African American Archival Resources: Representation in North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia

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Introduction

The breadth, scope, security, evaluation, and preservation of African American archival resources in the United States are all understudied. Moreover, the scope and contents of the majority of African American resources are likely unknown. Some proportion of existing materials Africana are presumed held in private homes and private collections with no lending practices or duplicates to share, they are therefore inaccessible. On the other hand, Africana collections in formal archival repositories such as in university library collections, historical societies, and in state, city, or county run archives and museums are typically not fully digitized; and marketing information about their existence may be too slim to alert researchers to their existence. In addition to these issues is the historic issue of slavery and its aftermath, including segregation and accompanying social and political repression of African Americans. The outcomes of these realities include the restriction, physically and in terms of representation, of African Americans from mainstream libraries and state historical societies until the mid-1960s, and omission of documentation of their story from the archives, libraries, and historical societies. These misrepresentations have led to the current problem of fair and accurate representation.

Yet, there is more to consider. Another aspect of the historical backdrop for the current research is that African Americans have experienced complications with traditional identity reinforcement structures due to their constructed non-appearance in the historical record. For years, public school textbooks and the national narrative omitted the African American story, at least from an African American perspective. Like many other subject peoples around the world who, in the aftermath of the world-wide fight against colonialism, did internalize the concept of self-determination, many African Americans have adopted the ideal of determining one's own identity since the international anti-colonial and domestic Civil Rights Movement. This practice is carried out with respect to several of areas of life, including the right to record, protect, design, and preserve their own history.

Historically, African Americans were colonized for the purpose of usurpation of their labor. African American archivists and historians have insisted on interpreting African history from that vein. Namely, reinforcing the reality that African American's experiences in the Americas and Western Hemisphere, generally, revolved around an economic system and economic incentives. These factors were alive in the minds of Africana lay curators in the 1960s and 1970s during the boom of independently-formed Black museums. It is perhaps not too surprising that private Black-run archives and African American museums emerged in droves after the Civil Rights Movement. The goals of these curators and managers were first and foremost to preserve the history of African people, and the right of African people to tell their own narratives. However, many of these curators also knew that historical archival resources and historical narratives bear potential latent economic value, and they reasoned that care should be taken to ensure that colonization of the African American story did not occur. Lay Africana curators at times insulated their collections away from the reach of state and county archives and at times they may have lost opportunities for city and state support. Their efforts to resist the possibility that their collections would fall into the hands of those who would exploit the African image and use Africana documents for their own gain, effectively prohibited collaborations with institutions who would acquire African American holdings. In some cases, financial distress resulted, and some African American museums and archives, funded by the curator's personal income or memberships fell into disrepair within a few decades. Meanwhile, a growing class of professional African American historians and archivists emerged, and these individuals continue to seek the best ways in which to

maintain their people's national and local history, and African Americans' right to tell their story themselves.

Problem Statement and Purpose

The preservation, processing, and accessibility of African American archival materials has been neglected, historically, and despite some advancements, has still not reached the standard or acceptable level of archival resources in the United States. The initial purpose of this study was to compile a record of collections holding primary resources on African Americans in the United States. When the scope of necessary research was considered, it was clear that a comprehensive study would exceed the scope of a master's project. Similarly, the goal of researching archival holdings in the Southeast United States, would require significant funding and other resources, setting this subject outside of the scope of a master's thesis. While both of those projects should and must be done in the future, the current project is much smaller and encompasses a smaller geographical area. The present research is therefore dedicated to conducting research on African American Archival Resources in three states, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. This research builds on earlier work by Linda Simmons-Henry and Lisa Parker, who wrote the 1995 *Guide to African American Documentary Resources in North Carolina* after being commissioned to do so by an organization that formed in the North Carolina research triangle and which went by the title the African American Archives Group. The *NC Guide* provides a model for how individual studies of Africana collections may be conducted in each of the fifty states. Lehman (2007) virtually updated the *NC Guide (*Simmons-Henry & Parker, 1995*)* more recently by assessing the digitalization of the collections described in the Guide.

Thus, the best model to date of a listing of African Resources by state is the *Guide to African American Documentary Resources in North Carolina* (aka the *North Carolina Guide* or *NC Guide*) (Simmons-Henry & Parker, 1995). South Carolina and Georgia were selected to expand on the North Carolina report in part because they each border on North Carolina and because symbolically, the work started in North

Carolina is expanding outward. Historically and culturally, Georgia and South Carolina are considered part of the Deep South, as well as part of the Southeastern United States, a region that is understudied with respect to Africana resources. Moreover, they are part of an area with no regional collection that is equivalent to the Schomburg Center for research in Black Culture, situated in New York City, in terms of scope and size of the collection, funding support, national recognition, or Black leadership. That these regions are centers of African American experience in the U. S., from which African Americans migrated west and north make the hypothesis that there is a depth of history and historical holdings there which has not be tapped, and archival and material resource holdings which are still dissembled and protected, likely. It should be said that such historical documentation of the Africana experience is inaccessible to researchers, but that is not the most important point. More importantly, such resources may be partially hidden from successive generations of African people, who need to experience their entire story as part of the daily narrative of life.

Research Questions

R1. What Africana resources exist in North Carolina (outside of formal repositories)?

R2. What Africana resources exist in Georgia (in formal repositories and within communities)?

R3. What Africana resources exist in South Carolina (in formal repositories and within communities)?

Operational Definitions

- Large collection: defined by this study as over 200 cubic feet
- Medium collection: 50-200 cubic feet
- Small collection: 1-49 cubic feet
- Africana: Pertaining to African American or Diasporic Africans
- Black Museums and Archives: African American repositories in the United States.

Limitations and Assumptions

Research was limited to the English language. It was assumed that historical documents existing in private and formal repositories are authentic representations

or original materials and that materials in the collections are accurate and authentic.

Importance of the Study

This study will add to the body of scholarly research on the existence, scope, type, location, status, security, context, and accessibility of African American and Africana archival holdings in the Southeastern United States.

Literature Review
A Brief History of African American Archives and Museums

In 2007, Lonnie Bunch was busy leading the planning for the National Museum of African American History and Culture which would eventually join other premier American museums on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. As the head of the project he would be called upon to answer why the museum was needed. Why in a pluralistic society that had verified everyone's Civil Rights decades earlier was a national African American museum a sign of racial progress? Was a separate museum advisable? Would integrating the African American story into the broader narrative of American life be more optimal within existing museums? To queries like these, Bunch responded that all Americans should know how African Americans work, intellectual achievements, and culture have contributed and contoured "the identity of the nation" (Heywood, 2007, p. 21).

The recognition by the U.S. Congress that a national museum dedicated to African American life and history was needed arose out of the context of more than one hundred years of independent resource collection and labor by lay African American archivists and a handful of trained African American librarians. The history of collection development by African Americans in the United States is long and should be written. For the purpose of this study, it is sufficient to say that it began during the abolitionist and colonization movements in the mid-1800s. African Americans began organizing personal family collections during the slave era and after emancipation, African American Literary Societies and Churches oftentimes kept the histories of the members and communities they served.

The first formal archives dedicated to African American life developed in the libraries of some historically Black colleges, most of which were founded between 1866 and the turn of the 20th century. Like other ethnic groups in America, African Americans' concern for preservation of their past was expressed through displays of their contributions to education, business, arts and sciences in public exhibits and despite resistance, they displayed their contributions to society at the World Fairs that spanned the hundred-year period from 1895-1995. Wilson (2007) relays that it was the Black professional-class men and women such as Ida b. Wells and Booker T. Washington whose ideas on history made its preservation paramount, culminating in the founding of historically Black colleges (HBCUs) and independent Black-run museums and archives.

Meyerowitz (2001) observed the formation of African art museums after the American Civil Rights Movement as active statements of rejections of white art museums and mainstream critics who used white-identified standards to evaluate African art. African American curators challenged cultural supremacy, racism, and disparate visions of the aesthetic in building places for Black art. These trends in art, which began in the Harlem Renaissance and sprung forth with an ideology of self-determination in the 1960s, had a counterpart. The dual side of the Black Arts Movement was the movement toward a positive Black identity, and to a useful, realistic, and truer history of the African past, present, and capacity for a free future (Meyerowitz, 2001).

Kook (1998) posits a "Shifting Status of African Americans in the Collective American Identity" and argues "African Americans were completely excluded from the American collective identity up until the 1960s" (p. 154) and since the American Civil Rights Movements, successive waves of struggle over inclusion of the Africana narrative in public school education, in media, and in historical repositories have taken place. Culture studies departments have emerged in the past few decades, and these departments increasingly evaluate group member actions, choices, and institutions based on each group's own cultural mores. Still, much of the recent scholarship places American citizenship at the center

of the discourse around identity, while African American identity formation is arguably much more complex. In fact, scholarship on Africana identity has shifted, from a focus on the African American community to a contradiction in White American culture, to changes in law and membership status for African Americans (Kook, 1998).

At present, much of the scholarship focuses the African American story into a broader American story about the incorporation of all citizens into the common wheel. Situated at the core of these narratives is America, and the nation's fulfilment of its own promises, founding documents, and creeds. This American legalist approach fails to consider African American perspectives on their own myriad and multi-layered identities. That most African Americans view themselves as citizens is not reason enough to exclude the greater complexities that make up their identities. In reality, African history and culture, Africana traditions, African American experience, and efforts at remedies for past abuses and omissions in America's historical and educational institutions, are part of the Africana saga. In the final analysis, American citizenship as the sole vantage point from which to view the Africana past, falls into the trap of narrow research foci. In 1974, F. Gerald Ham told the academic community that true efforts at diverse representation in history must "incorporate the unexplored history of underrepresented groups" (Gibbs, 2012, p. 195). Gibbs (2012) argues that, "archivists still have not analyzed the historiography of ethnic archives, including those in the African American community" and that American racial politics has created "social hierarchies" that persist until today and which surface in archival repositories in a "representative imbalance in documentary records" (p. 195). In response, African Americans constructed their own museums and archives under segregation. Often maintained by a single individual or family, community histories were kept and stored at the personal expense of a few individuals.

African American Collections: Building Lists

Kook (1998) noted that African Americans were gradually included into the American identity after the 1970, using both text and symbols. Symbols included development of African American commemorative items such as postage stamps, and textbooks in public school curricula. In public school textbooks, the African American story was constructed around the notion of citizenship (Kook, 1998). However, African American intellectuals refused to accept slavery as the starting point for Africana history. They observed African Americans as having rich and complex culture to which the citizenship narrative, while a factor, was not the center of community life. From this vantage point, citizenship was a tool to be acquired, like other tools, to help in the meeting of the objective of strong families, meeting one's potential, and building their legacy as a people. In fact, the mantra among many politically minded African Americans, those said to be awake or conscious, was to restore African people to their traditional greatness in a legacy that went back thousands of years prior to the Atlantic Slave trade.

In 1978, it was the desire to enable the telling of the whole African American historical narrative that led Dr. Margaret Burroughs, founder of Chicago's DuSable Museum, and Dr. Charles H. Wright, the founder of the African American Museum of Detroit, to form the Association of African American Museums, a non-profit corporation organized around six African American museums. Its focus was to support anyone working on African American collections, in order to help preserve and restore African American history. Originally named the African American Museum Association (AAMA) and headquartered in Boston, the organization was later renamed Association of African American Museums and moved to Washington, D.C. The mission of the AAAM continues today: to promote Africana archivists and museum workers as a professional organization, and as a supportive agency for Afro-American cultural organizations (AAAM, 2014). The AAAM contributed the publication of the *Guide to African American Museums and Galleries in the United States* (1988). In print in 1988, the 80-page book listed African American museums, historic sites, archives, and art collections (Rhodes, 1988). That same year, African American Museums Association

(AAMA) published a 54-page resource entitled *Profile of Black Museums,* jointly published by the AAMA in Washington D.C. and the American Association for State and Local History of Nashville, Tennessee (AAMA, 1988).

These two documents became the most important resources in their day for scholars who sought insight into where to begin an authentic study on any topic in African American history, and for African American families in search of their genealogy. In 1995, another important book, *Guide to African American* Documentary *Resources in North Carolina* (Simmons-Henry & Parker, 1995)*,* followed its prototype, *Guide to African Americans Museums* (1988), but focused only on one state (Simmons-Henry & Parker, 1995). The *NC Guide* (Simmons-Henry & Parker, 1995) work was commissioned by the North Carolina African American Archives group, which may have formed largely for the purpose of publishing the *Guide* book. This work was partially funded by a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission and served to list institutions with African American collections, thus providing a useful model of collaboration. The *NC Guide* identified 41 institutions in the state with Africana holdings, defined as materials about Africans in the diaspora, including historically Black colleges, private colleges, libraries, church and state-run archives and museums (Lehman, 2007). The *NC Guide* identified over 2500 African American collections in North Carolina, in over 40 repositories, setting the benchmark for identification of African American resources among the fifty states (Simmons-Henry & Parker, 1995). In 1996, the *NC Guide* was published online by the University of Virginia Press, making it the go-to site for information about African American holdings in North Carolina (Lehman, 2007).

In the last ten years, additional research on African American archival holdings has been produced. In 2007, Lehman evaluated the progress of the 41 institutions in the 1996 online version of *NC Guide* (Pyatt, 1996). Lehman (2007) did not find a substantial increase in online African American holdings in North Carolina repositories since 1996: 15 of the 41 institutions (36 %) showed an increase in African American holdings available via the Internet.

A final study by Davis (2008) identifies the leading repositories for African American materials in the United States. She includes the Charles L. Blockson Afro-American Collections at Temple University, the Amistad Research Center, and the Fisk University Library Special Collections among others. While not comprehensive, the work does direct researchers to the 37 best funded, most highly organized, most accessible African American Collections in the United States.

Afro Museums and Archives in the 21st Century: Case Studies

At the time that he was appointed head of the National African American Museum Planning Commission, Bunch (2007) published, "Embracing Ambiguity: The Challenge of Interpreting African American History in Museums," in which he argued "the American national memory is fundamentally shaped by African American history and culture. However, the essence of this experience is often forgotten or downplayed" (p. 45). Bunch says that instead of a single view of the past, Americans must accept "Ambiguity, and…finding [sic] a 'new integration'" that re-centers African American history (p. 46). Cultural borrowing, conflict, and compromise may dominate the new narrative, but it would be closer to the truth (Bunch, 2007).

Bunch (2007) alludes to the contested ground of interpretation over African American history in *Old Slow Town* which describes, among other things, Detroit's African American community during the American Civil War (Taylor, 2013) to "African American museums in South Carolina, including Old Slave Mart at Historic Brattonsville in South Carolina" (Shettel, 2011, p. 2). Point-of-view and day-to- day decision-making over historical narratives are touched by the reality of race, racial privilege, cultural competency, and colonial subject identity verses self-determination. Harris (2005) writes:

> Because of the persistent and pervasive problem of misrepresentation of ethnic and minority groups within history, natural history and general museums, ethnic and cultural groups have established their own museums and cultural

centers. These valuable institutions are places where the content comes from the voice of that ethnic or cultural group and where these groups have a place to celebrate their identity. (p. 1)

Harris (2005) notes that a "boom" in the development of cultural museums followed the American Civil Rights Movement in the 1960's "when a renewal of ethnic identity demonstrated through the Race Pride Movement" (p. 1) but the survival of these institutions became an issue at the end of the twentieth century as their founders aged, and as technological infrastructure for museums and archives increased. In the beginning, the growth of African American collections, which had begun with collectors of African American books and other materials before the turn of the twentieth century, blossomed into small museum-archive combinations in cities and towns around the nation and culminated in the emergence of nationally-renowned African American Collections. It is noteworthy to point out that the preeminent African American archive in the United States, and perhaps in the world, emerged early in the last century as the result of a collaboration between Africana collector Arthur Schomburg and New York Public Library (NYPL). It was the with the sale of his collection that the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture was formed at the 135th Street Branch of the NYPL in Harlem (Biddle, 1978). Schomburg had been collecting African American books and memorabilia for decades before he agreed to the sale of his collection. His archive and library became the basis for an Africana collection though collaboration in funding from the New York State Council on the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, and Ford Foundation, with additional funding from the Library Services and Construction Act (Biddle, 1978). The African American leadership provided by the NYPL Harlem Branch and Schomburg's direct leadership after the sale (he served as curator for six years after the collection was moved to NYPL) created a model for ensuring cultural competency, primacy of Africana world view in guiding interpretation, and procedures that guarantee access by those whose culture the collection represents.

Methodology

Historic preservation and representation within colonial contexts are complicated by imbalances in power and in command of resources. Constructions of the past sponsored by governmental entities have tended to privilege the historical narratives most familiar to the more powerful contingents. Franz Fanon wrote extensively about the psychology of colonial societies, both of master and of subject. Individuals and groups from Frederick Douglass, and Bishop Henry McNeal Turner, and Alexander Crummel, in the 19th century, to W.E.B. Dubois and Marcus Garvey in the early twentieth century worked to separate racialized thought which justified oppression of brown and Black people, from historical reality wherein they were actors in their own history on their own cultural stages. Harris (1982) describes the work of the Council to create a guide to resources on African Americans that existed within the bowels of the National Archives. However, issues over methodology soon arose within the members of the Committee. Would the Council's confrontation with false narratives of Africana life include practical attempts to end discrimination against Black scholars or include diasporic approaches to African history? Or try to correct omissions in the current national narrative, and include contributions of Black people to the United States. When the scholars could not agree on the group's focus with the chairperson, who in 1950 was Melville Herskovits, the organization disbanded, leaving issues of methodology far from resolved (Harris, 1982).

A number of secondary issues confront those whose goal is to preserve African American collections and interpret Africana materials with authenticity. Each of these factors impacts the choice of methodology that collectors, archives, museums, and African historiography has taken. Some of these issues are: whether the potential loss of the materials is the ultimate loss, or whether lost or submerged documents are preferable to donating material to a mainstream collection where it might be misinterpreted (Wakin, 2005); what obligation—if any—do African American librarians have provide special protections for and to correct narratives about African American people (Johnson, 2008; Johnson-Simon, 2004); do these same questions

impact museum curators, is it enough to police and when necessary correct the narratives about African Americans? Or should independent control of their historical representation? Are university-based collections such as Emory University's acquisition of the Carter G. Woodson (Father of Black History Week) Collection and the Association for the Study of African American Life and History a model of the best way to preserve the African American past into the future (Black Issues, 2004). In recent times the reality of the need to digitize African American collections, along with all other materials now being transferred online, raises additional concerns (Evans, 2007). Will independent collections lose needed patronage from walk-ins if materials are online? Must finding aids and information about collections be placed online to advertise collection contents? While the later issues are not unique to Africana collections, making the right decisions are potentially more impactful in small ethnic-based facilities than with mainstream collections. Finally, since African American materials were not, in general, historically included in archival repositories or apparent in collection finding aids - unless they supported the narrative of American history being told by the institution - what scrutiny of existing African collections must be done to make sure their interpretations are devoid of colonial-dominating thought?

Both historical contexts and mediating conditions were considered before outlining a methodological approach to the present research. The analytical model used in this study is similar to that used by Armada (2010), which found that African American collection formation, preservation, interpretation, and access for originating communities were all impacted by competing historical, economic, and cultural traditions (Armada, 2010).

Armada (2010) traces the formation of the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, Tennessee, where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was shot, from its origins as the Lorraine Motel. He considers the site's history, economic trajectory, and ethnic and cultural value to specific groups and its construction as a key site in national identity. Armada (2010) considered the historical "efforts of everyday Black citizens who rescued the Lorraine Motel from demolition in 1982" (pp. 898-99) to its designation by the National Park

Service as a building of exceptional significance. He also considers the hotel's economic demise after the King assassination in 1965, from a site of vice and prostitution, to the filing of bankruptcy by owner Walter Bailey and the fundraising efforts of WDIA-AM 1070 a Memphis-based Black radio station. The radio personalities who started the project that not only saved the building, but put it on its road toward being a national site of commemoration for not only Dr. King but for the nation, memorializing America's growth toward recognizing the Civil Rights of all citizens, and African Americans' role in that process. While it may be argued that America again sneaks into the center stage in this story, one may counter that in this case, because of the ethnographic approach of the narrative, America becomes a mere device, around which the actors move to reclaim their history, agency, community, economic stability, and representation all with greater and lesser degrees of success.

The specific methodological approach to this study include qualitative research, in that it utilizes descriptive statistics to gain insight into the existence and scope of Africana collections in cultural resource institutions in a three-state area: North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. Other methodologies used here include critical analysis, historiography, historical analysis and interpretation, grounded theory, and triangulation.

Procedures for this study begin with a generation of lists of formal repositories in South Carolina and Georgia, and generation of leads regarding important collections that are in private hands or informal collections in North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia. The method utilized to generate the *North Carolina Guide to African American Collections* (Simmons-Henry & Parker, 1995) was replicated for collections in South Carolina and Georgia. This entailed sending requests to formal archives, museums, and university libraries, and state curators, asking for data on their African American holdings. These data were collated and lists of archives on their holdings both in print and online were prepared. In addition, investigation into informal holdings was sought to create a secondary list of holdings that are not currently included in major repositories in each of the three states. The discussion section of this

research addresses what proportion of important historical materials Africana are in formal repositories, the status of any independent Africana collections, reasons why African holdings are not included in formal repositories especially where they are in danger of being lost, degree of digitization for Africana collections in the three state area, examples of successful collaboration, costs of collaboration, benefits of collaborations, suggestions for successful collaborations, and suggestions for further research.

This study builds upon the existing body of research into the historical representation of ethnic groups within a pluralistic society with persistent power imbalances along color, gender, and ethnic lines. This research seeks to further and contribute to the breadth of knowledge about the existence, scope, and status (such as condition, preservation, security, digitization, and current accessibility) of African American archival resources in a three-state area in the Southeastern United States. Africana collections held in private homes, as well as those existing within historical societies, libraries, and in other formal repositories are surrounded by issues of preservation, digitization, and accessibility. Independent African institutions face the added stress of financial feasibility and therefore sustainability, while formal mainstream institutions face challenges with respect to budgetary decisions and allocation of resources, cultural competency, fairness and accuracy of interpretation. This study provides information about Africana holdings in support of the preservation of these materials and of expanding knowledge about these collections so that their historical, economic, and cultural contexts can be understood and respected. Finally, this research seeks to add to the body of knowledge that leads not to greater exploitation of Africana people, or to the segmentation of their culture and past into a form of tourism which further exploits them economically, but rather toward solutions that benefit the communities from which they emerge.

Results
R1. What Africana resources exist in North Carolina (outside of formal repositories)?
African American collections in formal (institutional) repositories in North Carolina were documented in 1995 by Linda Simmons-Henry and Lisa Parker in their

Guide to African American Documentary Resources in North Carolina. The following year the University of Virginia published an online version. In all, the *NC Guide* identified more than 2,500 African American collections, held in 45 formal repositories. The project represented the collaborative efforts of the African American Archives Group along with the North Carolina State Historical Records Advisory Board, and the African-American Educational Archives Initiative. The *NC Guide* has served as the authority on African American collections in formal repositories from its publication up to the present. It also provided a view into Africana materials in the state and a research model for identifying African American archival materials (Simmons-Henry & Parker, 1995). The study did not shed a great deal of light on where to search for information on African American collections that were not held by either HBCUs, public or private libraries, or state or municipal offices.

While scores of African American lay curators, family historians, church archives, and African American historical organizations exist in North Carolina, determining the identity, names, and locations of individual collectors and organizational archives may call for an extensive ethnographic study. Meanwhile, insight into what can be referred to as outlying Africana collections, those in private hands and in private organizations, can be discovered with help from formal archives and from some community members. For example, when Jeffrey J. Crow, Deputy Secretary of the North Carolina Office and History, published a volume on *African American History in North Carolina*, (2002) he printed all the important features of the lives of Black Carolinians that he could glean from the state archives. His finds included the names of multiple back "benevolent organizations" such as the Royal Knights of King David, the Masons, and the Sons of Ham (Crow, 2002).

Crow (2002) described strong church ties among African Americans in North Carolina, estimating that at least one-third of black inhabitants belonged to a church just before the turn of the twentieth century. He wrote that voluntary associations and churches shared members, even though "churches had their own organizations, such as…the African Methodist Episcopal Zion [Church's] Woman's Home and

Foreign Missionary Society" (Crow, 2002, p. 2). The result was overlapping social structures in which generations were reared and which created deep cultural continuity, long multifaceted relationships, and a strong community life. Crow (2002) models how examinations of these cultural institutions make it possible to recreate Africana life. While Crow (2002) does not provide end notes or footnotes, he does offer the names of hundreds of individuals and black institutions as clues for researchers who want to further investigate the archives of former or extant black organizations in North Carolina. The present study, utilized some of Crow's finds as inspiration to begin asking questions of community members known to the author in the municipalities of Charlotte and Rocky Mount. Using informal requests for information (word-of-mouth) the author was able to locate and view the records of five outlying North Carolina collections and was not able to view but acquired credible information about the existence of six other outlying collections in central and eastern North Carolina.

Privately-held Outlying African American Archival Collections in North Carolina

Using community connections such as neighborhood elders and local librarians for word-of-mouth and other informal means of acquiring information about outlying collections in North Carolina, the Outlaying Collection identified by the present study are listed here:

- **Charlotte Mecklenburg Black Heritage Collection (**Charlotte, North Carolina)
- **Happy Hill Cemetery Records,** (Winston-Salem, North Carolina)—enslaved ancestor cemetery records; collected by the Happy Hill Cemetery Committee and the Rural Initiative
- **Black Workers for Justice and Abner Berry Freedom Library & Workers Center Archive** (Rocky Mount, North Carolina)—Black Workers Union Papers
- **The African American Genealogy Interest Group** (Charlotte, North Carolina)
- **Comprehensive Genealogical Services** (Charlotte, North Carolina) —enslaved ancestor cemetery records.

Members of the five organizations above shared the names of other private or lay curated Africana collections in North Carolina; the lists include:

- **West Charlotte High School Archives** (Charlotte, North Carolina)—High School and African American Community records.
- **Second Ward Alumni House** (Charlotte, North Carolina)—Second Ward High School Collection assembled prior to urban renewal.
- **Grier Heights House (**Charlotte, North Carolina)-former Girl Scout Center.
- **Greenville Historical Society** (Charlotte, North Carolina)—Organized by lay archivist and historian T. Elder.
- **People's Health Screening Clinics of the Garysburg, Tillery and Bloomer Hill, and Fremont Communities** (Representing North Hampton, Halifax, Nash, and Wayne North Carolina Counties).
- **Phoenix Archives** (Eastern North Carolina)**—**Workers Archives.
- **Georgia and South Carolina Holdings:**

Resource constraints prohibited similar informal inquiries about outlying African American collections in Georgia and South Carolina so the current research utilized Eben K. Lehman's approach. Lehman (2007) expanded on the work of the *Guide to African American Documentary Resources in North Carolina* (Simmons-Henry & Parker, 1995) by conducting a follow-up study. Specifically, Lehman wanted to know whether African American collections identified by the *NC Guide* had been digitized and put online by 2007. Out of the 41 institutions identified by the *NC Guide* as holding African American collections in 1995 (1996 for the online version), Lehman (2007) discovered that only 15 of the institutions had created avenues for "online access to their African-American Holdings" (pp. 1-2). The institutions with the fewest references to their Africana Holdings online were: Duke University, Fayetteville State University, Greensboro Public Library, Johnson C. Smith University, North Carolina Archives, North Carolina State University, Richard B. Harrison Public Library, Shaw University, the University of North Carolina system, Wake Forest University, and Winston Salem State University. Lehman (2007) recorded the names of institutions with finding aids

for African American collections online. These same institutions plus the American Dance Festival and Appalachian State University had posted online finding aids for African American Collections. A subset of these eleven institutions posted online exhibits. Lehman (2007) noted that nearly half of the institutions with information about or with actual online African American collections had enjoyed the benefit of outside funding, in this case NC ECHO grants (pp. 33-37).

Of the 17 queries on Lehman's (2007) article, four questions were retained that were relevant to the research questions of this study:
1. Are there African American collections online?
2. Are there finding aids online?
3. Are there any exhibits?
4. Is there evidence of funding or collaboration with other institutions?

African American Collections in Formal Repositories in Georgia and South Carolina

This study examined the online presence of all state and municipal library systems, university library systems, museums, historical societies and other historic and historic preservation institutions in the two states. The identifiable historic preservation and library institutional websites, databases, and online collections were analyzed for the presence of African American materials. The findings are reported as: Institutions with African American Holdings (Appendix A) Institutions with Online Finding Aids (Appendix B); Institutions with Online African American Exhibits (Appendix C), and Institutions with self-reported collaboration with other institutions or with outside funding (Appendix D).

R2. What Africana resources exist in Georgia (in formal repositories and within communities)?
Libraries:

- **Atlanta-Fulton Public Library** (Atlanta, Georgia)—Genealogy and Pathfinder for African American vertical files. (Thirty-six of the thirty-seven branches of the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System redirect the majority of their African American archival material to the Auburn Avenue Research Center Branch).

- **Atlanta University Center Woodruff Library** (Atlanta, Georgia) includes the campuses of Clark Atlanta University, Spelman College, Morehouse College and the Altanta University Center Consortium Interdenominational Theological Center through The Atlanta University Center's Robert W. Woodruff Library—holds manuscripts and archives on the people of the African Diaspora. The core of the collection began with Atlanta University's Trevor Arnette library Negro Collection. Today the AU Collection includes the papers of African literary and political icons such as the Countee Cullen, the papers of Walter Rodney and the Freedman's Aid Society records.

- **Auburn Avenue Research Library on African American Culture and History** (Atlanta, Georgia)—Currently under reconstruction, the branch is temporarily housed in the Central Branch of the Atlanta-Fulton Public Library and its archives are being temporarily housed in the Georgia State Archives. There are over 100 collections available online. Examples include the National Black Arts Festival Papers (1988-98); the Julian Bond Papers (1940-); and the Utopian Literary Club Collection (1916-1986). This collection holds materials that are not available anywhere else in the region, including rare materials on African American immigration to Haiti during the Fugitive Slave Act menace leading up to the American Civil War (aaba.galileo.usg.edu/aafa/search and www.afpls.org/aarl).

- **Chattooga Library System** (Summerville, Georgia)—Research tools include Heritage Quest which holds Freedman's Bank materials

- **Cobb County Public Library** (Marietta, Georgia) — "African American Connection" includes oral history and civil rights entries

- **Emory University Library MARBL Collection** (Manuscripts and Rare Books) in its Woodruff Library (Atlanta, Georgia). This expansive African American collection includes collections on: The Civil Rights & Post Civil Rights Movement, Blacks and the Left, African American Literature and the Arts, Expatriate Literate and Cultural Material, & African

Americans and Sports (marbl.library.emory.edu)

- **Georgia Public Library Service --Online Georgia Library Public Information Network** (PINES) (Georgia) -- This system covers 249 libraries in 127 counties, and represents 63 library systems. A search for African American materials yields 9530 results, most of them bibliographic. Two archival quality holdings exist under phonograph recordings. These are: "Slave songs from the Cost of Georgia" and Georgia Sea Island songs." Several library systems and individual branches of the Georgia Public Libraries also held Africana collections (see below) (georgialibraries.org)
- **Georgia State University Library** (Atlanta, Georgia)—holds Southern Labor Archives, Social Change Collection, Domestic Worker's Union papers, and more (digitalcollectionslibrary.gus.edu)
- **Kennesaw State Horace Sturgis Library** (Kennesaw, Georgia)—African Diasporic materials
- **Lee County Public Library** (Leesburg, Georgia)—Items relative to African American status in the state
- **Live Oak Public Libraries** (Savannah, Georgia)—African American History and Genealogy; including "African Americans in the Low Country" and "Internet Archive of a Slave Plantation" (www.liveoak.pl.org)
- **Middle Georgia Archives of Middle Georgia Regional Library** (Macon, Georgia)—holdings in African Americana (Mgaarchives.bibblib.org)
- **Moultrie-Colquitt County Library** (Moultrie, Georgia)—Race films
- **Newton County Library System** (Covington, GA) — African American material in Heritage Room
- **Roddenbery Memorial Library** (Cairo, Georgia)—Special Collections includes Jack Hadley Black Museum Collection and GAgenWeb (genealogy service)
- **Sara Hightower Regional Library** (Rome, Georgia)—Heritage Quest with African American material

- **Savannah State University Ash H. Gordon Library Special Collections** (Savannah, Georgia) "Negro Civil Rights Scrapbook" (library.savannahstate.edu)
- **Thomas County Public Library System** (Thomasville, Georgia) - Church histories and "Collection of African American Obituarie" (www.tcpls.org)
- **Uncle Remus Regional Library System** (Madison, Georgia) under "Ethnic Research" link includes primary resource collection on African Americans (www.uncleremus.org)
- **University System of Georgia Libraries** (Atlanta, Georgia) 37 branches—holds "Integration Materials 1938-65" for the University of Georgia (www.libs.uga.edu)

Museums, Archives, and Historic Sites
- **Albany Civil Rights Institute** (Albany, Georgia)—Southwest Georgia Movement
- **APEX Museum** (Atlanta, Georgia)—Ancient to modern Africana Artifacts and some archival material
- **Beach Institute of African American Culture** (Savannah, Georgia)—Africana materials and tours
- **Beulah Rucker Museum and Education Center** (Gainesville, Georgia)-African materials
- **Columbus Black History Museum & Archives** (Columbus, Georgia)—Africana Materials
- **Cumberland Island National Seashore Museum** (St. Mary's, Georgia)—Africana Materials
- **Dorchester Academy and Museum** (Midway, Georgia)—Former school for freed persons is now a museum
- **First African American Baptist Church** (Savannah, Georgia)—Africana church records
- **Geechee Kunda Cultural Arts Center and Museum** (Coastal Georgia) —African materials
- **Georgia Archives** (Atlanta, Georgia)— "Negro Education Division, Director's Subject files," 1928-1966 (www.georgiaarchives.org)
- **Georgia Department of Archives & History** (Atlanta, Georgia)—African American materials (www.n-georgia.com/ga-dept-archives-history.html)

- **Georgia Historical Society** (Atlanta, Georgia)—some African American holdings (georgiahistory.com)
- **National Dr. Martin Luther King Historic Site** (Atlanta, Georgia)-Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Museum, Historic Home, Internment, and Civil Rights records (www.nps.gov)
- **National Archives at Atlanta** (Atlanta, Georgia)—holdings on African Americans 1716-1980s (www.archvies.gov/atlanta/)
- **Muscogee Genealogical Society** (Muscogee County, Georgia)—African American cemeteries. Includes data for Columbus, Georgia, and Sumpter, Schley, Marion, Harris, Chattahoochee, and Muscogee counties (www.muscogeegenealogy.com
- **Savannah Ogeechee Canal Museum** (coastal Georgia) —African materials.

R3. What Africana resources exist in South Carolina (in formal repositories and within communities)?
Libraries:
- **Benedict College Library** (Columbia, South Carolina)-Special Collections includes rare African American materials
- **Claflin University's H.V. Manning Library** (Orangeburg, South Carolina)—Holds "The Black Collection" featuring materials on local African Americans (www.claflin.edu)
- **Clemson University Library Special Collections** (Clemson, South Carolina)-"Black Heritage in the Upper Piedmont"; more than 100 oral history audio tapes (www.clemson.edu)
- **College of Charleston**—See Avery Research Center
- **Furman University Library Special Collections** (Greenville, South Carolina)—Race Relations Collection
- **Low Country Digital Library** (Charleston, South Carolina)-African American digital items (http://lcdl.library.cofc.edu)
- **South Carolina Digital Library** (Columbia, South Carolina)—over 4000 images including photos of African American farm houses (southcarolinadigitallibrary.com)
- **Southern Wesleyan University Clayton Family Research Room** (Central, South Carolina)-Genealogy surnames includes some African American families
- **Spartanburg County Public Library Kennedy Room** (Spartanburg, South Carolina)—Genealogical services include Heritage Quest with African American materials
- **University of South Carolina Library Special Collections** (Columbia, South Carolina)—Digital Collection includes Africa American Materials
- **Winthrop University Archives and Special Collections** (Rock Hill, South Carolina)—African American History (digitalcommons.winthrop.edu).

Museums, Archives, and Historic Sites
- **African American Heritage Charleston**—(www.Africanamericancharleston.com).
- **Avery Research Center,** College of Charleston (Charleston, South Carolina)—Documents the history of African American South Carolinians from their origins on the African continent through the 20th century. Includes Charleston County Black School Directory Collection, African linage in Sierra Leone and Senegal, Civil Rights Movement and over 200 manuscript collections (http//:avery.cofc.edu)
- **Clemson Area African American Museum** (Clemson, South Carolina)—Africana archives; manuscripts and artifacts
- **Penn Center** (St. Helena, South Carolina)—Gullah Culture and African cultural transformation and continuity
- **SCIWAY South Carolina Information Highway** (South Carolina)—African American oral history, church histories, legal documents, music and more (www.sciway.net/afam/.
- **South Carolina African American Heritage Commission** (Columbia, South Carolina)—A facet of the State Department of Archives and History —Authority records can be browsed as culturally specific renderings. Searches for "African American" archival material result in "African American Criminals, African American Children—Mental Health Services" etc. (shpo.sc.gov)
- **South Carolina African American Heritage Foundation**-(scaaheritagefound.org)

- **South Carolina African American Genealogy**—(www.accessgenealogy.com)
- **South Carolina Historical Society** (Charleston, South Carolina)—Africana materials include cite directories, enslaved lists, capitation taxes on Freed persons, Freedman's Bank records and bibliographic materials on African American residents (www2.southcarolinahistoricalsociety.org)
- **Southern Revolutionary War Institute** (York County, South Carolina)—Includes Historic Brattonville and African Americans in the Southern campaign of the American Revolution (chmuseums.org)
- **State Historic Preservation Office, African American Historic Places** (Columbia, South Carolina)-Includes information on the Pine Grove Rosenwald School and Historically Black Colleges, Aiken Rhett Slave Quarters, Denmark Vesey House, Edesto Island's Folly Beach and Seaside School for African American Children, and information on African Americans on James' Island and John's Island (shpo.sc.gov)
- **William B. Box Collection** (Greenville, South Carolina)—Rotary Club "Negro" and Black Men at 3rd Annual Meeting of South Carolina Negro Life Insurance Association c. 1937.
- **WPA Federal Writers Project** (South Carolina)-Recorded Narratives of formerly enslaved men and women (library.sc.edu).

Discussion

Burns (2008) writes that the leaders of the Black Museum Movement contested and reconstituted mainstream representations of African American life and history. The goals of these institution builders were not a separate museum system, she argues, but accurate non-racist depictions of Black folk and African and African American culture. It was their persistence that led to the eventual revelation of majority archives, museums and libraries that African American history and culture must be included in the American narrative, interpreted with cultural competency, and identifiable in order to create meaningful avenues of access (Burns, 2008).

The transition between the omission or misrepresentation of African American archival resources from mainstream archives and the reference to such collections by many of the historic preservation organizations and bibliographic centers today was not without conflict. Early (2015) writes of instances where the specter of racism raises its head in the most distinguished historic preservation organizations in the world. He notes that the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History's Africa Hall on human evolution was "publicly lambasted" before it was taken down and "reconceptualized within an African Diasporic context" (31-33).

Fear of have their records misinterpreted has resulted in many lay Black archivists' determination to keep their holdings out of mainstream repositories. Collections like the Black Workers for Justice Collection in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, is in private hands today, with no current research possibilities for the public. BWFJ records detail the history of African American workers of the Burlington Textile Plant and their encounters with the mostly white Mill Workers of Nash County, and the Railroad workers of Edgecomb County. Black workers protests, demonstrations, and movement building history in this region are currently outside of the historical narrative, but replete in the organization's archives (personal communication, 2015).

Some of the earliest organized black archives were those at Historically Black Colleges and Universities and today, HBCU libraries hold Africana collections dating back to emancipation. Peter Duignan's *Handbook of American Resources for African American Studies* (1967) reported African American archival resources in seven HBCU collections including Fisk, Atlanta University, Howard, and Hampton College (Duignan, 1967). Other studies followed with Aloha South surveying 58 of the roughly 120 HBCU's and founding that ten of the 58 had no holdings at all, that the remainder had some papers, but that few had given data on their holdings to the National Union Catalog of Manuscript Collections (Spenser, 2001). Indeed, the Atlanta University Center's Robert W. Woodruff Library today boasts one-of-a-kind records on African Americans in Atlanta and on campus. The collection includes photographs of generations of student bodies, studies on Black family life, and one of a kind holdings

such as the papers of Eric Lincoln and Walter Rodney (Atlanta University, 2017).

There are also a number of traditional mainstream colleges and universities that have invested resources and staff in the development of extensive Africana archival holdings. The Manuscript, Archives and Rare Book collection at Emory University Library (MARBL) has an extensive African American archival collection, much of it available online. The collection is especially rich in the areas of Civil Rights, Black Americans and the political left, and literary, cultural, and personal papers. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill likewise offers "African American Newspapers in North Carolina via their library (UNC, 2017). A project to update the 1996 version of the online *Guide to African American Documentary Resources in North Carolina* if undertaken would reflect new African American archival additions to formal repositories in the state and this research would make the *NC Guide* even more valuable to present day researchers (Simmons-Henry & Parker, 1995).

As historically bibliographic centered institutions, city and county libraries examined by the current study generally had few archival holdings. However, a handful had extensive or culturally rich Africana materials. The best example is the Live Oak Public Library System in Savannah, Georgia. This library boasts an African American History and Genealogy Service, under the category of local history, which is expansive. Its holdings include: *African American Heritage in the Low Country*; *In Those Days: African-American Life Near Savannah*, which is replete with oral histories of African Americans and is sponsored by the National Parks Service. The Live Oak's offer links to the *Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database* that documents over 35,000 slave ships traversing over the middle passage (Live Oak Public Library, 2015)

The Atlanta-Fulton Public Library has relatively few Africana Archival holdings distributed among its 37 branches because its practice is to forward African manuscript donations and acquisitions to its Auburn Avenue Branch. The Auburn Avenue Research Library on African American Culture and History is a Special Library in the Atlanta-Fulton System. The branch was founded in 1994 to specialize in Africana archives and reference and is one of four renowned world-class

Africana combined library and archives in the United States. Like the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture in New York City, it attracts scholars from around the world. Situated within broader public library systems, yet independent in the arenas of interpretation and day-to-day work— both institutions gain considerable financial and structural stability from their relationships to the broader system while African collections integrity are maintained. These special libraries offer a formula for mutual success for public libraries and African collections, and can help inform other state and city libraries and Africana-preservation institutions. (Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System, 2015).

This preliminary study opens several avenues for further research. It should be noted that Africana art museums were not included in the present study, but a future study identifying these would help round out the historical and cultural narrative for researchers of African American life. Also not included were the services of ancestry.com, although several library branches subscribed to accessgenealogy.com. For purposes of this study, ancestry.com was defined as a service rather than as an online repository, although this definition could be debated. While this study provides information about the extent and nature of the Africana holdings of the repositories identified, when this information was available online, a listing all of the excellent resources of each of the collections was not possible. Such a study or series of studies should be carried out in the future. One example of why institutions' core Africana Collections should be identified is provided by Emory University's Special Collections and Archives Division. Emory acquired the Library of Carter G. Woodson and the Association for African American History and Life in 2004, and at the time the transfer of the collections was widely known. For a new generation of researchers, however, knowledge that this extensive collection resides with in the libraries on Emory's campus a decade later may not exist (Emory University Library, 2004). Moreover, donations to collections are ongoing. For example, Eula Mae Ramsey collected funeral programs for over 30 years in Eastern Georgia. Ramsey's niece Gloria Lucas gave the 300 funerary programs to the East Central Georgia Regional Library and donated them to be a part of the Library's genealogy services. Rather than

send the programs on to the state archive or elsewhere the library created a special collection of African American funeral programs. This collection may have over 3000 surnames, family connections, church memberships, and more contained within it. Ongoing donations create the need for ongoing updates of archival holdings (Demarest, 2009).

While it was outside the present research to create, much less update, databases for collections of the institutions holding Africana materials in this three state region—such a study would be useful and could lead to the creation of a unitary database of African American holdings in the U.S. Subsequent cadres of researchers could then update the database. This could be carried out within a library and information science (LIS) department, or in collaboration with Africana studies, cultural studies, or in a history department at one of the universities in each state.

While this study was successful at identifying institutions in Georgia and South Carolina with Africana holdings, it uncovered no outlying or privately held collections in the two states. Community connections such as elders, local librarians, and word of mouth were used to learn about the existence of outlying collections in North Carolina. There is a need for a systematic follow up study aimed at locating additional privately held Africana collections in North Carolina. Resource constraints prohibited conducting similar informal inquiries about outlying African American collections in Georgia and South Carolina. Such a project would likely be most successful if approached as an ethnographical study. The cooperation and trust of local people will be a precursor to such an undertaking. While there is much work ahead, further research on privately held African American collections in the three state area is important to the history of the Southeast United States and would provide a more comprehensive archival data field for reconstruction of the African American past.

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Selected Web Sites
www.ancestry.com
www.accessgenealogy.com
www.aaba.galileo.usg.edu/aafa/search;
www.afpls.org/aarl
www.chmuseums.org
www.Digitalcollections.library.gus.edu
 www.digitalcommons@kennesaw.edu

www.digitalcommons.winthrop.edu
http://lcdl.library.cofc.edu
http://catalog.hathitrust.org/api/volumes/oclc/18875709.html
 http://www.blackmuseums.org/
http://catalog.hathitrust.org/api/volumes/oclc/18875709.html
www.library.sc.edu
www.Mgaarchives.bibblib.org
www.Shpo.sc.gov
www.southcarolinadigitallibrary.com
www.Africanamericancharleston.com
www.accessgenealogy.com
www.archvies.gov/atlanta/
www.blackmuseum.org/mission
www.n-georgia.com/ga-dept-archives-history.html
www.liveoakpl.org/research/genealogy/african_american_history.php
www.muscogeegenealogy.com.
www.sciway.net/afam/
www2.southcarolinahistoricalsociety.org

Appendix A
Content Checklist for African American Archival Materials (Note: This data-gathering tool is a modified version of one developed by Eben K. Lehamn (2007), 33).
Results in bold were tabulated and appear in the results and/or appendices.
Institution_____ has:
_____Information on African-American Collection referenced and/or represented online, i.e. Are there African American collections online?
_____What is the level of description? Catalog, Subgroup, Series, Folder, Item?
_____Are formats indicated?
_____Are there finding aids online? (Qualifying documents for this category were formal finding aids created by a curator or repository).
_____What is the level of Access? Catalog, Subgroup, Series, Folder, Item, or None?
_____Are there any exhibits?
_____Is there evidence of funding or collaboration with other institutions?

Appendix B
Institutions with African American Collections presented in Online Finding Aids

Georgia
Auburn Avenue Research Library
Atlanta-Fulton Public Library via
Civil Right Digital Library)
Digital Library of Georgia
Georgia Public Library System
Moultrie-Colquitt County Library
Marshes of Glynn Libraries
Uncle Remus Regional Library System
University of Georgia Archives
Georgia Historical Society
Georgia Archives
National Archives at Atlanta
Middle Georgia Archives
Emory University's Woodruff Library
University of Georgia Libraries
Georgia State University Library
Savannah State University Library
Albany Civil Rights Institute

South Carolina
College of Charleston's Avery Research Center
South Carolina Historical Society
SCIWAY (SC Information HWY)
Benedict College Library
Clemson University Special Collections
Furman University Special Collections
University of South Carolina Special Collections
South Carolina State Department of Archives and History.

Appendix C
Institutions with Online Exhibits of African-American Materials
 Georgia
Live Oak Public Library
Moultrie-Colquitt Library
Middle Georgia Archives
Thomas County Public Library
Uncle Remus Regional Library System
Atlanta University Center Woodruff Library
Auburn Avenue Research Center
Georgia Virtual Library System (Galileo)

Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System
Georgia Historical Society
King Center Historic Site
Apex Museum
Georgia Archives
Emory University Woodruff Library
(MARBL Collection)
University System of Georgia
Albany Civil Rights Institute

South Carolina
College of Charleston's Avery Research Center
Clemson University Special Collections
Karpeles Manuscript Museum
Penn Center
South Carolina State Museum
South Carolina Digital Library
South Carolina Historical Society
University of South Carolina Special Collections
Wofford College Special Collections
WPA Federal Writers Project lib.sc.edu

Appendix D
Institutions Self-Reporting Collaboration or Outside Funding

Georgia
Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System
Auburn Avenue Public Library
Cobb County Library
Live Oak Public Library
Chattooga Library System
Lee County Public Library
Newton County Library System

South Carolina
College of Charleston's Avery Research Center