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THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO INSTITUTIONAL REPOSITORIES

**EDITED BY
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Contents

PART I: PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

1	Starting an Institutional Repository	3
	LEO STEZANO	
2	Communicating Value and Building Relationships	19
	HARRISON INEFUKU	
3	Integrating Publishers' Policies and Institutional Repository Workflows	35
	IAN HARMON AND MARIYA MAISTROVSKAYA	
4	The Deposit Policy	51
	<i>Balancing Content Goals and Ingest Control</i>	
	DAVID B. LOWE AND CHARITY K. M. STOKES	
5	Name Authority Control in Repositories	61
	CHARITY K. M. STOKES AND DAVID B. LOWE	
6	Identifying Policy Trends in Institutional Repositories	73
	CHRISTY SHOREY AND ERIN JEROME	

PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

PART I

- 7 | Undergraduate Student Work in the Institutional Repository** 87
STEPHANIE DAVIS-KAHL
- 8 | Staffing and Workflow for Institutional Repositories** 95
STEPHEN CRAIG FINLAY
- 9 | Creating Metadata for Institutional Repositories** 107
SCOTT OPASIK
- 10 | Copyright and Institutional Repositories** 117
BENJAMIN KEELE
- PART II: CASE STUDIES**
- 11 | Crafting an Institutional Repository Policy** 133
REBEKAH KATI
- 12 | Creating and Implementing a Successful Open-Access Policy** 145
A European Perspective
DAVID BALL
- 13 | Testing Open-Source Institutional Repository Software** 155
AMY LEIGH ALLEN
- 14 | A Digital Project as Community Outreach** 165
A New Way of Approaching Metadata
PATRICIA M. DRAGON, AMANDA VINOGRADOV, AND HEATHER M. WHITE
- 15 | Faculty Outreach with the Content Liberation Project** 175
JENNIFER SOLOMON AND REBEKAH KATI

About the Contributors 185

Index 191

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14

A Digital Project as Community Outreach

A New Way of Approaching Metadata

In early 2016 the city of Greenville, North Carolina, held open forums addressing the plans to redesign the city's "Town Common," Greenville's most visible civic space, which consists of twenty acres of open parkland adjacent to the Tar River. The plans included a tower to memorialize the Sycamore Hill Missionary Baptist Church, a historic African American church that was displaced when the park was originally constructed in the 1960s, but the plan still neglected a large section of the area's history. It became apparent that our city was naive about the larger story, which was one of urban renewal displacing an entire African American community on the site, a neighborhood known as "Downtown." With funding in part by a North Carolina Arts Council Grant, East Carolina University's Joyner Library spearheaded a community engagement project with the goal of documenting this missing piece of our city's history. The project built upon many years of work in developing strong relationships between the library and the local African American community. The grant project was ultimately called "Beyond Bricks and Mortar: Revisiting the Sycamore Hill Community," and it also included a traveling exhibition and a public celebration. In December 2016, former residents of "Downtown"

were photographed near the site of their former homes and participated in oral history interviews. Notably, during this fieldwork many of the residents came with portraits of family members and photographs of their former homes. A Community Scanning Day held two months later aimed to preserve these items and, with their owners' permission, include them in the Joyner Library's digital repository.

LITERATURE REVIEW

David Gwynn (2016), in his paper "Community Connections, Community Collections," notes that community engagement, long a province of public libraries, has in recent years received increasing attention in the academic library world. Gwynn notes that "[l]ibraries are . . . drawn to collaborative projects because of increased external funding opportunities, enhanced collection synergies and credibility, and a sense of community obligation" (88). This growing attention to community engagement has stimulated a corresponding increase in scholarship in this area. Like Gwynn's paper, much of the scholarship, for instance Shell-Weiss, Benefiel, and McKee (2017) and Vandeburgt and Rivera (2016), focuses on collaboration between libraries, community organizations, and local historical societies that already maintain archival collections. The types of projects these papers describe are very different from our project, in which library staff communicated directly to private individuals who have materials to share.

The intensely personal nature of the communication that occurred at the scanning day reflects the goals of community archives described by Michelle Caswell in her 2014 paper "Seeing Yourself in History: Community Archives and the Fight against Symbolic Annihilation." According to Caswell, "Symbolic annihilation . . . describes what happens to members of marginalized groups when they are absent, grossly under-represented, maligned, or trivialized [by media outlets or historical repositories]" (Caswell, 2014, 27). Such an "annihilation," were it allowed to continue, would match the actual physical one that occurred to "Downtown" by neglecting to preserve its history while the people who used to live in it are still alive. Community archives projects can elaborate on or correct the "dominant stories of the past" by letting the public know that archives are not solely concerned with famous people of the past (Caswell, 2014, 32). The library staff at Community Scanning Day were in the unusual position of allowing "radical empathy" to inform their work. Radical empathy is "a learned process of direct and deep connection between the self and another that emphasizes human commonality through 'thinking and feeling into the minds of others'" (Caswell and Cifor, 2016, 30). While infrequently held as an organizing principle of archives, such empathy is, according

to Caswell, necessary to develop a foundation for the relationship between the library and the community.

Such a relationship can aid a community by enabling the long-term preservation of their materials, but it also aids the library by enriching its collections, both in the near term and possibly long into the future. In the words of Lila Teresa Church (2011), it is "a way to plant seeds of goodwill that may subsequently spring forth with a yield in your favor" (3). Church specifically addresses the challenges involved in documenting African American community history, and in particular the importance of building trust through relationships. "Past experiences of being exploited, undervalued, and disrespected" can make it more difficult for "archivists at majority-white repositories to gain trust in certain instances" (Church, 2011, 6). In planning an event like Community Scanning Day, Joyner Library's goals were to further the establishment of trust and above all, not to reexploit a community that had already suffered disrespect.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The neighborhood known to residents as "Downtown" was also frequently referred to as the Sycamore Hill community, due to the historical importance of the Sycamore Hill Missionary Baptist Church. The church was founded in 1860, and the church building was constructed in 1917 with community funds. Most of the houses, businesses, schools, and churches in this area were built and owned by African American residents, who still speak of the area and its accomplishments with pride. As noted by former resident Alton Ray Harris, "Everything we needed was right here. We had a supermarket call Spain's. We had our own little shoe store. We had Dr. Battle. We had a Black dentist. We had Black lawyers. Everything was right here" (Harris, 2016).

In the 1960s, the city of Greenville's Shore Drive Redevelopment Plan resulted in the eventual displacement of most of the buildings in the Downtown community, and the destruction of most of the buildings in the area. The Sycamore Hill Missionary Baptist Church burned down in 1969 in what many former residents believe was an act of arson (Barber, 2017). Many former residents believe that the Shore Drive Redevelopment Plan specifically targeted them as an African American community (City of Greenville, 2010, 11). They point to the redevelopment plan and the resulting community displacement as having a continued negative effect on them personally, as well as their families. Eleanor Grimes Howard described the hardships that particularly affected elderly residents: "It was very hard on the older people. . . . We had some beautiful homes here, and a lot of people owned their homes, and most of them were widow women. It was very hard on a lot of them, very hard" (Howard,

Grimes, and Powell, 2016). Particularly hurtful is the lack of acknowledgment of the former community's existence in the redeveloped area.

JOYNER LIBRARY

The J. Y. Joyner Library is located on the main campus of East Carolina University (ECU), a large public university in Greenville, North Carolina. Through strong partnerships with libraries, educators, and the community, Joyner Library serves as a catalyst for positive change in eastern North Carolina. The “Beyond Bricks & Mortar” project furthered the mission of the library to acquire and preserve unique collections, including those documenting regional history and culture (Joyner Library Strategic Framework, 2017–22). The library’s Special Collections primarily houses collections pertaining to North Carolina history, including the Greenville Urban Renewal Files, 1959–1977. This collection contains the records of the Redevelopment Commission of the City of Greenville, which are largely related to the Shore Drive Redevelopment Plan. Some of the collection’s materials have been digitized and made available online in ECU’s Digital Collections repository. The Greenville Urban Renewal Files show the city’s perspective, but the collection does not include people’s stories of how this program impacted them.

The intent of Community Scanning Day was to act as a counterweight to the Urban Renewal Files. It completes the story by adding a new point of view to the library’s collection. Without the participation of former residents in the metadata creation process during this event, the library would not have had crucial information about this period of Greenville history.

COMMUNITY SCANNING DAY

The idea for a Community Scanning Day event came from the desire to ask people to share their materials rather than give them to the repository. It was a one-day event held on Saturday, March 4, 2017, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the fellowship hall of the relocated Sycamore Hill Missionary Baptist Church. Holding the event at the church was a strategic decision on the part of the event organizers to bring the event to a place where the target audience was accustomed to gathering, in the hope of increasing participation over the level that would have been expected had we chosen to host the event in the library on campus, a few miles away.

The large room was set up with a rectangular welcome table, three six-foot round meeting tables with chairs, a scanning station with equipment and tables, and a rectangular exit table. There were also several round tables

with chairs set in a corner, bearing snacks, water, and juice. The workflow was designed so that community members would be able to see exactly where their materials were at all times, even once they had left their hands. Since they would be entrusting us with material of great sentimental value, the primary concern was for transparency so that they would be comfortable temporarily sharing their materials with library staff while the digital surrogates were being made.

When community members entered the room, they were greeted at the welcome table by library staff they knew through previous community meetings and projects. They signed in and were given a number that was used to keep track of their materials. They were then escorted to one of the three meeting tables where two-person library staff teams were seated. The two-person teams were made up of a cataloger and a Special Collections staff member so that there would be someone familiar with the metadata forms, as well as someone more experienced with talking to library users and curating archival material. The teams of two also enabled a more natural conversation to ensue, because one person could take notes while the other engaged the community member in conversation.

The Special Collections team member briefly described the ECU Digital Collections. Laptops were set up in the room to allow community members to view examples of material in the Digital Collections. The Special Collections staff member also explained copyright options. Project staff wanted to ensure that people understood the entire process and their property rights. The participants were given the option of whether or not to allow their materials to be added to the ECU Digital Collections. Scans of the material would be made for the community member either way. During this discussion, they were asked to sign a release form allowing their materials to be scanned. No one refused to share their materials online, and all readily agreed to have their scanned items put into the ECU Digital Collections.

The cataloging staff member at each table filled out a metadata form for each item while participating as best they could in the conversation about the materials. The form provided a guide for discussion about the materials. It was preprinted with an item number, and contained areas for a title, date, creator, type, format, dimensions, and description, including any context about the people, places, or events. Project staff were initially worried that people might be reticent to talk, but they found that everyone loved telling the stories behind their items and their family history. Each metadata form was kept with the corresponding item. At the end of the discussion, all of a community member’s materials and forms were placed together in a plastic bin, with an inventory form and a release form on top. The inventory form provided a brief title for each item and helped to keep all of each person’s materials together. An important goal of the project was to ensure that each person’s materials

were returned to them without any confusion over what belonged to whom. Once the discussion was complete, the participants were directed over to the corner waiting area to enjoy a snack and beverage, and were told that someone would find them once their items had finished being scanned.

Library staff were able to transport three scanners to the site, including one large overhead scanner. They organized the materials based on which scanner would be the best fit for them. In addition to the materials, they also scanned the corresponding metadata form so that all of the information was kept together digitally. Once the scanned files were complete, they were saved to a flash drive, which was placed in the bin. The bins were handed to the exit table, and the people were located so that their materials could be returned to them, along with the flash drives. Joyner Library's preservation and conservation staff were stationed near the exit table to talk with community members about their materials. They were able to quickly show people the best way to care for their materials and discuss some of the best options for storing them.

A total of six community members brought materials for scanning. A few days after the event, project staff held a plus/delta meeting to discuss the day. While all agreed that those who visited seemed pleased, the staff expressed disappointment at the small number of people who turned out. A good deal of thought had been put into planning for crowds and managing large numbers of materials, but as it happened, this was not an issue. Project staff had many ideas for changes that might bring more people in next time, including planning the event for later in the day, scheduling appointments for people to bring in their items, or holding the event in coordination with community events such as church services and school reunions. The staff also agreed that a more descriptive name for the event was needed. While "Community Scanning Day" is meaningful to the library community, a name that invokes preserving and sharing your community and family history might have been more of a draw. The staff working at the welcome table said that several community members stopped by empty-handed, commenting that they were unsure that their family materials were worth scanning. For the future, it was noted that early conversations and reassurance with participants would be helpful. Project staff agreed, however, that for a first attempt at something like this, the day had been a success. The greatest return from the day's efforts came from community members seeing the library as a community partner and collaborator.

METADATA CONSIDERATIONS

After the scanning day event, the cataloging process began. The discussions with the community members had a big impact on catalogers' ability to

provide meaningful metadata. This situation was in contrast to the sparse information a cataloger often has when describing digital archival material. When faced with photographs of unknown people or unidentified places, the cataloger will usually construct a description based solely on what they see; for example, perhaps a date could be approximated from the style of an automobile or clothing. But in our project, for example, a photograph of a little girl near some bushes with houses and a 1950s-era car in the background was greatly illuminated by the conversation we had with the older brother of the girl pictured. Because of that conversation, we know the name of the girl, the approximate date, whose house is in the background of the photo, and we know that it was a large house with a front porch. We have the address of the former house, which could be matched up with a map. The discussions with community members helped the catalogers decide what is important to note, by providing a context for the materials.

For instance, is it important to note that the little girl in the photo is African American? Knowing that the photo documents an African American neighborhood which had been destroyed would lead the cataloger to consider this information important, and thus to include it in the description. Without the context provided by the owner of the materials, this would have been hard to say.

Multiple community members on Community Scanning Day mentioned that many people in that neighborhood had owned their own homes and taken pride in their appearance. This is in contrast to how the city viewed the neighborhood as an area to be cleaned up. The photographs document houses that are no longer there precisely because they were deemed substandard or expendable. The photographs capture a moment in time, but context provides the knowledge of what happened to that house and the girl's neighborhood subsequently, and why. Someone who knew the house and recalls that it had a large front porch where people used to gather, is able to evoke the comfortable neighborliness and simple pleasures that community members told us about. So the community members brought important context and meaning that are really part of the photo. In a sense, there is a difference between cataloging one image of the house, which is a photo from the Redevelopment Commission of the City of Greenville (<https://digital.lib.ecu.edu/50403>), and cataloging another image of it, which is a photo brought to an oral history interview (<https://digital.lib.ecu.edu/50494.6>). The photos are of the same street and the same house, but the context is completely different. One is a photo of a house marked for destruction. The other is a keepsake of the family home of times past. The first photo is devoid of context – it is merely a high-resolution scan of the original. The second shows the hands of the individual who lived there, holding the photo. It provides an immediate, tangible connection between the object and the humans who lived there. Here the community member is really framing the item with their story.

The terminology used to describe these items takes on extra importance because the items are connected to a historical injustice. This situation can be difficult to navigate for metadata staff who are inherently removed from the context of the items they are describing. This is where the radical empathy engendered by discussions with the record owners affected the cataloging process. Caswell (2016) writes: "In making descriptive choices, the archivist should ask, what language would the creator use to describe the records?" (34). Many of imposing external viewpoints, catalogers tried as much as possible to use the language used by community members themselves in talking about their materials. For instance, the area encompassing the former Sycamore Hill neighborhood is referred to by the city in recent marketing campaigns as "Uptown Greenville." Sycamore Hill community residents, however, continue to refer to this area as "Downtown." Some members of the community harbor some resentment over the rebranding, which they perceive as adding insult to the injury done to their community. Consequently, in catalog descriptions the area has been called "Downtown" in an attempt to use the terminology of the community members.

Of course, there is one area in which local terminology policies have less sway, and that is in the application of Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH). The value of the LCSH is that they collocate items addressing a particular concept under a single term, but no vocabulary is value-free in its choice of terms or its identification of concepts. The program which led to the destruction of the Sycamore Hill neighborhood is generally known as an urban renewal program. The LCSH includes the term "Urban renewal," which was applied to all items added to the ECU Digital Collections related to the Sycamore Hill neighborhood. The problematic nature of this terminology for residents was exemplified by Linda Daniels Coleman, who traveled from out of town to participate in an oral history interview. Daniels recalled: "I can remember, I was 12 years old and I had spent the summer in Scotland Neck and I came back home and I saw all of these signs that said 'Vote for Urban Renewal' and then I saw signs that said 'Vote against Urban Renewal.' And so I went home and I asked my mom, 'Who is this man, Urban Renewal, that people wanted people to vote for?'" (Crandell, Coleman, and Dudley, 2016). The term "urban renewal" may be a jarringly positive term for what some consider to have been a very negative experience; it is a term that disguises its true meaning in connotations of cleaning and freshening up. The term's application is all the more difficult given the intimate connection that community members had to their materials. While useful to collocate these materials with others dealing with similar subjects, the subject heading itself does not describe the full content of these materials.

CONCLUSION

A proverb popularized by Chinua Achebe says that "until the lions have their own historians, the history of the hunt will always glorify the hunter" (Achebe, 1994). Our community engagement, equity-focused project provided community members with a platform and voice to document their history, which would otherwise have remained missing from the historical narrative. In response to the library's work, a redesigned plan was approved by the Greenville City Council that included creating the "Sycamore Hill Gateway Plaza" (Johnson, 2019). This plaza commemorating the entire Downtown community was designed by the renowned architect Zena Howard, who is known for leading the design of the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, DC. Joyner Library has been awarded a North Carolina Humanities Council Grant to continue this work. As an expansion of the "Beyond Bricks and Mortar" project, the new grant focuses on empowering the community through additional interviews, exhibitions, and public workshops, which put documentation tools in the hands of the community members themselves. Joyner Library metadata staff continue to contribute to the project as needed. Ultimately, the project has had a positive impact on the residents, library staff, and local community as a whole, while furthering the library's mission to celebrate and preserve the life stories, art, and images that represent the regional culture of eastern North Carolina.

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15 Faculty Outreach with the Content Liberation Project

In January 2016, the faculty of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-Chapel Hill) adopted an open access policy, which encouraged faculty members to deposit their articles in the Carolina Digital Repository (CDR). The UNC-Chapel Hill Libraries' Open Access Implementation Team was then charged with increasing the amount of content in the CDR and raising faculty awareness of the university's new open-access policy and author rights issues. In this chapter, we will discuss the challenges of locating and harvesting content for the repository, the outreach strategies we used with faculty members from diverse departments, and the assessment of the project's overall success. We also share findings from our analysis of the content we collected and recommendations for replicating or scaling up similar projects.

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