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# Diversity Doesn't Mean "Issue" Stories

I've often said that embracing diversity in writing isn't about pushing an agenda or going for a quota. It's simply a reflection of real life's diversity. Stories that include diverse characters do NOT have to be about their diverse aspect. For more, here's Alisha Rai's excellent tweet stream:

by  Jami Gold 3 years ago 48 Views ▾



**Alisha Rai**  
@AlishaRai



There is some sort of weird idea out there that if you write a MC romance, you MUST make race a central tension/problem in the story.

10:43 AM - Dec 6, 2014

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MC: Multi-cultural



**Alisha Rai**  
@AlishaRai

I have a hunch that this is an expectation that has developed amongst primarily white readers. When I say this to POC readers, they go...O.o

10:44 AM - Dec 6, 2014

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## POC/PoC: People of Color



**Alisha Rai**  
@AlishaRai

Because for most of us, we recognize there is a wide variety of experiences amongst POC. Not everyone, not every IR relationship is the same

10:44 AM - Dec 6, 2014

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## IR: Inter-racial



**Alisha Rai**  
@AlishaRai

But this is a sort of "canon" that has developed, and I despise it, because 1) it doesn't account for all kinds of relationships and

10:45 AM - Dec 6, 2014

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 **Alisha Rai**   
@AlishaRai

settings and 2) please to tell me what heavy social issues you demand every romance with all white characters delve into?

10:46 AM - Dec 6, 2014

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 **Alisha Rai**   
@AlishaRai

I READ THIS ROMANCE WITH TWO WHITE CHARACTERS AND I DONT UNDERSTAND WHY IT DIDN'T ADDRESS THE SUBPRIME MORTGAGE CRISIS.

10:46 AM - Dec 6, 2014

♡ 44  27 people are talking about this 

 **Alisha Rai**   
@AlishaRai

And what truly, truly enraged me? This comment: "Some writers keep it safe to the point of why bother putting a PoC..."

10:48 AM - Dec 6, 2014

♡ 11  See Alisha Rai's other Tweets 

 **Alisha Rai**   
@AlishaRai

"...heroine, or hero, in the tale if she/he is going to still read like a non-PoC character." GAWD WHY HAVE A POC IF THEY'RE JUST LIKE US.

10:49 AM - Dec 6, 2014

♡ 13  19 people are talking about this 



As Alisha says, if our characters encounter racial tension as part of the story, by all means, include it. But including a diverse character doesn't mean that the story has to be *about* that diverse aspect.

All characters should be seen as whole people first. And their lives, their specific experiences, and their story should drive the decision of whether or not a diverse aspect is an important part of the story.

There's [no such thing](#) as a universal xyz experience. So it's more important to be true to our *characters'* experiences.

Including diverse characters isn't about meeting a quota or fulfilling an agenda, but about [avoiding a lazy default when creating a character](#).

This doesn't have to be difficult. :)

Jami

--

Jami Gold, Paranormal Author

[jamigold.com](http://jamigold.com)

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