Tech-ing to Transgress: Putting Values into Library Practice

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Slides: bit.ly/jv-oberlin16
Credits

bell hooks
nina de jesus
Jill Conte
Emily Drabinski
Jaena Alabi
Sarah Shreeves

Bhaharak Yousefi
April Hathcock
Chris Bourg
Cecily Walker
Monica McCormick
b.binaohan/mxbees
Bethany Nowviskie
@blackgirlinmain
my daughter
Barbara Rockenbach
Jessica Schomberg
brown bag women’s discussion group

Feminist praxis
research subjects
#critlib

#feministpraxis
researchsubjects
#critlib
to discuss our digital scholarship initiatives, our daily engagement with these projects, and the impact of digital scholarship on the communities we serve

—Catherine Newton, Personal communication. 2/24/2016
the difference between education as the practice of freedom and education that merely strives to reinforce domination

—bell hooks, Teaching to Transgress. 1994
Practice of freedom vs. reinforcing domination

Disruptive behavior

Building community
Oppressive normativity: the norms of identity that dictate who is privileged in our society and who is marginalized.

Practice of freedom vs. reinforcing domination

Disruptive behavior

Building community
Data is political
How data does political things: The processes of encoding and decoding data are never neutral.

It is difficult to see the political structure of data, because data maintains a veneer of scientific objectivity. But data is inherently a form of politics, argues Jeffrey Alan Johnson. Data does not just allocate material things of value, it allocates moral values as well. Data producers encode a state of the world at a given time, which is then decoded by data users to shape social practice. As such, a political theory of data, grounded in distributive and relational information justice, is necessary.

Data influences political practice

Data collection:

● Who mandates it be collected?
● Who determines data fields & validation tables?

Title required for conf registration
Choices are Mrs, Miss, Dr, Prof, or Mr, I chose Mr.
Shouldn't need to reveal my marital status to go
Amazon Prime Same-Day Delivery

Google Equates Black Girls With Sex; Why?

The search engine's profit motive doesn't always work in the best interests of women of color.

BY: SAFIYA UMOJA NOBLE
Posted: March 13, 2013

[Google] could do little to affect search results. It claimed that its algorithm technology was neutral, and search results were a matter of how people use Google, rather than the technology itself.

“Three black teenagers” vs. “Three white teenagers”

—Ben Guarino. “Google faulted for racial bias in image search results for black teenagers”

June 10, 2016
its search algorithm mirrors the availability and frequency of online content. “This means that sometimes unpleasant portrayals of sensitive subject matter online can affect what image search results appear for a given query...”

—Ben Guarino. “Google faulted for racial bias...” June 10, 2016
“...These results don’t reflect Google’s own opinions or beliefs — as a company, we strongly value a diversity of perspectives, ideas and cultures.”

—Ben Guarino. “Google faulted for racial bias...” June 10, 2016
Title: On our backs
Series: Feminist
Source: Sallie Bingham Center for Women's History and Culture, Duke University, Charles Deering McCormick Library of Special Collections, Northwestern University
Publisher Name: On Our Backs, Blush Productions
ISSN: 0890–2224
OCLC: 14191920
Place of Publication: San Francisco, CA
Frequency: Quarterly
Available online: 1 July 1984 – 1 December 2004 (68 issues)

- Summer, 1984, Volume 1, Issue 1
- Fall, 1984, Volume 1, Issue 2
- Winter, 1985, Volume 1, Issue 3
- Spring, 1985, Volume 1, Issue 4
Our unique library crowdfunding model uses library acquisition dollars to fund the development of digital collections. Working closely with content holders, we help define and scope the collection...

digitization: just because you can, doesn’t mean you should

I learned this week that Reveal Digital has digitized On Our Backs (OOB), a lesbian porn magazine that ran from 1984-2004. This is a part of the Independent Voices collection that “chronicles the transformative decades of the 60s, 70s and 80s through the lens of an independent alternative press.” For a split second I was really excited — porn that was nostalgic for me was online! Then I quickly thought about friends who appeared in this magazine before the internet existed. I am deeply concerned that this kind of exposure could be personally or professionally harmful for them.

—Tara Robertson. March 20, 2016
Consenting to a porn shoot that would be in a queer print magazine is a different thing to consenting to have your porn shoot be available online. I’m disappointed in my profession. **Librarians have let down the queer community** by digitizing On Our Backs.

—Tara Robertson. March 20, 2016
ClimateQUAL® is an assessment of library staff perceptions concerning (a) their library's commitment to the principles of diversity, (b) organizational policies and procedures, and (c) staff attitudes.

Librarians 2010

- White (not hispanic): 88%
- Hispanic/Latino: 3%
- African American: 5%
- Asian/Pac Islander: 3%
- 2 or more races: 1%
- Native American/Alaskan Native: 0%
whites are willing to live with only a handful of African American neighbors [some say ~20%]...

[For African Americans] a “50-50” neighborhood is routinely identified as the most attractive

Climatequal sample question:
The race/sexual orientation of a team/division member does NOT affect how they are valued on this team/division.

“non-minority librarians are unlikely to report observing racial microaggressions”
[even though “minority” librarians are, in fact, experiencing them.]

What data do you collect, how, and why?

What biases are embedded into your data collection and interpretation?

How will you disrupt harmful data collection practices?
“Fight the power,” exhorts @meta_car0: don’t use headings you see as racist, sexist, homophobic #beyondTEI #dhsi2016

Controlled vocabularies reflect political stance, eg the LCSH subject headings ‘Aliens’ & ‘Illegal Aliens’ #beyondTEI #dhsi2016
Community
break down barriers that hinder communication and collaboration among researchers and students of the Digital Arts, Humanities, and Cultural Heritage sectors in high, mid, and low income economies.

Micro-insult: Second-class citizen

I am an elected university senator at my university and one of two senators elected from the library. I have been attending monthly senate meetings since the beginning.
Our Mission

Mukurtu (MOOK-oo-too) is a grassroots project aiming to empower communities to manage, share, preserve, and exchange their digital heritage in culturally relevant and ethically-minded ways. We are committed to maintaining an open, community-driven approach to Mukurtu’s continued development. Our first priority is to help build a platform that fosters relationships of respect and trust.
Feminist Praxis in Library Leadership
Simply put, feminism is a movement to end sexism, sexist exploitation, and oppression.

— bell hooks, Feminism is for Everybody: Passionate Politics. 2000
[Avoiding leadership positions] might mean that you are leaving the leadership of our profession in the hands of those who aren’t concerned about those things...

— Chris Bourg, “Mentors, Gender, Reluctance.” 2014
using traditional organizational power to push an agenda maybe isn’t very feminist.

— Chris Bourg, “The radicalism is coming from inside the library.” 2015
Feminist leadership is: politically engaged
Feminist leadership is:
praxis
Feminist leadership is: sharing
Be absolutely committed to transparency. Do not assume that you know what others need/don’t need to know.

— Baharak Yousefi, How to be a Good (Library) Boss. 2016
"Painfully Transparent" is the level of transparency that I'm going for. "OMG Never Stops" is the level of communicating I'm going for.
influence

[in-floo-uh n]s]

Synonyms  Examples  Word Origin

See more synonyms on Thesaurus.com

noun
1. the capacity or power of persons or things to be a compelling force on or produce effects on the actions, behavior, opinions, etc., of others:

He used family influence to get the contract.
Exercise
Whom does this work benefit, disadvantage, or exclude?

Whose values, perspective, or voice is represented, marginalized, or erased?

Whom do/can I influence and how?

Who are my allies?
Questions?
Works Cited


Works Cited, cont.


