



# The **Ambivalence** of Librarianship, the Pipeline, and Pathways for BIPOC

Kenya Flash, Tarida Anantachai, Camille Chesley,  
& Jamia Williams

# Outline

01



Positionality

02



General Introduction

03



Ambivalence About the Pipeline Discussion

04



Librarianship As A Plantation Discussion





# Positionality

Each of the members of this roundtable are former residents and have engaged in DEI initiatives

Each of these librarians work for principally white organizations



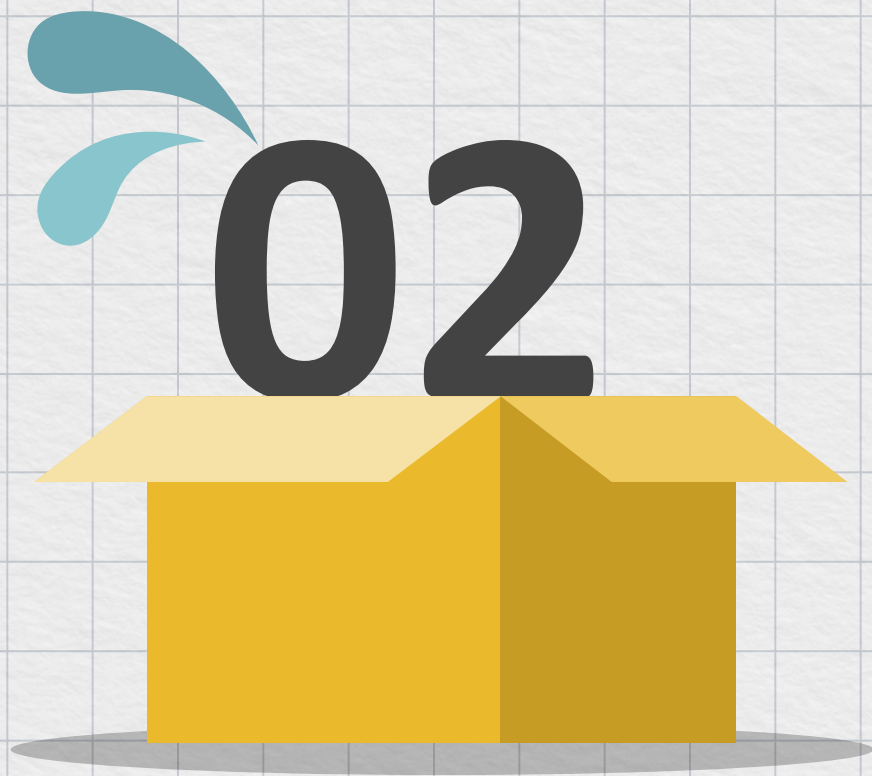


# General Introduction

House Rules

Major Themes

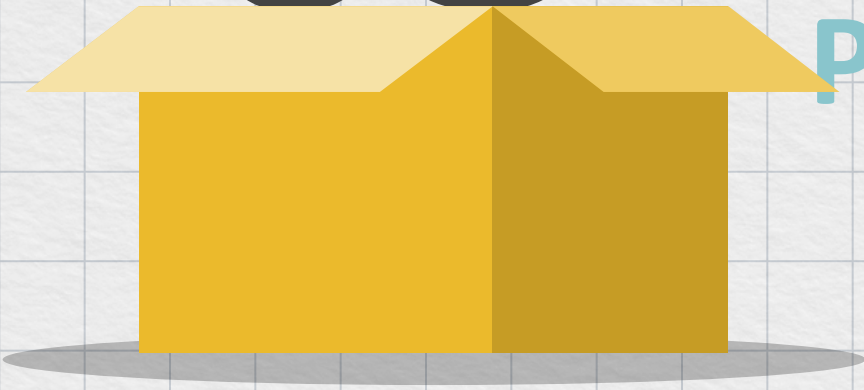
Definitions







03

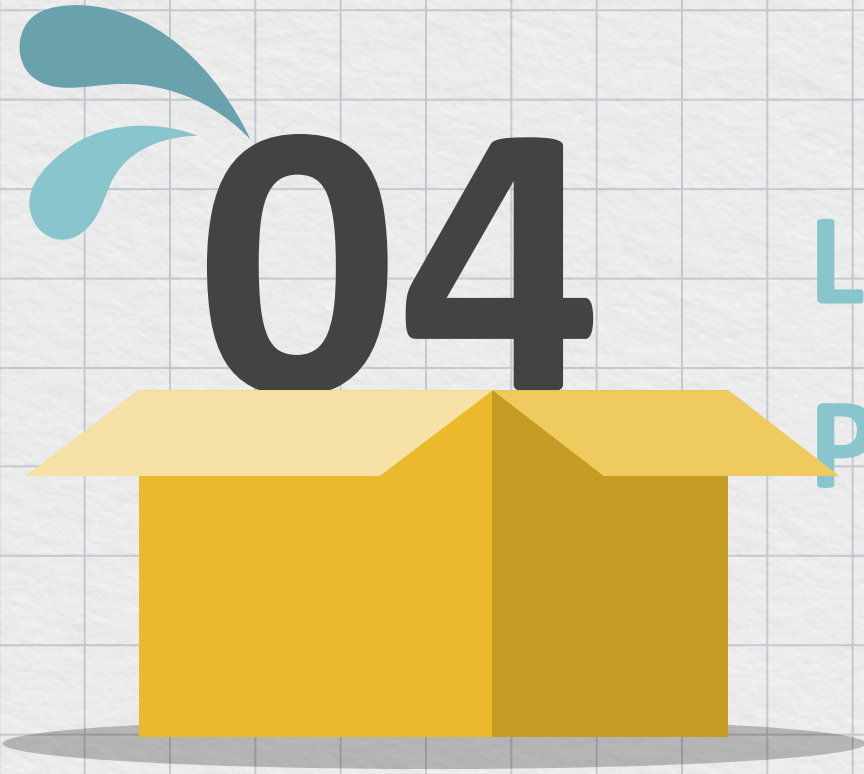


# Ambivalence about the Pipeline

## Discussion Questions

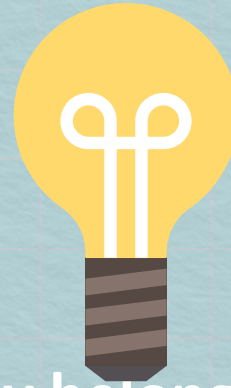
- How can we advocate for change through the pipeline?
- What would it look like if cultural humility was the nexus of thought around hiring within Librarianship, as opposed to the commodification of BIPOC to fulfill the diversity aspirations of institutions?
- How can we challenge the deficit thinking inherent in the pipeline?





# Librarianship As A Plantation





We are reminded that we don't truly belong in the manor as other than **“the help,”** meant to serve the masters' and missuses' agenda for lip service diversity and feel-good neoliberal multiculturalism. But we aren't meant to bring our true selves, our perspectives, our experiences, our feelings, and certainly not our critiques, into the sacred space of the owners' house. And many of us often find our invitations to enter and serve are temporary and precarious: they're happy to have us in a **“special program”** for a year or two, but we're never meant to stay.



— April Hathcock



## Discussion Questions

- Is abolishing the pipeline feasible? What would abolishment look like? What would this do to the field?
- Enduring residencies will allow people to survive and eventually build the life we want - is it worth it?
- The narrative is that libraries can't diversify without these initiatives - how can we challenge this narrative?



## Discussion Questions

- One expectation that library achievement culture has for POC Librarians in the pipeline is that POC librarians are expected to be phenomenal to get along, be palatable, and be professional. Do you feel this contributed to your success because of this or in spite of? How do institutions frame their success?
- Is the sponsored mobility model system designed to promote an uncritical deference to the dominant culture that is predicated on whiteness? If so, how can we design a system that de-emphasizes sponsorship and centers BIPOC experiences?
- Does the inherent pay-imbalance, the position precarity, overt surveillance and paternalism within many residencies lead to a more subservient role for residents? And/or does it have career implications?





# Thank you!

We appreciate your participation

Kenya Flash

Tarida Anantachai

Camille Chesley

Jamia Williams