

DLF Forum Opening Plenary
**“Decolonizing Knowledge, Decolonizing the Internet:
an agenda for collective action”**

October 15, 2018

Speakers and Description

Decolonizing Knowledge, Decolonizing the Internet: an agenda for collective action

Anasuya Sengupta

Sengupta is Co-Director and co-founder of Whose Knowledge?. She has led initiatives in India and the USA, across the global South, and internationally for over 20 years, to amplify marginalised voices in virtual and physical worlds. She is the former Chief Grantmaking Officer at the Wikimedia Foundation and a Shuttleworth Fellow. Supporting and strengthening free knowledge, human rights and social justice movements and communities of practice have been at the forefront of Sengupta’s work.

Sengupta is on the boards of the Nonprofit Quarterly, a leading news and analysis site for US civil society, and The Rules, aiming to challenge and change the rules of global capitalism and exploitation.

Among her publications is a pioneering collection, co-edited with Shamillah Wilson and Kristy Evans, titled *Defending Our Dreams: Global Feminist Voices for a New Generation* (AWID & Zed Books, 2006).

Anasuya Sengupta holds an MPhil in Development Studies from the University of Oxford, where she studied as a Rhodes Scholar. She also has a BA in Economics (Honours) from Delhi University.

Shared notes: <http://bit.ly/dlf2018keynote>

Transcript

Bethany Nowviskie: 00:00:14 Alright. Good morning. I think it worked. Okay, that would be my signal that maybe it worked. Now, I can't see any of you. Thanks. Good morning everybody. My name is Bethany Nowviskie. I direct the Digital Library Federation, which means that I get the great honor and pleasure of welcoming you to the 2018 DLF Forum. Welcome, friends. We are so glad that you're here.

Bethany Nowviskie: 00:00:45 Let's start with things that I know that you always want first. I can't see the slides from where I'm standing. Oh, I can see them backwards. Important stuff. The WiFi password and also our Twitter hashtags. If you're new to the Forum, you may wonder about the second one there. In a nut shell, it's a reminder of the Igbo and Yoruba saying about community and about the future. In essence, it takes a village to put on an event like this. So we know that we should be kind of helping each other along the way.

Bethany Nowviskie: 00:01:22 So, #DLFForum is like a regular conference hashtag, but #DLFvillage is your help desk and your community. Need something from us as organizers? We're monitoring it all the

time. Just give a shout. Want to share something with fellow travelers, or get the help or advice of the crowd? It's really good for that. This hashtag has reunited lost cell phones with owners. It has gotten the air conditioning adjusted in many a conference room, and it has also brought us together in times when we needed each other a hell of a lot, not least at the Milwaukee DLF Forum on Election Day 2016 when that hashtag really bloomed. I like it.

Bethany Nowviskie: 00:02:13

We have lots to share with you in this morning session and some big things to celebrate ahead of the keynote talk that we're all really excited about by the wonderful Anasuya Sengupta. But before we do anything else, I want to pause to say a few words about the place that we're in. To acknowledge the traditional and ancestral stewards of this beautiful mountain ringed desert land. Those are the Southern Paiute People, particularly the Las Vegas span of the Southern Paiute, the Nipakanticimi, which means "people of the snow-covered mountain, the Charleston Peak." They are a sovereign nation now bounded by a scant handful of acres just north of downtown Las Vegas and by a few thousand more at the Snow Mountain Reservation to the northwest. We pay our respects to to the Chemehuevi branch of the Southern Paiute who know themselves as Nüwüwü, simply "the people," and to the Moapa band, who now harvest the sun with vast solar arrays some 50 miles to the northeast of here.

Bethany Nowviskie: 00:03:20

The Southern Paiutes spent 800 years as traditional dwellers on and caretakers of the land that is now Henderson and Las Vegas, Nevada. Their ancestors spent thousands of years more. For all kinds of reasons, I'm glad we're in a space that's a little removed from the Las Vegas Strip, but maybe most of all because it lets us see the loveliness of the desert, and more clearly envision the cool, ancient seeps and springs and the fragrant mesquite groves that once nourished a people in this valley. And which gave over, through their unjust displacement in the 19th century, to vast cultivated green spaces supported by artesian wells, las vegas, which means "the meadows."

Bethany Nowviskie: 00:04:06

From our dry vantage point here in Henderson, I look out on the young, water-hungry city of Las Vegas, full as it of exuberant fountains, and gondolas, and big canals, and I wonder if some thinking about stewardship, and sustainability, and endurance, and deep time will filter into our conversations this week. So anyway, as I say when we descend on a new city every year, please spare a thought for the place that you are in, and for those who live here now, and those who came before.

Bethany Nowviskie: 00:04:43 Good things endure about this community too. But DLF is also changing. It's ever-changing. I have watched the growth that so many of you have driven with great admiration over the three and a half years of my tenure as director. Our institutional membership has doubled since 2015, and the number of working groups and DLF projects that you're participating in has just absolutely exploded. We offered DLF up to you as a light weight frame work for grassroots organizing, and you have taken us up on that. And the work that you do inspires all of us on this staff.

Bethany Nowviskie: 00:05:20 As for this conference, the Forum has become kind of a "crossover space" between so many different communities. So it's not just a meeting about standards and infrastructure and software development anymore, but it's really an embrace of the social contexts and the whole mission of our hybrid organization. From the creative design as you see in the mission statement to the wise application of library technology in service to research, teaching, learning, social justice, and the common good. And I have seen you working to make DLF into a spot where people can come together. Where they bring the perspectives of the huge array of all the professional roles, and the very types of institutions that we represent. But also the perspectives that stem from our own personal identities, and our lived experience. Embracing who we are as whole selves, with histories and futures, some shared, some very different. Listening to each other. Amplifying what we learn when we go back to our home environments and to our other conference communities. And above all I really and truly hope finding shared purpose and a shared vision for the work that we can newly plan and undertake together. So I thank you for that.

Bethany Nowviskie: 00:06:40 And I have some specific thanks to give too. And that's to the many dedicated numbers of this year's DLF Forum Planning Committee, who are listed here, and here, and here. Thank you. Thank you for volunteering your time, and for lending your wisdom to the crafting of our program. Thank you for creating resources for presenters and moderators. Thank you for designing wellness and social programing. Thank you for seeking sponsorships, and being attentive to matters of inclusivity and safety and comfort and equity. And thank you too to our wonderful DLF staff that so many of you have had the chance to meet and work with already. And that's the whole organization in the first line of the slide. And thank you to our wonderfully supportive colleagues from CLIR, the Council on Library and Information Resources. So many of them have contributed to helping organize this event. But a special shout out to Louisa and Wayne listed here, who put in serious overtime.

Bethany Nowwiskie: 00:07:53 I know that you will all feel the care that these volunteers and staff members have put into organizing the conference this week. So please, let's thank them.

Bethany Nowwiskie: 00:08:03 I am not going to talk forever, I swear. Just to give you a sense of where we are going next, I've asked our newest team member, Aliya Reich, to share some of the logistical info that she has been wrangling this year. And a few small reminders and suggestions that we have for you. Aliya will be followed by Louisa Kwasigroch, who is going to welcome our newest DLF member organizations, and thank our 2018 Forum sponsors. And then Becca Quon will join me to help welcome our 2018 fellowship winners, and to present DLF's biggest honor, the Community/Capacity Award. So now, over to Aliya.

Aliya Reich: 00:08:58 Good morning everyone. We're so delighted you're here, and I'm so happy to see, as much as I can, all the faces behind the emails I've traded with you. And I have to say, I'm a much more confident emailer than I am public speaker, so I will make this very quick. As quick as possible. So first I just want to say thank you so much to everyone who participated in our first-ever, fabulous Learn at DLF yesterday. It was a day full of workshops and exciting ideas. And it was a great way to kick off our Forum week. So many thanks to all attendees and presenters.

Aliya Reich: 00:09:36 To set the stage for today, I'll now go through a few important reminders, and share some crucial links with you, the first of which is our Code of Conduct. Hopefully all of you are familiar with this and you know it well. But the Forum and all DLF events are guided by our Code of Conduct, which as you can see on this screen states that our events are meant to be free from all forms of harassment, and welcoming to all people. You can find more info at that short link there. And we also have these great little business cards-size information at our front desk where you can take that with you and keep it in your pocket if you'd like to keep it. But if you have any questions or concerns, you can catch anyone with a white lanyard or call the number that you see on the screen.

Aliya Reich: 00:10:20 And just in case you missed it, I know we just went over this, and I've been answering lots of questions. But the wifi again, and we're always happy to answer that. So our online agenda. As many of you may have been directed, we have a lovely little piece of paper, a pocket agenda. And that gives our general timing, and breaks, and lunch, and all of that kind of good stuff. But if you want to know when the actual sessions are happening, and for many, we have many presenters in the

audience, when your presentations are, it's a good rule to look at Sched for our online agenda.

Aliya Reich: 00:11:03 We also encourage community note-taking in all of our sessions. And those can be found at that shortlink right there. It's my understanding that the case matters. So make sure that dlf is lowercase, and that link does work. And from there you can navigate to the correct session and please contribute notes and thoughts.

Aliya Reich: 00:11:25 For our slide repository: this is where presenters can put your presentation so everyone, whether you're at the Forum or not can access it. And so this, actually, this slide show is in there right now. And our keynoter's presentation will also be there immediately after. So we'll make sure to set you up with that. So everyone has access to all the presentations.

Aliya Reich: 00:11:49 Just a word. I didn't realize this was a gif when I looked at the PowerPoint before. Mics. Please, please, please use the mics in your break out rooms. I know we have many teachers, and many loud speakers, but no matter how loud your voice is, it's always helpful to use the mic. You never know when someone might need it. And it also helps fully able-hearing people to know what's going on as well. And that goes both for the presenters, and for Q&A. There are two mics in every room. So please, please make use of those.

Aliya Reich: 00:12:22 And by the way, if you are having trouble with a mic in your room, or any AV, or you have any questions, Bethany mentioned that #DLFvillage hashtag. Please use that and someone will come and help you, and will figure it out for you.

Aliya Reich: 00:12:36 I know I mentioned the Code a couple of minutes ago. And it really is important to us to make sure that this event is as inclusive and welcoming as possible for everyone. And as such we've included all-gender restrooms. Those are the ones that are closest to here. Between where we are right now, and the Marche set of rooms. And I think that is how that's pronounced. Marche, Marche. Anyway one of the rooms that starts with M. But those all gender restrooms are there. Everyone is welcome to use them and we just encourage everyone to be respectful there.

Aliya Reich: 00:13:08 Please, please also. I'm using the word please a lot. We have lots of things to ask of you, and lots of things for this community to do. We're asking you, if it's within your means, to please tip your housekeeping. Let's make sure we make this a terrific DLF Forum for the housekeeping staff here at the M, or wherever

you might be staying, if you're staying elsewhere. If it's possible for you, please consider doing this.

- Aliya Reich: 00:13:33 And then finally, I think this is a new thing this year. We'll be doing a toiletries donation drive on the very last day of the forum, on Wednesday. So we'll be collecting any unused, or unopened toiletries to benefit the Nevada Partnership for Homeless Youth. So we'll have a box by the registration desk so you can take any of the hotel ones, or anyone that you may have brought with you and not opened that you can donate for that excellent cause. And so with that it is my pleasure to introduce Louisa.
- Louisa Kwasigroch: 00:14:16 Thank you Aliya. Hi everybody. The green button, yeah? Okay. Alright. So first I would very much like to welcome all of our new DLF members. I'm pretty impressed with our new cohort here. But also I want to tell you that for the first time in 23 years we have over 180 institutional members. DLF started with 12, so we are just incredibly grateful for all of the support. And I want you to know that our members do make everything that we do possible.
- Louisa Kwasigroch: 00:14:53 So our sponsors. Support from our sponsors allows us to offer childcare, fellowships, livestreaming, and copious amounts of coffee and tea. I ask you to visit the sponsor tables while you're here to learn more about these great organizations. We don't share your contact information with them, so those in-person visits are really important to let them know that you value their support for the Forum.
- Louisa Kwasigroch: 00:15:18 So first. Our childcare fund. We have a lot of individual donors which I'd like to thank but also we have some groups. ACH, Digital Bedrock, the J. Willard Marriott Library at the University of Utah, and the Reed College Library. Our Platinum Sponsors this year are the Stanford University Libraries, the Digital Preservation Network, and the University of Nevada-Reno Libraries. Our Gold Sponsors are Memnon and Indiana University's MPDI. I hope I said that right. Gale, OCLC, Quartex by Adam Matthew Digital, Preservica, Code Ocean, i2S, and Duracloud and Duracloud Europe. Our Silver Sponsor is avp, and our Bronze Sponsors are Library Juice Academy, the University of Arizona Libraries, and the Legal Information Preservation Alliance.
- Louisa Kwasigroch: 00:16:15 Our Museum Cohort Sponsor is the Samuel H. Kress Foundation. And finally I'd like to mention our Fellowship Partners, VRA, ARL, MCN and AIC. Last I would like to thank our local hosts, the University Libraries at UNLV for all of their support and for

welcoming all of us to Las Vegas. So thank you to all of our sponsors.

Louisa Kwasigroch: 00:16:39 Next, Becca Quon, DLF Program Associate for Advancement and Awards will tell us about the DLF Fellows and the Community/Capacity Award.

Becca Quon: 00:16:58 Hi everyone. So this year we've been able to welcome fellows across five separate categories. And so I just want to give a little shout out to them. Here we have our ARL and DLF Students and New Professional Fellows. Our Focus Fellows and HBCU Fellows. And our GLAM Cross-Pollinator Fellows. We also have folks from Civic Switchboard here. And so I just want to say welcome to all of you. And we also have our CLIR Post-Doctoral Fellows, both past and present joining us this year. And we have so many new programs this year. Our Futures Fellows are with us. And so I just want to give a thank you to all of you for being here, and could all of our past Forum and CLIR Postdoc Fellows please stand up. And current.

Becca Quon: 00:18:04 We're so excited to be able to support all of them here so thank you.

Bethany Nowviskie: 00:18:18 So yeah. Thanks to our fellows, and our fellow alumni. And to Becca for coordinating this program so beautifully. So on the subject of fellowships. While we had the chance, we wanted to share with you that for the next three years, thanks to the generosity of the IMLS, and the strong and wonderful partnership of our friends at the HBCU Library Alliance, represented here by Ms. Sandra Phoenix, who is somewhere. We will be welcoming in three cohorts of 15 annual Authenticity Project Fellows over the next three years. So 45 early-to-mid-career librarians from historically black colleges and universities are going to receive travel funding, take part in year-round professional development programming, have the opportunity to undertake microgrant projects between projects that connect HBCUs with PWIs in meaningful and authentic ways. They'll receive mentoring from experienced HBCU librarians. And they'll also be matched up for conversational partnerships and mutual learning and growth with members of the DLF community. So the call for the fellows themselves will open next week, but open now is our call for HBCU mentors and for DLF community conversation partners. So please think about joining us in one of those rewarding mentoring or conversational roles, or applying for a fellowship if you're eligible.

Bethany Nowviskie: 00:19:44 All the details are in the Opportunities section of the DLF website. And again, I thank Sandra Phoenix for this

collaboration which we have designed together to try to be transformative at so many levels and has already been a major source of joy and hope for the two of us, and for our colleagues. Sandra, are you out there? If you are would you stand up? I don't see her, but then I don't see anything. Anyway. It's been a wonderful partnership, and we're so grateful to the Alliance.

Bethany Nowviskie: 00:20:17

Now, to shift gears a little bit. In May the DLF community nominated 13 inspiring projects, teams, and people for our biggest honor, which is the DLF Community/Capacity Award. A biennial award that honors constructive community-minded efforts to build collective capacity in digital libraries, and in allied fields. And we're pleased to be celebrating all of these terrific nominees who are listed on the screens, whose efforts contribute to our ability to collaborate across institutional lines, and work towards something larger together. Each DLF member organization had just one vote to cast, and we've been keeping the winner under wraps since June, which is crazy. We're so happy to be able to acknowledge their contributions in person with you all and to welcome a representative up here to accept the award, which includes \$1,000 prize and a very swanky certificate in a manila folder. I've heard about our winner's plans for the award and I can not be happier about that.

Bethany Nowviskie: 00:21:25

Our 2018 awardee, building the tension, is a project that develops tools, and builds community practices that support the ethical collection, use, and preservation of social media content. This work responds to the public's use of social media for participating in and leaving a record of historically significant events, as well as to demand from scholars, students, and community organizers and archivists among others who want a user-friendly way to collect and preserve this kind of digital content. So here to accept the award is community lead Bergis Jules, and I hope you'll join all of us at DLF in celebrating Documenting the Now.

Bethany Nowviskie: 00:22:54

Aw.

Bethany Nowviskie: 00:22:54

All of these projects were such an inspiration, and Documenting the Now just captured everybody's heart. So now, the moment you've all been waiting for. Everybody kind of take a stretch. Seriously. Stand up for a second. Take a deep breath. We are really changing gears. Feels good, right? Ready for the keynote, right? Alright. It's my great pleasure to introduce Anasuya Sengupta who is here to give a talk entitled, "Decolonizing Knowledge, Decolonizing the Internet: an agenda for collective action". Anasuya is a former Rhodes Scholar, past chief grantmaking officer at the Wikimedia Foundation, and a

Shuttleworth Fellow. She currently co-directs, and is co-founder of, a nonprofit organization called Whose Knowledge?, a global campaign to center the knowledge of marginalized communities--who are in fact the majority of the world--on the Internet. And among her publications is a pioneering co-edited collection called "Defending our Dreams: Global Feminist Voices for a New Generation." She's worked in India and the USA. She's worked across the global South and internationally for 20 years to amplify the voices of women, of people of color, of LGBTQI communities, indigenous peoples and others from the global South in both virtual and physical spaces.

Bethany Nowviskie: 00:24:31 We'll have a Q&A session after her talk, and you can either come to the mic stands, or put your questions in the community note-taking doc, and a member of our Inclusivity Committee will read them for you. So let's please all welcome Anasuya Sengupta.

Anasuya Sengupta: 00:24:56 Thank you Bethany for that generous introduction. Good morning. I am so grateful to be here with all of you. I give thanks, as Bethany did, to the extraordinary land that stretches around us, and to the Paiute for having us as guests on this land. Very special thanks to Bethany and the amazing, thoughtful, very large planning committee for inviting me. And a very special, special thanks to Aliya, without whom I definitely would not be here. I'm also deeply honored to be here with all of you. You who combined the best job in the world with the most progressive visions for that world. Thank you for being such inspiring social justice digital librarians. I never thought I'd say all of those words in one gulp. It's very cool. I look forward to learning from you and being with you over the next few days.

Anasuya Sengupta: 00:26:08 I would also not be here without the collective, cumulative inspiration of so many individuals and communities over my life, spent across three continents. I hope to bring some of their voices, and much of their brilliance to the conversation here today.

Anasuya Sengupta: 00:26:25 Alright. Let's try and see if this works. It does! So I'm Anasuya Sengupta, and I'm from India. I moved to the United States 11 years ago when I first learned what it meant to be a woman of color. And I continue to live in the liminal spaces between the Bay Area and Bengaluru, my hometown. Family and community, to me, over the past decade have been really this journey, this almost crazy dance between the physical and the virtual. And in so many ways, like for so many of us, my personal journey has run in parallel with my professional, with my work. Building, as I

try to do, and agenda for collective action in which we can decolonize knowledge, and decolonize the internet together.

Anasuya Sengupta: 00:27:27 Together with my fabulous Feminist companeras and co-conspirators, Adele Vrana, and Siko Bourterse, we run a global, multi-lingual campaign called Whose Knowledge. Siko is from the Republic of California. And Adele is Afro-Brazilian. We work to center the knowledges of different marginalized communities on the Internet. As Bethany said, women, indigenous communities, LGBTQI folks, and all of us from the global South. We center their leadership, sharing our histories and amplifying our knowledges.

Anasuya Sengupta: 00:28:10 For us this is what it means to decolonize the Internet. We see ourselves, I guess, as "social justice hackers," hacking at the structures of power and privilege together. And this may feel like a zero sum game to some, but not to us. In truth, I think about decolonizing at the heart of true empowerment. In many ways, the crisis of violence and injustice that we face today feel like they are rooted in a hidden crisis of unknowing. Of not knowing each other as fully and as well as we could or should. So whether as women, or non-binary folks, as people of color, as indigenous communities, and whether as white folks, or as men, as those who are cis and heteronormative--those who already feel relatively privileged--for all of us, decolonizing is a way of talking openly about whose stories get told. Whose faces get seen. Whose bodies and ideas are protected and amplified. And through this process, to create powerful, radical new ways of knowing each other and being with each other.

Anasuya Sengupta: 00:29:34 But for me the journey begins much earlier. It begins with my first job at the age of nine. A summer job that I adventurously created for myself and my brother, who was five and a half at the time. Any guesses as to the job? We became librarians. We were librarians of our own tiny neighborhood circulating library. We had books that were second- and third- and fourth-hand piled on top of a rickety metal, fold-out cart, and we kept it in the corridor in front of our apartment. We kept detailed, if somewhat sprawling and very untidy notes about who borrowed what and when they were returned. I wish I had a digital artifact to show you about that time. But I, like some of you, come from one of the last generations that does not have every moment of its childhood digitally preserved for posterity. And I'm, in some ways, grateful for that. But I invite you to use your imaginations.

Anasuya Sengupta: 00:30:52 And in order to help with that imagination, I want to walk you through a little bit of what was in our library. So at the age of

nine, unsurprisingly, we were full of comics, and books from the United States, and the United Kingdom, read at least by folks a few generations older than us. Right? So this is the mid-1980s. Everything that we had as books in India at the time was very much a few generations older than us. When I first went to the UK and I said, "I read Enid Blyton growing up," they laughed at me. When I first came to the US and I said, "I read Archie comics when I was growing up," they laughed at me.

Anasuya Sengupta: 00:31:43

But I outgrew our circulating library, I must say, and its contents, after that summer. Through friends and family, through public and private lending libraries, I began a really eclectic set of fiction. And yes, I will admit Ayn Rand, jostled with Asimov, Tolsoy with Ursula LeGuin. You will be happy to know that I outgrew Ayn Rand very quickly and I have not yet let go of Ursula LeGuin.

Anasuya Sengupta: 00:32:16

And then I began to realize I was not reading anything familiar. I was reading about crumpets and cookies, not samosas and doshas. I was reading very little that spoke to and about, and from the world around me. Its pasts, its presents, and its imagined futures. That's when I started devouring in earnest South Asian history and mythology, including one of the largest comic book series of all time, Amar Chitra Katha. For those of you who are graphic novel fans, this is a place to go. I began discovering feminist fables through the astonishing Suniti Namjoshi, home-grown science fiction from Satyajit Ray, who is not just a filmmaker, and our very own Lewis Carroll and his father, Sukumar Ray. Poetry from the first Asian to win the Nobel Prize in any field, Rabinadrath Tagore. And I began appreciating my own mother, Poile Sengupta, who was and is passionate about writing for children and young adults in an idiom she considers deeply rooted in India, and at the same time universal.

Anasuya Sengupta: 00:33:35

And then went on to discover the radical works of Franz Fanon, of Edward Said, of Audre Lorde and bell hooks. And I realized the critical need to decolonize myself within a so-called post-colonial society like India. I was now 18, and discovering that Buddhist nuns had been writing fierce poems since 600 BC and that BR Ambedkar, the towering who wrote the Indian Constitution, the longest written Constitution in the world, was also pushing me to think about the oppression of the caste system, and my own complicity in it as a woman privileged and born into an "upper-caste" family.

Anasuya Sengupta: 00:34:25

I learned the deep discomfort of being both oppressed and oppressor. Of being on the margins of the world myself, but also

of having cultural and social power that was over others even more marginalized than me. And I was starting to learn, in little bits, what it felt like to be a social justice warrior for myself and my community, and a social justice ally for others and their communities.

- Anasuya Sengupta: 00:34:57 And yet, do you notice anything about this set? I was still reading mostly in English, and a little bit in Hindi. I can speak six languages, but I can only read and write in two. Fanon says that to speak a language is to take on a world, to take on a culture. Even in the extraordinary, multi-cultural, complex world I was living in, I was only experiencing its topsoil, not its complex, rich, textured layers.
- Anasuya Sengupta: 00:35:33 So if I can actually see you all a bit, how many of us in this room can speak and read in more than one language? Fabulous. More than two? Wow. More than three? Alright. That's still incredible. Because I still saw a few with more than three, more than five. Okay. Let's ask this question another way. Language is both literal and metaphorical. How many of you feel like you speak multiple languages of expertise, of different domains? Hey, as digital librarians, you have to.
- Anasuya Sengupta: 00:36:26 So in many ways libraries are not just repositories, they are and can be interpreters of worlds, translators between many different languages and cultures, whether literal or metaphorical. And how do we celebrate and amplify this multilingual nature? This is true in the physical library. That's the Biblioteca Alexandrina, or the Library of Alexandria in Egypt. Or in the virtual library. That's the first mirror, and external backup of the internet archive which is hosted in the Biblioteca Alexandrina.
- Anasuya Sengupta: 00:37:06 So if we have to decolonize digital libraries, let's start with the foundations: knowledge itself, and the Internet as a critical knowledge infrastructure. According to research by our friends at Google a few years ago, of the 7,000 languages in the world, only about 7% of these languages are represented in published books or material. And as you can imagine, only about 20% of them are in public domain. According to research by Whose Knowledge? community member Sailesh Patnaik, only a little over 500 languages are on the Internet right now. So the breadth, depth, range of our embodied knowledges is not in books, or on the Internet right now. It is oral, it is visual, it is experiential.
- Anasuya Sengupta: 00:38:02 And yet, the problem is, as we all know, that we think of the oral and the nontextual forms of knowledge as not having as

much power and authority as text, as published material. I'll come back to this later.

Anasuya Sengupta: 00:38:19 So now let's look at who's online. Over half of the world. 75% of those who are online today are from the global South. How many of you expected that? Wow. Okay. As someone from the global South, when I learned that I was pretty shocked myself. It's amazing what good data can do for you. 75%. Three fourths of those who are online are from the global South, from Asia, from Africa, from Latin America, from the Caribbean and the Pacific Islands, from the Middle East. Nearly half of those online, 45% are women and girls. And half of the world's Internet users are from where I grew up, from Asia and the Pacific Islands. But published knowledge, and public online knowledge, does not look like me, or, most of us who are on the internet. And the problem is that there's a mythology about the Internet being participatory and inclusive, for all time, for all people. Of course there's potential for that. We are all sitting here as living examples. But without calling out the reality, we cannot fix it.

Anasuya Sengupta: 00:39:45 The vision for the Internet may be utopian, but its current reality and experience for many of us here, and across the world is too often, unfortunately, dystopian. And one of the dystopian elements, or at the very least, a deep cognitive dissonance, is the huge gap between those who are Internet users and those who are Internet producers. Internet users essentially are the majority of the world, speaking most of the world's languages. And Internet producers tend still to be mono or euro-lingual. I just coined that phrase. I like it. And sometimes monocultural. Most of the world as we know now is on social news or messaging apps. Malaysia has the most number of messaging apps in the world--Facebook, WhatsApp, Weibo, Line--but many of those absent platforms unfortunately seem to do a far better job at reproducing propaganda than producing knowledge. And if you look at this really interesting research from the Oxford Internet Institute, we find that Asia and the rest of the global South lags behind Europe and North America on domain registrations, GitHub commits, and my favorite thing, Wikipedia edits.

Anasuya Sengupta: 00:41:20 France alone produces over five times the number of GitHub commits and three times more domain registrations than all of the countries of Sub-Saharan Africa put together. And that is not because we don't have amazing techies in Sub-Saharan Africa. We do. Many of them are our friends.

Anasuya Sengupta: 00:41:44 So let's come to Wikipedia, our favorite and largest public online knowledge site. I love Wikipedia. I'm Wikipedian as many

of you know. But I believe strongly in tough love. I believe it is only through critiquing and challenging Wikipedia that we can hope to improve it. Wikipedia is also the best proxy we have for public online knowledge today that is open access and collectively created and curated. Wikipedia is astonishing, I don't want us to forget that, in so many ways. Including from the perspective of quantity. It currently has over 45 million articles in nearly 300 languages contributed by over 70,000 volunteers from around the world. In comparison, the Encyclopedia Britannica, when it went digital in 2012, had 65,000 articles and a few language versions, supported by 4,000 contributors. Yet both quantity and quality are impacted by who creates what content.

- Anasuya Sengupta: 00:42:59 The reason Wikipedia, and its sister projects, including Wikidata, the metadata project that is linked to Wikimedia, are so important is because all of them together make the largest free and open information databases in the world today. And third-party providers, like Google, will use that data for the knowledge graph, for instance. So the skews and the biases that are on Wikipedia get amplified further across the Internet. And these stats may be familiar to many of you now. So I won't overburden you with them again, but we still have only between 9 and 16% of Wikipedia editors estimated as being female or non-binary, and only about 20% of its knowledge is produced on or by folks from the global South.
- Anasuya Sengupta: 00:43:57 This map is also very stark. In 2012 Mark Graham and his colleagues at the Oxford Internet Institute did this visualization, and at the time there were more articles within this tiny circle of western Europe than on and from the rest of the world around it.
- Anasuya Sengupta: 00:44:18 So now I've given you all the citations you need on why it's urgent, and important, to think about decolonizing the Internet and knowledge. How do we go about it?
- Anasuya Sengupta: 00:44:31 I'd like to offer you some of what we, as Whose Knowledge? and our communities, have learned and done over the past few years. I want to begin by honoring and centering the three of our communities that we have worked with most closely, and continue to work with most closely. They inspire us, they challenge us, and so much of what we have learned to do and be is because of them.
- Anasuya Sengupta: 00:44:59 Dalits are a community from South Asia that have been oppressed by the caste system for millennia. They are those who are formally and pejoratively known as "untouchables."

We support Equality Labs, which has organized Dalit History Month in India, and the Diaspora, over the past few years, and is bringing Dalit history and knowledge online, onto Wikipedia and other parts of the interwebs.

Anasuya Sengupta: 00:45:25 We also work with Okvir, which is a feminist LGBTQI group in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which collects oral testimonies and histories for a queer digital archive. Please have a look at their site, if you can, kvirarhiv.org. They've transcribed the interviews into text and so you can read them in translation.

Anasuya Sengupta: 00:45:51 And we've supported the Kumeyaay-Wikipedia Initiative, which adds knowledge of the Native American Kumeyaay people to Wikipedia and beyond.

Anasuya Sengupta: 00:46:01 So now we're going to try and do a little bit of digital magic. Let's see if we can manage this. I want to bring in some of the voices of those we work with, and are inspired by. The short video excerpts I'm about to share with you are from a panel we held earlier this year at Wikimania, the annual conference of Wikipedians. There's a reason it's called Wikimania. And the panel was called "Centering Knowledge from the Margins." From left to right as I point out are: Kelly Foster, an Afro-Caribbean archivist from London; Stan Rodriguez from the Kumeyaay community of Southern California and Baja, Mexico; then Persephone Lewis from the Shoshone band of Indians who are originally from Nevada, and she now lives and works in San Diego. Next to her is Dumisani Ndubane, a South African who has almost single handedly built the Tsonga Wikipedia. And next to Dumi is Thenmozhi Soundararajan, a Dalit feminist organizer and musician, and generally activist extraordinaire, who's based in the US and works here in India and across the Dalit diaspora.

Anasuya Sengupta: 00:47:16 Because decolonization starts with us, and from our own homes, I'd like to start with Stan and Perse from here in Nevada and California. And I have a friend in the corner, my friend Martel, who is going to try and make digital magic happen.

Stan Rodriguez: 00:47:50 [Welcome in Kumeyaay.] Buenos Tardes a todos, me nombre esta Stan Rodriguez, y yo soy Api Kumeyaay the reserve a Santa Isabelle en San Diego, California. Good afternoon everyone, my name is Stan Rodriguez. I'm an Api Kumeyaay from the San Isabelle reservation in San Diego, California. Our tribe is on both sides of the border, half in the United States, and half in Mexico. And it's an honor for me to be here, and I would like to also thank the Native People from this land for allowing us to come into your land, into your territory. As we say in my language,

[expression in Kumeyaay] It makes my heart feel very good and we praise you.

- Persephone Lewis: 00:48:40 [Greeting in Yomba Shoshone language.] I'm Perse Lewis, I'm from the Yomba band of Shoshone Indians, so I hold the dual citizenship in my tribal nation, which is in the traditional territory of what we know the State of Nevada, in the United States, as well as United States citizen. I also would like to just thank the indigenous people for having me as a guest on their traditional territory. I currently work at the University of San Diego. I'm a tribal liaison, so I work with the 18 tribes, which includes the tribe that Stan is from, in our county. And then I also am professor of practice in the Ethnic Studies Department. Thank you.
- Anasuya Sengupta: 00:49:17 Can we stop the video here, Martel? Can we pause? Thank you.
- Anasuya Sengupta: 00:49:26 I'd like to go on to video two, which is also an excerpt from later in this panel, and Martel if we can go for two of three. Let's try it. This is when I asked Perse why it's so important that Native American knowledge comes online.
- Persephone Lewis: 00:49:43 Colonial society, and honestly I wasn't really engaged in online spaces. I used it of course, but a couple of years ago I really began to realize just how absent we were from that space. And I really saw it as a parallel, and we were in workshops a couple days ago, and somebody made the parallel ... You know how there's these analogies of land and the Internet. And so I really saw settler colonialism continuing within these online spaces, online spaces that have become so important to students, and to of course the youth in our communities. Our reservations are very isolated, didn't have good Internet access for a long time, but like the rest of the world now, because of mobile technology, a lot of our youth now have access. And I want them to be able to Google "Native American" and not see statistics of alcoholism and suicide rates. I want them to be able to Google images and not see typical Native Americans in headdresses, or things like that. And so I really have felt like it's my duty to engage in online spaces. And I'm fortunate because I'm able to do that through my position at the university.
- Persephone Lewis: 00:50:50 I have lots of workers, my students, that are very happy to feel like the work that they're doing is contributing in some way, right? Instead of just writing a paper, they're able to actually engage in something that is going to go into an online space. So I've been very fortunate to be able to do that. I'm also in San Diego, which is the traditional territory, as I said, of Stan's tribe. So I am also a guest in that homeland. So I definitely privilege

Kumeyaay epistemologies, knowledges, and perspectives in the work that I do with my students when it's appropriate, right? Because there's times, as a Shoshone woman that it's not appropriate for me to engage in their knowledges. So I work closely with the local community to be able to do that.

Persephone Lewis: 00:51:34 But I think as the internet continues to dominate and grow even more, our presentation this morning, those students are begging for Wikipedia, right? We have to be very cognizant of how we're not marginalizing folks, and then how, as marginalized people, we don't marginalize others. And so that has really come to the forefront for me.

Anasuya Sengupta: 00:51:53 Martel, can you stop that video? Martel, could you pause? Thank you.

Anasuya Sengupta: 00:52:03 Well, we made some digital tech happen. Yay. And I want to continue to...come back...Continuing to make magic happen! To tell you a little bit about how this story, and this work with the Kumeyaay matters on Wikipedia. Two years ago, Siko Bouterse, my fabulous co-conspirator met with Michael Connolly Mishkwish, a Kumeyaay scholar. Mike is an engineer and economist who teaches at San Diego State. He also happens to be an expert in Kumeyaay environmental science, cosmologies, and histories. Siko asked him what Wikipedia articles he would like to work with, with experienced Wikipedians. Any guesses on which one he chose? You can probably tell from the illustrations. We thought he would ask about improving the page on Kumeyaay, or on Kumeyaay physics, or Kumeyaay astronomy. No. What Mike asked was, and said quite firmly was, "We need to edit the California Gold Rush article."

Anasuya Sengupta: 00:53:23 Mike had realized that the entire Wikipedia article on the Gold Rush was written pretty much from the white settler perspective. The section on the impact on Native American communities was hardly detailed, and yet, for Mike and the indigenous communities across California, the Gold Rush was a systematic, state-sponsored genocide. Even more telling for Mike, as he looked at the Wikipedia article, was the picture that it originally displayed. The one on the left literally called "The Attack," which has white people under attack from the marauding Indian. That day in San Diego, Siko and the other Wikipedians working on the article with Mike, changed it to the one on the right. That is the picture the English Wikipedia article still has to this day.

Anasuya Sengupta: 00:54:19 At this point I want to step back a little and offer you some of the theoretical frames that we use in our everyday practice. Our

frames are obviously centered around the radical notion that people are knowledge. A friend of ours, Achal Prabhala, made a film a few years ago called "People are Knowledge," and that's easily accessible on Wikipedia Commons, and it's about how oral sources can be reliable sources. Including for places on Wikipedia. I encourage you to look at the film.

- Anasuya Sengupta: 00:54:55 In learning from all of our extraordinary friends, and strangely enough from a Hungarian-British scientist called Michael Polanyi, we have begun to think about knowledge not as a binary, but as a continuum between embodied and disembodied knowledge. Embodied knowledge being, as you can see, held orally, visually, audially, experientially, and disembodied, being held as artifact--books, journals, microfiches, bits and bytes. We tend to privilege disembodied knowledge in multiple ways, but as Polanyi pushed back against a positivist vision of the world, he said, essentially, that formal knowledge, which I'm calling disembodied knowledge, comes out of tacit embodied knowledge. When you make embodied knowledge explicit, you create formal, or disembodied knowledge.
- Anasuya Sengupta: 00:55:55 When Stan Rodriguez tells Kumeyaay cosmological stories, as he does beautifully, it is embodied knowledge. But when it gets videotaped and archived, it becomes a digital, disembodied artifact. Disembodied formal knowledge cannot exist without embodied knowledge, and once created, of course, it in turn further affects embodied knowledge. This is an ongoing, recursive process and practice.
- Anasuya Sengupta: 00:56:26 And yet, depending on where people are, which people where, their credibility, their authority, their knowledge is questioned. We live in a world of severe epistemic injustice. So unsurprisingly we turn to the feminists. Miranda Fricker is a feminist philosopher who calls these hierarchies of knowing "epistemic injustice.": "The wrong done to someone in their capacity as a knower." She goes further and draws distinctions between testimonial and hermeneutical injustice. Testimonial injustice is when you "deflate the credibility" of someone. Essentially, when you disbelieve a community or an identity. For example, the police and black men on the streets of the United States. Hermeneutical injustice is when you don't make sense of the social experience of someone different from you because you disbelieve a concept or an idea. For example, a woman who experiences sexual harassment in a culture that lacks or undermines the very concept of sexual harassment or assault. That might be familiar to some of us.

- Anasuya Sengupta: 00:57:42 And therefore, those of us who suffer epistemic injustice need to have the power to tell our own stories. And the rest of us as allies need to support that work. Linda Tuhiwai Smith is an extraordinary Maori scholar, and in her work "Decolonizing Methodologies" she talks about indigenous research, and I think this holds the research from every marginalized community, and for and from every marginalized community. She calls indigenous research "the struggle for autonomy over our own cultural well-being."
- Anasuya Sengupta: 00:58:19 These frames are primarily why our work is based on centering the leadership and research design of marginalized communities and in learning different ways to be better allies to each other. We're going for three of three now and I'm going to ask Martel to play a video in which Thenmozhi, our friend and partner from the Dalit community talks about epistemic injustice.
- Thenmozhi Soundararajan: 00:58:44 ...About wanting to tell the story of Dalit peoples. You really have to understand the profoundness of how knowledge has really been held in the power of those that have been upper-caste. And within the caste system you have several castes. Those at the top are the Brahmins. And those at the bottom are my people. We are the "untouchables." And we're seen as "untouchable" because we're spiritually defiling to other people. So from the beginning, knowledge was always a political construct in the Sub-continent. Such that if someone like me who was a Dalit was to listen to language, our tongues would be cut, and we would have lead poured in our ears. To actually begin to take the grasp of knowledge back, it's really our way of basically going for epistemological justice. And I think that this is what was so profound about what you're saying, is that it is untenable to Dalit peoples to have to contend, and make consensus with, our oppressors for us to see an unmitigated experience of our world view and our world reality.
- Thenmozhi Soundararajani: 00:59:52 And for me, what's amazing about doing this work as a Dalit woman, is that Dalit women represent .1% of all journalists, intellectuals, and media owners within the Indian context. So for me to say, "I not only want to be able to create knowledge for my people, and I want it to be unmitigated in the way that it's presented," is one of the most radical things that I can do to be free. Because ultimately, we all have heard that phrase that "knowledge is power." But I think for us as many of the marginalized peoples here, we know that if we don't have unfettered access to our history, we can't fight for our future. And that's why I'm here.

- Anasuya Sengupta: 01:00:37 Thank you, Martel. And that's why I'm here too. So it's pretty obvious what we work on. We see ourselves as a research, action, advocacy group that connects, collaborates, and convenes across different ideas, communities, and domains of expertise. A lot like DLF. We work with different communities sharing ideas, resources, toolkits, and research that are changing, not only what we know about the Internet, but how we can make it better. We partner with other campaigns, organizations and networks, including libraries and archives, and we'd love to partner with more, to create inclusive and participatory knowledge together. Including on Wikipedia, but not only on Wikipedia.
- Anasuya Sengupta: 01:01:28 We work to expand the sources we reference online to include more than text sources, like oral history archives. We're working with partners to expand the range and ease of tools through which knowledge can be shared in different languages. And we work to make sure that more faces like Dumisani's, like Thenmozhi's, and like Perse's, are seen in Silicon Valley offices, and in policy-making circles, where decisions about Internet design, architecture, infrastructure, and governance are made.
- Anasuya Sengupta: 01:02:03 This year, in March, we launched the #VisibleWikiWomen challenge. I don't know if any of you participated or know about it, but it was launched in March, International Women's Month, to increase the number of women's images available in the public domain and support the many community projects working to make women more visible online. Essentially there are only about 17% of biographies on Wikipedia that are about women or non-binary folks. Of those few biographies, only again a fraction, possibly about 20%, have images. So invisibility goes deep. Our goal was to add 100 images to Wikimedia commons during the month of March, and we worked with extraordinary partners within the Wikimedia movement--Wiki Women in Red, Wiki Mujeres, Art and Feminism, Afro Crowd, Black Lunch Table, and many, many others--as well as feminist organizations and networks across the world. To hold on the ground edit-a-thons and virtual ones. Together we kind of surpassed our goal. We added over 800 images. And of those, 500 of them are now being used on Wikipedia's in many different languages, and have inspired new articles about extraordinary women like some of those you see before you.
- Anasuya Sengupta: 01:03:38 We also held, in July, the Decolonizing the Internet Conference in Cape Town, South Africa, which seemed like exactly the right place to hold it. We brought together activists, scholars, techies, Wikipedians, and of course librarians and archivists, to talk about what a decolonized Internet might look like, and how we

get there. We had exciting, inspiring conversations, and I think it was particularly because of who was in the room, and what their online and offline experiences have been.

Anasuya Sengupta: 01:04:12 When more than half of the room is women or non-conforming folks from the global South, or people of color, then the conversation around the Internet is very different from those of the largely white, largely male, largely Silicon Valley conversations that we often end up hearing from.

Anasuya Sengupta: 01:04:33 For this audience, for all of you, I think there are two sets of ideas and conversations from the Decolonizing the Internet Conference that I want to share with you. One was a fairly obvious one, but I would love to see how all of you think about it in practice, which is, not to see the online and the offline as binaries, but as a continuum. And one space in which to think about that continuum is the library. Physical libraries, especially public libraries, are already on the cutting edge of community service in so many ways, and many of you are part of that. And digital libraries that many of you work with, especially those with easy access, are at the cutting edge of inclusion and diversity in so many ways.

Anasuya Sengupta: 01:05:20 So one of the conversations centered around, what are the ways to combine these? What does offline/online hybrids for community participation and inclusion look like? I would love to learn more about where some of your work is taking you.

Anasuya Sengupta: 01:05:38 The other conversation, and a key action item from our conference, was the creation of what some of our participants called "the people's archival cloud"-- community-led libraries and archives. And the question to you is, what happens when these community libraries and archives also have institutional support from large, established archives and libraries? What does a mentoring system, which is multi-directional--I never think of mentoring as being unidirectional--what does that look like between the global North, the global South? The global North in the global South? The global South in the global North? What does it look like? And two examples from those who were there which I think will be inspiring to you, are the black cultural archives in London, and the story of PV Chinnathambi on the right. I will tell you a little bit about both.

Anasuya Sengupta: 01:06:36 So the building on the left is that of the Black Cultural Archives in London. It is the first and only institution of its kind for black history in the UK. It was set up in 2014. It brings together objects, documents, publications and oral histories of the black people of Britain over centuries. And it enables the black

community to tell its own stories and its own history in its own voice for the very first time. It took 33 years and a lot of extraordinary people and passion to make it happen. One of them in more recent times is Kelly Foster, whom you saw earlier on our Wikimania panel.

Anasuya Sengupta: 01:07:15 Interestingly, also in 2014, was founded the People's Archive of Rural India, or PARI, a digital archive and living journal of life in rural India. And one of the first people to be featured is the man on the right. PV Chinnathambi. Chinnathambi is from an adivasi or indigenous community in a remote part of southern India, of Kerala. It's nearly a 20 kilometer, or 12 mile hike, very hilly hike from the nearest town to his village, and to his tea shop library. He has 160 books of which 40 or so get borrowed every year. I believe 25% is not a bad lending ratio. For every book that you borrow, you get a free cup of black tea and a very wonderful conversation with an extraordinary person. My friend Sainath, who founded PARI, calls Chinnathambi the most extraordinary librarian he has ever met.

Anasuya Sengupta: 01:08:27 So I've taken you on quite the journey of knowledge and the Internet this morning. As I wind down I invite you to imagine what decolonization might mean in practice for all of us as individuals, as digital librarians, as a network. As our friend Sydette Harry says so beautifully--Sydette is a black journalist and activist based out of New York--"To decolonize is to ask for what you want. And it is harder is tell the truth about your story, to create that space, than it is to know what you're not supposed to do."

Anasuya Sengupta: 01:09:09 So here are a few questions that I want to offer you, that I invite us all to explore over the next few days, and I know many of you already think deeply and creatively about these issues. What does a decolonized digital library look like? Who defines this vision? Who creates and curates it? What does success look like? And to whom? And I want to end with the slightly paraphrased words of Rabindranath Tagore, the poet, the philosopher, the passionate advocate of libraries. He called librarians the intermediaries of intimacy, the intermediaries between the intimate relationship of the reader and the library. And I think he gave us, in one of his most famous poems a vision for the future. Chitto Jetha Bhuyshunyo, Where the Mind is Without Fear.

Anasuya Sengupta: 01:10:09 Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high / Where knowledge is free / Where the world has not been broken up into fragments / By narrow, domestic walls / Where words come out from the depths of truth / Where tireless

striving stretches its arms towards perfection / Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way / Into the dreary desert sand of dead habit / Where the mind is lead forward / Into ever-widening thought and action / Into that heaven of freedom, let us all awake.

Anasuya Sengupta: 01:10:50 In many ways, libraries are part of a critical infrastructure of and for freedom. We need to continue to affirm their radical premise and amplify their even more radical promise. Nanri, dhonnobaad, thank you.

Bethany Nowviskie: 01:11:44 Thank you so much. And now I think you can all see why it was my heart's fondest wish to bring Anasuya here to speak with all of us. Anasuya, I'm just filled with gratitude for your talk. Thank you. We have ten to fifteen minutes. We'll eat into the break a little bit since we started late--but it's a nice long break before the next sessions start--for asking questions. And you can see up on the screen that there are two ways to do it. One is to come to the mics here and over there. The other is to type your questions into the notes, and we have wonderful volunteers from our Inclusivity Committee who will be happy to read them out for you. So I think we'll start.

Audience Member: 01:12:37 Thank you for that, that wonderful and inspiring talk, and call to action. English is sort of the predominant language of scholarly communication across the globe, in most all domains, and even in countries where English isn't the native language. I was wondering if you could speak to, or if you have thoughts on, the relationship between the hegemony of English and scholarly communication, and the content producers on the Internet. And is there a relationship to what is on the Internet and the hegemony of English? Thank you.

Anasuya Sengupta: 01:13:18 That's an excellent question, and you are absolutely right. About 80% of scholarly journals are in English. And I think followed quite far behind by German. So essentially what we're saying is, scholarship is English-speaking. Or if you're not English-speaking, you have to manage some form of interpretation and translation in order to make your scholarship known. And the question that, in fact, Bethany and I were at a meeting at MIT earlier this year where we originally met, and this was one of the key questions we asked. What are we losing out on? Now it's not to completely dismiss English. English as an imperial language has done its work for us. My mother calls it the imperial language as the connecting language. And it is true. It connects us. And yet, if we do not recognize its hegemony then we are losing out on so much science, technology, humanities, cultures, world views.

- Anasuya Sengupta: 01:14:26 And so I think for all of us as digital librarians, first being aware of that huge gap. Secondly, thinking about ways in which we can make those translations and interpretations possible. And thirdly, of course this is the fun part, pushing the publishing industry. We know that is easy, right? Pushing the publishing industry to think about what that means is really important. And at the same time, to amplify the journals that do exist already, the sites of scholarship that do exist already across the global South, in multiple languages. The largest number of open access journals are actually from Latin America, in Portuguese and Spanish. And that's not a fact many of us know. So thank you for the question, and it's a really key and important issue to think about.
- Audience Member: 01:15:27 I wanted to just ask you about ... I think a lot about the next generation. I know you've mentioned that some of the speakers have talked about students being able to find themselves online, and that's pretty interesting. I have a 12 year old daughter who's in middle school, and she's in a pretty traditional school. And on the plus side, they're learning US History and they're not learning it the way I learned it, which is "the great and heroic explorers who came over and settled this great land." She's actually learning that they brought disease, they killed a lot of people. They were pretty bad. And even in a traditional school, she's actually learning that. That this is multi-faceted.
- Audience Member: 01:16:13 On the flip side, when the teachers encourage them to find sources for the essays they're writing, they tell them that they're not really allowed to use Wikipedia because they can't necessarily trust what they're looking at. And here you are saying Wikipedia is a great avenue to get other voices in there. So I'm thinking, what kind of message should I be bringing back to my daughter's school about Wikipedia? What's your take on it? Do you feel like that's absolutely wrong and that we should trust Wikipedia? How do we balance that with the need for authenticity?
- Anasuya Sengupta: 01:16:51 The half billion dollar question. Well, half a billion readers read Wikipedia every month. As a Wikipedian, I've totally outed myself today. As a Wikipedian, here's what we would say. Do not quote Wikipedia. Wikipedia is not a primary or secondary source. It is a tertiary source. It's your landing page. It's your landing page to go to an issue or person, an event, an artifact, and then to look at the secondary sources that are referenced there. So the idea is that it's your portal into understanding a world, or a specific slice of information or knowledge, but not to think that that is all there is. Wikipedia itself, in many

complicated ways, relies on principles that have both made it more trustworthy than we might imagine. Wikipedians love to quote a 2012 Nature article that talks about how Wikipedia is as, if not more, trustworthy than Encyclopedia Britannica. But I think the key is about what do you trust? Who do you trust? And Wikipedia is one place, not the only place, in which trust as I understand it should be about expanding the social, cultural, and knowledge relationships that we have with each other.

Anasuya Sengupta: 01:18:21

And so I do think that Wikipedia is one way to do it. But I think also, the infrastructure that underlies it, which is where I hope all of you come in, is about building the sources of multiple voices, of plural voices, of plural knowledge, which could be through the archives, through the libraries, and then through the metadata that we can use. And through the actual source that we can use.

Anasuya Sengupta: 01:18:52

But I do think that Wikipedia, as with anything that we get on the Internet, needs its own lens of both caution and possibility, of potential. And that's true of physical artifacts of books as well. I think we've grown very used to seeing them reified, and reifying them ourselves. But let's remember as Jane Austen said, "Who holds the pen?" And who has held the pen across time? Thanks. Wow. Have I stunned you all into silence?

Audience Member: 01:19:40

This is a question from our community document. Often there are administrative, and institutional blockers to decolonization work. And doing this work can bring risk from those administrators and institutions. How do you suggest we navigate those risks? And what do you suggest we do when those institutions refuse to give us space to do the work?

Anasuya Sengupta: 01:20:02

That's a great question, and it's a very pragmatic and political one. And I think the answer to that is in communities like this. It's in solidarity. It's in solidarity in thought, and solidarity in action. No one person should be trying to do this work alone, and it can feel deeply lonely. And in that loneliness is often the potential for attack. For example, whether it's the Dalit, or it's our queer friends from Bosnia and Herzegovina, or it's the Kumeyaay. Every time that they bring their knowledge online, there is someone who pushes back. And backlash may be a measure of success, which in some ways it is. But backlash is deeply painful. It is also retraumatizing. So what I ask of all of you is to be allies for and with each other. We're all allies all the time. And so try and figure out what that means as individuals, and what that means as institutions, and what that means as networks. And all of this, I think, will come home in practice. How do you do this in practice with each other?

Audience Member: 01:21:23 Is it my turn? I have a question about who controls the Internet in the places where 75% of the globe is accessing it, to go back to your Jane Austen point. It's who holds the pen, but I'm interested in your thoughts on who created the pen, and made it available, and distributed it? And I'm wondering if there are any efforts to decolonize the Internet by taking control of the actual Internet infrastructure and systems.

Anasuya Sengupta: 01:21:49 That is a question better put to my partner, who actually works on Internet infrastructure. But I will give you a little bit of the spiel that he offers the world. Essentially the Internet at the moment, as it stands, is made up of more than 50,000 networks. Right? So literally the inter-network. And there's a social technical system that connects all of these called the Board of Gateway protocol. That protocol is managed by both states as well as corporates. So there's a protocol, and then there's the infrastructure, which is physical--submarine cables, satellites, fiber optics--and we often don't think, because we're so used to thinking about the cloud, we don't often think about that infrastructure. But that infrastructure is governed by those with power and privilege, whether as states, or as corporates. And it is true that that is often a very complicated process of politics and money. And so there is a need for us as folks who think deeply about the Internet to question that power and control. But also to see as allies the communities of administrators who actually make the Internet work as magically as it appears to do. Because one of the things we find is that they have affinities and solidarities that are beyond their institutional positions and places. They truly, as research shows us, are trying to do good for the Internet.

Anasuya Sengupta: 01:23:39 So the answer is really, it's a distributed power system. There are nodes of centralization and much decentralization, and in many ways we should celebrate that. But we should also be very, very aware of where those conversations happen. The conversations happen in the ICANN, the IETF, the World Telecommunication Union, at the UN. Those are conversations that we as digital librarians want to be aware of, and know, and have allies within those spaces who can push some of our perspectives, and some of the plural ways that we would like to see happen. But at the end of the day, unless, frankly, tech capitalism doesn't change its deeply unequal nature of being and working, we have very little hope in the actual power and control of the infrastructure shifting. So it is something to be aware of.

Audience Member: 01:24:49 Hi. Thank you for a wonderful talk. I spent the better part of the past five years traveling around the global South, and the global

North, and trying to understand how institutions and individuals use technology in libraries, and in faculty departments to do our work. And so this is a two sided question. It's about institutions in the North, and institutions in the South. I was gonna lay it out as a caricature, but in the North now I find exactly the opposite problem of the penultimate question which is that now diversity and inclusion has become a brand that is hungry to absorb as much as it possibly can into these pamphlets that we throw away in the trash, basically limiting the amount of the power of the voice that we have by compartmentalizing it in that little corner right there is actually even much less power than we could have had if it would have stayed open-ended.

Audience Member: 01:25:46 And then of course, there's the institutions in the global South which are pressuring their scholars and their librarians to contribute to the knowledge cartels of the North in order to incentivize them. Basically you can't get a promotion unless somebody in Springer will publish you, or something like this, right? So we have these two problems. One, a North that is hungry for decolonial but only in the PR version of decolonial. And then we have all the institutions in the South which are hungry for their scholars to be recognized in the English speaking-knowledge cartels. Institutionally, how do we find ourselves out of this jam that 2018?

Anasuya Sengupta: 01:26:28 No. It's such an excellent question, and it hits at the heart of some of the complexities of this. As you can see, I don't have answers. I often have really good questions, and some suggestions. But I think part of it is around being really aware that diversity, equity, inclusion, are just words if they are not ... they don't get accompanied with intention and understanding of impact. So you're right. If it's within our worlds, it's just a checklist. Let's have the Latina! Let's have the queer folks! Let's have the African American in the room! But if the Latina, the African American, the non-binary person are not designing the agenda, and are not at the table as equal partners, then there's no real inclusion. And I think we all know that.

Anasuya Sengupta: 01:27:40 The sort of other side of the coin, as you said, is the pragmatics of being in the global South and having to work within a system that you have not constructed, created yourself, and have no power over. For many of those in the global South, as I said, the Internet is a news or messaging app, and for scholarship it is a proprietary platform, it is a proprietary journal. And so the answer might be, again, as I said a little earlier--and I would love to invite you to think about these, and share them with me because I want to know--is really radical ways of creating relationships, and alliances across the global South and the

global North. What happens when a global North and a global South institution or community work together to overcome both this problem of PR, and this problem of pragmatics. I think we will find answers, as we have, in practice.

- Bethany Nowviskie: 01:28:45 Anasuya, we're gonna take time for one more question. It'll be a rich one, but we only have time for a quick answer for it, and then I have a couple of quick little announcements before we head out to the break.
- Audience Member: 01:29:00 Here's a question from our collective document. As library workers, we see the power of classification schemes to reinforce colonial perspectives. How do we work to amplify alternative and indigenous forms of knowledge organization?
- Anasuya Sengupta: 01:29:17 Oh boy. Where do we begin? It is a great question. And I truly have no glib answer for it. I think the very fact that we're asking this question, that we are looking at taxonomies, we're looking at classifications, we're looking at how deeply colonizing they can be is itself part of the answer. Last week I was in Taipei and a Taiwanese librarian said exactly this to me. He said, "Listen, I can't work with those taxonomies. Do you know what it feels like to try and classify the way that the Library of Congress does when I'm working in five different versions of Chinese?" And I had no answer for him. But I think again, the conversations between the Taiwanese librarian and all of you are where this might begin. And I'm happy to put you in touch.
- Bethany Nowviskie: 01:30:14 So this has been completely wonderful and amazing. I've been asked to share three quick announcements before we thank Anasuya.
- Bethany Nowviskie: 01:30:25 If you indicated in your photography preferences on registration that you would prefer not to be photographed, and yet missed getting a yellow lanyard at the registration desk, we have some of those left and you can swap out your lanyards. This is probably true of people who have changed their minds as well. So if you don't want ... if you want to indicate to everyone that you'd rather not have your picture taken, yellow lanyards do that.
- Bethany Nowviskie: 01:30:57 If you're traveling with a baby, first, I'm so glad you're here. We love babies. Feed your baby anywhere. Feel comfortable to do that. But we do have a key to a private room and a facility if you would like. This is also great if you are pumping. We just want to make generally life easier on you as a traveling parent. We can freeze milk. Et cetera. Et cetera. Check in at the registration desk about that.

Bethany Nowviskie: 01:31:26 When you leave here, you can exit and go back along the promenade and there will be coffee and tea both outdoors and in, past the sponsor tables where you can say hi to those folks too. So those were the announcements.

Bethany Nowviskie: 01:31:41 Anasuya is back down here now. Hey. We are inspired, motivated, filled with gratitude for your talk. Thank you so much.

Bethany Nowviskie: 01:31:53 And I know that these ideas will be resonating all week long. With that, coffee.