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Moving Toward a Reparative Archive: A Roadmap for a Holistic Approach to Disrupting Homogenous Histories in Academic Repositories and Creating Inclusive Spaces for Marginalized Voices

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Introduction

Tonia Sutherland writes that American archives and their recordkeepers have recently been at the center of criticism for "privileging, preserving, and reproducing a history that is predominately white."[1] Her scathing critique comes against the backdrop of traditional archives' inability or unwillingness to preserve the heavily documented history of lynchings, which have rarely made their way into the official American record, despite the fact that archives are "mandated to create, maintain, use and provide records of a shared national history."[2] Ta-Nehisi Coates reminds us that "the full acceptance of our collective biography and its consequences—is the price we must pay to see ourselves squarely."[3] Attempting to silence and erase this violent past is a direct assault on the unspoken oath of archivists and the institutions in which they reside.

Mainstream archives have frequently declined to catalog these records and to acknowledge them as evidence of human rights abuses,[4] and such practices have led to charges that traditional archives have taken on the role of coconspirator in the violence against black bodies. This type of oppressive praxis has not only impacted what archives collect but also the tradition of who is granted access. During the mid-twentieth century, records indicate that African American scholars were frequently granted lesser degrees of access and service than their white counterparts.[5] Rarely did southern white college campuses give access to African American scholars without formal referral from white librarians and only if the materials were unavailable at Jim Crow libraries.[6] Indeed, mainstream memory institutions have a long and dark history of engaging in oppressive archival practices.

The recent criticism leveled by Sutherland's article and previous scholarly discussions by Michelle Caswell,[7] Jarrett M. Drake, Joyce Gabiola, Walidah Imarisha, Bergis Jules,

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[1] Tonia Sutherland, "Archival Amnesty: In Search of Black American Transitional and Restorative Justice," *Journal of Critical Library and Information Services* 2 (2017): 1–2.

[2] Sutherland, "Archival Amnesty," 10.

[3] Ta-Nehisi Coates, "The Case for Reparations," *The Atlantic*, June 2014, accessed May 8, 2017, https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2014/06/the-case-for-reparations/361631/.

[4] Sutherland, "Archival Amnesty," 10.

[5] Alex H. Poole, "The Strange Career of Jim Crow Archives: Race, Space, and History in the Mid-Twentieth-Century American South," *The American Archivist* 77 (Spring/Summer 2014): 24.

[6] Ibid., 27.

[7] Since initially writing this article, Michelle Caswell's "Teaching to Dismantle White Supremacy in Archives" (*The Library Quarterly* 87, no. 3 [2017]: 222–35) has been published and is illuminating specific practices that are critical to decolonizing traditional repositories. The concept of reparative archives follows in the tradition of previously held discourse from Caswell's work, as well as Arthur Schomburg and Achille Mbembe, and should be viewed as a granular outgrowth of previous scholarship.

Safiya Noble, and others has led to thoughtful discourse on social justice in the archives and the use of archives to bring forward narratives that have been previously erased from history. The idea of archives and archivists acting as agents of change is not new, but it is increasingly infiltrating mainstream discourse. One of the most often quoted speeches by scholars seeking to create a historical context for such a paradigm shift is Howard Zinn's seminal speech from the 1970 Society of American Archivists) annual meeting. This speech is often viewed as a pivotal moment, and is invoked by scholars like South African archivist Verne Harris, Michelle Caswell, assistant professor of archival studies at UCLA, and Ricardo Punzalan, assistant professor of archives and digital curation at the University of Maryland, as launching the reevaluation of the role of the archivist and archives in society. In his speech, Zinn argued that "the most powerful, the richest elements in society have the greatest capacity to find documents, preserve them, and decide what is or is not available to the public."[8] By 1975 the scholarly discourse had begun to address Zinn's critique, one of the more earnest attempts being F. Gerald Ham's 1975 article, "The Archival Edge," and by the 1980s the profession was attempting to look at collection development policies and as a result produced literature that investigated issues of diverse representation in the archives.[9] In 2007, Randall Jimerson would reconstitute the Zinn narrative and write that "by archivists adopting a social conscience for the profession. . . . Archivists can use the power of archives to promote accountability, open government, diversity, and social justice."[10]

So we begin our roadmap with the phrase *social justice*, which is becoming prevalent within archival literature that looks at the "inclusion of underrepresented and marginalized sectors of society," within an archives framework.[11] The research presented here also begins with the supposition that social justice in archives is a worthwhile goal and that shapers of the historical record have a professional obligation not only to work toward a more equitable[12] future but also toward a moral one. As Punzalan and Caswell note, "Social justice . . . explicitly draws attention to inequalities of power and how they manifest in institutional arrangements and systemic inequities that further the interest of some groups at the expense of others."[13] Mainstream archives are steeped in a tradition that makes decisions about the existence, preservation, and availability of archives, documents, and records in our society on the basis of the distribution of wealth and power.[14] It is this inequity that has created a systemic defect within traditional archives that has led to the marginalization, erasure, and oppression of historically underrepresented communities. Zinn writes,

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[8] Howard Zinn, "Secrecy, Archives, and the Public Interest," *MidWestern Archivist* 2, no. 2 (1977): 20.

[9] Tracy B. Grimm and Chon A. Noriega, "Documenting Regional Latino Arts and Culture: Case Studies for a Collaborative, Community Oriented Approach," *The American Archivist* 76 (Spring/Summer 2013): 97.

[10] Randall Jimmerson, "Archives for All: Professional Responsibility and Social Justice," *The American Archivist* 70 (Spring/Summer 2007): 252.

[11] Ricardo L. Punzalan and Michelle Caswell, "Archival Approaches to Social Justice," *The Library Quarterly* 86 (2016): 27.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid., 26.

[14] Zinn, "Secrecy, Archives," 20.

> The collection of records, papers, and memoirs, as well as oral history is biased towards the important and powerful people of the society, tending to ignore the impotent and obscure: we learn most about the rich, not the poor; the successful, not the failures; the old, not the young; the politically active not the politically alienated; men not women; white not black; free people rather than prisoners; civilians rather than soldiers; officers rather than enlisted men.[15]

Archives that are rooted in biases and oppression that maintain the subjugation of vulnerable communities cannot be transformed, they can never morph into justice-oriented social assets, but can mainstream archives repair their praxis of suppression? Is it conceivable that traditional archives might find a way to help mend the social wounds that have been created by the absence of records documenting lynchings, transgender narratives, the differently abled, police brutality, or black student activism and that have created an ill-formed representation of history? This case study proves that the building of a reparative archive via acquisition, advocacy, and utilization can assist in decolonizing traditional archives and bringing historically oppressed voices in from the margins.

Background

Defining Reparative Archive

What do we mean when we say reparative? The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines the word repair as "to put into proper order something that is injured, damaged, or defective."[16] Traditional archives are damaged due to long-standing traditions that foster an imbalance of power. In 2016, the Nelson Mandela Foundation conducted a two-week dialogue with "memory workers" from nine different countries.[17] The event was held in South Africa and Sri Lanka, and invited participants addressed the overarching question of how to do memory work that is liberatory.[18] Doria D. Johnson,[19] Jarrett M. Drake, and Michelle Caswell were representatives from the United States, and one of their reflections on the process touched on the idea of repair. They suggested that "memory work is not just about remembering the past, but about reckoning with it—that is, establishing facts, acknowledging, apologizing, . . . and repairing the harm that was done

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[15] Ibid., 21.

[16] *Merriam-Webster Dictionary*, accessed on April 15, 2017 https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/repair.

[17] Verne Harris, "Reflections from the 2016 Mandela Dialogues," accessed on March 8, 2017, https://www.nelsonmandela.org/news/entry/reflections-from-the-2016-mandela-dialogues.

[18] Harris, "Reflections."

[19] Doria Johnson transitioned on February 14, 2018. Doria was viewed as a "change agent" by the Nelson Mandela Foundation. She served on the United States Senate Steering Committee for the Apology on Lynching, she was an international lecturer, and she participated in human rights initiatives in Palestine, Israel, South Africa, Europe, Sri Lanka, Chicago, Ferguson, and Cuba. She received the Andrew W. Mellon Dissertation Fellowship, the University of Wisconsin/Madison Advanced Opportunity Fellowship, the University of Chicago Black Metropolis Research Consortium Dissertation Research Fellowship, and a Yale University Summer Public History Institute Fellowship. See http://www.evanstonroundtable.com/main.asp?SectionID=26&SubSectionID=48&ArticleID=14800.

through both material and immaterial forms of reparation."[20] Traditional repositories must reckon with the past by repairing the harm that was done and this paper will focus on repair in material form, specifically within academic repositories that have customarily excluded the historically disenfranchised.

The archival profession calls upon practitioners to grant privileged status to certain written documents and refusal of that status to others.[21] These actions create spaces that can and do breed repressive behavior. In war, repositories are sought out for terrorist activities in an effort to eliminate evidence of a community's presence."[22] Archives and their practitioners engage in the same violent practices with decisions to cultivate, preserve, and make accessible homogenous narratives that eliminate evidence of other communities. This happens in traditional repositories, and more specifically—academic repositories. When archivists and their institutions acknowledge the marginalization or absence of the oppressed they must respond through establishing a reparative archive that engenders inclusivity. Reparative archival work does not pretend to ignore the imperialist, racist, homophobic, sexist, ableist, and other discriminatory traditions of mainstream archives, but instead acknowledges these failures and engages in conscious actions toward a wholeness that may seem to be an exercise in futility but in actuality is an ethical imperative for all within traditional archival spaces.

Scholarly spaces are seeing an increase in students of color questioning and pushing against physical spaces that are symbols of racist and oppressive histories.[23] Students at Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) are demonstrating to have the name of Nathan Bedford Forrest, the first grand wizard of the Klu Klux Klan and a Confederate general in the Civil War removed from their ROTC building.[24] Academic repositories must provide the counter-narrative. Walidah Imarisha, in her 2017 keynote at the Annual Conference for the Society of American Archivists (SAA) asked attendees to recognize that archives have functioned as ways to reinforce existing power structures and have been complicit in continuing to uphold oppressive and unequal systems.[25] Academic repositories must increase their engagement in the disruption of these master narratives, the narratives that uphold oppression, support the function of unequal systems, and create

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[20] Doria Johnson, Jarrett M. Drake, and Michelle Caswell, "From Cape Town to Chicago to Colombo and Back Again: Towards a Liberation Theology for Memory Work," Mandela Dialogues, https://www.nelsonmandela.org/uploads/files/Reflection_Liberation_Theology_for_Memory_Work_-_Doria_D._Johnson__Jarrett_M._Drake__Michelle_Caswell.pdf.

[21] Mbembe Achille, "The Power of the Archive and Its Limits," in *Refiguring the Archive*, ed. by Carolyn Hamilton, Verne Harris, Michele Pickover, and Graeme Reid (Cape Town: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002), 20.

[22] Richard Cox, "Archives, War, and Memory: Building a Framework," *Library and Archival Security* 25 (2012): 22.

[23] Tobias Holden, "The Right Call: Yale Removes My Racist Ancestor's Name from Campus," *New York Times*, accessed June 9, 2017, https://www.nytimes.com/2017/02/10/opinion/get-my-racist-ancestors-name-off-of-yales-campus.html.

[24] Sarah Grace Taylor, "Middle Tenn. State Students Protest Campus Building Named for Confederate Leader," *USA Today College*, accessed March 1, 2018, http://college.usatoday.com/2015/09/01/students-protest-confederate-building/.

[25] Walidah Imarisha, Transcript of Walidah's Liberated Archives Keynote, August 22, 2017, www.walidah.com/blog/2017/8/22/transcript-of-walidahs-liberated-archives-keynote.

spaces of exclusion. Social justice through archival repair is a change in the traditional praxis of the archival profession; it is a conscientious effort to begin one's work with the philosophy of inclusion from the margins.

What would an example of a roadmap for a reparative archive look like that contains voices highlighting the intersectionality of race, sexual orientation, gender, ethnicity, and all the voiceless communities that have been integral to the human experience? The research suggests an approach for academic institutions to repair past injuries through a holistic approach, by normalizing acquisitions of the oppressed, advocating, and utilizing primary resources that reflect society and that can provide a means to disengage with and prevent recordkeeping that systematically removes or intercepts the voices of the "other." Far too often these marginalizing actions can create a sense of isolation that reverberates within scholarly spaces and spills out beyond the walls of academia.

Advocacy: Belonging and believing

Due to the malformed root of mainstream archives, community archives have served and continue to serve as the path forward in establishing a moral compass for the humanizing of the dehumanized. The work of these memory institutions inevitably creates a powerful and organic relationship with historically vulnerable communities as they provide a platform that has traditionally been nearly inaccessible.

Jarrett M. Drake, former digital archivist for Princeton University and an advisory archivist for A People's Archive of Police Violence in Cleveland (APAPVC), is one of the leading contemporary voices on community archives. In his keynote at the Community Archives Forum hosted at UCLA in 2016, he stated that "the action of belonging and the action of believing are two of the most fundamental exercises of the human spirit, and it's my argument that liberatory archives possess the potential to engender both actions within communities whose humanity traditional archives fail to recognize and respect."[26] This statement represents the goal that all archives should work toward—this is the definition of creating inclusive spaces.

Drake, along with Stacie Williams, team leader of digital learning and scholarship at Case Western Reserve University, published a well-documented article on establishing a community archive that works to document the absent narratives of the victims of police violence in the historical record.[27] APAPVC was launched during the 2015 SAA conference in the wake of the high-profile murder of Cleveland resident Tamir Rice (a twelve-year-old) in 2014, and the 2012 shooting of Malissa Williams and Timothy Russell, all by Cleveland police officers. All officers were acquitted. Cleveland has a long history of police brutality, but "the lineage of police violence in the City of

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[26] Jarrett M. Drake, "Liberatory Archives," Community Archives Forum, accessed December 2016, https://medium.com/on-archivy/liberatory-archives-towards-belonging-and-believing-part-1-d26aaeb0edd1.

[27] Stacie Williams and Jarrett M. Drake, "Power to the People: Documenting Police Violence in Cleveland," *Journal of Critical Library and Information Science* 2 (2017): 1–27.

Cleveland does not outpace the lineage of resistance to that violence."[27] The authors document this resistance and the efforts to establish this community archive in order to create a sense of belonging and believing, as the accounts of these victims and their families are often footnotes to the received narrative or completely ignored by collecting institutions.

Other significant social justice projects occurring in digital spaces that provide a platform for counter-narratives through the documentation of traditionally silenced communities include the Baltimore Uprising 2015 Archive Project, which seeks to document the protests that occurred in the aftermath of the murder of Freddie Gray.[28] The Documenting the Now (DocNow) project is transforming the discourse on Internet archiving by responding to the public's use of social media for chronicling historically significant events.[29] DocNow could potentially serve as a powerful mechanism to ensure the preservation of social movements of the disenfranchised utilizing digital spaces.

The preponderance of scholarly literature on social justice and archives leans toward the development of community archives. However, this paper wants to challenge traditional repositories, more specifically, recordkeepers in scholarly institutions, to claim a greater stake in this discourse and begin to repair their holdings by targeted efforts to increase the diversification of collections and to advocate for and promote those collections for utilization within scholarly spaces.

Literature Review

Diversifying the archive

More than twenty years ago archival scholarship began expanding outside much of the foundational discourse produced by Jenkinson, Schellenberg, Norton, and Maclean, allowing room for more substantive discourse and critique of archival theory.[30] Since that time, the scholarship has questioned the historically Eurocentric nature of the archival profession, from the lack of a diverse workforce to the absence of diverse narratives that interrupt the homogeneity of the hegemonic white discourses of traditional repositories.

In the years that have followed Zinn's call to action, the dialogue on integrating themes of class, race, gender, and social equity has continued to serve as the foundation for the emergence of more socially conscious practitioners in the field of memory work. In 1986 the SAA endorsed the promotion of "archives and society," which assisted archivists in contemplating how to push the boundaries of theory and practice in order to address social and cultural issues.[31] These challenges have led to a more thoughtful analysis of the historical record and the role of the archivist.

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[28] The Baltimore 2015 Archiving Project, http://baltimoreuprising2015.org/.

[29] Documenting the Now, http://www.docnow.io/.

[30] Anthony Dunbar, "Introducing Critical Race Theory to Archival Discourse: Getting the Conversation Started," *Archival Science* 6 (2006): 110.

[31] Ibid., 110.

Alex H. Poole reminds us that archivists need to be held accountable for their record-collecting and recordkeeping practices and for ensuring diversity not only in the profession but also in the types of records retained, and in their content.[32] For most professionals, the myth of archival impartiality has been thoroughly dismantled.[33] "Archivists/recordkeepers know that every recordkeeping act . . . occurs in and is influenced by its layers of context, from the systems and people that are directly associated with the act, to the motivations of the organization that funded it, to the expectations and norms of the wider society in which it occurs."[34]

The Women's Archive at the University of Iowa is one of the earliest efforts to incorporate the disenfranchised into the institutional record at an American academic repository. Since the 1990s, the Louis Noun-Mary Louise Smith Iowa Women's Archives have sought to acquire a collection that represents the diversity of women's histories, including African American and rural women.[35] The Iowa Women's project early on acquired forty collections, and although this seemed to be a significant measure of success, the acquisitions were practically devoid of the broad spectrum of diversity they had hoped for.[36] Their efforts underscore some of the embedded challenges of community relations that are mediated by the post-custodial model and that are being implemented in many archives. The project highlighted the need to engage in conversations about the historical value of collections and uncovered circumstances where collections took several years to acquire. As a result, the organization took a targeted approach toward their outreach to women of color, specifically African American women, in 1995. Acknowledging the need for a committed effort, they hired an archivist dedicated to the collection development initiative of African American women in Iowa.[37] Through fundraising, grants, and intense donor relationship building with multiple visits, the project was able to acquire fifteen oral histories and fifty collections; the initiative also targeted collections highlighting the narratives of rural women, and in this case they were able to acquire one hundred collections.

A more recent project affiliated with an academic repository is the Desegregation of Virginia Education (DOVE Project), which began in 2008, led by the Special Collections and University Archives at Old Dominion University.[38] DOVE has become a creator and collector of records, particularly oral histories, although it initially set out to identify, locate, catalog, and encourage the preservation of records that document school desegregation in Virginia.[39]

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[32] Poole, "Strange Career," 23.

[33] Cassie Findlay, "Archival Activism," *Archives and Manuscripts* 44, no. 3 (2016): 155.

[34] Ibid., 155.

[35] Karen Mason. "Fostering Diversity in Archival Collections: The Iowa Women's Archives," *Collection Management* 27, no. 2 (2002): 23.

[36] Ibid., 26.

[37] Ibid., 27.

[38] Sonia Yaco and Betriz Betancourt Hardy, *A Documentation Case Study: The Desegregation of Virginia Education* (Chicago: Society American Archivists, 2014).

[39] Ibid.

T-Kay Sangwand, librarian for digital collection development at UCLA, has provided a successful approach for partnering an academic repository with efforts to create local and international digital collection partnerships. Sangwand has engaged in significant work in preserving the histories of marginalized people and everyday individuals impacted by war and genocide, and some of her most notable projects occurred during her time as the archivist for the Human Rights Documentation Initiative at the University of Texas.[40] The South Asian American Digital Archive (SAADA) also serves as a pioneer in the area of digital collections and partnerships. SAADA's mission is to create "a more inclusive society by giving voice to South Asian Americans through documenting, preserving, and sharing stories that represent their unique and diverse experiences." SAADA has amassed 3,162 digital objects on South Asian American history, making it the most publicly accessible repository on this subject.[41]

The Iowa Women's Archives, the DOVE Project, SAADA, and the emergence of human rights efforts whose goals are to document and reflect the complex tapestry of the human experience are engaging in reparative archival work because they are laboring to include forgotten and marginalized voices within academic repositories and in partnership with them.

The diversification of analog and digital records in an effort to provide an all-encompassing panorama of America's human story is critical to the process of healing the relationship between traditional archives and historically underrepresented communities. Providing a path to accessing those records through archival literacy also remains vital to this discourse.

Library instruction

In 1971, SAA president Hugh Taylor asked archivists to become more involved in encouraging students to use the archives.[42] In 1998, the Boyer Commission Report for Undergraduate Education recommended that undergraduate students should have the opportunity to work with primary materials. As a result, within the last ten to twelve years archivists have become more engaged and proactive in creating partnerships with faculty members and instructors.[43]

Instruction allows archivists to help students develop archival literacy, which provides "knowledge, skills, [and] abilities an individual needs to effectively and efficiently find, interpret, evaluate, and ethically use primary sources."[44] Every connection with a faculty

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[40] "T-Kay Sangwand Movers & Shakers 2015—Advocates," *Library Journal*, accessed June 2016, http://lj.libraryjournal.com/2015/03/people/movers-shakers-2015/t-kay-sangwand-movers-shakers-2015-advocates/.

[41] South Asian American Digital Archives. https://www.saada.org/.

[42] Hugh A. Taylor, "Clio in the Raw: Archival Materials and the Teaching of History," *American Archivist* 35 (July/October 1972): 317–33.

[43] Sammie L. Morris, Tamar Chute, and Ellen Swain, "Connecting Students and Primary Resources: Cases and Examples," *Teaching with Primary Sources: A Guide for Archivists, Librarians* (Chicago: Society American Archivists, 2015), 76.

[44] Morris et al., *Teaching with Primary Sources*, 78.

member is an opportunity for archivists to educate members within academia about the collections they manage and therefore increase the likelihood that students will become citizens who appreciate and support archives.[45] However, interactions with primary sources are also a chance to change minds, society, and policy, and to inspire restorative justice, if only in a small way. In this case, the advocacy and utilization of collections in workshops or informational instruction that grants students and faculty access to documentation from traditionally invisible communities becomes increasingly critical in these interactions.

A case study from Yale University highlights efforts to do inquiry-based learning in a freshman seminar titled African American Movements in the Twentieth Century. To get students to connect primary resources to a larger historical context, students utilized correspondence from the William Sloane Coffin papers. Coffin was a chaplain at Yale who was active in the Civil Rights Movement and received letters from alums angered by his participation.[46] The letters were "vitriolic" and led students to ask questions about regional and professional influences on US citizens' beliefs about race during the 1960s.[47] A post-assessment concluded that more work would be done to increase faculty awareness and integration of collections.

Yale provides an example of interactions between archives and students that can help steer students toward an analysis of the intricacies race, racism, and social justice as they relate to actions within academic spaces and their impact on greater society. The case study does not fully address the idea of disrupting homogenous narratives as it relates to Sutherland's criticism of mainstream archives producing predominately white narratives. However, it is an example of an archive advocating and utilizing primary resources that stimulate a discussion on marginalized communities, which is an outgrowth of archival practices that seek to establish a praxis that is restorative.

The depth of literature available on building relationships between courses and archives through faculty outreach has expanded exponentially. However, we need a further intense analysis of advocacy and the utilization of collections within classroom spaces that offer counter-narratives to white homogeneity and that inculcate a multiculturalism that supersedes oppressive histories. Future research should include outreach with archives and student organizations as it relates to this area. As mainstream archives work to acquire collections highlighting student life, it is incumbent upon practitioners to engage in outreach with their student leaders and use those opportunities to create a new set of outcomes and relationships.

The following is Kent State's Department of Special Collections and Archives approach toward a reparative archival practice that includes its Black Campus Movement Collection Development Initiative. The case study briefly looks at our work toward decolonizing our holdings; advocacy and promotion through an exhibition and

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[45] Ibid., 78.

[46] Barbara Rokenbach, "Archives, Undergraduates, and Inquiry-Based Learning: Case Studies from Yale University Library," *The American Archivist* 74 (Spring/Summer 2011): 306.

[47] Ibid.

digitization; and the utilization of new and previously collected materials that underscore the black student experience for a library instruction session with the student group Black United Students (BUS). These efforts end with a sense of inclusivity and the interruption of a narrative that has historically made the black experience at Kent State between the late 1960s and the early 1970s all but invisible.

Kent State University's Case Study

Context

The Black Campus Movement (BCM) Collection Development Project Initiative launched at Kent State University in the fall of 2013 in the wake of the formation of the Black Lives Matter Movement, which was established in July of the same year. By 2014–2015, campuses across the country were seeing a rebirth of student activism, with over 140 protests throughout the US, much related to the racial climate on campuses. Some reports compared this surge to the 1960s.[48] The push for social justice has also created a groundswell in favor of the eradication of Confederate symbols such as statues and flags, the renaming of educational institutions that bear the names of slaveholders, and other instances of the glorification of America's racist past. Repair through the elimination of monuments has happened at Vanderbilt University, where the inscription "Confederate," which was added after the University accepted a $50,000 donation in 1933 from the Tennessee Division of the United Daughters of the Confederacy, was erased from a residence hall.[49] Academic repositories have a pivotal role on the front line of these actions of reparative social justice in academic spaces.

While Kent State is most notably known for its predominately white antiwar movement that led to the shootings on May 4, 1970, very little is known of those students who were fighting other injustices, specifically representation within academic spaces in the form of more students, faculty, and staff of color; more culturally diverse programming; and a Department of Pan African Studies in unison with other college and universities around the country.[50]

In a dedicated effort to move toward a reparative archive, the department decided to engage in collection assessment to locate holdings that included black student activism. The evaluation indicated that Kent State's Special Collections and Archives had a scarcity of records in this area and that the majority of the documents were administrative in nature with very little collection development in the area of documents from the viewpoint of African American students and their organizations.[51] The department engaged in a collection assessment process followed by targeted outreach for collections about black student life. A full case study on evaluation and initial outreach were

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[48] Alia Wong, "The Renaissance of Student Activism," *The Atlantic*, May 2015, accessed October 2016, https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2015/05/the-renaissance-of-student-activism/393749/.
[49] Marina Koren, "College Dorm and the Confederacy," *The Atlantic*, August 2016, accessed April 2017, https://www.theatlantic.com/news/archive/2016/08/vanderbilt-confederate-hall/495941/.
[50] 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): 28–42.
[51] Ibid., 28–42.

published in 2014. However, what we have learned since this initial case study is that there must be a multi-pronged approach for engaging in social justice through reparative archival practices when dismantling homogenous or master narratives within academic repositories. The approach includes the following goals: (1) acquisitions; (2) advocacy/promotion; (3) utilization. This research maintains that how those goals are met can vary based on staff, funding, resources, and so on. Thus, the following example, which shows how Kent State University met the above goals for a reparative archive, is just one example, not the totality.

Goal # 1: Acquisition

After the official launch of the BCM Collection Development Initiative, the project acquired the Lafayette Tolliver papers. Tolliver was an African American alum who had attended Kent State University from 1967 to 1971. The flagship collection included nearly 1,000 photographic prints and negatives, primarily never before published images of black student dissent, fraternities and sororities, cultural events, and various informal gathering between black coeds—the collection is primarily a visual history of the black student experience at Kent State between 1968 and 1971.[52]

While the initial focus was the late 1960s through early 1970s, we are actively collecting records about black student life up through the present. As a result of the growing awareness of this project, we have acquired additional items that document the 1990s and 2000s. Some of the smaller collections have included correspondence and memorabilia from black fraternities and sororities. The BCM Collection Development initiative has also resulted in the recording of more than thirteen oral histories that highlight the narratives of black alums. The majority of the narratives include voices from Black United Students (BUS), as research shows that this group served as the most critical element in the evolution of cultural transformation at Kent State during the late 60s through early 70s.[53]

One of the interviews includes Dr. Larry Simpson, provost of the Berklee College of Music, and one of the first stand-alone presidents of BUS, which was established in 1968. He gives an illuminating account of being a student of color in the late 1960s on a predominately white campus with the arrival of the Oakland Police Department recruiters in the wake of the death of Black Panther Party member Bobby Hutton, and the importance of seeing "oneself reflected" in academic spaces.[54] Silas Ashley, a 1972 Kent alum, speaks of his Southern roots and his earliest memories of lynchings and participating in the Montgomery Bus Boycott as a young boy. He describes how those experiences traveled with him up north and served as a catalyst for his activism at Kent State University, including in athletics, where there were many complaints of discrimination leveled against the university's intercollegiate sports for their lack of diversity. To address this injustice, Ashley assisted in the creation of a black intramural

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[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.
[54] Larry Simpson (provost, Berklee College of Music) in discussion with the author, June 2017.

basketball team.[55] Finally, Dr. Francis Dorsey, who was part of the early wave of black faculty hired by the university, underscores the challenges of navigating the campus with limited resources in the newly formed Department of Pan African Studies.[56]

All of these interviews and small acquisitions have begun to clarify the development of black student life and activism in the late 1960s and early 1970s. However, the acquisition of physical collections remains the most challenging element of this initiative. As was the case with the DOVE and Women of Iowa project, our research suggests that reparative archival work requires at a least one dedicated staff member to attain a reasonable level of success.

Goal # 2: Advocacy (Exhibits and Digitization)

In the fall of 2014, the university libraries, along with the Office of Diversity Equity and Inclusion and the Department of Pan African Studies, hosted an exhibit highlighting a cross-section of the Tolliver collection; the exhibit was actually at the request of the donor. This agreement between the department allowed Special Collections and Archives to create a trust of stewardship with the donor, while at the same time the exhibit provided an opportunity for the hidden voices of black student activism to begin to reclaim their space and their history, and a forum to assist in deconstructing the master narrative at a predominately white academy.

The majority of the images from the Tolliver donation did not include descriptions, so the exhibit relied heavily on images that were easily identifiable. More than one hundred black alumni returned to Kent State for the event, many of whom had not returned since graduating more than forty years ago. Names of individuals were gathered for potential future inclusion in the Black Campus Movement project's oral histories and acquisition outreach. Marketing materials highlighting the BCM project's goals were provided during the event. This event led to many local news reports in outlets on and off campus.

When the exhibit was completed, a digitization project was initiated to make all of the Tolliver photographs digitally accessible. Normally, a collection is fully processed before digitization, but due to the publicity that the exhibit received from campus and local coverage and because of the rarity of the content, both the university archivist and the head of special collections archives at Kent State University, Cara Gilgenbach, decided to make the digitization of the Tolliver photographs a priority. The department was also transitioning to an Omeka platform and this digitization project would be one of the earliest collections to be added using Omeka. The Tolliver photographs served as the pilot collection to test the new workflow system.

Since most of the Tolliver photos did not include descriptions, the university archivist solicited a group of four reviewers from the previously interviewed black alums. Requests for participation were sent out to individuals who, based on their oral histories, were heavily involved in black student activities, including fraternities, sororities, or

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[55] Silas Ashley (Kent State alumnus) in discussion with the author 2016.
[56] Francis Dorsey (Kent State alumnus) in discussion with the author 2016.

other culturally relevant student groups. A Dropbox account was created as the primary platform to give access to reviewers. However, one reviewer had technical difficulties accessing the account and instead requested that images be sent via email. Due to file storage limits at the time with university email, this process required a bit more labor. Nearly one hundred images were reviewed by the group of four individuals. The reviewers were asked to provide the following if known: name(s); date(s); event; location (on/off campus).

If the collaborators needed to provide any additional context outside of the areas requested, they were given space to do so. Reviewers sent information on images via email, phone calls, and through Google docs. The university archivist hoped that reviewer responses would largely coincide with one another. The digitized *Daily Kent Stater* (DKS) was used to further verify responses (specifically the timeline). Fortunately, there were only a few instances where the time frames differed, but even so, not drastically. Some events were not reported in the student newspaper, and thus there was not an immediate mechanism to verify timelines for reviewer submissions. Additionally, due to the fact that there were a number of protests between the late 1960s and early 70s, it was a challenge to differentiate which specific protests were taking place. In the first set of 112 digitized images uploaded into Omeka there were twelve images, in which neither the individuals nor the events could be identified.

Since this digitization project does not have a dedicated full-time staff member, there has been a lapse in gathering and uploading the next batch of images. However, as this article goes to press, the next set of Tolliver images is being reviewed for metadata and uploaded into Omeka. The same mechanisms have been put into place to gather metadata before their upload.

One of the more significant components of this digitization process is the participation of the reviewers in creating the metadata, which had an impact on the controlled vocabulary used for this digital project. An increasing constituency within memory institutions, specifically within the realm of human rights work in community archives, engages in a participatory archives model, and "archives consequently become a negotiated space in which these different communities share stewardship—they are created by, for and with multiple communities, according to and respectful of community values, practices, beliefs and needs."[57] This paper argues that reparative archives in academic repositories should make this approach part of the acquisition process and work collaboratively with the donor or community members where applicable. In this particular relationship, African American alums played a role in bringing forth marginalized figures and events from the shadows of the past and placing them into their proper context in digital and physical spaces. These actions, in turn, gave participants a sense of ownership and belonging.

Goal #3: Utilization

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[57] Anne Gilliand and Sue McKemmish, "The Role of Participatory Archives in Furthering Human Rights: Reconciliation and Recovery," *Review for Modern Archival Theory and Practice* 24 (2014): 78.

Building inclusive spaces: Student organizations (library instruction)

A significant portion of the literature on library instruction focuses on outreach to faculty members. As highlighted in the literature review, valiant and considerable efforts are being initiated to engage in outreach to faculty members and to connect them with primary resources that will strengthen course outcomes.

However, this paper has focused on an interaction between library instruction personnel and the student organization, prompted by BUS, which was a significant development because of the organization's long-established history of disrupting white homogeneous culture at the university. Student organizations are not attached to specific outcomes and they therefore may provide more opportunities for organic interaction with records than structured classrooms can afford.

After attending the Tolliver exhibit in the fall of 2014, members of BUS approached the university archivist about holding one of their 2015 spring leadership meetings in the archives with the goal of learning about the BCM project. The university archivist agreed to hold a session for twenty students. Students were given packets outlining the aims of the project and given a presentation on current holdings. Students were granted access to newly created oral history recordings of black alumni and engaged in a hands-on workshop with primary resources that focused heavily on their own organization's history. Unfortunately, much of the historical record still relies on the administrative perspective. But copies of the *Blackwatch* (the organization's newspaper) in addition to other ephemera related to activities of BUS from the late 1960s and early 70s provided some counterbalance. The students were given an overall introduction to Special Collections and Archives and then received a review of the BCM Collection Development Initiative, outlining efforts to collect historical documentation of black student life (including photographs, video, correspondence, newsletters, oral histories, and organizational information). The university archivist then discussed the importance of archiving their stories to assist in repairing the void in the historical record in the institution's archives moving into the future.

Anecdotally, the university archivist has since witnessed an increase in reference requests by members of BUS, has been contacted by various members from BUS about visits to Special Collections and Archives, and has received invitations to engage in future meetings for the fall of 2017.

This engagement with BUS is a clear example of an outcome from reparative work within Kent State's Department of Special Collections and Archives that has led to a feeling of inclusivity. The 2015 workshop is the first time BUS specifically requested library instruction for their student group, which is due to the awareness of the department's efforts through advocacy. Today's BUS group are the descendants of the Black Campus Movement of the late 1960s and this relationship is not tokenistic. The organization reaching out to the department is evidence of a building of bridges with this community and the repairing of a broken relationship.

Conclusion

Zinn, Jimmerson, Poole, Sutherland, and other scholars critical of mainstream repositories have called into question the repeated refusal of mainstream archives to include records of historically subjugated and marginalized communities. Due to institutional practices that have permitted sexism, racism, classism, discriminatory application against the differently abled, religious minorities, LGBTQIA persons, and others, community archives have shouldered the brunt of charting a course that bears the truth of America's "bloody catalogue of oppression."[58] Mainstream archives, including academic repositories, cannot see the community archive as a type of absolution or emancipation from their debt to society. Mainstream archives are not free to continue to preserve a privileged history that is riddled with half-truths and tainted narratives that dismiss lynching crusades, genocides, state violence on university campuses, and black students and their charge to create an academy more respectful of the black diaspora and instead champion the "virtuous" histories of slave owners.

It is the conclusion of this paper that engaging in social justice through reparative archival work in the form of the diversification of archives, advocacy/promotion, and then utilization within an academic archive has set a process in motion that has shown early signs of creating feelings of inclusivity within the archival space, a feeling of "believing and belonging."[59] This process has challenged and disrupted the institutional history that has promoted a white homogenous depiction of Kent State's activism in late 1960s through the early 1970s and has shifted us slowly toward a new trajectory, one closer to how we should "truly see ourselves."

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