
It's Not (Just) About the Cost: Academic Libraries and Intentionally Engaged OER for Social Justice

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ABSTRACT

How can librarians seize the radical affordances of OER to complicate standard narratives with the stories of those historically and systemically marginalized? Using work created through the University of Idaho's Think Open Fellows 2019–20 Cohort as a starting point, the author explores how these projects created OER content that demonstrates Lambert's three principles of OER and social justice. The author discusses the unique potentials of the academic library to support intentionally engaged OER as well as the responsibility of librarians to center marginalized perspectives in their work with faculty as cocreators and identifiers of OER. A discussion of some of the transformative aspects of this work follows, including the potential impacts on librarians with marginalized identities in creating intentionally engaged OER, as briefly examined through bell hooks's notion of engaged pedagogy. The article concludes with a call to action, inspired by hooks and Austin, to specifically and intentionally diversify the perspectives represented in the OER we identify and create as librarians.

INTRODUCTION

Open educational resources (OER) are part of a broader framework of open pedagogy, which can loosely be defined as an educational praxis that uses new technological affordances to reduce barriers to education (Cronin and MacLaren 2018). OER and open pedagogy are new enough fields that definitions are still developing and will be discussed in some detail in the OER Scholarship Landscape section of this article.

OER proponents have done a great deal to raise awareness of the potential for OER to positively impact students and faculty. OER adoption has obvious and quantifiable benefits, such as savings for students and

increased availability relative to physical textbooks. To date, much of the existing scholarship on OER is concerned with either defining and naming open practices or is research that seeks to measure OER quality and efficacy in a variety of educational settings.

Within the existing scholarship on OER, little theorizing or research exists on the topic of diversity and OER, and even less on how the new publishing affordances of OER can challenge or complicate the standard narratives found in many traditional textbook curricula. Fortunately, two works by Lambert and Adam et al. lay a foundational framework for evaluating social justice themes in OER. Using Lambert's three social justice principles, defined as recognitive, representational, and redistributive justice, this article explores ongoing work at the University of Idaho Library's Think Open Fellows Program that intentionally and specifically engages with social justice themes.

After exploring examples of open praxis at the University of Idaho, I discuss how an intentionally engaged OER praxis complements existing library values and work. I close with the unique affordances intentionally engaged open praxis provides librarians from marginalized identities and a call to action inspired by Black feminist scholars Regina Austin and bell hooks.

OER SCHOLARSHIP LANDSCAPE

Research on open education can be challenging because of the wide range of activities, practices, and concepts covered by the term "open." Current discourse on open education and OER should be distinguished from historical concepts of open education, which typically centered on the physical layout of classrooms and the physical methods of delivery and instruction of curricular concepts (Cuban 2004; Kohl 1970). While the praxis and definition of open is still very much under development, a few recurring features emerge. At the broadest level, open praxis focuses on creating and disseminating free or low-cost materials that are free to be used, shared, and adapted by others.

The current scholarly landscape on open pedagogy and OER is dominated by two central discourses. One discourse is preoccupied with the definition and direction of open as a term and praxis; I call this a theorizing discourse. A second discourse seeks to address questions around OER and quality, as well as assessing OER impacts on student success. I call this the practical discourse because of its emphasis on quantifiable benefits.

From the theorizing discourse, I locate open as a praxis that is a similar to a tributary-river model, with distinct paths in open theorizing that all flow into a broader model of open pedagogy.

Within this model, some key tributaries of open are defined by Creative Commons (2019) as follows:

- Open educational practices, from Cronin and MacLaren's 2018 paper "Conceptualising OEP: A Review of Theoretical and Empirical Literature in Open Educational Practices," situates open as using, creating, and sharing OER in conjunction with collaborative, peer-focused learning environments that utilizes social and participatory technologies with the aim of learner empowerment (Creative Commons 2019, Module 5.4).
- Open pedagogy, from DeRosa and Jhangiani (2017), defines open pedagogy as "an access-oriented commitment to learner-driven education and a process of designing systems and tools for learners that enable learners to shape and contribute to the public knowledge commons of which they are part" (Creative Commons 2019, Module 5.4).
- Wiley and Hilton's (2018) OER-enabled pedagogy, a set of teaching and learning practices only available when the work is formed and licensed with the 5Rs in mind (retain, revise, reuse, remix, redistribute). This requires appropriate licensing as well as a willingness for practitioners to engage with the 5Rs (Creative Commons 2019, Module 5.4; Wiley and Hilton 2018).

A review of open scholarship suggests that, in many academic libraries supporting open endeavors, there are a range of each of these types of praxis co-occurring. For this article, I reference some aspects of these definitions, as well as put forth a briefer definition later on specifically informed by open praxis at the University of Idaho Library.

The other discourse, which I refer to as the practical discourse, seeks to assess the impact and efficacy of OER on student learning, including open textbooks and other OER such as curricula and assignments. Related concepts include evaluating how overall student success is impacted by implementing open textbooks as measured by metrics like the drop-fail-withdraw rate (DFW). Other avenues of scholarship are more case study or place oriented and sometimes explore reducing costs for students with or without the use of an explicit OER tool by using low-cost materials like past editions of textbooks or library systems like course reserves.

Questions around OER quality and efficacy have been investigated in both postsecondary and K-12 settings with consistent results that OER can match and sometimes improve upon standard textbook quality and outcomes when evaluated by student performance (Kimmons 2015; Kelly and Rutherford 2017; Chiorescu 2017; Hunsicker-Walburn et al. 2018; Clinton 2018; Clinton and Kahn 2019). According to Hilton, Mason, and Clinton's OER "Review Project," which is an online literature review of the research to date on OER efficacy and user perception, the quality of OER has consistently been shown across studies to meet or exceed traditional textbooks, with students using open texts performing as well as or better

than peers using traditional texts. Hilton, Mason, and Clinton note that across dozens of efficacy studies on OER outcomes, in only one study did students using OER perform worse than their peers using traditional textbooks (Hilton, Mason, and Clinton n.d.).

The practical discourse does include some metrics that might be proxies for diversity, but rarely engage with the subject directly. For instance, several studies have shown improved outcomes for Pell Grant recipients who are in zero-cost courses, oftentimes at rates notably higher than their more affluent peers (Delgado, Delgado, and Hilton 2019). Similar work by Colvard, Watson, and Park (2018) revealed “that OER adoption does much more than simply save students money and address student debt concerns. OER improve end-of-course grades and decrease DFW (D, F, and Withdrawal letter grades) rates for all students. They also improve course grades at greater rates and decrease DFW rates at greater rates for Pell recipient students, part-time students, and populations historically underserved by higher education” (262).

While OER and open pedagogy have been broadly connected to implied social justice themes in both the theorizing and practical discourse, research on diversity in representation and authorship of OER content selection and creation is scarce. Despite having elements related to social justice in both of the primary discourses discussed above, none of dominant discourses feature race, gender, or other social justice themes as an overt or central element of the current scholarly discussion. It is not all bad news, however, with promising ideas on OER and social justice emerging within the past two years.

EMERGING DISCUSSION ON SOCIAL JUSTICE AND OER

Lambert notes in her 2018 article, “Changing our (Dis)Course: A Distinctive Social Justice Aligned Definition of Open Education,” doing scholarly research on open and OER social justice consideration is tough work, thanks in part to both the plethora of potential topics covered by search subjects like *open*, as well as the actual scarcity of scholarly content on the social justice potentials of OER. Lambert’s research finds that while a vague, but at least articulated, goal of social justice is part of original OER founding declarations, it is absent from the majority of the seminal declarations and scholarship since 2018. To address this deficiency, Lambert first defines three social justice principles and then situates open education within those definitions.

Building on the work of Keddle, Fraser, and Young, Lambert arrives at the following definition of social justice: “A process and also a goal to achieve a fairer society which involves actions guided by the principles of redistributive justice, recognitive justice or representational justice” (Lambert 2018, 3). Lambert then identifies three central principles of social justice as follows:

Redistributive justice is the most long-standing principle of social justice and involves allocation of material or human resources towards those who by circumstance have less (Rawls 1971). *Recognitive justice* involves recognition and respect for cultural and gender difference, and *representational justice* involves equitable representation and political voice (Fraser 1995; Keddle 2012; Young 1997).

Lambert (2018, 3) then specifically situates these three social justice principles in open education using the following examples:

Redistributive Justice: Free educational resources, textbooks or courses to learners who by circumstance of socio-cultural position cannot afford them, particularly learners who could be excluded from education or be more likely to fail due to lack of access to learning materials.

Recognitive Justice: Socio-cultural diversity in the open curriculum. Inclusion of images, case studies, and knowledges of women, First Nations people and whomever is marginalized in any particular national, regional or learning context. Recognition of diverse views and experiences as legitimate within open assignments and feedback.

Representational Justice: Self-determination of marginalized people and groups to speak for themselves, and not have their stories told by others. Co-construction of OER texts and resources about learners of colour by learners of colour, about women's experiences by women, about gay experiences by gay identifying people. Facilitation to ensure quiet and minority views have equal air-time in open online discussions. (Lambert 2018, 3)

Adam and colleagues build a similar model in a 2019 blog post on the *OER19 Recentering Open Blog*, which itself builds off of Hodgkinson-Williams and Trotter's 2018 article, "A Social Justice Framework for Understanding Open Educational Resources and Practices in the Global South." Both the article and blog post put forth a rubric that is similar to Lambert's, with some differences in the final definitions of the social justice principles.

Having established a rough framework of what can be meant by open, and using Lambert's three principles as a foundation, I now examine how these social justice principles have manifested in actual OER work at the University of Idaho Library. Here we define OER to mean digital educational resources created with sharing-friendly licenses that are distributed free of cost (Anderson et al. 2019). This definition fits well into a number of the definitions discussed but may also fall short of definitions like Wiley and Hilton's that foreground the 5Rs (Wiley and Hilton 2018). This definition is used here because it best reflects the context of OER practice to date at the University of Idaho generally, and the University of Idaho Library specifically.

THINK OPEN AT UNIVERSITY OF IDAHO LIBRARY

Through my work as the open education librarian, I collaborate with faculty and graduate students to implement open or low-cost materials into

assignments and curricular content for both undergraduate and graduate students while using my research interests and background in digital critical ethnic studies to foreground social justice concerns as much as possible. This work occurs both in my work as a liaison to the College of Education, Health and Human Sciences and as part of the Think Open Fellows program.

Assignments and curricula created by the 2019–20 Think Open Fellows Cohort:

- Challenge traditional notions of who can be an author by incorporating students in curriculum creation.
- Complicate, challenge, or replace the standard historical narratives with representations of women, Black, Indigenous, and Non-Black People of Color, and GLBTQIA people.
- Expand and complicate regional histories by centering archival records documenting the lives and times of people with marginalized identities.
- Introduce learners to concepts around critically evaluating and interrogating authoritative sources.

In addition to changing up traditional sources and narratives, these *OER-ventions* (OER interventions) can demand an updated teaching method as well. This year's cohort has experimented with novel assignments using platforms like Twitter and Spotify, as well as developing renewable assignments to be used in both the University of Idaho College of Education and local elementary schools. Wiley and Hilton define renewable assignments as those "which both support an individual student's learning and result in new or improved open educational resources that provide a lasting benefit to the broader community of learners" (2018, 137). The renewable assignments in development invite students to be cocreators of content by identifying relevant digital primary objects on topics that expand current curricula. These primary documents form the base of assignments and activities that will be codeveloped as a class and will be used next for these classes next year.

The Think Open Fellowship program was created at the University of Idaho Library in 2017 by then scholarly communication librarian Annie Gaines. This program is designed to increase OER adoption and creation by University of Idaho faculty and graduate students via a competitive fellowship program. Each year, four faculty and one to two graduate students are awarded a modest financial award and the opportunity to work intensively with library faculty to create an open course curriculum. The program to date has saved students an estimated quarter of a million dollars in textbook costs. Think Open projects have ranged in complexity—some Think Open Fellows have created entirely new textbooks that use technology to provide new learning opportunities for students, such as Professor

Sean Butterfield's "Inquiry-Based Music Theory," which features the real-time ability to edit and compose music scores. Other Think Open Fellows have focused on pedagogical innovation with assignments and syllabi, as well as using unabridged open textbooks from creators like OpenStax.

The most current 2019–20 cohort of Think Open Fellows features several University of Idaho faculty and graduate students actively engaging with themes of diversity, equity, and inclusion in the design and creation of new course materials. I work collaboratively with fellows to identify and evaluate various resources and, in some cases, cocreate accompanying assignments. A brief discussion of several Think Open projects demonstrates that intentionality in creating representative resources leads to innovative and impactful contents and curricula.

Re-Historying Anna Murray Douglass

Graduate student Rebekka Boysen-Taylor worked in partnership with the Frederick Douglass Family Initiatives to create custom assignments for seventh-grade students at a local charter elementary school, centering the life of Anna Murray Douglass. These assignments are used both by College of Education students in teaching focused courses as well as in a local middle school classroom.

These assignments introduce primary documents related to the life and activism of Anna Murray Douglass. In the current standard narrative, Anna Murray is known as the wife of Frederick Douglass and little beyond that. For instance, Anna Murray does not have her own entry in the online *Encyclopædia Britannica* but is instead listed in name only under "Facts & Data of Frederick Douglass" (*Encyclopædia Britannica* n.d.). This is a significant omission, as Boissoneault notes that without Anna Murray, Frederick Douglass's work would not have been possible, both for her role in freeing him from slavery and in providing all manner of logistical support to the underground railroad (Boissoneault 2018).

Boysen-Taylor's curriculum rightfully centers Anna Murray as a civil rights champion who helped Frederick Douglass escape slavery by both inspiring him and providing practical aid and logistical support to his escape. Murray went on to assist untold more when she established an underground railroad headquarters in Syracuse, as well as in her lifelong work as an active abolitionist (Thompson, Conyers, and Dawson 2010). Learners interpret and analyze primary documents identified in partnership with Library of Congress reference librarians and from the archives of Douglass's direct descendants and leaders of the Frederick Douglass Family Initiatives, Kenneth B. Morris Jr., and Nettie Washington Douglass (Frederick Douglass Family Initiatives n.d.). Using a process of critical interaction via guided questions and exercises, students learn more about both Anna Murray and the struggle for freedom, as well as the implicitly sexist omissions of the dominant storyline.

Culturally Competent and Low-Cost English 101

Graduate student Kathryn Pawelko's work focused on identifying no-cost, culturally competent materials to support English 101 students who speak English as a second language and/or who come from the University of Idaho's CAMP Program. According to the University of Idaho, "the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) assists students who have qualifying migrant/seasonal farm work backgrounds by providing financial and academic support services" (n.d.).

Pawelko identified resources and then built them into a custom curriculum designed to support standard learning objectives while also including culturally competent materials. Strategies employed range from selecting freely available culturally inclusive readings to using bilingual captions on YouTube videos to increase content options.

Pawelko's work also resulted in a plan to put one of the current mandatory titles for English 101 online as a digital course reserve through the University of Idaho Library. Utilizing familiar services like course reserves can be a good short-term strategy to reduce student costs while larger OER implementation awareness and course conversion efforts happen on campus.

Native American Perspectives Video Series

Professor Vanessa Anthony-Stevens is creating a series of short interview-style videos with Native American community members with connections to the University of Idaho and/or to the greater Palouse region. The videos focus on what the speakers think Idaho educators should know about working with Native youth, and how their own perspectives as Native people influence their work, research, and scholarship. The final product, which will be ready in Fall 2020, will include a series of short, high-quality videos, as well as a how-to guide for other educators hoping to create similar curricula in partnership with local Native communities. This project is in collaboration with the Office of Equity and Diversity and via existing relationships between Anthony-Stevens and Native community members.

According to Reclaiming Native Truth's 2018 Research Findings Report, Native Americans are largely perceived by Americans as invisible and/or extinct. Content, both factual and fiction, about Native Americans is largely controlled by non-Native people, and stereotypes abound throughout depictions of Native people (2018). Recent research has shown poor representation extends to current K–12 curricula (Sanchez 2007; Sleeter and Grant 2017).

Each of these points underscores the need for content by and about Native Americans. While progress has been made to decolonize children's literature thanks to efforts like Debbie Reese's blog "American Indians in Children's Literature (AICL)," which "provides critical analysis of In-

digenous peoples in children's and young adult books" (Reese 2019), standard textbook curricula remain at best limited in their depictions of Native American histories, cultures, and current day realities (Sanchez 2007; Sleeter and Grant 2017). To help combat implicit and explicit bias by future adapters, Anthony-Stevens will use her expertise as a culturally responsive educator, as well as her connections with local Native community members, to create a brief guide on adapting and creating culturally responsive content with an emphasis on collaboration with regional Native communities and campus members. This guide will also include general technical filming guidelines to help empower future users to create polished and professional content.

As a librarian, I support this work by codeveloping the concept, providing technical expertise for filming and editing, writing instructional documents on technical aspects of filming, and ensuring final licensing is both appropriate for sharing and in respect to participants' wishes.

Decolonizing Spanish 393: Culture and Institutions of Latin America

Professor Ashley Kerr identified and created original OER assignments for a Latin American survey course, Spanish 393: Culture and Institutions of Latin America. This class is a required course for the University of Idaho's Spanish major, a popular major with Latinx students, many of whom also participate in the CAMP program described above. Missing from the current narrative in the standard textbook for this course are Indigenous viewpoints, as well as those of women and GLBTQIA people.

Kerr used past in-class exercises and conversations designed to bridge these gaps as a base to build new OER assignments and discussions that forgo the limiting and expensive textbook. Kerr and I also worked together to identify existing OER assignments, materials, and readings that support a more representative retelling. Some assignments and lessons include formal OER identified, while others are built around freely available platforms or content. One new assignment asks students to demonstrate their knowledge of a particular historical figure's viewpoint by tweeting from a fresh Twitter account made specifically for the task. Another assignment uses local restaurant menus and open resources on the Columbian food exchange to challenge students to create a totally European meal without using endemic North or South American foods. These assignments are fun and creative, but also underscore important points about the Eurocentric framing of Western society and colonization (Hira 2017).

Analyzing for Redistributive, Recognitive, and Representational Justice

As can be seen in table 1, each of the discussed 2019 Think Open projects engages with Lambert's principles of OER and social justice. General themes include centering marginalized perspectives, ideally as told by marginalized people themselves, and challenging or expanding the standard narrative. Each project strives for recognitive justice, as voices of

Table 1. Applying Lambert's three principles of social justice to 2019–20 Think Open projects at the University of Idaho Library.

Think Open project	Redistributive	Recognitive	Representational
Re-Historying Anna Murray Douglass	Yes, leverage academic privileged position (relative to many K–12 teachers) to collaborate with Frederick Douglass Family Initiatives to create free content that can be used or remixed for use by elementary students nationwide.	Yes, standard curricula do not center the lives of Black women, including extraordinary women like Douglass.	Yes, idea and content created in partnership and collaboration with Anna Murray's living descendants and founders of the Frederick Douglass Family Initiatives.
English 101	Partial, this course still uses a paid text which is in process to be available on course reserves as a result of Think Open collaboration.	Yes, typical English 101 curricula are often overwhelmingly not diverse. Content is specifically designed to allow for self-identification beyond limited stereotypes.	Partial, content is intentionally selected to be from multiple perspectives, but the Think Open Fellow is not from the marginalized groups targeted for OERventions.
Native American Perspectives	Yes, creating totally new content and that is not currently available and will be available free of charge.	Yes, standard curricula do not feature histories or concepts told from an Indigenous perspective.	Yes, idea and content created in partnership with local tribal partners and the UofI Office of Equity and Diversity.
Spanish 393	Yes, eliminates expensive standard text; many students in Spanish major are CAMP students.	Yes, standard curricula do not survey South America or tell South American history from Indigenous perspectives.	Partial, content is intentionally selected to be from multiple perspectives, but the Think Open Fellow is not from the marginalized groups targeted for OERventions.

traditionally excluded people are being included in curricula where they are historically and currently absent or marginalized.

Representational justice is more complex, as all four practitioners discussed are white cisgender women working in collaboration with me, a transmasculine, disabled, feminist, brown person on Latinx, African American, and Indigenous histories. At a minimum all four of these Think Open Fellows engaged with representational justice by seeking out self-authored content by and from marginalized viewpoints. Depending on the level of collaboration, my input helps projects achieve outright representa-

tional justice, as in the cases where I am actively codesigning assignments on marginalized identities I share. For cases where I am less collaboratively involved in content creation, my experience in digital critical ethnic studies, as well as expertise from my lived experience, can help to suggest and inform ideas and directions for curricula and assignments.

Of the three principles, it was most difficult to quantify the redistributive impacts of these works, especially for those not replacing existing texts but rather creating whole new areas of content, as in the case of Boysen-Taylor's Douglass project and Anthony-Stevens's Native American perspectives videos. I argue each of these Think Open efforts harnesses the unique intellectual capital of the University of Idaho to create knowledge and resources for all Idahoans, including those in less privileged circumstances and from marginalized identities. In this way, each project mentioned engages in redistributive justice.

In summary, more than half of this year's Think Open Fellows cohort (four out of six total projects) created work that actively engages with the three principles of social justice as identified by Lambert. While each is working in a different context and sometimes in different modalities, all share a focus on representational, recognitive, and redistributive justice. With this in mind, let us now turn the focus to intentionally engaged OER and the academic library.

INTENTIONALLY ENGAGED OER AND THE ACADEMIC LIBRARY

Since the start of scholarship on OER, authors have noted the unique potentials of the library to support OER creation (Kleymeer, Kleinman, and Hanss 2010; Smith and Lee 2017; Okamoto 2013; Davis et al. 2015; Hess, Nann, and Riddle 2016; Woodward 2017; Katz 2019). However, much like in the broader open scholarship, the potentials of libraries to specifically support intentionally diverse or representative OER content appears to be undiscussed. Here I examine the ways intentionally engaged OER maps to existing library values and praxis.

The praxis of creating representative OER is deeply compatible with many existing library goals and functions and is not inherently transformative to library functions. Libraries who have made the leap to supporting OER, in whatever capacity, can easily prioritize diversity and inclusion as central goals of OER practice alongside better known goals such as student success and cost savings.

Intentionally engaged OER work supports the American Library Association's goals for librarians for creating and supporting inclusive and diverse content (American Library Association n.d.). More specifically to academic libraries, the 2018 Association of College Research Libraries Plan for Excellence says, "The Association will acknowledge and address historical racial inequities; challenge oppressive systems within academic

libraries; value different ways of knowing; and identify and work to eliminate barriers to equitable services, spaces, resources, and scholarship” (Association of College and Research Libraries 2019a).

A review of university mission statements shows similarities in universities’ goals—Wilson, Meyer, and McNeal found in a 2012 analysis that 75 percent of university mission statements include language around diversity. Similar results were found in Morpew and Hartley’s 2006 thematic analysis of mission statement rhetoric. College and universities are already “hotbeds of OER creation,” according to the Creative Commons, so it seems logical that universities might want to encourage ongoing and future OER work to include antiracist and/or decolonial curriculum interventions (2019).

Intentionally engaged OER work is also an excellent fit for collaboration with library departments like special collections. Primary sources for OER content can be identified in special collections at a home institution, in regional aggregators like Archives West, or in the wide range of state and national digital holdings offered by historical societies, archives, and libraries (LeFurgy 2013). According to Garcia, Lueck, and Yakel, archival objects are increasingly popular in instructional and curriculum settings: “The rising interest in facilitating learning with primary sources spans across primary, secondary, and postsecondary contexts, and aligns with broader changes in the American educational landscape” (2019, 94).

Finally, academic libraries are sources of the special expertise needed to create and share OER, such as licensing concerns and repository guidance. Creative Commons licenses are legally enforceable licenses that release some of the rights normally reserved as part of copyright. Creative Commons licenses are a popular OER tool, as they allow users to share content while reserving rights the creator deems critical. While many libraries already have in-house Creative Commons licensing expertise, librarians new to Creative Commons can develop skills via informal learning pathways like YouTube videos and lectures or through more formal means like the Creative Commons Course Certificate (Creative Commons 2019). Many libraries may already have some copyright expertise that can be expanded into Creative Commons and other sharing-friendly licenses. Similarly, librarians’ database skills can facilitate the discovery of relevant existing OER, while familiarity with metadata for sharing and OER sharing platforms can assist faculty at institutions without an open institutional repository in identifying appropriate sharing outlets.

From these perspectives, intentionally engaged OER is nondisruptive and, in fact, deeply compatible with many existing library departments, systems, and institution-level values. However, when viewed from an experiential lens, the praxis of intentionally engaged OER offers many possibilities for professional and personal growth.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR REPRESENTATIONAL SOCIAL JUSTICE WORK FOR LIBRARIANS WITH MARGINALIZED IDENTITIES

Recent studies have documented the overall low morale experience of many library faculty and staff and the especially toxic environments many librarians of color face (Kendrick 2017; Alabi 2015; Brown et al. 2018). Library workplaces are frequently sites of higher than average incidences of bullying (Freedman and Vreven 2016), which, when combined with homogenous racial demographics (Chang 2013), can create oppressive or isolating environments for many librarians of color and women, as well as gender queer and/or disabled librarians (Misawa 2014; Benjes-Small et al. 2019; Krueger 2019; Pionke 2019). In response to this difficult environment, librarians of color may experience what Kendrick calls deauthentication, briefly defined as the suppression of certain aspects of the self for fear of being racialized or othered. While I do not propose that OER practice alone can address major systemic issues in the profession, I do believe intentionally engaged OER work presents unique opportunities for librarians with marginalized identities, as well as a few common challenges.

In terms of drawbacks, work on specific diversity-focused efforts often comes with a plethora of unintended and unwanted consequences—be it microaggressive comments, skepticism from colleagues, or fear of being (further) entrenched as the resident diversity expert (Alabi 2015). On a content level, librarians of color may experience secondary trauma from interacting with historical objects documenting traumas and abuses of marginalized people. Additionally, the context of often being the only marginalized person in the room while working with people of privilege around topics with historical racial violence or bigotry can also create scenes and spaces ripe for unfortunate opinions and comments that ring in a marginalized person's ears well after the end of the work day.

Despite these challenges, advocating for and cocreating OER that center marginalized identities is an affirmative step librarians of marginalized identity and experience can take for themselves. Intentionally engaged OER allows librarians from a range of identities to advocate for representation of often-suppressed aspects of their own identities, fighting deauthentication at a root level. Librarians actively experiencing deauthentication can use OER as a micro-practice of representation, as a way to find affirming collaborative colleagues both inside and outside the library, and to practice what hooks calls “engaged pedagogy”:

Progressive, holistic education, “engaged pedagogy” is more demanding than conventional critical or feminist pedagogy. For, unlike these two teaching practices, it emphasizes wellbeing. That means that teachers must be actively committed to a process of self-actualization that promotes their own wellbeing if they are to teach in a manner that empowers students. (hooks 1994, 15–16)

Librarians may not be teachers by title, but most do have an educational capacity to their role, and many, such as those with faculty teaching appointments, practice formal lecturing and teaching. Thus, from hooks's perspective, librarians also have a responsibility to be self-actualized. I argue in the realm of OER this means to consider how our contributions of resources and instructional design helps to affirm our own and other identities. For those with privileged identities, OER can present an opportunity to center a story other than a familiar standard narrative. For those who have been omitted, OER can present an exciting opportunity to co-construct new historical narratives and curricula that better reflect ourselves and others with marginalized identities.

Those who are educators, healers, or helping professionals of any kind, hooks goes on to say, must strive for continual self-actualization as part of a truly antiracist educational praxis (hooks 1994). According to hooks, Thich Nhat Hanh's definition and practice of Engaged Buddhism is foundational to her thinking on engaged pedagogy, a term she coins in 1994's *Teaching to Transgress* (hooks 1994). While it is difficult to summarize an entire religious and philosophical practice succinctly, Engaged Buddhism posits that enlightenment is a function of the continuous cultivation of self-awareness via mindfulness, and that same mindfulness will inspire interventions to injustices both perpetuated and experienced by the self and others (Hanh 1987).

This type of mindful self-actualization, hooks argues, is essential for helping professionals of all kinds. She offers a call to responsibility based on her now seminal phrasing of one of Thich Nhat Hanh's teachings: "Thich Nhat Hanh emphasized that 'the practice of a healer, therapist, teacher or any helping professional should be directed toward his or herself first, because if the helper is unhappy, he or she cannot help many people.' In the United States it is rare that anyone talks about teachers in university settings as healers. And it is even more rare to hear anyone suggest that teachers have any responsibility to be self-actualized individuals" (hooks 1994, 15–16).

To embrace hooks's message is to also understand that librarians are included in this call to self-actualize toward justice, as a responsibility to ourselves and our patrons. The freedom and possibilities of OER creation and customization creates space for systemically marginalized librarians to self-actualize and empower others via redistributive, recognitive, and representational social justice. The process and final outcomes are interventions for both the creators of the resource and the receivers of the harm caused by the dominant historical narrative. When marginalized librarians are empowered to create OER that center their or others' marginalized identities, a unique opportunity for work that is holistically affirming emerges. Further, this work suggests that by critically and holistically en-

gaging with the self, all librarians can take an authoritative and active role in positively transforming content and pedagogy.

A CALL TO COMMIT

The overall lack of scholarship on OER and social justice concerns suggests specific and intentional inclusion of social justice aims are necessary if they are to be achieved. This is not a new idea, especially in the lens of Black feminist praxis. In her 1989 foundational Black feminist legal jurisprudence article “Sapphire Bound!,” Regina Austin “calls for minority female scholars in the legal field to straightforwardly, unapologetically, and strategically use their intellectual pursuits to advocate on behalf of poor and working-class minority women” (Evans-Winters and Esposito 2010, 11).

Evans-Winters and Esposito argue that Austin’s ideas not only are still relevant but apply to most aspects of education: “Even though Austin is arguing from the perspective of a woman of color, with experience and interest in the legal field, her comments are also relevant to conceptual, theoretical, methodological, and pedagogical efforts in the field of education” (2010, 12). Austin’s writing itself argues that antiracist or antisexist work must be explicitly and deliberately so. As this article has shown, open pedagogy as a practice could benefit from this type of direct and clear intention to use the affordances of open to create intentionally engaged content.

With hooks and Austin as inspiration, a call can be made that more must be done to make OER work explicitly and specifically antiracist and antisexist in definition, praxis, and content. In addition to antiracist and antisexist goals, OER work must also take up content that represents queer and trans perspectives, as well as those from systemically marginalized groups like Indigenous peoples, disabled people, neurodivergent people, migrants and refugees, and the systemically impoverished.

Librarians can advance intentionally engaged OER by selecting inclusive and representative OER, exploring OERventions for those people missing from dominant-narrative-aligned resources, and insisting that intentional and specific social justice work is an essential part of open praxis. By seeking out opportunities to create recognitive, representational, and redistributive justice with intentionally engaged OER, open practitioners can engage with the truly radical and transformative potentials of open pedagogy.

CONCLUSION

OER is powerfully positioned to positively impact diversity equity and representation in college and school curricula. Library programs like the University of Idaho Library’s Think Open Fellows can support the social

justice potential of OER by encouraging faculty and graduate students to consider what perspectives are missing from current texts and help them find and adapt more representative resources.

Libraries are natural facilitators and incubators for this type of work, including serving as connectors to the intellectual capital necessary to identify and amplify marginalized narratives. Academic librarians interested in creating open resources that center marginalized perspectives can find collaborators in librarian subject specialists, faculty, and staff, special collections both on campus and beyond, and other units on campus like offices of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Public librarians can also utilize community expertise to create regionally relevant resources that create space for the often unheard or overlooked histories, events, and people of their locality.

Scholars like Lambert offer promising ideas evaluating how OER practice might embody specific social justice goals. My analysis of OER at the University of Idaho Library shows Lambert's three R principles manifested in our work to foster and support critically engaged OER, with particular success in the principle of *recognitive justice*.

Intentionally representational and *recognitive OER* complements existing academic library values such as centering diversity, as well as utilizing existing core services and departments like course reserves and special collections. At the same time, this work presents exciting possibilities for librarians of marginalized identities and their antiracist allies to actively create and share OER curricula and content that center systemically oppressed peoples.

Inspired by hooks and Austin, I argue those working as open practitioners have a responsibility to specifically and decisively center self-representations of women, people of color including Indigenous people, transgender and queer people, people with disabilities, and neurodivergent people, as well as all other systematically marginalized people, in OER content and praxis. To not seize the opportunity to challenge the limiting standard narrative with queered, crip'd, feminist, and colored OERventions is to implicitly side with that standard narrative. Future OER creation must recenter historically marginalized people into a new, iteratively more just narrative, or itself contribute to that marginalization. Black feminist scholars, critical educators, and decolonizers of all disciplines have shown us the way; now it is up to us to forge a new path of intentionally engaged open librarianship.

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