



The Assistant or Associate Professor of Critical Approaches to History of Education
Search Committee invites you to a talk:

“KEEPERS OF THE MOVEMENT: BLACK ABOLITIONIST TEACHERS AND THEIR ASSEMBLAGE OF EARLY BLACK EDUCATION, CIVIL RIGHTS, AND ABOLITION MOVEMENTS IN 19TH CENTURY CALIFORNIA”



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Monday, April 14th, 11:00 a.m., Sproul 1212

[Zoom](#)—Meeting ID: 351 519 0645 Passcode: SOEFAC2024

ABSTRACT: In 1854, when the inaugural California Colored Convention, an anti-slavery organization, was called to order, the matter of quality Black education was a thematic agenda item of convention goers—many of whom were Black teachers. This august body was committed to educating “the head, the hands, the heart” of Black students in preparation for the necessities and responsibilities of life in a hostile world. In dialogue with these efforts, this project historicizes how abolitionist praxes, pedagogies, and epistemologies rooted in the Black radical and intellectual tradition informed Black education in the American West. Examining black periodicals, personal papers, administrative state documents, and Colored Convention minutes, this project illuminates the interiority of Black educational heritages in antebellum California and untangles competing visions for Black schooling in the Western frontier. This research bridges a critical rupture in the Black educational archive to document how Black teachers transformed the sociopolitical landscape of the American West and offers insights into how Black abolitionist teachers like Rev. Jeremiah Burke Sanderson articulated demands for social, political, and educational redress. Synthesizing life, intellectual, and social movement histories of education, this project employs the methodological innovation of “archival cognition” to provide hermeneutical scaffolds to interpret historical artifacts, researcher subjectivity, memory, and power, while also adding specificity to how historians become better learners of history ourselves. Ultimately, *Keepers of the Movement* demonstrates how Black abolitionist educators breathed life into Black social movements as political subjects committed to undoing the symbolic and material order of antiblackness, as well as, how they transformed the political ambitions of the anti-slavery and civil rights movements in California. These historical explorations expand the canon of Black educational history westward and add texture to our understanding of the limits and possibilities of educational abolitionism(s) in practice and theory.

