

# 12

## PRAXIS FOR THE PEOPLE

### Critical Race Theory and Archival Practice

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The archival profession is nearly 88 percent white, with Black archivists like me making up not even 3 percent of the population (Society of American Archivists 2005). To address the overwhelming demographic whiteness of the field, the Society of American Archivists (SAA) has established programs like the Harold T. Pinkett Student of Color Award, of which I am a past recipient, to help diversify the profession.<sup>1</sup> While participating in initiatives like the Pinkett have been instrumental in my training, I also credit my professional success to the network of librarians, archivists, and colleagues of color who provide consistent support and encouragement. Relationships formed through scholarship and leadership programs, community work, conferences, campus affiliation, and familial connections are invaluable. This nationwide network is crucial, as I find myself one of fewer than five Black professional staff and the sole Black archivist in an entire library system at one of the largest universities in the country. Added to that, I focus almost exclusively on collections documenting Black people across space and time. Though the lack of professional diversity is disappointing, it is not a deterrent—what I bring to this work, and what brought me to this work, is my identity as a Black woman. Any way you slice it, my work is interesting, challenging, exciting, and highly racialized.

As a member of the professional minority, I feel a great deal of responsibility to the people represented in collections, the donors whose collections I steward, and my fellow People of Color (POC) colleagues. I must use every bit of privilege my position affords to support and create space for my fellow POC. As “the diversity” in an

institution, I also have a self-imposed mandate to do this work without being siloed, as a way to garner the greatest support for the collections I work with. This necessitates putting myself in spaces and conversations I do not always want to be in, and requires a great deal of emotional labor once there. I have to be intentional about not appearing angry, even when I have the right to be, and being excited to collaborate, even when collaboration tests my bandwidth (though it is easy to disregard invitations to collaborate that seem to come around only once a year, in February).

The dimensions of whiteness in archives are twofold—in the workplace and in the collections. I feel its oppressive presence when I walk into the library building and when I walk into the archival stacks. Working with records documenting Black populations, I confront on a regular basis global anti-Black racism—that is, discriminatory beliefs and practices against Black and Afro-descended people across the world.<sup>2</sup> There is no escaping racism and violence, considering the Black experiences commonly found in an imperial archive—I interact with documents related to slavery and Black communities existing under a legacy of colonial empire. Doing this work, I do not have the privilege of turning away or disengaging with present and historical traumas, both of which take their toll.<sup>3</sup> In a world where anti-Blackness is as pervasive as the weather (Sharpe 2016), my work must demonstrate my high regard for Black lives past and present, and dedication to preserving Black legacies. I want my professional contributions to be an act of counternarrative, and in that, a means by which to challenge the normalization of erasure surrounding Black death.<sup>4</sup>

As a Black woman archivist, I am deeply familiar with the silences that exist in documenting Black life, and specifically the lives of Black women. Effective silencing does not require a conspiracy, or even a political consensus—its roots are structural (Trouillot 1995, 106). Within the structure of contemporary society, the Black woman's world has been rooted in the periphery to those most likely to keep records of any kind, white men and women, making manuscript collections on Black women scarce (White 1987, 237). Systems of oppression, sexism, and global anti-Blackness have created an archival ecosystem where Black women are consistently underrepresented. Even as an experienced researcher and archivist, I encounter difficulty identifying Black women in collections with regularity. Too often, we are documented, if at all, with language that does not render us visible. Though troubling on its own, this also calls for us to refashion collection descriptions and carefully reconsider what constitutes a “Black collection.” If we are difficult to locate in conventional collections, using accepted vocabularies, perhaps new definitions and language can provide alternate points of access. To quote Saidiya Hartman, “The loss of stories

sharpens the hunger for them; it is tempting to fill in the gaps and to provide closure where there is none" (2008, 8).

The hunger for stories and noticeable representation gaps found in archival collections demonstrates further the need for greater diversity in the profession. As archivist Kellee Warren notes, "The relationship that Black women have to the archives in which they are treated as subjects make Black women archivists a unique, if rare group (because of the paucity of archival materials that represent the lived experiences of black women and the small number of black women in the archives profession)" (2016, 777). The sisterhood in this rare group and the community of Black, women of color, and nonbinary archivists is invaluable. Regularly, we serve as peer mentors to each other, providing emotional and professional support, sharing similar experiences, and talking through different challenges (Powell et al. 2018, 7). As we continue on, we must consider how we welcome new professionals into the field and collectively work to dismantle the systems that keep many of us from reaching our highest success. The wider archival community must recognize that "the unearthing of silences requires not only extra labor at the archives but is also a project linked to interpretation" (Trouillot 1995, 58). To do that work, we must bring in voices that have been pushed to the margins, and let them lead. It is in our collective best interest to not only train but also support professionals who understand and can speak directly to the nuances of collections documenting ethnic and historically marginalized communities. Even with attempted "objectivity," finding aids and descriptions created for archives of People of Color or ethnic communities and authored by someone from outside of that community are often discernable. The outside gaze reveals itself through language. Here, word choice creates barriers to access for those most likely to use and see themselves represented in a particular collection, and intentionality aside, the inclusion of problematic, offensive terminology or the exclusion of informed detail that leads to erasure is troubling. Archivists from diverse backgrounds offer an important and underutilized perspective in the field.

In my five years as a professional, I have come to understand the culture of archival repositories and the organization of archival records. I have also grown familiar with discomfort and the emotional labor required for success. As a researcher looking for records that provide a glimpse into the lives of the enslaved, I know well the game of chance that is played when requesting incriminating records from repositories staffed by white people, where those records are often hidden under layers of silence or questionable descriptions. Navigating racialized channels of information finding is quotidian. Like many archivists of color, the majority of my professional

skills—processing collections, creating and publishing finding aids, providing reference, working with donors, and so on—are utilized while in my institutional role, where I am not solely responsible for determining my priorities. It is on my own time outside of work where I am able to fully engage my expertise in justice-based and community-centered archival work.<sup>5</sup> The professional tension(s) experienced as an archivist of color provides an opportunity to consider Critical Race Theory (CRT) as a framework to move our professional practice forward. Engaging CRT offers a way to begin systematically addressing White Supremacy and the colonial thumbprint that dominate archival repositories and consequently influence our work.

In the spirit of CRT and its central tenet of storytelling, this chapter began in autobiographical form to offer my personal experience as a counternarrative. In sharing my positionality, I hope to give voice to some of the challenges Black women archivists encounter while trying to be our best professional selves. In full transparency, this is uncomfortable for me—I tend to shy away from the spotlight, focusing more on the work and its success than on the processes. However, in talking about my experience, I aim to demonstrate the urgent need for greater considerations of race and actionable methods to approach the legacy of structural racism in archives.

I begin my discussion of CRT in archival enterprise by reviewing previous scholarship on the topic. Attention is focused on CRT as a framework, with particular emphasis on a branch of CRT that is action-oriented, critical race praxis (CRP). In providing an example of how CRP has been applied in the field of education, I hope to demonstrate how it is a viable methodology to employ in archives. I then consider critical archival studies to explore how critical theory has been engaged within the archival community, and how this scholarship works toward shared goals with CRT. I conclude by fashioning what critical race praxis in archives might look like and questioning how it may further conversations in the profession and help us achieve tangible change. This process of change making is aligned with the idea of transformative librarianship, the application of TribalCrit, and the continuum of activist librarians discussed in this volume.<sup>6</sup>

## CRITICAL RACE THEORY IN ARCHIVES

Anthony Dunbar's 2006 article "Introducing Critical Race Theory into Archival Discourse: Getting the Conversation Started" is the first piece of literature to directly engage CRT in the archival profession. As a framework, Dunbar offers CRT as a systematic approach to address cultural and social issues documented in archival

records and impacting archivists working in repositories (2006, 110). Specifically, he examines how CRT's methodological concepts of counterstories, microaggressions, and social justice have presence in archival praxis. Engaging these concepts in archivy provides a method to create space for racially and nonracially marginalized voices to be elevated. Dunbar suggests CRT's usefulness not only in an administrative focus, but also as a tool for examining the historical focus of a record—including its content, context, and structure—which thereby emphasizes the social implications of archival discourse (2006, 119–122).

CRT provides a framework from which aspects of the archival profession can be evaluated and improved, including collections stewardship and the archival workforce. As pioneering archivist and archival scholar Harold T. Pinkett asserts, “American archival theory does not exist as a systematically formulated body of ideas. It is essentially an aggregation of ideas drawn from well-tested and widely accepted European archival principles, and of pragmatic concepts developed to meet special needs of American archival administration and democratic traditions” (1981, 222). As a practice-driven profession, junior to European archival enterprise, Western ideals lie at the foundation of our praxis. Indeed, whiteness exists as the terra firma of the archives profession in the United States and informs the very formation of its praxis (Ramirez 2015, 340). Considering the European roots of our profession and scholarship, a CRT approach allows for critical examination to be made in specific relation to making our praxis attend to difference. To push Dunbar's conversation further, I would like to engage critical race praxis as a method to better understand archival work and the role the archival community can play in transforming these understandings into reality.

## CRITICAL RACE THEORY AND PRAXIS

CRT first emerged from the field of critical legal scholarship and radical feminism in the 1970s. One of its principal founders, Derrick A. Bell, offered CRT as a mechanism for theorists to strive for specifically, more egalitarian state of affairs, and further, as a way to empower the traditionally excluded views and see all-inclusiveness as the ideal, out of a belief in collective wisdom (1995, 901). At its core, CRT asserts that racism is normal and ordinary. A product of social thought, racism is deeply embedded in the ingrained social structures that govern and affect our daily lives. Because of this, it can be hard to address and eliminate, because it must first be acknowledged (Delgado and Stefancic 2017, 8). Through CRT, we emphasize our marginality and

turn it toward advantageous perspective building and concrete advocacy on behalf of those oppressed by race and other interlocking factors of gender, economic class, and sexual orientation (Bell 1995, 902)

In the late 1990s, legal scholar and Critical Race Theorist Eric K. Yamamoto pushed forward critical race praxis (CRP) as a way to provide structure to justice practice—which, though grounded in the messy and conflictual racial realities of those who experience it, can be difficult to define in a purely theoretical sense (1997, 875–876). CRP, as an action-based framework grounding racial justice in concrete situations, starts with inquiry into the experiences and perceptions of racial groups and frontline justice practitioners (Yamamoto 1997, 881). CRP provides a way to move theoretical and intellectual discourse into practical action, as informed by the communities and lived experiences of those at stake. Yamamoto proposes four tenets: the conceptual, the performative, the material, and the reflexive.

**Conceptual:** focuses on the particulars and the context of a controversy or relationship in conflict by examining the racialization, heterosexism, patriarchy, class, and each of their interconnecting influences (1997, 878; 1999, 130).

**Performative:** raises the questions of “What?” and “Who should act?” in response to specific claims—responses to these questions “perform” to the specific case and dismantle subordinating social structures to rectify justice (1999, 131).

**Material:** highlights the material conditions of racial oppression and supports the idea that change is material when it is social structural and representational (1997, 880; 1999, 132).

**Reflexive:** alerts theorists, lawyers, and activists to reintegrate experience into practice and continually rebuild theory in light of the experiences of racial groups engaged in racial and antiracist struggles (1997, 881; 1999, 132).

## APPLIED CRITICAL RACE PRACTICE

CRT and education scholar David O. Stovall has taken CRP beyond legal scholarship and applied it specifically to education. As a growing body of scholarship, CRT in education has been evolving since the late twentieth century. CRT was first introduced in education in 1995 by Gloria Ladson-Billings and William F. Tate as a framework both to underscore the school curriculum as a cultural artifact that upholds White Supremacy and disenfranchises many, and to democratize the education system. Discussions within the field of CRT in education can be instructive to archival

enterprise, as much of our work supports the educational processes of research and instruction. CRT in education is commonly used as a framework to better understand and articulate social relationships and power structures in direct relation to race and racism in schools across the United States. Pushing discussions of CRT in education further, Stovall has engaged CRP with education (2013; Stovall et al. 2009) to better realize how scholars may suspend expertise and substitute it with the process of listening to members of communities with whom we work, with the specific intent to address identified issues (2013, 290). CRP in education positions the researcher to continually question their practice with community stakeholders (Stovall 2013, 292).

Grounding his argument in Yamamoto's CRP tenets, Stovall integrates theoretical constructs from educational, anthropological, sociological, legal, and public health scholarship to formulate a framework for CRP in education:

**Commitment to on-the-ground work:** theory should deal less with abstract concepts and be rooted in a tangible commitment to the physical, social, and intellectual support of communities experiencing educational injustice;

**Social justice as an experienced phenomenon:** justice work requires a material commitment to work with communities in reaching tangible goals;

**Utilization of interdisciplinary approaches:** it requires a commitment to use theoretical and methodological approaches to specifically address the racial, social, political, and economic concerns of communities;

**Training others to move beyond the intellectual exercise of challenging dominant ideologies:** it is necessary to continually develop the capacity of up-and-coming CRT scholars to engage communities and groups working for educational justice;

**Commitment to self-care:** justice work in education can be extremely taxing to the mind and body—it is imperative to commit ourselves to physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. (Stovall 2013, 294)

## CRITICAL ARCHIVAL STUDIES

Introducing a critical framework to archival discourse creates space for those who want to approach information tenets with a critical social consciousness (Dunbar 2006, 111). Critical archival studies is a relatively recent movement in the archival field, gaining prominence only within the last decade. First introduced by Ricky Punzalan in 2010, critical archival studies is a growing dimension of archival

scholarship. In fact, a 2017 special issue of the *Journal of Critical Library and Information Studies* focused entirely on the topic (Caswell, Punzalan, and Sangwand 2017). Blending critical studies and archival theory, critical archival studies provides an approach to consider the role of power in record creation, archival functions, the establishment of archival institutions, archival outreach and use and advocacy, who becomes archivists and how and why, and how we define and teach and practice core concepts (Caswell 2016, 3). Using this approach, archivists and scholars are able to evaluate the field in new ways, reconstructing both archival practice and theory. Ultimately, critical archival studies is an emancipatory project that seeks to transform both archival practice and research, and further, to interrogate how records contribute to what is wrong with the world, how records can be used to change it, and by whom (Sutherland 2017, 3; Caswell 2016, 5; Caswell, Punzalan, and Sangwand 2017, 2).

Embracing critical archival studies means recognizing that theory and practice are a false binary, and that theoretical and political assumptions will always underlie the work of archives and archivists (Caswell, Punzalan, and Sangwand 2017, 5). Moving archival thinking into a social realm, critical archival studies provides a way “to liberate, interrogate, and usher in a ‘real democracy,’ where power is distributed more equitably, where White Supremacy and patriarchy and heteronormativity and other forms of oppression are named and challenged, where different worlds and different ways of being in those worlds are acknowledged and imagined and enacted” (6).

Archival scholar Michelle Caswell proposes a three-point definition, suggesting that critical archival studies

- (1) explains what is wrong with the current state of archival and recordkeeping practice and research and identifies who can change it and how;
- (2) posits achievable goals for how archives and recordkeeping practice and research in archival studies can and should change; and
- (3) provides norms and strategies and mechanisms for forming such critique. (Caswell 2016, 6)

## TOWARD A CRITICAL RACE PRAXIS IN ARCHIVES

Considering Yamamoto’s CRP framework, its application in the education field set forth by Stovall, and Caswell’s definition of critical archival studies, I would like to suggest what a critical race praxis might look like, and mean, for the archival field. While each of these tenets are related, I believe they may exist, operate, and



be enacted independently. Collectively, however, I believe they can bring attention to race and the implications of racism, and ultimately revolutionize the profession.

**DISRUPTIVE: ACKNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS OF POWER, RACE/RACISM,  
AND PRIVILEGE PRESENT IN ALL ASPECTS OF ARCHIVAL WORK AND  
SUBVERT THE IDEA OF NEUTRALITY**

In his now canonical 1971 SAA presidential address, Howard Zinn discussed the ongoing bias in archival work, arguing that archivists tend to perpetuate the political and economic status quo simply by going about ordinary business (Zinn 1977). The very acts of preserving and making archival records accessible directly reflects social distributions of wealth and power. Inextricable from conversations of wealth and power is the social embeddedness of racism. Over forty years later, it is time to move our discussions beyond debate by acknowledging the inherent politics of our work and the false presence of archival neutrality. For the first time in SAA history, presenters at the 2019 annual meeting were explicitly encouraged to consider their positionality and address power structures as they related to their presentation topics via a message included in all proposal notification messages—for proposals accepted, selected as alternates, and declined.<sup>7</sup> This change was implemented by conference cochairs, with the intent to raise awareness and encourage thoughtful dialogue at the annual meeting.<sup>8</sup> While the effects of promoting this kind of self-awareness during the session submission and acceptance process is yet to be seen, anecdotally, the cochairs received feedback from attendees stating that the 2019 conference had some of the greatest representational diversity in presenters and topics seen at an annual meeting. In what ways can we acknowledge the systemic power dynamics in our institutional practices and the harm caused by upholding them? What privileges do we possess, at both the individual and institutional levels, and how might we use said privilege(s) to transform systemic power dynamics? How can we document decisions and policies to provide greater transparency and accountability to prevent the continuation of harmful practices?

**RESPONSIVE: ADDRESS CURRENT ISSUES IN BOTH THE ARCHIVAL  
COMMUNITY AND SOCIETY AT LARGE AND EMPOWER PRACTITIONERS  
AT ALL LEVELS TO ENACT CHANGE WITHIN THEIR INFLUENCE**

A responsive approach supports practitioners addressing social issues—legacies found in archival collections and currently happening in contemporary society—and

encourages an archival perspective in creating social change. This approach is not fixed in status quo, established protocol or organizational hierarchy. All archivists, not just those in decision-making positions or library administration, “have a professional obligation to work toward a more equitable future” (Punzalan and Caswell 2016, 27). Indeed, it is up to every librarian and archivist to disrupt the affective implications of whiteness (Espinal, Sutherland, and Roh 2018, 158). As custodians of records documenting society, we are responsible to individuals and communities whose records we steward. Operating out of an understanding that racism is ordinary and neutrality does not exist in archivy, “archivists need to be willing to take a public stand at times” (Jimerson 2009, 290), addressing issues that affect the profession and the communities where we live and work.

For me, responsive archival work includes establishing a paid undergraduate internship in collaboration with the university’s Black studies department. I sought to begin this internship as a way to provide exposure to students of color, introducing them to archival work and encouraging them to see themselves in the archive—while also paying them for their labor. There was no model or precedent for a collaborative or even paid undergraduate internship program in my repository. Through an endowment in Black studies supplemented with collection development funds, recruitment through Black studies faculty and student listservs, and selection by a committee of representatives from both campus units, the internship program is now successfully in its third year. In addition to working directly with Black diaspora collections, the intern also participates in donor relations and programmatic activities throughout the academic year. In what aspects of our work can we improve, or create, equity? How can our collective archival training and individual positionalities be used to benefit society, address silences and erasure, or enact justice? What spaces or platforms are available to articulate and promote these ideas and support people doing this work?

**ACTIONABLE: CENTER SOCIAL JUSTICE IN ARCHIVAL WORK,  
RECOGNIZING THE LARGER SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY TO  
COMMUNITIES AND INDIVIDUALS, PAST AND PRESENT, WHILE  
PROVIDING GOALS FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND MEASURES  
FOR ACCOUNTABILITY**

Social justice in CRT pushes scholars to actively engage in their communities by using their academic resources and intellect to foster tangible change (Chapman 2013, 103). In the archival context, social justice and actionable practice address how archives can be used to generate or support social change. An actionable approach

may necessitate the reevaluation or modification of established theory and/or practice to better support records and communities at stake—those existing outside of the white, elitist origins of archival enterprise. Social justice through action, and reparative action in particular, is a change in the traditional praxis of the archival profession. Not only that, it is a conscientious effort to begin one's work with the philosophy of inclusion from the margins (Hughes-Watkins 2018, 5). An effective first actionable step for many collecting institutions is revisiting collection development policies. If guiding documentation articulates a commitment to justice work and representational collecting, some of the challenges that can present in the context of this work are mitigated. How can our community of archival practitioners begin, and even end, our practice and workflows by centering those who are underrepresented or disenfranchised? In what ways can our practice support justice and liberation work? What systemic barriers exist in archives, and how can they be broken?

**INFORMED: INCLUDE PRACTICES AND KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS  
OUTSIDE OF THE ESTABLISHED "TRADITION," INCORPORATING  
SELF-REFLECTIVE PRACTICE, CULTURAL COMPETENCE/HUMILITY, AND  
CRITIQUE AS NORMALIZED EXPECTATIONS OF ARCHIVAL WORK**

An informed approach emphasizes the need for and the contributions of understanding, culturally competent archival professionals. However, these people alone cannot undo oppressive systems of race and power—in fact, focusing exclusively on interpersonal attributes can reduce racism to individual relations, obscuring analysis of broader structures of racial domination (Hudson 2017, 17). As an example, in 2018, the SAA adopted *Protocols for Native American Archival Materials* as the profession's guiding resource for working with culturally sensitive records of Native American communities. *Protocols* was first introduced to the SAA Council for endorsement in 2006; the twelve-year opposition to its endorsement was the result of "cultural insensitivity and white supremacy" present in the council (Society of American Archivists 2018). While the delayed endorsement of the *Protocols* demonstrates the embeddedness and influence of White Supremacy in our profession, it also proves the reality of its undoing. If our practice is not informed by the diverse members of our profession, the communities we collaborate with, and those represented in the collections found in our repositories, we are doing nothing but a disservice. We must not only embrace but also privilege counterstories and alternate ways of knowing and performing archival work, particularly when these ways of knowing come from groups historically oppressed. This will lead to strengthened practice, which in turn

will impact (and improve) nearly every aspect of archivy—appraisal, description, documentation strategy, and community archives, just to begin. How are certain ways of knowing privileged in archives, and what can be done about that? How are we continuously improving our practice and providing support to those who contribute to the growth and evolution of archival work? In what ways can thoughtful archival practice transform society?

#### CARING: OPERATE OUT OF A COMMITMENT TO MINIMIZE HARM AND PROVIDE CARE FOR BOTH COLLECTIONS AND PROFESSIONALS

Discussions of care in archival work most often engage feminist theory and the ethic of care (e.g., Caswell and Cifor 2016; Jules 2016; Punzalan and Caswell 2016). This discourse challenges us to refashion the role of archivist from enforcer to caregiver, honoring webs of responsibility to the records themselves and to the communities documented within them. While there has been less engagement with Black feminist theory in archival discourse, it too has a lot to offer, particularly in how care is conceptualized in the profession. The Black feminist ethic of caring centers the notion that ideas cannot be divorced from the individuals who create and share them. Enacting an ethic of caring includes providing space for individual expressiveness, the appropriateness of emotions, and the capacity for empathy (Collins 2000, 262–264). Inherent in this is recognizing the significance of different kinds of knowing and individual experiences, and the valuable contribution they make to archival endeavors. As stated by Powell and colleagues, as Black women archivists, “our professional practice demonstrates caring for people as evidence of capacity to care for materials” (2018, 8).

A caring approach can begin with simply acknowledging the labor of archivists processing and working with challenging or difficult material and being intentional about being in relationship with them, as a supervisor or colleague. Michelle Caswell and Marika Cifor (2016) outline a four-part framework for affective archival relationships, including (1) archivist and record creator, (2) archivist and subject or records, (3) archivist and user, and (4) archivist and the larger community. Building from this, archivists Holly Smith, Elvia Arroyo-Ramirez, Molly Brown, Shannon O’Neil, Dinah Handel, Jasmine Jones, Rachel Mattson, Giordana Mecagni, and Kelly Wooten have suggested a fifth affective relationship—archivist to archivist.<sup>9</sup> The value and importance of caring relationships in the archival setting are important, and the relationships among and between archivists should not be minimized. We must extend care beyond the boxes, folders, and server space in our repositories. How are we honoring

the humanity of the people in our collections and the professionals providing archival labor to support them? In what ways can our archival relationship be improved? How do we care for staff who engage with records documenting trauma or violence? How is labor distributed, and how can those required to exert increased emotional labor while on the job—most often, archivists of color—be supported?

## CONCLUSION

CRT and CRP have a lot to offer the archival profession. In this chapter, my goal has been to consider what enacting a CRP can do for archives—both the professionals that sustain them and the collections in our care. By proposing a CRP framework in archives, I hope to encourage additional conversation on the subject. In fact, I invite others to further these suggested tenets to better articulate and support the needs and diverse perspectives in the field. I look forward to the day when the discussions centering race and the professional mechanisms that exist to support racially and ethnically diverse archivists are more the norm than the exception. Though it is unclear when this day will come, being critical of our work and mindful of the implications of our praxis gets us closer.

## NOTES

1. In 2018, the name of this award was changed from “Minority Student Award” to “Student of Color Award”; see Berry 2018. For more on the program, see Poole 2017.
2. João H. Costa Vargas (2018) posits, “Antiblack racism is a constitutive aspect of the social world of the Black diaspora, and can be conceptualized as a shared set of attitudes, and their assumptions, that translate into everyday practice and measurable results” (26–27).
3. “POC experience both individual and collective trauma in this country. We can’t be expected to produce, produce, produce without any acknowledgement of the horrors that POC in general and librarians of color in particular are having to process on a bodily level” (Espinal, Sutherland, and Roh 2018, 157).
4. “By failing to consistently collect visual evidence as an intentional counternarrative, American archives have effectively created a master narrative of normativity around Black death” (Sutherland 2017, 13).
5. I co-curated the exhibition *Juntos/Together: Black and Brown Activism in Austin, 1970–1983* at the George Washington Carver Museum and Cultural Center in Austin, TX, in 2018.
6. See, e.g., chapters 2, 4, and 6 in this volume.
7. The positionality statement for accepted proposals read, in part: “As presenters at the Joint Annual Meeting, it is important to reflect and acknowledge your positionality as it relates to your chosen topics. At the basic level, this involves reflecting on and acknowledging power structures and

your social location (intersecting identities) as it relates to your topic. To not acknowledge the power structures that control our work reproduces that power and, depending on the topic of your presentation, erases the contributions and voices of historically marginalized people and communities.”

8. The 2019 SAA Program co-chairs included myself, Joyce Gabiola, and Tanya Marshall.

9. As presented in the session “Radical Empathy in Archival Practice” at the 2017 SAA annual meeting, Portland, OR, July 28, 2017, <https://archives2017.sched.com/event/ABGy/301-radical-empathy-in-archival-practice>; and in the Society of California Archivists webinar, “Applying Radical Empathy Framework in Archival Practice,” September 17, 2018, <https://calarchivists.org/event-3034395>.

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This is a section of [doi:10.7551/mitpress/11969.001.0001](https://doi.org/10.7551/mitpress/11969.001.0001)

# Knowledge Justice

## Disrupting Library and Information Studies through Critical Race Theory

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### Citation:

*Knowledge Justice: Disrupting Library and Information Studies through Critical Race Theory*

Edited by: Sofia Y. Leung, Jorge R. López-McKnight

DOI: 10.7551/mitpress/11969.001.0001

ISBN (electronic): 9780262363204

Publisher: The MIT Press

Published: 2021

The open access edition of this book was made possible by generous funding and support from Arcadia – a charitable fund of Lisbet Rausing and Peter Baldwin



The MIT Press

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The open access edition of this book was made possible by generous funding from Arcadia—a charitable fund of Lisbet Rausing and Peter Baldwin.



This book was set in Stone Serif and Stone Sans by Westchester Publishing Services.

#### Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Leung, Sofia Y., editor. | López-McKnight, Jorge R., editor.

Title: Knowledge justice : disrupting library and information studies through critical race theory  
/ edited by Sofia Y. Leung and Jorge R. López-McKnight.

Description: Cambridge, Massachusetts : The MIT Press, [2021] | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020028167 | ISBN 9780262043502 (paperback)

Subjects: LCSH: Minorities in library science--United States. | Critical pedagogy--United States. | Social justice--United States. | Library science--Moral and ethical aspects--United States. | Information science--Moral and ethical aspects--United States. | United States--Race relations--Philosophy.

Classification: LCC Z682.4.M56 K58 2021 | DDC 020.89--dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020028167>