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Keynote

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Closing Keynote: Collecting Ourselves: Revisiting Archives, Testimonio, and Desert Wisdom

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Readings & Resources
From Keynote, "Collecting Ourselves: Revisiting Archives, Testimonio, and Desert Wisdom"
UC Libraries Forum | October 23, 2025

Dear UC Libraries Forum Attendees,

Thank you again for an inspiring experience at the UC Libraries Forum! A special thank you to Jade Alburo, Sara Davidson Squibb, and the planning team for the invitation.

On the following pages, you'll find some of the key sources I mentioned along with further resources on Indigenous epistemologies during turbulent times. Community makes this work possible! I also highlight the organizations and makers I mentioned.

And a few notes! Gratitude for your thoughtful questions during Q&A. I wanted to acknowledge that ancestors can take many forms: biological, intellectual, creative, activist, and more. Especially in the context of historical trauma and personal trauma, acknowledging that a broad understanding of ancestors can be necessary and vital. One of the questions also addressed cultural appropriation. I provided a definitive response, but I imagine what we could have unpacked in more depth (with more time!). For example, more about context, relationships, and history. Krawec's *Becoming Kin: An Indigenous Call to Unforgetting the Past and Reimagining Our Future* helps me think about how to engage with cultural practices and community knowledges with intention. Many traditions beyond the ones familiar to my ancestors influence my work, and I think quite a bit about appropriation as well.

Lastly, the altar craft I mentioned appears in the piece "Crafting Black Ecologies: From the Gulf and Geographic Kin, a collaboration with fellow artist-scholars in *Southern Cultures*.

Wishing everyone plenty of the care, inspiration, support, and community-building you experienced during the forum.

Onward in these times and beyond,
Naya
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Organizations and Makers

Texas:

- Alliance for African American Health in Central Texas
- Urban Roots
- Foodways Texas
- Briscoe Center for American History (University of Texas at Austin)

California:

- Mojave Desert Land Trust (and Seed Bank)
- Grateful Desert Apothecary (Maker/Local Business in Joshua Tree, CA)
- African American Health in Central Texas
- Urban Roots

Black (Ethno)botany

Books:

Judith Carney (2022) *Black Rice: The African Origins of Rice Cultivation in the Americas.*

Judith Carney and Richard Nicholas Rosomoff (2011) *In the Shadow of Slavery: Africa's Botanical Legacy in the Atlantic World*.

Robert Voeks and John Rashford (2013) *African Ethnobotany in the Americas*.

Exhibit: "Black Botany":

New York Botanical Garden, Curated by Rashad Bell and Nuala Caomhánach, https://www.nybg.org/event/black-botany-the-nature-of-black-experience/

Black Ecologies

Articles (Open Access):

Essays in the "Black Ecologies" series of *Black Perspectives,* the online journal of African American Intellectual History Society (AAIHS): https://www.aaihs.org/tag/black-ecologies/

JT Roane and Justin Hosbey (2019) "Mapping Black Ecologies." Volume 2, *Current Research in Digital History*. https://crdh.rrchnm.org/essays/v02-05-mapping-black-ecologies/

Also, work by Tianna M. Bruno (UC Berkeley - Black ecologies) and MM Ramírez (Stanford - Latinx/Latine/Indigenous/BIPOC ecologies)

Conversations between bell hooks and Amalia Mesa-Bains
bell hooks and Amalia Mesa-Bains. *homegrown: engaged cultural criticism* (2nd. edition). *Note: the 2nd edition corrects errors in Spanish.*

Chicana/Xicana Spiritual Expressions
Altar and visual art by Amalia Mesa-Bains

Research and community work of Dr. Brenda Sendejo (forthcoming book on Guadalupe/Tonantzin; previous chapter with similar focus)

Works by Gloria Anzaldua - *Borderlands/La Frontera* along with other works (such as in this reader).

Lara Medina and Martha R. Gonzales, Editors (2019). *Voices from the Ancestors: Xicanx and Latinx Spiritual Expressions and Healing Practices.*

On Testimonio
This comprehensive piece also places *testimonio* in conversation with other BIPOC feminisms: Kathryn Blackmer Reyes and Julia E. Curry Rodriguez (2012). *Testimonio:* Origins, Terms, and Resources. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, *45*(3), 525–538. https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2012.698571 (Download also available here: LINK)

Indigenous Epistemologies/Knowledges (and Turbulence)
Patty Krawec (2022) *Becoming Kin: An Indigenous Call to Unforgetting Our Past and Reimagining Our Future.*

Norma Wong (2025) *When No Thing Works: A Zen and Indigenous Perspective on Resilience, Shared Purpose, and Leadership in the Timeplace of Collapse*.

Healing Justice
Cara Page & Erica Woodland (2023) *Healing Justice Lineages: Dreaming at the Crossroads of Liberation, Collective Care, and Safety*.

Podcast/Magazine: Emergence Magazine: *Recommendations: some available in audio form:*

- "Corn Tastes Better on the Honor System" from Dr. Robin Wall Kimmerer (well known for *Braiding Sweetgrass*)
- "Deep Time Diligence: An Interview with Tyson Yunkaporta" (Australian Aboriginal scholar and author)
- "Myrtle's Medicine" from Dr. Kinitra Brooks (African-American healing practices, rootwork, and gardening)