

A zine catalogue accompanying the Decolonising the Arts Curriculum. Perspectives on Higher Education exhibition, LCC, 4-31st October 2018 by Jessica Anoché, Ruth Collingwood, Pascale Jordan, Monica-carmela Sajevo. All images © LCC Library

# Practice

Special Collections and Decolonisation

Second printing October 2018



1936 - 1938

## The Printing Historical Collection

ICC Library's Printing Historical Collection charts the history and art of the Western book, reflecting its physical, technical and aesthetic development from the 15th to 21st centuries. The foundations of the collection were laid in the 1960s. The collection is therefore historical and can be problematic in that representation of certain voices is higher in printing history and mainstream published works; namely, the voice of the white, middle-class, European male. Just as 'colonial perceptions and mindsets are embedded into the fabric of our institutional structures' (Hansika Jethnani, 2018, *Decolonising the Arts Curriculum* zine) so they are embedded within our library collections.

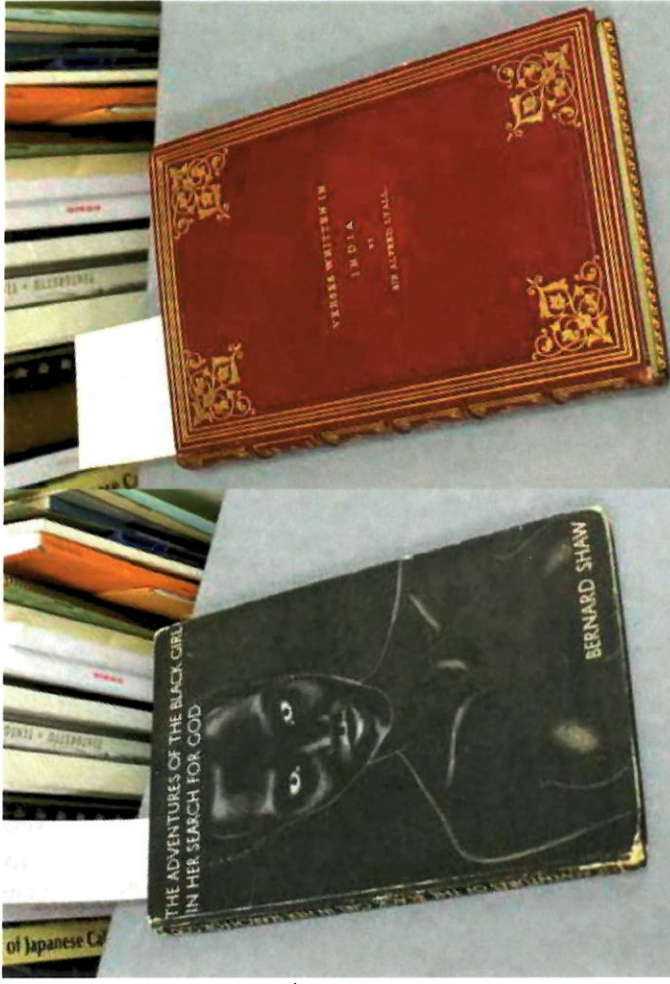
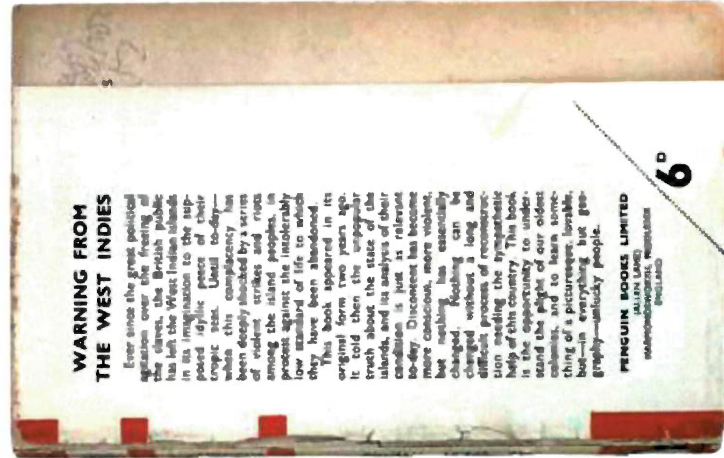
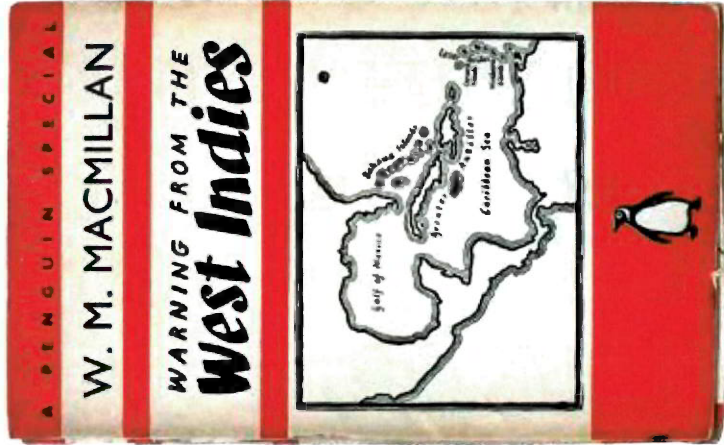
ICC special collection librarians seek to challenge these dominant voices, to recognise the multiple, systemic barriers and multiple forms of prejudice faced by those who sit outside of the dominant culture and the ways in which their voices have been erased or silenced in printing and publishing history. Decolonising collections is one part of a broader critical practice with which we aim to ensure collection development is as diverse and inclusive as possible. We are diversifying our collections to be inclusive of BAME voices, culturally diverse voices, international voices, women's voices, LGBTQ+ voices, working class voices...

'The project of decolonisation is less about seeking out authentic culture as such but more about the opening up of creative spaces to facilitate the production of culture informed by indigenous thinking and doing.'

Guram Singh, 2018

## Colonialism and its impact

Given the focus of the Printing Historical Collection, these books will primarily have been collected to demonstrate the changing processes of book production, rather than their content. Yet the items shown here reveal something else, our colonial past. Some provide evidence of dissenting voices which were critical of colonialism at the time, but most are the product of and therefore are unquestioning of colonialism.



## Diverse voices and cultural production

Over the past decade the practice of diversifying collections has in part been possible through the development of the artists' books and zine collections, allowing us to adopt more creative approaches to collection development.

The inclusion of alternative or underground publications ensures voices outside or against the mainstream are represented, allowing LCC's special collections to evolve to incorporate inclusivity and diversity. The zine collection contains zines that are varied in topic: class, sexual identity, gender and body politics, race, ethnicity and faith, mental health, and personal interest. The zines and artists' books shown here demonstrate 'the opening up of creative spaces to facilitate the production of culture' (Gurnam Singh, 2018, *Decolonising the Arts Curriculum* zine) and the empowerment of self-publishing.

Publishing is "an independent validation of one's own culture, history, and politics" ... (it) "implies autonomy and initiative – the validation of ourselves."

John La Rose (founder of New Beacon Books), 1969, quoted on OOMK website [http://oomk.net/blog/issue\\_2\\_deep\\_roots.html](http://oomk.net/blog/issue_2_deep_roots.html)



## Provocations

- 1 *Common Ground: Aspects of contemporary British Muslim experience* by Cooper, Clement; Dhanda, Suki; Jamil, Rehan; Piyasena, Sam; Amyandtanveer; British Council. Visual Arts Department: 2003  
Gregory GoogleUK  
  
Shelves of uncatalogued documents (books, artefacts, ephemera) are not an untypical occurrence behind the scenes in any library. At LCC library our uncatalogued documents have accumulated for a variety of reasons over the decades.  
*Common Ground* – a British Council 2003 'major photography exhibition, which attempts to explore the range and diversity of British Muslims' experience of life in the UK' – was recently 'found' in our uncatalogued items shelves having been there since 2003.  
Considering the fact that exhibitions for and of race and gender voices in the major art institutions are the exception – it has to be questioned why this important document was not catalogued and made accessible to students and staff at UAL for 15 years.



This is Whiteness: white privilege and white centring.

*Whiteness: Defined as a set of characteristics and experiences that are attached to the white race and white skin. In the US and European contexts, whiteness marks one as normal and the default. While people in other racial categories are perceived as and treated as 'other', whiteness comes with a wide variety of privileges. (SoN, 2018, p. 137)*

**Disclaimer:** Presenting and viewing this 'everyday event' through the Critical Race Theory lens acts as a provocation for dialogue within the library service and academic institution.

## References

- British Council (2003 ) *Common Ground: Aspects of Contemporary British Muslim Experience*. Available at: <http://visualarts.britishcouncil.org/exhibitions/exhibition/common-ground-aspects-of-contemporary-british-muslim-experience-2003>
- SoN ToR (2018) Peekaboo we see you whiteness. Available at: <https://shadesofnoir.org.uk/peekaboo-we-see-you-whiteness/>
- Reilly, M. (2011) *Toward a Curatorial Activism*. Available at: <http://www.maurareilly.com/pdf/essays/CIAFessay.pdf>

## Provocations

### 2 An African Folktale by Willow Legge: Circle Press 1979

Elphinstone Dayrell (1869–1917) was a British colonial administrator, was the district commissioner for Ikom in the South Eastern province of Nigeria when he ‘gathered the stories told to him by the local Efik Ibibio people’. ‘Dayrell’s collection of tales’ was published in 1910 as *Folk Stories from Southern Nigeria, West Africa* by Longmans, Green and Co. publishing company [1].

Approximately seventy years later Willow Legge (wife of Ron King from the Circle Press) found Dayrell’s story ‘Why the Sun and the Moon live in the Sky’ in the 1952 anthology: *African Folktales and Sculpture* by Paul Radin and designed by E. McKnight Kauffer [2]. An *African Folktale* is an adaptation of this Efik Ibibio traditional tale.

This is cultural misappropriation.

*Cultural misappropriation ... It's a place where one culture (most often one that has an historical record of oppressing other cultures: white) engages in the unauthorised taking/stealing of some aspects of another (most often an oppressed) culture without consent. But it doesn't end with just that primary format.* (SON, 2018)

Disclaimer: Documenting the historical record of this item held in the LCC library’s special collection acts as a provocation for dialogue within the academic institution.



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#### References

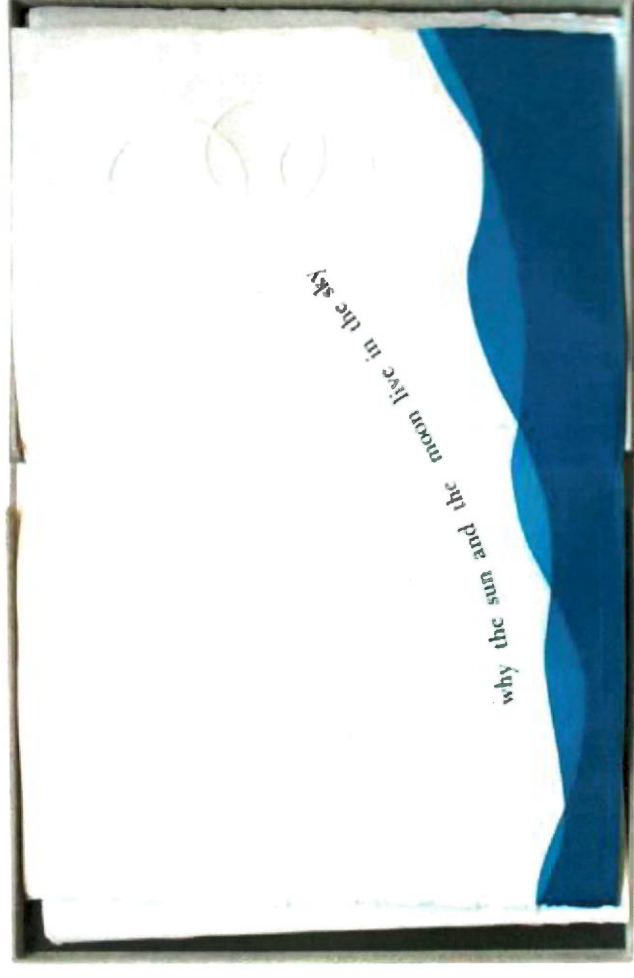
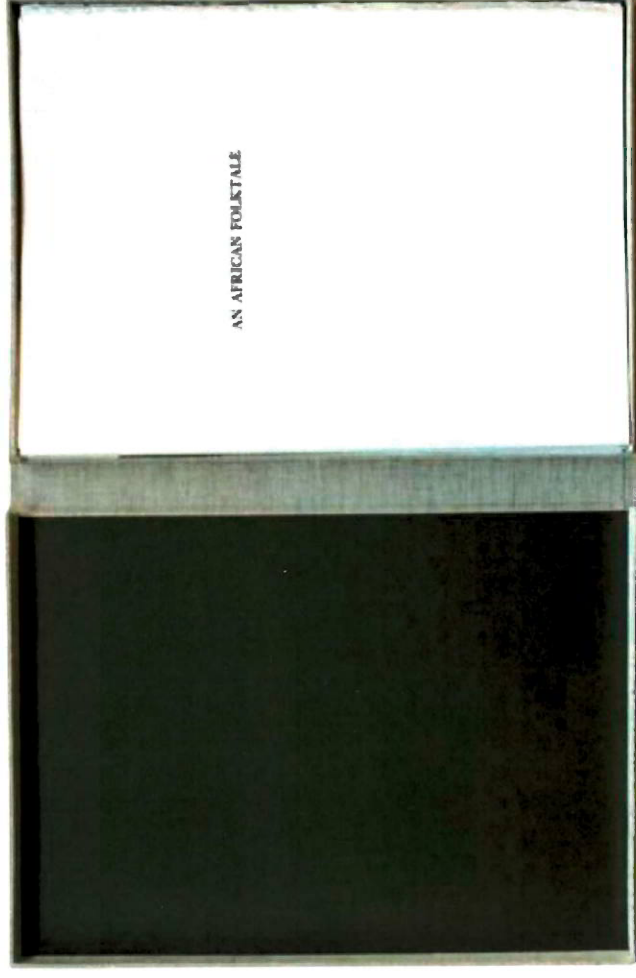
Fairytalez.com (2018) Elphinstone Dayrell. Available at: <https://fairytalez.com/author/elphinstone-dayrell/>

Krewinkel, B. (2015) Africa in the photobook. Available at: <https://africanthephotobook.com/2017/11/18/african-folktales-and-sculpture-1952/>

SoNAdmin (2017) Cultural appropriation and cultural misappropriation on your course? Available at : <https://shadesofnoir.org.uk/cultural-appropriation-and-cultural-misappropriation-on-your-course/>

Smithsonian Libraries (n.d.) Artists' books and Africa. Available at: <https://library.si.edu/exhibition/artists-books-and-africa/african-folktale-full>

Image 2 (Krewinkel, 2015)



- 3 A LCC Library Special Collections critical pedagogy proposal to highlight 'a hegemonic discourse that the current art and design system privileges: the European-white male' (Reilly, 2012, p. 12).

Working with the LCC Printing Historical Collection is a challenge because the collection and its character is not inclusive. Actively working with this teaching collection could be said to perpetuate the discriminatory narratives and ideals of the hegemony.

To inspire, experience and inform are the attributes of learning engagement that the special collection librarian uses to select and display documents from the collection. Yet despite our considered exhibition schedules the 'omnipotence' of the 'biased representation' often negates the function of any exhibition.

This proposal aims to shift the gaze of the collection from the hegemonic to the critical pedagogical by providing the means for students to question the documents exhibited and displayed. In turn, the teaching and learning function of the Printing Historical Collection is renewed for today's academy.

#### The proposal:

Add the following label when and where applicable to any item displayed and exhibited.

Disclaimer: Actively encouraging students to question and challenge the collections held in UAL libraries acts a provocation for dialogue between students and the library service.

#### References

- Friere, P. (1970) *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. London: Continuum.
- Reilly, M. (2011) *Toward a Curatorial Activism*. Available at: <http://www.maurareilly.com/pdf/essays/CIAFessay.pdf>

## European-White-Male

<p>The Printing Historical Collection</p>	<p>Diverse voices and cultural production</p>	<p>Bad Mouth &amp; Boileroom (2015) What is your activism? a workshop series</p>	<p>Eloisa Aquino (2014) Pajubá: the language of Brazilian travestis</p>
<p>Adelaide A. Procter (ed.) (1861) Victoria Regia, a Volume of Original Contributions in Poetry and Prose</p>	<p>Maria Lucia Cattani (2005) 4 cantos do mundo = 4 corners of the world = Heimshornin 4</p>	<p>Jacob V. Joyce (2014) White boys: a simple zine about white men</p>	<p>Proletarian gob (1995) White boys: a simple zine about white men</p>
<p>Provocations</p>	<p>Text in Portuguese, English, Icelandic and Japanese. Based on a work in four parts based in four public collections around the world</p>	<p>WOC zine collective (2017) WOC (Women of Color). #13, Presidential crisis.</p>	<p>Jacob V. Joyce (2017) QTIPOC Assemble!: Radical imaginations of queer, trans &amp; intersex people of colour. Volume one</p>
<p>Anyandtanveer [and eight others] (2003) Common ground: Aspects of contemporary British Muslim experience</p>	<p>Batool Showghi (2010) Birth certificate. Series 2</p>	<p>Charlotte Richardson Andrews (2013) Working class queers. Issue #1</p>	<p>Swazy (2014) Roadfemme. Issue 002, The black issue /</p>
<p>Willow Legge (1979) An African folktale</p>	<p>Sherley C. Olopherne (2014) Lesbian Herstory Archives</p>	<p>BORN N BREAD (date unknown) The Yard Chronicles</p>	<p>David Tremlett (1985) Rough ride: works made in Africa, Australia, Mexico</p>
<p>Colonialism and its impact</p>	<p>Sherley C. Olopherne (2014) Black Lesbians in the 80's @ Lesbian Herstory Archives</p>	<p>Melanie Santin (date unknown) You'll see it. Issue 1. [A juxtaposition of the traditional and modern - in Japan Photographs of Japan</p>	<p>Ms Dorothy Damage (2014) A short compendium of significant African-American hairstyles &amp; other related ephemera</p>
<p>W.H.D. Rouse &amp; Heath Robinson (1973) The grant crab, and other tales from Old India Adapted from tales from 'The Jataka' translated, in part, by W.H.D. Rouse</p>	<p>Sherley C. Olopherne (2014) Black Lesbians @ Lesbian Herstory Archives 2000-10</p>	<p>Grace Barber-Plentie [and six others] (2015) Zine Latifah / Grace Barber-Plentie [and six others]</p>	<p>Osa Atoe (2015) Shotgun Seamstress, No. 8,</p>
<p>Caspar van Baerle (1631) Casparis Barlei Poematum</p>	<p>Jacq Applebee (date unknown) Black like outer space</p>	<p>A zine about Queen Latifah made by contributors.</p>	<p>Megan Pickering (2016) Silenced Feminism: inspired by Spare Rib</p>
<p>Sir Alfred Lyall (1889) Verses written in India</p>	<p>Jacq Applebee (date unknown) A blaze of candles on my cake: growing old when you're bisexual, black and disabled</p>	<p>Zine-making</p>	<p>Anuradha Henriques &amp; Lina Abushouk (eds) (2015) Skin deep. Issue 3, March 2015, Terrorising the masses</p>
<p>Bernard Shaw (1935) The adventures of the black girl in her search for God</p>	<p>Naomi Moyer (2015) Black women &amp; self-care: thoughts on mental health, oppression &amp; healing</p>	<p>Anonymous (date unknown) How to make zines and why</p>	<p>Yasuo Kume (1980) Tesuki washi shuho: Fine handmade papers of Japan / Vol. I</p>
<p>W. M. Macmillian (1938) Warning from the West</p>	<p>Night Pong (2014) A brief foray into Japanese psych music</p>	<p>Melanie Maddison (2010) Taking cultural production into our own hands</p>	<p>Renato (2010) Tijolada cónciso 6 Brazilian punk fanzine</p>
<p>Indies: a tract for the Empire</p>	<p>Seleena Laverne Daye (2014) Brown girl</p>	<p>Sarah (2007) Zine making: an introduction</p>	<p>BORN N BREAD (2017) WERK: Work experience real knowledge</p>
<p>Norman Angell &amp; Dorothy Frances Buxton (1939) You and the refugee: the morals and economics of the problem</p>	<p>Seleena Laverne Daye. (2015) Brown girls. 2</p>	<p>DIY Diaspora Punx (2017) What it's like to be a punk of colour: a zine to accompany the first ever Decolonise-Fest /</p>	<p>DIY Diaspora Punx (2017) What it's like to be a punk of colour: a zine to accompany the first ever Decolonise-Fest /</p>
<p>V.G. Calderon (1938) The white llama: being La Venganza del Condor / now translated into English for the first time by Richard Phibbs: engravings by Clifford Webb</p>	<p>Miho (1985) China =: (Chung-kuo) Kromekote opens up a whole new world.</p>	<p>Playlist</p>	<p>Seleena Laverne Daye &amp; Em Ledger (2015) Poor lass. No. 7. The race issue.</p>
<p>Ms. Frizz (2002) Made with tender loving care. 1</p>	<p>Ms. Frizz (2002) Made with tender loving care. 1</p>	<p>Decolonising the Arts Curriculum Playlist, Spotify profile: LCC Library Special Collection</p>	<p>Seleena Laverne Daye &amp; Em Ledger (2015) Poor lass. Health issue</p>
<p>C.A. Burland (1953) Magic books from Mexico</p>	<p>C.A. Burland (1953) Magic books from Mexico</p>		
<p>Conversations about our hair</p>	<p>Conversations about our hair</p>		