



Science Fiction & Fantasy Diversity Audit

Lorena Neal & Tyler Works
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Introductions

Lorena Neal - Legal Literacy Librarian

- Responsible for Adult Print Science Fiction & Fantasy Collection Development since 2015
- Member of EPL's EDI Committee, Elevating Equity Committee, and Racial Equity Task Force

Tyler Works - Data & Technology Librarian

- Needs no intro [brag about yourself here]
- *cue wrestler style entrance*

Purpose

Evaluate diversity of adult print Science Fiction & Fantasy (SFF) collection at Main Branch from 2014-2022, in light of:

- DeEtta Jones Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Needs Assessment (issued 2018)
 - Recommendation 5: Create and use metrics to assess and adjust efforts in support of the Library's EDI values.
 - Recommendation 7: Expand book collections that reflect the needs and interests of the Black and Latinx communities.
- EPL updated Collections Policies (adopted 2022)

3.3 Objectives

The collections and electronic resources of the Evanston Public Library are the principal means by which the Library fulfills its mission as stated by the Library Board in its **Mission Statement**. The Library seeks to develop a meaningful collection that is positioned to meet the needs of the community and supports equity, diversity, and inclusion. The Library will strive to provide materials and electronic resources that:

- A. Enrich, entertain, and serve the varied interests of community residents;
- B. Provide community residents with reliable information sources for their personal needs; and
- C. Reflect the diverse religious, racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds of our community and our world.

Demographics & Publishing



Evanston Demographics

Race and Hispanic Origin	
White alone, percent	61.6%
Black or African American alone, percent(a)	16.5%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent(a)	0.3%
Asian alone, percent(a)	9.2%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent(a)	0.0%
Two or More Races, percent	8.7%
Hispanic or Latino, percent(b)	11.3%
White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent	58.4%



Gender in Evanston

Female = 51.5%



Male/other = 48.5%





Sexuality in Evanston

- Evolving data, as people are more or less comfortable identifying themselves as LGBTQIA+
- Nationwide estimates of the LGBTQIA+ population: approximately 10% (2021)
- City of Chicago estimate (2018): 7.5%
- Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, IL-IN-WI Metro Area (Census, 2021) - 4.1%
- No specific data for City of Evanston

5%

Books published by BIPOC authors, 1950 - 2018

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Gender Ratio of the Best-Selling Genres by Decade

← PERCENT MEN

PERCENT WOMEN →



Analysis & Issues



Sources and challenges

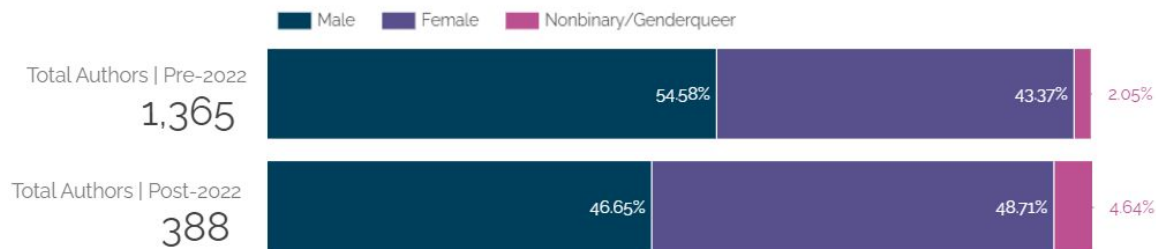
- NoveList: EPL subscription database providing book and author reviews, reading guides, author demographics.
- CollectionHQ: Baker & Taylor collection analysis product; draws from BISAC and Library of Congress headings
- Personal research: author and publisher websites, author social media accounts, and interviews with authors
- Novelist challenges: incomplete data, frequently failed to identify “white” as a race, issues with identifying non-American BIPOC.
- CollectionHQ challenges: our experience found that about half of data was missing or wrong (e.g., focused on topic of book rather than author demographics)
- Personal research challenges: time consuming, involves personal judgment calls

Results - Gender

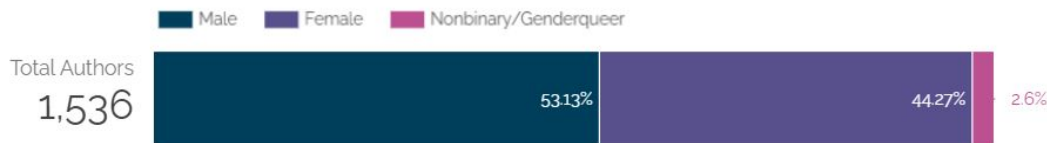
Gender representation in the SFF collection from books that remain in the collection from 2014 (the “Pre-split date” authors) vs. the authors in the collection from 2015 - 2022 combined (the “Post-split date” authors).



Gender representation in the SFF collection published before 2022 (the “Pre-split date”) vs. those books that were published and added to the collection in 2022 (the “Post-split date”)



Gender representation across SFF collection, 2022

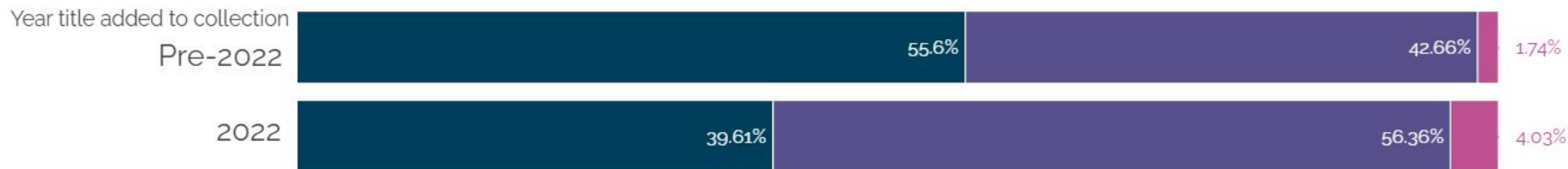


Borrowing habits are shifting

Titles added in 2022 show **significant increases in checkouts for both female and nonbinary/genderqueer authors** when compared to titles added prior to 2022.

2022 Checkouts by Author Gender

Male Female Nonbinary/Genderqueer



Results - Race & Ethnicity

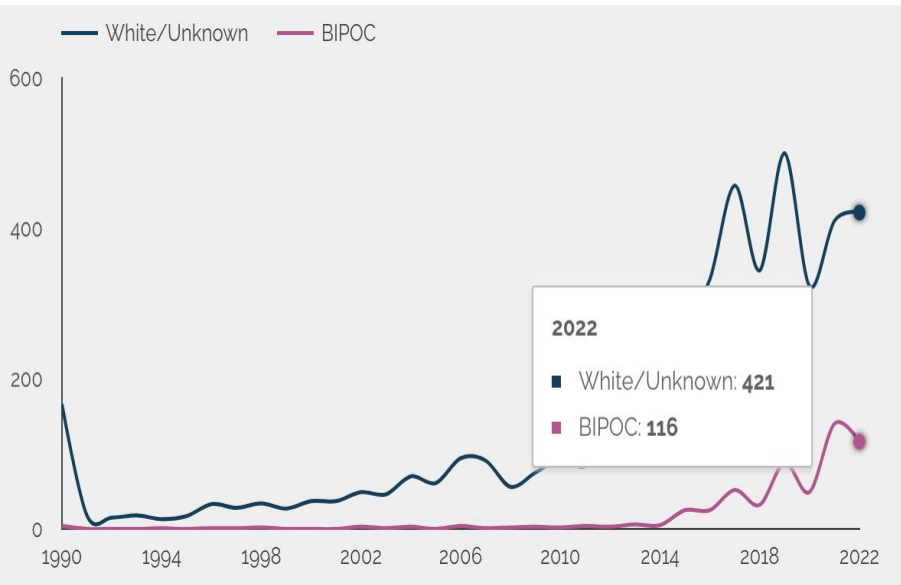
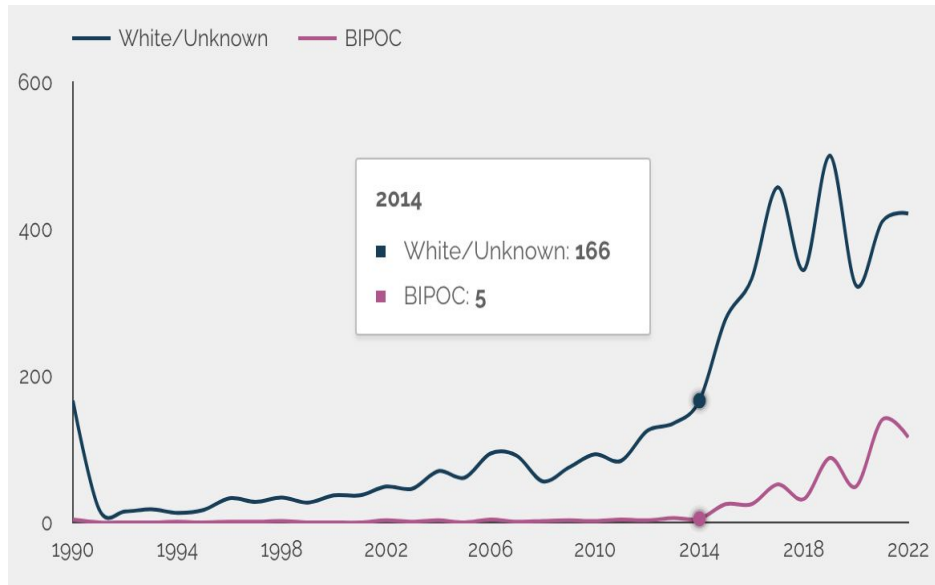
1145%

Increase in BIPOC authors
in SFF collection since 2015

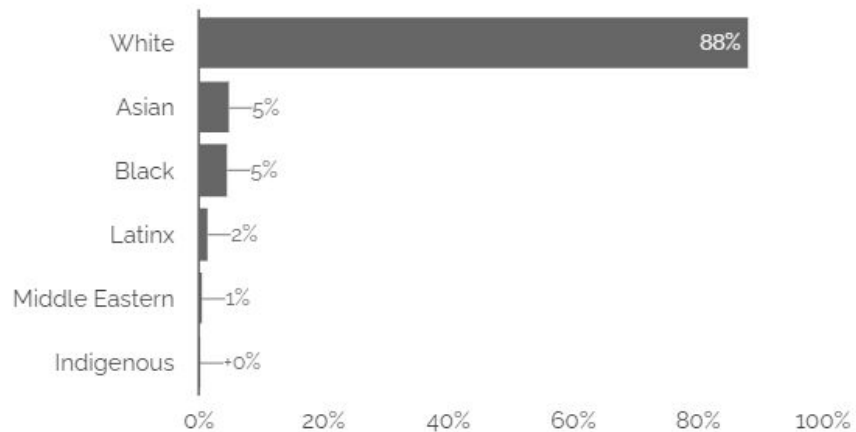
193%

Increase in white/unknown authors
in SFF collection since 2015

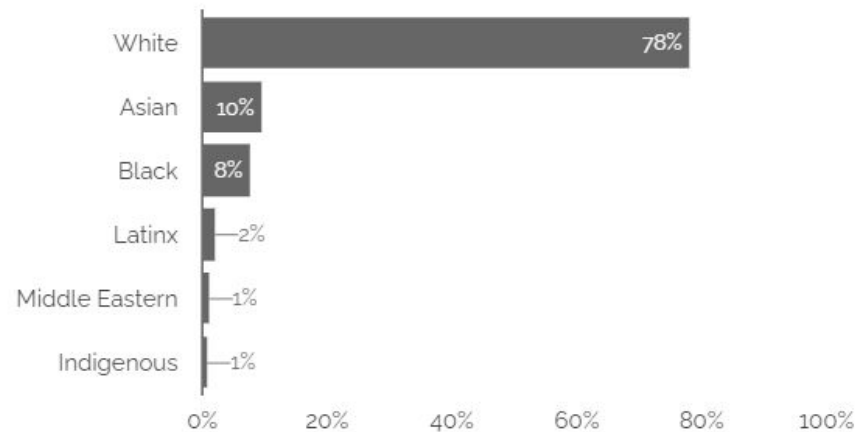




Authors added pre-2022

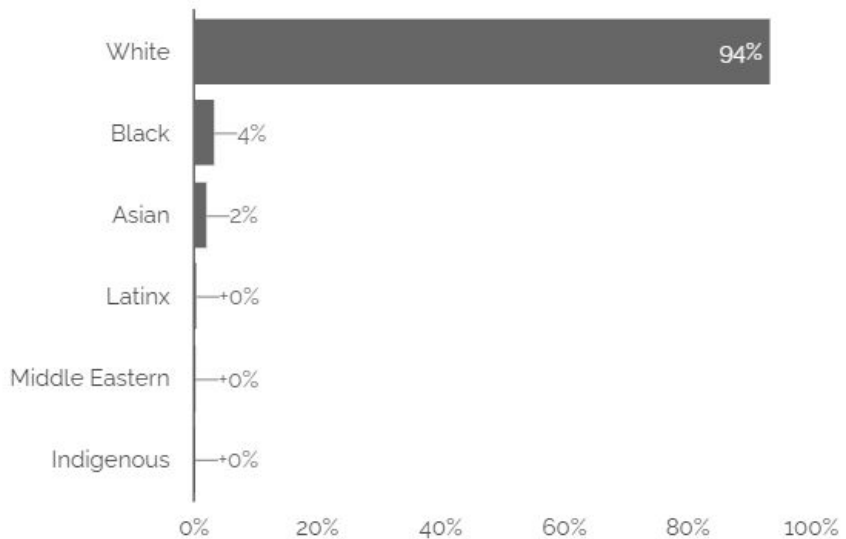


Authors added 2022

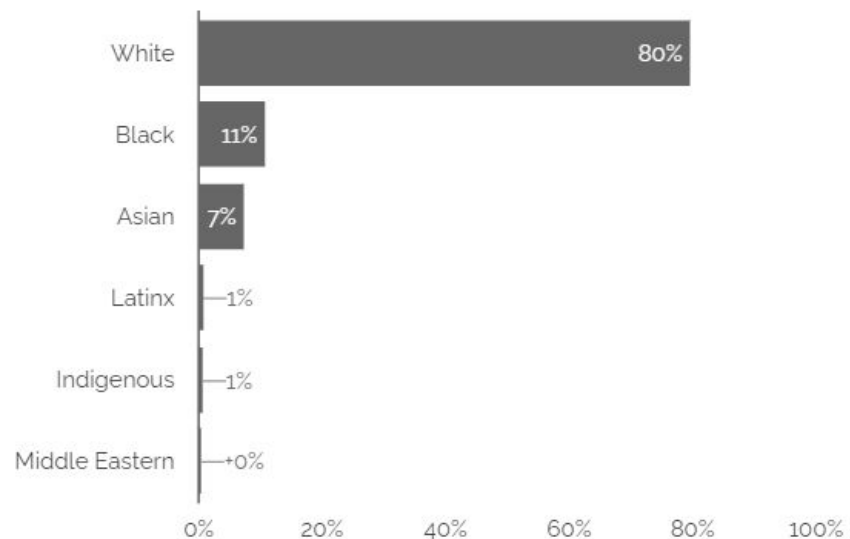


BIPOC authors in SFF collection prior to 2022 vs. BIPOC authors added to SFF collection in 2022

Checkouts % pre -2022



Checkouts % 2022



Checkouts by Race/Ethnicity: Pre-2022 vs. 2022

Results - LGBTQIA+

This bar depicts the percentage of identifiable **LGBTQIA+ authors** in the SFF collection in 2014:



This is the percentage of **LGBTQIA+ authors** published and added to the SFF collection in the year 2022:

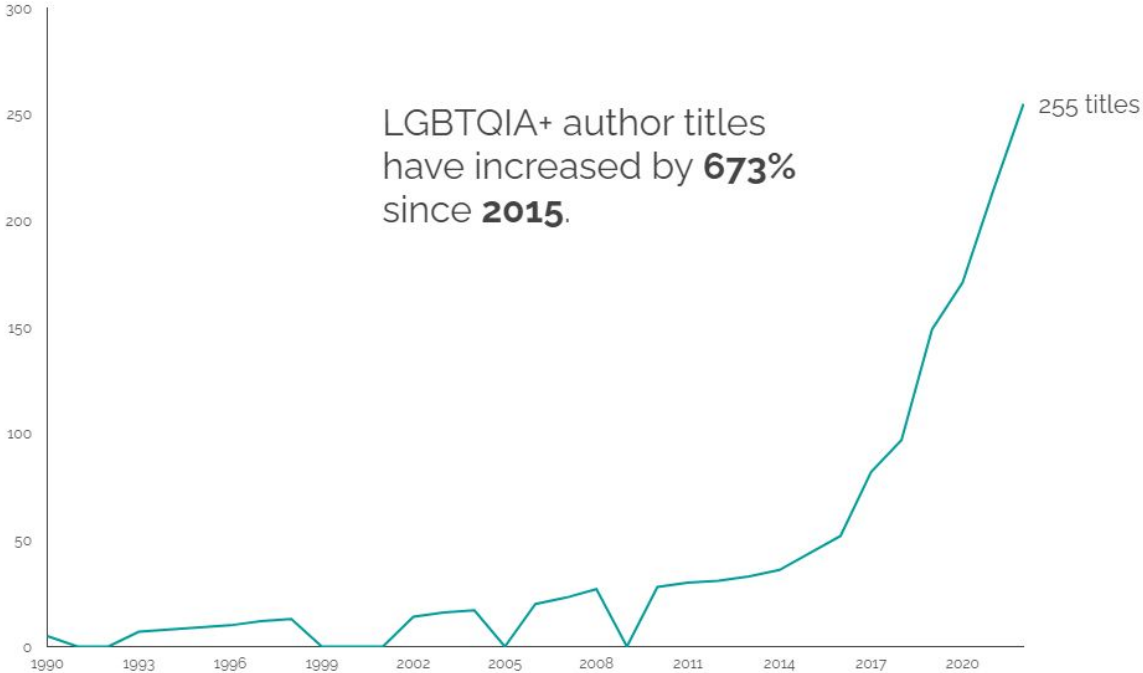


This is the percentage of **LGBTQIA+ authors** represented in the SFF collection overall:

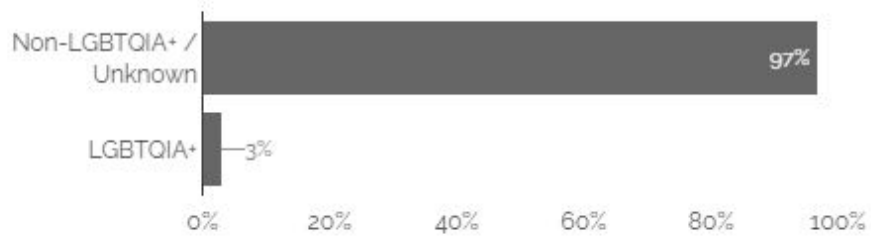


LGBTQIA+ authors in SFF collection

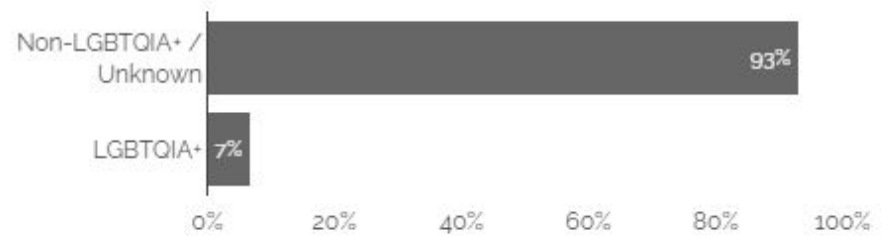
Total LGBTQIA+ author titles



Checkouts % pre -2022



Checkouts % 2022



LGBTQIA+ checkouts

Issues for Further Investigation



Continuing Equity Audits

- Are the funds invested (as measured in staff time) worth the data returns?
- If so, should EPL adopt uniform procedures for staff to use in classifying authors by certain marginalized identities, and which identities are EPL interested in tracking?
- Are there other outside research sources on these issues that we have not used or considered thus far, and what are the costs and benefits of any such systems vs. doing the work in house?



Continued Improvement of Collections

- What training should staff with collection management responsibilities receive?
- What strategies and resources can EPL staff use to discover diverse authors that are not promoted or reviewed by major industry sources?

Questions?