

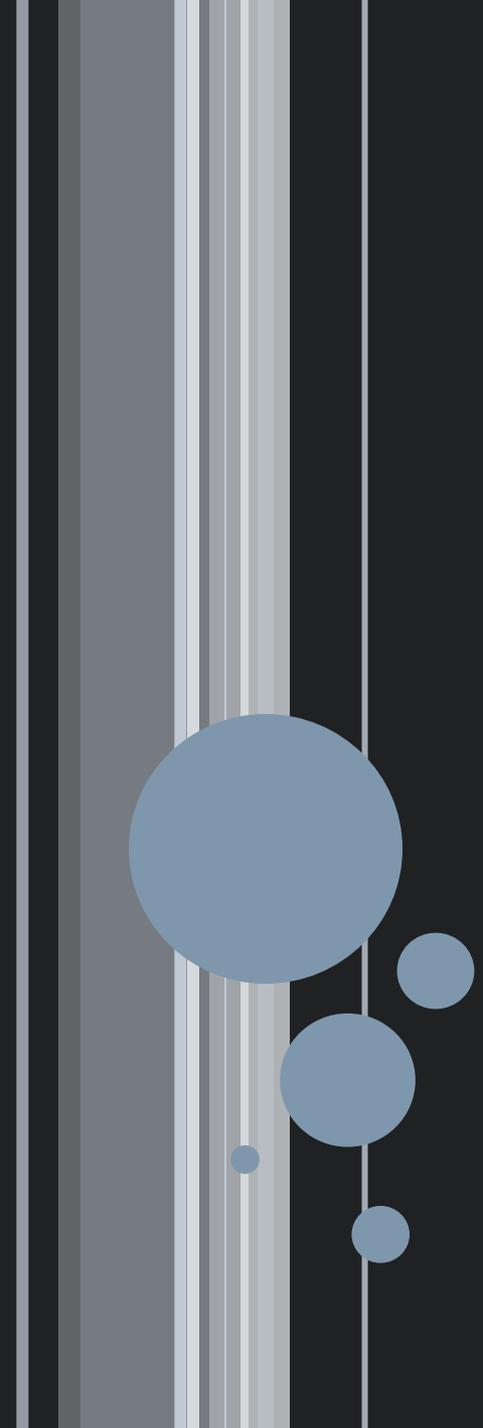


TO BE SEEN & HEARD

Realizing the Benefits of Diversity
and Responding to the Needs of
Minority Academic Librarians

Jaena Alabi, Auburn University Libraries

**Mississippi Library Association Annual Conference
Natchez, MS
October 21, 2015**

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DEFINITIONS OF DIVERSITY

“Generally, ‘diversity’ refers to policies and practices that seek to **include** people who are considered, in some way, **different from traditional members.**”

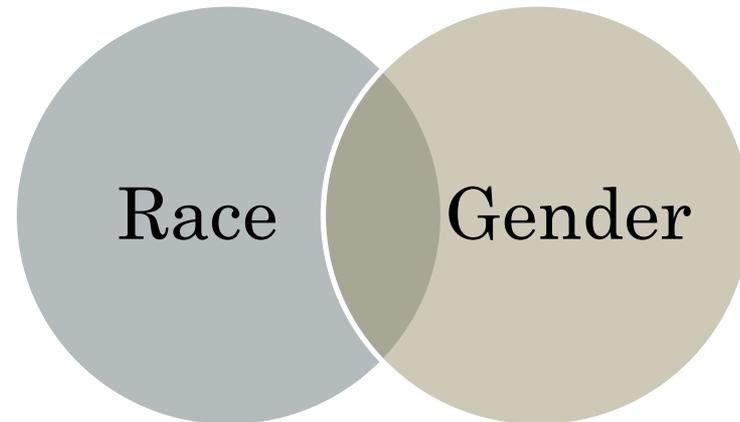
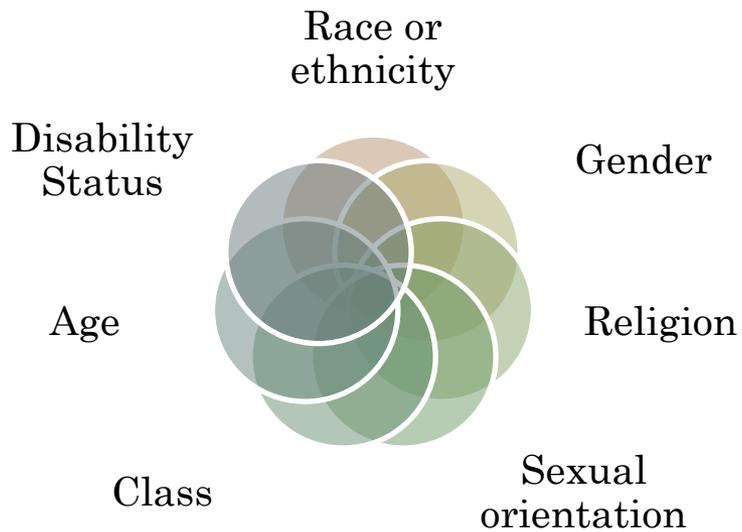
([emphasis added] Herring, 2009, p. 209)



SOCIAL DIVERSITY

Identity Groups

Emphasized Areas



ALA DIVERSITY COUNTS

Percentage of Higher Education Credentialed Librarians by Characteristic, 2009-2010

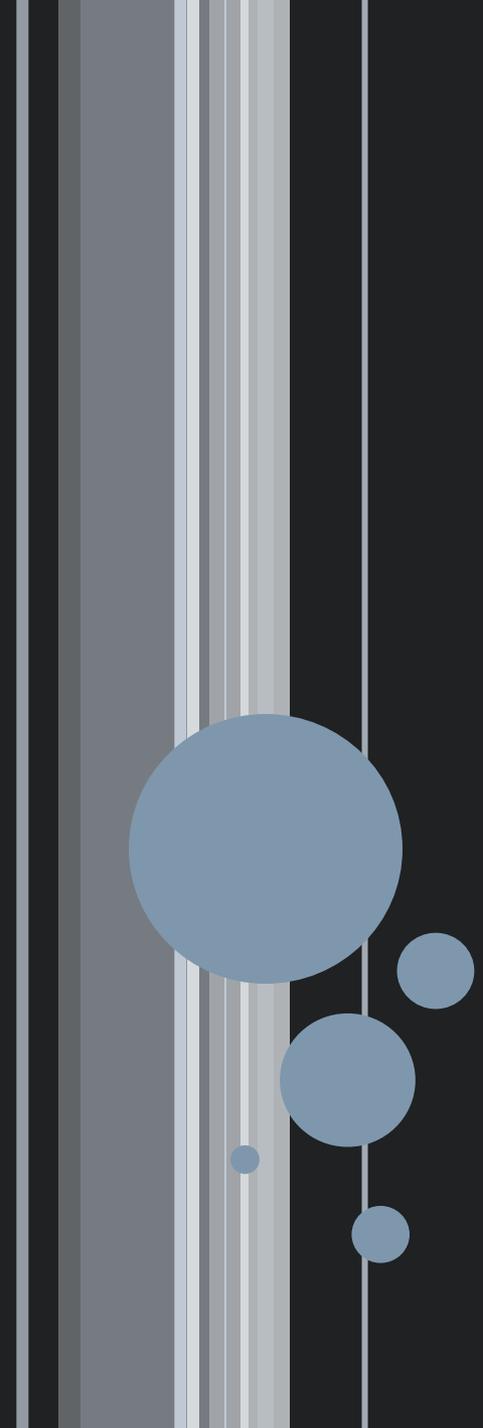
Non-Latino					
White	African American	API	Native American inc. Alaskan	Two or more races	Latino
86.1%	5.4%	4.8%	.2%	.9%	2.6%



“Diversity should be understood as *the varied perspectives and approaches to work* that members of different identity groups bring”

(Thomas & Ely, 1996, p. 80)





APPROACHES TO DIVERSITY

DISCRIMINATION-AND-FAIRNESS (THOMAS & ELY, 1996)



<https://pixabay.com/en/soldiers-military-attention-salute-559761/>



COLOR-BLIND APPROACH (STEVENS ET AL., 2008)



<https://www.flickr.com/photos/gastev/2960556197>



ACCESS-AND-LEGITIMACY (THOMAS & ELY, 1996)



<https://pixabay.com/en/spanish-learn-speech-translation-375830/>

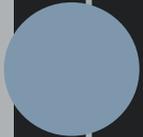
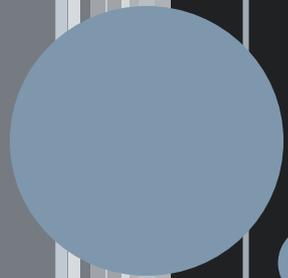


MULTICULTURAL APPROACH (STEVENS ET AL., 2008)



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Macro_of_sharpened_colored_pencils_arranged_in_a_circle.jpg





OUTCOMES OF DIVERSITY

BENEFITS OF DIVERSITY

- Better decision making and problem solving

(Stevens 2008; Herring 2009; Phillips 2014)

- Improved products and services

(Herring 2009)

- Enhanced creativity

(Thomas & Ely 1996; Herring 2009; Phillips 2014)

- Innovation

(Herring 2009; Phillips, 2014)

- Flexibility and adaptability

(Thomas & Ely 1996)

- Increased profitability

(Thomas & Ely 1996)



COSTS OF DIVERSITY

- Increased conflict

(Stevens et al., 2008; Herring, 2009)

- Decreased cohesion

(Stevens et al., 2008; Herring, 2009)

- Inhibition of decision-making and change processes

(Stevens et al., 2008)

- Lower quality (if positions filled by unqualified workers)

(Herring, 2009)



THE DIVERSITY PARADOX

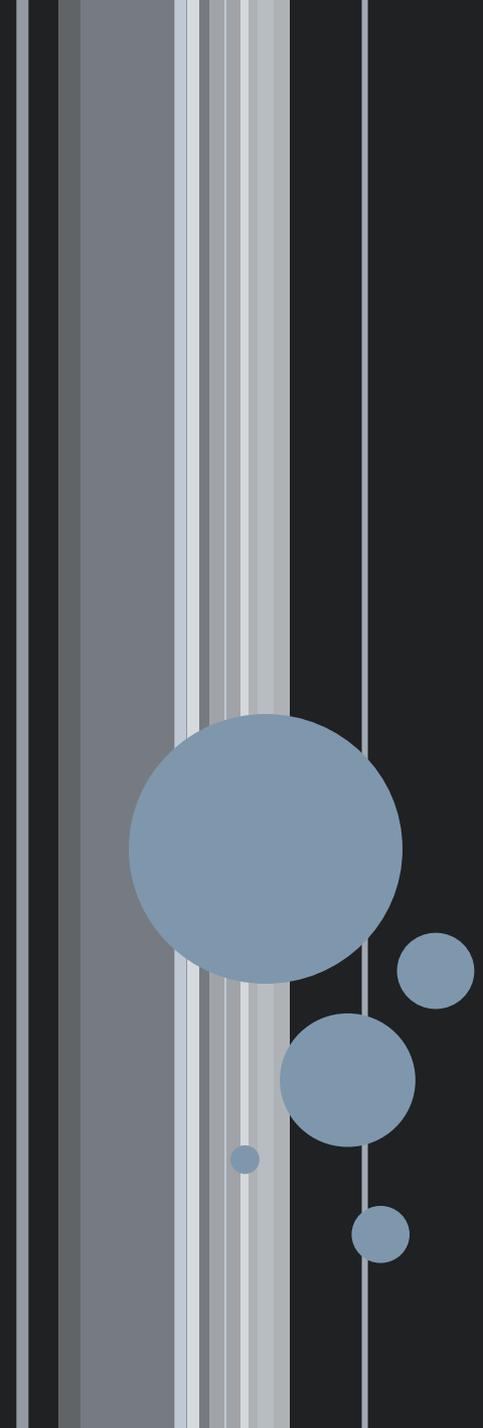


https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Albion_Baron_Medieval_Sword_4_%286091866751%29.jpg

“Workforce diversity—if approached in a way that maximizes inclusion and minimizes resistance—presents organizations with opportunities to create change that fosters the positive human potential of their employees.”

(Stevens et al., 2008, p. 117)



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EXPERIENCES OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIANS OF COLOR

A DIFFERENCE OF PERSPECTIVE

“librarians of color see
a major problem;
whites do not”

(St. Lifer & Nelson, 1997, p. 44).



MINORITIES IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

“In my library I’m viewed and treated as a second class citizen. My skills, knowledge and abilities are not valued in their own right. They are treated as commodities to be used to serve others. I [am] treated as just the ‘hired help’. I’m not given the opportunity or support that my white counterparts are given. For example I’ve been bounced around from work area to work area never being given the time to focus in an area long enough or in-depth enough to get to the point of engaging in scholarship. In contrast my white counterparts are able to focus on an area long enough to get to the point of engaging in scholarship. When it comes time for evaluation I’m then evaluated as less productive because I have written fewer articles. Evaluators can then claim they are being fair and objective because they are evaluating candidates by the same criteria—how many articles the candidate has written. It’s a form of subtle discrimination that has become institutionalized.”

(Damasco & Hodges, 2012, p. 294)



MINORITIES IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES II

“Publish, publish, publish without informal coaching, networking, or constructive feedback. Also an obstacle is counterproductive criticism without remedy or suggestions from [sic] improvement from those in a position to provide junior library faculty the most valuable help. Of course, there are those (especially white) senior members who have eagerly helped white, junior counterparts by providing them co-authorship opportunities. This is a concrete, tangible way to be taken under one’s wing. Others (especially non-white faculty) have been offered the customary abstract opportunities through workshops, presentations, and the like, but the senior white faculty stop short of actually allowing non-whites the opportunity to learn through leadership such as this.”

(Damasco & Hodges, 2012, p. 295)



MINORITIES IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES III

“My research was originally look [sic] down on as a poor choice for possibly getting tenured. However, my research on a specific issue of people of color was innovative and new. This I believe helped me... along with good reviewers in my field of research. If I had listen [sic] to these informal comments, I would have left nontenured.”

(Damasco & Hodges, 2012 p.295)



COMMONLY REPORTED EXPERIENCES IN EDUCATION AND THE WORKPLACE

- Encountering overt and subtle expressions of racism

(Curry, 1994; Walton & Cohen, 2007)

- Treated as second-class citizen

(Sue, Bucceri, Lin, Nadal, & Torino, 2007; Sue, Capodilupo, Torino, Bucceri, Holder, Nadal & Esquilin, 2007)

- Assumptions made about intelligence

(Sue, Bucceri, Lin, Nadal, & Torino, 2007; Sue, Capodilupo, Torino, Bucceri, Holder, Nadal & Esquilin, 2007)

- Credibility and authority are questioned

(Griffin, Pifer, Humphrey & Hazelwood, 2011; Linder, Harris, Allen, & Hubain, 2015)

- Accused of being overly sensitive about race

(Curry, 1994; Linder, Harris, Allen, & Hubain, 2015)

- Research or quality of work is questioned

(Griffin, Pifer, Humphrey & Hazelwood, 2011)



EFFECTS & CONSEQUENCES

On the Individual

- Self-doubt
- Frustration
- Isolation
- Anxiety
- Anger
- Fatigue

(Solórzano et al., 2000; Constantine, Smith, Redington & Owens, 2008; Griffin, Pifer, Humphrey & Hazelwood, 2011; Harper et al., 2011; Yosso, Smith, Ceja & Solórzano, 2009; Pittman, 2012)

For the Organization

- Decreased productivity
- Decreased achievement
- Withdrawal or Departure

(Solórzano et al., 2000; Yosso et al., 2009; Griffin et al., 2011).

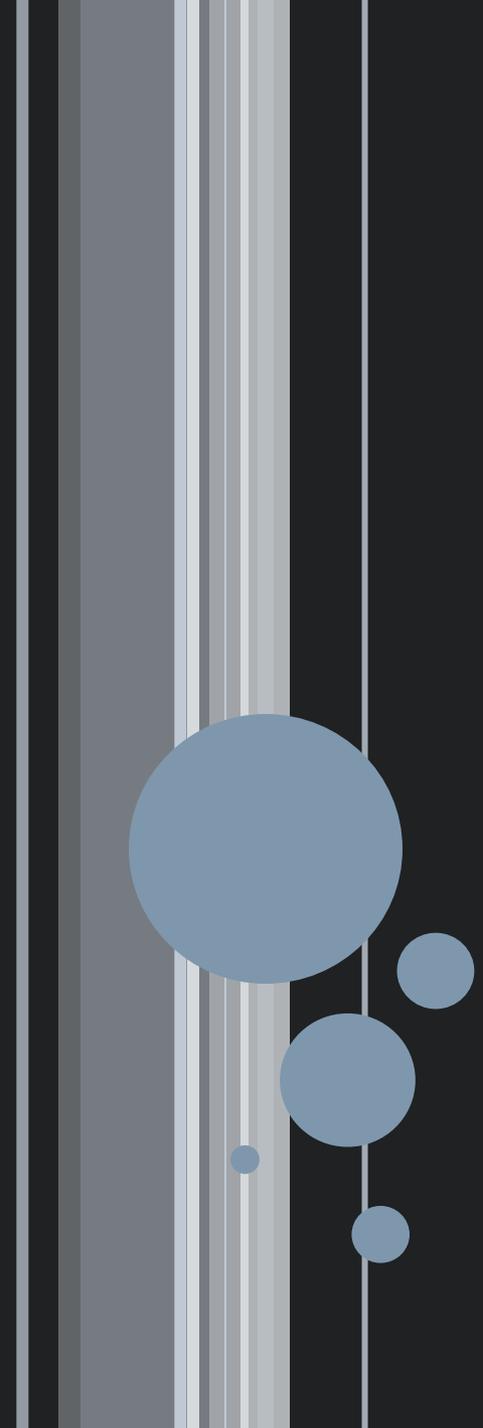


MINORITIES IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IV

“Mentoring programs and institutes targeted at librarians of color are not the answer. I believe they are making the situation in academic libraries worse. These programs imply that the problem is with the librarians of color, that librarians of color need to be taught to assimilate. The real problem is institutionalized racism in academic libraries. Instead of sending me to a program/institute, administrators...need to be sent to programs to raise their awareness about how their attitudes and behaviors are forms of discrimination and create barriers for librarians of color who are trying to obtain tenure and/or promotion.”

(Damasco & Hodges, 2012, p. 295)



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INCLUSIVE APPROACHES TO DIVERSITY

LEARNING-AND-EFFECTIVENESS (THOMAS & ELY, 1996)

- Emphasis on integration
- Acknowledges and values differences
- Organization internalizes differences
- “We are all on the same team, *with* our differences – not *despite* them.” (Thomas & Ely, 1996, p. 86).



ALL-INCLUSIVE MULTICULTURALISM (STEVENS ET AL., 2006)

- Multicultural approach that explicitly includes non-minorities
- Interracial interactions as opportunities for learning
- Focuses on developing “high-quality relationships among dissimilar others”

(Stevens et al., 2008, p. 124)



STRATEGIES FOR INCLUSION

○ Open, honest dialogue

(Thomas & Ely, 1996; Linder et al., 2015)

○ Authenticity & community

(Linder et al., 2015)

○ Desire to learn & grow

(Thomas & Ely, 1996; Linder et al., 2015)

○ Support & validation

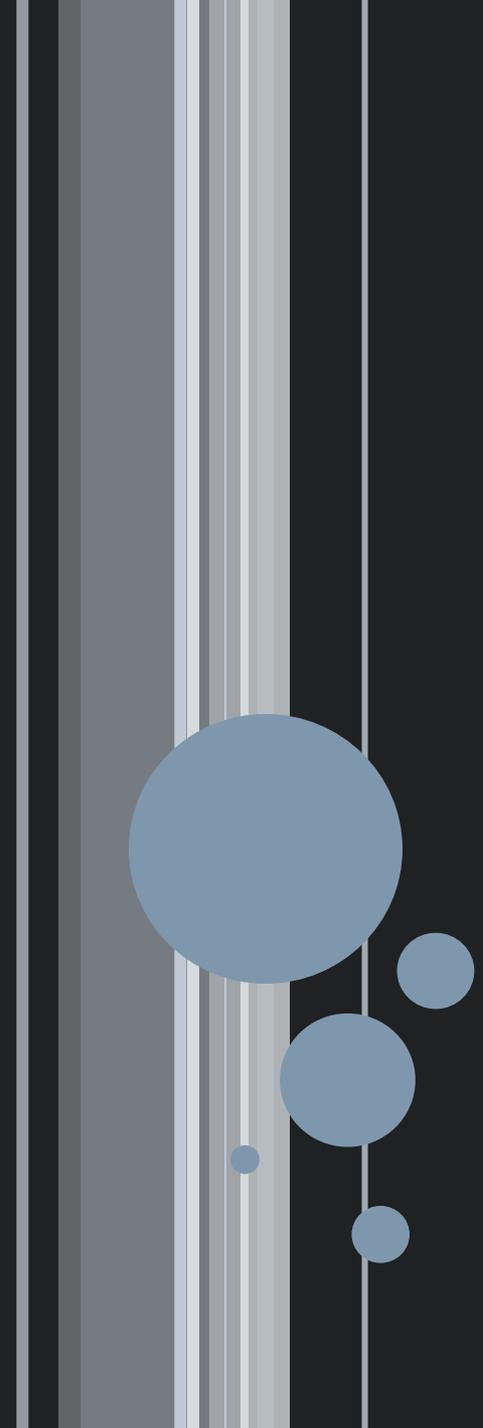
(Linder et al., 2015)



“The responsibility for engaging with students of color in an authentic way cannot be solely the responsibility of faculty of color in graduate programs”

(Linder et al., 2015, p. 189).





QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

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ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED READINGS

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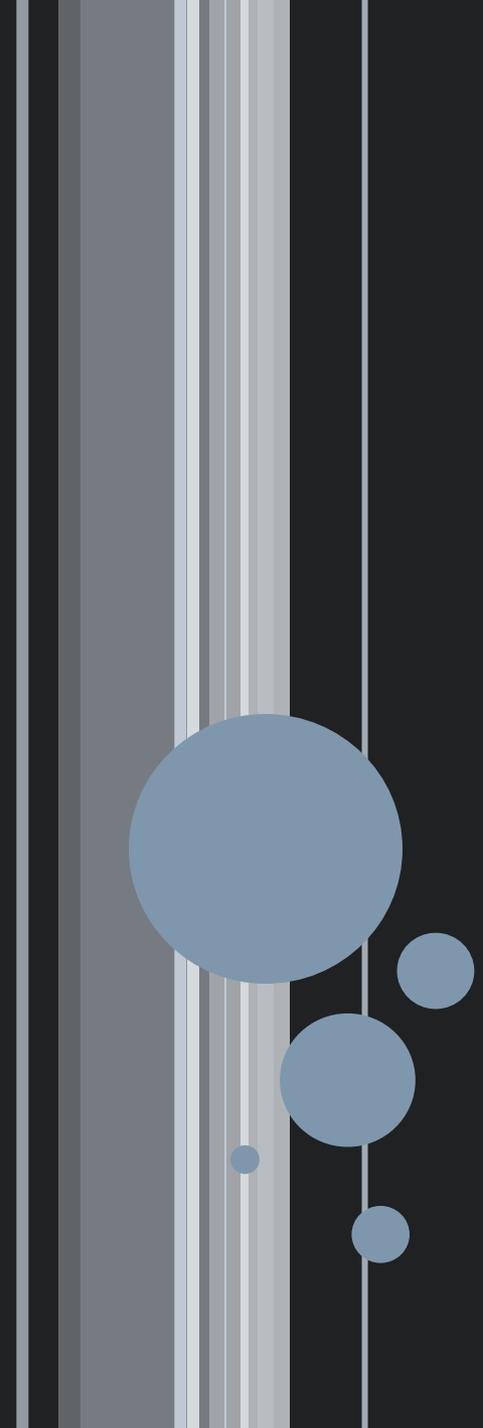
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THANK YOU!

Please feel free to continue the conversation:

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