

4A—Re-theorizing the Library #2

The Bias that Binds Us: Retraining the Brain to Default to the Inclusive

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Using understandings from modern social psychology, this paper examines bias through subconscious, cognitive processes creates shortcuts—biases—which operate in a way extremely helpful to everyday functioning and learning yet which also create exclusionary behaviours. These exclusionary behaviours can reinforce traditional systems and create less diverse and inclusive environments. This has profound implications for traditional “diversity” training aimed at “fixing” prejudicial and oppressive aspects of majority cultures’ orientations, behaviours, and mindsets. The paper discusses unconscious or implicit bias through the lens of critical theory, through to how biases can lead to exclusionary and unhealthy professional environments and illustrate practical ways to combat unconscious bias.