough representation, at all levels of seniority, in the general workforce. We need to learn how to promote, retain



Photo by FatCamera on Getty Images Signature

and champion our staff.

- Measure the progress and benefit of any new process, and ASK your staff for their input
- Actively seek to build community, and celebrate the differences we have. Ask respectful questions!

Which minority group do you believe are the most in need of representation?

Honestly, I wouldn't know how to answer this one without some real data and research.

For me, any community, group, individual that faces any sort of barrier to employment, or discrimination is a group that we should all, collectively, be advocating for and showing allyship.

Is there a sector with a more significant lack of underrepresented employees? Why is that? Lack of commitment? Cultural aspect?

Some of the work we do uncovers some really interesting data in terms of which industries are usually behind with ensuring they are hiring inclusively and practising non-bias in the workplace.

For example, Construction is still a traditionally white male industry, same goes for the Creative Arts, Media and Publishing where Leadership is not often representative of their junior workforce, or even their buyers.

It starts from the bottom up. If you're not hiring talent based on potential, and rather on how well they fit the status quo. Are you really introducing any sort of new ideas? Any new

ways to problem solve? By hiring and training people who all think the same and do things in the same way as it's always been done, you're building a workforce that never iterates or gets any better. Friction builds shine.

Do you have any advice for those struggling to find their place in employment due to being part of a minority group?

Use the resources available! An apprenticeship scheme like we run, for example, is exactly for people who are facing barriers. We work with you to train you in hugely sort after tech skills, pair you with an employer that has the same values and objectives as you - all while you get paid a salary at the same time.

“For me, any community, group, individual that faces any sort of barrier to employment, or discrimination is a group that we should all, collectively, be advocating for and showing allyship.”

CONTACT MULTIVERSE



NEURO DIVERSITY

How to make your workplace neurodiversity-friendly

BY MARCELLA RIELLI

The month of April marked the National Autism Awareness month in The United States. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), this disability is sometimes forgotten even though one in a hundred children worldwide is diagnosed with autism, according to the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#).

However, autism is only one of many neurodiverse conditions, such as ADHD, dyslexia, Tourette syndrome, and more, so corporations and academia must understand and make their environment more neurodiversity friendly. Here are some tips from [Harvard Health Publishing](#).

How to make your workplace more neurodiversity-friendly?

- Offer small adjustments to an employee's workspace to accommodate any sensory needs, such as
 - Sound sensitivity: Offer a quiet break space, communicate expected loud noises (like fire drills), offer noise-cancelling headphones.
 - Tactile: Allow modifications to the usual work uniform.
 - Movements: Allow the use of fidget toys, allow extra movement breaks, offer flexible seating.

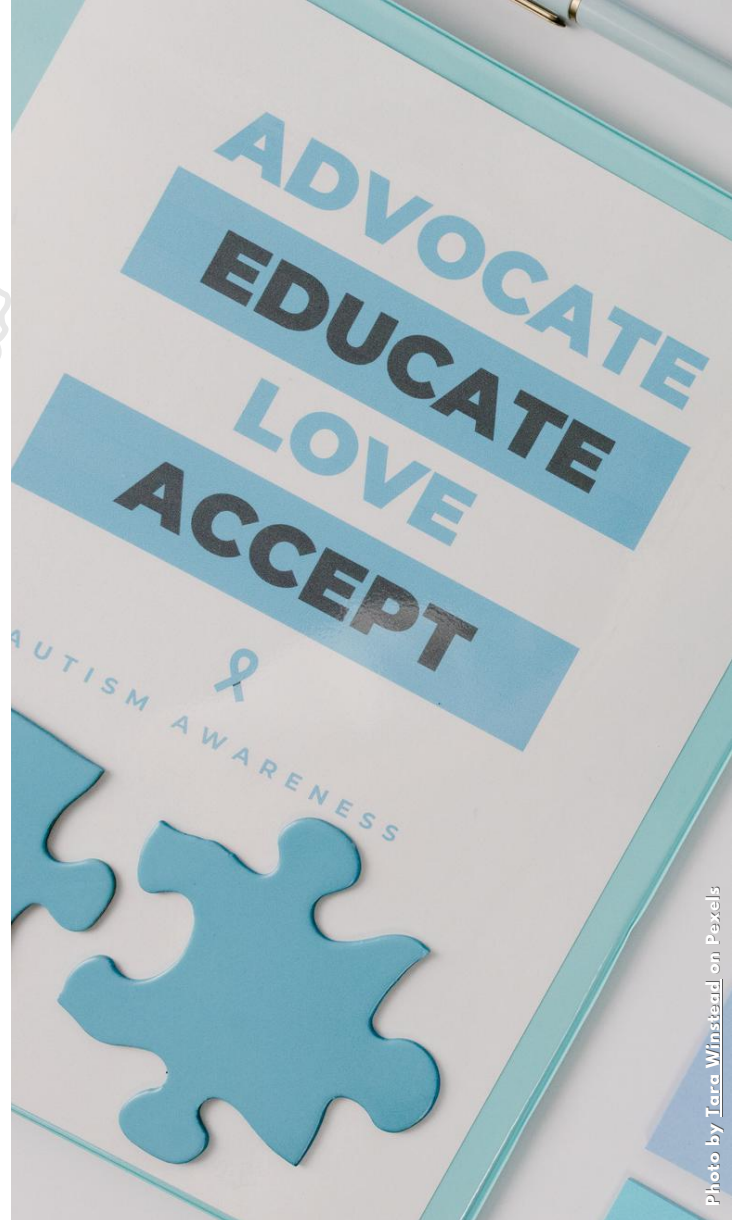


Photo by Tara Winstead on Pexels

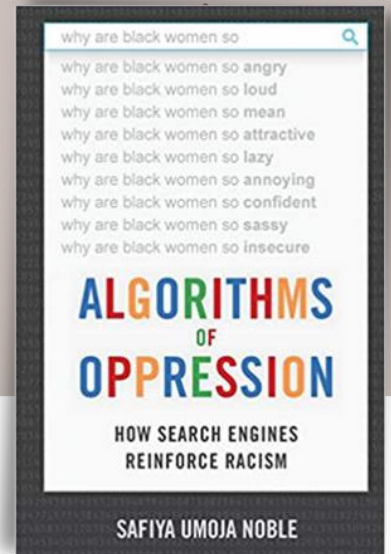
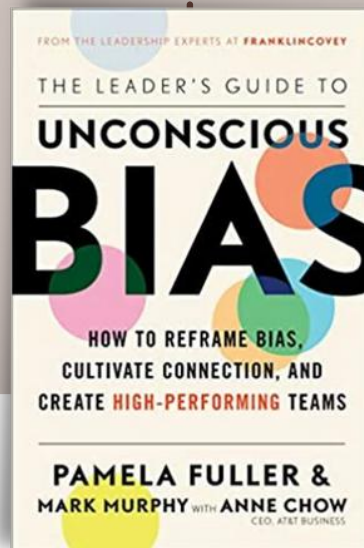
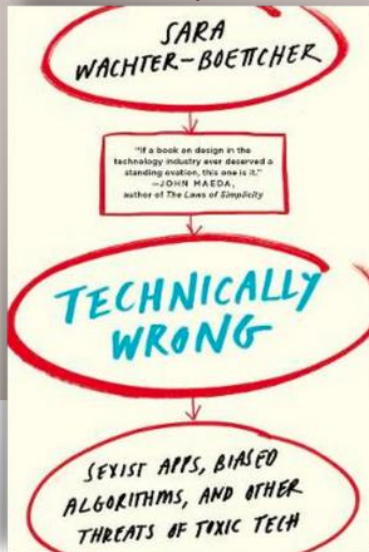
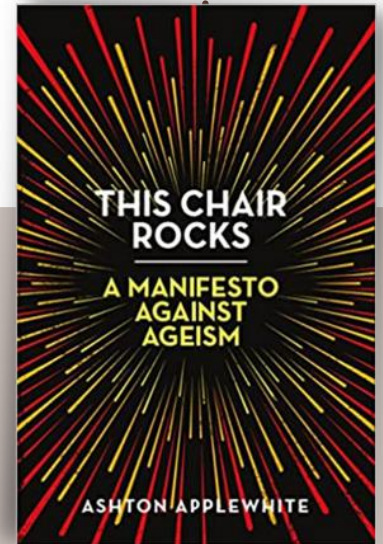
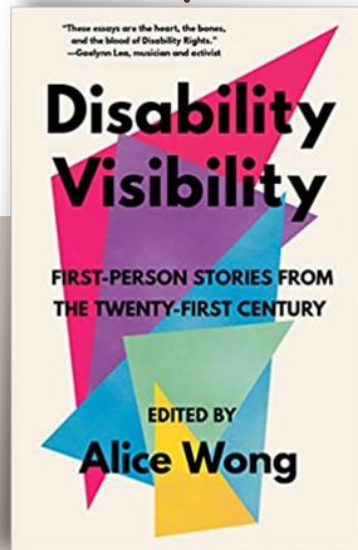
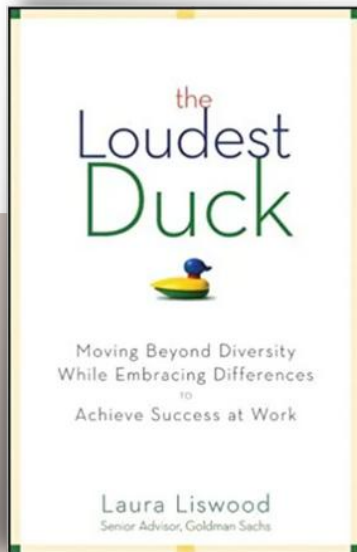
- Use a clear communication style:
 - Avoid sarcasm, euphemisms, and implied messages.
 - Provide concise verbal and written instructions for tasks, and break tasks down into small steps.
- Inform people about workplace/social etiquette, and don't assume someone is deliberately breaking the rules or being rude.
- Try to give advance notice if plans are changing, and provide a reason for the change.
- Don't make assumptions — ask a person's individual preferences, needs, and goals.
- Be kind, be patient.

BOOKSHELF



Photo by Mika on Unsplash

Our top picks



Every month you will find our top picks on academic or literature books about diversity and inclusion and/or by underrepresented authors. The aim is to give voice to everyone.

Would you like to contribute with book suggestions for our next issue? Send your list to [@DEIMagazine](#) and we will publish them here.

CELEBRATE GENDER FREEDOM



Image by may17.org.

CALENDAR

MAY 2022

DEI workplace calendar

Photo by tab194 on CanvaPro



May 2-8

Deaf Awareness Week (UK)

May 3

Eid al-Fitr (Muslim)

May 5

Cinco de Mayo

May 8

National Liberation Day (Czech)

May 9-15

Black Inclusion Week (UK)

Mental Health Awareness Week (UK)

May 16-23

World Wellbeing Week

Dementia Action Awareness Week

May 17

International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia

May 21

World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development

May 30

Memorial Day (US)



Photo by gerard4170 on Pixabay

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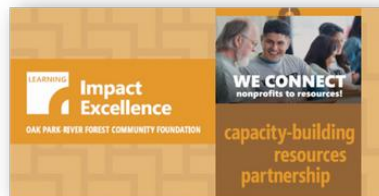
What's on out there

Wed **11** May



Black Inclusion Week: Allyship - Together for a Better Tomorrow

Thu **19** May



Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Anti-Racism

Thu **26** May



IB THRIVE: Building Diverse & Inclusive Businesses

Sat **21** May



World Day of Cultural Diversity



Diversity in Design: Are we missing the point?



Neuroinclusion - Why it is Essential in Your Organisation



DEI MAGAZINE UK
LONDON, UK

