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From Human Rights to Feminist Ethics: Radical Empathy in Archives

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Samenvatting	Much recent discussion about social justice in archival studies has assumed a legalistic, rightsbased framework to delineate the role of records, archives, and archivists in both the violation of human rights and in holding individuals and governments accountable for basic human rights, such as the right to life, privacy, and freedom of expression. Yet decades of feminist scholarship have called into question the universality of a rights-based framework, arguing instead that an ethics of care is a more inclusive and apt model for envisioning and enacting a more just society. This article proposes a shift in the theoretical model used by archivists and archival studies scholars to address social justice concerns - from that based on individual rights to a model based on feminist ethics. In a feminist ethics approach, archivists are seen as caregivers, bound to records creators, subjects, users, and communities through a web of mutual affective responsibility. This article proposes four interrelated shifts in these archival relationships, based on radical empathy.
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