

those who are wondering how disability intersects with the archival field, as well as a friend and a testimonial connection to those who have lived the experiences within it. — *Matrice Young, University of Iowa*

Andi Gustavson and Charlotte Nunes, eds. *Transforming the Authority of the Archive: Undergraduate Pedagogy and Critical Digital Archives*. Lever Press, 2023. Print/Open access. (ISBN: 978-1-64315-051-2/978-1-64315-052-9)

Andi Gustavson and Charlotte Nunes' collection, *Transforming the Authority of the Archive: Undergraduate Pedagogy and Critical Digital Archives*, is an instructive tool for any librarian or faculty member seeking to strengthen collaborative, critical archival work using digital platforms. While that may be expected from the title, the collection's structure and wide focus also offers insights into the nature of working across and beyond university structures to offer campus and community members meaningful experiences with primary sources. As Gustavson and Nunes note in their introduction, theirs is the first study to date that "provides a comprehensive study of how critical digital archives and archives-based pedagogy interact, inform each other, and even determine new contours in each of these respective fields" (10–11). The collection is ambitious; it offers a constellation of projects and perspectives that approach critical digital archives from many vantage points and centers many different archival collections. Organized into three parts: "Archives and Trauma," "Confronting Institutional Power," and "Beyond the Campus," each chapter offers an overview of the significant theoretical or critical frameworks that inform the project team's work, as well as information about the institutional context in which the projects are—or are not—situated before moving into specific case studies.

Part 1, "Archives and Trauma," situates the work of critical archival studies in the classroom by acknowledging the realities of working with archival materials that are violent and harmful. Its first chapter (Alpert-Abrams and Gustavson) considers the classroom as a site of "radical empathy," providing tools and steps for instructors to frame archival processes and materials so students can feel empowered to grapple with difficult ethical questions about access, absence, and digitization—a theme that continues throughout the collection. The second chapter (Gianluca De Fazio) reflects on archival amnesty and the *Racial Terror: Lynching in Virginia* project at James Madison University and serves as a testament to the power of how challenging the gaps and silences in archives can transform not just the archives, but state policy (73).

The second section, "Confronting Institutional Power," retains a focus on archival silences, gaps, and opportunities. Here, each of the five chapters (as well as the first and second chapters of the third section) feature reflections from individuals who worked on critical digital archives projects as undergraduate students. Former student

researchers are credited as co-authors in all but one of the chapters in this section. Chapter three (Fuentes and Koreman) focuses on the Historical Accountability Student Research Program at Dartmouth, the only Ivy-League institution represented in the collection; it showcases the archival research process in all its complexity while grappling with the gaps in university archives and histories of student life and activism. Chapter four (Armstrong, Nunes, and Wellnitz) outlines the tensions encountered in creating the Queer Archives Project at Lafayette College. The authors discuss strategies for representing the non-linearity of a complicated history of a campus that has not historically been a supportive or safe place for queer students, and the importance of oral histories to this work. Chapter five (Hardesty, Kumbier, and Miller) considers three connected projects that explore zines, a topic that is increasingly popular in academic libraries and humanities classrooms; however, the authors are quick to trouble any simple or reductive history of zines. The authors outline with great care issues of attribution, copyright, digital accessibility, and network analysis that are unique to zines. This chapter offers a useful overview of thoughtful practices for metadata creation for zines, inspired by the xZINECOREz standard developed by zine librarians and archivists (154).

Chapter six (Jones, Rodrigues, Schnepfer, and Wolff) continues the exploration of university archives of student life and activism, this time focused on the work being done at Grinnell College to create digital projects that engage in the histories of student life and protest. The chapter's reflections are helpful for instructors seeking to better understand how to create research experiences that work to empower students, particularly when the research projects concern histories of historically marginalized groups on campuses still grappling with legacies of institutionalized racism, sexism, and oppression. Chapter seven (Nacca and Lang) offers an overview of the work done at the University of Texas at Austin to prepare students to design public online exhibits. I found this chapter's inclusion of sample reflections and prompts very useful to my understanding of the authors' pedagogical goals. Additionally, the author's discussion of their use of Omeka and its various affordances for their project was a useful consideration of the more digital-specific aspects of critical digital archives.

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The final part of the collection, “Beyond the Campus,” includes two chapters that focus on projects not entirely based in university settings. Chapter eight (emswiler) considers the Inside Books Project Archive (IBPA) and provides a moving exploration of the “counter-archive” represented by the IBPA. It does, however, end with a note of warning about barriers that grassroots projects face: IBPA’s Omeka site license was revoked, necessitating a transition to a new domain. Unlike the other chapters in this section, chapter nine (Robinson, Earles, and White) considers the work of HBCUs such as Prairie View A&M University and the unique role that HBCUs often play in “as the primary—in some cases, the only—publicly accessible repositories for the Black experience in the local communities and regions in which they exist” (311). The final chapter (Field) explores another community-based project: the Texas After Violence Project (TAVP) and how undergraduate student interns involved with the project engage with TAVP interviews.

Again, the collection is ambitious. I appreciate that not every chapter can accomplish everything, and that there is a general balance across the collection that honors all three pieces of the collection’s title. While I appreciate the difficulty of maintaining this balance, I would have liked to learn a bit more about the digital specifics of some of the projects. I am also interested, though not surprised, that oral history projects played a relatively large role in many of the projects. Yet I would have liked to know more about the ways in which oral histories and related information—transcripts, contextual statements, etc.—have been presented on digital platforms. The figures included throughout the collection did an excellent job showcasing how various chapters’ critical digital archives projects displayed and described digitized physical materials, but I’m curious about the digitized oral histories or other audiovisual or born-digital materials included in these projects.

As Gustavson and Nunes emphasize in the introduction, the goal of this collection is to offer models of both frameworks and project specifics that colleagues can rework for their own use in other contexts in the effort to transform the authority of the archives. The case study model is exceedingly useful as it provides steps by which other practitioners could implement similar projects in their own institutions. The collection also offers perspectives from a variety of institutions, including two from authors who steward projects that are not primarily affiliated with universities. There is much to learn from this collection, not least because of the wide range of projects that the chapters discuss. I know I will be using keeping my annotated copy of this collection close as I plan my instruction sessions for the semesters ahead, as the work of transforming the authority of the archives becomes ever more imperative. — *Jeanette Schollaert, University of Maryland Libraries*