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Call for Papers

Crop and Bleed: An Information Studies Reader on New Boundaries in Critical Print and Visual Culture

Editors: *Robert D. Montoya (UCLA; California Rare Book School), Sean E. Pessin (California State University, Northridge; CSUN Book Arts Lab)*

As recent discussions of the global nature of the book have taken shape among bibliographical and print culture scholars (Boehmer, et. al., 2017; Suarez, et. al., 2013), there is ample momentum to rethink the role of print culture in the power-based, oppressive structures that have facilitated the many social ills currently being experienced across the globe today. The study of print and visual (herein abbreviated to print culture) is tantamount to the study of how knowledge, language, and culture have impacted our epistemic, economic, political, and environmental spaces. As a primary vehicle for language and semiotic meaning, print culture has played a central role in the struggle to control the social mechanisms of power that, invariably, have led to the epistemic and social oppression of various societies and communities throughout history. It is this fact that led Walter Mignolo (1995) to state that writing, books, and recording practices played a central role in the “colonization of languages, memories, and of space.” Further, invoking Anibal Quijano, the “colonial matrix of power” interrogated by Mignolo (2011) could not have taken such deep root in our collective spaces were it not for print’s rapid ability to radiate over vast geographic and temporal planes.

Propelled by the epistemic cultural Western domination of theological and secular philosophy and patriarchal social arrangement, the matrix of power outlines the domains of social control that were necessary for coloniality to take hold. It is through print that the domains of authority, economy; racism, gender & sexuality; and knowledge and subjectivity are articulated, enacted, realized, and expressed. In parallel, the study of literacies can, in one way, be described as the acquisition of critical and interpretive skills by way of print sources that provide situational, individual, and/or collective access to said knowledge toward some social, epistemic, or material benefit. These skills then provide the capacities to realize what Miranda Fricker (2007) calls our social agential power, identity-producing power, and ultimately, our hermeneutical and interpretive powers. As a core source of social power, the study of print culture is paramount to understanding the broader social injustices that individuals, communities, and societies have experienced throughout history.

The goal of this Reader, published as part of the [*Critical Book, Publishing, and Literacy Studies*](#) series with Litwin Press, is to bring the study of print and literacies culture (and its ancillary topics) into critical conversation with a variety theoretical discourses, including (non-exhaustively) feminist, queer, critical race, indigenous, anti-colonial, postcolonial, and decolonial theories, such that we can better understand their roles as normalizing agents in the unequal distribution of social, cultural, and epistemic power. Ranging from rampant systemic racism, political unrest, the rise of nationalist ideologies, the increasing exploitation from capitalist and neoliberal structures, and widespread environmental catastrophe, print culture has a role to play in *both* how social problems sustain themselves, as well as how we might, potentially, find ways to reimagine new social formulations and cultural imaginations to counteract this effects. So, while thinking of the book as a global instrument that transgresses boundaries, for example, is useful, the aim with this collection, is to think beyond geographic boundaries, and to formulate how we, as print culture scholars, educators, and professionals, can decenter the epistemic frames common in the scholarship of print, visual, and literacy cultures, that perpetuate, overlook, or ignore these power relations.

Chapters that examine multiple cultures, countries, and geographies are of interest, of course, but the question remains how we can methodologically re-envision our scholarly discourses in ways that center interpretive ambiguity over universal normalization; cultural and ontological plurality over rigid binary determinations; humanity over exploitation; relationality over individualism; and racial justice over violence and systemic racism. Part-and-parcel of this goal is to promote print culture scholarship that succeeds on three distinct and interrelated planes: (1) investigations that identify the oppressive cultural, Imperial, institutional, and scholarly forces that inhibit new modes of diverse and ethically redemptive scholarship; (2) examinations that center narratives that run counter to, and perhaps even revolt against, the global and culturally-entrenched forces of oppression, racism, economic inequality, environmental violence, and epistemic suppression; and (3) pieces that propose new theoretical and methodological approaches that strive to not merely *push against* prevailing interpretive frames, but ones that envision new boundaries by which print scholarship can flourish in the name of ethics, justice, and cultural appreciation.

To this end, investigations of special interest include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Feminist, queer, trans, critical race, Indigenous, anti-colonial, postcolonial, decolonial and anti-class approaches to print culture, bibliography, and literacies
- Global, transnational, and radical approaches to print culture and literacies
- Print culture as it relates to labor, exploitation, unionization, or neoliberal forces
- Critical examinations of the bibliographical and print culture canon
- Whiteness and its relation to bibliographical and print histories, collections, institutions, and literacies
- Print culture and autoethnography
- Print culture, citizenship, and identity production
- Print culture and its impact or transformation on the public sphere
- Materiality, maker culture, or popular culture and its epistemic, political, or public influence
- Role of literacies and print culture in political, radical, and cultural uprisings and liberation movements
- Radical, political, activist, and counter-cultural approaches to small press and independent publishing
- Alternate bibliographical and narrative forms—i.e. distributed and conditional documents (Drucker, 2014)
- Community, site, and identity-specific oppression of literacies and epistemic possibilities
- Institutionalization of literacy, issues of literacies access
- Systemic racism and power imbalances in information institutions
- Librarianship and collection development and management
- Critical and radical cataloguing, knowledge organization, and standardization practices
- Library collections as spaces of power, hegemonic social constructs, spaces of epistemic and identity violence, and resistance
- Critical, radical, or activist bibliographical and print culture pedagogies
- Professionalization, professional organizations, and continuing education models
- Preservation, conservation, and erasure

Abstract Submission and Publication Timeline

Interested contributors should send their **300-500 word** abstracts to Rob Montoya (montoya@gseis.ucla.edu) and Sean Pessin (sean.pessin@csun.edu) by **August 1, 2021**. Interested contributors are also free to email the editors for additional information.

Final contributions will be between **6000-8000 words**, including references and footnotes, and will be due to the editors by **April 1, 2022**. Essays will undergo double-blind peer review. The full editorial process will be complete by **July 30, 2022**, at which time the manuscript will proceed to press for a Fall 2022/Spring 2023 publication.

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