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**UCLA Department of Information Studies**

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**Doctoral Student Forum**

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**January 12, 2006**

1:00 - 4:00 pm with refreshments

Room 111, GSE&amp;IS Building.

**Featuring panel presentations of work done during the 2005 Information Studies research mentorship program.**

- o [Jesse H. Shera: A Historian of Librarianship - Stasa Milojevic](#)
- o ["Building" the Information Society: A Library-Centered Critical Theory of Technology - Ajit Pyati](#)
- o [A CRITICAL Discussion: An introduction of Critical Race Information Theory \(CRIT\) - Anthony W. Dunbar \(Tony\)](#)
- o [Beyond the Paper Paradigm, Toward a Full Archival Descriptive Standard: Extending and Modifying Archival Description to Accommodate Electronic Records - Lori Lindberg](#)
- o [Giving Voice to the Voiceless: Comic Strips as Evidence of Various Discourses in the African American Community \(1930-1950\) - Kelvin L. White](#)

**Jesse H. Shera: A Historian of Librarianship***Stasa Milojevic*

Jesse H. Shera (1903-1982) is often considered to be a single most influential theorist of library science. Although not widely known or recognized for his historical work, Shera's *Foundations of the Public Library* is a "citation classic" for anyone interested in history of public libraries in America. It was one of the first works to depart from the celebratory view of the libraries, and instead use methods of what has been known as a "new history", or what we now call social history. Shera was a pioneer of a new library history, synthesizing and analyzing historical material and events, rather than just chronicling them. In his early period, Shera wrote about the history, American library history and the history of librarianship. Although his ideas evolved and changed over time, throughout his career Shera kept a strong faith in the importance of history to all aspects of librarianship and serious scholarship. For Shera, history and theory of librarianship fed off each other. This can be summarized in his view that in order to write good histories we need well defined concepts, but in order to define concepts we need a historical perspective. The talk will focus on Shera as a historian of libraries and librarianship, and how the radical changes that librarianship experienced during Shera's career influenced his views. Today, this facet of Shera's work is often times neglected, yet it was evidently important to Shera himself, and it is especially significant in the study of the history of library and information science.

**BIOGRAPHY: Stasa Milojevic** is a Ph.D. student in Information Studies at UCLA. She also holds MLIS from Kent State University (2001), where she was a recipient of Jesse H. Shera Memorial Award, awarded to a student who maintains an excellent academic record and demonstrates potential for future scholarly research and publication. She got her B.A. in English Language and Literature from the University of Belgrade. Her professional experience includes working as a librarian in academic, government, corporate and public libraries for 9 years.

**"Building" the Information Society:  
A Library-Centered Critical Theory of Technology***Ajit Pyati*

The public discourse of libraries is aligning libraries with the development of a global information society. Critics of the information society concept and policies, however, see the information society as an extension of neo-liberalism and policies of deregulation and privatization. This research study builds upon these critiques of the information society, arguing that a global information society may serve to undermine library service goals and accelerate processes of information commoditization and the privatization of library services. Countering these ideologies and policy goals requires developing adequate theories and modes of action. This study proposes critical theory of technology as a way for libraries to become active shapers of technology and developers of alternative, progressive visions of an information society. Using a case-study approach, this new theoretical framework is explored in the context of open source software development, specifically

with regard to the innovative open source software initiatives of an academic library in British Columbia, Canada. This library is selected because of its unique pioneering efforts in the development of open source software for its wider library and academic community. This case study will help in exploring, defining, and developing a library-centered critical theory of technology.

**BIOGRAPHY: Ajit Pyati** is a second-year doctoral student in UCLA's Department of Information Studies. He received his MLIS degree from the same department in 2004. Pyati's general research is in the area of information equity. Within this area, he is interested specifically in discourses of the information society, ICTs and international development, technology studies, and the uses of critical theory, postcolonial theory and other critical frameworks in expanding the disciplinary scope of information studies. His current doctoral dissertation research focuses on the development of critical theoretical frameworks to guide progressive technological development in libraries.

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**A CRITICAL Discussion:  
An introduction of Critical Race Information Theory (CRIT)**

*Anthony W. Dunbar (Tony)*

This presentation is an introduction of an original concept to the information studies discourse. While critical race frameworks are not new developments in academia, conversely, its application to the research, pedagogy and practice within the information domains can be considered an innovative endeavor. Thus, a critical race information theory (CRIT) is grounded in the notion that every aspect of information, the form, use, structure, and infrastructure reflect and represent the beliefs, values, practices, and politics of our society. Such representation is both explicit and implicit in nature. The discussions, however, of how these dynamics affect individuals and groups that are traditionally positioned in society as marginalized or disenfranchised are underdeveloped. There have been peripheral discussions addressing this void within the information discourse. Yet, such discussions have not fully addressed the current empirical limitations and possible exclusion of those often distanced from the nucleus of social relevance within the ever-evolving information discourse; nor have these discussions confronted the inequities of identity development of disenfranchised populations within the study of information. Thus, the suggestion is that a critical race information theory can serve as a means to cultivate a vital discourse missing from information study domains.

Among the assumptions of CRIT is that our society has embedded biases that promote the economic, political and social capital of some citizens over others. Additionally, these biases often play themselves out through information practice and institutions. The nature of these biases exists as both macro and micro dynamics within our society and CRIT serves as a vehicle to identify, discuss, research, and confront these dynamics. This brief presentation will not only layout the assumptions of this 'CRITical' framework but it will also discuss the significant terminology, overall objectives, historical lineage and research agenda involved in this endeavor, while also identifying the points of resistance to its development.

**BIOGRAPHY: Anthony W. Dunbar** is a doctoral student at the University of California, Los Angeles working under the direct supervision of Professor Anne J. Gilliland. UCLA Professor Daniel G. Solorzano nurtures his interest in Critical Race Theory. He holds a B.A in Communication, M.A. in Communication and Training, and a M.Ed. in Teaching and Learning. Currently, he is also the (2005-2006) Director of Communication for the UCLA Graduate Student Association, and a student representative on the Faculty Executive Committee for the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies (2004-2006).

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**Beyond the Paper Paradigm, Toward a Full Archival  
Descriptive Standard: Extending and Modifying Archival  
Description to Accommodate Electronic Records**

*Lori Lindberg*

Through the findings of the metadata schema analysis process developed as part of MADRAS and the InterPARES project, important and widely-utilized record-keeping descriptive standards such as EAD and ISAD(G) have been identified as lacking significant capability for the description and management of electronic records. As record-keeping systems and the records they manage

evolve from paper-based to predominantly electronic, a process already well underway in some communities, the concept of the archival fonds or the archival collection will need to be re-conceptualized. In turn, so will the descriptive standards used to control and provide access to these records. Archival description must extend its role and function by providing the means to contextualize, manage and preserve records, describe them, and ensure that the description supports and demonstrates their continued authenticity. This research presents are-conceptualization of archival arrangement and description based on entities, functions and business processes, affected by technical descriptive issues of original and altered technological context, argues that in order to remain viable over the long-term current descriptive standards should be modified to achieve such needed capability, and suggests modifications to the standards to achieve this purpose.

**BIOGRAPHY: Lori Lindberg** is a full-time lecturer in the archives specialization at San Jose State University's School of Library and Information Science and an archival consultant, having work relationships with entities large and small, including Bank of America, the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, California State Parks, and the State of California Department of

Industrial Relations. In addition to her teaching and consulting work, Lori is currently matriculating for the PhD in Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles, where her advisor is Dr. Anne J. Gilliland. She is a member of the Society of California Archivists, the Academy of Certified Archivists, the American Society for Information Science and Technology, and the Society of American Archivists.

Lori's research interests lie in archival informatics, metadata and metadata structures – specifically preservation metadata, metadata preservation, and the role of metadata in the long-term preservation of reliable and authentic electronic records. As part of her doctoral studies, Lori works as a graduate student researcher with the InterPARES 2 project

(<http://www.interpares.org>).

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**Giving Voice to the Voiceless: Comic Strips as Evidence of Various**

**Discourses in the African American Community (1930-1950)***Kelvin L. White*

**Abstract:** Due to imbalanced power relations and various restrictions placed on marginalized communities such as African Americans during the first half of the twentieth century, traditional mechanisms of producing, presenting, and deploying information were severely limited. Very few nationwide newspapers existed for African Americans during the 1930s and 40s. Opportunities to control and widely disseminate information considered significant to the African American community were squashed by Jim Crowism and perpetual economic unfairness. As such, the historical record—from what has been remembered to what has been collected by institutions—is, at best, uneven. Scholars looking to traditional records—legal proceedings, letters, diaries, newspaper articles—as primary sources may only walk away with one side of the story—those produced by entities created and maintained by privileged members of society. Thus, these types of records alone may not be sufficient means of uncovering, for example, the voices of the African American masses on topics that affected both them and the nation in which many never experienced their rights as full citizens; or how the black community renegotiated meanings of race, gender, identity, and nationhood. To generate a more accurate analysis, scholars need to look to alternative records, records created by the African American community, in whatever way the community chooses to record rather than ways generally expected by the privileged few. The black press provided a space for its community to redefine itself and shape a new black consciousness that would eventually lead to the modern civil rights movement of the 50s. This paper explores the use of comic strips published in the black press as alternative sources of evidence of social, political, and historical discourses occurring between dominant and subaltern publics developing during the late 1930s and early 40s in the United States. African American comic strips not only sought to provide entertainment, but also presented nonjudgmental prescriptions and blueprints for what life should be like for the community.

**Biography:** **Kelvin White** is a second-year PhD student in Information Studies at UCLA, where he works under the supervision of Dr. Anne Gilliland-Swetland. He also holds an MA in Afro-American Studies from UCLA and a BA in History from Texas Southern University. His research interests include comics as information, document interpretation, critical (information) theory, and collective memory.

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