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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

8 See Alisha Rai's other Tweets 

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

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 **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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