

ETHICS, HIERARCHY
AND IMPERIALISM:
PRESERVING VOICES
VULNERABLE TO
ERASURE.



KEY QUESTIONS.

1. What are the political, social and psychological impacts of representations in the cultural and heritage sector?
2. How does history shape culture making?
3. How does curatorial practice shape historical narratives?
4. How can creative practice disrupt false narratives?
5. How can art/ design give voice to those underrepresented?
6. How does the structure of the museum and gallery (acquisitions, collection, and maintenance) perpetuate a capitalist value system of heritage? How does this bias collective memory and public thought?
7. How does the presentation of non-western heritage materials in western institutions, impact the life of cultural traditions? Does it have an impact?
8. How have communities and individuals created their own platforms to preserve histories outside of heritage institutions?
9. Do communities who have experienced violence and trauma have a right to forget?
10. Are memory and cultural participation a human right?
11. How can the power of stewards of cultural heritage be shared to collect and showcase a less sterile account of history and a more accurate reflection of the populations the institutions serve?
12. How might disrupting traditional hierarchies of power (with curators and collectors at the top) in cultural institutions affect exhibitions and programming? How else can this power be distributed, and what might the effects be?

FURTHER
RESOURCES.

Photo by Othello DeSouza-Hartley



KEY TERMS.

Ally	A person of one social identity group who stands up in support of members of another group; typically a member of a dominant group standing beside member(s) of a group being discriminated against or treated unjustly.
AFAB	Assigned female at birth
AMAB	Assigned male at birth
Art Activism	Artistic practice that addresses political and social issues.
Binary	The classification of sex and gender into two distinct, opposite and disconnected forms of masculine and feminine.
Black	A term used in certain countries, often in socially based systems of racial classification or of ethnicity to name people, especially one of African, Australian Aboriginal and/or Melanesian ancestry.
Black Feminism	The belief that sexism, class oppression, gender identity and racism are impossible to separate. These concepts relate to each other through intersectionality
Cisgender	A person who identifies with the gender that was assigned for them at birth
Colourism	A term coined by Alice Walker in 1982. Describes the ideology and practice that dark skinned people are lesser than light skinned people. This ideology is indigenous to many cultures outside of the West but is one of the main foundations of racism and white supremacy.
Conservation	The holistic safeguarding of cultural heritage through preventative measures and interventive action such as environmental monitoring and remedial repair.
Decentralised Curation	When curatorial responsibilities are shared between archivists and the participants in an archive, who as a collective have the most in-depth subject knowledge on the records, their contexts and uses
Democracy	A form of government, tied strongly to Ancient Greek political systems, wherein citizens of a state elect representatives to govern them and potentially have the power to remove such representatives from their position.

Desi	A Person of the indian subcontinent or South Asian diaspora. Desi countries include; Bangladesh, India, Maldives, Pakistan, Nepal and Sri Lanka.
Diaspora	Scattered population whose origin lies within a different geographic locale. Diaspora can also refer to the movement of the population from its original homeland.
Ethnicity	A group of people who identify with each other on the basis of shared historical, social, cultural experiences, ancestry which distinguish them from other groups.
Femininity	A set of behaviours, presentations and roles which are culturally associated with being a woman and/or possessing female sex characteristics. People of any gender identity or sexual orientation can be feminine, but women and those who are assigned female at birth often experience societal pressure to be so.
Gender	Gender is an expression of the reenactment of certain roles. it may differ from time to time.
Heteronormative	The belief that people can only fall into distinct and complementary genders (man and woman) with fixed traditional gender roles. It assumes that heterosexuality is the only sexual orientation or the only norm.
Homophobia	Prejudice against same gender sexual and/or romantic relationships. This hatred extends to the cultures of LGBT/queer people.
Indigenous	Indigenous populations are communities that live within, or are attached to, geographically distinct traditional habitats or ancestral territories, and who identify themselves as being part of a distinct cultural group, descended from groups present in the area before modern states and colonial contact.
Internalised Racism	Internalised racism is loosely defined as the internalisation by people of racist attitudes towards members of their own ethnic group.
Intersectional Feminism	A perspective within feminism that doesn't exclude people from the movement based on their Gender, Race and Class.
Intersectionality	A term coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw which examines how social identities are used as a way to discriminate against marginalised groups who experience multiple forms of oppression simultaneously. Specifically women of colour who suffer from both gender and racial discrimination.
Liberatory Archives	A concept invented by Michele Caswell which imagines archives as community-based institutions that focus on the process of imagining futures rather than collecting things. This challenges the idea of 'belonging' that has led to xenophobic, queerphobic, ethnocentric and racist practices.
Marginalise	To relegate to the fringes, out of the mainstream; make seem unimportant: to place in a position of marginal importance, influence, or power.

Masculinity	A set of behaviours, presentations and roles which are culturally associated with being a man and/or possessing male sex characteristics. People of any gender identity or sexual orientation can be masculine, but those who are assigned male at birth often experience societal pressure to be so.
Matriarchy	A social system in which females hold primary power, predominate in roles of political leadership, moral authority, social privilege and control of property at the specific exclusion of men, at least to a large degree. An example of a matriarchal society is Moja village in Northern Kenya founded by Rebecca Lolosoli.
Misogynoir	A term referring to misogyny directed towards Black women, where race and gender both play roles in bias.
Non-Binary	Non-binary gender describes any gender identity which does not fit within the binary of male and female.
Oppression	When a person or a group of people are subjected to unjust, and usually violent treatment by those in position of power.
Participatory Archives	An archive in which the usability and fundability of the resources is the number one priority. The usability does not denote use alone, but also a deeper level of involvement in the sense of actual participation in the archive and in the archival process.
Patriarchy	A social system in which cis-men hold primary power, predominate in roles of political leadership, moral authority, social privilege and control of property at the specific exclusion of women and non gender conforming people, at least to a large degree.
POC	Person/People of colour, has been used and taken up at different points in history in different places to describe non-white, European people.
Post Colonial	A theory or academic discipline exploring concepts and themes relating to the cultural legacy of colonialism. Critics of this discipline often consider the prefix 'post' to be inaccurate as it suggests 'a moving beyond' the colonial moment and its impact.
Prejudice	Hatred towards someone based on their identity. Example: An oppressed person of colour can be prejudiced against privileged races but cannot be racist.
Preservation	Ensuring the continued life of a collection of cultural material through best proper and storage practice as well as public access.
Privilege	A special right, advantage, or immunity granted or available only to a individuals in particular groups by institutions.

Pronouns	A word that can function as a noun phrase used by itself and that refers either to the participants in the discourse. People with various gender identities choose pronouns they feel comfortable with; some people may have more than one pronoun.
QTIPOC	Queer, Trans and Intersex People of Colour
Queer	An umbrella term for sexual and gender minorities that are not heterosexual and/or cisgender
Queer Phobia	Similar to Homophobia, describes a fear or hatred of queer folk (any one who is not heterosexual)
Race	A socially constructed system of classification of the human population into distinct, unequal, discontinuous groups, based, from the 17th century onwards, on physical features and ancestry. Though the concept existed long before this time, in many different forms, it was used by European scholars, scientists, merchants and nobility to legitimise and justify their genocide and dispossession of the peoples of America and enslavement of Sub-Saharan Africans.
Racism	Acts of prejudice, bigotry, and/or discrimination of individuals of one race against members of other races. These acts do not count as racism if they are coming from members of a marginalised race, i.e. black people, as they do not have the social, political or economic power to make their actions oppressive and effective. Racism also refers to institutional, systemic, linguistic and economic structures that perpetuate the idea of racial superiority and inferiority, allowing for a wide range of effects, e.g. skin-bleaching, overrepresentation of PoC in prisons, underrepresentation of PoC in media, the poverty of Africa and its Diaspora community.
Radical feminism	Radical feminism suggests that the answer to social problems can be a complete restructuring of how society defines human experience.
Representation	Refers to equality in opportunity and visibility. For example, representative media is media that is reflective of the variety of races, cultures, genders or religions that its entire readership belongs to.
Sexual Orientations	A person's sexual identity in relation to the gender to which they are attracted
Sexuality	Refers to a person's sexual orientation/preferences in terms of sexual activities
Subversion	To undermine the power, authority and logic of an established system, culture or institution with the aim of overthrowing or causing a significant transformation.
Symbolic Annihilation	Concept first developed by feminist media scholars in the 1970's that describes when members of marginalised groups are absent, grossly under-represented, maligned or trivialised in cultural production.

Tokenism	The practice of making only a symbolic effort to practice inclusivity by accepting a small number of people from an under-represented group in order to give the appearance of equality within an institution or space.
Transgender	The term transgender is an umbrella term for anyone whose internal experience of gender does not match the gender they were assigned at birth .
Transphobia	Prejudice and/or fear towards the Trans folk
Transmisogyny	A term referring to misogyny directed towards trans women.
White Feminism	A feminism that does not take into consideration non-white women, often even partaking in the oppression of non-white people.
White Supremacy	White supremacy is an ideology centered upon the promotion of the belief, that white people are superior. It is argued by critical race theorist that all white people have a level of white supremacy values because of the media, education and politics have embedded whiteness as superior in society.
White Washing	A term used to describe white actors or actress playing non-fictional and historical non-white character roles. Therefore writing and disconnecting historical events and achievements to the non-white community.
WoC	Women of Colour
Womanism	Because mainstream feminism goals and ideologies differed to that of the needs of Black women, Alice Walker coined the term womanism where Black Women were at the center of the ideology without the need to racialise how gender plays an important role in the life of Black Women.
Xenophobia	Fear and hatred of strangers or foreigners or of anything that is strange or foreign.

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DIGITAL RESOURCES.

Websites:

www.ayeshafuentes.com/readings

Website of objects conservator and researcher, Ayesha Fuentes

www.ianbarringtonart.com

Website of contributing artist, Ian Barrington

www.ideacritik.com

Website of contributing artist, Audrey Samson

www.kabul-reconstructions.net/disappeared

The Index of the Disappeared is an ongoing collaboration between artists Chitra Ganesh and Mariam Ghani. It is a physical archive of post-9/11 disappearances - detentions, deportations, renditions, redactions - and a platform for public dialogue around related issues. The Index also produces visual and poetic interventions that circulate fragments of the archive in the wider world.

www.minheekim.crevado.com

Website of contributing artist, Minhee Kim

www.othellodesouzahartley.com

Website of contributing artist, Othello De'Souza-Hartley

www.raymondantrobust.com

Website of contributing writer, Raymond Antrobus

www.rayvenn-dclark.com

Website of contributing artist, Rayvenn D'Clark

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Key Organisations:

Iniva - Stuart Hall Library
www.iniva.org/library/

One of the leading UK libraries in international visual art holding a substantial collection of monographs, catalogues, periodicals, DVDs and other media on visual arts and culture focusing on contemporary art from Africa, Asia and Latin America and the work of British artists from diverse cultural backgrounds.

The Women's Library
www.lse.ac.uk/Library/Collections/Collection-highlights/The-Womens-Library

A UNESCO recognised collection housed at the London School of Economics consisted of printed material, archives and 3-D objects.

Disability Cooperative Network for Museums (DCN)
www.musedcn.org.uk/

A UK-based group of committed museum professionals working with national charities, organisations, people with disabilities, academics, groups, disability networks in other sectors, curators and managers to promote and embed inclusive practice in the heritage and cultural sector.

Decolonising the Archive (DTA)

www.decolonisingthearchive.com/

London-based body working to reclaim black narratives, past and future by recontextualising and reflecting on heritage objects in archives.

South Asian American Digital Archive (SAADA)

www.saada.org/

A Philadelphia-based nonprofit dedicated to creating a more inclusive society by giving voice to South Asian American through documenting, preserving and sharing stories that represent their unique and diverse experiences.

George Padmore Institute

www.georgepadmoreinstitute.org/

A London-based archive, educational research and information centre housing materials relating mainly to the black community of Caribbean, African and Asian descent in Britain and continental Europe.

Tell Us About It

www.education.shadesofnoir.org.uk/digi-artefact/

www.arts.ac.uk/study-at-ual/library-services/collections-and-archives/archives-and-special-collections-centre/collections/

A joint collaboration between Creative Learning in Practice and the Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and the University of the Arts London Diversity Team, the Tell Us About It project explores the learning experiences of students with diverse backgrounds. The aim is to extend the range of institutional strategies to support students effectively in their learning and progression. The collection has been digitised by Shades of Noir and is now hosted on its Educational Resource site.

Black Cultural Archives

www.blackculturalarchives.org/

The only national repository of Black history and culture in the UK— a public archive safeguarding history of people of African and Caribbean descent in Britain.

Arts Council England

www.artscouncil.org.uk/

Organisation funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to support arts, information and heritage sectors.

Heritage Lottery Fund

www.hlf.org.uk/

HLF is the largest dedicated funder of heritage in the UK— advocates and supports heritage projects nationally.

ukadia

www.ukadia.ac.uk/about/

A group of specialist arts and design institutions from across the UK's higher and further education sectors aiming to widen participation in higher education and encourage mobility in professions serving creative and cultural industries

The Feminist Library

www.feministlibrary.co.uk

The Feminist Library is a large archive collection of Women's Liberation Movement literature, supporting research, activist and community projects in this field.

UNESCO

en.unesco.org

UNESCO is responsible for coordinating international cooperation to promote access for all to education, scientific advancement, and cultural heritage.

May Day Rooms

www.maydayrooms.org/about

An educational charity founded as a safe haven for historical material linked to social movements, experimental culture and the radical expression of marginalised figures and groups.

Black Quantum Futurisms

www.blackquantumfuturism.com

A Philadelphia-based collective exploring Black/ African cultural traditions of consciousness, time and space. BQF's work focuses on recovery, collection and preservation of communal memories, histories and stories through, writing, music, film, visual art, and research projects.

Art & Humanities Research Council

www.ahrc.ac.uk

A funding body supporting research in the arts and humanities.

Community Archives and Identities Project

www.ucl.ac.uk/dis/icarus/projects/community-archives

An AHRC funded project exploring the importance of independent community archives and their role in the production of collective identities.

rukus!

www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/london-metropolitan-archives/the-collections/Pages/rukus.aspx

Black and LGBT cultural archive consisting of collected diaries, letters, minutes and related papers, magazines, pamphlets, flyers, posters, journals, books, photographs and prints, audio-visual material, memorabilia and ephemera. Records relate to individuals including activists, DJs, club promoters, writers, artists and magazine publishers; community organisations; and subjects including sexual health, black lesbians and women, night clubs and pride events.

The Center for Historical Reenactments

www.facebook.com/pg/Center-for-Historical-Reenactments-151490281528008/about/?ref=page_internal

The Center for Historical Reenactments (CHR) is a Johannesburg based non-profit organisation, which sets to look at history to investigate how, within a particular historical hegemony, certain values have been created, promoted and subsequently sublated into a broader universal discourse. CHR explores how artistic production helps us to deconstruct particular readings of history and how historical

context informs artistic creation, both which become central questions.

Curating Development

www.curatingdevelopment.com/f

The Curating Development project uses curatorial research methodology to address conversations about development. It combines ethnographic methods including participant observation, curatorial research practice involving community-based arts events to investigate the nature of Filipino migrant workers' investments in their own country.

The Anarchist Library

www.theanarchistlibrary.org/special/index

Free, publicly editable web-based library. .

Numbi, Coming Here: Being Here

www.numbi.org/heritage-archive-projects/

This project archiving British Somali presence in the East End of London seeks to engage with, gather and share the stories of people in the Somali community and train 10-15 local people to design and deliver the workshops and events that make up the archival process. The project spans over five months (September 2017 - February 2018) and culminates in an exhibition and a live celebratory event.

Chimurenga Library

www.chimurengalibrary.co.za

The Chimurenga Library is an ongoing invention into knowledge production and the archive. Curated by Chimurenga, it investigates the library and the archive as conceptual and physical spaces in which memories are preserved and history decided.

Pan African Space Station (PASS)

www.panafricanspacestation.org.za

PASS is a pop-up live radio studio, a performance and exhibition space, a research platform and living archive, and an internet based radio station.

A People's Archive of Police Violence in Cleveland

www.archivingpoliceviolence.org

A web-based archive which collects, preserves, and shares the stories, memories, and accounts of police violence as experienced or observed by Cleveland citizens.

Indian Memory Project

www.indianmemoryproject.com

Indian Memory Project is an online, curated, visual and narrative based archive that traces a history and identities of the Indian Subcontinent

Black Radical Imagination

www.blackradicalimagination.com

A touring program of visual shorts that delve into the worlds of new media, video art and experimental narrative. The notion of Black Radical Imagination stemmed from a series of discussions around the boundaries and limitations historically given to people of color in the realm of the cinematic.

Nelson Mandela International Dialogues

www.nelsonmandela.org/content/page/nelson-mandela-international-dialogues-overview

A collaboration between the Nelson Mandela Foundation and the Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ Global Leadership Academy to bring together participants from countries worldwide to engage in a series of dialogues on memory work.

Twitter Users to Follow:

@newbeaconbooks

@MicheleCaswell

@jmddrake

@raymondantrobus

@bcaheritage

@AutographABP

@GPI_Archive

@IndigArchives

@ideacritik

@FRAUD_la

@AfroFutures_UK

@DWAN

@MuslimsinArts

@SYFUCollective

@fhalarchives

@BlackMuslimArt

@museumDCN