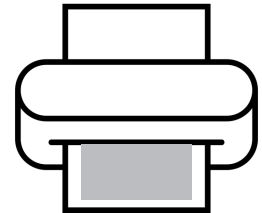


RADICAL EMPATHY IN ARCHIVAL PRACTICE

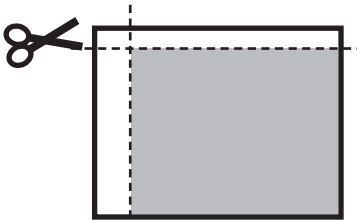
POSTER ASSEMBLY DIRECTIONS



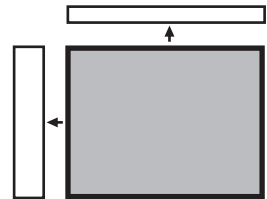
1. Open PDF



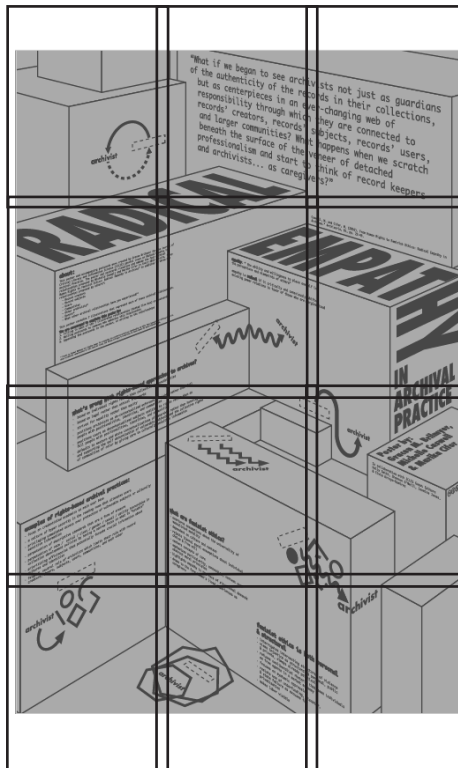
2. Print at 100%
Do not resize



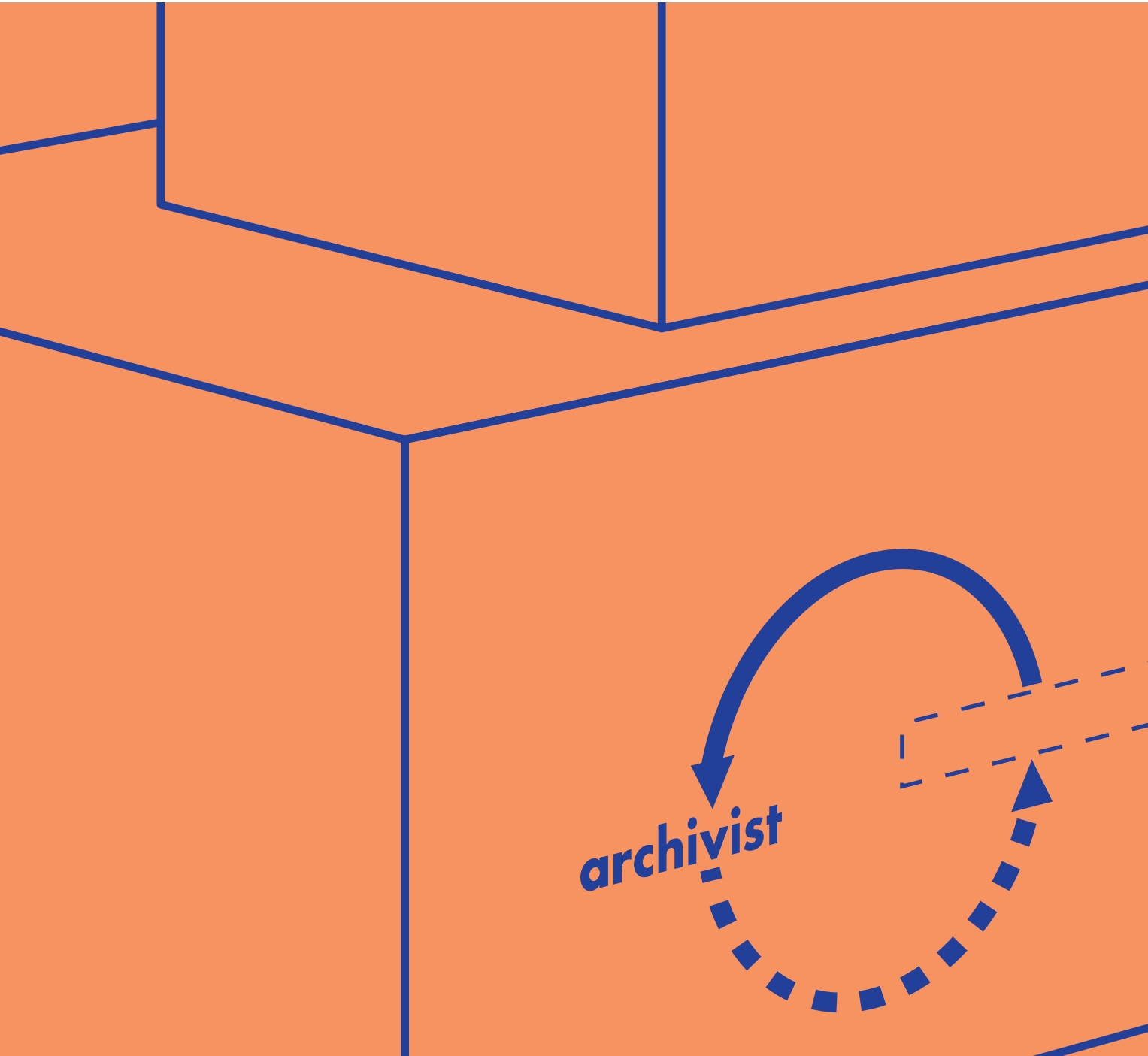
3. Cut off white edges
for each page



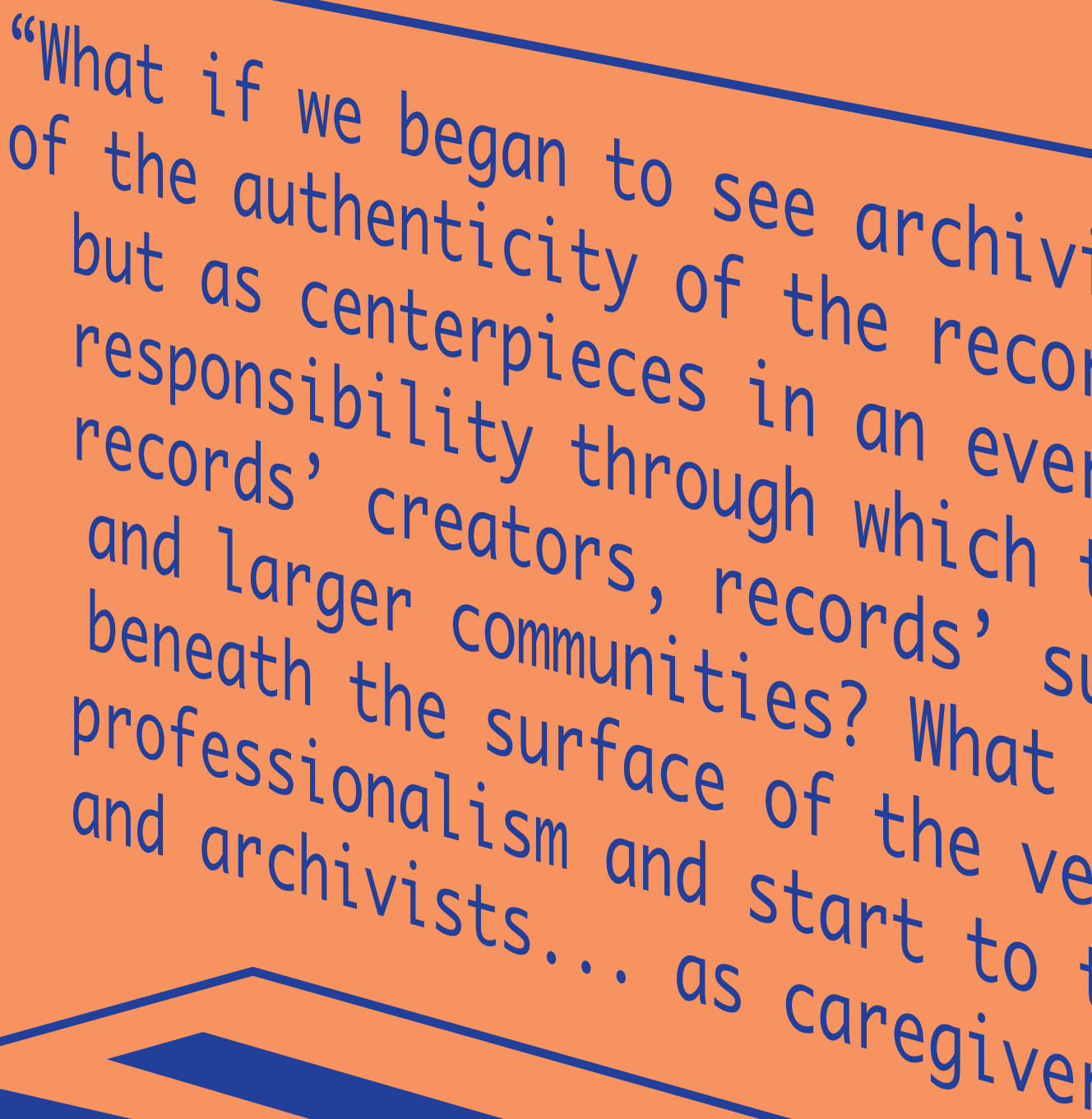
4. Discard white edges



5. Assemble
by overlaying matching edges



archivist



“What if we began to see archivists
of the authenticity of the records
but as centerpieces in an ever
responsibility through which the
records’ creators, records’ subjects
and larger communities? What
beneath the surface of the very
professionalism and start to think
and archivists... as caregivers

vists not just as guardians
ords in their collections,
er-changing web of
they are connected to
subjects, records' users,
happens when we scratch
eneer of detached
think of record
ers?"

RAMPS

about:

This poster and accompanying postcards were created by Gracen Brilmyer for the Journal of Critical Library and Information Science (JCLIS) special issue on Radical Empathy in Archival Practice. The poster and postcards visualize and embody the four archival relationships proposed by Michelle Caswell and Marika Cifor in their 2016 article "Human Rights to Feminist Ethics: Radical Empathy in Archives" in addition to three relationships proposed by others*:

- Record creators
- Record subjects
- Users
- Communities
- Other archivists*
- Donors*
- What other archival relationships have you experienced?*

You are encouraged to complete this poster by:

1. Filling in each of the 7 illustrated relationships (dotted line box) on postcards
2. Mailing postcards to someone who embodies this relationship
3. Appending the postcards to the poster, or writing in the relationships

* Credit to Rachel Mattson and Jasmine Jones for proposing the archivist-archivist relationship in 2017; Itza Cabrajal for writing about the donor-archivist relationship in this special issue; and Gracen Brilmyer's creativity to leave space for more relationships.

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cle, "From
three new

empathy: "the ability and willingness to place oneself in
the perceptions and viewpoints of others"
empathy is **radical** if it critically and consciously shifts
existing power relations in favor of those who are marginal

relationships.

stcards

writing about the

archivist

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Record keepers

aswell, M. and Cifor, M. (2016). From Human Rights to Feminist Ethics: Radical Empathy in Archives." *Archivaria*, 81, pp. 23-43.

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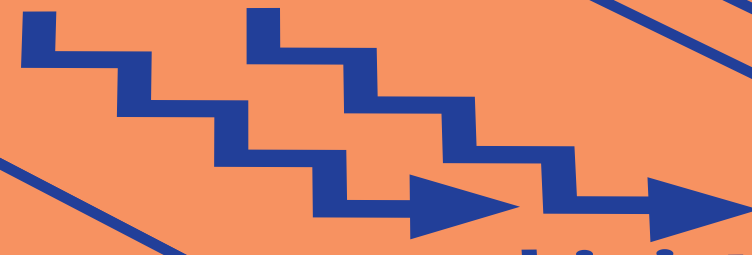
what's wrong with rights-based approach

- based on individual rights rather than collective responsibility
- based on legal rather than ethical frameworks
- strives for equality rather than equity
- positions archivists as de-contextualized enforcers of rigid rules
- people with positionalities, identities, and communities
- positions users as decontextualized subjects entitled to rights
- full people with positionalities, identities, and communities
- defaults to western and white conceptualizations of ownership
- and supporting the self determination of vulnerable subjects
- of communities of color by giving care to culturally sensitive

examples of rights-based archival practices:

- focus on credentialed academics as main user base
- a culture of hyper security in the reading room that alienates users
- privileging unmediated access over protection of vulnerable subjects or culturally sensitive information
- perpetuation of descriptive standards that are a form of erasure
- perpetuation of race / social / class / gender / sexual / ability hierarchies in collection development policies by having a narrow focus on what is "notable"
- prioritizing efficiencies that potentially forsake crucial information about cultures and identities
- feigned neutral role of archivists which limits their role with record creators, donors, subjects, users, communities, and each other

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archivist

what are feminist ethics?

- overturns assumptions about the universality of masculinist morality
- dependent on culture and context
- rejects liberal moral assumptions about individual choice & free will
- centers concepts of care
- emphasizes particularity, connection, context
- abstracts moral principles
- highlights empathy in the face of suffering
- draws to the fore women's lived experiences as caregivers



IN ARCHIVAL PRACTICE

Poster by:
**Gracen M. Brilmyer,
Michelle Caswell,
& Marika Cifor**

In collaboration with JCLIS Guest Editors
Holly Smith, Shannon O'Neill, Jasmine Jones,
& Elvia Arroyo-Ramírez



archivist



30

creat
archivist



OC
107



context over
of situational demands
lived experiences as

feminist ethics is both & structural

- interrogates intersecting structures
- views injustice as structural & personal
- & private, always already political
- refuses neoliberalist rhetoric that
- focuses on systemic oppression
- as free agents in a market economy
- resists use of underfunding, disaster
- & state failure as excuses for
- privatization
- makes labor visible

archivist



archivist

personal

...es of violence
...ersonal, public
...l
...t sees individuals
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