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An Archive for the People

An Interview with Rasheedah Phillips

Julian C. Chambliss, *Michigan State University* 

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You can listen to this interview on the [Scholarly Editing website](#).



Rasheedah Phillips

Housing advocate, lawyer, writer, interdisciplinary artist, and cultural producer Rasheedah Phillips connects housing justice, archival practice, and community futurisms through her work. Phillips investigates time, memory, and Black futurist methods of community survival through web-based initiatives, zines, cinema, speculative fiction, printmaking, performance, installation, and social practice. In addition to co-founding Black Quantum Futurism and founding The AfroFuturist Affair, she helped establish the Community Futures Lab, a socially conscious art and research initiative that addresses memory, displacement, redevelopment, and preservation. As the former Director

of Housing Futures and Land Justice at PolicyLink, she advocated for land-use, housing, and tenant rights. Her book *Dismantling the Master's Clock: On Race, Space and Time* (2025) explores how our perceptions of time are built on colonial ideas and how engaging with Afrodiasporic concepts of time supports a liberatory vision. Phillips served as a Vera List Center for Art and Politics Fellow from 2020 to 2022, during which she developed *Time Zone Protocols*, a project exploring the agreements, protocols, and rules underlying Westernized time constructs. Using Afrofuturist theories, Phillips analyzed the "Protocol Proceedings" developed at the 1884 International Meridian Conference held in Washington, D.C., situating the international and U.S. time zones within a social and political context that highlights questions of access and agency. Readers of *Scholarly Editing* should be intrigued by how Phillips reimagines archives, empowers community, and challenges institutional practice. Phillips shows how archives can be used as instruments for collective memory, policy action, and community self-determination.

Julian Chambliss: Alright. Rasheedah, in the past, especially in the context of your work, you've spoken about the importance of Octavia Butler, shaping your vision of Black futures. Could you talk a little about what that means, in particular around questions of memory, community, and action, and how that has sort of shaped your approach to your work?

Rasheedah Phillips: Yeah, absolutely. So I guess I'll start by naming that Octavia Butler's work *Kindred* in particular, was really transformative for me. Going back to childhood, I've loved science fiction, but by the time I was in college, I had really distanced myself from it because I rarely saw reflections of myself in terms of blackness, queerness, anything that reflected my own personal identities. And in college, I had been given frameworks and language to start to interrogate what those absences were. So, I was taking classes, like Black Philosophy and Black Womanhood that was just like, okay, my eyes are open to, like, the absence of myself in these worlds that I've always enjoyed. And then I had a friend give me a copy of *Kindred* and it was just really like a revelation, as most people who feel when they encounter her—Octavia Butler's—work for the first time. So this was a time travel story that was really unlike any of the ones that I grew up on.

One that centered a young Black woman whose body itself became that conduit for time travel and where survival and memory persevere, not just because of her lineage, but because of the possibilities of community across time. And so rather than, like, focusing on paradoxes or machines—which are also really fun and I really enjoy that kind of time travel as well, but—her narrative was really about how history lives in the body, how it lives in family, how it lives in relationships, and about the kind of actions that are required to preserve those connections, particularly in the face of systemic erasure. So that was really foundational for me, and it really showed me the ways that memory and community are not just, like, subjects of speculative fiction, but they're really truly technologies for surviving the sort of timelines that we find ourselves on as Black people. And so that really shaped my own trajectory.

It gave me the confidence that I needed to found the Afrofuturist Affair, which was my first community-based experiment in practicing time travel through art and performance and being in community and archiving. And then later co-founding Black Quantum Futurism with my partner, Camae, and we just literally translated Octavia Butler's lessons and the nonlinear temporalities that one finds in her work, into sound and space and community tools. One of our first projects as Black Quantum Futurism was a sound project called "Constellation Eight," which sampled her novels into these, like, layered audio collages. And that was really a direct attempt to sonically render some of the ways that she treats time as recursive and multiple. And so that became a blueprint for how we work together today in the present Black Quantum Futurism. The album came out over 10 years ago. That's just an example of how we try to treat memory as material and community as a form of archive.

Yeah, a lot of that is inspired by her work.

Julian Chambliss: I really appreciate that answer. And I've always looked to your work in the way that you kind of make Octavia Butler's writing a kind of blueprint for a lot of action. And other people over the years have joined in that conversation. I think for the readers of *Scholarly Editing*, which is, you know, a publication for the Association for Documentary Editing, they'd be really intrigued about the way that your work has always shown a concern about how we might imagine the archive as a space of existence. And I wonder what you would say, what do people need to do inside and outside of our institutions to understand ways they could create archives or recreate archives as a way to resist erasure? Like, what does that mean from your perspective?

Rasheedah Phillips: It's a nuanced answer, but I think, ultimately, it's about treating the archive very differently than we have. In Western culture, we think about the archive as something that is, you know, if it's documenting history, it's definitely fixed in time and it has these sort of fixed definitions and it operates on linear timelines. And I think those kinds of archives are, again, they're usually built on a historical record, and we as Black people have been positioned outside of that record, right? So it gets really complicated. We're positioned as people who don't belong-either we don't belong or we're seriously behind on the timeline of progress. For us to archive can't just be about preserving the past. That past isn't necessarily meant for us. And so I think about the archive as rememory, as something that can disrupt time, about something that creates portals to the sort of futures that we've been denied.

So I think about the archive, not just as historical record, but as future record, as it can hold future record, it can hold these sort of nonlinear relationships to time. And I think there's ways to trouble it, to question what counts as evidence, to sort of create our own records. I think speculation plays a huge role in that, particularly for people who have been cut off from time, cut off from our histories, particularly due to enslavement. Speculation plays a huge role in how I think about archiving or think about reconnecting back to family histories that I don't, you know, have sort of everyday access to or material access to. And then that can also allow the archive to shift from being something that's housed only in institutions like universities and museums to something that can be more organic and community-based and dynamic. And that's how we have tended to think about archives.

Like, typically, when you're thinking about archives in a Western sense, it's this notion of trust and paternalism that goes into it. Like, who is the authority to hold the archive, who can hold it you know, carefully without putting a fingerprint on it and all these sorts of things? But how can we house our histories and our futures in our own communities, in the community organization that's down the street that you know, maybe there's a leak in their ceiling, but, right, they're going to hold onto those things as long as they can? And so also housing these things that aren't, in my practice, maybe aren't legible to certain people, you know, *Jet* magazines, those kinds of things, those old things that-maybe there's a collection in the Schomburg, but a lot of people aren't necessarily archiving or holding onto those things because, again, they've been told that there's only a particular way that you can archive or you can hold that record.

So yeah, so I think basically to trouble these things and what Afrofuturism and Black futurism offer us is just that sole possibility of someone other than the institution being that carrier of our archives, that carrier of our histories and our memories. And I think an Afrofuturist approach demands that they open up and that they recognize that nonlinear relationship and possibility. In our work, we have a project called "Project Time Capsule" that's thinking about how we in the present reach back to add to the historical record and add and be in touch directly with the past and with our ancestors and give them information that they can then use to survive or create technologies. So just rethinking that linear relationship or even that physical tangible one that has to be legible in this particular way.

Julian Chambliss: I think for a lot of people, they will think of Afrofuturism as a literary movement or they'll think of, like, Black Panther as a sort of an aesthetic, but a lot of your work, in an essential way, sort of talks about Afrofuturism, it's like a lived practice that people can do every day. And I wonder, especially in the context of what you just said about thinking differently about what an archive can be. And again, I think about this in the context of the readership of this journal who are people who work with very traditional-some of them-are people who work with very traditional kinds of things, papers. They work with the recollection of institutions. They are working within a system where whatever comes in has to go through a process to be made at some level, for lack of a better term, legible. And so there's, I think, an inherent challenge to what you just said, because you're saying to the people who sort of run the archive, "you have to think about a totally different set of things as archives," which is not to say they have not done that in the past.

Obviously, given our technological evolution over the last 50 years, things that were not in the archive 60 years ago are a really important part of the archive and a whole set of conversations about preservation, stabilization, and pushing on things forward. But it's also true, perhaps less clearly, that on the community side, there's a conversation that has to be had about how are we approaching the archive? Like, what are we doing to remember? I wonder if you could talk a little bit about what does the community, from your perspective, the people outside the institution, what do they need to do to remember?

Rasheedah Phillips: Yeah, that's such a good question. And I think the answer shifts depending on the community and depending on what the community needs and wants to remember and how that remembrance contributes to that community being able to continue and being able to move forward in whatever sense that community needs to. I think about all of the communities that have been harmed by a certain kind of violence and how, according to the official archive--like, let's just take Tulsa, for example, how the people in that community did not know what had happened to their ancestors for many decades because of the level of silence that was around it, right? Not only just the level of silence within official archives and the official story, but the pain and the trauma that needed to be unlocked in a very careful, particular way that, you know, it couldn't be passed down even in a way that we think of in oral traditions.

It had to be unlocked at a certain time when people were able to hold the level of trauma, and then the action that needed to happen to gain restitution or reparation for some of the things that had happened. And so, I think it really depends on the community, and it really depends on what is the infrastructure, what's the level of care that can be put into that. And that is not a question that an outsider can or should answer, in my opinion, right. And so yeah, this may be challenging to say, but I think opening up who we consider to be an archivist and who gets that official designation is part of the answer to that. And again, that communities should have the level of autonomy to care for their archives in a way that they think is best, even if that means forgetting, even if that means we're not ready to encounter these memories, like, that should be okay.

These things shouldn't be forced on people, in my opinion. So yeah, that's kind of how I think about it. And also, it's back to this question of legibility. I think we can also, even as people who think expansively about this, be indoctrinated into thinking that things have to be tangible, be visible in this particular way. And I think archives can contribute to that, right? Like that there has to be a thing there that we can all see and understand, but that archiving and passing down of memory can also be this thing that is totally nonphysical, totally about language, about words, about certain kinds of sound that trigger ancestral memory that you can connect it back to that. And it's like, how do you, without a mediating technology, hold a sound or archive a sound, archive particular words, particular way that you say it and a particular context that you say it in.

Just like, writing that down doesn't do the thing. That's for me what the living piece of it is, is that—And that defies time. Again, when we archive something and we put it into a box or put it into a physical medium that can be revived, we're in some ways flattening it as a living thing. We're concretizing it in some way. And I think that there are ways to let things live that culture today doesn't quite align with that, like the rush to document everything, to sort of like prove to each other that a thing happened. I understand it, but I think if we're truly talking about challenging what an archive is and what its possibility is, we have to be thinking about the intangible as a form of archiving.

Julian Chambliss: Yeah. I think that makes a lot of sense given the nature of a lot of your work. And I think for our readers, it will be interesting to sort of hear you reflect on a consistent sort of strand in your thinking and work [that] has talked about the master's map and the master's clock, like time and space, and underscored at some level the kind of repetitive damage—these are my words, not necessarily your words—associated with the institutional record, which is a really complicated set of conversations that I have with students because, of course, the record itself doesn't like nod like in a movie, "I'm the bad guy," it just sort of exists as a record. And you have to, especially from the perspective of communities that are affected by it, articulate the nature of the injury in a very particular way. At the same time, I think one of the things that also undergirds your work is a belief at some very basic level that better structures can be made, not just simply that this structure sucks, but there are also better structures that can be made.

And so how you navigate that constant struggle to make clear the nature of these sort of epistemologies that are grounded in a very particular kind of remembering, erasure, misremembering, displacement, lots of words I could rattle off, but at the same time say, "hey, we can make other systems" and also recognize, which I think you often do, the current infrastructure that our system rests on has to be transformed. Like, that's a big arc that involves a lot of institutional, individual, governmental, third dimension, who knows kind of interventions. And I wonder, how do you navigate that from a practical standard? Like, that's an everyday set of questions that doesn't seem to have an easy answer.

Rasheedah Phillips: Yeah, I would definitely agree. I think those things that you named don't lend themselves to a neat sequence or order of things or linearity, if you will, in terms of how you approach them and that they require community. I mean, that is why I am so much about community. And I don't romanticize community as like, "oh, there's this perfect set of people out there who, you know, can activate the will of the people." I don't think of it that way. I think there's a lot of tension, a lot of struggle that comes with community. Being a part of community, choosing to be in it with community comes with a lot, but it is necessary to do all those things, to transform all those things because there are so many different parts of it. One of the places where I think it does start is just by naming these things, naming what these things are, naming the master's tools for what they are, unsettling the basic level of objectivity that we have when we look, or that we perceive when we look at a clock or a map. Understanding these things to be instruments of control, understanding the ways in which these things, that the everyday things, the watch that's on our wrist, the clock that's on our wall, how they are tied to the bigger things around colonial timelines, colonial geographies, being able to talk about and do a deep dive research on the Prime Meridian Conference where the standard time zones around the globe were set, right?

That certainly, if you are thinking about it and making those connections can upset your notion of the clock as a neutral item just measuring time. So, I think for me, that's where a lot of it starts, is just naming that truth behind it, that simple truth that can be buried by the level of objectivity that we are forced into to be a part of this society that we're in. You know, when I think about dismantling, a piece of that is refusing that authority. So being able to not just say the record's wrong, but utilizing the tools, even if it is the master's tools that we have to flip and subvert, but using it to challenge the record, using it to question standardized time, using it to trouble institutional archives and add into the story. And again, even if it is speculation, there's so much value in that.

And then, you know, then when it comes to building the structures and transforming the structures, I don't believe everything has to be made anew because none of these things are new. And actually, these things have been manipulated. A thing that could be served as a positive tool, like a clock, have been manipulated in bad ways, so I don't think we need to rebuild a whole new. I think clock time has a utility, but it has to be agreed upon by a community. It can't be a globalized thing coming down on high that, you know, flattens all of us into one timeline. I don't think every structure needs to be rebuilt anew. I think we can take what is already existing, subvert them, reclaim them, reuse them in new ways and different ways that honor our own temporalities and spatialities and in ways that we want to move forward within our communities, whatever we call community.

Julian Chambliss: You know, that's a really powerful answer, especially in light of the moment that we're in related to technology and innovation. And this is where both our readership at the journal and the people who follow you will be really interested in your take on AI and the sort of overarching narrative related to that. I think there are lots of different questions that might be asked of someone like you, and then particularly you, because you are so sensitive to the nature of, like, these sort of built-in structure that place or erase or manipulate. But from your perspective, how do you see generative AI intersecting with, or possibly disrupting, the kinds of practices that are already established? Right? Like, is there a way to leverage these tools for something good to sort of create a kind of Black time practice that makes sense to you. But also, you know, given the nature of the rapid transformation that we've already seen in a very short period of time, what is your fear for the way that the community vision or community archive, the sort of stories that we tell about ourselves, might be distorted in AI in new and perhaps more sinister ways?

And so, I'm curious, is there a positive path forward represented by the instability that we're in, from your perspective, if we can act? On the other hand, what are the things that we need to be concerned with given what we know?

Rasheedah Phillips: Yeah, great question. I mean, I think you've already named what I feel around... I have a sense of double consciousness around AI. On the one hand, it's deeply problematic for some of the reasons that you name. It's built on extraction. It is theft of work, all types of copyright violations, drains community resources, literally, in terms of, like, water and energy. We're seeing it actively pollute communities and in doing so, it's reproducing colonial logics, right? It's reproducing that logic of theft, taking without consent. And for Black time practices and community archives that are already fighting erasure, this extraction is just another very dangerous form of dispossession. Certainly "sinister," I think is the right word. But on the other hand, right, I can't ignore its potential. I think in a way, AI replicates that collective intelligence. It, you know, It's similar in a way that the internet does, but it takes it a step further.

Like it can gather these fragments across time and scale and sort of mold it into a kind of collective unconscious, even if it is sort of artificial in a sense. And that is troubling when it's done unethically, but I think it also reveals other ways of thinking about knowledge outside of Western copyright and ownership. And I like that potential. Even as a person who's like written a book and sometimes I feel some type of way about citations and copyright, if I'm thinking about the logics of ownership and copyright outside of the Western tradition, I think it actually more mimics what AI is doing and what is possible for collective knowledge, but only if we can find an ethical way to do that. And I think it also, like, offers a repository of imagination that if we steward it differently, it could align with some of our Black traditions of shared memory and remix and oral circulation.

I see the potential, I see, you know, a way to harness it, but I don't know if we're too far down the road to be able to reclaim it. I like to think not, but I think it's done so much harm and how the public perceives it, we may be too far down the road to really be able to utilize the power and the potential of it, so...

Julian Chambliss: I'm curious about one of the things you mentioned there, because I think one of the things that, especially for the readership of *Scholarly Editing*, is that we're actively trying to bring into focus a more global sense of the archive and the documentary record. And you mentioned there's a way that AI might better mimic patterns that we see in non-Western contexts. And can you talk a little bit more about if you were to imagine an AI kinda doing what you wanted to do on a large scale, what would that look like and how would that change the sort of practices that people understand? Because I think one of the things about this particular moment, you're not the only one who thinks, "has this horse left the barn, so to speak? Are we too far down that rabbit hole?" And I think part of the reason we think that is because we never get to hear anything else.

It's so hard to separate our fear and other people's longing from the technology that I'd love for you to sort of talk and imagine like, "hey, this is what I would like to see AI do and why that's important" because I think that's an important jumping-off point for a potential intervention in practice, right, if we can understand what you're meaning by that.

Rasheedah Phillips: Mmm, this is an interesting question. I haven't quite ever tried to imagine it. I think part of what I appreciate about it is that, and why I kind of see it as mimicking sort of a collective unconsciousness is the speed at which it can return information and not just, like, return information, but crafted into something that is coherent and responsive and mimics thinking. It's too deep to go into, like, "is it thinking or not?" I don't think it's thinking in the way that we think, but it's doing something that resembles that and it's doing it at the speed in which we perceive it very quickly. And I think if we could like, mimic that, but have a way that it's connected more deeply to being able to trace and not just hallucinate the source of things, because I think that's part of the issue too, is that, like, it makes up stuff.

Again, beholden to Western citation practices, there has to be a happy medium. When I think about that, I think about how we do it in law really is, it is encouraged that you copy, like, no citation, right, like, because you couldn't get anything done if everything that you were doing as a lawyer was original in some way. So you were perfectly encouraged to copy templates. I was using templates from the 1960s that somebody used and to, like, perfect them, but you don't need to credit this particular person. It's understood that that information is being passed down and that you build on that information. And even when it comes to writing memos or writing papers, you're not like, "this was authored by such and such," right. Like, the lawyer whose name goes on it may not be the lawyer who wrote it. So, just that sharing of information. And I think also very parallel in the scientific community.

You have your rockstar scientists who stick out, but for the most part, like, folks aren't in it to get credit. They're like building out a body of knowledge that can be tapped into for you know, years to come, forever, and it continues to build. That's why you only know a handful of scientists' names because that's not, you know, that's not really the trajectory. These things already exist in the world. We don't have to necessarily, again, build anything new, but we can perfect AI to be more ethical and to incorporate these sorts of things that can actually do the work. And I've seen memes about it like, "I've wanted AI to help me wash dishes so that I could do more thinking," right. Like, if there's more utility to it, which I think it actually does have a lot of utility, but a lot of it is just based on public perception and narrative in terms of what's going to be possible for it because if people don't want to improve on it because it's seen as unethical and you're seen as a pariah if you're using it, I don't know, that potential could be squandered.

Julian Chambliss: Well, you mentioned your legal training, and I think for the readers, they will garner from your introduction to this interview that you are a lawyer and you're a housing advocate and you have a long career and an organization called PolicyLink that is dedicated to these questions. And I've noted over the years looking at your work that one of the things that ironically has been very powerful is imagination. It's a kind of critical imagination that intervenes in a particular set of practices, and also being able to translate the kind of lived experience of the people you're advocating for into a set of, at some level, actions that they can take to transform their situation. You know, as we sort of look at our current set of circumstances where perhaps two fundamental things are under attack: one, the rule of law and what we mean when we say that, and the validity of the archive, meaning what was supposedly safe is no longer, especially for a readership that are in many ways, I would argue, directly connected to both that sort of legal, like, who are the papers that, the papers of judges, the papers of government, the papers of this and that, and what institutions and legal cases, and very strong kinds of archival identities associated with these things.

What would you tell these sorts of traditional institutional actors as a person who's been operating at some level as their own nonprofit, very rooted in a grassroots effort to empower people? I would make an argument at some level, almost everyone's got to learn from someone like you now if they want to, sort of, like, be able to find an impact. And I don't mean that to be joking. I mean, if you think about the nature of structures and how much they have decayed, what can they learn from the work of an organization like PolicyLink? What can they learn from a grassroots organization dedicated to the work that you have done so many years?

Rasheedah Phillips: Your observations around our archive and law... we're seeing these things being dismantled severely and quickly. And I think it tells us a lot. And I think part of it is the danger of what I talked about earlier, which is that archives being in control of state-backed institutions and us relying on them to hold our memory. So, whether it's the Library of Congress or your local museum, the level of authority and power that they have taken to be able to hold our things, this was always the natural result of that. This was always going to be the outcome of digitally archiving Black oral histories and photos in a place where a White supremacist can push a button and erase all of that. Right? Like, this was always going to be the outcome when technology and the state mediate memory. And I think the same for law. For me as an attorney, it is very, very interesting.

Right, like, not in a, "I'm sitting back delighted way," but it's very interesting to see how the law can be just dismantled, how it can become easily speculative, how it can become fiction depending on who is in power and who's making the judgment. We see the Supreme Court dismantling things left and right that we as a civil society have said, "hey, these are the things that we need to be civil and for us to thrive as a country," right. Like they're just, with a check mark, tearing it all apart. So, for me, it always has been that law is just as much as speculative practice as writing fiction. It is about structuring reality. Law codifies what's possible. Speculative practice imagines what could be possible, right? Like, it is two sides of the same coin. And law has always been the imagination of White supremacy. It is what they have made real in terms of the boundaries of our society.

And so, in legal advocacy, I'm able to see the state's rigid timelines. You know, as a lawyer, whether it's statute of limitations for the people I was representing, eviction filings, criminal records. These are all kinds of attempts to fix Black people in place, right, and to set the bounds of how they can move and where they can move. What folks can learn is speculative work, imagination work, helps us to open and disrupt timelines, whether it's community archives, whether it's oral futures, whether it's nonlinear maps of memory. These are the kinds of tools that I use, but you know, there's lots of different tools that people use. And I think what's important is that in my work, whether it's at PolicyLink, or in my work as an Afrofuturist, or my previous work as an attorney, I don't treat imagination as a luxury. It is a survival technology. It is a technology that lives alongside of any other, you know, whether it's money, whether it's whatever it may be.

It's a tool for and technology for survival. And my work has been about researching, looking at all the ways, different ways that people have used imagination and speculation to be able to navigate the most impossible conditions. So, like, for example, in my book, I talk about Harriet Tubman and how she used nature and speculation, and voices, and different things to navigate impossible conditions. And I think practicing activism, as Ruth [Wilson Gilmore] tells us about abolition, right? We can't be just resisting harms. We have to be about creating the new, creating the new worlds. And again, new might not be brand spanking new [that] we just flipped it out of air, right, but it could mean uprooting the old and repackaging it for modern times. I'm not a person who tries to romanticize the past and say, "oh, everything in the past is great and would work in the present and we just need to go back to that."

But no, I think we do need to reshape things to be applicable to the times that we're in and some of the things about our times that we can't control. And I encourage the communities that I work with to think of imagination, to think of speculation and storytelling, narrative work as forms of policymaking. They are just as important as the legal work that I do. We have a project at PolicyLink that is strictly about narrative and about building out housing narrative. Like, that is just as important a strategy as me getting a policy where people can be represented if they're being kicked out of their homes. Without a narrative strategy, I would not have been able to advance those policies, right? So, people being able to storytell, that's what convinces people. That's what moves the needle every time. So, I see these tools as just as important as, you know, your everyday other kinds of political tools.

Julian Chambliss: Particularly for this set of conversations in Volume 43, we're talking to different people at different stages of their career. Like, we have some people very early on who are still in graduate school at some level, and then people sort of like yourself, kinda outside but adjacent to the academy. And I'm curious for you, if there was something you would advocate for in terms of institutional spaces, what they could do? In particular, schools and educational institutions. Because I think at some level, almost everything you talk about has a really direct implication for schools, for how people are educated, how people learn about institutions and things like that. What are the things that you would love to see in the context of the documentary record that we associate with, like, education in school? What are the techniques? What are the resources? What kind of new tool kits should we be advocating for? Because ironically, one of the things that is still hyper-local is schooling.

It's under assault, no question, but it's still essentially hyper-local. So, you could see in a sort of fragmented dystopian future, some school systems doing some things that are very much good and some school systems, sadly, doing some things very much bad. So, what would be something that you would advocate for in that space?

Rasheedah Phillips: Yeah, I think I would advocate for more embedded community-based work. I think often what happens in the university is about the community, but not in the community. Like, it's abstracted, right? You study the community, but you don't necessarily come in contact with them. And I think there are models of things that we've seen where people are embedded, like, whether it's an externship or internship or whatever, or a project that you have to do. There's a project in Philadelphia called the "Dox Thrash House," which was about restoring the home of this artist named Dox Thrash from the 1930s, around the [Harlem] Renaissance, but maybe a little bit after Harlem Renaissance time. And part of the project was revived by a bunch of architectural students at the University of Penn who then continued the project after they graduated and have now, like, just made... [were] able to get a lot of money to restore the home, all these different things, umm, educate the community about this artist, set up community programs.

And again, started with a couple of students at the university who had the foresight to, like, take this project, build it out over a couple of years' time, and not just be limited to the university because even after they graduated were still involved in it. So I think things like that. I think from my own personal experience, going through law school, none of that stuff I learned mattered until I was able to apply it, until I was able to actually work in the community and apply the knowledge. Otherwise, it was just super abstract cases about people's lives that obviously shift people's lives, but you don't know how practically and how you can intervene in that until you're actually in the community doing things. And so, I was really dissatisfied with my legal education until I had the chance to do an internship at a family court and actually work with people and actually apply it.

So, I think that's what I would consider. I have seen when folks actually go into the community, and it doesn't have to be ... like, even if it's not, like, your university may not host that, but you as a person can have the opportunity to start within your own community. Go to a community event, go to monthly community meetings, talk to people, right. Like, you can start within your own community with your own self. It doesn't take necessarily a whole body of people or a university backing to be able to do that work. It can be as simple as going to a local community organization and [saying], "hey, do you need support archiving the history of your organization?" Start right there. Do a workshop with community members at the local library about archiving their family documents, right. So, there's ways that we can intervene and be in community, and support, and build up these kinds of practices without relying on a university.

But if we are going to rely on it, I think those are some of the keys is making sure you're in contact, and your work is not abstracted, and you're not just studying people. Because then by the time you get out there, right, like, it's so disconnected and you have to catch up in terms of, like, actually knowing real people and being able to apply it in real time. And it may not fit one for one, but you can start now.

Julian Chambliss: I appreciate that. And I think that's actually a good place, good place to stop. I really appreciate you taking the time to talk with me for *Scholarly Editing*. I believe that our readership will get a lot from your perspectives and your voice. And so, I truly want to thank you for sharing that with us.

Rasheedah Phillips: Of course. Anytime. Yeah. Thanks so much for thinking of me.

[credits]