ARCHIVAL ISSUES

Journal of the Midwest Archives Conference

Volume 42, Number 1, 2023

CONTENTS

MAC midwest archives conference

Archival Issues

Journal of the Midwest Archives Conference

Volume 42, Number 1, 2023

CONTENTS

PUBLICATION REVIEWS

Editorial Policy

Archival Issues, a semiannual journal published by the Midwest Archives Conference since 1975, is concerned with the issues and problems confronting the contemporary archivist. The Editorial Board welcomes submissions related to current archival practice and theory, archival history, and aspects of related professions of interest to archivists (such as records management and conservation management). We encourage diversity of topics and points of view. We will consider submissions of a wide range of materials, including research articles, case studies, review essays, proceedings of seminars, and opinion pieces.

Manuscripts are anonymously reviewed by the Editorial Board; its decisions concerning submissions are final. Decisions on manuscripts generally will be made within six weeks of submission and will include a summary of reviewers' comments. The Editorial Board uses the current edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style* as the standard for style, including endnote format.

To submit a manuscript to *Archival Issues*, or to view additional information about the submission process including acceptance criteria, copyright, and licensing, visit our online submission portal (https://www.iastatedigitalpress.com/archivalissues/submissions) or contact the Editorial Board chair, Brandon Pieczko.

Publication Reviews

Archival Issues reviews books, proceedings, web publications, and other materials of direct relevance or interest to archival practitioners. Publishers should send review copies to Publications Review Editor Nicholas A. Pavlik. Please direct suggestions for books, proceedings, web publications, other materials for review, and offers to review publications to the publications review editor.

Digital Access to *Archival Issues*

Archival Issues is available digitally through Iowa State University's Digital Press (https://www.iastatedigitalpress.com/archivalissues). This online version of the journal is open access and includes past issues of *Archival Issues* (1992–) and its predecessor, *The Midwestern Archivist* (1976–1991). Beginning with volume 40, issue 2, articles published in *Archival Issues* will be assigned a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International (CC BY 4.0) license that will allow us to provide immediate online access to new issues of the journal without an embargo period. A full run of *Archival Issues,* except the three most recent volumes, is also available to JSTOR subscribers (https://www.jstor.org/journal/archivalissues).

Advertising

Display advertisements in color (RGB) or grayscale are accepted at the following rates: full page, $250; 1/2 page, $150; 1/4 page, $75; 1/8 page, $50. These rates are discounted 20 percent for a one-volume (two-issue) commitment. Ads supplied via email are preferred; camera- ready black and white are acceptable. No bleed pages.

Archival Issues is pleased to consider exchange ads with other archival publications and with publications of other organizations that may be of interest to our readers.

MAC offers advertisers several easy and effective ways to market products, services, and announcements. These outlets include its newsletter, journal, Annual Meeting programs, and website. For all advertising rates, please contact the MAC vendor coordinator.

The vendor coordinator handles all invoices for advertising. Payment is due within 30 days of receipt of invoice.

For information concerning exhibits and sponsorships during the Annual Meeting, please contact the MAC vendor coordinator.

Awards

The Margaret Cross Norton Award, established in 1985, honors a legendary pioneer in the American archival profession and first state archivist of Illinois. The award recognizes the author(s) of what is judged to be the best article in the previous two years of *Archival Issues*. The New Author Award, instituted in 1993, recognizes superior writing by previously unpublished archivists and may be awarded to practicing archivists who have not had article-length writings published in professional journals and to students in archival education programs. Up to two awards may be presented in a single cycle.

A panel of three archivists independent of the journal's Editorial Board selects the Margaret Cross Norton and New Author Awards for articles appearing in a two-year (four-issue) cycle. Winners of each award receive a certificate and $250.

The Editorial Board

Amplifying Civil Rights Collections with Oral Histories: A Collaboration with Alumni at Queens College, City University of New York

By Annie Tummino and Victoria Fernandez

ABSTRACT: Representing a shift in archival methods, oral history is increasingly used alongside more traditional methods of documentation to capture institutional and community histories. In this article, the authors demonstrate how the Student Help Lived Experience Project at the Queens College Library's Special Collections and Archives (SCA) provided a vital supplement to more traditional methods of archival documentation. SCA was able to leverage resources provided by a partnering organization and a newly established graduate fellowship to bolster its relationship with other entities on campus and to engage alumni in a participatory, collaborative effort that centered their knowledge and interests. This article highlights models and lessons from the project and explores how oral histories collected for the project amplify existing collections in the archives. The authors found that revisiting collections through oral histories introduced nuance and complexity not available in the physical collections. The oral histories collected for the project enriched the historical narrative, bringing into vivid relief an important chapter in civil rights and Queens College history by uncovering personal motivations, details, and life lessons of interest to a wide audience of archives users.

Introduction

In July 1963, 16 Queens College students embarked on a six-week trip to Prince Edward County, Virginia, to tutor Black children who had been locked out of public education since 1959. Part of a student-led organization called the Student Help Project, the Queens College volunteers were white, with the exception of one Black female student, and predominantly Jewish. In Virginia, they lent support to a long struggle for equal education with national ramifications. Locally, they were part of a larger pool of volunteers who tutored children in underresourced schools in Queens. Many were also active in the campus chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). These students were united by their determination to take action to make the world a better place.

Figure 1: Queens College publicity photograph of Student Help Project volunteers in 1963. Rosalind Silverman Papers, Queens College Special Collections and Archives.

In 2009, Special Collections and Archives (SCA) in the Benjamin S. Rosenthal Library at Queens College, City University of New York, began a collecting project to document the history of alumni who participated in the civil rights movement of the 1960s. The college is known for its association with Mississippi Freedom Summer in 1964, when a contingent of Queens College students traveled to Mississippi to participate in voter registration drives and teach in Freedom Schools. Tragically, Queens College student Andrew Goodman was murdered by white supremacists in Mississippi that summer, along with fellow organizers Michael Schwerner and James Chaney.[1] The Student Help Project is a lesser-known but still vital component of Queens College's connection to the civil rights movement.

Over the 2020–2021 academic year, SCA undertook the Student Help Lived Experience Project to further document this history, carrying out 14 interviews with alumni. This article provides a case study of the project, including successful outcomes and challenges faced, with a goal of providing useful information to other archivists interested in oral history. The authors explore how oral histories collected for the project enhanced the historical narrative, supplementing and amplifying existing collections.

Background in the Literature

The Student Help Lived Experience Project drew from oral history practice, as well as participatory and community archiving models. In 2012, Terry Cook conceptualized four "shifting archival paradigms" within the Western archival tradition over the last 150 years: evidence, memory, identity, and community. Overall, the archivist moved "from passive curator to active appraiser to societal mediator to community facilitator."[2] In 2012, the "community facilitator" paradigm was "on the horizon . . . not yet fully formed."[3] Characteristics of this emerging framework included centering community practices and Indigenous knowledge; sharing archival expertise, authority, and resources with community members; and engaging stakeholders with mainstream holdings in new ways.[4]

The emphasis on community facilitation has impacted college and university archivists in multiple ways. In "Building Relationships," Eddie Woodward says, "College and university archivists are learning that, while a university records management program is important, it only tells half of the story . . . the social and cultural side must be documented as seen through the eyes of the students who attended the school."[5] Jarrett M. Drake challenges college and university archivists to "document student protests and activism that critique or otherwise implicate the college," thereby exposing institutional histories of racism and inequality.[6] Project STAND, a radical grassroots archival consortia project, provides practical guidance about how to document student activism without causing harm to marginalized communities.[7] Overall, archivists must consider the social, ethical, and political dimensions of their work to build truly diverse, inclusive repositories.

Today, oral history is a natural choice for archivists wishing to document the student point of view and the history of dissent within their institutions. Yet, this represents a sea change in archival practice. Traditionally, Western historians were skeptical of oral history as a reliable methodology to document the past. According to Alistair Thomson:

> The late-nineteenth-century development of a professional history discipline based in universities led to the institutionalization of historical procedures and training inspired by the work of German historian Leopold von Ranke. The primary concern of the new professional historian was to discover "what really happened" in the past, and the most reliable sources were documents which could be preserved in archives and checked by other researchers. Oral evidence was regarded as unreliable folk tales and treated with disdain by academic historians.[8]

This scholarly cold shoulder began to thaw after World War II, as the availability of portable tape recorders made it easier to record interviews and create transcripts.[9] However, even as oral history became more common, academics were quick to assert that the technique belonged in the ivory tower, not in the hands of the masses. For example, in 1955, Vaughn Davis Bornet fretted that "the interview method can, in careless or irresponsible hands, produce reminiscences filled with problems for the historian."[10] In Bornet's view, only trained "interviewer-historians" following stringent standards were qualified to carry out this work.[11]

Despite concerns over the trustworthiness of oral history, the practice continued to grow in popularity, gaining traction as historians increasingly aimed to document underrepresented populations. By the 1970s, historians were urging archivists to use oral histories to illuminate the lived experience of ordinary people and to document the history of social movements from the bottom up.[12] Writing in *American Archivist* in 1983, James Fogerty defended oral history as an important method for documenting gaps in traditional archives. In particular, he felt that interviews could illuminate the "thoughts and motivations" of collection donors in ways that records alone could not.[13]

According to Ellen Swain, despite defenses in the literature like Fogerty's, many archivists were painfully slow to embrace oral history, remaining attached to traditional notions of archival neutrality.[14] The integration of archives into the field of library science also deemphasized subject expertise, with technology—web development, databases, and access systems—taking center stage in the profession in the 1990s and early 2000s.[15] However, postmodern theory, with its emphasis on the value of subjective and lived experience, also influenced the archival literature in the 1990s. Responding to a changing theoretical landscape, as well as calls from social historians and activists for more grassroots approaches to collecting, archival professionals began to take a more proactive stance toward documentation and appraisal, with a goal of creating a more complete historical record.[16]

Recent scholarship has explored the relationship between community-based archiving practices, public history, and history-making. Community-based archivists and public historians are both committed to common interests, such as illuminating marginalized narratives, highlighting societal concerns, and developing accessible content that connects past histories to the present. In their article for *The Public Historian* in 2018, authors Marika Cifor, Michelle Caswell, Alda Allina Migoni, and Noah Geraci—all individuals working in community archives—argue that the connection between community-archiving practices and public history is the mutual need to engage in activism that challenges traditional notions of neutrality and objectivity in both arenas.[17] By surveying staff at 12 community archives sites, the authors observed that community archiving projects are part of an ecosystem that aligns with public history practices. The authors conclude that "community archives both provide support for history-making activities and are themselves a product of history-making processes. Public history production is thus intimately wrapped up in the practice of creating and sustaining community archives."[18] Community archives have societal implications in the sense that these repositories are actively engaging with tools that reject the passivity of the recordkeeper, while introducing new historical perspectives. Ideally, the relationship between public history practice and community archiving is reciprocal and mutually supporting.

Whether conducted by archivists or public historians, oral history serves as a primary tool for including varied voices in historical narratives. In his publication discussing the benefits of oral history projects, Michael Frisch asserts,

. . . oral history emerges a powerful tool for discovering, exploring, and evaluating the nature of the process of historical memory—how people make sense of their past, how they connect individual experience and its social context, how the past becomes part of the present, and how people use it to interpret their lives and the world around them.[19]

Oral history is unique in its duality that creates and documents history, which joins together the fields of archives and public history through its practice. Frisch's point about the power of oral history is exemplified in the outcomes of the Kentucky Civil Rights Oral History Project (KCROHP). This project collected the experiences of over 100 individuals who lived through segregation and the civil rights movement. Using oral history, the KCROHP exposed the reality of lives of average Kentuckians that were affected by Jim Crow laws and racial tensions. Most important, the project "broadened [the] understanding of the regional and national movement" by painting a microcosm of history through the conducted interviews.[20] The value of the KCROHP situated a specific narrative of social activism in Kentucky among the entirety of the civil rights movement and explored the histories of people who were otherwise lesser known.

In the twenty-first century, archivists have merged their technical expertise with larger goals of community empowerment. Examples of collaborative, interdisciplinary oral history initiatives abound, especially in New York City. The Queens Memory Project established a sustainable model for documenting the histories of residents from one of the nation's most diverse counties. The Brooklyn Public Library and the New York Public Library have carried out numerous oral history initiatives centered on various neighborhoods, as well as on social and religious identities. Nationally, StoryCorps democratized the oral history model by facilitating submissions of stories collected by everyday people on a broad scale, collecting more than half a million stories since 2003.[21] The Oral History Association's website currently lists over 60 "Centers and Collections," many of which are situated in archives and libraries.[22]

Oral history training and standards remain important but are no longer the exclusive purview of professionals or scholars. In 1955, best practices included hiring stenographers to transcribe texts, discarding original media, and retaining only brief audio extracts for reference, which "could be made on 33 1/3 r.p.m. disks or with an expensive, high-fidelity tape-recording machine similar to those used by radio stations."[23] Today, oral histories can be conducted using smartphones, over Zoom, or with inexpensive digital audio recorders. Software can automate the production of transcripts (or at least provide decent first drafts), and tools like the Oral History Metadata Synchronizer (OHMS) can be used to index and synchronize transcripts with sound and video for display on keyword searchable, online platforms.[24]

In a 2016 article published in *American Archivist*, Jessica Wagner Webster found that "though archivists have been involved with the oral history movement from its early days, archival professional literature is surprisingly sparse in its presentation of oral history case studies."[25] Using keyword searches, Wagner Webster determined that the word "archivist" appeared only 36 times in articles published in *Oral History and Oral History Review*, excluding results in the front matter, back matter, and regional network lists.[26] Moreover, Wagner Webster found that *American Archivist*, the oldest and most prestigious archives journal in the United States, contained only 37 articles with the phrase "oral history" in the title from 1938 to 2011, with only one published between 2000 and 2011. Replicating this approach, the authors found that only three articles with the phrase "oral history" in the title had been published in *American Archivist* from 2012 to 2022.[27] This points to the need for more oral history case studies to be published from the archival perspective.

Despite the gap in the professional literature, oral history has been widely adopted in the field. As reported by Wagner Webster, in a survey of 150 archivists conducted in 2015, 83 percent of respondents said that they or their colleagues had carried out an oral history project at their current place of employment.[28] Additionally, 71 percent planned to conduct an oral history project in the near future despite considerable obstacles, such as lack of support, time, and resources.[29] In academic libraries, oral history is increasingly used alongside more traditional methods of documentation to capture institutional and community histories. Academic archivists may initiate their own oral history projects or collaborate with faculty or administrators who conduct interviews. In either case, oral history projects are challenging because they draw upon skills that fall outside of standard archival training and require specialized workflows, software, and/or equipment. Despite improvements in technology, oral history remains time and resource intensive.

Recent scholarship highlights the advantages and challenges of integrating oral history work into academic archives and libraries. Rebecca Ciota notes that archives and libraries often become involved in oral histories "at the tail end" of the process, serving as repositories for externally generated content.[30] However, at Grinnell College, the Libraries and the Office of Development and Alumni Relations (DAR) were able to create a "balanced and functional partnership" in an effort to collect Alumni Oral Histories.[31] As Ciota explains in a useful case study, the Libraries and DAR share labor and other project costs. DAR coordinates collection of the interviews during the annual reunion weekend, pays for transcription software, and funds student workers. The Libraries supervise student workers, create metadata, and upload the oral histories to Digital Grinnell, the Libraries' Islandora-based digital platform.[32] The project is worthwhile for both entities: it supports DAR's fund-raising goals, and enriches the Libraries' unique collections.

At Texas Tech University, archivists Robert Weaver and Zachary Hernández of the Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library (SWC) explored the feasibility of converging archival acquisition processes and the collection of oral histories. They concluded that when equipped with dedicated staff and resources, conducting oral histories with donors while acquiring new accessions created "moments for reflection and

discussion . . . boosted the creation of richer metadata and uncovered deeper connections between this project and existing materials."[33] Not only did the integration of oral histories into the archival workflow benefit the processing archivists, it also proved that fostering relationships with donors can democratize and increase the transparency of archival processes that involve community interests. The success of the SWC's incorporation of oral histories into the field of archives further demonstrates that the two previously independent spheres are mutually beneficial and should be explored at greater lengths in other archival projects

Civil Rights Movement History

In Prince Edward County, Virginia, Queens College volunteers became connected to a long, historic struggle for civil rights and equal education. The story began in 1951 when Barbara Johns, a student at the segregated R.R. Moton High School in Farmville, led her classmates in a strike to demand better school conditions. The students wanted a new school. Resources in segregated public schools in Black communities, such as at Moton High School, were decidedly inferior to those found in schools for white students. Moton, built in 1939, was overcrowded from the start, with 450 students by 1950, although the building could only accommodate 180 students. Tar-paper shacks lacking adequate heat in the winter were the solution to overflowing classrooms. The school building did not have a cafeteria or gymnasium and was assigned a few broken-down buses from the white schools to transport only a portion of its total number of students. Overall, the school lacked up-to-date equipment, learning spaces, and books, and it was underfunded and in a state of disrepair.[34]

Although desegregation was not their initial goal, Johns and the other students agreed to the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) filing a suit on their behalf to overturn the legal basis of maintaining segregated schools. This suit became one of five cases to make up the historic Supreme Court decision *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954. Although *Brown v. Board* declared de jure racially segregated public schools unconstitutional, many school districts resisted desegregating their public schools. Harry F. Byrd, a US senator from Virginia, called for a strategy of "Massive Resistance" to desegregation.[35] In 1959, a judge ordered Prince Edward County schools to desegregate; however, the county school board responded by closing the entire public school system rather than comply. The white community then banded together to open private, segregated schools for white students only. Religious and community institutions, relatives, and nearby counties provided limited educational opportunities for Black children, and, in many instances, Black children were sent to live with relatives in other counties or even states to receive an education.[36]

The summer of 1963 brought major changes to Prince Edward County. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) sent field organizers to Prince Edward County to conduct training in direct action and nonviolent methods. The local NAACP Youth Council, under the tutelage of Reverend Goodwin Douglas, pastor of the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Beulah Church in Farmville, not only protested the school

lock-out but also demanded desegregation of movie theaters, stores, and other municipal facilities. Queens College volunteer Phyllis Padow-Sederbaum captured wonderful black-and-white photographs of one of the sit-ins, which are preserved with her papers in the archives.[37]

Figure 2: Sit–in demonstration outside the segregated movie theater in Farmville, Virginia, 1963. Phyllis Padow-Sederbaum Papers, Queens College Special Collections and Archives.

The Virginia Student Help Project had its beginning the summer before, when Queens College student Hanoch McCarty (then known as Fred) saw a story about the school lock-out in Prince Edward County on an NBC news program. At McCarty's urging, student members of the Jamaica (Queens) Student Help Project and CORE organized the trip to Virginia with the help of Education Department professors Rachel Weddington and Sidney Simon. Preparation for the trip included fund-raising, publicity, and training for living in the segregated South. Once in Prince Edward County, the 16 volunteers spent six weeks living and socializing with Black families, tutoring children, and organizing a community library. At the request of community leaders such as Reverend L. Francis Griffin of Farmville's First Baptist Church, the Queens College volunteers focused on teaching and did not directly participate in local demonstrations. The local community wanted the volunteers there to help, not to lead the fight.

During the summer of 1963, Special Assistant to the Attorney General William vanden Heuvel was also present in Prince Edward County on a fact-finding mission. Under the leadership of Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, vanden Heuvel and the US Department of Justice played a pivotal role in establishing the Prince Edward Free School Association, which provided children with free education during the 1963–1964 school year. Schools were then ordered to desegregate by the Supreme Court in 1964 (*Griffin vs. County Board of Prince Edward County*), and the public schools reopened for the 1964–1965 school year.[38]

The history of the fight for equality in Prince Edward County is more thoroughly documented by the Robert Russa Moton Museum, site of the former Robert Russa Moton High School, which is now a National Historic Landmark and museum. The museum brings this history to the public and educational partners through physical and digital exhibitions, highlighting the "leading role its citizens played in America's transition from segregation toward integration" while also serving as a policy center and community resource.[39]

The Student Help Lived Experience Project: A Case Study

In 2009, SCA kicked off its civil rights collecting initiative. The first donation of 30 boxes of materials came from alumnus Mark Levy, who served as co-coordinator of the Meridian (Mississippi) Freedom School in 1964. More donations from activists of the 1960s followed, including collections from six alumni who participated in the Student Help Project and traveled to Prince Edward County, Virginia, in 1963. Their papers include organizational records, clippings, photographs, political ephemera, correspondence, and tutoring curricula related to the Virginia initiative. Yet, alumni central to the project felt that something was missing from the archival record: the direct voices of the volunteers.

In 2018, alumni Stan Shaw and Mike Wenger, who served as chairpersons of the Student Help Project consecutively in 1963–1964, approached SCA with a proposal. They wanted to document the long-term impact of the Virginia initiative on the participants, including those who did not save physical materials, but still had important memories to share. Additionally, they wanted to illuminate the role of supporters who helped orchestrate the project, but did not travel to Virginia. Shaw and Wenger felt that oral histories and/or submission of written reflections would be the best way to include this information in the archives. SCA was immediately enthusiastic about Shaw and Wenger's proposal. The department strives to implement a collaborative archival model, which integrates the voices, desires, and concerns of donors and stakeholders. Moreover, with the Queens Public Library, Queens College co-administers the Queens Memory community archiving project, which uses oral history to document the history of the borough and the campus. The college's relationship with Queens Memory provided a strong foundation to take on Shaw and Wenger's proposal. However, the head of SCA, Annie Tummino, was hesitant to commit to the project without dedicated staff resources. Oral history initiatives are time intensive, involving research, planning, outreach, consent, and documentation.

A joint initiative of the Queens Public Library and Queens College Library, Queens Memory is a successful participatory local history project. The program's goal is to "raise awareness and a sense of ownership in the production of our shared historic record," representing the people of Queens in all of their diversity.[40] Within the Queens Memory model, library staff provide archival processing and long-term preservation of and public access to interviews and other archival donations from Queens residents as well as programming, training, equipment, and resources to communities and individuals across

the borough.[41] This facilitates submission of interviews, scanned documents, and other local history materials from volunteers and residents. Digital files are managed centrally and made accessible through a variety of online access points, including the Queens Memory Aviary portal, Queens College's instance of ArchivesSpace, and the CUNY OneSearch catalog (discussed in more detail later in this article).

Initially founded as a pilot project in 2010 with a $25,000 collaborative digitization grant from the Metropolitan New York Library Council (METRO), Queens Memory is now in its twelfth year, with several dedicated staff, dozens of volunteers, and a vibrant roster of initiatives. The project has preserved close to a thousand oral histories; conducted hundreds of public programs, including story-sharing events, scanning days, panel discussions, training sessions for new participants, and personal archiving workshops; and produced three seasons of an award-winning, multilingual podcast. Its Ambassadors Program trains branch librarians from diverse neighborhoods to collect memories from their local communities. Administrative responsibilities for Queens Memory are delineated through a memorandum of understanding (MOU). Queens Public Library is responsible for long-term preservation of digital files, while the Queens College Library is responsible for hosting the Queens Memory website. Generally, Queens Public Library focuses on public and neighborhood-based outreach, while Queens College Library documents the history of campus communities and provides assistance to faculty teaching public history classes. Building on the college's historic connection to the civil rights movement, the Queens College Library prioritizes documentation of student activism, social change, and diverse populations.

In 2019, the Civil Rights and Social Justice Archives Endowed Fellowship program was established through the generosity of Freda S. and J. Chester Johnson. The program supports annual selection of a Fellow from the Queens College Graduate School of Library and Information Studies to carry out a project related to the civil rights collections. The establishment of this new program allowed SCA to move forward with Shaw and Wenger's proposal. Tummino elected to dedicate the first fellowship to what became known as the Student Help Lived Experience Project. Victoria Fernandez was selected from a competitive pool of applicants as the inaugural Fellow. With the assistance of Shaw and Wenger, and under the supervision of Tummino, Fernandez dedicated 300 hours over the 2020–2021 academic year to the project, earning a $2,500 stipend each semester. The fellowship was designed to be carried out entirely remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Fernandez's work included conducting outreach, carrying out interviews, creating metadata, processing transcripts, and compiling resources.

Fourteen interviews were conducted with alumni, who included volunteers of the Student Help Project, students who were politically active in campus government and helped support the initiative, and involved faculty members. The initial outreach list was compiled by Stan Shaw and Mike Wenger, the alumni who initiated the project. The Queens College Alumni Relations office helped provide contact information for the individuals with whom Shaw and Wenger had lost touch. Sadly, several people associated with the project had already passed away or were in ill health. When reflecting on

outcomes at the end of the project, Shaw and Wenger expressed some regret that the oral history project had not been organized years before, when folks were in better health and their memories sharper.

To launch the project, Shaw and Wenger drafted interview questions based on their own recollections and experiences they felt were pertinent to include in the oral histories. The questions were divided into four sections: 1) personal background information; 2) Virginia project experiences; 3) Jamaica project experiences; and 4) questions regarding project outcomes and later-life lessons derived from the volunteers' participation in the Student Help Project. A brief list of questions for nonparticipants, such as faculty and student supporters, was also included. Fernandez then revised the questions to be open-ended and to facilitate further discussion of the interviewees' responses or anecdotes. A complete list of interview questions can be found in the appendix. As a means of accommodating participants who did not want to be recorded or felt that it would be easier to provide written responses, the interview questions were also made available as a Google Forms survey. None of the participants, however, selected this option.

Before conducting interviews, Fernandez attended a Queens Memory training, consulted informally with an experienced oral historian, and reviewed existing oral history protocols and technologies. She read existing finding aids related to the Student Help Project and researched the history of school desegregation in Prince Edward County. This preliminary work provided a strong foundation for the interview process.

The interviews were primarily conducted through Zoom meetings, with the exception of two that were phone calls recorded using the Rev Call Recorder application. By using the aforementioned platforms and software to record interviews, the files generated were saved to archival standards despite only having access to basic technology without professional recording tools. Interviewees were required to sign consent forms that certified their participation in the oral history project. The release confirmed that the content created could be used by Queens College and the Queens Public Library and was protected under the Creative Commons License for distribution by the entities listed.

Through a multistep process, the interview files were prepared for publishing and access on Aviary, the platform Queens Memory uses to provide access to audiovisual materials. After identifying possible participants and coordinating the interview, the project Fellow ensured that all components of the interview were prepared for upload. This included the creation of accompanying metadata for the file and the extensive editing of transcripts that were also uploaded to Aviary. Initial drafts of the transcripts were produced by Rev. com, the service Queens Memory uses to generate transcripts from audio and/or video files. The drafts were then reviewed by Fernandez, who made batch revisions to fix common errors and remove filler words like "um" and "uh." Fernandez then listened to the interview files alongside the transcripts to correct more specific grammatical errors that automated software did not catch, such as the mention of individuals or phrases that were not understood due to low audio input. This process required that an interview be played back at least two times at 1.25 speed, generally taking between 4 and 10 nonconsecutive

hours to complete. Transcripts were edited using standards outlined in the "Oral History Transcription Style Guide" created by the Columbia University Center for Oral History Research (CCOHR).[42] The interviewees were also integral in the subsequent steps of the process, as they were asked to proofread transcripts to revise any factual errors they might have stated or to provide further comments for clarification. Finding aids for the oral histories were created in Queens College's instance of ArchivesSpace, with links to the digital files on Aviary. (SCA developed a guide that adapts DACS standards for oral histories.) These ArchivesSpace records were further harvested for access in OneSearch, CUNY's integrated library catalog, via scheduled OAI-PMH requests. Last, the links to the interviews on Aviary and the finding aid records were shared with the participants, along with a note of appreciation that acknowledged their contribution to the project.
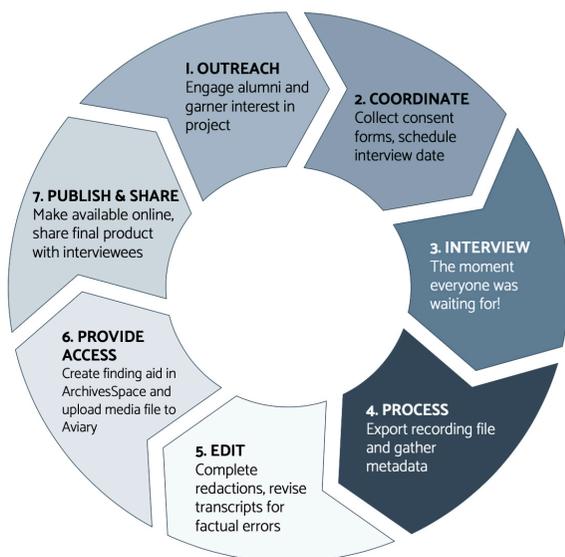
Figure 3: Workflow of Student Help Lived Experience Project tasks. Image by Victoria Fernandez.

Of the 14 total interviews, 10 were conducted in a traditional interview format, with one interviewer and one narrator. While these interviews were successful, the remaining four, which were more collaborative in style, became the favorites of the project team. These interviews involved three to five people, with multiple alumni being interviewed together by archives staff, or alumni interviewing each other with archives staff assisting. This model combined the strengths of the professional staff (knowledge of policies and procedures, keeping the interviews on track, and running the technology) with the strengths of the participants (intimate knowledge of the history and the ability to build on existing relationships). In these interviews, the alumni frequently jogged each other's memories and asked impromptu follow-up questions, leading to more nuanced narratives. Many humorous and tender moments also emerged as the alumni recalled their shared histories and friendships.[43]

Amplifying Collections through Oral History

Conducting and accessioning oral histories about particular collecting areas of the library's repository helped foster a better understanding of existing archival records maintained by the institution. Because Tummino and Fernandez were familiar with the existing records, they were able to develop and ask targeted questions about previously donated materials during interviews. Although metadata provides description for archival objects, it can often fall short of including details, dates, or personal background information that users would be interested to learn. The tailored approach of linking an individual's oral history with their donated collection contextualizes the narrative of their experience, as well as the circumstances in which items were created and saved for many years or even decades.

For example, the interview conducted with Rosalind Silverman Andrews demonstrates the usefulness of adding personal narratives to existing collections. Andrews was among alumni who donated personal materials such as correspondence, letters of support, newspaper clippings, project fliers, and a photograph that pertained to her involvement in the Student Help Project to SCA in 2009.[44] However, the items in her collection were limited to the brief descriptions included in its accompanying finding aid. Tummino emailed Andrews digital files from her collection prior to the interview to help her remember anecdotes from the summer of 1963 and create a comfortable space to share her memories. The records included correspondence from readers of *The Herald Tribune*, to which people from around the country sent letters with modest donations to Andrews in support of the volunteer initiative after seeing a feature about the Student Help Project in the newspaper. As a result, Andrews reacted with renewed surprise that readers mailed her donations and wanted to contribute to the Student Help Project. She recalled the following in her interview when speaking about the letters:

> That was another thing that struck me about it when I looked at that [the letters]. There was an article in *The Herald Tribune*, I think it was, it was about our going down there before we went. And it had my name in there, it could even have had a picture, I don't know, but it had my name and address, which of course in this day and age would never happen. . . . I got no hate mail and instead what I got was several people writing to me and sending me checks, like for twenty-five dollars, to tell me to buy supplies for the kids.[45]

Andrews's explanation of the support letters further contributed to the background of the Student Help Project by providing more information about the different types of fund-raising done by the volunteers to prepare for their trip to Prince Edward County. The practice of revisiting alumni collections in the oral histories allowed Andrews to add a personal narrative to the materials that were physical representations of the memories she made nearly 60 years ago.

While some interviews with the alumni illuminated details about items within the archives of the QC Library, others used the interview as an opportunity to capture memories that were not on record. During the outreach phase of the project, the project team contacted a list of individuals who had donated to the archives in the past, as well as alumni who did not have direct ties or affiliations with the college's library or who simply did not keep records and ephemera from their summer in 1963. The Student Help Lived Experience Project wanted to include the perspectives of as many volunteers as it could connect with, irrespective of whether they had materials in the collections. As a result of this effort, the oral history project was able to collect memories and reflections that were otherwise not a part of the archival record. This was particularly true of the interview with June Tauber Golden, who had not donated materials but was able to share in the interview how she became involved in the Student Help Project and included anecdotes about her interactions with other students on campus. Arguably, her most impactful remark made during the interview was her retelling of a conversation with classmate and fellow activist, Andrew "Andy" Goodman:

> One of the people who was planning to go down [to Mississippi] asked me about my experience in Prince Edward County. And I said to him, you know, some of it was dangerous, you had to sort of learn about it, but that it was the first time in my life, I said I never felt so alive in my life because I felt like I was looking at a deep-seated resident, evil inequality, and beginning to maybe be able to do something about it and maybe turn the world around. And it was one of the most, for me, exhilarating and life affirming things. The person that I had the conversation with was Andy Goodman. And I said to him, "You know, you will just always be thankful that you've gone." And unfortunately, that was not what happened. But I do remember that that was, that was the feeling we had coming out of it. That we had learned as much as the kids had about how maybe we could, we could open up the world.[46]

As previously mentioned, Andrew Goodman was a student at Queens College who was murdered in 1964 along with Michael Schwerner and James Chaney during the Mississippi Freedom Summer. Even though Goodman, Chaney, and Schwerner were immortalized in media reports of the time and are remembered on campus through the dedication of the library's clocktower, Tauber Golden's remarks demystified this well-known event by connecting a personal relationship to the greater history of the civil rights movement. In turn, Tauber Golden's anecdote personalizes the experiences of the student activists for researchers. Her testimony also deepens and extends the historical narrative of Queens College's connection to the civil rights movement, which often focuses on Mississippi Freedom Summer. Because of the Virginia initiative a year earlier, the idea of traveling to the Deep South to engage in civil rights work was already familiar to students on campus when SNCC began recruiting for Freedom Summer in the spring of 1964.

Similarly, unique personal reflections were revealed in the final interview of the project which was a roundtable interview with alumni Stan Shaw, Carolyn Hubbard-Kamunanwire, and Phyllis Padow-Sederbaum. The controlled environment of the oral

history set the foundation for narrators to share reflections that did not exist in the physical collections and may have not been included if it were not for the interviews with the project volunteers. Hubbard-Kamunanwire, who is Black, was the only person of color among the rest of the student volunteers, who were representative of the predominantly white and Jewish campus community. It was important to the project team that Hubbard-Kamunanwire and Leslie Francis "Skip" Griffin Jr., the son of the local Prince Edward County reverend, were included in the oral histories to represent the voices of color who were primarily affected by social events of the 1960s. In the roundtable discussion, Hubbard-Kamunanwire challenged remarks that alumni offered in previous interviews and contributed to a perspective that was missing in the physical collection:

> **Shaw:** Carolyn, we've often talked about in these previous interviews how us white folks went to Prince Edward and suddenly, we were fearful of whites and totally comfortable with Black people. Did you find that amusing?
>
> **Hubbard-Kamunanwire:** I don't know if amusing is the word I would use. I think of it in reverse. Why weren't you comfortable with Black people in New York?
>
> **Padow-Sederbaum:** Interesting.
>
> **Hubbard-Kamunanwire:** Why, why weren't you comfortable with us as Black students on campus? Because there was some of that too. Why weren't there more Black people teaching us at Queens College? Dr. Weddington was one of very few—
>
> **Padow-Sederbaum:** There were three people.
>
> **Hubbard-Kamunanwire:** That's, that sounds about right. So, you know, I thought of it that way and I thought of it in terms of, you know, people who are now so comfortable here in Prince Edward, why don't they carry some of this back to New York?
>
> **Shaw:** Hopefully they did.
>
> **Hubbard-Kamunanwire:** And change our environment at Queens.
>
> **Shaw:** Right. Good points.
>
> **Hubbard-Kamunanwire:** And those were the thoughts I had at the time.[47]

Many of the people interviewed for the project expressed that they were welcomed by the Black community of Farmville, yet they began to grow weary of white people since they had inflicted so much injustice and hardship on the Black community. Shaw and Wenger also reiterated how they felt "embraced by and enveloped within the Black community" of Prince Edward County and contrastingly "began to recoil at [their] own skin color" because the oppressors looked like them.[48] However, Hubbard-Kamunanwire offered a very different perspective from that of her peers since she had experienced racial inequality firsthand, and her parents were involved in the NAACP while she was growing up. Through oral history methodology, her own insightful and honest reflection was captured on record and is reflected in the archives.

Figure 4: "Roundtable" interview with Stan Shaw, Victoria Fernandez, Phyllis Padow-Sederbaum, and Carolyn Hubbard-Kamunanwire (clockwise from top left) conducted through Zoom video conference platform. Image by Victoria Fernandez.

The method of collecting interviews decades later provided the alumni a platform to reflect on how the Student Help Project shaped their lives and careers. Only a few volunteers from both the Jamaica and Virginia initiatives actually went on to pursue careers in the education field. Yet, many shared in the interviews that the lessons and skills learned from their summer in Prince Edward County changed the trajectory of their lives. The concluding interview questions asked participants to reflect on their lives since 1963—how did the experience inform their personal and professional futures, what skills did they develop as individuals or activists, and how did the Student Help Project change their outlook on effecting social change? Many expressed that the Student Help Project was the most important activity they participated in during their young adult lives. In the interviews, alumni shared how they continued engaging in different forms of social activism that were centered around educational initiatives after they graduated college and even still today.

For example, alum Fern Kruger shared that the lessons learned from her time as a volunteer in Jamaica led her to the path of working as a career counselor in an alternative high school for youth who were formerly incarcerated. Kruger felt that her participation in the Student Help Project gave her "a sense of the power of community" that helped her to realize how project-based learning and community organizing can be effective and impactful models of hands-on education.[49] At the time of the interview, Kruger also shared that she continued her involvement in activism by canvassing in low-voter turnout neighborhoods in New Orleans, Louisiana, and participates regularly in social protests, especially during the Black Lives Matter movement in 2020. In the interviews, it is apparent that, for many of the alumni, their participation in the Student Help Project

influenced their lives from then on and created lifelong friendships that have sustained their dedication to antiracism and progressive politics over the decades.

Centralizing Collection Access and Publicizing Outcomes

As the project came to a close, Tummino and Fernandez were eager to share outcomes with the Queens College community. Though various access tools had been created, they were spread out in disparate digital systems, making them difficult to find. To streamline access for users, the team elected to create a LibGuide to centralize access to all finding aids, digitized photographs and documents, and oral histories related to the Student Help Project.[50] LibGuides are used extensively by Queens College librarians to curate access to research materials and therefore seemed like a logical choice to collate the project's assets. Thanks to the LibGuide, researchers are now able to locate and explore a diverse array of archival resources documenting the history of the Student Help Project via a single access point. Additionally, the LibGuide provides a bibliography of secondary sources related to the fight for equal education and school desegregation in Virginia, including books, journal articles, and external websites.

To publicize this new research tool and project outcomes more broadly, SCA proposed that the Office of Institutional Advancement dedicate one of its "At Home with Queens College" virtual programs, which features research and expertise of members of the college community, to the project. The event was held in December 2021, several months after the conclusion of the fellowship. Titled "Stories from the Civil Rights Archives," the program garnered close to a hundred attendees. During the program, Tummino and Fernandez used a variety of primary sources, including oral history clips and excerpts, to highlight the history of the Student Help Project at Queens College and in Virginia. The program was a great way to engage the public, promote SCA's role in preserving college history, and demonstrate the impact and success of the fellowship program.

Conclusion

Overall, the Student Help Lived Experience Project was successful on multiple fronts. SCA was able to leverage resources provided by the Queens Memory Project and the new Civil Rights and Social Justice Archives Endowed Fellowship to achieve its goals. For Fernandez, the fellowship bolstered her professional resume and led to several professional development opportunities, including presenting at conferences of the Oral History Association and the Midwest Archives Conference. Oral history work lent itself well to the virtual format, since digital tools were used for recording, transcribing, and cataloging the interviews. The digital nature of the project allowed SCA to retain momentum during the COVID-19 pandemic, providing a successful model for a virtual graduate fellowship.

From an institutional perspective, the Student Help Lived Experience Project enriched SCA's relationships with the Office of Alumni Relations and the Office of Institutional Advancement. SCA continues to partner with these campus entities to offer online

programming, conduct oral histories, advertise exhibits, and solicit materials for the collections. Through these activities, SCA celebrates and preserves diverse alumni memories for future generations. The college administration appreciates SCA's willingness to facilitate these outreach opportunities with alumni, who make up the college's primary donor base.

Overall, the Student Help Lived Experience Project was successful because it centered the knowledge and interests of alumni themselves. The idea for the project came from Stan Shaw and Mike Wenger and would not have gotten off the ground without their initial outreach and recruitment work, nor without the assistance of Phyllis Padow-Sederbaum and other participants. The interview questions were collaboratively shaped by alumni with SCA staff, and several of the interviews were conducted in a small-group format with multiple participants. SCA plans to pursue these collaborative approaches to oral history in the future.

The oral histories collected for the Student Help Lived Experience Project enrich the historical narrative, bringing into vivid relief an important chapter in civil rights and Queens College history. While SCA's existing collections tell part of the story, the oral histories capture a more nuanced version of events, uncovering personal motivations, details, and life lessons of interest to researchers, new generations of activists, and the general public. Moving forward, SCA will continue to use oral history to amplify existing collections and expand documentation of the college's historic connection to struggles for civil rights and social justice. For repositories that are able to secure the necessary resources, oral history initiatives provide a vital supplement to more traditional methods of archival documentation.

Appendix: Student Help Lived Experience Project Interview Prompts

I. **Personal Background**

- Where did you grow up? How would you describe your neighborhood?
- How were you influenced by your parents' political views?
- Did you experience or witness social injustice growing up? Can you think of a particular instance where you felt that you needed to be an agent of social change?
- Why did you enroll at Queens College?
- Describe your campus experience. What was the campus like at that time?
- In what other campus activities or forms of activism did you participate, apart from the Student Help Project?
- How did you get interested in or involved with the Student Help Project? Which project(s) were you involved with (Jamaica/Virginia/both)?

II. **Virginia Project**

- What motivated you to spend the summer in Prince Edward County?
- What types of fundraising or training activities did you help to organize or participate in to prepare for the summer in Prince Edward County?
- How were Queens College faculty involved in this project? What faculty members were involved? Can you share specific examples of how they supported the project?
- What were your assumptions, fears, anxieties, hopes, and expectations regarding going to Prince Edward County and living with local Black families? How did the reality of Prince Edward County compare?
- Did you ever travel outside of New York before visiting Virginia? If so, to where?
- How did your parents feel about you going to Prince Edward County and living among local families in the Black community?
- How prepared did you feel for the experience, from both a personal and a teaching perspective?
- What was an average day like in Farmville?
- What was it like as a white student to live in Farmville for the summer? How was it different from New York?
- How did your students react to having been denied a public education for four years? What was your reaction?
- How did you feel about the local demonstrations against segregation that were going on while you were in Prince Edward County? To what extent did you want to join the student demonstrations?
- Did you attend the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom on 28 August 1963? What do you remember about the event?
- When you returned to New York at the end of the summer, what changed in how you viewed society? Were you more attuned to demonstrations of racism and injustice in your everyday lives?

III. **Jamaica Project**

- What motivated you to tutor with the Jamaica project?
- For how many semesters did you tutor?
- Describe your tutoring experience. How did you feel about tutoring in under-resourced, minority urban neighborhoods?
- Did your university courses prepare you to tutor students?
- In your opinion, was the tutoring experience productive for your students?
- Was participating as a tutor in the Jamaica project a meaningful experience for you? Why or why not?
- Were you planning to be a teacher or educator when you were participating in the Jamaica project? Did your experience inform decisions about your career?

IV. **Outcomes and reflections**

- Did you feel that you made a difference in your students' lives? If so, how?
- Share any anecdotes that particularly touched you during your work with the Student Help Project. What did you learn from these experiences?
- How did this experience make a difference in your life? If so, how were you changed? In what ways did this experience inform your future, both personally and professionally?

- What specific personal, activist, and/or professional skills did you develop through SHP?
- How did the experience influence the remainder of your time in college and/or vocational decisions?
- In what ways did the experience influence your outlook regarding how to make social change?
- In what ways has the experience influenced your outlook regarding race relations in the United States?

V. **Questions for individuals who were not participants in the Student Help Project**
- What extracurricular or other campus activities did you engage with while at Queens College?
- What was your level of awareness or what did you know of the Virginia project? What about the Jamaica project?
- What impact do you believe these projects had on the broader campus community at Queens College?
- What impact did you have on these projects? In what ways did you support or were involved with the Student Help Projects?
- What impact did these projects have on you?
- In what other civil rights, social justice, or political activities on campus did you participate?

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Annie Tummino is an assistant professor and head of Special Collections and Archives at the Queens College Library, where she manages over 5,000 linear feet of college records, personal papers, and rare books. She is particularly interested in preserving the social movement history of Queens College and connecting it to today's activists and students. She received a master's degree in library and information studies from Queens College in 2010 and a master's in maritime studies from SUNY Maritime College in 2020.

Victoria Fernandez is a processing archivist at the Winthrop Group. She received a dual master's degree in history and library science from Queens College in 2021. She has held several positions within the field of archives, most recently serving as the museum coordinator at the Harriet and Kenneth Kupferberg Holocaust Center at Queensborough Community College CUNY. Her research interests include the politicization of memory after the Holocaust and exploring experiences related to vicarious traumatization among archivists.

NOTES

1. Schwerner also had ties to Queens College; his wife, Rita, was a Queens College student, and his brother, Stephen, worked in the Queens College counseling office from 1963 to 1976.
2. Terry Cook, "Evidence, Memory, Identity, and Community: Four Shifting Archival Paradigms," *Archival Science* 13, nos. 2–3 (2012): 95, https://doi.org/10.07/s10502-012-9180-7.
3. Ibid., 113.
4. Ibid., 113–15.
5. Eddie Woodward, "Building Relationships: The University Archives, the University Archivist, and the University's Alumni," *College and Research Libraries News* 76, no. 3 (2015): 138–39, https://doi.org/10.5860/crln.76.3.9279.
6. Jarrett M. Drake, "Documenting Dissent in the Contemporary College Archive: Finding Our Function within the Liberal Arts," *On Archivy* (blog), November 7, 2016, https://medium.com/on-archivy/documenting-dissent-liberal-arts-e1c69e574ff8.
7. Annalise Berdini et al., "Archiving Student Activism Toolkit," Project STAND, November 2018, https://standarchives.com/project-stand-toolkit.

8. Alistair Thomson, "Unreliable Memories? The Use and Abuse of Oral History," in *Historical Controversies and Historians,* ed. William Lamont (London: UCL Press, 1998), 24.

9. Ibid., 24.

10. Vaughn Davis Bornet, "Oral History Can Be Worthwhile," *American Archivist* 18, no. 1 (1955): 241, https://www.jstor.org/stable/40289348.

11. Ibid., 241.

12. Jessica Wagner Webster, "'Filling the Gaps': Oral Histories and Underdocumented Populations in *The American Archivist*, 1938–2011," *American Archivist* 79, no. 2 (2016): 258, https://doi.org/10.17723/0360-9081-79.2.254.

13. James E. Fogerty, "Filling the Gap: Oral History in the Archives," *American Archivist* 46, no. 2 (1983): 151, https://www.jstor.org/stable/40292583.

14. Ellen D. Swain, "Oral History in the Archives: Its Documentary Role in the Twenty-First Century," *American Archivist* 66, no. 1 (2003): 148, https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.66.1.9284q6r604858h40.

15. Ibid., 157.

16. Ibid., 148.

17. Marika Cifor, Michelle Caswell, Alda Allina Migoni, and Noah Geraci, "'What We Do Crosses Over to Activism': The Politics and Practice of Community Archives," *The Public Historian* 40, no. 2 (2018): 92–93, https://www.jstor.org/stable/26504393.

18. Ibid., 71.

19. Michael H. Frisch, "Quality in History Programs: From Celebration to Exploration of Values," in *A Shared Authority: Essays on the Craft and Meaning of Oral and Public History* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1990), 188.

20. Catherine Fosl and Tracy E. K'Meyer, *Freedom on the Border: An Oral History of the Civil Rights Movement in Kentucky* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 2009), 234–35.

21. StoryCorps, "About StoryCorps," https://storycorps.org/about.

22. Oral History Association, "Centers and Collections," https://oralhistory.org/centers-and-collections.

23. Bornet, "Oral History," 247.

24. OHMS: Oral History Metadata Synchronizer, Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, University of Kentucky, "Home," https://www.oralhistoryonline.org.

25. Wagner Webster, "Filling the Gaps," 255.

26. Ibid., 259–60.

27. Oral history does appear as a keyword in a wider variety of articles discussing topics such as community archives; however, Wagner Webster's goal was to locate articles in which oral history is a primary focus of the article.

28. Wagner Webster, "Filling the Gaps," 269.

29. Ibid., 270.

30. Rebecca Ciota, "Alumni Oral Histories: A Collaboration Between the Libraries and Development and Alumni Relations at Grinnell College," *Collaborative Librarianship* 11, no. 3 (2019): 158, https://digitalcommons.du.edu/collaborativelibrarianship/vol11/iss3/5.

31. Ibid., 157.

32. Ibid., 162–63.

33. Robert G. Weaver and Zachary R. Hernández, "Oral History, Donor Engagement, and the Cocreation of Knowledge in an Academic Archives," *Archivaria*, no. 93 (2022): 88–90, https://archivaria.ca/index.php/archivaria/article/view/13837.

34. Susan Goldman Rubin, Brown v. Board of Education: *A Fight for Simple Justice* (New York: Holiday House, 2016), 34–36.

35. NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, "What Was *Brown v. Board of Education*?," https://www.naacpldf.org/case-issue/landmark-brown-v-board-education.

36. Robbins L. Gates, *The Making of Massive Resistance: Virginia's Politics of Public School Desegregation, 1954–1956* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1964), 210–13.

37. Junior NAACP Sit-Ins, Farmville, VA, July–August 1963, box 2, folder 1, Phyllis Padow-Sederbaum Papers, Department of Special Collections and Archives, Queens College, City University of New York, https://qcarchives.libraryhost.com/repositories/2/resources/13.

38. Robert Russa Moton Museum, "Prince Edward School Closings," https://motonmuseum.org/learn/prince-edward-school-closings/.

39. Ibid.

40. Queens Memory, "About Us," https://queensmemory.org/about.

41. Queens Memory provides links to several resources for interviewers on its website, https://queensmemory.org/resources. Included is the organization's participant consent form (available in additional languages of local communities), suggested interview questions, and guidelines for capturing and editing audio files.

42. Columbia University Center for Oral History Research, "Oral History Transcription Guideline," 2018, https://www.ccohr.incite.columbia.edu/s/CCOHR-Transcript-Style-Guide-2018.pdf.

43. This format was made possible by the use of video through Zoom. Queens Memory does not do audio interviews with multiple people, because the quality is often poor, and it is difficult to distinguish who is speaking.

44. Correspondence—Letters of support, 1963–1970, Queens College (New York, N.Y.) Department of Special Collections and Archives, https://qcarchives.libraryhost.com/repositories/2/archival_objects/1824.

45. "Rosalind Andrews Oral History," interview by Victoria Fernandez, October 26, 2020, conducted as part of the Student Help Lived Experience Project, Queens College CUNY Special Collections and Archives, 19:58–22:10, https://queenslibrary.aviaryplatform.com/r/8s4jm23w0w.

46. "June Tauber Golden Oral History," interview by Victoria Fernandez, November 18, 2020, conducted as part of the Student Help Lived Experience Project, Queens College CUNY Special Collections and Archives, 1:34:22–1:35:50, https://queenslibrary.aviaryplatform.com/r/qr4nk36v33.

47. "Phyllis Padow-Sederbaum and Carolyn Hubbard-Kamunanwire Oral History," interview by Stan Shaw and Victoria Fernandez, April 21, 2021, conducted as part of the Student Help Lived Experience Project, Queens College CUNY Special Collections and Archives, 55:59–57:27, https://queenslibrary.aviaryplatform.com/r/n58cf9k07q?.

48. Michael R. Wenger and Stan F. Shaw, "Chapter 5: Northerners in a Jim Crow World: Queens College Summer Experience," in *The Educational Lockout of African Americans in Prince Edward County Virginia (1959–1964): Personal Accounts and Reflections,* ed. Terence Hicks and Abul Pitre (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2010), 63.

49. "Fern Kruger Oral History," interview by Victoria Fernandez, November 6, 2020, conducted as part of the Student Help Lived Experience Project, Queens College CUNY Special Collections and Archives, 01:08:57–01:11:54, https://queenslibrary.aviaryplatform.com/r/7w6736mg3h.

50. Queens College Libraries, "Civil Rights: The Queens College Student Help Project," https://qc-cuny.libguides.com/sca/studenthelpproject.

Understanding History, Building Trust, and Sharing Appraisal Authority: Engaging Underrepresented Student Groups through Culture Centers

By Jessica Ballard and Cara S. Bertram

ABSTRACT: Appraisal of student records is an essential part of building a complete narrative of a university's history. Within this process, it is important to capture the experiences of underrepresented student groups. A rich source of documentation of both student life and campus diversity comes from the records produced by university cultural student clubs, cultural houses, and sororities and fraternities with historically BIPOC membership. The formation, activities, and dissolution of cultural student organizations can help to shape an understanding of a university's demographic, social, and political history. Working with and building relationships with organization advisors and student members is important for forming good appraisal decisions about the records they produce. This article examines two case studies of appraisal projects involving the Ethnic Student Center at Western Washington University and the Bruce D. Nesbitt African American Cultural Center at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. It also includes an analysis of the appraisal of records of cultural student organizations and discusses the importance of working with stakeholders and understanding ownership of records.

Introduction

Appraisal of student records and building trust with student organizations is an essential part of developing a complete narrative of a university's history. Within this process, it is important to capture the experiences of underrepresented student groups. A rich source of documentation of both student life and campus diversity comes from the records produced by university student clubs, cultural houses, and sororities and fraternities with historically BIPOC membership. The formation, activities, and dissolution of cultural student organizations can help to shape an understanding of a university's demographic, social, and political history. Working with and building relationships with organization advisors and student members is important to forming good appraisal decisions for the records they produce. This process can engage stakeholders in appraisal decisions and enables archivists to develop an understanding of the context of the records, which are important, and which are considered confidential or sensitive. Creating these relationships can also help archivists understand how students view the ownership of the records they produce. While a retention schedule may classify university-affiliated student organization records as university records, many students may interpret them as belonging solely to the organization and its

members. These differing views of ownership can affect the appraisal process and potentially strengthen or damage relationships with these student groups.

This article examines examples from appraisal projects with the Ethnic Student Center at Western Washington University and the Bruce D. Nesbitt African American Cultural Center at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. These projects involved established culture centers on university campuses, along with student clubs and organizations, both official and external. This article also discusses the appraisal of records of cultural student organizations and the importance of working with stakeholders in making appraisal decisions, understanding ownership of records, working with and without retention schedules for student organization records, and, ultimately, building and sustaining relationships with underrepresented communities. Underrepresented or marginalized communities have often been neglected by mainstream archival collections. These case studies will demonstrate how collaborative work between archivists and stakeholders from these communities can foster mutually beneficial relationships that can strengthen archival programs when more cultural communities are included in archival holdings.

Literature Review

The importance of including student life records in the appraisal and collection of university records is well documented. Helen Willa Samuels's 1992 publication *Varsity Letters* strongly advocates for the collection of student life materials by university archives, and the chapter "Foster Socialization" focuses entirely on the documentation of student social life.[1] In her 2013 article, Jessica Wagner's survey of college and university archivists about student life documentation reflects the prevalent view of the value of student life materials.[2] Student life archival programs, such as those at The Ohio State University, Iowa State University, and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, highlight the importance of student records in research, preservation of collective memory, and community building.

There are challenges in trying to document student populations and their activities. Sarah Buchanan and Kathie Richardson's article, "Representation through Documentation: Acquiring Student and Campus Life Records through the Bruin Archives Project," and Ellen Swain's "College Student as Archives' Consultant? A New Approach to Outreach and Programming on Campus" both describe methods of engaging students in archival literacy and performing outreach initiatives for collection development of student records.[3] These articles also highlight the challenges of working with students, noting the limited years students spend on campus, thus limiting networking initiatives. Jessica Wagner and Debbi Smith note that "capturing these materials is like hitting a moving target. Students are only enrolled for an average of four years, and they arrive and leave every semester."[4] Chris Prom and Ellen Swain also acknowledge the difficulties of documenting student groups because of the "transient nature of student populations—student organizations form and dissolve frequently and their leaders hold office only

briefly."[5] The ebb and flow of the student population emphasizes the need for strong communication between archivists and student groups.

Many studies and conversations have been conducted to find methods to increase the inclusivity of cultural groups, more commonly known as underrepresented groups, in higher education spaces. In the 1970s, scholars Howard Zinn, Gerald Ham, and Gould Colman challenged historians and archivists to consider more inclusive approaches to their work. In "The Archival Edge," Ham argued that "responses to changing patterns in the pursuit of history, and the increase of other studies once considered outside the proper use of archives, are a temporary corrective. . . . Small wonder then, that archival holdings too often reflected narrow research interests rather than the broad spectrum of human experience."[6] Gould and Zinn mirrored Ham's response, challenging archivists and historians to consider more inclusivity regarding archival collections, both culturally and politically.[7] Zinn's, Ham's, and Colman's calls for increased diversity initiatives for underrepresented groups in the archives resonate with many archivists. In more recent scholarship, archivists have explored hands-on approaches to increase the acquisition of student records. Brian Keough's "Documenting Diversity: Developing Special Collections of Underdocumented Groups" describes the documentation project conducted at the University of Albany to increase the acquisition of community records of underrepresented groups. Keough also expresses the importance of forming a network with various members of the communities, such as potential donors, and student research pertaining to underrepresented communities. Additionally, Keough encourages archivists and/or an advisory board to such projects to consider keeping in contact with those who might hesitate to donate materials because of an unfamiliarity with the archives.[8]

Another avenue that has received limited attention is outreach to alumni groups. In the article "Filling in the Gaps: Using Outreach Efforts to Acquire Documentation on the Black Campus Movement, 1965–72," Lae'l Hughes-Watkins addresses the importance of reaching out to alumni of underrepresented communities to increase collection development to provide a more complete narrative of university history.[9] Hughes-Watkins notes that "Strengthening these bonds will in turn create important relationships for generations and will serve as the foundation for what is one of the most important goals of the archives community—democracy!"[10] Despite various challenges, such as outdated contact information, and concerns of potential donors, Hughes-Watkins's outreach efforts demonstrate how alumni can help fill in gaps in archival collections with their personal papers and records.

Kathryn M. Neal provides further guidance in the documentation of underrepresented populations on higher education campuses. Neal urges the need for sensitivity when dealing with diverse populations, quoting from Cesar Caballero about the distrust and conflict between Latinx populations and educational institutions and, by extension, archives, to understand the relationship that diverse populations sometimes have with universities.[11] This illustrates an important point that the history between a university and its underrepresented groups is not always an easy one. Past and ongoing discrimination,

segregation, and exclusion of student groups add another layer of complexity that archivists need to be aware of.

Michelle Caswell, Marika Cifor, Anne Gilliland, Mario H. Ramirez, and others have highlighted community archives' role in filling in the gaps of underrepresented communities. Initiatives involving input from community members allow trust and control of records that are not always found in "mainstream" archives. Their focus on community archiving emphasizes the value of coming to communities deserving increased visibility, and their efforts provide intersections for college and university archives to consider modeling. In "From Human Rights to Feminist Ethics: Radical Empathy in Archives," Caswell and Cifor explain:

> Creating space for the voices of communities that are often misunderstood, vilified, and/or deemed unable to speak for themselves and making those stories public, both within those communities and far beyond them, is key to building trust, honoring the voices and experiences of individuals whose stories are too often silenced, and upholding in the wider community our ethical relationships as archivists.[12]

Cifor and Caswell's discussions of radical empathy inspired additional conversations and literature. In a special issue of the *Journal of Critical Library and Information Studies*, "Radical Empathy in Archival Practice," the editors reflect on Cifor and Caswell's radical empathy: "while radical empathy is expansive, capacious, and responsive, it is also bound by its insistence upon uprooting structural harms, and it is about making intentional shifts and actions with the aim of transforming our systems."[13] In the issue, multiple authors discuss their approaches for treating the archives of and relationships with underrepresented communities with immense care. These candid articles emphasize the need to make archives and archival practices more inclusive to help bridge the gap of some archival silences.[14]

The literature of culture centers can be found in books and journals on the history of higher education pertaining to the late 1960s and early 1970s. African American studies professor Fred Hord's book, *Black Culture Centers: Politics of Survival and Identity*, is currently the only book that thoroughly discusses the history of Black culture centers and the efforts of Black students to create such spaces. Lori D. Patton's numerous works describe the importance of culture centers. Her coedited work, *Culture Centers in Higher Education*, describes the different types of culture centers on campuses with the goal of dispelling common myths about these centers: "Culture centers dedicate themselves to this work, which, for the most part, historically White institutions fail to do. It is our hope that in documenting the significance of these counterspaces, we contribute to ongoing struggles of survival and resistance in the margins of higher education."[15] Patton's dedication to documenting their history and the impact that culture centers make for underrepresented communities particularly at predominately white campuses is exemplary of how archivists at these institutions can consider filling in the gaps with these centers' rich records. In her book, *Black Power on Campus: The University of Illinois*

1965-1975, Joy Williamson-Lott discusses the integral role of the Black cultural center's program development during the Black Power movement at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana. Much of Williamson-Lott's research for the book came from the University of Illinois Archives, including documents covering the Black Student Associations' demands for a Black cultural center. Author Kimberly Sanders's article, "Black Culture Centers: A Review of Pertinent Literature," provides literature on Black culture centers and discusses the emergence of multicultural centers. Sanders gives a brief history and provides studies and calls for additional research.[16]

While Hord, Patton, Williamson-Lott, and Sanders discuss the value of culture centers, these crucial spaces deserve more literature in academia, including from archivists. Some culture centers have existed for only a short period of time, yet archival literature should cover more fully their role in fostering safe spaces for many cultural groups on campuses, especially as many archivists at universities speak about the need for increased dedication to filling in the gaps. Culture centers have commonly emerged through student advocacy and are often incorporated as a part of the university. These centers, and their affiliated student groups, might be transferring their records to archives and archivists who have a limited understanding of their history and ongoing activism. Chaitra Powell, Holly Smith, Shanee' Murrain, and Skyla Hearn explain in their article, "This [Black] Woman's Work: Exploring Archival Projects that Embrace the Identity of the Memory Worker," that the "ethical practice of archival work necessitates that we 1) learn the history of the communities, 2) understand the relationship dynamics (institutional, intergroup, geographic), 3) identify gatekeepers and collaborators to ascertain the needs and manage expectations, and 4) defer to community knowledge."[17] Archivists' ethical duty is to educate themselves about the context of the formation of culture centers and student organizations and their relationship with the university. Incorporating these concepts will increase dialogues and can alleviate misrepresentation of records.

The body of literature described here, while rich in content, does not widely address the issues of selecting and appraising the records of student cultural organizations and culture centers at universities and colleges. The following case studies examine two archivists' experiences of working with student culture centers by discussing the history of the projects, approaches for building trust between repositories and student cultural groups, and how history and trust building can help to inform future appraisal decisions and strengthen relations with underrepresented groups.

Case Study 1: Ethnic Student Center at Western Washington University

In the late 1980s, student leaders from ethnic and cultural clubs at Western Washington University (WWU) discussed the needs for a space for students of color on campus and a strong commitment to diversity from WWU. While negotiations with university administration about the space were positive, little was done. This prompted acts of student activism, including a sit-in at President Kenneth Mortimer's office. Student activism and a supportive community of students, staff, and faculty helped to push the issue back onto the table, and university administration and student leaders reentered

discussions. The outcome was the establishment of the Ethnic Student Center (ESC), which opened in April 1991.[18] The ESC is home to over a dozen ethnic and cultural clubs that help students in "transitioning to Western [Washington University], developing cultural identity, providing a sense of community, and being active in social justice."[19] The center also provides resources and a safe environment for all students to work on club programming, to study, and to hang out.[20]

Project Overview

In the winter of 2010, the WWU university archivist met with the ESC director to discuss an inventory project to document and appraise the records held by the center to preserve its history in the University Archives. The ESC director welcomed the discussion, as he was looking toward the twentieth anniversary of the center in 2011. Given the ESC's roles as a safe space for students and a central location for ethnic and cultural student clubs, the selection, appraisal, and acquisition of ESC records would help the University Archives to document the activities, activism, and history of students of color on campus, thereby filling in the gaps in its existing holdings.[21] The existing records held by the University Archives regarding the ESC and its clubs were produced by other university offices, creating an outsider's narrative of the center and the clubs. Working with the center to acquire its records would help to build better representation of its work and activism within WWU's institutional memory. Not only did the ESC hold its own administrative and historical records, it also provided office space and storage for current clubs and preserved the files left by inactive clubs. Several affiliated clubs long predated the formation of the center, including the Native American Student Union, the Black Student Union, and Movimiento Estudiantil Chicanx de Aztlán (MEChA). Collecting their records provided an opportunity to capture the history of these student groups on campus before the establishment of the center.

At about the same time, the university archivist was discussing potential internship projects with a graduate studen he History Department's archives and records management program. The graduate student expressed a strong interest in the ESC project since she was a longtime member and officer of an ESC club and a former undergraduate employee of the center, and she had recently researched the center's history.[22] Using the intern's specialized expertise, the university archivist assigned her to the project for the spring and summer quarters. This was an important move, as the university archivist was the only professional staff member at the archives and, while knowledgeable about the center, he did not have the same deep community ties as the intern. The university archivist was open to learning more about the center's history, but, at the same time, realized the importance of deferring to community knowledge. The ESC staff were already enthusiastic about working with the University Archives, and they expressed further excitement in having one of their community members integrally involved.

The project involved inventorying the physical files within the ESC storage room and club office space. There was also discussion of reviewing the digital records on the ESC's

server space; however, due to time restraints of the internship and not having a strong digital archives program in place, those files were not included. The intern conducted the inventory and served as the main contact between the archives and the center. With the university archivist, she performed an analysis of the records retention schedule and drafted specialized file plans for the records of the center and its clubs. Over the spring quarter, the intern inventoried the administrative and historical records of the ESC and moved on to the club offices during the summer quarter while most of the students were gone and not occupying the small spaces. The intern then compiled the inventory into a spreadsheet with columns for the office name, location, record type, file title and description, notes, date range, and retention assignment. Before recording file titles, the intern labeled each office based on who was utilizing the space, using the preferred acronyms for the ESC and the club. To record the physical location of the files, the intern also assigned a letter and number code to every filing cabinet drawer and storage box included in the inventory. Each file was also assigned a broad category based on its contents: administrative records, awards, club files (for club records held in ESC staff storage space), conferences, events, financial records, history files, project files, public relations, and scholarship files.

After the initial inventory was complete, the university archivist and the intern appraised the records by comparing the categories and descriptions of the files in the inventory against the general university records retention schedule to identify corresponding record series within the schedule.23 Because the clubs were officially affiliated with and funded by the ESC, a department of the university, the files they produced were considered university records and fell under the collecting mandate of the University Archives. Even though the retention schedule was created with the functions of university offices and departments in mind, it still applied to most of the club files. Materials with archival value that did not have a strong corresponding record series in the retention schedule could be assigned to a broader record series with generic descriptions such as "special projects and activities" and "history file," which were designated for transfer to the archives. These broader record series allowed flexibility in the appraisal of club records without having to revise the retention schedule. This emphasized the advantage of working with a community member to help make appraisal decisions and to determine what should be considered a "history file." The intern was able to navigate the numerous club acronyms and could easily recognize the wide variety of event names. With an understanding of the center's activities, the intern was able to readily identify the informational and evidential value of a file's contents, quickly recognizing the importance of event materials and papers from conferences and workshops buried under vaguely named folder titles. She knew that dinners, dances, and other events put on by the ESC and its clubs were not just fund-raisers, but also opportunities for broad outreach to the university and the public, and celebrations of culture. Workshops and conferences also functioned as settings for developing leadership skills and community building.

While revising the schedule to better accommodate collecting from university-funded student organizations would be ideal, this was a practical solution to keep the project moving. As a public institution, changes to the records retention schedule require

approval at the state level. The current (as of June 2022) WWU general records retention schedule does include sections on "Student Socialization and Enrichment" and "Cultural Enrichment" and notes that the records are unique to individual offices and that recommendations are tailored for individual offices.[24] One set of materials that did not fit within the retention schedule was artifacts, consisting primarily of old club T-shirts. Because the storage and care of these items were beyond the capabilities and collecting policy of the University Archives, the university archivist and intern decided to encourage the clubs to offer the artifacts to the library's Special Collections department, which was better equipped for handling artifacts and actively collecting such items for its Campus History collection.

Once the files in the inventory were assigned retentions, the intern composed two sets of recommendations, one for the ESC and the other for the clubs. Each plan defined what a "record" is, established guidelines for archival and nonarchival records, provided a recommendation for organizing files moving forward, and included a link to the general university records retention schedule.[25] These recommendations provided transparency in the process and a clearer understanding as to why certain decisions were made. The club recommendations also included a general history of the center and emphasized the importance of creating more representation within the institutional memory of the university. While the recommendations were written for club officers, they also explicitly encouraged an open dialogue with their members, so all were aware of their records, history, and the archival process.

Challenges

Even with the help of a community member, the project faced challenges. First, the University Archives had to establish the records' creators and ownership. While the records of official university clubs were considered university records, the perception of ownership can be just as important as actual ownership. Students may consider the records they produce during club activities to belong to them or the club itself, and not to the university. To muddle ownership even further, ESC administration held the records of active and inactive student clubs mixed within its own files. Even though these records were clearly produced by the clubs, they were in the physical custody of the ESC staff. The university archivist and intern chose to inventory all files held by the ESC staff and within the club offices to create a complete picture of the physical holdings of the center and to treat them as university records within the inventory. This was important to make sure that the clubs were aware of and complied with certain retention policies, especially as the clubs regularly engage with outside vendors for events using money provided by the ESC or other university funds. Keeping these kinds of records for their legal retention period was important in case the center needed them for reporting purposes or if past contracts needed to be reviewed. Not communicating this information could potentially be detrimental to the clubs. The recommendations written for the clubs communicated why their files were considered university records, and the intern explained their status in person to club representatives. This was met with a few questions but a general understanding of the reasoning behind the decision.

To help acknowledge the students' sense of ownership over their own history, no push was made to immediately transfer archival materials to the University Archives. It was left to the center and its clubs to choose when to send records over, and they were reassured that there was no time limit on when materials could be transferred. The intern also emphasized that club members and the public would have access to the materials and that, while the clubs could not remove the records from the archives, they could receive free copies. She also stressed the security the archives provided for records, meaning that files were less likely to go missing as students left the university or cleaned out offices. This would ensure a continuity in the preservation of their history that future community members could access and feel a connection to.

Gaining the trust of the students was another challenge and demonstrated the need for community engagement. After inventorying the administrative files of the ESC, the university archivist and the intern sought the permission of the active clubs to access their individual offices within the center to do the inventory and appraisal. This was done to show the students the same level of respect and consideration that the university archivist would show university staff in accessing their records. The intern secured a place on the agenda for the Ethnic Student Center Steering Committee meeting, which included representatives from all the affiliated clubs and was chaired by the vice president for diversity, a student elected by the general student population. The university archivist was unable to attend the meeting, so the intern went on her own to give a short presentation about the project and archival services and to ask the representatives to speak to their clubs about accessing the offices over the summer. The representatives were enthusiastic and did not foresee any objections. However, the vice president for diversity expressed concern over the University Archives having an inventory of club files and feared that their financial records would be audited and placed under the scrutiny of university administration. While the student did not actively vocalize distrust for the University Archives, he did communicate a suspicion of university administration. The representatives and the vice president for diversity then engaged in a lengthy discussion about the project, with the representatives in favor and the vice president more skeptical. This portion of the meeting, which was intended to be a short presentation, had turned into a delicate situation. Wanting to ensure that everyone had accurate information, the intern stayed for the entirety of the discussion, beyond the time allocated for the agenda item. Being present meant that the intern could answer questions about the archives and the intention of the project and clarify any misunderstandings. While only the vice president expressed concerns during the meeting, the intern addressed them respectfully and with a familiarity of the history behind the questions. The intern was also aware that similar questions and apprehensions might come up among other club members, so it was important to provide clear answers. The intern explained that the inventory was not intended to be shared beyond the ESC and the clubs, that units outside of the archives were unlikely to be aware of the project, and that the risk of an audit due to the project was extremely low. Once the vice president and the representatives resolved their differences of opinion, tentative approval to access the offices was given and was eventually permitted.

Just as Kathryn Neal warned, this incident demonstrates the potential distrust between historically marginalized groups and university administration.[26] Even with no immediate plans to transfer the files to the University Archives, the act of inventorying club files by a university unit was viewed with suspicion. It also showed that a unified response one way or the other should not be assumed and that differing thoughts and opinions should be expected within any community. Given the uneasy history between university units and the center's students, the concerns should not have been a surprise. Having a community member involved allowed open communication and a nuanced response on behalf of the University Archives that seriously addressed the apprehensions of the student, and the intern's presence and participation showed a commitment to the interests of the student clubs.

Outcomes

At the end of the project, the recommendations were submitted to the ESC and its clubs, along with an inventory of their records. While no immediate transfers of materials were made to the archives in 2010, the 25th anniversary of the ESC prompted an accession of materials in 2014. With access to the records, the University Archives was able to scan a few hundred photographs for the center in support of its anniversary celebration. A second accession was transferred in 2017, bringing the collection to nearly 24 cubic feet of archival records, covering 1975 to 2016.[27] Even though the students involved in the project and discussions were gone, the existing relationship between the University Archives and ESC staff opened the door for the acquisitions. The records provided primary source materials on ADEI (Anti-racism, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion), race, identity, and representation and became a popular resource for classes visiting the archives.[28]

The project also provided a meaningful experience for both the intern and the university archivist. The intern had been a member of an ESC club since her freshman year and spent her senior year as an employee for the center. She was excited to be able to apply her studies as an archivist and historian to preserving the history of the ESC, which had provided her with friendships, employment, and a safe space. After her internship, she remained a resource to other students at the center about the archives and an advocate for preserving the center's history. For the university archivist, the project helped to lay the foundation of a fruitful relationship with the ESC. Collecting the records was not just about documenting the center's history, but also building representation within the archives and acknowledging the biases and inequities that shaped the archival collection.[29] It was also "a way to make the archives more accessible, welcoming, and familiar to all of [WWU's] students—so they can see themselves in the records."[30]

The broader value of these records has become more apparent in recent years as the students and administration work toward making WWU a more inclusive campus. This includes opening a new and highly visible Multicultural Center in 2019, which houses the ESC; naming a residence hall after the first Black student to attend the university and starting a Black affinity housing program; making efforts toward reinstating the Ethnic

Studies College; and renaming Huxley College as the College of the Environment in 2021, due to its namesake's ties to racist ideology.[31] The ESC records within WWU's institutional memory demonstrate a long history of student activism and the struggle for support, space, and visibility on campus, reflecting present-day efforts.

Case Study 2: Bruce D. Nesbitt African American Cultural Center at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

Since its establishment in 1963, the University of Illinois Archives has acquired an extensive collection of records highlighting the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign's (UIUC) history, yet there remain gaps in the archival holdings. The culture centers on UIUC's campus serve as central spaces for many underrepresented groups. The University Archives has cultivated dialogues with the culture and resource centers for many years, and, as a result, collection development with these centers' records has steadily increased. The Bruce D. Nesbitt African American Cultural Center (the first culture center at UIUC) is one such center with which the University Archives has gradually formed a sustainable relationship with over the years. Furthermore, appraising its most recent transfer of records has revealed the multifaceted ways the center serves multiple communities on the UIUC campus.

In 1967, 233 Black undergraduate students and 107 graduate students were enrolled at UIUC, making up 1 percent of the total student body enrollment.[32] By the fall of 1968, the university had approximately 690 Black undergraduates, its largest enrollment of Black students up to that time.[33] Over 500 incoming Black students were admitted under the Special Education Opportunities Program (SEOP), commonly known as Project 500.[34] Unfortunately, the university was not prepared to accommodate every student enrolled in the SEOP program, which resulted in unresolved financial aid and housing issues.[35] Not only were SEOP students disappointed with these accommodations, but Black students collectively were also disheartened by the triggering of racial tension on campus.

The increase in Black students galvanized the Black Student Association's (BSA) efforts for increased reform against racial divides. In the February 18, 1969, edition of its newspaper, *Black Rap*, the Black Student Association published a list of 35 demands,[36] including, "the immediate establishment of a black cultural center large enough to accommodate all black people which will be run by the Black Students Association."[37] Hoping to alleviate some of the racial unrest, the chancellor conceded to some of the demands, and, later that year, the Afro-American Cultural Center was established.[38] The center created and continues to offer programs such as a speaker series, lunches, spaces for organizations to meet, study spaces, and other programs and services relating to students' needs and enriching students' knowledge of Black culture. The cultural center also attracts many Black faculty, staff, and community members. The Afro-American Cultural Center was eventually named the Bruce D. Nesbitt African American Cultural Center in 2004, after Bruce D. Nesbitt, the center's longest-serving director.[39] Before the concept of a Black cultural center existed, members of the Nesbitt family, and many other

Black families, heavily supported Black students who were new to the local and university communities.[40]

Project Overview

Over the years, the Bruce D. Nesbitt Center had accumulated a variety of historical documents, thus creating its own archives. Through the years, the basement was filled with administrative records, student organization records, various other historical documents, and a variety of audiovisual content. Around 2011, a doctoral LIS student served as a liaison between the University Archives and the Nesbitt Center. As a result, the University Archives acquired 18 cubic feet of archival records from the center, but many historical documents remained in the basement.

When the Bruce D. Nesbitt Center prepared for renovations between 2014 and 2019, the center moved to a temporary location.[41] A student group that recently donated its records to the archives encouraged the new director of the Nesbitt Center to contact the Student Life and Culture Archives, a program of the University of Illinois Archives. Shortly after communicating with the student life and culture archivist, the student organization and a team of archivists recovered a multitude of historical documents, photos, audiovisual materials, and ephemera from the Nesbitt Center.[42]

Challenges

Developing appraisal and processing procedures for the collection has been time consuming. The records include an extensive photograph collection of student life, over 600 audiovisual items, publications, correspondence, event fliers, meeting minutes, and information on organizations that met in the space. The same student group that assisted the cultural center and the archives with the transfer of records inquired if it could volunteer to work on appraising and processing the collection. The Student Life and Culture Archives received multiple monetary gifts to pay the students for their time.[43] Unfortunately, the processing has been more time consuming than expected. Some delays occurred due to the students' limited availability, along with some staff shortages and other project deadlines. The records recently came under the care of the newly appointed archivist for multicultural collections and services,[44] and, shortly after her start date, the processing was halted due to the stay-at-home order caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. While working remotely, the archivist and her intern were able to work on the recently digitized content in the collection, and, since resuming in-person work, the archivist continues to gradually work on the collection with some student support. Additionally, the multicultural collections archivist receives assistance from the library's preservation unit to review over 600 audiovisual records of the center's events.

During the appraisal process, documents were discovered about a student organization[45] founded many years before the cultural center was established. The organization had previously held its meetings at the Nesbitt Center but had then become inactive for several years. Although the organization eventually restarted, its members might not have been aware that the center kept its records. The records also contain some

information that requires content restriction. Additionally, because the organization is a chapter of an international organization, some policies might exist regarding what materials can be transferred to a university archives and which should be sent to the organizations' headquarters. These different factors prompted the archivist to reach out to this organization to determine the best way to handle the materials. Discussion led to a consensus that some records had privacy concerns and should be returned.[46] The members are content with the majority of their records being housed at the archives, and conversations between the archives and the organization are ongoing. While the archives had not planned to return the records once they were deposited, this careful attention to detail during appraisal allowed the archivists to further cultivate a relationship with the student organization.

Outcomes

The multicultural collections archivist is now considered a stakeholder by the Bruce D. Nesbitt Center and regularly checks in with the center to see how she can assist it. She also facilitated a workshop with archives' colleagues and the library preservation unit for staff of all of the cultural houses (as requested by one of the directors). The workshop included an introduction to the archives, including how to preserve digital and analog materials. The head of library preservation and conservation gave advice regarding simple methods to assist with preserving the longevity of physical materials, and the center learned how such preservation efforts assist the archives. The positive feedback from the first workshop is encouraging implementation of future workshops, and two other cultural centers have also contacted the archives regarding transferring their records. The ultimate goal is that these initiatives will provide more clarity about the archives' role with the university community, increase engagement, and build trust with underrepresented groups.

Through appraising the documents from the Bruce D. Nesbitt Center, the cultural center recognized the enduring historic value of keeping the abundance of records housed at the center for multiple decades. Through the appraisal process, the archives not only connected with a cultural center, it also rekindled ties with a historical organization at the university. This success echoes the recommendation of former University of Illinois archivist and Society of *American Archivist*s president Maynard Brichford: "Archivists need to be an ear for the voices of the past, present, and future; a careful concern for our professional colleagues; a sense of organizational unity; an openness to innovation; and a commitment to meeting the needs of the public as a whole."[47]

Conclusion

Given the challenges presented by established structures of power at universities, high student leadership turnover, and the difficulty of clearly communicating collecting policies and intentions, the acquisition of student records is never straightforward. However, it is a rewarding process and an important one for capturing a complete picture of a campus's history. The benefit of working with culture centers is that they often have permanent

staff members who can serve as liaisons between the archives and the students and help lay the foundation for a strong and enduring relationship. Archivists should take advantage of the consistent organizational structure of these centers to help overcome the obstacles of the transitory nature of the student population and to provide consistent transparency through the appraisal and acquisition process. Lessons learned from the case studies presented here can help to smooth the path for future projects and for building new, or building upon existing, relationships with cultural student organizations.

The first lesson is that establishing clear lines of communication with student groups and culture centers is key. No miscommunication can occur between the archives staff, the student groups, and the directors and staff who work with the students. Misunderstandings about the archives' collecting policies can lead to missed opportunities or, at worst, make it appear that the archivist and the unit itself do not care about the records of underrepresented students.

Second, archivists must understand the history of the groups they are working with. The history of a student group can help to provide context to the records the archives is collecting and will help to inform the selection and appraisal process. This research can inform archivists' understanding of the relationship between the students and traditional structures of power within the university, including campus libraries, archives, and museums. Archivists should also be aware of what materials regarding the student groups currently exist within the archives and other campus collecting repositories, taking note of the record creators and their position within the university. Knowing what is currently within the university's institutional memory, and whose perspective is being represented, can help archivists build a case to student groups for transferring their organizational records.

Third, archivists should leverage community connections whenever possible. Not all archives can hire specialized staff and faculty to make connections and collect from student or multicultural groups, and student workers with specialized expertise will not always come along, so finding and building connections will take an active effort. Establishing a relationship with the director or another staff member of a culture center will promote better understanding of their organization and any affiliated student groups that utilize the center. Advertising internships and work opportunities to culture centers and clubs, visiting club and culture center tables during information fairs and fund-raisers, and asking to speak at leadership trainings that centers may offer help strengthen community connections. Recruiting students to participate in projects to document and transfer records can help to foster relationships and trust between the community and the archives. These connections may also appear among archives or library staff members who are active or former members, or who serve as advisors for student organizations.

Fourth, knowing a student group's history and leveraging community contacts can help to build trust, but it is not a given. The relationship between the university administration and underrepresented student groups is not always an easy one, and archivists are a part of the power structure that has long excluded students of color. Patience and gentle persistence on the part of archivists may be necessary. Archivists need to find the right balance of actively making the archives and its services known to student groups and culture centers, while waiting patiently for transfers of records and not rushing the process.

Fifth, archivists need to accept that some underrepresented communities may not want to deposit their records with the archives, preferring to stay out of the official institutional memory. As Safiya Noble explains, "The right to be forgotten is an incredibly important mechanism for thinking through whether instances of misrepresentation can be impeded or stopped."[48] This approach may feel counterintuitive to the profession, but archivists should be mindful that legitimate reasons exist for not having an interest in building trust with structures of power. If an opportunity arises to understand why those barriers exist, archivists can gain insights that may assist them in establishing more inclusive practices in the future.

Finally, while not explicitly discussed in these case studies, access must become the focus of these collections once the materials come through the door. Archivists need to be transparent about what is going to happen to the records once they are acquired. Speedy processing is not always possible, and archivists must be honest and not overpromise when the records will be processed and a finding aid produced. At the same time, access should not be denied to students and staff of culture centers because a collection is not perfectly arranged and described. Archivists should strive to provide students with access to their records whenever possible with reasonable limitations on access to restricted information as outlined in laws such as FERPA and HIPAA. Students and the staff who support them should not feel like their records and history have disappeared into the folds of university bureaucracy.

These methods and lessons learned will help archivists determine the best approaches to relationship building, making selection and appraisal decisions, and acquiring materials from underrepresented student organizations. Instant results cannot be expected, and archivists need to be patient and persistent, keeping open lines of communication when building these relationships. Even enthusiastic partnerships with community participation may not produce immediate acquisitions. But, pursuing and nurturing these relationships are essential, otherwise university archives will only continue to reinforce narratives of power.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Jessica Ballard is an assistant professor and archivist for multicultural collections and services at the University of Illinois Archives. Previously, she was an archives resident at the University of Illinois. Ballard serves on the advisory board for Project STAND and served on the nominating committee for the Midwest Archives Conference. She earned a BA in history and American racial and multicultural studies from St. Olaf College. She received a dual master's in history and library science from Indiana University Bloomington.

Cara S. Bertram is an archives program officer at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. She manages the operations of the American Library Association Archives and previously provided reference services for the University of Illinois Archives. She has also worked at the Yellowstone National Park Archives and interned both at the National Museum of the American Indian and at the Western Washington University Archives. She earned both her BA in history and MA in history with a certificate in archives and records management at Western Washington University.

NOTES

1. Helen Willa Samuels, *Varsity Letters: Documenting Modern Colleges and Universities* (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 1992).
2. Jessica Wagner, "The Student as Subaltern: Reconsidering the Role of the Student Life Material Collections at North American Universities," *Archival Issues* 35, no. 1 (2013): 37–38, https://academicworks.cuny.edu/bb_pubs/10.
3. Sarah Buchanan and Katie Richardson, "Representation through Documentation: Acquiring Student and Campus Life Records through the Bruin Archives Project," *American Archivist* 75, no. 1 (2012): 205–24, https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.75.1.e61061ul8701076u; and Ellen D. Swain. "College Student as Archives' Consultant? A New Approach to Outreach Programming on Campus," *Archival Issues* 29, no. 2 (2005): 113–31, https://www.jstor.org/stable/41102106.
4. Jessica Wagner and Debbie Smith, "Students as Donors to University Archives: A Study of Student Perceptions with Recommendations," *American Archivist* 75, no. 2 (2012): 539, https://www.jstor.org/stable/43489635.
5. Chris Prom and Ellen Swain, "From the College Democrats to the Falling Illini: Identifying, Appraising, and Capturing Student Organization Websites," *American Archivist* 70, no. 2 (2007): 345, https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.70.2.c8121767x9075210.
6. Gerald F. Ham, "The Archival Edge," *American Archivist* 38, no. 1 (1975): 5–13, https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.38.1.7400r86481128424.
7. Howard Zinn, "Secrecy, Archives, and the Public Interest," *Midwestern Archivist* 2, no. 2 (1977): 14–26, https://www.jstor.org/stable/41101382; Gould P. Colman, "The Forum: Proceedings of the Society of *American Archivist*s Annual Conference," 1970; Gould P. Colman, "The Forum: Communications from Members," *American Archivist* 36, no. 3 (1973): 483–86, https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.36.3.mt802p8712878684.
8. Brian Keough, "Documenting Diversity: Developing Special Collections of Underdocumented Groups," *Library Collections, Acquisitions, and Technical Services* 26, no. 3 (2002): 241–51, https://doi.org/10.1080/14649055.2002.10765857.

9. Lae'l Hughes-Watkins, "Filling in the Gaps: Using Outreach Efforts to Acquire Documentation on the Black Campus Movement, 1965–1972," *Archival Issues* 36, no. 1 (2014): 27–42, http://digital .library.wisc.edu/1793/73931.

10. Ibid., 40.

11. Kathryn M. Neal, "Giving It More Than the Old College Try: Documenting Diverse Populations in College and University Archives," in *College and University Archives: Readings in Theory and Practice*, ed. Chris Prom and Ellen Swain (Chicago: Society of *American Archivist*s, 2008), 111–12.

12. Michelle Caswell and Marika Cifor, "From Human Rights to Feminist Ethics: Radical Empathy in Archives," *Archivaria* 81 (Spring 2016): 40–41, https://archivaria.ca/index.php/archivaria/article/ view/13557.

13. Elvia Arroyo-Ramírez et al., "An Introduction to Radical Empathy in Archival Practice," *Journal of Critical Library and Information Studies* 3, no. 2 (2021): 3–4, https://doi.org/ 10.24242/jclis.v3i2.171.

14. The term "some archival silences" is used, as some underrepresented communities prefer to remain out of traditional archives and power structures, which should be respected. For further information, refer to Safiya Umoja Noble, *Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism* (New York: New York University Press, 2018).

15. Lori D. Patton, *Culture Centers in Higher Education: Perspectives on Identity; Theory; and Practice* (Sterling, VA: Stylus Publishing, LLC, 2010).

16. Kimberly N. Sanders, "Black Culture Centers: A Review of Pertinent Literature," *Urban Education Research and Policy Annuals* 4, no. 1 (2016): 30–38, https://journals.charlotte.edu/urbaned/article/ view/443.

17. Chaitra Powell et al., "This [Black] Woman's Work: Exploring Archival Projects that Embrace the Identity of the Memory Worker," *KULA: Knowledge Creation, Dissemination, and Preservation Studies* 2, no. 1 (2018): 5, https://doi.org/10.5334/kula.25.

18. Michael Vendiola, interview by Cara Bertram, 2009.

19. "Ethnic Student Center," Associated Students Ethnic Student Center, Western Washington University, https://mss.wwu.edu/esc/esc-clubs.

20. Ibid.

21. James M. O'Toole and Richard Cox, *Understanding Archives & Manuscripts* (Chicago: Society of *American Archivist*s, 2006), 120.

22. Coauthor Cara Bertram was a former member and officer of the Mixed Identity Student Organization (2005–2011), a former undergraduate public relations support staff at the Ethnic Student Center (2008–2009), and a graduate intern at the Western Washington University Archives (March–August 2010).

23. University Archives and Record Center, "WWU General Records Retention Schedule" (Western Washington University, 2010).

24. "Records Retention Schedule," Heritage Resources, https://recmgmt.wwu.edu/records-retention-schedules.

25. University Archives and Record Center, "Ethnic Student Center Club Records Guidelines" (Western Washington University, July 2010).

26. Neal, "Giving It More Than the Old College Try," 111–12.

27. Tony Kurtz, "Ethnic Student Center Records," email to coauthor, May 6, 2019.

28. Tony Kurtz, "Ethnic Student Center Records," email to coauthor, June 8, 2022.

29. Ibid.

30. Ibid.

31. Tony Kurtz, "Ethnic Student Center Records," email to coauthor, June 8, 2022; "Multicultural Center," Viking Union, Western Washington University, https://vu.wwu.edu/mcc; "Black Affinity Housing," On-Campus Housing, Western Washington University, https://housing.wwu.edu/black-affinity-housing; "WWU Board of Trustees Resolution on Naming," President's Office, Western Washington University, https://president.wwu.edu/wwu-board-trustees-resolutions-naming.

32. Joy Williamson-Lott, *Black Power on Campus* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press 2013), 35, 65.

33. Ibid., 68–69; Donald J. Wermers, *Minority Ethnic Enrollments at the University of Illinois Fall Terms, 1967–1973* (Urbana, IL: University Office of School and College Relations, April 1974).

34. The Special Education Opportunities Program (SEOP) was a program for incoming disadvantaged students. One had to qualify for the program. The first cohort had approximately 565 students. The majority of the students were Black, but there were other students of color and some white students admitted to Project 500. Not all Black students were admitted under Project 500. Some came through regular admissions. Joy Williamson-Lott, *Black Power on Campus*, 68–69.

35. Ibid., 75–85.

36. "Unity and Action," *The Black Rap: BSA's Newspaper*, February 18,1969, University Archives 41/66/826, https://digital.library.illinois.edu/items/2ab9b3f0-59f6-0134-1dc2-0050569601ca-1. It is worth noting here that during this time period, many colleges and universities were responding to similar demands for racial equity and justice from BIPOC student organizations. For more on current efforts by archivists to document the history of student activism in marginalized communities, see Project STAND (Student Activism Now Documented), https://standarchives.com.

37. Williamson-Lott, *Black Power on Campus*, 128; "Afro-American Commission Offers Aid to Departments in Changing Curricula," 1; Press Release, September 12, 1969, UPR, Box 6, Folder: A (quote).

38. Ibid.

39. "BNAACC History," Office of Inclusion and Intercultural Relations, https://oiir.illinois.edu/bnaacc/about-bnaacc/history.

40. "African American Student Housing," Mapping History at the University of Illinois, https://univofillinois.maps.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=77fc470dba3b49e4ac18cc802ea81fa8.

41. Rebecca Wood, "Building the 'Ideal Cultural Center': Set to Open for Student Use Spring 2019," *Daily Illini*, October 2, 2017, https://dailyillini.com/news-stories/campus-life/2017/10/02/building-ideal-cultural-center.

42. "Rescuing Black History: Students, Archivists, Collaborate to Save Priceless Documents," *Friendscript: Newsletter for Friends of the University of Illinois Library at Urbana–Champaign* 39, no. 2 (2017–2018): 4–5, https://www.library.illinois.edu/friends/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/FriendscriptV39N2.pdf.

43. Ibid.

44. One of the coauthors of this article, Jessica Ballard.

45. Out of respect for this organization's privacy, it will remain anonymous to readers.

46. To respect the organization's privacy, the authors have elected not to discuss the records with privacy concerns, as providing too much information might unintentionally identify the organization.

47. Maynard J. Brichford, "What's Past Was Future," *American Archivist* 43, no. 3 (1980): 432, https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.43.3.631227106ux2q512.

48. Noble, *Algorithms.*

Situating Community Archives Along the Continuum of Community-Engaged Archival Praxis: Autonomy, Independence, and the Archival Impulse

By Lindsay Kistler Mattock and Aiden M. Bettine

ABSTRACT: *Community archives* is a widely used concept in both archival scholarship and the archival profession, yet, to date the concept lacks a clear and consistent definition. In attempts to increase inclusivity in the community archives paradigm, scholars have refused to offer a strict definition for the term, resulting in the conflation of community archives and community-based archival practices occurring in institutional repositories. This article reviews the definitions offered in the growing body of community archives literature and offers a reframing of the umbrella concept of community archives through the lens of community engagement. In applying the principles of Arstein's Ladder, a framework that describes the level of citizen engagement in public planning projects, the authors offer the Continuum of Community-Engaged Archival Praxis that articulates the distinction between community archives and other archival practices that fall on a spectrum of community-based archival projects. Returning to earlier definitions of community archives that center on the autonomy of the community, they ground community archives in the concept of the *archival impulse* as a means for identifying the impetus of a community-engaged archival project and the directionality of the control over the archives. The continuum and impulse provide a means for disambiguating the myriad concepts that fall under the moniker of "community" and for more clearly defining the relationship between institutional repositories and the communities that they seek to engage.

Introduction

In the 2013 special issue of *Archival Science* "Memory, Identity and the Archival Paradigm," Terry Cook describes four significant shifts in archival thought ending with "community" as the fourth archival paradigm. This seminal piece suggests that the community paradigm is "on the horizon" with the advent of networked communications technologies. Cook articulates technology as an affordance for archivists to document society as a whole, while enabling communities to share in archival practice with professionals.[1] The section heading for this paradigm, "Community: participatory archiving—the activist-archivist mentors collaborative evidence—and memory-making," demonstrates a blurring of concepts and methodologies, including postcustodial models afforded by digital technologies, participatory archiving practices, and autonomous community archives. Reflecting on postmodern critiques of archival praxis, Cook recognizes the power, authority, and control of institutional archives over history and memory, along with the harm this has caused marginalized communities

and cultures. In this new paradigm, archivists become "mentors, facilitators, coaches, who work in the community to encourage archiving as a participatory process shared with many in society, rather than necessarily acquiring all the archival products in our established archives."[2] Cook's community-based archiving paradigm is one of shared responsibility, custody, and practice that aims to move toward a "total archive" representing the plurality of voices within the archival multiverse, describing a "more democratic, inclusive, holistic archives."[3] However, in this framing, the professional archivist continues to play a central role in this paradigm. In this most recent shift, Cook describes professionals "empowering communities" to care for their records by serving as liaisons and partners in archival endeavors while facilitating the use of digital tools to preserve and provide access to community-based projects, rather than recognizing the autonomy of communities to employ archival methodologies to tell their histories and stories or to critique institutional archival praxis.

The archival discourse that precedes and follows Cook's reflections continues to conflate community archives with community-based practices that necessitate a role for professional archivists rather than acknowledging a broader continuum of community-engaged archival practices. The breadth of vocabulary associated with the concept of *community archives* results in a weakening of the terminology that describes a range of disparate contexts from autonomous community settings to traditional institutional repositories. At risk in both scholarship and practice is the decreased engagement with notions of power, legacies of historical oppression, and acknowledgment of community needs and capability. This article reviews the current scholarship related to community archives and offers a reconceptualization of the term through the lens of community engagement. This reframing situates community archival practices within their historical contexts and along a continuum of engagement between communities and the archival profession.

Shifting into the Fourth Paradigm

Community Archives: The Shaping of Memory, the first edited volume focused on community archives, appeared just a few years before Cook's 2013 article. Now over a decade old, this scholarship serves as a marker of the shift in archival thought. Cook's themes of identity and community resonate throughout the chapters focusing on the significance of record-keeping to communities, broadly conceptualized. Like Cook, the authors contributing to this volume fail to adequately define "community archives," though they are the subject of study. The contributors explore the various types of communities that mainstream archival institutions and theories have historically harmed or disregarded, including case studies of Indigenous and Aboriginal archives, LGBTQ collections, and records produced by other underrepresented and historically marginalized groups. Collectively, the authors consider the impact of archival thought and theory on communities of people focusing on issues of identity, collective memory, and social justice. This work marks a significant conceptual movement in archival scholarship, following postmodern critiques of the archive that explore the power of state and institutional archival praxis and the impact on community memory, history,

and culture. Few of the pieces in the volume use the term "community archives," but all describe the relationship between communities and archival practice.[4]

The exception in this volume is the opening chapter by UK scholars Andrew Flinn and Mary Stevens.[5] Their work is among the most cited from this volume, providing a definitional framework for "independent and community archives." The authors cite Flinn's previous scholarship, defining community archives as "the (often) grassroots activities of creating and collecting, processing and curating, preserving and making accessible collections relating to a particular community or specified subject."[6] The chapter focuses on three UK-based case studies: the George Padmore Institute, the Institute of Race Relations, and the Black Cultural Archives. It is important to note that these case studies are particular to the community archives movement in the United Kingdom. Flinn's work traces the movement through initiatives such as the Community Access to Archives Project (CAAP), led by the National Archives, and the Community Archive Development Group (CADG), now an extension of the Archives and Records Association. Both groups provided funding and infrastructural support for the development of community archives and history projects. This distinction is a reminder that Flinn's work in the United Kingdom, undertaken in a particular place and time, has not been replicated in other contexts. This is critical to acknowledge because, in this set of case studies, the funding and infrastructure of the projects have been supported by the state.

While Flinn's voice permeates the community archives discourse, a close reading of Flinn's scholarship reveals a reticence to define community archives firmly. In his earliest piece on community archives, Flinn writes, "defining and establishing a common understanding of the terms employed in this area is important but also quite difficult. Definitions of what a community might be, or what a community archives is and what it might be taken to include are not necessarily clear or fixed."[7] Flinn articulates an early aversion to providing a bounded definition of community archiving as a practice but acknowledges the grassroots nature of the community archives and heritage realms. He also asserts that communities must participate and have control or ownership of the archival project. Flinn's article establishes the idea that community archives and oral history projects are a means for diversifying and democratizing history by challenging and adding to the dominant narratives of the past at both the local and national levels.

Continuing his publication of scholarship on community archives in the United Kingdom, in 2010 Flinn examined the role of technology in community archiving for the creation of community-generated content. Challenging the problematic assertion from some archival professionals that community archives subvert the archivists' role as "expert," Flinn situated community practices within a lineage of efforts to document history from below.[8] Contradicting his observations in the earlier work, Flinn introduced the notion that community archives *do not* have to be community inspired but might be sponsored or initiated by mainstream heritage organizations and infrastructure. His focus on the role of the Internet and digital technologies

for cultivating community-generated content shifts the focus from independent, community-driven efforts to participatory models of community engagement from institutional repositories and collecting institutions.

The blurring of community-driven and community-engaged practices continues throughout Flinn's coauthored publications. In 2009, Flinn, Stevens, and Shepherd argued that the primary feature of community archives is the engaged participation of community members in the preservation and accessibility of their history on their own terms.[9] Again, focused on the United Kingdom and community archiving initiatives in London specifically, the authors outlined the guiding questions of their two-year research funded by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council. Their central aim was to uncover the impact of community-based practices that challenge dominant historical narratives and archival practice, exposing the relationship between mainstream repositories and community archives. Employing an ethnographic methodology, the authors utilized participant observation to gain a bottom-up perspective of community archives. The authors observed that community archives collect a wide diversity of materials melding the traditional collecting scope of archives and museums. They also acknowledged that personal and even individual dimensions of community archiving can lead to issues of stamina and sustainability, often requiring the intervention of institutional repositories. The primary tensions of community archiving according to the preliminary observations concern custody and ownership and the distrust of mainstream heritage organizations that communities often exhibit. Flinn, Stevens, and Shepherd concluded that community archives play an integral role in allowing communities to maintain power over what is preserved and what is destroyed.[10] Subsequent scholarship reflects how the findings from this article have come to serve as the de facto definition of community archives by framing the conversation that follows in the archival discourse.[11]

Attempting to remain inclusive, Flinn, Stevens, and Shepherd[12] codified an understanding of community archives that provides little distinction between independent community archives and community-engaged practices offered by archival institutions. As an umbrella term, "community archives" are described as a means for harnessing the power of controlling representation of community history often marginalized in the mainstream archives. As Rebecka Sheffield observed in 2017, the concept is "used as a shorthand for the myriad community-based archival initiatives that come together outside of formal heritage networks."[13] Community archives are framed within the postmodern critiques of institutional archival practices that examine the biases of institutions that have privileged dominant historical narratives and become a means of archival activism that embraces social justice and plurality. Yet, as Sheffield notes, community archives are still framed within the practices of institutional repositories as a way for professional archivists "to reinvigorate their profession with new methodological approaches to documenting cultural heritage and making this material accessible to a broader public."[14] Throughout the discourse, the distinctions between the independent community archives described in Flinn's earliest work and participatory, community-engaged practices blur.

Despite the broadening of the concept evidenced in the scholarship of Flinn, Stevens, and Shepherd, their work has served as the foundation for others studying community archives. Michelle Caswell, like Flinn, has emerged as a dominant voice in the field based on her work in Southern California. The scholarship produced by Caswell and graduate students at UCLA is similarly geographically situated and builds from the result of research at a set of 12 community-based archives in Los Angeles and the surrounding area.[15] Exploring the significance of the representational frameworks offered by archival collections, the community spaces where the archives are maintained, and the practices developed at these sites, this work is integral to the development of scholarship in this area. However, as with Flinn's, Caswell's work is grounded in a limited number of case studies. The geographical focus on California is replicated by the queer community case studies offered by Wakimoto et al. who explore three repositories in the state.[16]

Despite the growth of community archives research over the past decade, the number of case studies remains limited. Outside of the UK context, community endeavors from the US coasts dominate the literature. The Lesbian Herstory Archives in New York City, as an example, is one of the most popular case studies.[17] Other California-based LGBTQ archives, such as ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives; the Lavender Library, Archives, and Cultural Exchange (LLACE); and the GLBT Historical Society, appear in multiple articles and chapters.[18] However, these cases are situated in large metropolitan areas on the coasts of the United States, offering little diversity in terms of the communities, practices, and organizational frameworks that are represented. Further, all build on the earlier work of Flinn, Stevens, and Shepherd,[19] citing the broadest possible understanding of what constitutes a community archives.

Despite the reluctance to formally define "community archives," the work of Flinn, Stevens, and Shepherd has become the cornerstone for others studying community-based archiving endeavors.[20] Zavala et al. open their literature review by citing this earlier work:

> Andrew Flinn, Mary Stevens and Elizabeth Shepherd define community as "any manner of people who come together and present themselves as such, and a 'community archive' is the product of their attempts to document the history of their commonality," with the resulting "collections of material gathered primarily by members of a given community and over whose use community members exercise some level of control."[21]

Flinn, Stevens, and Shepherd's 2009 *Archival Science* article provides the broadest possible definitions of both "community" and "community archives," serving as the framework by which future case studies have been selected.[22] Scholars acknowledge the absence of boundaries around the terminology, noting that "a clear general definition of *community archives* is difficult to delineate."[23] And, while the growing body of literature critically engages various dimensions of community collections—exploring affect, representation, identity, archival space, advocacy, social justice, and issues of plurality in the archives—the definition of "community archives" has not been further bounded or developed.

Community Archives as a Continuum of Community-Engaged Practices

In his 2015 entry to the *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science*, Andrew Flinn observed, "the term community archives has not been precisely defined or even deemed capable of precise definition," despite the continued use of the terminology.[24] In an attempt to draw boundaries around the concept, Flinn first grappled with the idea of community, noting "in some countries the term is used mainly to describe local, geographically located communities and archives, elsewhere instead of or in addition to place, the term refers to communities self-identifying by race, ethnicity, faith, nationality, gender, sexuality, disability, class, occupation, shared interest, or a combination of the above."[25] Flinn then addressed the breadth of practices evoked by the term:

> Community archives do not sit easily inside professional silos. The activities frequently described as community-based or community-led archiving shares many attributes with other related endeavors such as community history, oral history, community-based museums and heritage groups, radical archiving, resource centers, and autonomous archive.[26]

"Community" rightly remains a loosely defined term from the perspective of the archivist, allowing the community to self-define from within. The activity-based definition of community archives, on the other hand, does little to draw distinctions between collecting practices initiated by the community and those originating from professional archives. All historical or heritage-oriented practices that engage the community in some way are drawn under this expanding umbrella term.

As we have argued, Flinn's observations in this brief encyclopedia entry reflect those of the broader literature. In an attempt to be as inclusionary as possible, the field has refused to concisely define "community archives."[3] However, this reluctance has resulted in a body of literature that fails to fully engage the distinct nature of community archives and the complexity of the ownership, control, and power situated in these sites. The failure to set clear boundaries prevents archival scholars from demarcating the distinctions between community-based archival endeavors adhering to participatory models and those that originate from within the community. The range of terminology employed to describe the relationship between institutional repositories and community members further illustrates the breadth of projects and practices described as community archives. Modifiers such as "engagement," "local," and "participatory" signify the involvement of community members in archival practice and represent different methodologies for professional archivists to engage communities in building more inclusive collections.[27] While scholars acknowledge the utility of the range of methodologies deployed in these practices, few connect this work to the spectrum of community engagement practices described in higher education and other areas of public scholarship.

Janet Ceja Alcalá and Desiree Alaniz are among the few in the archival discourse who acknowledge the need to situate the range of community-engaged practices along

a continuum that describes the relationship between communities and institutional repositories. They define community-engaged archiving "as those [organizations] who consciously work alongside and partner with communities to give voice to their collection, whether the collections are in heritage organizations or in autonomous environments."[28] Ceja Alcalá and Alaniz frame the "Community Engaged Archiving Continuum" around a series of case studies. Community engagement is described along three levels of practice, ranked according to the level of activity between the community and institutional repository (see Figure 1). The bottom tier represents the participatory archiving models described in the archival discourse. In this level of engagement, archival access is of primary focus. The authors describe practices that include community members in the development of finding aids, archival description, and arrangement of collections. In the center tier, Ceja Alcalá and Alaniz describe projects embedded in the community. These case studies feature two-way communication between the community and archival professionals exemplified through service-learning projects. The continuum peaks at "complete collaboration," suggesting an equal partnership between community and archivist in the implementation of archival projects.[29]
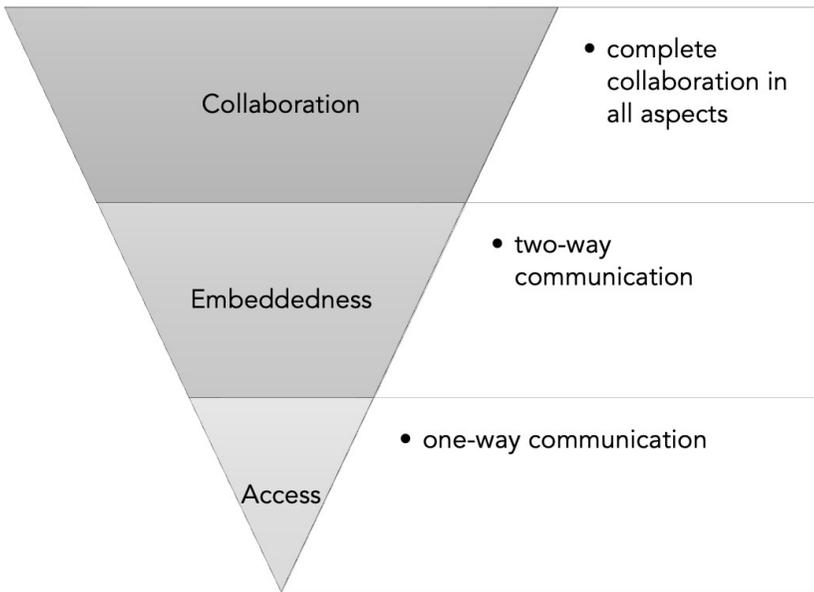
Figure 1: Ceja Alcalá and Alaniz's Community Engaged Archiving Continuum

Ceja Alcalá and Alaniz's Community Engaged Archiving Continuum begins to draw distinctions between the practices described in the community archives literature by acknowledging the position of the community within archival praxis. Definitions of community archives have similarly situated the community's relationship to institutional archives. In 2007, Flinn centralized the role of community engagement, arguing,

"[c]ommunity histories or community archives are the grassroots activities of documenting, recording and exploring community heritage *in which community participation, control and ownership of the project is essential*."[30] He further noted, "this activity might or might not happen in association with formal heritage organisations *but the impetus and direction* should come from within the community itself."[31] While the definition blurs the boundaries between archives and other historically oriented projects, Flinn clearly asserts that these projects should originate from within the community and that the community should retain control. Elsewhere, Flinn has used the term "independent community archives" to stress the autonomy of these sites.[32] However, as Flinn's work developed, the concept weakened. The definition crafted by Flinn, Stevens, and Shepherd frequently used to frame studies of community archives softens this language defining community archives as "collections of material gathered *primarily* by members of a given community and over whose use community members exercise *some level* of control."[33] While the differences are subtle, these definitions move the concept of community archives down the continuum proposed by Ceja Alcalá and Alaniz, asserting more space for institutional and professional archives and archivists and less autonomy for community collectors.

This shift is further evidenced in the archival discourse, as modifiers such as "community-led" or "community-based" enter the archival vernacular. The phrase "community archives" then serves as "a matter of convenience to draw together what is in reality an incredibly diverse group of archival organizations."[34] The primary distinction between community archives and other institutional collecting efforts has thus become some level of engagement with a self-defined community. The qualifiers used to describe sites of study range from notions of locality ("local history archives"), size ("small community archives"), site ("church archives," "school archives," "home-based archives"), methodology ("oral history project," "DIY," "participatory"), mission ("radical," "feminist," "activist," "social-justice-oriented"), and identity ("ethnic," "identity-based," "interest group"). While this wide range of terminology captures the complexity of the relationship between archives/archival praxis and society, the discourse has done little to establish the distinctions between community archives and other archival endeavors that engage identity, community, and underrepresented histories. Rather than defining community archives through these other characteristics, Simionica suggests, "community archives are defined as a collection of tangible heritage or an action of self-dedication to preserve the intangible heritage of a community of which community engagement amongst its

members in such processes is the most important feature,"[35] thus defining community archives by the level of community engagement.

As noted, the archival discourse has yet to turn to the community-engagement literature to draw definitional boundaries around archival practices. Many community-engagement models describe a range of practices similar to those described by Ceja Alcalá and Alaniz that stretch across a spectrum from outreach/informing, consultation, involvement, and collaboration, to empowerment or shared leadership at the top tier of engagement.[36] The movement across this spectrum hinges on the ability of community members to make decisions and derive benefits from the relationship. It also reflects *when* the community becomes involved with an engaged project, whether at the end of a project to serve as the audience for something created by an institution or in the beginning stages as the project is being designed.

The Community-Engaged Research (CEnR) Continuum defines a six-tiered typology that describes an increasing level of engagement among members of a community involved in a research project (see Figure 2).[37] Published by the US Environmental Protection Agency's National Center for Environmental Research to inform grant-funded projects engaging the public, the CEnR Continuum builds from the community-engaged research in public health and allied fields. In this model, outreach describes the lowest level of engagement, representing a unidirectional flow of information from the researchers to the community members. At this level, the results of a study may be shared with a community, but the community members have no input in the design of the research. With consultation, community members may provide some means of feedback to inform the research project, but projects falling within this level of engagement do not engage the community in the initial stages of project design. Involvement includes projects that may engage the community from the beginning stages of design and the formulation of the questions. Shared leadership/participation is one step up from involvement, recognizing community members as equals in the research design project. Community-driven projects are defined as those in which the project is both community owned and led.
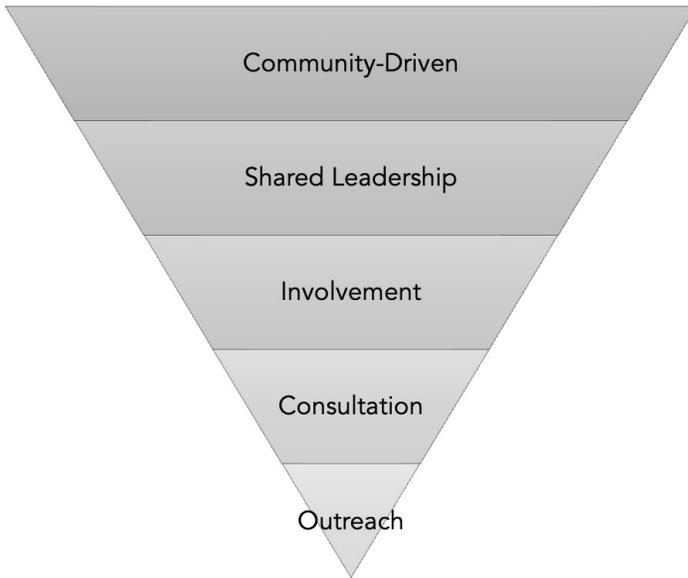
Figure 2: Community-Engaged Research Continuum adapted from CEnR (2013)

The CEnR Continuum illustrates the tensions of power often discussed in the community archives discourse. As community involvement increases, so do trust and communication between community members and researchers. This framework asks researchers to examine the design and methodology of the project. Whose voice is the loudest? Who has the ultimate control over the design of the project? Whose needs are prioritized? When does the community become involved? Mirroring Ceja Alcalá and Alaniz, the CEnR Continuum carefully examines the means of community participation and engagement, providing clearer definition of the boundaries of community participation.

Sherry Arnstein's "Ladder of Citizen Participation" provides more nuance to the models described, offering eight "rungs" along a typology that describes citizen participation in social programs, planning projects, and democratic public participation (see Figure 3).[38] Though first proposed in 1969, the typology continues to inform community-engaged research in planning and public policy and to serve as a means of assessment for community-oriented projects.[39] Arnstein frames participation as the measure of power and "juxtaposes powerless citizens with the powerful in order to highlight the fundamental divisions between them."[40] Along the eight rungs of the ladder, the level of citizen participation and power moves from "non-participation" at the bottom rung to "citizen control" at the top.
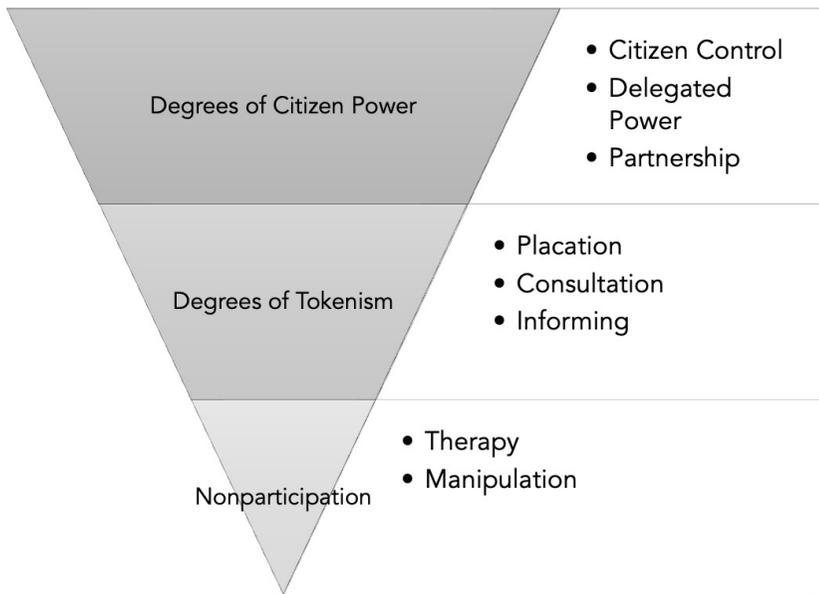
Figure 3: Arnstein's Ladder of Citizen Participation, adapted from Arnstein (2019)

The lower rungs of the ladder describe methods of nonparticipation. Here, Arnstein describes advisory committees that offer citizens little voice and the illusion of participation. In these projects, citizens may be consulted, but only as "information gathering" exercises. Such projects seek community support rather than true involvement of community participation and serve as mechanisms for public relations.[41] The middle rungs of the framework risk tokenizing members of the community. Mirroring the CEnR Continuum, these methods offer additional community input and control, but citizens are brought into the project after it has been designed by those outside of the community. Tokenism is not inherent in these relationships, but Arnstein's language describes the risk of allowing the researcher's voice to overpower that of the community.[42] At the top of the ladder, Arnstein describes greater "Degrees of Citizen Power." Partnership, delegated power, and citizen control describe relationships between researchers and communities that increase the level of community voice and input in the design and implementation of community-engaged projects.[43]

Arnstein's language emphasizes the risks involved as researchers outside of communities design projects intended to engage a particular community and the need to carefully consider the positionality of power and authority in community-engaged projects. Figure 4 places Arnstein's Ladder in conversation with the CEnR Continuum and Ceja Alcalá and Alaniz's model. This comparison demonstrates the limitations of the models, capturing only part of the ladder.

Ceja Alcalá and Alaniz (2018)	CEnR (2015)	Arnstein (2019)
	Community-Driven *Community control over project*	Citizen Control *Community governance*
		Delegated Power *Control over a particular domain*
Complete Collaboration *equal partnership*	Participatory *Equally shared leadership*	Partnership *Shared-responsibility*
Embeddedness *two-way communication*	Involvement *Bi-directional communication*	Placation *Increased control*
	Consultation *Community feedback*	Consultation *Inviting feedback*
Access *one-way communication*	Outreach *Provides community with information*	Informing *One-way communication*
		Therapy *Masked participation*
		Manipulation *Information gathering, project support*

Figure 4: Comparison of all three frameworks

Arnstein provides a more nuanced framework for analyzing the extent of community power within a community-engaged project. Neither the CEnR Continuum nor Ceja Alcalá and Alaniz's model extends downward to examine projects in which communities have little to no power and may be tokenized. As both models presume the involvement of a researcher or an archivist, neither extend fully upward to complete citizen control. However, all three models demonstrate the importance of clearly understanding where community-engaged work falls along a continuum of practice. While "community archives" is broadly used to recognize projects along a similar continuum, like Ceja Alcalá and Alaniz, we argue for more nuanced language that recognizes and acknowledges the positionality of institutional archives within the community-engaged practices described under this umbrella term. It is not that these models are absent from the archival literature, rather, the issue is that the emerging case studies building on the theory of community archives have not fully examined this level of engagement. As Arnstein's Ladder demonstrates, the subtle distinction between outreach and consultation provides nuance to describing the amount of community input and informs how the level of community involvement may affect the reception or engagement of the target audience. Similarly, the distinction between a true shared partnership and consultation, and further, between partnership and community control, significantly shifts the involvement of the community along the spectrum. We argue for a new model in the "Continuum of Community-Engaged Archival Praxis" that recognizes these distinctions between

community power and control, offering a continuum of terms that fully describes the positionality of the researchers, the partitioners, and the communities that they engage, thus fully articulating where the power is situated in community-engaged archival practices and methodologies.
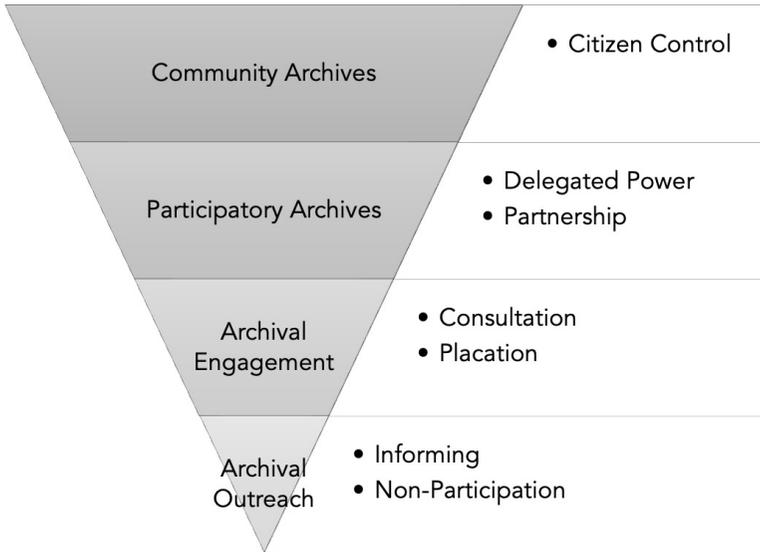
Figure 5: The Continuum of Community-Engaged Archival Praxis

Figure 5 imposes commonly used archival terminology on Arnstein's Ladder. In this model, outreach describes modes of engagement in which communities have little to no input. Traditional forms of outreach such as exhibits and educational efforts may fall under this bottom tier of practice if communities do not have input from the beginning of the project or have little influence over the design. Some projects labeled as "participatory" may also fall into this category, such as social tagging activities that allow limited community engagement with archival collections. Outreach practices describe community-based projects that speak to the community, setting up practices that community members may engage with, but giving them little to no control over how the project develops. Archival engagement refers to archival activities in which communities might provide some deeper level of consultation, informing the implementation of a project. Within this level of the continuum, the origin of the project lies outside of the community, but the community may inform how the project develops. These first two tiers describe a large part of the "participatory archives" literature, equally fraught by a lack of clear boundaries on what practices compass the terminology.[44] Many "participatory" projects describe efforts to incorporate digital and web-based technologies that engage communities outside of the archives to participate through these tools. This literature focuses on accessibility, use, and the affordances of digital tools to engage broader

audiences.[45] Many projects labeled "participatory" ask communities to work within the boundaries of archival praxis and would fall within archival engagement on our framework rather than describing a true collaborative partnership. Reframed through the lens of community-engagement, true participatory archives would suggest an equal partnership between institutional repositories and community groups. Such projects are defined by shared leadership and control. Allard and Ferris describe their work with the Digital Archives of Marginalized Communities Project (DAMC) as "community-led participatory archiving," employing a methodology that engaged community members throughout the project.[46] While in the earlier stages of the project the researchers from the University of Manitoba consulted with community members, the methodology of DAMC evolved as the archives developed, allowing the members of the community to serve as partners in its design and implementation. Many projects currently described as community archives rarely fall within the top tier of our framework. In the Continuum of Community-Engaged Archival Praxis, projects in which communities initiate and have full control over a project are designated as community archives. Perhaps one of the most cited examples is the Lesbian Herstory Archives (LHA).[47] Founded in the 1970s by Joan Nestle, Deborah Edel, and women from the Gay Academic Union, the LHA remains community led by a group of dedicated volunteers in a Brooklyn brownstone and is often cited for its alternative approaches to collections organization and access. The Gerber/Hart Library and Archives in Chicago,[48] San Francisco's GLBT Historical Society,[49] and Evanston's Shorefront Legacy Center,[50] like LHA, were founded by community members as what Flinn and others would describe as "independent-community archives," spaces where the communities are in complete control over the collections.

Redefining Community Archives

By placing community archives at the top of the continuum, we argue for a reassertion of Flinn's earlier definition and a tightening of the concept's boundaries, offering a multifaceted definition that recognizes the power and authority of the community in the establishment and control of community archives: 1) the archival impulse originates from within the community, 2) the community retains ownership of the archives, and 3) the community maintains control over the preservation, access, and management of the collection. Partnerships and collaborations with institutional archives and community archives are akin to collaborations between archival repositories, which may include events and programming, shared community outreach, and sharing of knowledge and resources around archival practice. In this sense, community archives remain autonomous, but community archivists become colleagues in the profession.

The archival impulse refers to a community's desire to build an archives and preserve the history and memory of a self-defined group. With this concept, we return to Flinn's understanding that "the impetus and direction" of community archives should originate within the community.[51] However, the archival impulse is also situated within the historical contexts that have led to the formation of the community and in which the community identifies as integral to its shared memory and archival praxis. The archival impulse resituates the study of community archives, shifting the emphasis from the

contemporary practices of community archives to the history of these sites and the individuals who constructed and shaped them. Community and identity are not static but deeply rooted in the conditions that brought together groups of individuals who share common interests, cultures, histories, and practices. Community boundaries and identities shift over time in response to historical conditions that are both external and internal to these groups. Few scholars have firmly rooted their studies of community archives in a historical analysis of the communities building the archives and of the shifts in the mission and practice within those collections over time. Focusing on the contemporary practices of these archives, archival scholarship nods to the historical longevity of these archival spaces yet fails to interrogate the social, cultural, and political contexts that motivated community members to build and maintain an archives.

While case studies often engage brief histories of identity terms and organizational timelines, few engage the history of the archives or the historical conditions under which archival collections were founded.[52] To provide one example, Caswell engaged with the history of community identity and terminology, writing from her position as the cofounder of the South Asian American Digital Archives (SAADA). Formed in 2008 as an "independent online-only community-based repository," Caswell explains why the term "South Asian American" was selected to represent a broad diasporic community: "in SAADA's case, we have strategically employed the constructed category of 'South Asian American' in order to build connections between diverse groups, while at the same time documenting differences between those groups that ultimately denaturalizes South Asian American as a category."[53] The complexities of this terminology in connection to Western notions of geography and the colonial history of British rule complicate present-day social connections and understandings of shared history. In the case of SAADA, identity terminology is deployed as a tool for archival growth and contemporary affinity building for South Asian American immigrants and their descendants. In this example, community is constructed through the archives and not as a historical precursor to archive-building. Integral to the archival impulse and the historical analysis of community archives is that the drive for building an archives comes from within a self-defined community.

Besides discussions of identity through a historical lens, archival scholars include the history of community archives as short introductions to case studies concerned with contemporary best practices. Wakimoto, Bruce, and Partridge study three queer community archives in California utilizing these case studies to articulate the need for social justice in the archival profession more broadly.[54] To introduce the GLBT History Society; the Lavender Library, Archives, and Cultural Exchange of Sacramento Inc.; and ONE National Gay & Lesbian Archives in their article, Wakimoto, Bruce, and Partridge provide a brief timeline of each organization, at which point the historical engagement with each archives ends. The purpose of their work is to assert that through understanding the motivations behind queer community archives building, professional archivists can develop increasingly reflexive archival practice that leads to heightened inclusion of marginalized communities within institutional repositories through outreach and collaboration. Disengaging with the historical context of each archives' emergence

allows scholars to skirt the political nature of community archives as grassroots activist projects that necessitate autonomy.

The archival impulse centers the early visions and imaginations of the archives before these projects come to fruition through an engagement with the desires of the founders in their social, cultural, and political contexts. Situating community archives in the historical conditions of their establishment provides the opportunity to study the archival collections preserved by the community to understand how community visions of a shared memory are enacted through its collecting policies. In this light, the practices of community archives necessitate a historical investigation to examine the change in practices and policies over the lifetime of an archives to its present-day manifestation. A historical approach to community archives affords researchers the ability to engage the ways in which communities define themselves and their history over time. "Community" suggests that no single person acts alone. Therefore, the archival impulse that initiates a community archives also shifts over the lifespan of an archives as the people in the role of community archivist change and continue to build and expand their archives. Our recent case study on the history of the Gerber/Hart Library and Archives in Chicago, Illinois, demonstrates the implementation of a methodology centered on the archival impulse.[55] To unpack the history of Gerber/Hart since its founding in 1981, we utilized historical analysis to read the archival collections of key founders and archivists involved in its establishment and early years. This analysis situates Gerber/Hart within the gay liberation movement that preceded its founding and sheds light on the growing professional network of lesbian and gay librarians and archivists engaged with preserving history in community contexts across North America. Case studies that engage the history of queer community archives across the country have overlooked this burgeoning network of lesbian and gay professionals simultaneously engaging their local communities in developing historical visibility and legitimacy in response to long-standing exclusionary institutional collection policies.

Grounding the archival impulse in the origins of the archives exposes the power dynamics embedded in community archival practices. The archival literature notes the suspicions that community archivists often have of institutional archives and partnerships with traditional archival spaces, based on the historical imbalance of power between communities and institutional repositories. These reflections on power extend from the postmodern critiques of archival practice that acknowledge the power of the archives as an extension of the power of the state that marginalizes specific communities and their histories.[56] The community archives discourse has positioned itself in this fourth paradigm shift, accepting the turn toward community as an acknowledgment and repair of the colonial power dynamics within institutional repositories. Yet, community archives are described as operating at a deficit, without funding, resources, and broader community support. Flinn and Stevens note, "questions of independence, sustaining resources, keeping archives open, achieving organizational aspirations and navigating the possible compromises required in partnership with formal heritage organizations are common to many independent archives all over the world," further arguing that these partnerships are inevitable for many community archives.[57] Community archivist Dino Robinson

of the Shorefront Legacy Center in Evanston, Illinois, reflected on the imbalance of power, noting, "often, when big institutions attempt to partner with community-based organizations, the relationship isn't equitable and the archives—which end up being stored in the big institution—become less accessible to the public. . . . It's usually the community entity that has to follow the rules of the bigger one."[58]

In recognition of the historical and contemporary power dynamics, the archival impulse is only one facet of our community archives definition. Community archives are not only initiated and desired by community members, they are also owned and maintained by the community itself. The archival impulse reveals the "reasons that communities seek to build collections, to claim ownership of their history, preserve materials, celebrate their history, pass on knowledge to future generations, and seek to shift archival practices that have excluded or marginalized their history."[59] The second and third facets of our definition set additional boundaries on the concept of *community archives*, acknowledging that community archives are not solely defined by the founding moment, they become part of the histories of the communities that sustain the practice. Like Flinn, Stevens, and Shepherd,[60] we recognize that community participation is a defining characteristic of community archives, but reflecting the frameworks offered by the community engagement discourse, we argue that to fall within the definition of community archives at the top of the community-engaged archives continuum, the community must retain ownership of the archives and control over the preservation, access, and management of the collections. Ownership and control of archival materials and spaces demonstrate that community archives are not strictly about a desire for preserving memory but about the continued control of the narratives and materials that they hold. Caswell reflects on these principles in the context of SAADA: "We felt a real need for these materials to remain under community control and not be subsumed under larger institutional repositories, where they could be undervalued, get lost in the shuffle, or misrepresented."[61] While the archival literature acknowledges the need for new modes of engagement with community history to repair a colonial past and pluralize archival collections, as we have noted, these modes of praxis are described under the larger umbrella of "community archives," further blurring the distinctions between autonomous projects in which the community retains power and control and those in which the community has little voice to influence praxis.

Returning to earlier definitions of community archives that center on control and grounding the definition in the archival impulse allows us to easily begin to disambiguate projects that fall along the continuum and situate the center of power across these practices. Using these boundaries, community-engaged projects that seek to decolonize collections and better represent marginalized histories in institutional repositories are distinct from projects initiated by the community. The risk of representing all community-focused or -based practices as community archives is losing sight of the power and control that have been assigned to these sites. The archival discourse continues to note this power dynamic but is reluctant to acknowledge how the failure to classify community archives as autonomous and to appropriately describe the engagement of institutional archives with community partners risk tokenizing these relationships. The power of community archives and community-engaged practices is not just

in the aggregation of materials documenting underrepresented people, it is in the community's power to continue to control and influence that mode of representation. In reconceptualizing the relationship of communities to their archives and recognizing the autonomy of this practice, we argue that the engagement of institutional archives with these sites must be situated along a continuum of clearly defined methodologies.

By using Arnstein's Ladder to reframe the practices that fall under the continuum of community-engaged archival praxis, we return to earlier work that attempted to draw similar boundaries on practice. Recognizing the need for engagement between archives and communities, Stevens, Flinn, and Shepherd explored the relationship between mainstream institutional repositories and community archives in the United Kingdom.[62] Utilizing ethnographic methods, their study reports on the engagement models employed in partnerships between publicly funded archival institutions and independent community archives. The study identifies five primary modes of practice that mainstream archives use to engage community archives: custody, collection, curation and dissemination, advice, and consultancy. According to Stevens et al., "the most successful allow communities to combine the retention of control over their material with provision for its long-term preservation. Where once community-based groups were under pressure to hand over their archives, now the emphasis is on the handing on of knowledge to future generations and the sharing of expertise between organisations."[63] The authors similarly recognize the significance of the level of community-engagement across the highlighted case studies. Practices that involved "handing over" would fall at the bottom tiers of the community-engaged archival continuum as archivists take custody of community-based archival materials to fill gaps in mainstream collections. The methods of curation and dissemination, advice, and consultancy described by the authors as "handing on" involved a shift in the power dynamic and more community control, thus moving up the continuum. However, the framing still privileges the institutional archives, presuming that the community members are experts on the community and professional archivists are the experts on archival praxis, thus the case studies do not describe the community-driven practices at the top of the continuum falling under participatory or community practices.

Our definition of "community archives" is similarly centered on the directionality of engagement between community and institution. In the archival literature, community-engagement frameworks are driven by the institution, regardless of when the community becomes involved in the partnership. Archival advocacy, social justice, and discussions of plurality have opened a conversation that acknowledges a need for archival institutions to recognize the biases in archival praxis and build more inclusive collections that better represent the diversity of society. Participatory and collaborative approaches to custody, appraisal, and representation begin to correct these inequities by involving the community in the development of institutional collections, policies, and practices, but these remain at the levels of archival engagement and outreach. Our definition works in the opposite direction. Starting at the top of the continuum, we situate community archives within the context of community-driven and community-led practices. Community archives are first and foremost archival projects that originate within the community. As they evolve, the community retains ownership and control of the archives and the management of

the collections. As Flinn, Stevens, and Shepherd and others have observed, community archives may not always be capable of maintaining their independence from institutional repositories. The continuum, likewise, recognizes these shifts as community archives move across the spectrum toward participatory archives when the community no longer has the capacity or desire to maintain an autonomous archives. This framework reframes this evolution of community archives, shifting the narrative from participatory practices employed by institutional repositories to engage marginalized communities, to an approach that privileges community control and ownership as community archives are enfolded into institutional archival collections.

Conclusion

Cook's paradigms aptly contextualize the history of archival thought as praxis has shifted over time. The most recent paradigm has turned attention toward community, but just as the archival profession cannot fully contextualize our contemporary practices without understanding the rich history of archival thought, the complexity of community archives cannot be over simplified.[64] As a growing area of scholarship, many questions remain to be addressed, but to move forward and continue to theorize these projects, archival scholars must have a firm understanding of the subject of study. The framework proposed here seeks to illustrate the distinctions between projects that are initiated by the community, those which involve partnerships, and those that emerge organically and independently from within a community. Drawing these clear boundaries around the terminology will only further help to clarify how archives can engage communities and how communities engage in archival praxis.

We, like many others, grounded our work in the scholarship produced by Andrew Flinn, Mary Stevens, and Elizabeth Shepherd.[65] Their earlier works point toward an understanding of community archives as independent sites, but, over time, this language has been diluted in attempts to increase inclusivity in institutional repositories and address the colonial legacy of archives. As the profession shifts toward the community-based paradigm, it is integral to operate with a clear definition the practices utilized to engage communities in archival praxis. The limited number of available case studies demonstrates the newness of this literature, necessitating an expansion of research. Definitive boundaries on professional collaboration with community groups and community archives along a spectrum of engagement aid in the process of creating mutually beneficial relationships between institutional repositories and community partners. In arguing for precise definitions of the terminology that the profession employs to identify community archives, the Continuum of Community-Engaged Archival Praxis also calls for a new methodological approach to understanding these sites.

The archival impulse situates community archives historically, requiring a reading of community archival collections and their broader historical context. By directing attention to the founding of the archives, the archival impulse examines the way that the community was and continues to be defined, and how the archives aids in the formation of community by shaping community identity. A contextualized understanding

of individual community archives demands a close examination of the relationship between the archives and the community as well as the archives and the broader profession. Further, historicization of community archives provides a lens for engaging the contemporary practices and politics of these spaces. Recognizing community archives as social, cultural, and political projects pushes scholarship away from deficit models that critique community archives for resources they do not have and instead affirms the spaces for what they do and the purposes they serve. This shift is integral for studying community archives, especially when their purpose differs from the mission of institutional repositories.

Our goal in clearly defining the boundaries of community archives and professional collaboration is *not* to exclude practices or diminish the importance of community engagement, but to better define the relationship between archivists working in institutional contexts and those archives built by communities outside of these institutions. We do not intend to draw distinctions between professional and amateur, but instead to acknowledge the political and cultural reasonings for the development of spaces and practices that preserve, protect, and perpetuate community history and knowledge outside of institutionalized archival collections. Unlike institutional repositories that represent the archival mandate within organizations, the archival impulse originates within a self-defined community as an expression of the community's ability to control and preserve its history. To remain within this definition of community archives, the community must retain ownership and control over the collections and their management. All other modes of collaboration between institutional archives and community archives fall outside of these boundaries, representing other methods of community engagement. We recognize that not all communities that have the archival impulse desire to maintain and control their own archives; donating their materials to an institutional archives is precisely how they want to preserve their history. This raises a call for more case studies along the community-engaged archival continuum that employ a firm definition of the concept of community archives. Our work provides a framework for archival scholars to identify sites and establish historical case studies that will inform future studies of community archives, and it challenges the profession to form ethically minded relationships with these sites.

Acknowledgments

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Lindsay Kistler Mattock is an associate professor of library science at East Carolina University. Her work focuses on the archival practices of noninstitutional archival spaces, such as media collectives and community archives. Her ongoing digital project, Mapping the Independent Media Community, builds from archival resources and traces the historical social networks emerging between independent film and video makers, distributors, media arts centers, and cultural heritage institutions to understand how the historical conditions of the independent and avant-garde have influenced contemporary archival praxis.

Aiden M. Bettine is the curator of the Tretter Collection in GLBT Studies in Archives and Special Collections at the University of Minnesota Libraries. He specializes in oral history, public history, and community engagement through archives. His community work prioritizes creating generative spaces for LGBTQ people to learn, share, and research their history. Bettine founded the LGBTQ Iowa Archives & Library, a community archives and lending library in Iowa City.

NOTES

1. Terry Cook, "Evidence, Memory, Identity, and Community: Four Shifting Archival Paradigms," *Archival Science* 13, nos. 2–3 (2013): 113–16, doi:10.1007/s10502-012-9180-7.

2. Ibid., 114.

3. Ibid., 116.

4. Jeanette Bastian and Ben Alexander, eds., *Community Archives: The Shaping of Memory* (London: Facet Publishing, 2009).

5. Andrew Flinn and Mary Stevens, "'It Is No Mistri, Wi Mekin Histri,' Telling Our Own Story: Independent and Community Archives in the UK, Challenging and Subverting the Mainstream," in *Community Archives: The Shaping of Memory*, ed. Jeannette Allis Bastian and Ben Alexander (London: Facet, 2009), 4.

6. Ibid., 4, citing Andrew Flinn, "Community Histories, Community Archives: Some Opportunities and Challenges," *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 28, no. 2 (2007): 152–54, doi:10.1080/00379810701611936.

7. Andrew Flinn, "Community Histories, Community Archives," 151.

8. Andrew Flinn, "Independent Community Archives and Community-Generated Content: 'Writing, Saving and Sharing Our Histories,'" *Convergence* 16, no. 1 (2010): 39–51, doi:10.1177/1354856509347707.

9. Andrew Flinn, Mary Stevens, and Elizabeth Shepherd, "Whose Memory, Whose Archives? Independent Community Archives, Autonomy and the Mainstream," *Archival Science* 9, no. 1 (2009): 79–86, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10502-009-9105-2.

10. Ibid.

11. Diana K. Wakimoto, Christine Bruce, and Helen Partridge, "Archivist as Activist: Lessons from Three Queer Community Archives in California," *Archival Science* 13, no. 4 (2013): 293–316, doi:10.1007/s10502-013-9201-1; Diana Wakimoto, Debra Hansen, and Christine Bruce, "The Case of LLACE: Challenges, Triumphs, and Lessons of a Community Archives," *American Archivist* 76, no. 2 (2013): 438–57, doi:10.17723/aarc.76.2.kqv813v23vl24741; Michelle Caswell, "Inventing New Archival Imaginaries: Theoretical Foundations for Identity-Based Community Archives," in *Identity Palimpsests: Archiving Ethnicity in the U.S. and Canada*, ed. Dominique Daniel and Amalia Levi (Sacramento: Litwin Books, 2014); Michelle Caswell, Alda Allina Migoni, Noah Geraci, and Marika Cifor, "'To Be Able to Imagine Otherwise': Community Archives and the Importance

of Representation," *Archives and Records*, 38, no. 1 (2017): 5–26, doi:10.1080/23257962.2016.12 60445; Jimmy Zavala, Alda Allina Migoni, Michelle Caswell, Noah Geraci, and Marika Cifor, "'A Process Where We're All at the Table': Community Archives Challenging Dominant Modes of Archival Practice," *Archives and Manuscripts* (2017): 3, doi:10.1080/01576895.2017.1377088; Michelle Caswell, Joyce Gabiola, Jimmy Zavala, Gracen Brilmyer, and Marika Cifor, "Imagining Transformative Spaces: The Personal-Political Sites of Community Archives," *Archival Science* 18, no. 1 (2018): 73–93, doi:10.1007/s10502-018-9286-7.

12. Flinn, Stevens, and Shepherd, "Whose Memory, Whose Archives?"

13. Rebecka Sheffield, "Community Archives," in *Currents of Archival Thinking*, 2nd ed., ed. Heather MacNeil and Terry Eastwood (Santa Barbara, CA: Libraries Unlimited, 2017), 351.

14. Ibid., 351–52.

15. Caswell et al., "'To Be Able to Imagine Otherwise,'" 5–26.

16. Wakimoto, Bruce, and Partridge, "Archivist as Activist," 293–316; Wakimoto, Hansen, and Bruce, "The Case of LLACE," 438–57.

17. Rachel F. Corbman, "A Genealogy of the Lesbian Herstory Archives, 1974–2014," *Journal of Contemporary Archival Studies* 1, no. 1 (2014): article 1, https://elischolar.library.yale.edu/jcas/vol1/iss1/1; Ann Cvetkovich, *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003); Jen Jack Gieseking, "Useful In/stability: The Dialectical Production of the Social and Spatial Lesbian Herstory Archives," *Radical History Review*, no. 122 (2015): 25–37, doi:10.1215/01636545-2849504.

18. Wakimoto, Bruce, and Partridge, "Archivist as Activist," 293–316; Wakimoto, Hansen, and Bruce, "The Case of LLACE," 438–57; Caswell et al., "'To Be Able to Imagine Otherwise,'" 5–26; Zavala et al., "'A Process Where We're All at the Table'"; Rebecka Taves Sheffield, "Archival Optimism, or How to Sustain a Community Archives," in *Community Archives, Community Spaces: Heritage, Memory and Identity*, 3–21.

19. Flinn, Stevens, and Shepherd, "Whose Memory, Whose Archives?"

20. Ibid., 71–86.

21. Jimmy Zavala et al., "A Process Where We're All at the Table,'" 3.

22. Flinn, Stevens, and Shepherd, "Whose Memory, Whose Archives?" 71–86.

23. Cristine Paschild, "Community Archives and the Limitations of Identity: Considering Discursive Impact on Material Need," *American Archivist* 75, no. 1 (2012): 131–32, doi:10.17723/aarc.75.1.c181102l71x4572h.

24. Andrew Flinn, "Community Archives," in *Encyclopedia of Archival Science,* ed. Luciana Duranti and Patricia C. Franks (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 145.

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

27. Danielle Allard and Shawna Ferris, "Antiviolence and Marginalized Communities: Knowledge Creation, Community Mobilization, and Social Justice Through a Participatory Archiving Approach," *Library Trends* 64, no. 2 (2015): 360–83, doi:10.1353/lib.2015.0043; Karida L. Brown, "On the Participatory Archive: The Formation of the Eastern Kentucky African American Migration Project," *Southern Cultures* 22, no. 1 (2016): 112–27, doi:10.1353/scu.2016.0002; Amber L. Cushing, "'We've No Problem Inheriting That Knowledge on to Other People': Exploring the Characteristics of Motivation for Attending a Participatory Archives Event," *Library & Information Science Research* 40, no. 2 (2018): 135–43, doi:10.1016/j.lisr.2018.06.005; Caroline Daniels, Heather Fox, Sarah-Jane Poindexter, and Elizabeth Reilly, "Saving All the Freaks on the Life Raft: Blending Documentation Strategy with Community Engagement to Build a Local Music Archives," *American Archivist* 78, no. 1 (2015): 238–61, doi:10.17723/0360-9081.78.1.238; David Gwynn, "Community Connections, Community Collections: Building Partner Support for the Collaborative Digitization Projects," *Digital Library Perspectives* 32, no. 2 (2016): 88–102, doi:10.1108/DLP-08-2015-0013; Kevin S. Fleming and Morna Gerrard, "Engaging Communities: Public Programming in State Universities' Special Collections and Archives," *Archival Issues* 36, no. 1 (2014): 7–26, http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1793/73927; William J. Morison, "Creating a Local Records and Community Archival

Center: The Case of the University of Louisville," *The Public Historian* 1, no. 4 (1979): 23–28, doi:10.2307/3377278.

28. Janet Ceja Alcalá and Desiree Alaniz, "Toward Community Engaged Archiving: Building a Digi-Rasquache Archives," in *Cultural Heritage Care and Management,* ed. Cecilia Lizama Salvatore (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2018), 153.

29. Ibid., 154.

30. Flinn, "Community Histories, Community Archives," 153 (authors' emphasis).

31. Ibid. (authors' emphasis).

32. Andrew Flinn, "Independent Community Archives and Community-Generated Content," 3–51.

33. Flinn, Stevens, and Shepherd, "Whose Memory, Whose Archives?" 73 (authors' emphasis).

34. Grant Hurley, "Community Archives, Community Clouds: Enabling Digital Preservation for Small Archives," *Archivaria* 81 (2016): 132, https://archivaria.ca/index.php/archivaria/article/view/13561.

35. Kanokporn Nasomtrug Simionica, "Self-Documentation of Thai Communities: Reflective Thoughts on the Western Concept of Community Archives," in *Community Archives, Community Spaces: Heritage, Memory and Identity*, 79.

36. Melody Barnes and Paul Schmitz, "Community Engagement Matters (Now More Than Ever)," *Stanford Social Innovation Review* (Spring 2016): https://ssir.org/articles/entry/community_engagement_matters_now_more_than_ever.

37. National Center for Environmental Research, NCER Community-Engaged Research (CEnR) Primer (March 2013), https://www.epa.gov/sites/production/files/2015-05/documents/cenr.pdf.

38. Sherry R. Arnstein, "A Ladder of Citizen Participation," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 85, no. 1 (2019), 24–34, doi:10.1080/01944363.2018.1559388. Originally published in 1969 in volume 35, issue 4 of the *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, doi: 10.1080/01944366908977225.

39. Gwendolyn Blue, Marit Rosol, and Victoria Fast, "Justice as Parity of Participation," *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 85, no. 3 (2019): 363–76, doi:10.1080/01944363.2019.1619476; Andrea Roberts and Grace Kelly, "Remixing as Praxis," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 85, no. 3 (2019): 301–20, doi:10.1080/01944363.2019.1622439; Alex Karner, Keith Brower Brown, Richard Marcantonio, and Lewis G. Alcorn, "The View from the Top of Arnstein's Ladder," *Journal of the American Planning Association* 85, no. 3 (2019): 236–54, doi:10.1080/01944363.2019.16177 67; Santina Contreras, "Using Arnstein's Ladder as an Evaluative Framework for the Assessment of Participatory Work in Postdisaster Haiti," *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 85, no. 3 (2019): 219–35, doi:10.1080/01944363.2019.1618728.

40. Arnstein, "A Ladder of Citizen Participation," 25.

41. Ibid., 26–27.

42. Ibid., 27–30.

43. Ibid., 30–33.

44. Itso Huvila, "The Unbearable Lightness of Participating? Revisiting the Discourses of 'Participation' in Archival Literature," *Journal of Documentation* 71, no. 2 (2015): 358–86, doi:10.1108/JD-01-2014-0012; Gregory Rolan, "Agency in the Archive: A Model for Participatory Recordkeeping," *Archival Science* 17 (2015): 195–225, doi:10.1007/s10502-016-9267-7; Cushing, "'We've No Problem Inheriting That Knowledge on to Other People'," 135–43.

45. Itso Huvila, "Participatory Archive: Towards Decentralised Curation, Radical User Orientation, and Broader Contextualisation of Records Management," *Archival Science* 8 (2008): 15–36, doi:10.1007/s10502-008-9071-0; Kate Theimer, "What Is the Meaning of Archives 2.0?," *American Archivist* 74, no. 1 (2011): 58–68, doi:10.17723/aarc.74.1.h7tn4m4027407666.

46. Allard and Ferris, "Antiviolence and Marginalized Communities," 361.

47. Polly Thistlethwaite, "Lesbian Herstory Archives," in *Lesbian Histories and Cultures: An Encyclopedia*, ed. Bonnie Zimmerman (New York: Garland Publishing, 2000), 459–60; Aimee Brown, "How Queer 'Pack Rats' and Activist Archivists Saved Our History: An Overview of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) Archives, 1970–2008," in *Serving LGBTIQ Library and Archives Users: Essays on Outreach, Service, Collections and Access,* ed. Ellen Greenblatt (Jefferson, NC:

McFarland & Company, 2011), 121–35; Erin Baucom, "An Exploration into Archival Descriptions of LGBTQ Materials," *American Archivist* 81, no. 1 (2018): 65–83, doi:10.17723/0360-9081-81.1.65.

48. Aiden M. Bettine and Lindsay Kistler Mattock, "The Gay Archival Impulse: The Founding of the Gerber/Hart Library and Archives in Chicago," *Global Knowledge, Memory and Communication* 68, nos. 8–9 (2019): 689–702, http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/GKMC-02-2019-0023.

49. Brown, "How Queer 'Pack Rats' and Activist Archivists Saved Our History," 121–35.

50. Rishika Dugyala, "Evanston Organizes: Evanston's Black Community Lacked Recognition for Decades. Shorefront Legacy Center Aims to Give It to Them," *Daily Northwestern*, November 8, 2018, https://dailynorthwestern.com/2018/11/08/city/shorefront-legacy-center-works-to-preserve-north-shores-black-history.

51. Flinn, "Community Histories, Community Archives," 153.

52. Caswell et al., "'To Be Able to Imagine Otherwise,'" 5–26; Caswell et al., "Imagining Transformative Spaces," 73–93; Marika Cifor, Michelle Caswell, Alda Allina Migoni, Noah Geraci, "'What We Do Crosses Over to Activism': The Politics and Practice of Community Archives," *The Public Historian* 40, no. 2 (2018): 69–95, https://www.jstor.org/stable/26504393; Anthony Cocciolo, "Community Archives in the Digital Era: A Case from the LGBT Community," *Preservation, Digital Technology & Culture* 45, no. 4 (2017): 157–65, doi:10.1515/pdtc-2016-0018.

53. Caswell, "Inventing New Archival Imaginaries," 41.

54. Wakimoto, Bruce, and Partridge, "Archivist as Activist," 293–316.

55. Bettine and Mattock, "The Gay Archival Impulse," 689–702.

56. Terry Cook and Joan M. Schwartz, "Archives, Records, and Power: From (Postmodern) Theory to (Archival) Performance," *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 171–85, https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02435620; Eric Ketelaar, "Archival Temples, Archival Prisons: Modes of Power and Protection," *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 221–38, https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02435623; Randall C. Jimerson, *Archives Power: Memory, Accountability, and Social Justice* (Chicago: SAA, 2009).

57. Flinn and Stevens, "'It Is No Mistri, Wi Mekin Histri'," 15.

58. Dugyala, "Evanston Organizes."

59. Bettine and Mattock, "The Gay Archival Impulse," 700.

60. Flinn, Stevens, and Shepherd, "Whose Memory, Whose Archives?"

61. Caswell, "Inventing New Archival Imaginaries," 38.

62. Mary Stevens, Andrew Flinn, and Elizabeth Shepherd, "New Frameworks for Community Engagement in the Archive Sector: From Handing Over to Handing On," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 16, nos. 1–2 (2010): 59–76, doi:10.1080/13527250903441770.

63. Ibid., 59.

64. Cook, "Evidence, Memory, Identity, and Community," 95–120.

65. Flinn, Stevens, and Shepherd, "Whose Memory, Whose Archives?"

Archival Accessioning. **Edited by Audra Eagle Yun. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2021. 170 pp. Softcover. $55.00. $39.00 for SAA members.**

Accessioning is an essential component of collections management, establishing a baseline of legal, physical, and intellectual control over each collection held by an archival repository. However, the theory and practice of archival accessioning remains largely overlooked in professional literature. *Archival Accessioning* seeks to address this gap through a robust introduction to the history and principles of accessioning and a collection of thoughtful case studies.

In her introduction, editor Audra Eagle Yun centers accessioning as a foundational element of archival work, "the keystone of responsible collection stewardship practice," which impacts every subsequent element of collections care and access (p. 2). In the next four chapters, Eagle Yun provides an excellent introduction to the history and practice of archival accessioning, providing a detailed literature review, outlining the core functions of accessioning and briefly addressing the related topics of reappraisal and deaccessioning.

In the first chapter, Eagle Yun outlines how conversations surrounding Mark Greene and Dennis Meissner's More Product, Less Process have transformed archival accessioning over the past 20 years (p. 22).[1] She also discusses Christine Weideman's "Accessioning as Processing" and Daniel Santamaria's *Extensible Processing for Archives and Special Collections*, which explore how minimal-level description could be applied to all incoming collections at the point of accession and how archival accessioning could be incorporated more completely into an efficient accessioning workflow.[2] Eagle Yun draws heavily from Weideman, Santamaria, and others who conceptualize archival accessioning as the logical first step in minimal processing.

The book's 10 case studies draw heavily from the same influences, focusing almost exclusively on the development of intake processes and workflows that result in minimal-level description of all accessioned collections. Many of the case studies are intentionally general in scope, providing simple and straightforward guidelines for accessioning personal papers, institutional records, government records, and accretions to processed and unprocessed collections.

The sample checklist and accessioning worksheet provided by Kelly Spring in chapter 8 is an especially useful resource, drawn from worksheets produced by Johns Hopkins University and the University of California, Irvine Libraries' Department of Special Collections and Archives. Chapters on accessioning audiovisual materials by Lauren Sorensen and digital archives by Erin Faulder underscore the importance of identifying and completing an assessment of fragile media upon intake and provide several possible workflows for identifying preservation needs and completing the ingest of electronic records.

Case studies on retrospective accessioning by Chela Scott Weber, deposits by Michael Rush, and reappraisal and deaccessioning by Laura Uglean Jackson provide valuable insights on how to manage legacy acquisitions when incomplete or outdated accession records complicate custody resolution. Weber provides an essential list of questions to consider before undertaking retrospective accessioning that should be helpful to anyone

considering a complex or large-scale project. Case studies drawn from Yale University's Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library and the University of Wyoming's American Heritage Center comprise the chapters written by Rush and Uglean Jackson.

Archival Accessioning provides a helpful introduction to the history and core principles of accessioning, and the case studies present practical and well-outlined workflows and questions for improving an existing accessioning program. The book may be most helpful for archivists who have already established an accessioning program and are looking to enhance their existing workflows or undertake larger reappraisal or retrospective accessioning projects. However, archivists working at small institutions without a full-time accessioning archivist may find the volume less helpful. Most of the case studies are written by university archivists with well-established accessioning or intake programs, and the writers presume that the reader comes to the book with a working knowledge of the legal and administrative functions of archival accessioning. Deeds of gift and other legal instruments of transfer are mentioned only in passing, and no sample documentation is provided.

Eagle Yun also introduces several compelling themes in the introduction that are never fully explored. She acknowledges that archival accessioning is personal and subjective, the technical services field remains predominately white, and the roots of accessioning practices are Eurocentric. She also notes that information exchanged between donors and archival institutions are essential to the development of accession records. However, the case studies that follow her introduction never address these issues and focus almost exclusively on accessioning workflows after a deed of gift is signed. While accessioning archivists may not always be involved directly in donor interactions, many archivists do undertake this work as a routine process of accessioning. Additional case studies outlining how archival institutions engage with their communities during the donation and accessioning process would benefit the profession.

Archival Accessioning provides a valuable introduction to accessioning and will hopefully inspire an increased examination of the related topics of donor relations, custody resolution, and the lack of diversity in the technical services field.

<div align="right">

Haley E. Aaron
Registrar
Alabama Department of Archives and History

</div>

NOTES

1. Mark Greene and Dennis Meissner, "More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Archival Processing," *American Archivist* 68, no. 2 (2005), 208–63, https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.68.2.c741823776k65863.

2. Christine Weideman, "Accessioning as Processing," *American Archivist* 69, no. 2 (2006), 274–83, https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.69.2.g270566u745j3815; Daniel Santamaria, *Extensible Processing for Archives and Special Collections: Reducing Processing Backlogs* (Chicago: American Library Association, 2015).

The Digital Archives Handbook: A Guide to Creation, Management, and Preservation.
**Edited by Aaron D. Purcell. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2019. 270 pp.
Hardback. $125.00. Softcover. $56.00.**

The Digital Archives Handbook, edited by Aaron D. Purcell, PhD, professor and director of Special Collections at Virginia Tech, is a collection of essays aimed at archivists responsible for establishing and maintaining policies and procedures to address digital materials. The book provides guidance on the place and scope of digital materials within the current archives and special collections landscape. Students training for archival careers will also find the book a useful overview of the impact of digital technologies on the archives profession and will learn some of the common terminology archivists use and issues that arise in the context of digital archives management.

The book is organized into two sections. The first section focuses on reevaluating policies and practices to address the new complexities that digital materials introduce to an archival repository. The second section provides specific examples of different types of repositories/collections where digital materials are especially prevalent and provides insight on the ongoing and evolving challenges posed by digital materials. The introduction contextualizes both sections well and introduces digital records as just another material type that can be managed within standard archival workflows with a little bit of extra planning, investment, and care. Chapter authors include several leading archival professionals with a strong mix of higher-level management and hands-on processing experience in public, academic, and government institutions. Chapters are based on applied theory and navigate the reader through the work of addressing the "digital" aspect of the chapter's topic.

The first section includes the chapters "Acquisitions, Appraisals, and Arrangement," "Description and Delivery," "Digital Preservation," "Digital Forensics and Curation," and "Contracts, Intellectual Property, and Privacy," making it easy for readers to refer to different aspects of archival workflows as needed and to reflect on which ones would be most relevant for their own institution. Each chapter is written to address how digital materials may need special considerations in each step of the archival process, and the authors contextualize their case studies with an overview of how digital materials have impacted or fit within their own institutional policies. Authors also outline how to discuss with key interest groups (including archives staff, donors, researchers, etc.) changing or updating policies to reflect the incorporation of digital materials within certain institutional contexts. The case studies are mostly free of technical jargon or overly specific local practices, and most archivists should find them broadly relevant and useful. Even the chapters delving into the most technically complex side of working with digital materials, such as "Digital Preservation" and "Digital Forensics and Curation," are clear and approachable, focusing on policies and general workflows rather than diving too much into specific tools and technical processes. A common theme throughout the first section is the importance of archivists taking a proactive role and being as prepared as possible to address the complex issues related to digital materials *before* they are transferred to an archives, rather than waiting until after digital materials arrive. Throughout the section is an underlying recognition that not every institution

can or should handle every type of material "perfectly" and an emphasis that doing *something* to get a handle on digital materials is better than doing *nothing*.

The book's second section shifts to more specific and technical case studies, with chapters titled "Performing Arts Collections," "Oral History Collections," "Architectural and Design Collections," "Congressional Collections," and "Email." These chapters are more packed with technically complex details than those in the first section, introducing specific tools and file formats that are associated with managing particular types of collections. At the same time, the authors explain the resources and/or policies for which archivists should advocate to appropriately process digital collections and make them accessible, ensuring that these technically laden chapters will not become outdated too quickly. For example, in "Oral History Collections," Douglas A. Boyd explores not only the actual technical processes of handling digital files, but also how to navigate the potential rights and privacy issues inherent in making oral history interviews available online, especially those that were recorded in a pre-Internet era and never intended for such widespread public use. A benefit of the variety of topics in this section of the book is that they are case studies that stand on their own; if readers find any to be too "in the weeds" or not relevant to their own roles, they can just focus on those that are relevant. While these case studies may be too specific to be immediately applicable for some readers, they do provide interesting insights into how archivists in particular repositories have handled the increasing prevalence of digital materials within their collections.

The key takeaway from this book that sets it apart from others focusing on digital collections is its emphasis on discussing digital materials with donors. The most technical aspects of the book may become outdated quickly, but the authors still offer invaluable insights into the importance of archivists advocating for the tools and resources necessary to facilitate early interventions with respect to digital content and to ensure materials are collected, processed, and made accessible in a useful way. Descriptions in the case studies of how decisions were made in different parts of the archival process will likely prove especially helpful for archivists in any type of institution in assessing the relevant stakeholders and resources needed to successfully handle the growing number of digital materials headed our way.

Thomas Cleary
Assistant Professor, Archivist/Librarian
LaGuardia Community College

Future-Proofing the News: Preserving the First Draft of History. **By Kathleen A. Hansen and Nora Paul. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2017. 274 pp. Hardback. $35.00.**

Readers approaching *Future-Proofing the News: Preserving the First Draft of History* expecting a practical how-to manual for news media archivists will be disappointed. Instead of a guide to preservation strategies, as the title might suggest, this work presents a compelling narrative of major news forms in the United States and functions as a clarion call from authors Kathleen Hansen and Nora Paul to rescue "the first draft of history" from disaster, deterioration, and indifference.

As now-retired faculty members at the University of Minnesota's School of Journalism and Mass Communication, the authors bring a wealth of experience to the task. They cite two concerns that galvanized this study: the dwindling number of news archivists and internal news libraries within broadcast studios, and growing unease about vanishing web content. With these concerns in mind, Hansen and Paul address the general public and offer a sobering assessment: for the vast majority of news content producers "archiving that news output for future reference has been an afterthought—if it has been thought of at all" (p. 2). For Hansen and Paul, this first draft of history can only be saved for future access if news producers recognize the historical and cultural significance of their work, intentionally invest in preserving and stewarding news media content, and commit to working alongside archivists, librarians, and memory institutions to ensure a future for yesterday's news.

Future-Proofing the News is helpfully organized to guide the curious reader through three centuries of mainstream news history in the United States, scores of media formats, and a myriad of thorny preservation issues. The authors survey six distinct news forms in separate chapters, providing a brief history of their origins and development before detailing why these news forms were lost, the heroic efforts to preserve them, and current preservation challenges.

Chapter 2 inaugurates Hansen and Paul's chronological survey of news formats with a focus on newspapers. Here a depressing theme quickly emerges: despite the rapid growth and immense popularity of American newspapers from the colonial period onward, "news organizations themselves did precious little to guarantee their long-term availability for posterity" (p. 16). Notwithstanding the dedicated efforts of a variety of institutions and individuals, only an estimated 15 percent of all newspapers printed in the United States survive today. Much of this loss can be traced to the unique preservation challenges of newsprint. Since the rise of cheap newsprint made from highly acidic wood pulp in the late nineteenth century, news libraries and archival practitioners have raced the clock to preserve brittle and crumbling newsprint. These preservation concerns, however, only partially account for the catastrophic loss of American newspapers. News organizations commonly maintained "news libraries" to hold their clipping files, but tightened budgets, staffing restrictions, and storage limitations frequently combined to consign newspapers to the dust bin.

Similar themes of widespread loss and preservation nightmares recur in the next

chapter, which the authors devote to visual news media. Illustrations and photographs were also subjected to a litany of preservation woes. As with newspapers, preservation issues alone do not explain the loss of visual news formats. Hansen and Paul note, "For news organizations, archiving decisions were rarely based on potential future interest in the images. Instead, decisions were pragmatic" (p. 51). While news organizations maintained a "photo morgue," these collections could be weeded or discarded entirely as space became cramped or the organization downsized or relocated. Besides ongoing concerns of storage and budget, the authors identify the lack of "organizational mission" as a significant contributing factor to the loss of visual news (p. 56). News organizations navigated a constant tension between producing today's news and preserving their portion of the historical record.

Chapter 4 introduces the newsreel, the short-lived news format that debuted in the United States in 1911 and largely created using highly flammable cellulose nitrate film. Hansen and Paul open this chapter by recounting the 1978 fire at the National Archives and Records Administration in Suitland, Maryland, where over 12.5 million feet of newsreel were destroyed when nitrate film spontaneously combusted in the storage vault. The greatest threat to newsreels, however, was from the studio production companies themselves, that saw little historical value in their product. Standard practice for studios was to retain snippets for their stock footage libraries and to toss out distribution copies.

Radio news comes to the fore in chapter 5, tracing its origins to 1920. Due to the lack of high-quality recording formats, the first years of radio news were broadcast live and lost to history. By the time technical advances made radio news recording and rebroadcasting possible in the 1930s, the fragile electronic transcription discs were already at risk of damage and deterioration from mishandling and replaying. Despite the best efforts of memory and academic institutions and private collectors, radio news remains one of the least-preserved news formats. Hansen and Paul find this gap especially pertains to regional radio news broadcasts, where decades of local events and voices have been irretrievably lost.

First introduced in 1939, television news faced many of the same preservation hurdles as its predecessors, as detailed in chapter 6. News organizations focused their efforts on preserving footage snippets for future broadcasts with little thought for other uses. Growing storage and staffing costs ensured that many television news archives, if saved at all, were eventually discarded. The shift from film to digital video formats in the 1990s only introduced a new host of concerns. "The dizzying array of formats for capturing news images, editing the footage into broadcasts, logging the images and sounds into the broadcast production system, and keeping track of everything over time led to the situation we have today," where obsolete software and file formats render the past inaccessible (p. 139).

Taken together, chapters 7 and 8 describe the digital revolution and explosive rise of digital news, assuring readers that, despite popular assumptions, the Internet is not forever, and the Wayback Machine alone cannot solve the growing crisis of disappearing

web news. Other preservation nightmares include the ongoing struggle to preserve the aging equipment and software required to read and preserve digital news content before the onset of "bit rot." Today, as users increasingly turn to social media platforms to access news content, Hansen and Paul issue the stern warning, "If your archival strategy is to assume everything is on the Internet, you don't have an archival strategy" (p. 200).

In the final two chapters, Hansen and Paul shift their focus from preservation to access, claiming "the most important aspect of news preservation is whether and how it is *now* available for use by researchers, historians, journalists, librarians, and citizens" (p. 215). The authors identify four ongoing challenges to access. The first challenge is simply to *locate* news media content, no small feat when collections can be scattered in bits and pieces across a range of memory institutions and private archives. Another obstacle is access to the content itself. Researchers can be hampered by copyright restrictions, geographic barriers, and lack of playback equipment, among other hurdles. Third, once they have access, many users find it impossible to navigate news media collections without the aid of indices, catalogs, finding aids, and other search tools. Finally, researchers who locate news media content can find themselves unable to duplicate or use the content due to copyright restrictions. As the authors rightly point out, a well-preserved news media archive is next to useless if it cannot be located, accessed, searched, and reused.

In *Future-Proofing the News*, Kathleen Hansen and Nora Paul offer a valuable contribution to news media history. The book is particularly successful in two areas. First, it effectively dispels the assumption that because news media content is everywhere, news media content is forever. Further, readers will be sobered to learn that the greatest resistance to news media preservation and access often comes from its creators, whose allegiance is to the news of tomorrow not yesterday.

Although it presents a head-spinning amount of information, *Future-Proofing the News* succeeded in leaving this reviewer wanting more. Each news form covered here could easily merit a book-length treatment. A noticeable omission, however, is the lack of attention given to news forms created by and for regional, local, or ethnic communities. While the authors acknowledge that the intentionally wide scope of the project prevented greater research into these areas, one wonders how the story of news media disappearance in the United States might be enhanced if focused on these lesser-known and more at-risk news media, like the *All-American Newsreel*, produced for Black audiences in the 1940s. In spite of these minor complaints, Hansen and Paul provide a compelling overview of three centuries of news media loss in the United States and sound a much-needed wake-up call to creators and consumers of tomorrow's news to foil this repeating pattern.

<div align="right">
Katherine J. Graber
Special Collections Librarian
Wheaton College
</div>

Making Your Tools Work for You: Building and Maintaining an Integrated Technical Ecosystem for Digital Archives and Libraries. **By Max Eckard. Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2020. 337 pp. Softcover. $55.00.**

I encountered Max Eckard's *Making Your Tools Work for You: Building and Maintaining an Integrated Technical Ecosystem for Digital Archives and Libraries* at the tail end of a drawn-out migration to an open-source system, with time, patience, and resources running short. Rather than (merely) serving as a distraction to the many tasks at hand, the book provided useful conceptual language to communicate goals and rationales for this migration, as well as ideas for next steps to integrate the new system with other library and archival tools. While we could have used the knowledge it imparts earlier in the process, it will continue to serve as a resource at my place of work, and I would recommend it to archivists attempting to use technology more effectively and technologists seeking to better serve archivists.

Eckard, whose work at the University of Michigan Bentley Historical Library and professional service on committees such as the ArchivesSpace Technical Advisory Committee establishes his *bona fides* and informs his approach, includes clear definitions (repeated in a glossary), examples from his own and others' software integration projects, thoughtful discussion questions, and extensive endnotes with each chapter. Most of the endnotes lead to citations (also listed in a bibliography), but I wished that those containing conversational asides had been integrated into the text itself as they supplied useful insights, the discovery of which meant that I felt compelled to flip to the endnotes as I read.

The book devotes an entire chapter to five case studies from a variety of institution types and sizes, but Eckard emphasizes the need to understand and articulate the goals—typically faster, more accurate archival accessioning, discovery, and/or digital preservation workflows—before selecting the specific technologies used to achieve them. As he puts it, "Systems come before systems integrations, and workflows have to be established before they can be optimized" (p. 144).

In chapters focused on the conceptual underpinnings of "a functional coupling between software applications to act as a coordinated whole" (p. 4), Eckard characterizes vertical, horizontal, hub-and-spoke, and point-to-point integrations, and delineates methodologies such as common metadata standards, data interoperability protocols, application program interfaces (APIs), and command line interfaces. Getting a better handle on these options could lead to improved communication between the archivist proposing an improved workflow and the information technology specialist setting it up, as can the introduction to project management offered in another chapter.

A chapter entitled "Can We Talk About Your Messy Metadata?" resonated most strongly with me in light of my current system migration, during which metadata (and, I might add, file name) restructuring and standardization has been a laborious task, but a tool mentioned by Eckard, OpenRefine, and one called Bulk Rename Utility have eased the burden and reduced human error. As I also attempt to ensure that links to ArchivesSpace from an item's metadata replace duplicative but often outdated collection

descriptions within the digital collections site, Eckard's explanation of the need for an authoritative data source articulates and validates my efforts.

A chapter introducing why and how to use the Python programming language in archival systems integration work at times felt intimidating (as have brief workshops I have attended on the same topic). Eckard very sensibly recommends learning coding by using real-world examples rather than canned exercises, so the "why" aspects of the chapter make it worth digesting.

Integrations can be iterative, with each step removing or replacing a cumbersome or manual process. The advice to "Cultivate a realistic and manageable, as well as iterative and dynamic and, above all, incremental, definition of done" (p. 55) serves as a helpful reminder to stay focused on what you need the technology to accomplish and to be willing to backtrack, tweak, or wrap up (perhaps to revisit later) as appropriate. The integrated technical ecosystem also requires maintenance, which should be accommodated in budgets and workplans, and not supplanted by funneling those resources toward the next technological innovation that promises to do it all.

A few months before reading this book, I attended the National Digital Stewardship Alliance's Digital Preservation 2021 virtual conference (https://ndsa.org/conference/digital-preservation-2021). In a talk entitled "How Do We Build Long-Term Infrastructure When Funding Is Uncertain?," panelist Margo Padilla astutely declared, "Digital preservation is people." (Bonus points if you recognize the *Soylent Green* reference.) Max Eckard makes a similar point in his concluding chapter when he states, "The tools we use are really just proxies for the people who use them—both internal and external, and past, current, and future—and the needs they have. Systems integration implies integration of people and their workflows just as much as it implies integration of systems" (p. 290). This book serves a useful role by addressing the full scope of considerations, human and technical, involved in an archival technical ecosystem.

<div align="right">

Rachel I. Howard
Digital Initiatives Librarian
University of Louisville Archives and Special Collections

</div>

Record-Making and Record-Keeping in Early Societies. By Geoffrey Yeo. New York: Routledge, 2021. 205 pp. Index. Hardcover. $160.00. eBook. $44.05.

Record-Making and Record-Keeping in Early Societies by Geoffrey Yeo explores the beginnings of human recording practices. This volume also seeks to update Ernst Posner's *Archives in the Ancient World* (1972), which Yeo feels was a landmark text in its time but is now outdated. Yeo clearly defines the scope of the book as looking at early record making and record keeping in Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, the Aegean, and the Americas. He acknowledges that this volume does not comment on the contributions of Indigenous cultures in North America or the Indus Valley civilizations, as their 4,000-year-old script is still undeciphered. The vast records created by the Roman and Chinese ruling bodies are also not discussed, as Yeo focuses attention on the earliest developments of record making and record keeping. Even with this tightly defined scope, this book does cover a significant geographical and historical span.

A key conceptual framework of this book is the idea of records as "persistent representations." Yeo defines "representations" as something standing for something else, such as an event or activity, and "it is a persistent representation because it has the capacity to remain available after the ending of the activity or event it represents" (p. viii). Records do not need to last forever to be persistent, but they do have the capacity to outlive the immediate contexts in which they were created. Yeo focuses on records, not as acts of preservation or later historical significance, as this was a much later concept, but regarding their relationships to activities and events and their durability to potentially outlast the activities and events they represent (p. viii).

In the first two chapters, Yeo explores the earliest forms of record making and record keeping. In chapter 1, "How Records Began: Representation and Persistence," Yeo discusses the emergence of "memory aids," or using objects or features of the landscape to help trigger the memory of an event or of specific types of knowledge. The admission of the weakness and limits of human memory also leads to counting aids, such as knots on a cord. Counting aids give the ability to recall the count if contested and to offer proof of an action. Chapter 2 deals with ownership marks and seals. Ownership marks provided a way to inscribe objects with the identity of the owner. Seals became a way to connect objects to a particular individual and acted as a method of access control. Pottery vessels sealed with clay are an example given of how seals could control access, as it would be obvious if the vessel had been opened, but also of how the style of the seal indicated what individual or family owned the vessel. These seals and ownership marks indicate the growing economic complexity of societies.

Chapters 3 and 4 concentrate on specific geographic regions and the emergence of writing. Mesopotamia, Egypt, the Aegean, early China, and the precolonial Americas are regions where writing developed independently and at different times. These chapters are incredibly detailed, almost to a fault. Yeo discusses the use of clay envelopes as perhaps one of the first methods to document chain of custody and the development of protocuneiform writing and numerical notation. While the subject matter is certainly interesting and relevant to those working in the field of archives, the level of detail does rise to that of ancient history or archaeology.

Chapter 5, "Creating and Storing Written Records and Archives: The Proliferation of Records in South-west Asia, Egypt, and Greece," examines the spread of records after the appearance of writing techniques. Yeo examines the spread of cuneiform tablets from Mesopotamia to Syria, Iran, Iraq, and Turkey. The emergence of temple administration repositories in Mesopotamia, which were stores of written records relating to royal rule and the economic affairs of the region, indicated the growing economic and social sophistication of society. This chapter also details the emergence of the first legal and land records, and how the ability to write the spoken word led to treaties, marriage settlements, wills, and letter correspondence.

The growth and relevance of records is examined is chapters 6 and 7. Chapter 6, "Orality and Literacy: Confidence in Records," details the growing role of written records and the lasting impact of oral traditions. While written records helped supplement human memory, oral traditions did not disappear. These ancient societies honored both means of record creation, but writing was certainly a means for the powerful to remain powerful in a society. Chapter 7, "Orality, Record-making, and Social Action," details how early records reflected "speech acts." Speech acts is a theory that language is performative no matter where it is found and is used to convey action (p. 147). These early records document actions such as land transfers, sales of goods, marriages, treaties, declarations of war, and commemorations of events or people.

The final chapter, "Concluding Thoughts: Archival Science and Early Records," examines the relevance of current archival practice to the records made and kept in these early societies. Throughout the chapter, Yeo cautions against the attempt to link Western archival practices with the record making and record keeping of early societies. He warns not to link the motives of modern records to the records of early societies, as it is not possible to fully suppose the priorities of early record making from the vantage point of our modern practices. Though Yeo cautions about falsely creating links between modern archival practices and record-making actions in the past, he does acknowledge that early societies probably dealt with some difficulties similar to those of modern archivists. He discusses how early societies likely contended to some degree with authenticity, controlled access, storage, and duration of storage.

Record-Keeping and Record-Making in Early Societies does bring a much-needed update to Posner's *Archives in the Ancient World*. Yeo provides a detailed look at specific record-making and record-keeping early societies, almost to the point of overwhelming the casual reader, but the volume is doubtlessly useful to archivists wishing to understand the history of records. This volume also provides a robust list of additional readings should a reader want to learn more. Yeo discourages scholars and readers from suggesting a continuity of archival practices from the past to the present and discusses the need for more archival scholarship in the study of early records and societies.

Ashley Howdeshell
University Archivist
Northeastern Illinois University

***Elusive Archives: Material Culture Studies in Formation*. Edited by Martin Brückner and Sandy Isenstadt. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2021. 286 pp. Hardcover. $89.95. Softcover. $39.95.**

Elusive Archives is the first volume in a series published by the University of Delaware Press called Material Culture Perspectives. It includes essays by several individuals who have been involved with the University of Delaware's Center for Material Culture Studies and the Winterthur Program in American Material Culture. Editors Brückner and Isenstadt, who also serve as the series editors, were formerly the codirectors of the Center for Material Culture Studies and are now affiliated faculty with the center. Brückner is director of the Winterthur Program in American Material Culture, while Isenstadt is professor and chair of the Art History Department at Delaware.

The volume both expands and complicates the definition of "archives," with chapter authors looking at the written word and photographs as well as three-dimensional objects and geographic locations, and even the absence of these things, to discuss material culture. The focus is largely on what the contributors call "fugitive archives," or objects that do not necessarily make their way into cultural heritage repositories for preservation. Brückner and Isenstadt frame this approach as a direct response to the postmodern archival turn that has taken place in other humanities disciplines but has largely been missing from material culture studies. The book editors have divided the volume into four sections, including "Archives in Practice"; "Archives in Objects"; "Archives in Places"; and "Archives in Circulation." It is an interdisciplinary work, with authors coming from history, literature, archives, material culture, art history, and architecture and design backgrounds. Some chapters are more formal than others with the expected citations and footnotes, while some chapters describe individual authors' experiences working with fugitive archives in a more personal manner.

The volume raises several questions about appraisal for archivists: What should be kept? What stories do the materials we preserve tell us? Does everything need to be preserved, even after it has come to a museum or archives? Many of the items and collections of materials discussed in this volume come from marginalized communities or ordinary individuals whose archival traces have frequently not made their way to a formal institution to be preserved. One example includes photographs from a Crow community in Cindy Ott's chapter "A Historian Walks into a Bar . . . Or, a Story about Alternative Ways of Finding and Using Archives when the Normal Avenues Don't Cut It." Many of the authors rely on ephemera, trash, or items that were typically discarded to tell stories about both the objects and the people who created and used them, as discussed in Alexandra Ward's chapter "Decoupage: Cutting Ephemera and Assembling Sentiment," Lu Ann De Cunzo's "Buried Archives" chapter about trash studied by archaeologists, and Natalie Elizabeth Wright's chapter on Ikuo Yokoyama's motorcycle swept up in Japan's 2011 tsunami and left to decay at the Harley-Davidson Museum in Milwaukee.

Some authors use the absence of objects to make their arguments, as Jennifer Van Horn does in her chapter on the missing portrait of the enslaved Ryan Homer, or J. Ritchie Garrison does in the chapter "John Hancock's Fugitive Tar." Laura E. Helton's chapter,

"Historical Form(s)," notes the irony of the forms kept from the Negro Manuscripts Unit in the Historical Records Survey at the National Archives and Records Administration, in that "the forms . . . now have the curious status of being archival descriptions of unarchived material—because ultimately, most of the records the unit inventoried were never deposited in a formal repository" (p. 54). Other authors are interested in looking at archives in situ, such as Michael J. Emmons Jr. in his chapter on signage and symbology found in eighteenth-century buildings in the Mid-Atlantic region, or Sarah Wasserman in her chapter on the human response to "Underpass Mary" in Chicago, where water seepage appeared to create an apparition of the Virgin Mary.

Coming from a material culture perspective, the authors are interested in the materiality of archival materials, how objects have meaning, and how humans invest meaning in those objects. In this context, the term "objects" can encompass not only human-made items, but also the geographies and places where those items are situated. This is particularly apparent in Catherine Morrissey's chapter on the Underground Railroad in Delaware, in Kaila T. Schedeen's chapter on Native artist Will Wilson, and in Torsten Cress's chapter on visiting the Lourdes shrine in the French grotto, as well as in the two chapters focused on German Fraktur and religious history written by Alexander Lawrence Ames and Oliver Scheiding, respectively.

The one area I wish more of the authors, or at least the series editors, had discussed is the use of what archivists would typically refer to as "archival" materials—the written word, photographs, and other documentary evidence—to support their research, and how the absence of such evidence has made their research more difficult. Some of the authors do enter into this discussion through analyses of unknown provenance for objects. For example, Rosalie Hooper describes a chest-on-frame that exists at the Winterthur Museum, but it is unclear who created and used it. Relatedly, several others use archival sources to describe the absence of objects, of which all we have left is the written word. Wendy Bellion, for example, describes using Charles Wilson Peale's papers to reconstruct experiments with instruments "long gone" (p. 27). Kiersten Thamm's chapter is an example of marrying the existing archival material with the object still in existence; her "The *Chaise sandows*: Object as (Obscured) Archive" uses a variety of primary and secondary sources to illustrate the complicated history of the creation and use of a piece of furniture to argue that design museums should engage more with providing the context for the many people involved in creating these items, not just the well-known designers. These individuals include rubber plantation workers in French Indochina and workers in Alsace-Lorraine, which the author argues was being treated as another colonial district by the French government. On the whole, however, given the volume's focus on "fugitive archives," I wish more authors had brought awareness of the tension between objects being studied and the documentary evidence *about* those objects to their work.

The volume is lavishly illustrated, with several color photographs associated with each chapter. My favorite section is "Archives in Places" because I am fascinated by how people can connect to other times and perspectives when physically in a place, and these are some of the most holistic chapters for making those connections. Some of these

chapters include Spencer Wigmore's discussions of Albert Bierstadt and the mining industry, Catherine Morrissey's examination of the Delaware Underground Railroad, and Michelle Everidge's focus on one of the Japanese concentration camps in California.

This volume challenges archivists to broaden their definitions of archives and what can be considered archival material. It also challenges us, again, to be more inclusive about whose stories we preserve. Chapters can be read alone, and several could be useful in archives classes, either to help students consider questions of appraisal or to demonstrate how research in archival sources can create new scholarship. This volume is an excellent read for any archivist interested in how their work intersects with the broader field of material culture studies.

<div align="right">

Marcella Huggard
Archives and Manuscripts Coordinator
University of Kansas Libraries

</div>

Digital Preservation in Libraries: Preparing for a Sustainable Future. **By Jeremy Mynetti and Jessalyn Zoom. Chicago: ALA Editions, 2019. 392 pp. Softcover. $84.99.**

With the advent of digital technologies, long-term preservation of library holdings has challenged information professionals for the better part of three decades, if not longer. Much has been written on the topic of digital preservation, and this book reflects the perspectives of libraries, archives, and museums (LAMs). While not specifically a "how-to" manual on digital preservation, those seeking a useful overview will find a balanced selection of writings exploring the topic as practiced primarily in the United States, other English-speaking countries, and Europe since the 1990s. Organized into six sections containing a total of 18 chapters, the writings naturally build upon each other in discussing key developments in best practices, workflows, and institutional programs.

The first section, "History and Theories: What Is Digital Preservation?," reveals the complexity facing LAM professionals when attempting to apply digital preservation standards to unique situations. The first chapter, "A Brief History of Digital Preservation," covers major milestones and concepts in the development of digital preservation, such as data migration, fixity, authenticity, the Open Archival Information System (OAIS) reference model ISO standard, the Trusted Digital Repositories/Audit and Certification (TRAC) Research Libraries Group-OCLC standard, and preservation metadata standards, along with collaborative preservation projects such as the Digital Preservation Network, International Research on Permanent Authentic Records in Electronic Systems (InterPARES), Electronic Resource Preservation and Access Network (ERPANET), and the National Digital Stewardship Alliance (NDSA). Fairly comprehensive, this history includes mention of online web archiving and preservation initiatives such as the Internet Archive and the Digital Millennium Copyright Act.

Readers overwhelmed by the litany of historical and theoretical foundations of digital preservation detailed in section 1 may find some solace in section 2, "Frameworks, Strategies, and Systems," which provides policy and strategy frameworks for approaching the task at hand. Christine Madsen and Megan Hurst's chapter, "Digital Preservation Policy and Strategy: Where Do I Start?," wisely breaks down the goals and players involved in planning a preservation operation. Rosy Jan's "Sustaining the Digital Investment" introduces and expands upon concepts regarding migration, emulation, and encapsulation, delving into their codependencies with provenance and context. Jan's deemphasis of digital archaeology, or the preservation of obsolete software/hardware and data recovery, as a preservation strategy could be seen as a shortcoming considering that many archivists face a glut of obsolete media and formats in need of data recovery. Then again, it can also be argued that preventative approaches provide the best cost-benefit for preservation outcomes.

Still, most LAM professionals involved in digital preservation will find much of use throughout this volume. Somaya Lanley's chapter, "Digital Preservation Should Be More Holistic," offers a wealth of resources on born-digital workflows by introducing digital stewardship models that address pre-ingest stages and the importance of

the early phase of the record's life cycle. Although section 3, "Digital Preservation in Individual Institutions," contains only two specific cases, the volume as a whole contains many references to specific practices from different institutions. Lanley, for example, shares some impressive workflows coming out of the University of Cambridge that break down the (14!) "stages" typically followed by digital archivists. Other examples of preservation plans and strategies abound, and later sections examine a handful of repository cooperatives for institutions lacking infrastructure and/or funding. Heavy with references to LOCKSS (Lots of Copies Keep Stuff Safe), the reader will also find suggestions for well-known and possibly not-so-well-known proprietary systems and academic/local consortia. The book ends on the thorny issues specific to copyright of digital and publicly accessible objects at LAM institutions.

The volume is not without its shortcomings. Digital forensics tools, for instance, are largely overlooked. Chapter 12, a 2016 case study at the Library of Congress involving the transfer of oral histories from a mobile phone, provides a glimpse into the problems associated with appraising and acquiring data taken from devices, but this case offers only a cursory mention of preservation applications for imaging and extraction tools such as Forensic Toolkit and Guymager or data package transfer tools such as write-blockers and Bagger. Readers seeking details specific to digital forensics in this book will find them lacking. Furthermore, while the book delves into the myriad aspects of the development and application of digital preservation in libraries, the topic of its subtitle, "Preparing for a Sustainable Future," is slightly neglected. Merriam-Webster online defines "sustainable" as "of, relating to, or being a method of harvesting or using a resource so that the resource is not depleted or permanently damaged."[1] Obviously, library preservation aims for long-term sustainability, but what are the metrics for determining the sustainability of library workflows, models, software applications, best practices, and standards? Such metrics are not discussed.

In the corporate sector, where "sustainable" often implies the long-term management, storage, and energy requirements needed to maintain the current level or rate of growth, the concept of "degrowth" now pervades discourse in the context of future energy demands.[2] Relatedly, the "scalability" of digital preservation in LAMs has become a major question, considering the implications of exponential growth of digital content. Camilla Tubbs and Angela Fang Wang's "Defining Your Strategy for Digitizing Materials" touches on this subject in their digitization case study at the University of California Hastings Law Library, stressing that collection development policies must also apply to digital content. However, more attention could have been given throughout the volume to how forecasting can help predict and plan for long-term energy and data storage demands to round out discussions of what a truly sustainable future for LAMs looks like.

As an ALA publication, this work serves as an authoritative reference represented by a variety of authors and provides an accurate overview of the general digital preservation landscape in libraries. Those with a background in digital archives may not find new information, but the plethora of topics offers good jumping-off points for further investigation. As the editors write in the introduction, the field of digital preservation is

fast changing and some of this information may become quickly outdated; still, learning about past technologies helps inform the present. But, given the rapid rate of technological change, with digital preservation, it's the sooner done the better.

Jennifer Ulrich
Technical Services Archivist
Augustus C. Long Health Sciences Library
Columbia University Irving Medical Center

NOTES

1. Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, s.v. "sustainable," https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/sustainable.

2. Is anything sustainable when faced with the reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), United Nations, which warns of environmental tipping points due to human-generated emissions of greenhouse gases? The 2022 IPCC reported that "Digital technologies can contribute to mitigation of climate change" by increasing energy efficiency, adopting low-emission technologies, and decentralized renewable energy, but may also increase energy use by increasing demand due to the use of digital devices. Policymakers of the IPCC Working Group II report, Climate Change 2022: Mitigation of Climate Change, approved Sunday, February 27, 2022, B.4.3 {5.3, 10, 12.6, 16.2, Cross-Chapter Box 11 in Chapter 16, TS.5, Box TS.14}, https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg3/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGIII_SPM.pdf.

MAC midwest archives
conference