SHARE YOUR STORY: COMMUNITY DATA AND CONVERSATION

JENNIFER GARCON, Ph.D.

BOLLINGER FELLOW IN PUBLIC AND COMMUNITY DATA CURATION
UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA LIBRARIES

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE, RADIO PRESERVATION TASKFORCE,
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
As the public and community data curator, my job is to develop and expand models for the care of vulnerable collections of data.

A central component of my work is developing partnerships and strategies that ensure equitable access to data and promote data advocacy.
“The role of the historian is to reveal the past, to discover or at least approximate the truth. Within that viewpoint, power is unproblematic, irrelevant to the construction of the narrative as such. At best, history is a story about power.”

Michel Rolph Trouillot, Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History
My point of departure...

Within the purview of my work at Penn, data curation is used to facilitate greater access to historic records. For under-documented communities, it means offering access to the technology and the expertise to produce and curate digital surrogates and through advising and consultation, improve the preservation condition and expand the life-cycle of materials held within those communities.

This means that I proactively seek to find and/or create digital surrogates to fill existing gaps in archival holding, with the goal of preempting the loss of historic material (either from format or technical obsolescence and/or obscurity).
Race and Ethnicity

Percentage of the total population.

Scope: population of Pennsylvania and Philadelphia

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Philadelphia</th>
<th>Pennsylvania</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>35.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic²</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>42.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed</td>
<td>2.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Count: number of members in ethno-racial group

¹ non-Hispanic    ² excluding black and Asian Hispanics
Report: Philly Is Gentrifying More Than San Francisco, the Poster Child for Displacement

Whether you see that conclusion as a warning or a blueprint probably depends on whether you're a developer.
Addressing the Elephant in the Room: on ethics and stewardship

My approach foregrounds a post-custodial model, meaning that PENN does not seek to take physical possession or assume stewardship of the physical material, rather I am working to create frameworks and practices that can improve the preservation of materials within the communities where they were created and can be of most use.

Your institution may have a complicated relationship with the city and the communities that surround it. It would serve you well to learn that history, and to be intentional and thoughtful about that history when engaging with communities.
Ecosystem Mapping

Great news! You’re not the first person to engage in a project like this.

Ecosystem mapping allows you to see what else is out there, what approaches and methodologies others have taken. Your project will benefit from being in conversation with like-minded initiatives.
My Eco-Map (for Community Data Curation project)

Where to start looking...

- Amongst your colleagues
- Within your library department (Digital Scholarship, special collections, etc.)
- Elsewhere in the library system
- Elsewhere in nearby university systems
- In your city
- Nationally
- Globally

And importantly, IN THIS ROOM.
Where I started out...
Where I ended up...
FIVE MINUTE EXERCISE

SPEND A FEW MINUTES TO MAP YOUR OWN ECOSYSTEM

OUTSIDE YOUR UNIVERSITY

WITHIN YOUR DEPARTMENT

WITHIN YOUR UNIVERSITY
Resource Mapping AKA Identifying Allies

Your institution has abundant resources that can be leveraged toward supporting this work, ensuring its viability, and helping to make it sustainable.

Cross institutional collaboration help to make a project’s scalability and opens up new resources (including funding sources).

Figure out who can serve as an ally, and develop a language for how working together can broaden the impact of the work.
FIVE MINUTE EXERCISE

SPEND A FEW MINUTES TO MAP YOUR OWN ECOSYSTEM
My Partners

Within the Library:
• Community Outreach Librarian
• Digital Strategies (Fine Arts)
• Digital Assets Dept
• Metadata Librarians
• Kislak Center for Special Collections
• Conversation and Preservation Department
• GIS Specialist

Within the University:
• Graduate School of Education
• Africana Studies
• Penn Museum
• Price Digital Humanities Lab
• Anthropology Department
• Alice Paul Center

Within the City:
• Pennsylvania Area Consortium of Special Collection Libraries (PACSCL)
• Free Library
• School District of Philadelphia
• Archivist for Black Lives Matter, Philly Branch
• Black Writer’s Museum
• Germantown Historical Society
Tenets of Relationship Building

1. Understand your capacity and make promises only within those limits
2. Listen and center the communities you’re working with
3. Bring resources and support – figure out ways to leverage the resources you have access to for the benefit of under-resourced communities
4. Seek opportunities to expand the scope of the work through collaborations and partnerships
5. Welcome opportunities to refine your own perspectives
6. Remain open to feedback and criticism
7. Recognize your own power, and be intentional in using that power to further the goals of a project (as dictated by the community)
What this looks like in practice....

Possible models (according to institutional capacity and labor):
The Eugenio María de Hostos Archives is a resource and research center that includes a varied collection of books, periodicals, articles, recordings, and research, focusing on Puerto Rican and Latino history in Philadelphia and across the country. Some of these materials are out of print, which makes this a unique resource of information. As the role and population of Latinos have expanded in this region and across the U.S., there has been an increasing demand for data and information on Latino history. These archives is an asset to this community, as well as to the city.
In the 1970, Taller undertook a community oral history project, that spoke to first and second generation Philadelphia residents of Puerto Rican descent.

The project produced approximately 300 audio cassette recordings that reflect the culture and lived experience of Puerto Rican residents in the immediate post-Civil Rights era in Philadelphia.

The tapes were in various states of disarray, and Taller had limited funds to pursue preservation and digitization.
Metadata Schema Examples for Taller Puertorriqueño

Audio:
Title
Date interview was created
Series Title (if any)
Description
Language
Creator (Institution)
Interviewee
Interviewer
Duration
such as photos and the digitized VHS material, having an archival collection management software will help create enhanced finding aids for future collections.

![Digital Life Cycle](image)

Digital Life Cycle

Example of a digital life cycle model, Image from *Digital Project Planning & Management at ARL.*

"High-Level" Project Timeline:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Month</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>01-04</td>
<td>Assign a project manager and other staff responsibilities. Buy equipment and select a third party vendor if appropriate. Install and become familiar with the new technology. Process collection materials for digitization.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04-18</td>
<td>Digitize objects, perform QA, save preservation and access files in the repository</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
William Santiago (Cont.)

I am not necessarily going back.

I see that my plans are different in the sense that I don’t necessarily want to go back to Puerto Rico, that I can live in the United States and be more helpful than I would ever be in Puerto Rico. I can do more in the United States for Puerto Ricans than I could do for Puerto Ricans in Puerto Rico. They have changed in the sense that I feel that what I am studying now isn’t very practical, it’s only something I am doing for my own good but I want to do something, I want to learn a trade that would help people directly, like law, so I may go to law school. I feel I am more needed here. Yes, definitely that’s the major change, that I am not necessarily going to go back, that I won’t feel bad if I don’t. In fact, when I say organizing, what I mean is nation-wise, there are a lot of Puerto Ricans in this country and they are not organized nationally.

I have to understand things for myself.

If I had a project that I could do on my own I would like to do it on the migrant workers in New Jersey. I would like to know exactly what the contracts say, how much of what the contracts say is being done. I would like to know it for my own benefit and to the extent that I can use it, other people can use this in the courts, and the government can use it. I knew Puerto Ricans were being discriminated against and that as a consequence there were ghettos, and I knew that in the ghettos people were having poor education, poor housing, etc., I knew all that. I may have read it in the paper one day, it wasn’t part of my life. Now it is so much part of it. It is not like something I read in the paper, I know what is going on.

Right now in my life I am trying to do a lot of things just because I am interested in them, there may be no practical reason. You see, I don’t have a lot of power at this time, to influence what happens... but right now I have to understand things for myself.

It makes people think about their lives.

A lot of people at the beginning were very cold and reserved and didn’t want to talk too much. After ten minutes they were more open and they were talking. About twenty minutes after entering the interview they would start reflecting on and becoming philosophical about their lives. They’d say “how much is the money” and it hit them that they had lived there many years and had gone through all these things. The interview had made them review their lives, made them re-think what they had gone through and what they were doing now and what they were going to do in the future. So it was like a self-study for them, like therapeutic, it was as if I was the therapist and they were telling me all their problems. It makes people think about their lives. That was the effect that it had both in the people that were interviewed and the interviewer.
Batiendo La Olla

http://os.pennd.org/oralhistorytaller
Unmarking African American history in Philadelphia

By Faye Anderson - January 24, 2019

‘Disappearing Blackness’: The campaign to show how African American history in Philly is being erased

by Valerie Russ, Updated: April 26, 2019

This article originally appeared on PlanPhilly.
Christian Street YMCA

None

July 2, 2018 to July 2, 2018

The Colored YMCA of Philadelphia was organized in 1889 and later was moved to Christian Street in 1914, thus becoming known as Christian Street of YMCA. At this location, it became known as an important social and education center for Black Philadelphia. The location was vital during the Great Migration in which it provided religious instructions, provided lodging for those that moved up North, and provided evening classes. Christian Street YMCA encouraged men and their families to move up North all the while setting up thrift shops and helping people find jobs. With establishing physical education as one of its philosophies, it established several sports clubs including tennis, basketball.
We seek to:

1. **document** processes of community change and displacement through multimodal storytelling
2. **support** community institutions and members in digitally preserving significant historical materials, and
3. **collaborate** with youth and other community members in place-based inquiry and storytelling.

Our pillars:

- Community archiving and preservation
- Interactive mapping
- Filmmaking
- Oral history collection
- Immersive experience
- Place-based inquiry
Why did a shuttered Germantown school sell for a fraction of its value?
Neighbors haven't heard a peep from the developer since he bought the building.

First Look: Inside the new West Lofts at the old West Philadelphia High School
Coworking space, a restored gym, and a coffee shop are also on the way
By Melissa Romero | Jan 30, 2017, 10:30am EST
Do you have prom photos, school yearbooks, or sports memorabilia that you'd like to keep safe for future generations?
West Fest, an intergenerational reunion
Mapping Philadelphia with Philadelphia School District
Data Collection at Odunde
Re/Member Black Philadelphia: a storytelling and community archiving project

SHARE YOUR MEMORIES OF THE MOVE BOMBING.

Remember: MOVE Bombing

We are a team of researchers and activists documenting the experiences of Black people in a changing Philadelphia through storytelling, film, and community archiving.

We are collecting stories and materials related to historical and current events of significance to Black community members, in order to preserve the memories, institutions, and cultures that are in danger of being erased by the ongoing displacement of Black communities.

We would like to hear your experiences related to the MOVE organization and the 1985 bombing of Osage Avenue. With your permission, we will record your responses to a prompt related to these events, which will be included in an online collection of stories about Black Philadelphia. If you are interested, we may also contact you for an interview to learn more about your perspective.

If you have questions, please contact: Dr. Krystal Strong (moment@upenn.edu) and Dr. Jenifer Gardon (gardon@upenn.edu) main

Email address *

Valid email address

This form is collecting email addresses. Change settings

Full Name

Short answer text

Phone Number
Community Data Curation pop-ups, 2019 - 2020

Through this pilot we would proactively seek to create, and/or collect digital surrogates to fill existing gaps in archival holding, with the goal of preempting the loss of historic material (either from format or technical obsolescence and/or obscurity).
Muhammad Speaks

Above: Men's Heart Falling: Fear!

*Website is still in development. We’re using the WAX Minimal Computing platform (https://minicomp.github.io/wiki/)*
Community conversations bring informational professionals in dialogue with community members to information share, lending insight to archival description language.

https://archivesforblacklives.files.wordpress.com/2019/10/ardr_final.pdf
How does all of this inform library practice?

Expand preservation capacity in the surrounding community through outreach, knowledge sharing, and resource sharing.

Investigated new stewardship models for digital and analog materials that plug existing knowledge gaps within our collection, while strengthening our relationship with community stakeholders.

Improved metadata schema and descriptions that make to make collections more viable, visible, and user-friendly through collaborative partnerships.

Fosters deep and thoughtful engagement with multiple communities surround Philadelphia