Objective:

To share some of the ideas, tools, and people who support my work, in order to help you to identify & strengthen your own support systems.

Copy: Ideas, theories, and practices I have adapted to enhance and inform my work.

Cut: Structural and personal frameworks to dismantle; Plus tools for dismantling.

Paste: Things that can strengthen, connect, and sustain us.
Building a Survival Kit

Sara Ahmed includes:

- Books
- Things (photographs & mementos)
- Tools (literal & figurative)
- Permission notes
- Other feminists (friends & accomplices)
- Humor
- Feelings
- Bodies*

*still living


Image: www.saranahmed.com
“Copy”

Ideas, theories, and practices
I have adapted to inform and enhance my work
Feminist Pedagogy for Library Instruction

A method of teaching that:

- “Seeks to bring about social change by raising consciousness about oppression”
- “Favors active learning techniques”
- Respects “student agency, autonomy, and knowledge;” “Values personal experience and testimony”
- Empowers students “to learn and bring about social change rather than being passive consumers of knowledge and culture”

(Quotes from p. 25)
An Ethics of Care

“As opposed to a human rights framework that endows individuals with universal and inalienable rights, a feminist ethics framework posits interlacing and ongoing relationships of mutual obligation that are dependent on culture and context.”

(Cifor & Caswell 2016, 29)

Translation:

- We all exist in relation to each other and to our environment
- We all have feelings, experiences, and knowledge
- We want to be “cared about and cared for” (Accardi 2013, 44)
- Our responsibilities to each other depend on context
3–2–1 Evaluation, remixed

Traditional 3-2-1 Evaluation:

- 3 things you learned
- 2 questions you still have
- 1 thing you would change

My adaptation:

- 1 thing you learned
- 1 question you still have
- How do you feel?

Comment card from class on Men, Women, & Sports, Duke University, January 29, 2020
Think/Pair/Share: a tool for active learning

To foster conversation and support different modes of learning, an instructor asks students to:

1. **Think** individually about a topic
2. **Pair** with a partner and discuss
3. **Share** ideas with the rest of the group

But what if I’m not an instructor?

This idea can be used in any setting (like meetings) that calls for collaboration and encourages participation.

Our Think/Pair Activity (Secretly an ice breaker):

“**I recommend**”

1- **Think** about something you would **recommend** to someone (anything! A book, a TV show, a recipe)
2. **Pair** with the person beside you, **introduce** yourself, and **share** your recommendation!
3. It’s okay to feel **awkward**.
Snacks, a praxis

Praxis just means putting theory into practice: snacks show care for yourself and others

What’s in my snack drawer?

- Something sweet
- Something savory
- Tea bags
- Toiletries (do not eat)
- Socks
- A spare umbrella

Pictured: Ghirardelli dark chocolate squares, a handful of almonds, P.G. Tips tea, “Sugar Needle” candy review zine.
“Cut”

Structural and personal frameworks to dismantle & Tools for dismantling
PopQuiz: I work in libraries because I love:

- Books
- Rules
- People
- Providing access to information
- Cats
- Cardigans
- Cardigans with cats on them
- Cardigans with cat hair on them
- Money, lots and lots of money
- Meetings
- Pointing directions to restrooms

- Metadata
- Public speaking
- Performing invisible labor
- Writing and receiving emails
- So many emails
- Fixing printers and staplers
- Arguing and/or complaining about libraries and archives on Twitter
- Crushing student loan debt
- None of the above

(Sorry, there’s not a prize!)
Vocational Awe

“Vocational awe describes the set of ideas, values, and assumptions librarians* have about themselves and the profession that result in notions that libraries as institutions are inherently good, sacred notions, and therefore beyond critique.”

Fobazi Etarrh, “Vocational Awe and Librarianship: The Lies We Tell Ourselves.” In the Library with the Lead Pipe.

*and other library/information workers
What does white supremacy and privilege have to do with libraries?

- 88% of U.S. librarians are white vs. 62% of the U.S. population
- Libraries and archives (as facilities and as professions) were formerly segregated in the South; libraries for black citizens (if available at all) were underfunded and under-resourced.
- Materials in libraries reflect mainstream publishing practices that under-represent marginalized voices and perspectives; historical archival practices document people and groups with power and resources
What we did at the Rubenstein Library

- Inspired by a workshop led by Michelle Caswell on *Identifying and Dismantling White Supremacy in Archives* at the Society of American Archivists annual meeting in Portland, OR, in 2017
- Wholehearted support from Rubenstein Library Leadership Team was essential; all staff strongly encouraged (aka required) to attend
- Goals and strategies were generated with timelines and other means of accountability
What are some examples of white privilege and white supremacy in archives and libraries?

Areas to Consider:

- Arrangement and Description
- Access, Reference, and Instruction
- Preservation
- Appraisal
- Library science & archival education
- Perspectives: Library/archives workers, researchers, donors, community members

Example:
As a white person, I can expect to easily find materials documenting my race’s history and culture in the archive.
Positive Outcomes

- “Open Door” policy
- Inclusive Customer Service Training
- Attention to accessibility across departments
- Development of a “How we teach” statement for instruction
- Support for culturally sensitive re-description of legacy collections
Cut it out

- Negative self talk
- Apologizing unnecessarily
- Turn off email notifications
- Meetings without agendas
- Doing work off the clock
- Drinking substandard coffee

______________

Bluestar the cat vows to cut out salads, despite appearing indifferent
“Paste”

Things that can strengthen, connect, and sustain us
Radical Empathy

- A responsibility of care
- Based in relationships and connections
- Acknowledges power differentials and inequities
- Grounded in the body (physical labor, physical and mental health)
- “a willingness to be affected, to be shaped by another’s experiences, without blurring the lines between the self and the other.” (p. 31)
Radical Empathy shifts:

- relationship between the archivist* and the records creator
- relationship between the archivist and records subject
- relationship between the archivist and user
- relationship between the archivist and larger communities

+ relationships among archives workers

*replace “archivist” with your term of choice

Image from my mini-zine on Radical Empathy in Archival Practice
#SquadGoals

- Radical Empathy in Archival Practice
  tumblr: radical-empathy.tumblr.com
  (On hiatus)
- Hosted a #critlib Twitter chat on Radical Empathy: http://critlib.org/
- Planned and lead a webinar on Radical Empathy for Society of California Archivists
- Edited a forthcoming special issue of Journal of Critical Library and Information Studies
#SquadGoals: Zine Librarian edition

ZINE LIBRARIANS
CODE OF ETHICS ZINE

PREAMBLE

We, the community of zine librarians and archivists believe that:

BECAUSE zines are often produced by members of marginalized communities.

BECAUSE we strive to respectfully engage with and represent those communities.

BECAUSE librarians/archivists are often part of the communities that make/read zines.

BECAUSE the material itself, so beautifully and wonderfully varied, is often weird, ephemeral, magical, dangerous, and emotional.

BECAUSE we reject the myth of library/archival 'neutrality'.

Therefore we want to be accountable to our users, our institutions, our authors, donors, and communities.

zinelibraries.info
Shine Theory

- When our friends find success, we reflect that light and all shine brighter (coined by Ann Friedman and Aminatou Sow, Call Your Girlfriend podcast)
- Meaningful, specific compliments & praise; Gratitude & appreciation
- Amplification in meetings
- Citational practices (#CiteBlackWomen)

When you’re shining, everybody’s gonna shine, to paraphrase Lizzo
Creating Joy

1. Cats
2. Cube flair
3. Clip art
4. Coffee

(not pictured)

Images, clockwise from top left: Murder She Wrote cross stitch made by Rachel C., photo of Great British Bake Off winner Rahul, gift of Val G.; Cat witch art by Marta Mickelsen; “Everything will work out” patch, gift of Beth D; photo of Julia Grout, director of Women’s College Athletics; my cats; witch art from a feminist newsletter
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Credits

Moral support:
Valerie Gillispie for editing my remarks; Jenna Freedman for creating a cat picture group chat; Monica Samsky for the enormous box of PG Tips; my family for being supportive; and my cats Hamilton, Bluestar, and Rosie for being beautiful and perfect.

Images (where not already credited):
Vintage scissors via https://favpng.com/
Happy glue stick: http://gclipart.com/glue-clipart_14302/


Caswell, Michelle, and Marika Cifor. “From human rights to feminist ethics: radical empathy in the archives.” *Archivaria* 81, no. 1 (2016): 23-43. [https://escholarship.org/uc/item/0mb9568h](https://escholarship.org/uc/item/0mb9568h)

Caswell, Michelle. “Teaching to Dismantle White Supremacy in Archives.” *Library Quarterly* 87, no. 3 (2017): 222–35. [https://doi.org/10.1086/692299](https://doi.org/10.1086/692299)


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