

Race, Archives, and Campus Communities

Presentation by Irina Rogova, Simmons College MLIS Candidate, May '16
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This presentation seeks to examine the relationships between race, archives, and campus communities by breaking these relationships into couplings and investigating these pairings.

1. Race & Archives

- A definition of social justice as found in:
 - Duff, Wendy, Flinn, Andrew, Suurtamm, Emily, and Wallace, David A. "Social Justice Impact of Archives: A Preliminary Investigation," *Archival Science: International Journal on Recorded Information* 13, no. 4 (2013): p. 317-348, doi: 10.1007/s10502-012-9198-x
- Social justice has become extremely prominent in the archives profession, reflected by Michelle Caswell and Randall Jimerson in these works:
 - Caswell, Michelle. "Not Just Between Us: A Riposte to Mark Greene." *The American Archivist* 76, no. 2 (2013): p. 605-608.
 - Jimerson, Randall C. "Archives for All: Professional Responsibility and Social Justice." *The American Archivist* 70, no. 2 (2007): p. 252-281. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40294571>
- With this turn towards a social justice imperative and the critical examination of how privilege affects things we do, I believe that archivists now need to recognize that we can no longer claim tradition, neutrality, or objectivity for our work. Instead, new standards for archival work must come into existence, particularly acknowledging and critiquing whiteness and structural inequality.
- Anthony Dunbar suggests using Critical Race Theory to address inherent bias and white supremacy in archives:
 - Dunbar, Anthony. "Introducing Critical Race Theory to Archival Discourse: Getting the Conversation Started." *Archival Science: International Journal on Recorded Information*, 6, no. 1 (2006): p. 109-129, doi: 10.1007/s10502-006-9022-6
- This theory is entwined with several stories from my own experiences in the Simmons SLIS program in confronting racism and the silencing of people of color and erasure of their histories in archives. Included are issues I came across during a digital library project, which can be viewed at: slis.simmons.edu/blanche. This section concludes with the mention of two digital archives covering #BlackLivesMatter protests in Ferguson, Missouri (digital.wustl.edu/ferguson/) and Baltimore, Maryland (www.baltimoreuprising2015.org/).

2. Race & Campus Communities

- This section goes into detail about the recent protests at the University of Missouri over threatening and violent actions toward students of color, particularly black students, at the institution, and the administration's lack of response. Students organized under the name Concerned Student 1950, and days of protests from students, faculty, and staff led to the resignation of the university president. Solidarity protests started at schools across the country, and 77 schools to date have made lists of demands for addressing racism on campus communities. They are available here at www.thedemands.org/. The following discussion summarizes the overarching demands made by students across the country, and looks at a private university that has centered social justice in their strategic plan, and what that centering looks like in action.

3. Archives & Campus Communities

The last section discusses ways that students have used archival collections to counter traditional histories and to pull silenced voices out of the past. These collections are primarily centered at the institution discussed in part two.

Conclusion

The presentation concludes by investigating taking a look at how institutional support has connected students directly to archives to develop cutting edge projects, keep archives relevant to academic success, and bring the investigation of racism and other systems of oppression to the forefront of how we confront history and academia.