Umbra Search African American History and African American History, Culture, and Digital Humanities (AADHum)

Umbra Search and the Future of Black Digital Platforms

“Intentionally Digital, Intentionally Black” Pre-Conference Workshop White Paper

October 18, 2018

convened by
Cecily Marcus and Trevor Muñoz
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Introduction

Together, Umbra Search African American History (umbrasearch.org) and the African American History, Culture, and Digital Humanities (AADHum) initiative at the University of Maryland (aadhum.umd.edu) convened a working meeting on digital collections and platforms focused on African American history and culture. The meeting was held on October, 18, 2018, at the University of Maryland as a pre-conference session for AADHum’s “Intentionally Digital, Intentionally Black” conference.

The meeting was organized by Cecily Marcus, Curator of the Givens Collection of African American Literature at the University of Minnesota Libraries and Principal Investigator of Umbra Search African American History, and Trevor Muñoz, Interim Director of the Maryland Institute for Technology in the Humanities (MITH) and Co-Principal Investigator of AADHum. Muñoz also facilitated the meeting. A full list of participants is included as Appendix A.

By convening a group of librarians, archivists, curators, digital humanists, students, technologists, grant-makers, and other stakeholders, we hoped to advance conversations about representation, agency, and value in the context of African American digital collections and platforms. We were particularly interested, through this meeting and through follow up activities, in topics such as broadening the constituencies for black digital collections, ownership and agency in shared collections, as well as beginning and sustaining not only collaborations, but also digital platforms themselves.

We hope the report from this forum represents a useful contribution to ongoing and related efforts to create opportunities for partnerships, transparency, and collective outreach and advocacy for the many projects, programs, and initiatives involving the preservation, discovery, and access of African American history and culture.
Discussions

A full agenda for the meeting is included as Appendix B.

The first half of the meeting was spent in plenary discussion. Participants opened the day by engaging with questions and provocations submitted online in advance of the meeting. (A full list of position statements is available as Appendix C.)

Examples include:

- How can we use our individual areas of strength to create a collective platform not just for harvesting collections metadata, but for hosting, describing, sharing and sustaining digital collections? Can we develop guiding practices to help sustain and promote community-held archives in ways that are true partnerships that do not appropriate or exploit community members?

- Should academic libraries assume or maintain copyright of orphaned collections, or collections of unknown provenance documenting historically marginalized communities? How can academic institutions leverage and empower the livelihood of Black digital collections in an equitable, responsible way?

- Digital access to black collections is one central and highly significant piece of accessibility, but beyond this, how do we engage the public[s]? What do partnerships look like? What does digital curation look like? How do we support struggling Black archives/museum spaces with this kind of platform?

- How do we build digital capacity in collections with smaller staff who are often stretched in multiple directions?
The opening discussion was followed by three context-setting presentations.

1

The first speaker, Rebecca Hankins, curator of Africana Studies at Texas A&M University, offered general remarks about Black collections and collecting. Hankins spoke from her perspective as a member of the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC). In this context, she emphasized several dimensions of collaboration among different types of institutions, including but not limited to:

- How best to build and support new communities of grant seekers among smaller institutions and organizations through outreach, grant writing support, collaborations?
- The importance of working with donors to grow the impact of African American collections (digital and analog);
- An exhortation to diversify the community of grant reviewers for NHPRC and other granting agencies (NEH, IMLS, etc.), to volunteer, and to create a guiding list of people who can serve as panelists.

2

Cecily Marcus discussed Umbra Search, an initiative at the University of Minnesota Library Givens Collection of African American Literature that includes an award-winning, freely available search tool of nearly 1 million digitized African American primary sources materials from over 1,000 US libraries, archives, and cultural heritage organizations; systematic digitization of African American history materials from UMN archives and special collections; public programming, education, and outreach efforts locally and nationally. Marcus described some of the issues that Umbra Search is currently navigating, which include questions that are applicable to digital platforms generally, and Black digital platforms specifically. These include:

- How projects, programs, and initiatives that center Black and African American Studies can actively collaborate with each other;
- The meaning of long-term sustainability in a digital and grant-funded context, and how to ensure it;
How the success and sustainability of Black/African American digital programs are linked across universities, and how these relationships can be articulated to organizational leadership, funders, and other stakeholders;

How institutional partnerships demonstrate buy in and demand accountability on the part of the project and its organizational leadership;

How to partner with non-academic organizations around digital collecting and other initiatives in equitable and non-traditional/non-custodial/quasi-custodial ways;

The distinction between equitable and equal partnerships and the importance of equitable partnerships in library and academic contexts.

Katrina Fenlon, Assistant Professor of Information Science, University of Maryland, presented two conceptual tools for thinking about digital collections: context and completeness. These concepts emerge from information science research on a range of digital collections and aggregations and their use in humanities research. Collections with different purposes strive toward different ideals of completeness. At the same time, collections build up context for content by making visible and actionable the relationships within and among items, collections, and other sources. The presentation demonstrated how these relationships are realized in the content, navigation, and design of collections. Finally, the presentation identified hallmarks of contextual mass, a concept that unites context and completeness into a critical measure of the success and sustainability of digital collections. Fenlon’s slides are available on Humanities Commons: hcommons.org/deposits/item/hc:21325

Building on the conversations around the position statements and presentations, discussion focused on three core questions and the outlining of several recommendations.

The core questions for this part of the meeting were:

How to demand, create, and support equitable partnerships and collaborations?

What are the conditions of success for sustainability of collections projects and what are some first steps towards those sustainability goals?

How might we think about control of collections and honor the work and investment of Black spaces in these collections, including analog, digital, and national digital Black platforms?
Recommendations

The list of recommendations generated by the full group was captured in the community notes document, a lightly-edited version of which is included as Appendix D. Key high-level recommendations are described in more detail here:

CREATE AND MAINTAIN A ROSTER OF EXPERTS IN BLACK COLLECTIONS

The best sources on Black collections are the people who create, steward, and interpret such collections with the explicit intention of centering the experience of Black people. There is a need to help these experts, whether institutionally-affiliated or independent, to identify themselves and each other so that we can begin to represent more fully the scope of activities and investment in African American Studies, Black Studies, and Black Digital Humanities scholarship and initiatives. Groups within the larger community, such as Archivists and Archives of Color Section of the Society of American Archivists and Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture at New York Public Library, among others, have developed resources that should serve as starting points.

Members of the community should be able to control how they wish to be visible, including what and how much information they share about themselves and their work. The rapid creation of an online directory would itself be a demonstration of the structure and effectiveness of this group of cultural memory workers and their potential to collectively strengthen Black collections. The recent #womenalsoknowhistory initiative is an example of a similar action that this community could take. There is a need for participation across different types of positions and roles but the overriding value should be to recruit broad-based participation rather than a list of only activists and people in positions of institutional power.

The resulting directory would create the possibility of greater collaboration among members; it would also provide a resource for those seeking people to invite as keynote speakers or conference panelists, people to consult for press articles, and people to recruit as reviewers for grant and award competitions. Another vital role this directory could play would be to support cross-generational mentoring among those working on Black cultural memory.
CONVERT A DIRECTORY OF BLACK REPOSITORIES AND COLLECTIONS INTO A COMMUNITY RESOURCE

No single or definitive directory of Black repositories and collections currently exists, though a variety of versions (historical, digital, analog) serve as partial resources. An updated online directory with collaboratively-defined criteria for inclusion would serve as a community and institutional resource for curators, archivists, researchers, students, scholars, artists, and more. Such a directory could highlight collection strengths and priorities, size of staff or budget rubrics, and other data. The landscape of Black digital collections is not divisible from the broader analog landscape of Black collections. Meaningful and equitable priorities can only be developed by considering the need for different, interrelated activities across collections of different kinds. Work on Black collections must be broad-based and participatory rather than funneled to one or even a few high-profile projects and collections.

CONTINUE THE CONVERSATION

Cross-institutional conversations about the state and future of Black collections and platforms are not new, and multiple strands of the conversation are taking place all over the country at the present moment. The enthusiastic response to meeting invitations that the pre-conference organizers received demonstrates the eagerness of this community to come together to discuss and take action on collective issues. The forum organized through the “Intentionally Digital, Intentionally Black” conference is one activity in what needs to be an ongoing conversation, with a broadening and more deeply connected community of participants and stakeholders.

An active forum might support activities that go beyond the scope of focused discussions including but not limited to:

- The sharing of templates, best practices, work flows, grant proposals (successful and otherwise);
- Open calls for partnerships and collaborations on projects, initiatives, and ideas; for letters of support; and other demonstrations of collective strength in the field of Black collections and repositories;
The quasi-formal development of a community of practice with regular online meetings and discussions around various topics and questions; possible affiliation with other organizations that can help to support ongoing work and collaborations.

Considered prioritization of activities that support participants’ professional development and advancement, as well as the long-term health and sustainability of field-wide initiatives and programs.

DEVELOP COMMUNITY PRINCIPLES FOR EQUITABLE PARTNERSHIPS

A strong and consistent topic of interest to participants in the pre-conference meeting was how to promote more equitable partnerships both at institutional levels (i.e., between historically Black colleges and universities and predominantly white institutions) and at personal levels (i.e., between full-time salaried workers and contingent or independent workers, as well as community members). Examples from the Colored Conventions Project and the Design Justice Network offer valuable models for a set of principles related to equitable partnerships. There is a need for education of both working professionals and students about best practices in this area. A publication on this topic by members of the community would be an important resource not only for practitioners but also for program officers at funding agencies and members of peer-review panels.
Acknowledgements

Umbra Search African American History is generously funded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the Council on Library and Information Resources, and the University of Minnesota Libraries. The AADHum initiative at the University of Maryland is funded by a generous grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.
Appendix A: List of Participants

Ms. Aaisha Haykal  
Avery Research Center for African American History and Culture/College of Charleston

Dr. Ana Ndumu  
University of Maryland, College Park

Dr. Benjamin Wiggins  
University of Minnesota

Robert Horton  
Smithsonian National Museum of American History

Ms. Carol Rudisell  
University of Delaware Library, Museums & Press

Cecily Marcus  
University of Minnesota/Umbra Search African American History

Ms. Chaitra Powell  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

Mr. David McKnight  
University of Pennsylvania

Emily Reynolds  
Institute of Museum and Library Services

Dr. Franky Abbott  
Digital Public Library of America

Dr. Ida Jones  
Morgan State University

Ms. Kathleen Bethel  
Northwestern University Libraries

Dr. Katrina Fenlon  
College of Information Studies University of Maryland, College Park

Kellee E. Warren  
University of Illinois at Chicago

Kenvi Phillips  
Harvard University

Kris Kiesling  
University of Minnesota

Dr. Leah Weinryb Grohsgal  
National Endowment for the Humanities

Dr. Lopez Matthews, Jr.  
Moorland-Spingarn Research Center

Ms. Mary F. Yearwood  
Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, The New York Public Library

Dr. Marya Annette McQuirter  
curator, dc1968 project

Dr. Meghan Ferriter  
Library of Congress Labs

Dr. Menna Demessie  
Congressional Black Caucus Foundation

Phillip Cunningham  
Amistad Research Center

Rachel E. Winston  
The University of Texas at Austin

Ms. Rebecca Hankins  
Texas A&M University

Dr. Sarah Florini  
Arizona State University

Mr. Sony Prosper  
University of Virginia

Ms. Tahirah Akbar-Williams  
University of Maryland, College Park

Dr. Tonia Sutherland  
University of Hawai’i Mānoa

Trevor Muñoz  
MITH/AADHum University of Maryland, College Park

Dr. Tyechia Thompson  
Virginia Tech
Appendix B: Agenda of Pre-Conference Workshop

UMBRA SEARCH AND THE FUTURE OF BLACK DIGITAL PLATFORMS

Thursday, October 18, 2018
University of Maryland, College Park
Marie Mount Hall
Maryland Room (0100)

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<tr>
<th>START TIME</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00 AM</td>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>Participants arrive; breakfast and coffee</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30 AM</td>
<td>9:40 AM</td>
<td>Introduction to the pre-conference: agenda and aims</td>
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<td>9:40 AM</td>
<td>10:10 AM</td>
<td>Engage with pre-submitted position statements</td>
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<td>10:10 AM</td>
<td>10:20 AM</td>
<td>Overview of Black Collections and Collecting</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Rebecca Hankins</td>
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<td>10:20 AM</td>
<td>10:30 AM</td>
<td>“Umbra Search and its Future(s)”</td>
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<td>Dr. Cecily Marcus</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30 AM</td>
<td>10:50 AM</td>
<td>“Context and completeness: Conceptual tools for thinking about digital collections”</td>
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<td>Dr. Katrina Fenlon</td>
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<td>10:50 AM</td>
<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td>Synthesizing discussions so far</td>
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<td>11:00 AM</td>
<td>11:15 AM</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<td>11:15 AM</td>
<td>11:35 AM</td>
<td>Discussion Round</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:15 PM</td>
<td>12:30 PM</td>
<td>Agree on Action Items</td>
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Appendix C: Community-contributed Position Statements

Position statements have been lightly edited for clarity and to facilitate discussion. All contributions are shared under an open culture Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License by their creators.

- How can Black digital collections and platforms respond to Professor Amy Earhart’s call to reinvigorate the digital canon and to assert the importance of including black studies in cultural heritage data and in digital scholarship?

- Are the sources of funding digitization of collections in our best interest? Is it long-term funding—how can we sustain these resources? – Kellee E. Warren

- How do we address problems of decontextualization in digital collections? – Kellee E. Warren

- How might we think about when and how to standardize across institutions or at least be more in alignment? – Kellee E. Warren

- We need a collective platform not just for harvesting collections metadata, but for hosting, describing, sharing and sustaining digital collections? How can we use our individual areas of strength to create it? – Erin White

- What might be some guiding practices to help sustain and promote community-held archives in ways that are true partnerships that do not appropriate or exploit community members? – Erin White

- Digital access to black collections is one central and highly significant piece of accessibility, but beyond this, what are some ways we might engage the public[s]? – Amaka Okechukwu

- How might we support struggling Black archives/museum spaces with this kind of platform? How might we facilitate collaboration through this kind of platform? – Amaka Okechukwu

- What is the relationship of the digital (which is kind of ubiquitous) and place, and Black place in particular? – Amaka Okechukwu
What are some specific strategies for building digital capacity in collections with smaller staff who are often stretched in multiple directions? — Joe Thompson

The literacy of the 21st century is the quest for and utilization of digitization. The ability to access primary source materials online and run huge chunks of information through filters expedites the amount of ground covered by aspiring and seasoned scholars, as well as, lay persons. I applaud the technology and embrace it from a researcher’s perspective - this vast “new” way of engaging information. However, the polluted atmosphere within the academy and larger society infects and affects the - who, what, where, when, why and how of managing, curating and interpreting information which is more than a one-dimensional element of the human story. The rush to digitization seemingly abandons or neglects the long-term analog method of keeping records in “spaces/places” that are historically/currently challenged - yet which have maintained as complete a record as possible. In brief, digital imperialism for the sake of access is a taut and wobbly tightrope suspended between two poles. A desire to share openly and the benefits of new patrons investing in “knowing” all the while suspended over a chasm of virulent racism, lack of equitable partnerships/representation and myopic cultural competency. This is an enigmatic quandary with irreparable outcomes. How might we begin to navigate these issues – Ida Jones

What are some specific ways in which Black digital collections and platforms can help us explore the intersections between capital, the state, academy, and activism (both historical and contemporary)?

What are some specific ways in which Black digital collections and platforms can help us explore Black memory?

What are some specific ways in which Black digital collections and platforms can help us explore the information professions as a conduit for human liberation?

What are some specific ways—and what might be some best practices—for exchanging information about technical and subject expertise among digital humanities practitioners? – Carol Rudisell

What are some ways that our ability to collaborate through digital collections and platforms might inform individual institutions’ collecting decisions regarding materials about Black people?

How might we employ a collections-as-data framework with Black collections?
How might we make data curation and storytelling foundational to our digital collection efforts?

What are some creative ways to digitize collections and get them out to the public?

What is some of the critical infrastructure that can link similar projects (i.e. relating to slavery or transcriptions) together? How might we get some of this infrastructure built?

What are some ways that those working on similar projects (i.e. relating to slavery or transcriptions) can talk to each other about the challenges that each had as they undertook such projects?

What kinds of additional information and what kinds of visualizations or maps might make the directory of Black digital projects more useful for seeing density or gaps that collection development might address?
Appendix D: Community Notes

This is a shared notes document. This activity is governed by the AADHum Conference Statement of Values (aadhum.umd.edu/conference/values).

DISCUSSION OF POSITION STATEMENTS

» HBCU desire to be part of digital landscape; importance of equitable partnerships that are mutually beneficial; sustainability of soft money investments and efforts;

» Projects situated in historically white institutions and what impact that has on the project; how the project acknowledges histories of racism at its institution

» Black digital platforms and Black memory; physical materials, digitization, technology and storytelling; tech can be confounding; requirements of digital literacy to use the digital collections

» Honor and share resources between HBCUS and PWIs;

» Specific steps around partnerships coming forward

REBECCA HANKINS—ON BLACK COLLECTIONS

» NHPRC Commission’s initiative on how to get more institutions of many sizes (small, medium) that don’t generally apply for grants to apply;

» Ways of getting new communities of grantees

» How do we get larger institutions to collaborate with smaller ones, and vice versa;

» Forms of assistance:
  - Fiscal sponsorship and sub grants?
  - Other
  - Forms of outreach and support to write grants?
  - Encourage new people to be readers of proposals

» California Rare Book School (2015) focus on documenting and administering African American collections to make connections and see what other institutions are doing
• How to find donors to bring their collections to institutions, with understanding of the process and needs of administering collections; how to invite donors to invest in the accessibility of their collections
• Talking to donors about backlogs
• Ethical collecting around community needs and histories; where should papers go; how do institutional histories have an impact on longevity of collections;
• Relationships with donors and institutional changes/staff turnover; keeping promises
• How do we get our materials into a pipeline of institutions; advocating for Black collections to be in that pipeline
• List of experts we can create to send NHPRC/NEH/IMLS to be asked to read
• Importance of discussing sustainability in a realistic way
• Developing roster of experts through hashtags (Rutgers)

CECILY MARCUS—UMBRA SEARCH AFRICAN AMERICAN HISTORY

• How is the sustainability of one project or initiative is linked to another
• Institutional commitment to maintain a site; showing statistics, making case of impact
• Archives of 501c3s another non-academic organizations; how to partner with academic institutions that do have the mission and bandwidth to do that (Congressional Black Caucus Foundation)
• Tweets, emails, etc and how to capture
• Funding sources of funding and labor for these partnerships and new ways to communicate?
• Internships and student engagement to help move collections forward
• Finding consistency across collections
• Extending value of collections

KATRINA FENLON

Slides: hcommons.org/deposits/item/hc:21325

• Conceptual tools for thinking about collections
• Thinking about context and completeness as critical to success and sustainability of digital collections
IMLS digital collections and content program (IMLS DCC)

- Aggregation that is purposeful rather than opportunistic
- Looking at the uniqueness of digital collections

Context as relationships within and among collections; items, external resources; stories; implemented in different ways and with diff impacts

- Item: Collection
- Collection: Collection
- Collection: Platform

Levels of context:

- Ways to assert meaning through selection and curation; recontextualizing them to build a story
  - Storytelling
  - Links back to original source collections
- Collection to collection relationships
- How to present sources (Civil Rights Digital Library): in an event; browsing through collection information
- Item: Derivative
  - How to integrate coded metadata
  - RDF that documents relationships between entities
- Item: All the ways it’s used (narratives, timelines, exhibits, etc.)

How context plays out:

- Choice of content
- How it’s represented
- What are the underlying technical schema being used
- Navigation, hyperlinking
- Design—foregrounding and juxtaposition

How much context is enough?

- How to add scaffolding: DPLA guides for different kinds of uses (genealogy, students, etc.)
Collection objectives
- Finding
- Collocating
- Choice
- Acquisition
- Navigation
- Discovery and access
- Making social change;
- Developing a more complete record;
- Recover stories;
- Gather new evidence (crowdsourcing transcription; oral histories),
- Publishing

Digital collections support all of these things, though not everyone has to do all of it.

**TYPES OF COLLECTIONS**

- Some collections aim to be definitive sources
- Some aim to provide representative sources surrounded by context
- Some have a more specific goal of making one particular project complete
- What does it mean to be complete
  - What are you striving for? What is the ideal of completeness? What would that mean for your collection and your users?
- What is contextual mass: system of interrelated sources where different sources and materials work together. Not critical mass but contextual mass—prioritizing relationships, connections, context, rather than amount
  - Balancing thematic coherence with diversity of sources
- Redefining completeness
  - Role of architecture and design
— Equitable description and importance with African American collections
— How you look at data and provide context for data and source documentation

FIRST TAKEAWAYS

▶ Work of smaller institutions working together equitably; who brings institutions together
▶ Critical mass vs. context
▶ HBCU equitable partnerships; analog, trust building
▶ Collections and priorities of larger efforts—how to address
▶ Non-institutional voices
▶ Context—how much is enough? What is too much?
▶ Incompleteness and how to represent it
▶ How to teach collections through a lens of context and completeness
▶ How we ensure we have intergenerational conversations as move toward digital
▶ How to be inclusive to everyone
▶ How to think about objectives of a project, rather than just the urgency and excitement
▶ Contextual mass in analog collections; how to work with those who aren’t at the digital table
▶ Tensions between discovery and access and making social change
▶ How to explore profession for human liberation
▶ Power of diverse spaces and importance of putting faces to names and expertise/resources
▶ Equitable partnerships and what works; what makes them difficult; how funders can support that parts that are difficult
▶ Sustainability and relationship to impact—how it’s meeting a demand; how to translate into an argument
▶ How funding institutions can carve out money to recovering history
▶ Path to documenting the movement collectively; imperative to enact social change through documents and interpretation, but also through the people doing the work (student voices & more)
▶ How to support community archives—partnerships and how to encourage ethical and appropriate partnerships, how to structure review process for evaluation
> Born digital material and corporate ownership of our email, tweets, etc.; ethics of cataloging social media
> Hidden collections and how to bring them into the digital; how to make things differently accessible
> Decontextualization in digital context/lost in aggregation; is everything for everybody? How to create levels of access
> Critical race theory and place in our work around access and discovery, intention
> Control and discovery—how to apply new material in different forms of access, not just the same materials
> Supporting the research and curriculum with digital projects
> What collaboration looks like—what can we do, what are we really talking about
> After the one-off project, what comes next; how to better curate digital content and work with educational partners
> Magnification of questions of context (or its lack) in large aggregation like DPLA; what happens with contextualization, what happens with users work with materials without guidance from curators, archivists, scholars, etc.; how partnerships are represented
> Challenges of being within institutions—collections at scale and how authority obscures knowledge
> Opportunity and potential with collaboration; how to create transformation of historical understanding and what is already known
> How to take huge collections (600 boxes) and connect to other related collections that would actually make something more complete; how to know what is at other institutions
> How to think about collection scope to be more inclusive
> Commodification of collections and how it has an impact on less resourced collections that cannot purchase collections; perception of value from cost

**QUESTIONS FOR FINAL DISCUSSION ROUND**

> How to demand, create, and support equitable partnerships and collaborations?
> What are the conditions of success for sustainability and first steps towards sustainability?
> How to think about control of collections and honor the work and investment of Black spaces? Including analog, digital, and national digital Black platforms
SUSTAINING EQUITABLE PARTNERSHIPS

➤ Meaning of equitable
  ➤ historical context(s)
  ➤ Returning stolen resources, acknowledging how they were stolen and by who

➤ Non custodial models for equitable partnerships
  ➤ Is it non-custodial if you have the digital surrogates?
  ➤ How to navigate the inequity of resources

➤ Joint curriculum in the classroom with representative from community and institutions

➤ How to avoid quasi non custodial arrangements that don’t benefit the community from which the collections come?

➤ Good examples:
  ➤ Example of Anna Julia Cooper collaboration between Howard and Penn State—articulating and living up to benefits for each institution—who pays for what, where the materials are housed, where the digital is displayed, where the description happens. See dh.howard.edu/ajcooper and the Anna Julia Cooper Society www.annajuliacoopersociety.com
  ➤ Being mindful of history of pain and damage that the institution has caused—how to bridge personal relationships and institutional resources and histories; positionality and acknowledgement of history
  ➤ Community archiving at Arizona State
  ➤ Archives in a backpack at UNC

➤ Return resources to other institutions. Some resources are stolen.

➤ Should the materials in certains institutions be “housed” there?

➤ Options for different places to “house” materials, digitally and physically.

➤ Asking the community what they need vs. doing what you think they need

➤ Empowering communities to maintain their own libraries
  ➤ There are models for success in this regard.
  ➤ Support the best practices
- SAA—protocol for Native American Materials (handling and dealing with those collections):
  www2.archivists.org/statements/saa-council-endorsement-of-protocols-for-native-american-
  archival-materials
- Non-custodial—work with communities that don’t have digital materials. (Keeping them in the
  communities where they were created).

  ▶ More examples:
  - People’s Archive of Police Violence: www.archivingpoliceviolence.org
  - Joint classrooms (community, instructor, and student). Students to see microaggressions with
    push back against “surrendering of materials.” (potential for instructor to mediate conversation).
  - Architecting Sustainable Futures: Exploring Funding Models in Community-Based Archives
    medium.com/community-archives/architecting-sustainable-futures-exploring-funding-models-in-
    community-based-archives-da9a7a856cbe
  - UC Irvine, community partnerships. Community archive program. Training people on how to
    maintain their own archives: ocseaa.lib.uci.edu/community_archives

WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS OF SUCCESS FOR SUSTAINABILITY AND FIRST STEPS TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY?

  ▶ Importance of policy and best practices/standards for digital preservation
  ▶ Priorities of content for digitization; decisions about what is put out first to feed possibility of doing
    more next
  ▶ Collective cases about use and sustainability –broadening argument about use—not just quantitative
    but also qualitative
  ▶ Changing what people want?
  ▶ Is sustainability about engagement, programming, awareness, not just digital growth and/or change?
  ▶ How to tell your story and making the most of all the materials at your disposal
  ▶ Allocations can be changed
  ▶ How can students find where all the archives are, and where to find out about them
  ▶ Howard University’s long-term digital preservation policy. Lost access to older files/materials.
  ▶ Dedicate continuing resources to digital infrastructure and projects. Integration of digital
    technology further develops what people are already doing.
Equitable partnerships can feed sustainable investments.

Priorities in the content that is being developed. Most used. What is being put out? Is the context relevant? Is it on researcher’s radar?

How can we make a pitch for the value of the work we do with qualitative and quantitative analytics?

Alternative metrics can include that communicates value: How you tell your story? Discuss your packet when you go up for tenure.

MORE RESOURCES

- Archivists Against History Repeating Itself Collective: www.archivistsagainst.org
- People’s Archive of Police Violence in Cleveland: www.archivingpoliceviolence.org
- Emerging Archival Scholars Program aeri2015.umd.edu/about-easp (contact Tonia Sutherland, tsuther@hawaii.edu)

NEXT STEPS

- Developing register of Black Collections
- Developing register of expertise for reviews and other work
- Mentoring list
- Inform colleagues
- How DPLA can support other projects
- Mentorship for professional development
- Template sharing—do it!
- Digitize and datafy records of slavery in Maryland—how to connect to related projects, data sets, etc.
- How to form strategic partnerships within this group
- Be an IMLS peer reviewer, NEH, NHPRC, etc. send an email and express interest
- Online forum or space to continue conversation in library, archives, and black spaces
- Non-exploitative partnerships and sustainability
- Using resources we have to the best of our abilities
- Connecting people to projects together
Digital platform for conversation

Share grant proposals and ethical considerations, workflows around metadata, transcription, etc.

ASAHL library group—2019 theme of Black Migration, submit

asalh.org/asalhs-2019-theme-black-migrations

Publish!