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CRITICAL THEORY, LIBRARIES AND CULTURE

by Jenny Bossaller, Denice
Adkins and Kim M. Thompson

There are disparate notions among people within the broad field of information and library science regarding exactly what comprises information science. One broad definition is provided by Tefko Saracevic: “Information science is a field of professional practice *and* scientific inquiry addressing the problem of effective communication of knowledge records – ‘literature’ – among humans in the context of social, organizational, and individual need for and use of information” (1055-1056). At its most basic, it seems that information science could be a neutral science if, indeed, it studies everything that is communicated, in any form. However, as noted in the above definition, the actual professional practice of information science involves placing value on the tools used for communication, thereby adding a burden of subjective interpretation.

Sandra Harding explains the myth of neutrality in the sciences, bringing up many examples which illustrate that what is considered important is dictated by Euro- and androcentric dominant traditions. Although more men work in the scientific fields, Harding explores implications of class and Western imperialism to explain why a feminist or critical stance can improve science by allowing alternate voices to be heard. She writes, “Science is politics by other means, and it also generates reliable information about the empirical world... It is a contested terrain and has been so from its origins. Groups with conflicting social agendas have struggled to gain control of the social resources that the sciences – their ‘information,’ their technologies, and their prestige – can provide” (10).

To the extent that library and information science (LIS) is, by self-definition, a science, we can learn from Harding’s assertions regarding Euro/masculine dominance and tradition, realizing that alternate methods of evaluation and obtaining books should be encouraged – for the growth of the science, and for the health of libraries as a part of communities. Challenging the status quo and questioning libraries’ compliance with outsourcing, for example, means welcoming alternative viewpoints and methods for evaluation. Ultimately, this questioning can shape our concept of what culture is, what is worth preserving, and what values are shown by our professional praxis.

Collection development tools are generally based on some type of statistics. Many of the tools that libraries routinely use for selection and weeding are

essentially based on quasi-scientific measurements, such as circulation and in-house use statistics. Another method might be comparing the collection to a comparable institution. Librarians also make use of census statistics and similar community analysis tools. While these are very useful, they also serve to reduce our own liability in making a wrong decision about what we should put in our libraries. However, at some point some expression of values surfaces, whether in discussing what types of books people should be reading, what should be made available, and even our conceptions of topics such as literacy (i.e., what people should know in order to participate in society).

As John Buschman and others have pointed out, there have been diverse applications of Foucauldian theory to LIS, but that Foucault's contradictions cause difficulty in application. Looking back further (and further afield) to Marcuse and Giroux might provide a more coherent application of critical theory for LIS, as viewing information science through the lens of critical discourse exposes the political implications of our research, education, and practices (Buschman).

Libraries as Agents of Social Change

The idea of libraries as agents of social change has been reiterated for years. Benjamin Franklin, noting the impact of his 1729 public subscription library, writes in his autobiography, "Our people...became better acquainted with books, and in a few years were observ'd by strangers to be better instructed and more intelligent than people of the same rank generally are in other countries" (61), suggesting some level of social amelioration because of the presence of his library.

Sidney Ditzion's *Arsenals of a Democratic Culture* traces the cultural foundations of American libraries, noting that post-colonial advocates saw libraries as a means to advance science and learning, prevent crime, and help raise the poor to higher social standing through diligent self-education while at the same time serving to keep the rich morally oriented through good literature. According to Ditzion, early American public libraries were fashioned as a means to create "a new order of merit based on intellectual culture rather than on wealth which had hithertofore been the only title to eminence" (12).

Part of Andrew Carnegie's philanthropic efforts for "the improvement of mankind" (Bobinski, 3) was giving "some \$36,000,000...for library purposes" (7) around the world between 1880 and 1899. Even Melville Dewey's 1893 motto, "The best reading for the largest number, at least cost," has a connotation of the value of providing "the best reading" for social improvement.

Authors today have differing opinions on the wisdom of this social role connected with librarianship. In the compilation *Questioning Library Neutrality*, Jack Andersen, John J. Doherty, Shiraz Duranni, Elizabeth

Smallwood, Ann Sparanese, and others scrutinize libraries' philosophical and/or practical role in American society. Andersen's essay urges librarians to see themselves as neutral agents in the scholarly communicative process. By divorcing themselves from any particular doctrine or literature (of, for instance, the social sciences), librarians can view only the technical aspects of the transmission and storage of information. Doherty's essay invokes the writings Friere, Giroux, and Budd in order to revisit the concept of a self-reflective praxis in librarianship, defined by Budd as "action that carries social and ethical implications and is not reduced to technical performance of tasks" (as quoted in Doherty, 109). Furthermore, Doherty relates selection of materials to the "Western cultural paradigm...that the resource selection process in libraries is hegemonic depending as it does on privileged source lists and methods of collecting titles" (111). Durrani and Smallwood emphasize the importance of libraries remaining rooted in their local community over a focus on collecting national bestsellers. They write that the "myth of the 'neutral librarian' needs to be exploded. There is no way that librarians are or can be neutral in the social struggles of their societies. Every decision they make...is a reflection of their class position and their world outlook" (123). They discuss the need for librarians to take part in the local struggles and to reject outsourcing of traditional librarian jobs, which are all too easily accepted and endorsed by the scientific-rational model of neutrality.

Sparanese writes a vivid account about her own experiences building collections that reflected her library's diverse constituency: "I think I started to make the connection [between my former life as an activist and my life as a librarian] when I realized that my library...was not really serving the whole of our community." She wrote, and received, a grant to buy lots of books, "even the most controversial ones," about "Black life, Black writers, and Black history" to meet the needs of her service area. She then turned to the needs of the Hispanic population. As she explains, "the concept of activism or advocacy is seen as contrary to the idea of neutralism or neutrality in libraries" (74).

The purpose of the current article is to extend the above articles by examining culture-centered lenses through which library neutrality might be viewed. The lenses are related in that they offer criticism of the non-neutral systems which currently inform librarians as they develop programming and order books which attempt to support a non-homogenized constituency. Each of the cultural lenses demonstrates that information needs do not always fit a norm, and that information needs can not be met with a normative, privileged and homogenized product.

Cultural Propositions

In order for libraries to retain or reclaim a position that supports the full diversity of human cultural experience, they must look beyond mainstream media and easily obtained products. The systems in place that make librarians' jobs easier (that is, the publishing and ordering systems) are

part of what D'Angelo calls the state of "Postmodern consumer capitalism [which] transforms discourse into private consumer product and as such reduces knowledge to mere information or entertainment" (1). The authors argue that librarians' roles in the U.S. go far beyond merely providing access to products of the dominant culture, and that there is evidence that demonstrates a conflict between dominant and marginalized cultures within the library milieu. This argument proposes that:

- information does not equal communication,
- communication occurs within a larger realm of culture,
- communication involves knowledge and some knowledge is privileged above others,
- challenging what is privileged is a way to break down barriers, and
- challenging what is privileged is necessary to retain the democratic ideal of librarianship.

We will address each of these propositions in turn.

Proposition 1: Information does not equal communication

Information can be minimally defined as a message, passed from one entity to another (see Shannon and Weaver, and Beltran). But in addition to the transfer of scribbles, murmurs, or bytes of data, the transmission of information requires that there be a receiver, a human with the awareness, reasoning and judgment to decipher the message (Case), with the meaning and use of the message receiving more emphasis than the transmission of the message (Losee). In other words, "information remains nothing unless it is meaningful" (Lax, 4). With this definition, the value of information is found with the transfer of an idea. If no cogent message is transferred, no information has been passed or received (Losee). The act of informing, then, is the transfer of a message in a single direction. This passing of information is independent of feedback, response or even acknowledgement of reception of the message.

It is *communication* that adds a component of reciprocity, a two-way flow of information, incorporating the phenomenon of response or reaction to a sent message (Beltran). As the communication of information includes the presence of a human transmitter and a human receiver, information is inherently a social entity, an entity or concept that requires the company of "Others." Information affects all levels of the social hierarchy and holds great potential as an equalizing tool.

Proposition 2: Communication occurs within the larger realm of culture

Language equally forms and is formed by culture. The words that people use to communicate, whether spoken or written, are observable expressions of culture. Those words influence how the word-users are perceived—that is, they are observable by outsiders. They are symbolic of the culture from which they spring, and they influence how culture is transmitted.

Literacy itself is one facet of language, and that with which libraries are fundamentally concerned. Language and culture work together to help people express ideas and identity.

By the same token, “when people control one another, they do so primarily through communication” (Beltran, 12). There is, to a certain extent, an industry behind the production of cultural goods. Editors and publishers make books available to us based in some part on how well they are predicted to sell. Producers finance television shows based on their appeal to a mass audience. French sociologist and public intellectual Pierre Bourdieu discusses the struggle between the dominant and dominated languages and cultures in the context of the educational system; he also specifically addresses the importance of the publishing industry’s role in legitimating one language (or, in reinforcing proper or dominant use of language):

The position which the educational system gives to the different languages (or the different cultural contents) is such an important issue only because this institution has the monopoly in the large-scale production of producers/consumers, and therefore in the reproduction of the market without which the social value of the linguistic competence, its capacity to function as linguistic capital, would cease to exist (Bourdieu, 57).

Public library services are specifically designed with the intention of drawing in more library users from the community. This cultural industry is caught between appealing to the largest possible audience and appealing to a more specific but underserved audience.

Nonetheless, libraries are not obliged to recreate the dominant culture by oppressing non-dominant cultures. Shiraz Durrani discusses the role of libraries in creating a space for the preservation and promotion of local culture. He cites multiple examples of libraries going against the grain of a corporate publishing world to support the local people—“to understand working people’s lives and struggles, be one of them, and then seek ways of creating a relevant library service” (162). His idea of library as agent of activism says that libraries should support popular movements by providing information and communication technologies with which members of otherwise suppressed groups can record their own viewpoints, which the library can then collect and distribute.

Durrani recommends that libraries team up with other cultural groups – local arts, music, drama, and poetry groups, for instance, to “[connect] people through non-print media” (292) in order to expand the boundaries of the library – to challenge the hegemony of the printed word. The goal of his suggestions is to reach across the boundaries that are imposed by the ideal of who a library is for (i.e., people who want to read popular books) to becoming a place where local culture can flourish.

Proposition 3: Communication involves knowledge, and certain knowledge is privileged above other

There are a number of different ways to think of culture, but we can begin with the premise that the products of some cultures, recognized as ‘high culture,’ are deemed more worthy of study and preservation (and thus promotion) than other types of culture. Another type of privileged culture is ‘popular culture,’ that culture that feeds and is fed by mass media. This is problematic on a number of levels for librarians, notably because the idea of the library is that it is a place that is supposed to promote equality.

If one adheres to the Library Bill of Rights, one might agree that:

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment. (ALA, n.p.).

Equality is not possible when one culture is valued above another; the institutions then become tools of the dominant society (for better or worse). They become agents for the reproduction of existent socio-political power structures, vested in the preservation and promotion of a particular type of cultural record, whether those records and documents exist, rather than people’s access to the tools necessary to thrive in the public sphere. The writings of Herbert Marcuse and Henri Giroux provide a way for us to conceptualize the problem of libraries in relation to linguistic (or cultural) minorities in society. The problem here, then, becomes not what is worthy of our attention as librarians, but how we can work to expand equality in the world of what we pay attention to.

Proposition 4: Challenging privileged information is a way to break down barriers

Traditional Marxist thought dictates that the world in which we function is controlled by a certain group of people, a ruling class, which we can call the dominant group. This group controls not only material goods but also culture, that is, what is recognized as legitimate, and what is not recognized, or is considered inferior in some way to that of the dominant culture, or what we could call ideology. Legitimization of that culture is a process of reification by institutions, which might include schools and libraries. Williams explained cultural ideology in Marxist thought as:

- (i) a system of beliefs characteristic of a particular class or group;
- (ii) a system of illusory beliefs – false ideas or false consciousness – which can be contrasted with true or scientific knowledge;
- (iii) the general process of the production of meanings and ideas (55).

Under this framework, then, ideology is part of cultural hegemony, which utilizes economic and social forces to influence the direction of society as a whole, in favor of a particular group of people. Furthermore, the group of people with the most power is the one which holds the most capital.

Language is one observable and recordable aspect of culture. When cultures collide, one way to observe how conflicting cultures or languages are interacting is through expression in the written word. Literacy can demonstrate how a culture manages its resources and creates its own evolution. When members of a culture use literacy for their own authentic purposes, they work toward changing the conditions of their existence. However, one problem found in studying multiple literacies—especially one which is considered less important or counter to national homogeneity – is that the vernacular is sometimes hidden; it is hard to observe in many common public settings.

We can turn to Foucault to provide an explanation of this phenomenon; furthermore, his explanation provides reason to embrace local literacies. In private settings, or settings in which the dominated is the dominant, people can be observed without the constraints of society's gaze. However, in public the dominant language or behavior will arise. Foucault [19] explains this effect as panopticism, which occurs when disciplinary powers force a person who is deviant (or different) to change his own behavior or language, in effect disciplining himself. The 'different,' that which falls outside of the norm, becomes a social flaw. The function of discipline "arrests or regulates movements; it clears up confusion; it dissipates compact groupings of individuals...[and] establishes calculated distributions" (219). In regards to a dominated population, this division and domination is evidenced by a police force and work system that reinforce systems of inequality: "The constant division between the normal and the abnormal, to which every individual is subjected...the existence of a whole set of techniques and institutions for measuring, supervising and correcting the abnormal brings into play the disciplinary mechanisms...which, even today, are disposed around the abnormal individual, to brand him and to alter him" (Foucault, 199). Viewing literacy practices in situ (that is, looking at how individuals communicate within their own culture) is one way to find out how people are shaping their own existence, in their own terms. Are libraries disciplinary agents of the state, or proponents of cultural equality? If, indeed, libraries embrace cultural differences and individuality (rather than serve as a disciplinary force) we can see the importance of taking part in production of local literacy products: it legitimates the authentic needs and purposes of the people the library claims to serve.

Herbert Marcuse supplied an interpretation of critical theory which guided the propositions outlined in this paper. Although it has been applied to many situations, one goal of the critical theorists was to empower the lower classes through political means—to legitimate alternatives to a capitalist-driven cultural and ideological hegemony. The ultimate goal would be to create a world in which individuals are able to achieve freedom (that is, to become responsible for their own happiness) outside of the status quo (Marcuse, 138). Critical theory’s concern “with human happiness, and the conviction that it can be attained only through a transformation of the material conditions of existence” (Marcuse, 135) demonstrate the importance of library science’s continued resistance to library systems that submit to the global information hegemony. In short, critical theory posits that human happiness is held hostage to current “material conditions of existence,” and that increased happiness can be obtained by changing those conditions to ensure that oppressed peoples receive a more just and equitable treatment in the larger culture.

Three current studies of resistance

Library literature provides clear evidence of an attempt to change the material conditions of existence for library users. In some cases, these attempts are encouraged by libraries; in others, it is the communities themselves who work to produce the change. Adkins, Bossaller, & Thompson found evidence that libraries and community organizations were engaging in bilingual language and literacy instruction. This instruction attempts to place Spanish-speaking people in the mainstream society, thereby giving them a voice in the larger community. At the same time, many shops in a particular neighborhood had signs in Spanish and bilingual or Spanish-speaking employees. This demonstrates an effort by the Spanish-speaking community to validate its own language and culture by enabling people to obtain the resources they need without having to negotiate a potentially hostile culture. Locally produced literacy products demonstrated economic needs and material or experiential desires of Latinos living in a large metropolitan area. That message may have been hidden if one only studied the messages provided by the dominant culture.

Librarians use various tools to find out what they should provide for their communities. This is an effort to try to serve everyone in their service area – users, as well as non-users. This puts local collection development efforts at odds with the industrialization of the library profession. Heather Hill examined discourse in Requests for Proposals and other documentation regarding public library transitions to corporate ownership. In the RFPs, she found little regard for actual community needs: “Instead, the statements are cookie-cutter responses and lend credence to the idea that the contractor has some sort of master proposal with areas that read ‘insert library name here’” (Hill, 75). Furthermore, by putting the contracted company in the role of ‘expert’, the community loses its authority. Hill notes that when a formerly public library becomes a privately owned entity (that is, it outsources every function of the library so that the employees

are no longer public employees), “the library may be redefined in this process by commodified, capitalist rhetoric that changes the relationship with the community by positioning the library as a business” (Hill, 12). The effect is that “underserved populations that are more difficult to reach may be excluded in the outsourced library as the contractor focuses on those benchmarks easiest to achieve with a narrower, convenient to access population” (Hill, 8).

A third study by Annette Goldsmith explores how “editors’ decision-making processes and motivations [illuminates] the current state of children’s book translation publishing in the U.S.” (Goldsmith 1). Goldsmith discusses the importance of having “culturally conscious (children’s) books,” defined as those “that appear to present an authentic sense of the culture from an insider perspective,” available to children in the U.S. (1). Culturally authentic translated books enable the reader to see a different world, by preserving the original meanings and viewpoints of the foreign text. She finds that although some excellent books are published, many more are not published because of business considerations (such as the risk of publishing something which might not be popular, and the cost of translating). Additionally, publishers often intervene in an authentic translation in favor of one that is altered in order to fit a potential market – making it less authentic in order to be more profitable.

Hill’s and Goldsmith’s studies illustrate the importance of the market in decision making, or the ‘norming’ of the language of the marketplace in public discourse. It also points toward the danger of rational technological mentality in decision-making. Marcuse famously coined this tendency “the Establishment,” defined as the “susceptibility of all disciplines to organization in the national or corporate interest” which “has made the goods of culture available to the people – and they help to strengthen the sweep of what is over what can be and ought to be, ought to be if there is truth in the cultural values” (Marcuse 17).

Proposition 5: Challenging what is privileged is necessary to retain the democratic ideal of librarianship

One’s perceptions of culture are largely based on one’s identity and one’s affiliations. Marcuse said that “the ‘validity’ of culture has always been confined to a specific universe, constituted by tribal, national, religious, or other identity” (15). When one is embedded within a particular culture, be it the dominant culture or the culture of one of many various immigrant groups, there is always an “Other” or even an “Enemy,” an outcast or divergent culture that is viewed in opposition to one’s own culture. To a native-born American, the Spanish-speaking immigrant may be the Other, and even if the native-born American wants to welcome that immigrant, it is done through the mores and values of the native-born American.

The integration and resistance of a linguistic minority in relation to the dominant culture has implications for wider cultural participation.

Practically speaking, linguistically isolated people are vulnerable—communication with banks, community officials, and others is limited, and the numbers of linguistically isolated people are rising. According to the Census Bureau, “in 2000, 4.4 million households encompassing 11.9 million people were linguistically isolated” (Shin and Bruno 10). Beyond purely practical reasons, though, language use has implications for libraries and other cultural institutions. How libraries and other cultural institutions try to include vernacular cultures will determine who participates. When a library staffed by English speakers works with a Spanish-speaking community that uses primarily vernacular (Spanish) communications, that library’s attendance will reflect the particular portion of the community that is more comfortable using English, but may not reflect other portions of that community. When a library chooses to provide only bilingual books, rather than Spanish-monolingual books, that library is making a statement as to the relative worth of the Spanish language.

Libraries exist to promote and preserve culture. It is natural, then, that there should be an argument within librarianship regarding how to work with people outside the dominant culture, including the role of libraries in becoming an inclusive institution. Whether or not the library, as an institution, serves to reify the social structure or to defy it is a matter of great importance, because the stance one takes in this regard dictates what will be included in the services of that library. This extends to all areas of culture, including which languages it will support and how that support will happen. Libraries responding to multicultural populations are constrained by both the dominant culture and the cultures of the patrons. A library that provides *fotonovelas*, Spanish-language books for adults that use a comic book format, is serving a particular population, perhaps at the expense of another population. One librarian reported that when she asked about *fotonovelas* at the Guadalajara Book Fair, she was told that those were the kinds of things read by truckers and laborers (see Adkins, Bossaller, and Thompson). However, it is worth noting that Mexican attendees of the Guadalajara Book Fair are generally more literate and book-oriented than the average person, much as an American attendee of Book Expo in Chicago might be. The acceptance or rejection of *fotonovelas* as a valid form of literature may be indicative of a site of resistance between dominant and non-dominant cultures in Mexico.

In the study of Kansas City Latino print culture (Adkins, Bossaller, and Thompson), a variety of languages was noted in public settings, but the emphasis in many settings is on teaching and learning the dominant language. Cesar García Muñoz wrote in the Spanish newspaper *El Mundo* that the Spanish language lacks cultural power in the U.S., and will not gain influence here as a result of that. Humberto López Morales, editor of the *Enciclopedia del español en los Estados Unidos* (*Encyclopedia of Spanish in the U.S.*), suggested that the Spanish language had become a territory of affirmation and resistance for Spanish speakers in the U.S.

Social agencies, libraries, and schools often celebrate multiculturalism within the constraints of the dominant culture. That is, there are certain things which are encouraged, such as art, while use of the vernacular language is discouraged, or thought of in terms of deficits. Spanish language materials for children are often bilingual, rather than monolingual Spanish. One librarian we spoke to said she purchased bilingual materials as a way for the library to support English-language acquisition. The library, as an agent of the dominant culture, felt that acquiring the dominant language was a more pressing need for its patrons than maintaining their mother tongue. However, maintenance of the mother tongue was supported passively, as the library had not limited its collection to English as a Second Language learning materials.

The same librarian who tried to buy *fotonovelas* mentioned the importance of children and parents being able to share a work of literature regardless of the parent's English-language literacy. Stable family relationships and the development of literacy are assumed to be supported by both the dominant and non-dominant cultures in this scenario. Goldsmith indicates that the editors who decide to publish foreign children's books might feel they have less control over an already-published text which they cannot substantively change. The editors who sought international children's works for translation and publication in the U.S. valued these books as potential bridges between cultures and nationalities, helping American children to learn about their peers in other countries. However, the U.S. publishing industry does not have a mechanism developed for training editors how to acquire and publish culturally-conscious children's materials (Goldsmith 120). This suggests that these materials are viewed as marginal to the success of the American publishing industry.

Implications and Conclusions

This article discusses the disconnect between the professed library values and the business-driven information machine which librarians rely upon. It reiterates the idea that information science cannot be a neutral science; it is laden with values, as is any science. Because we ultimately strive to serve all people, we cannot simply reduce our professional decisions to available technological tools and outsourcing. There are important implications in considering the notion of information science as a tool for social progress, and as a tool which must be thoughtfully employed for the good of society. The social divide or gap is the issue that is truly of concern. When Harding said:

It is a challenge for feminism and other contemporary countercultures of science to figure out just which are the regressive and which the progressive tendencies brought into play in any particular scientific or feminist project, and how to advance the progressive and inhibit the regressive ones. The countercultures of science must elicit and address these contradictory elements in the sciences...(11),

she could have been explaining the technical-rational model used by libraries which make it more difficult to look outside of what is easily supplied to our users. The Frankfurt school said that positivist science cannot be used to justify the ends; ethics should be employed when making decisions. Giroux, reflecting an ideology that is difficult to put into practice, said that “what is important to stress is that fundamental categories of socio-historical development are at odds with the positivist emphasis on the immediate, or more specifically with that which can be expressed, measured, and calculated in precise mathematical formulas” (15-16).

“Differentials in power and privilege” result in haves and have-nots on various levels, including those who have quality food supplies, health care, and education resources and those who do not (Galtung and Wirak). Social stratification fragments society, creating marginalized and peripheral groupings that remain out of reach of the increasingly individualized access to information that benefits the development of a society. Social thinker Frantz Fanon wrote that decentralization of information resources is key to political and social development. The switch in focus to information literacy, or the ability to acquire and use information to meet daily needs, for example, leads to a certain amount of decentralization, an inextricable step in political and social development. As citizens have more open access to legal and political resources, they make better-informed decisions. Having access to reliable medical websites or knowing whom to call in the case of an emergency creates independence and can cut health costs. In business, the trend is moving toward a system where, rather than report to a hierarchical management structure, workers are required to actively participate in the management of the company and contribute to its success. Virtual program teams and online education require that workers and students possess skills beyond those of the basic reading, writing and arithmetic.

Technology gives us the ability to make our jobs easier: we can easily analyze exactly what gets checked out from our libraries, and we can outsource our ordering, so that all that we have to do is (similar to bookstores) put the books on our shelves, without ever thinking about what we’re doing. The ease which is bought by technological tools comes at a price, though; we need to constantly be vigilant about what we’re doing so that we don’t mindlessly become part of the machine that excludes and reinforces inequalities. This is accomplished by going out into the world to see what is not easily available, who isn’t easily served, what we collect, and what we preserve.

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