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What is Critical About Critical Librarianship?

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Critical librarianship, like librarianship itself, begins with attention to order. Order is at the core of what we do in libraries—ordering books from publishers, ordering books on shelves, ordering patrons around. Libraries are disciplinary spaces and totalizing spaces, a three-dimensional 3D Encyclopedia Britannica, attempting to organize and document the entirety of human knowledge. Contemporary libraries are rooted in the same context as other Enlightenment projects of dominant order: colonial museums and zoos that collect and display objects and animals from across the globe; world maps with cartographic projections that place Europe or the United States at the center of things. Libraries are a part of these efforts, desiring machines that seek to collect everything for everyone for all time, making knowledge universally accessible through cataloging and classification schemes from which nothing escapes.

Critical librarianship acknowledges and then interrogates the structures that produce us as librarians, our spaces as libraries, our patrons as students, faculty, and the public, whose interface with the sum of human knowledge is produced, in large part, by us. (The caveat, of course, being that knowledge-making happens elsewhere; the library may seek to contain all things, but in this it is bound to fail.) These structures are material. Think about the text you are reading right now, the metals and plastics that formed the laptop on which it was typed, the servers and wires that transmitted the text from my desk in New York City to the editors in London. These are material structures, the kind that appear to us only when they break down, in Susan Leigh Star's formulation, when the Internet "goes down," otherwise running invisibly behind or underneath our daily practice. Critical librarianship is also about surfacing these structures and the work that goes into maintaining them.

Critical librarianship is also about another crucial structuring element of our daily lives: time. We can think of time as chronology, or time as a quality of action. This paper originated as

a conference talk, prepared to fit into the one hour allotted, with time for questions. Critical librarianship must grapple with librarianship's relationship to time, to a past accumulation that represents an ordering of only certain kinds of things, reflective of only dominant modes of seeing and making the world. And we must grapple with the future, the kind that we make every day with our pedestrian present-tense practice, the decisions we make about what we collect, how we organize it, the ways that we share and don't, the what and how of our accumulation. The conversation about how we might make a better future for ourselves and each other begins in a framework of critical librarianship: what is it, what do we mean when we talk about it, what critical librarianship looks like when we do it, and how critical perspectives can help us think about and act on the intractable problems in our field.

My own approach to critical librarianship began in a classroom at Syracuse University in 2000: Barbara Kwasnik's Knowledge Organization class. What emerged from our discussions of the various ways that librarians and others in the classification business create and manage the order of things was an acute sense of the political nature of those schemes. Invisible to me until library school, the material conditions of the library surfaced as a kind of text against which critical and political perspectives could be read, understood, contested, challenged, and ultimately changed. Knowledge organization offers a clear and concrete example of how we can see this at work in the library.

Libraries are about fixing things, in ideological structures and in time and space. This is a necessary practice. Can we imagine a library without cataloging and classification structures? Systems to order things? The library would simply be a neatly stacked pile of books, and retrieval would be at random. Libraries implement cataloging and classification schemes in order to facilitate access, creating spaces that are the opposite of random piles. Library shelves are, in

the ideal if not always in practice, ordered, neat, and tidy. Technologies of control from the card catalog to the database to the algorithmic discovery layer collate like materials with like materials, facilitating serendipitous discovery. Our systems also structure material space as books are shelved according to an intellectually and ideologically informed order. In this way, libraries are structuring machines.

Knowledge organization structures are also about power, the power to produce both order and excess. In 2017, I visited the Philippines. Like most librarians I know, I spent much of my time as a tourist in various libraries, in this case in Baguio and Manila. The Philippines is a former U.S. colony, and its contemporary libraries are marked by the extension of American systems of knowledge control. The libraries I visited were hung with signs warning patrons about the scourge of "fake news" and how to spot it. It is arguable that "fake news" is a useful category in U.S. politics in the age of Trump—the current political situation poses problems of power more than problems of fact. "Fake news" is also not at the heart of a contemporary Philippine politics marked by the rise of Duterte and his war on the poor and the left. How does the stuff of U.S. library marketing make its way 10,000 miles around the world to northern Luzon?

One of the ways U.S. global power is reflected in the postcolonial Philippine library is in the use of the Library of Congress classification structure. Materials are ordered according to the fixed categories used in the United States' Library of Congress and most academic libraries. Of course, such extensions of power are never seamless, always contested, and Philippine libraries capture some of what is excessed in those organizing schemes through the use of Filipiniana collections. These "special" collections contain books written by Filipino authors and by or about the Philippines. It was a surprising thing to find, standing in a library in the northern Philippine

mountains, that books from the land where I stood would be outside the ordering scheme and not the other way around. It would be like setting aside a collection of English books in the British library. And Filipinania is not a marginal portion of the collection—at the University of the Philippines, Diliman, the largest university collection in the country, Filipiniana outnumbers the rest of the collection by nearly 100,000 titles.

One of the insights of critical librarianship since the 1970s has been this acknowledgement that invisible, intellectual structures actually have a relationship to the material world of knowledge construction. As the tools that order things, our catalogs and classification structures are themselves technologies of power, facilitating some ways of knowing and not others, representing certain ideological ways of seeing the world, and, crucially, not others. As librarians, we deploy these tools of power every day in our practice, as we describe material using controlled vocabularies, assign class numbers to place books on shelves.

Another concrete example from my own experience: One of the questions that has dogged me since my first days working in libraries is the conflict between how I understand gender and sexual identity, and the ways those identities are represented in libraries. I came out and of age in the late 1990s in academic queer circles that were deeply informed by the work of theorists like Judith Butler, even if a person hadn't read her. Indeed, I have not read Butler in her entirety, but I have read enough to understand my own gender as performative, historicized, contingent, and subject to change. Gender, like other social identities, is determined in relationship to structures of power that outline the parameters of what it is possible to be. I don't have a story about myself as once and always a lesbian who slowly came to accept this truth about myself and then revealed it once and for all in a dramatic moment of coming out. Instead, I understand my sexual identity to be relational. I am a lesbian to my mother because that is an

identity she can understand. I am queer in the context of political groups organized around sexual and gender identity. If I was born in the 19th century, you might call me an invert. If I was born one hundred years from now, who knows? Language and identity will surely have changed by then. Gender and sexuality are fluid and always in motion.

But this is not how gender and sexuality happen in libraries.

Once materials about identity enter the library, they are disciplined into existing structures of knowledge organization. Books about people like me are assigned fixed cataloging terms. I am a lesbian, and that is all I can be. Books about me are cataloged in the HQs, named as a social problem and shelved alongside an array of deviant sexualities. While this analysis is specific to libraries, the same disciplinary process operates elsewhere. Sexual minorities experience that ghettoization and marginalization every day as we move through the world: completing forms at the doctors office, answering questions about boyfriends and girlfriends that simply don't apply, enduring slurs like *dyke* by people on the street. The ideology that informs this experience—the heterosexism and homophobia—is perhaps most clearly read in the text of the classification itself where we can see heteronormativity written into the order of things.

This paradox is for me an example of critical librarianship. Rather than concerning itself with the radical, or root, of various problems, this critical stance looks at what is and tries to understand how it came to be that way, what various systems produce and reproduce in the world, what the stakes might be in accepting something as natural, and how we might imagine systems, structures, objects, and processes differently. We can bring a critical perspective to working with controlled vocabularies and classification schemes that is informed by queer and feminist theory, and by our own embodied experiences. Cataloging and classification cannot be abolished—as librarians we understand that these systems are all that separate us from a giant

and ever expanding pile of books. Instead, classification and cataloging can be analyzed, discussed, and taught critically. We should understand what ideologies they perpetuate and try to understand how to interrupt and change the stories they tell.

This approach to knowledge organization offers one point of access into critical librarianship. Next, I will offer some of what I see as the foundational elements of a critical approach to our work. I'd caution that this is mostly just what I'm talking about when I'm talking about critical librarianship. There isn't a central organizing committee making decisions about what must be changed and how we will organize to make that change. I see this as both a strength and a weakness of critical librarianship—it is a loose enough affiliation that one can likely find comrades somewhere underneath the big tent. But to the extent that social and political change require organized, concerted effort, #critlib is less good at producing that. What I see in that big tent, though, is this: a persistent longing for a librarianship that looks and acts in ways that disrupt the status quo, that center a commitment to social justice and social change, that elevate and amplify the voices of a diverse group of librarians, and that grapple directly with the problems of power concentrated in the hands of a only a few.

For me, the poles holding up that big tent are as follows:

Critical librarianshiop interrogates the work of power in structures and systems

Librarianship is, at its beating heart, is about the production and reproduction of structures and systems. These systems include things like our cataloging and classification systems, technologies like the ILS and the OPAC, as well as frameworks, standards, and guidelines that govern the performance of reference service at the desk and online as well as the what and how of classroom teaching in our libraries. Critical librarianship is concerned with who determines what those systems look like and how they work, and who is excluded from those

processes. Critical librarianship asks who benefits and how from the development of standards of all kinds.

We ask who benefits not only at the scale of the individual, but at the scale of class: groups of people defined by some characteristic that makes them more or less vulnerable to the harms that emerge from structures of order and control. I teach a reference class at the Pratt Institute in New York City, and we always begin with the guidelines promulgated by the American Library Association about what constitutes good reference services. In American libraries, good service requires that we greet people, be friendly, smile, make sure you invite them back to the library again. And then we talk about the assumptions that document makes about people, that everyone is comfortable with direct address, that the emotional labor of a smile is the same amount of work for every person working at a reference desk. Critical librarianship challenges the assumptions of a universal patron or universal librarian, understanding instead that complexities of social experience change how people experience the library as users and as workers.

Critical librarianship acknowledges the social, economic, and political context of library policies and processes

Just as sexual and gender identities are contingent, so are answers, solutions, and decisions we make in our libraries. Critical librarians must respond to the particular conditions of our work. I am a librarian at Long Island University, Brooklyn. Our students are largely working class and first generation students of color. We have many immigrant students, not all of them documented. Given this context, we have to think critically about things like security and policing of that space, and this has been the subject of quite a bit of conflict in my library. Some of us want to increase security in order to produce clean and quite study space. Others of us are

concerned with the implications of policing an already over-policed body of students. There is a tension there that critical librarians acknowledge as we develop and implement library policies.

I also think critical librarians must and do look at the social, political, and economic contexts that govern our work at scales outside the library. I'm thinking here of the requirements many of us face to "articulate our value" to university administrators. Implicit in those requirements are assumptions about what matters: that which can be counted over what can be understood in more complex ways, immediate outcomes over the long term, education as instrumentalist, producing workers for a late capitalist economy. When we are asked to fill out forms documenting the functional results of our work, it's useful to think about what bigger systems those forms might fuel, including the devaluation of the humanities and liberal arts and the shift of higher education toward a credentialing model that simply turns out widgets rather than people.

Critical librarianship surfaces hidden labor

Library work is often invisible. To users, books seem to appear on shelves and journals in databases the way text appears on the page or screen that you are reading right now—naturally, without any effort, only noticeable if something goes awry, the page does not load or the formatting obscures. We seek seamless user experiences that require as little effort as possible from our students and faculty. In these contexts, critical librarians surface that work. Making work visible allows us to argue for compensating it fairly, and means a stronger claim for institutional resources. When I started my position at Long Island University I had to endure one of those all-day human resources-driven onboarding days. It included what was meant to be an inspiring talk from our Vice President for Academic Affairs about the library as portal, a space where we could get whatever we needed for faculty research. As a librarian, it was chilling to

listen to him talk about libraries as portals rather than collections because I understood immediately that he did not think collections required resources. Looking at the ways our collections budgets have been cut in the years I have been on campus has made it even clearer to me that we need to make labor and its costs apparent to ourselves and then to those who manage our work.

We also need to think about different kinds of labor as worth valuing. What counts as productive in our libraries? Do we only value the number of courses taught or reference desk hours? Or do we need a more nuanced understanding of emotional labor that some of us do more of than others? I am thinking of my Latina colleague here, sought out by Latina students more than the rest of us because she connects with them differently. Students want to work with Gloria, they build deep relationships with her that help sustain them to graduation. It's important emotional labor, but difficult to measure in a tenure portfolio. How can we surface and value that work beyond the statistics? What does it mean for some of us to emerge as lifelines for students, and how are we supported when that happens?

Critical librarianship articulates the infrastructures that enable some lines of inquiry and not others

Libraries facilitate the production of knowledge. We do this by collecting materials, organizing and describing those materials so that they are accessible, connecting users to those resources through teaching at the reference desk, in classrooms, on the phone, and online, and, increasingly, using our resources to produce knowledge itself through library publishing ventures. We can think of the systems that facilitate all these efforts as infrastructure. The network of pipes in a house determines how water flows, and the placement of faucets determines where and how we can put it in a glass. In the same way, our acquisitions processes

determine the kinds of materials we can include in our collections, and, in turn, what constitutes the "stuff" our users can mobilize when producing knowledge of their own. If we only collect materials from major publishers, available through the infrastructures of collections assembled by our book jobbers, we miss the knowledge produced in zines, small magazines, artists books, and elsewhere. Similarly, when we de-fund and de-staff our cataloging departments and rely on copy cataloging, we don't develop local cataloging thesauri that might better represent the language that students use when searching our OPACs. Because so many of these infrastructures are seen as natural and necessary, critical librarians play a role in pointing to them and interrogating the kinds of work they make possible and what they don't.

I think it's also critical here to think about who we have in the library and the ways that they help students frame some kinds of questions and not others. This requires both hiring a diverse library faculty, but also being clear about the perspectives we bring to the classroom and the reference desk so that we're aware of the directions in which we steer students. I am thinking here of a research consultation I had with one of our public health students. She had been assigned to argue the "con" side in a debate about the link between poverty and health outcomes. The pro side was arguing that poverty produced a range of health issues: anxiety and depression, lack of access to fresh and healthy food, that anger that just eats and eats at you when you live every day in a world that is basically unfair and stacked against you from the first. What is the con side? My brain struggled to come up with anything. It just wasn't a question I could answer because I couldn't imagine a way that poverty wasn't bad for people. We all have these kinds of blocks on what our brains are capable of thinking, and as librarians, that affects the kinds of questions we're able to get students to ask, and the answers we can give them. Making those blocks visible so that we can begin to move around them is critical.

Critical librarianship knows that the world could be different

At the heart of critical librarianship, for me, is a conviction and a radical hope that things could be different from the way they are now. Critical librarians acknowledge the contingency and constructedness of the world we find ourselves living and working in. Simply because things have "always been this way" does not mean they are meant to be or that they will be forever. For the critical librarian, nothing about the ways things are is a given, and all is subject to change. We librarians are the agents of that change. We work every day to make and remake the structures that produce the terrain of the present and, therefore, the future. We could make things differently.

We are also agents of reproducing the same. Every time we teach students in our information literacy classes that scholarly articles are "good" articles, we reproduce ideas about who has a right to speak in the academy. In that moment, we can make it otherwise, and instead teach students the skills necessary to interrogate information of all kinds, including the five scholarly articles their composition instructor has told them to use in their end of semester research paper. As librarians, we have significant power, more than I think we know that we do, and we can choose to wield it every day. Part of the task of critical librarianship is to delineate the boundaries and limits of that power, to describe what it is and how it is produced, and identify the moments where we can enact it, when we build our collections, connect with our users, and make the case for our work outside of our libraries.

For me, this set of principles defines a critical librarianship as something different from a radical or progressive librarianship. You'll notice that missing from my list is a set of outcomes that we ought to be working towards. This is not because I don't have an idea of the kinds of changes I want to see in our libraries, but because I think a critical perspective is a matter of

heuristics, or developing frames through which we view the work we do. Developing a habit of mind that consistently interrogates what otherwise feels natural means that we can respond nimbly to problems as they emerge in our libraries and in our world.

This habit of mind is palpably important when those of us who teach meet a group of students in a classroom. When we approach teaching with a frame that centers student learning and student voice and that looks for openings where we can do that centering, great things can happen. I am thinking of a particularly surly group of students I once taught—an English composition class that came to the library to learn how to access scholarly journal articles for a research paper. If you have been teaching long you have taught a group like this: frustrated they had to be in the classroom, resentful of the librarian at the front of the room, extremely sure that there was nothing I could possibly teach them to do, think, or experience. I brought to that moment a belief that students know things, that people are curious and that my enthusiasm for the work I do will be shared by them. I also understand that the dynamic of a classroom extends to the library session: so much of what students bring to us is a projection of the relationship they already have with their teacher. If the professor is connected to students, the students will be connected to the librarian. And the opposite is true. If a professor has failed to animate a class, the students won't be animated in the library.

In this case, the students were notably frustrated that they had to be in a class with me. The professor had asked me to teach citation practice, something I actually love teaching because citation is one of these infrastructures of power that, once introduced to students, also introduces them to the ways that we signal authority and engagement with one another in our writing. Instead of simply barreling through with my active learning exercise informed by critical theory, I asked the students why they were so angry. It was a powerful moment, one that has shaped how

I approach angry students ever since: one of the students told me how they were feeling. They were angry at their professor. She was strict. She demanded that students bring a three hole punch to every class and would take points off their grades if they didn't show up with that hole punch. She was frustrated with students because they failed to produce papers with correct citations--that's why she'd asked me to teach it. She was angry with them. The students, in turn, were angry and hurt and betrayed by their teacher. "She wants us to use APA citation, but she won't show us how." Bringing a critical mind to the classroom means seeing moments like that as openings, openings for connecting with students as an ally against power.

I think our daily work lives are full of moments like this. Do we adopt food and drink policies that increase policing in our libraries? Do we implement noise policies that work for us or that work for our students? Do we replace missing staplers or refuse on the grounds that student steal? Do we add zines and other alternative publications to our collections? Do we say yes or no, when and to whom? Adopting a critical habit of mind can facilitate a liberatory practice in all the quotidian aspects of our work, which, if we are honest, is most of library work.

I will close this piece with a few issues in our field that I think critical librarians must address. Many of these are about us as the people who make libraries work. I believe we matter. Our work matters. Who we have at our reference desks and in our classrooms matters. Since the election of Donald Trump, an American instance of a global right wing turn, we have seen an explosion of texts defining the role that libraries can play during difficult times. We can offer information and entertainment, space for groups of people to meet and connect and organize. We can create research guides that help people understand how to resist authoritarian regimes. All of those things that libraries do are well described elsewhere. What we sometimes miss is the importance of beginning our critical work with ourselves.

Who works in our libraries?

Think about the people employed as librarians in your library. Then think about who is not represented. Libraries in the United States are notoriously white, 88% at last count in a country where white people will be the minority within the next few decades. We are homogeneously staffed. Most academic librarians look like me: white, middle class, cisgender, able bodied, English speaking, and bringing a critical lens that is both informed by those things and not informed by the things I am not. The problem of a lack of diversity in libraries--which I would like to name here as a problem of persistent whiteness--has been well-documented. My library serves a majority-black student population, and we have only one black librarian on staff.

Critical librarianship must grapple concretely and directly with the dynamics of white supremacy and consolidations of wealth and opportunity to a vanishing few that produce these facts on the ground. We need to be serious with ourselves about why librarians consistently fail to hire people who do not look and act like them. And we need to ask why librarians of color so often leave the profession. This requires librarians to develop a more sophisticated analysis of race. The problem of diversifying the profession can't simply be about getting more people of color into and then through library school. Many people of color graduate from library school. Instead, we need to understand barriers to unbiased hiring. I have been on many hiring committees and have often had to fight against committees that refused to talk about race in the hiring process. I have been reported to a library director for bringing bias into the hiring process by opening up a discussion of race. I have listened to white librarians reject Black librarians as candidates because they are aggressive or angry or some other racist stereotype about Black women. We need to normalize the discussion of race in libraries so that we can talk frankly about what it will take to persuade white librarians to hire people of color to work in their libraries.

What are the working conditions of librarians?

Once we finish talking about who we are hiring in our libraries, we need to talk about what happens to them once they are working with us. When we talk about librarians of color, we need to respond to concerns raised again and again about working majority-white spaces. Are our libraries spaces where microaggressions are uncontested? Are black librarians treated as full and valued members of the staff and faculty, or do white librarians treat librarians of color as exceptions?

We also need to ask critical questions about whether the libraries that we all work in are hospitable to all of us. That means our structures and processes must make room for differences of all kinds. Last year I visited the X̱wi7x̱wa Library at the University of British Columbia. The library uses a knowledge organization structure mapped onto indigenous ways of knowing. The Brian Deer classification scheme orders materials according to indigenous ontologies rather than the western ontologies I am used to. If we think about the HQ classification, we can see the way it places materials in the order of a particular conception of the human life cycle--sex gives way to marriage and then to child rearing, young adulthood, courtship, and on to marriage again. In the X̱wi7x̱wa Library, this was not the ideological story. The emphasis was not on time or progressivism but on on space and place and social networks. The geography was indigenous, not western. It was unusual for me, both in that I had never been in a library with the Brian Deer system, and because most libraries I have worked in or used as a patron are built for people like me, from a western perspective, English-language-speaking, white and with a certain liberal understanding of the world. If I took a job in the X̱wi7x̱wa Library, I would need to re-order my understanding of knowledge so that it aligned with what I saw on the shelves. This is what librarians and library workers are asked to do when they enter all libraries, and it's worth

thinking about what that might mean for librarians from non-dominant cultural locations. How can we make the library a space that adapts to difference, rather than asking only some of us to adapt to the library instead?

Are we facilitating resistance and change?

Most of us design our collections and resources to match the needs of our curriculum. My library supports a majority health-sciences campus. We use government health and medicine databases, we use Elsevier products. It is important to use our libraries to help students gain access to the language and discourse of power. There is value in teaching students how to use Boolean logic and truncation, how to pick up and work with the dominant language embedded in our classification structures, and how to use scholarly information sources. Students must have access to the language of power so that they can either use it or reject it. We must equip students with these skills.

We also have a responsibility to build library collections and service models that help students understand themselves as capable of intervening in and changing the library, the university, and the world. We do this in part by making sure our libraries contain alternative and outsider voices and that we work to include those voices in the literature we search and the classes we teach. Library workers can use our role as people who help other people navigate systems and structures of power--from our OPACS to our noise rules--to also help students see the ways that systems and structures of power are everywhere, organizing all of our interactions in the social world. Once we see those systems we can begin to articulate and point to potential sites of resistance. For librarians, this can mean strengthening the local cataloging of our collections. It might mean fighting to make name changes easier for transgender students in our patron information databases. Once we leave the library, it might mean building relationships

with other political actors. As librarians, we build and then work inside of systems of power every day. We are perhaps best positioned to see them at work elsewhere, and to intervene and change them.

Find our power and organize it.

Finally, I will return to the ideas of structure and time that opened this paper. In terms of time, I would argue that we are in an exigent moment, one that requires a differently urgent response to the challenges we see both inside our libraries and in the world in which we are embedded. Many of us see our safety nets dismantled day by day by governments that see obligations to the wealthy as more important than their obligations to the poor. Spectacular building fires that leave poor and working class people. Walls are built at borders. Library workers are removed from libraries. Immigrants and refugees face discrimination and outright violence. Wealth is systematically transferred from workers to the global one percent. These phenomena are linked. If structures are about producing and directing power, librarians must get to work building ours.

I have some recent practice at doing this as part of an organized labor struggle. In 2016, at the end of contract negotiations, I was locked out by my employer along with the rest of the faculty at Long Island University, Brooklyn. Because we could not agree to contract terms with a management that refused to bargain, they fired us all. Management took our syllabi and uploaded them into course shells and assigned administrators and people hired with little vetting to teach our classes for low wages. They cut our salaries and health insurance with no warning and blocked our access to email, one of the only tools we had to communicate with each other. They hired security guards to prevent us from coming to campus. It was a terrifying encounter with a brute power. As we say in the labor movement, management is the best organizer. The faculty at

LIU Brooklyn organized for a win, if a small one. We refused the initial contract offer and forced management to end the lockout.

One of the central lessons I took from that experience was that a clear-eyed analysis of brute power is necessary for a critical librarianship that seeks to make a meaningful difference. It is simply not enough, not ever and certainly not in this urgent moment, to develop a critique, and then head to the pub for a pint. We must first locate the structures of power available to us—our labor unions, our cataloging and classification schemes, our electoral system—and begin to use those structures as ladders, bridges, staircases for building better worlds.

Librarians are some of the only people who understand what organizing for power and for change--concretely, materially, and in the present tense--can mean. Organizing is what we are best at. We put books in a row and classes on calendars. We schedule reference desk shifts and design complicated workflows. It turns out that this is also what politics is: coordinating opposition to power is a lot like coordinating the instruction schedule. Organizing is about talking to people and helping them articulate what they need and find ways to get it. Organizing is the reference interview, over and over and over again.

The time is urgent for critically informed action by all of us, by librarians. That action requires building power. The task I see as most clearly at hand for critical librarians is to locate our power in our structural positions and in each other, and to organize that power, collectively, toward shared ends. That is concrete work, in material time. It requires talking to each other about what matters, developing a shared critical analysis that can inform our work. We have to find the one small task that, coupled with so many other small tasks, will build our power while making our worlds change. In other words, we need to be librarians.