Transforming the Authority of the Archive: Undergraduate Pedagogy and Critical Digital Archives

Chapter Four Queer Pasts, Queer Futures: The Lafayette College Queer Archives Project

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Introduction

This chapter features perspectives from three key contributors—faculty director, digital scholarship librarian, and student researcher—on the creation of the Lafayette College Queer Archives Project (QAP) at Lafayette College in Easton, Pennsylvania. The QAP is a collaborative, interdisciplinary initiative designed to illuminate Lafayette's Queer history, advance teaching, learning, and research in the area of Queer studies, and promote positive institutional transformation. The project encompasses curricular and oral history components, as well as a unique digital humanities project that was honored with the 2020 Center for Research Libraries Primary Source Award in Access.[1] In this chapter, we narrate the origination of the QAP. We detail how we make use of the structural features of the web-based publishing platform Scalar[2] Page 115 →in order to make visible hidden and under-archived elements of Lafayette's LGBTQ+ past and to structure user engagement with these materials as a distinctively non-linear, Queer experience.

The QAP is informed by recent scholarship in Queer archives studies and academic librarianship emphasizing the relationship between privilege and archival representation. As the coauthors of "Information Maintenance as a Practice of Care" write, "[p]ower inheres in the acts of identifying, classifying, and ordering information. People who are privileged to define information of importance and dictate how it is organized and shared have disproportionate influence on the shape and dynamics of society."[3] In their survey of founders of such community archives as the ONE National Gay and Lesbian Archives at the University of South California and the Transgender Living Archives, Michelle Caswell et al. identify both the "profoundly negative affective consequences of absence and misrepresentation in…archives and the positive effect of complex and autonomous forms of representation in community-driven archives."[4] Jamie A. Lee of the Arizona Queer Archives details such positive effects, arguing that "'legibility' play[s] a role in 'legitimacy.'" They highlight "the important role that LGBTQ-identified archives…can play across generations…in non-dominant communities to legitimate lived and living histories that are often erased, obscured, and marginalized."[5] In conversation with these voices, our aim for the culmination of the QAP is ambitious—nothing less than to actively reshape Lafayette's social, curricular, and institutional futures so as to manifest, as community archivist Jarrett Drake puts it, "the seismic shift in paradigms that we want to see in society."[6]

The QAP is animated by the following questions: how can institutions of higher education—which are historically both products of and replicators of privilege—be truly transformed? Can such transformation move beyond "inclusion," a process that leaves established, hierarchical power relations intact? How can archives-based undergraduate pedagogies contribute to the work of moving Page 116 →marginalized voices to the center? Located at the nexus of pedagogical innovation, archival engagement, and pioneering digital scholarship, the QAP works toward such radical institutional change. The QAP intervenes in an institution that has (historically) been slow

to support and often unambiguously hostile to LGBTQ+ people. The project collaboratively deploys undergraduate pedagogy and the curriculum, student engagement in the archives, and use of digital humanities scholarship to leverage that change. It has, at its very center, the voices and stories of the LGBTQ+ people who have lived Lafayette's sometimes quite painful history.

Perspective 1—Faculty Director: Mary A. Armstrong, Charles A. Dana Professor of Women's, Gender & Sexuality Studies and English, and Program Chair, Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies

Curricular and Institutional Change

When I developed Lafayette College's first course in sexuality studies in 2011, I had no idea that my students and I were heading for transformative work with the college archives or that the course would be the starting point for the QAP. As the relatively new chair of the Women's, Gender and Sexuality Studies (WGSS) program Studies program, the original purpose of my WGS 340: Sexuality Studies class was to intervene—as swiftly as possible—in a college curriculum that did not offer students the opportunity to engage in LGBTQ+ studies in any substantive way. Historically a conservative institution, Lafayette's approach to sexuality studies was a perfect version of what education theorist Elliot Eisner has termed the "null curriculum."[7] This particular null curriculum—that is, the Queer studies content with which students were not given the opportunity to engage—was more than a failure to offer important intellectual content to students. The absence of LGBTQ+ studies sent a message about institutional values, signaling clearly that LGBTQ+ histories, Page 117 →cultures, and issues were not sufficiently important to include in the college's most essential work, that is, the business of teaching and learning. The absence of sexuality-related courses banished both Queer history and Queer people to invisibility, inside and outside of the classroom.

QAP's close connections to both the classroom and the archives is shaped by this context. In many ways, WGS 340 was the origin point for the QAP because initial course goals were overtly political as well as pedagogical. When I designed the class, I was clear-eyed about the political nature of the curriculum and eager to deploy it ideologically.[8] Adding a sexuality studies course was a necessary part of developing a more viable WGS program, but the development of WGS 340 was also an intentional intervention in the institution, an instructional decision that aimed for effects that were liberatory and campus-wide, as well as intellectual and classroom-based.

WGS 340: Sexuality Studies is an advanced interdisciplinary class that is, like many higher-level LGBTQ+ studies courses, anchored in the work of French historian and theorist Michel Foucault. Foucault's thinking shapes the course, framing other materials and also functioning as a main

reference point for class discussions. Students spend the first three weeks of class intensively reading *The History of Sexuality Vol. I: An Introduction*, with an emphasis on the historically constructed, contingent nature of seemingly self-evident, "natural" sexual identities. Like most courses of this kind, one goal is for students to understand that gender and sexual identities are (re)constructed over time through the intertwined workings of emergent discourses and morphing institutions. These identities arise and dissipate as power, language, and institutions interact. I designed WGS 340 to focus, in particular, on institutions' role in the creation and shaping of modern gender/sexual identities.[9]

The first iteration of the course was successful, judging by 2011 standards for LGBTQ+ Studies at Lafayette. The course "made" with a total enrollment of nine students—an achievement in and of itself. Several LGBTQ+ identified student participants came Page 118 →out to me during or after the class, and most reported I was the first person at Lafayette to whom they had disclosed their Queer sexual or gender identities. This indicates that the course created a much-needed safe space on campus. LGBTQ+ and allied students uniformly expressed appreciation for the class in both its contents and climate-changing senses. Word began to get around that this was a challenging but interesting course.

But the first iteration of the class also revealed an important limitation. Sexuality Studies necessarily spends a great deal of time on theory, and deploys a considerable amount of historical and contemporary examples of how gendered/sexual identities are socially produced. There is also heavy emphasis on intersectionality as a key analytic. Class materials move energetically across many examples of how other identity categories, such as race and ethnicity, intersect with discourses around sexuality and how these categories have mutually constitutive effects. Amid theory, historical examples, and intersectional analytics focusing on race, I also wanted my students to *directly* discover and explore how discourses of sexuality move and shift within institutions, and to see and understand how such processes are currently happening all around them.

Into the Archives—Undergraduate Research as Product and Catalyst for Change

As I was considering possible revisions to the course, a new variable entered the equation in the person of a Lafayette alumnus. Riley Temple, a member of the class of 1971, is one of the earliest African American graduates of Lafayette, an Emeritus Member of the Lafayette Board of Trustees, and an out gay man. Coincidentally, Temple arranged to meet with then-Provost Wendy Hill to discuss what it would mean for the college to begin to attend to its Queer past. Soon after, the (now Emerita) Director of Special Collections & College Archives Diane Shaw and I were invited to meet with the provost to discuss Temple's visit and his request for more attentiveness Page 119

→to Lafayette's LGBTQ+ history. It soon became obvious that connecting WGS 340 to the college archives would be the perfect place to spark an intervention that was both curricular and institutional.

Higher education archives are situated in specific institutions, supported by a particular constellation of resources, and embedded in contexts that shape what it means for an instructor to engage with both archival materials and archivists. In the case of WGS 340, several local institutional factors influenced my ability to partner with Lafayette's special collections and college archives in order to develop a pedagogical strategy for my students to explore the college's "history of sexuality." Some salient characteristics of Lafayette were:

- •*Teaching partnerships between faculty and archivists/librarians are routine at Lafayette*. Archivists and librarians hold faculty status, reflecting the institution's recognition of their capacity as co-instructors and normalizing their engagement in teaching praxis.
- •As part of a small, well-resourced, private liberal arts college, *the archives are well resourced as well*. Archivists are highly trained, materials are available and well-organized, and there is a functional, welcoming space where classes can take place. The liberal arts model also encourages individual instruction for students in this space.
- •The Lafayette archives *has been historically committed to diversity and to the collection and preservation of materials related to underrepresented groups*. Notably, in 2002, the archives collected oral histories from Lafayette's first women alumnae (the college began to admit women in 1971) and African American alumni from the 1960s and 1970s.
- •Despite a demonstrated commitment to diversifying collections, such diversification was selective: the archives *had no specific projects, collections, or areas of focus related to LGBTQ+ issues*. Lafayette's Queer history, as such, was not present in the archives.

These characteristics help illustrate that pedagogical interventions involving higher education archives are shaped not only by actors' intentions, but also by relevant local institutional features such as cultures of co-instruction, availability and kinds of resources, institutional type, and already existing or absent ideological and political commitments (both curricular and archival). Understanding how pedagogical interventions and student work can change a higher education archive means actively taking the characteristics of any *particular* institution and archive into account. In Lafayette's case, the college archives had a strong record of successful pedagogical involvement. However, the archives also had implicitly but authoritatively declared that gender and race mattered when it came to more intentionally recording the college's discriminatory past and that Queer issues and lives did not.

Bringing my students into conversation with the archives began with questions. While I of course wanted my students to acquire standard archives-related skills (i.e., strengthen their capacity to work with primary sources), I was especially interested in formulating a way to enable them to put Foucault's ideas into radical praxis. I wrote to the Director of Special Collections, Diane Shaw, and college archivist Elaine Stomber, querying them about possibilities because I was anxious to know whether there were any LGBTQ+/sexuality studies materials and artifacts in the archives at all. I asked four questions:

1. 1.Could the college archives support student research on sexual identities, including LGBTQ history, on campus?
2. 2.Did we have the documentation to help students explore the history of sexuality at Lafayette?
3. 3.Would the records in the college archives help students understand how institutions organize sexuality?
4. 4.And would those documents uncover the mechanisms by which they do so?

I wanted my undergraduate students to recognize and reframe the archives' past representational and preservationist decisions through projects that uncovered "new" artifacts and reoriented archival materials that addressed Queer stories, histories, and lives. But before such an undertaking could begin, I had to believe that it was reasonable to try. What materials and artifacts pertaining to LGBTQ+ life specifically and sexual cultures generally were extant and concealed in the Lafayette archives? In an institution historically hostile to LGBTQ+ people, had any LGBTQ+ related artifacts survived at all?

The willingness of the archives to collaborate on this liberatory project was significant, and connects the QAP with the emergent insights associated with critical archival studies, a field of archival studies that emphasizes "collective critical thinking about ways to resist reinforcing oppression based on race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability in the archives."[10] This critical approach clarifies the many connections between archival practice and the dynamics of power, oppression, and liberation that have focused our work.[11] Archives may actively participate in their own deconstruction and revision, or resist those processes. Archives have the power to support or hinder, to seek or shroud searches for certain materials and documents. And, like the null curriculum, the actions of archives often take place through inaction. The insidious inertia generated by unexamined, default perspectives in which the experience of dominant groups stand in for "experience" itself can effectively block other representations of identities, history and power while seeming to do "nothing."

Research is always *technically* possible when archives are accessible, but the cooperation and interest of colleagues who control access and have intimate knowledge of archival contents influence how a revisionist project moves forward. In the case of WGS 340, archivists at Lafayette embraced the participation of undergraduates in the revision of the archives and welcomed a

project Page 122 →that interrupted the invisibility of the college's LGBTQ+ history. College archivists began developing possible nodes of the collection where the history of sexuality—particularly LGBTQ+ issues—might be identified as places for students to start looking. These included materials pertaining to themes such as LGBTQ+ student clubs, Title IX, sexual assault policies, AIDS, college domestic partner benefits, and so on (see **Figure 4.1**). A very hazy outline of materials began to surface in preparation for the second iteration of WGS 340.
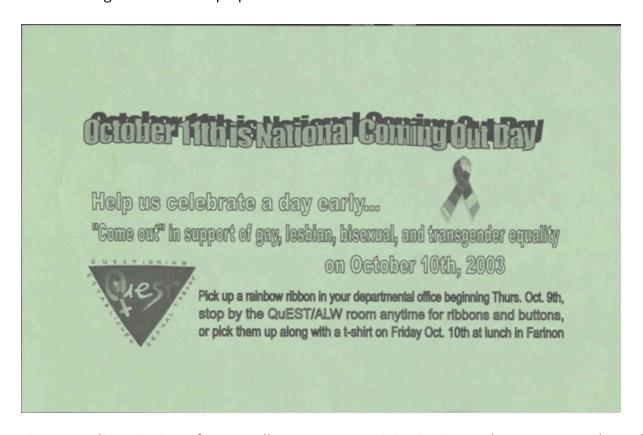

Figure 4.1.Flier to invite Lafayette College campus participation in October 2003 events hosted by QuEST (Questioning Established Sexual Taboos), observing National Coming Out Day.

When that iteration came around, WGS 340 students had a new option for their final assignment, a possibility that emerged from the intersection of several variables: an alumnus's outside intervention, the college archive's interest in self-critique and alteration, and an instructor's pedagogical desire for students to directly encounter the intertwined workings of discourse, identities, power, and institutions. Students could choose to write a standard research paper, but they also had the option of participating in Page 123 →something new: "The History of Sexuality at Lafayette College: The Archives Project." The archival assignment option offered WGS 340 students

the opportunity to pursue a Lafayette-centered topic in which you discover and analyze topics concerning sexual identities (including but not limited to LGBTQ identities) on campus. Your work will explore a <u>narrative, historical, and/or political</u> aspect of sexuality on campus and be centered on a theme.

You will design project/do research in the Lafayette Archives (Skillman Library) and partner with the College as it works to better understand and preserve its own rich history around sexual identities, particularly LGBTQ history on campus.

In essence, the assignment asked students to revise the archives' presentation of Lafayette's history of sexuality and alter the contents and organization of that history relative to the archives' collections, holdings, and areas of emphasis. Students were encouraged to see the basic materials presented by the archives not as endpoints but as doorways to new questions and the unearthing of additional materials. It was made explicit that the institutional power of the archives was under scrutiny and the archives was not a static collection of materials to be used in the conventional sense, but also a place and an ideological nexus we would intentionally work to transform.

The new WGS 340 assignment option was also designed to link student work back to the archives, looping newly discovered artifacts *and* related student analyses back into the archives itself. Every student who selected the new archival assignment had the option to (voluntarily) contribute their research project to the archives; the archives, in turn, agreed to add those student papers. This meant that every student project could act as a permanent disruption to the archival status quo. These students would expand knowledge of LGBTQ+ history and sexuality issues but Page 124 →also leverage their research as mechanisms for transforming archival content and, in most cases, contributing sharp critiques of both archival and institutional practices. From that first set of papers, projects spanned a wide range of sexuality-related topics including *Black Manifesto to QuEST Manifesto* (Shanequa Lassiter '14), *The Language of Sexual Health at Lafayette College 1970–2014* (Hollis Miller '14), *LGBTQ and the Princeton Review* (Deja Washington '14), and *The Emergence of Lafayette College's Sexual Harassment Policy* (Kathryn White '14).

Through this new assignment, WGS 340 intervened in the archives in two critical ways. First, students intentionally located and synthesized materials meant to shift how the archives recognized and organized artifacts relative to the significance of sexuality-related issues and LGBTQ+ communities and experiences. Second, the option of adding their own interventive research directly to the archives ruptured the boundary between the classroom and the archives, placing students' challenges to archival decision-making within the bounds of the archives as well. Student research was not a product of updated archival materials but a force that disrupted lines of power and became a transformative artifact in and of itself—one that was permanently

capable of disrupting the archival status quo. In short, unlike many final research papers, archived WGS 340 projects were neither synthetic in purpose nor temporary in lifespan. They became long-lasting tools for change.

Queer Oral History

Because the research praxis of WGS 340 was rooted in theory, students saw their work in the archives as much more than simply locating new materials or adding to the collection. The critical context provided by the course enabled them to recognize shifting discourses around sexuality and sexual/gender identities, as well as the relationships of those discourses to formal and informal Page 125 →structures of power. As they unearthed new artifacts and themes, students sharpened their capacity to think critically about the framing of sexuality within the institution of the college over time. Students who chose to add their own research to the archives evidenced a particularly strong sense of the deep intervention they were making. Slowly, after several iterations of WGS 340, the archives' relationship to sexuality studies-related materials shifted. The interventions of student researchers—elevated by course content and energetically abetted by the archives staff—began to generate a collection of materials and artifacts directly associated with the college's history of sexuality and LGBTQ+ lives.

There were, however, limitations to WGS 340's capacity to challenge archival authority around sexuality and Queer lives. Lafayette's history around sexuality and LGBTQ+ issues has been a dark one—so dark that in 1992 the college was recognized by the *Princeton Review* as the most homophobic institution in the United States.

Using logic, imagination, and research, and guided by active archivist allies, students gleaned what they could from the archives relative to sexuality and Queer history. Yet given the institution's long neglect of LGBTQ+ issues there was, predictably, a relatively limited amount of material. We needed to open new avenues for research and enable further interventions in transforming the archives. We needed more information.

The QAP LGBTQ+ Oral History Project developed from this need. Pedagogical interventions into the archives were necessarily limited to what had been somehow already preserved and collected, confining LGBTQ+-related archival work to past record-keeping decisions made by the archives. Because no formal attempts had been made to document Lafayette's history of sexuality generally or LGBTQ+ history specifically, salient materials had largely entered the archives as "stowaway artifacts" piggy-backed onto content that had been retained for other reasons. The idea behind an oral history project with alumni was to move the project away Page 126 →Page 127 →Page 128 →from a reliance on accidental Queer history. In addition, an oral history project would push the college archives to surrender representational authority to Lafayette's LGBTQ+ community. Queer history at the college could emerge in terms of lived, local LGBTQ+ experience, rather than in terms of archival choice-making or the specific interests of student researchers.

THE **PRINCETON** REVIEW

THE
STUDENT ACCESS
GUIDE TO
THE BEST
COLLEGES

1992 EDITION

BY TOM MELTZER,
ZACH KNOWER, AND
JOHN KATZMAN

■ Gays out of closet:

Bryn Mawr College
Grinnell College
Simon's Rock of Bard College
Rhode Island School of Design
Goddard College
Bard College
Reed College
Hampshire College
Sarah Lawrence College
Bennington College

New College–University of South Florida
Wesleyan University
Vassar College
Juilliard School
Oberlin College
Beloit College
Tufts University
Smith College
Parsons School of Design
Carleton College

■ Gays still in closet:

Lafayette College
Washington and Lee University
Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology
Randolph-Macon College
Rhodes College
College of Holy Cross
Villanova University
Brigham Young University
Wofford College
Clarkson University

Muhlenberg College
University of Dayton
Baylor University
Colorado School of Mines
Seton Hall University
Wittenberg University
Franklin and Marshall College
DePauw University
Claremont–Claremont McKenna
Manhattanville College

■ Gay community accepted:

Deep Springs College
Bennington College
New College–University of South Florida
Eugene Lang College
Reed College
Simon's Rock of Bard College
Marlboro College
Bryn Mawr College
Goddard College
College of the Atlantic

Hampshire College
Bard College
Rhode Island School of Design
Parsons School of Design
Sarah Lawrence College
Grinnell College
Smith College
Vassar College
Oberlin College
Juilliard School

■ Homophobic:

Lafayette College
Baylor University
Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology
Washington and Lee University
Brigham Young University
Randolph-Macon College
Bucknell University
Morehouse College
Hampden-Sydney College
Furman University

Clemson University
Fairfield University
Villanova University
Providence College
Colorado School of Mines
University of North Dakota
Wofford College
College of Holy Cross
University of Notre Dame
Clarkson University

Figure 4.2. Excerpt from the 1992 edition of *The Princeton Review: The Student Access Guide to the Best Colleges* putting Lafayette College at the top of a list of the nation's most homophobic campuses.

The Lafayette college archives' existing commitment to active engagement with alums from historically marginalized groups (first women graduates and early African American graduates) offered a precedent for launching an LGBTQ+ oral history project at Lafayette. As the QAP turned toward oral history, WGS 340 shifted once again. Students now needed access to the critical debates around the *particular* workings of power and value relative to oral history and Queer lives. I again revised the course to include materials on queering the archives, and on the history and theory behind LGBTQ+ oral history and Queer archives work.[12]

The introduction of oral history interviews powerfully reshaped and expanded the QAP. Structurally, the oral histories added entirely new strata of information about the college's past and its Queer history. The reflections, recollections, and observations of Queer alums, faculty, and staff who had lived the college's LGBTQ+ history guided student research into new places and transformed the content of their work. More profoundly, oral history offered the QAP a particularly rich and productively disruptive mode for transforming the archives. Offering intimate-yet-public narratives that are always "rich with multiple truths," oral history interviews necessarily reflect the shifting nature of human subjectivity and embodied experience, representing particularly powerful ways to engage in archival transformation.[13] The evolving, inherently ambiguous narratives of our LGBTQ+ oral history interviews elevated the QAP from a project that aimed to "fill in gaps" in a linear chronology to one which expanded the record but also productively destabilized and challenged assumptions around the nature of Queer experience, identity, and history.

As the QAP LGBTQ+ oral history project unfolded and transcripts began coming in, our work took on new complexity and depth. It was at this point Lafayette's archivists and I began to consider how we might make these important new materials widely accessible. We wanted to make the LGBTQ+ oral histories available in a standard way, just as other oral history collections from the Lafayette archives were. But we also wanted to go beyond that and make our work in queering the archives—including ongoing transformative student work—public facing and available more broadly for use by other educators and researchers. Having developed a fairly broad collection of emergent LGBTQ+ materials and a slowly-growing collection of LGBTQ+ oral histories, we believed this was a moment to take the archives beyond its own walls. We turned at this point to the development of a Queer digital humanities project, a lofty goal that coincided fortuitously with the arrival of Dr. Nunes.

Perspective 2—Digital Scholarship Librarian: Charlotte Nunes, Director of Lafayette College

Libraries Digital Scholarship Services

When I arrived at Lafayette in August of 2016, the QAP was already well under way, as Dr. Armstrong detailed previously. As the QAP faculty director, she had convened an enthusiastic faculty advisory committee to help guide the project. Along with former Director of Special Collections & College Archives, Diane Shaw, and college archivist, Elaine Stomber, Dr. Armstrong had completed the Institutional Review Board process and was actively collecting oral histories to be preserved in the college archives. For some time, the advisory committee had been contemplating a digital humanities (DH) project anchored in the QAP oral histories. As a new member of the committee with a background in digital scholarship technologies, I was happy to consult on some options. We had in mind a highly flexible DH project that would interweave Page 130 →oral histories, archival materials, and undergraduate interpretive research to tell new stories and make new arguments about Queer history at Lafayette.

We considered TimelineJS but determined that although we would indeed want a timeline functionality as part of our DH project, that couldn't be the extent of the project—we needed something more multimodal and multi-linear. The digital exhibit platform Omeka was a possibility; its hierarchical structure, composed of items and thematic collections, gives useful shape to many successful DH projects. Ultimately, we chose the platform Scalar for our project for a number of reasons. In particular, Scalar's aggressively non-linear approach to content meshed with our vision of the site as Queer in form, as well as content. In Scalar, contents are heavily networked and interconnected across the site, rather than being hierarchically nested. We determined that for us this was important in thinking ahead to how the site could be used for research and teaching that approaches history-building critically and iteratively.

We also liked the values behind Scalar. Like TimelineJS and Omeka, Scalar is an open-source software project created and supported by an institution of higher education. Scalar is stewarded by the Alliance for Networking Visual Culture at the University of Southern California. This alliance has a number of archive, library, and university press partners, and is an important player in the field of open access academic library publishing. We liked that Scalar is driven by values of higher education and cultural heritage, and that it has good traction in the way of robust user communities in the fields of DH and open access scholarly communications.

In addition to shared values, Scalar offered specific features that were important to us. Scalar integrates TimelineJS to offer a timeline layout option for content, which supported our goal of creating new historical narratives. Scalar has comprehensive options for metadata—that basic information you need to Page 131 →orient yourself to a digital asset so it doesn't exist in a vacuum, but relates to a context. In Scalar you can select fields from multiple metadata schemas used by libraries and archives to describe Page 132 →primary source materials. This was appealing to us since the site would incorporate a range of materials such as oral histories,

photographs, event posters, meeting agendas, newspaper articles, various ephemera and material objects including leaflets, buttons, and t-shirts, and even a quilt commemorating the admission of women to Lafayette in 1970.

Figure 4.3. Flier to advertise a 2018 Arts Fest hosted by the Lafayette College student group Queer People of Color (QPOC).

For a DH project that would be inherently archival, anchored in oral histories, and highly cross-linked and cross-referential, Scalar emerged clearly as the platform of choice.

The next step was to build a team to undertake constructing the QAP DH project. There was no question that this would be an invaluable experiential learning opportunity for talented undergraduate students to create new knowledge while building skills in digital content management. Dr. Armstrong recruited a team of students who had taken courses with her in the WGSS program at Lafayette. These students came to the work with a strong general sense of the conceptual and historical issues involved in building the project. Meanwhile, I communicated with members of my department to determine what tasks they could reasonably take on given their other responsibilities in Digital Scholarship Services. By the time we launched the project in April of 2019, Adam Malantonio (digital initiatives developer), Nora Egloff (digital repository librarian), Paul Miller (visual resources curator), and Janna Avon (digital initiatives librarian) had all played key roles in the project, from configuring the Scalar software and addressing server-side issues, to providing training on audio editing workflows for oral histories, to offering consultations on the nuts and bolts of adding content to Scalar. The QAP DH site is a truly collaborative team effort, and the depth and complexity of the site's final iteration is a reflection of the many layers of expertise required to construct a digital project driven by such a complex and ambitious vision.

During the first several months of the project, the undergraduate researchers wrangled with nuts and bolts of the site. Over the course of two workshop sessions per week, we learned the ins and outs of Scalar. We needed a data model, a style guide, and metadata guidelines, and we would need to create all of these from scratch in order to actualize our unique vision for the project. Cue many a lengthy discussion hashing out the component elements of our data model and how they would interact. We made endless minute decisions about fonts, formats, file names, title conventions, date conventions, metadata field definitions, rules for acronyms, and more. Attending to these seemingly endless minutiae was essential to setting a strong prototype for the site that would enable future researchers on the site to contribute seamlessly, with a clear sense of parameters, and create a cohesive whole.

Playing an active decision-making role as we set the foundation of the site was also essential for the students to develop a sense of ownership of the project. This, in turn, supported the goal to support young professionals interested in library work. By scaling up the professionalization opportunities we offer students to participate in digital archives projects, and by improving communication to the student body about the archives-related professionalization opportunities we currently offer, the QAP has made an active investment in the diversity of the archives profession. No matter what fields students enter professionally, their experience with the QAP helps them develop skills for engaging in collaborative, respectful teamwork. Ideally their encounter with archives work exposes them to the contingency of the historical record, and provides opportunities for them to seek equity—both important outcomes of undergraduate education at an institution like Lafayette, where the college values statement on diversity and inclusion calls for "an environment in which difference is valued, equity is sought, and inclusiveness is practiced."

While many campus units do important work to advance these values, libraries and college archives are uniquely situated to enact them. If a community's history doesn't have accessible archival documentation, it's harder to conduct research that centers the Page 134 →community in the historical record. Therefore, the archives profession has a particular responsibility to seek equity by supporting initiatives that offer a corrective to past acquisitions policies that may not have centered what archivist Yusef Omowale calls "minoritized life."[14] For student researchers on the QAP DH project, the process of building the site was a visceral encounter with archival absence. As they realized the apparent dearth of materials on Queer history in the college archives, they were frustrated—even disillusioned—by the inherently incomplete, inherently exclusive nature of archives. Yet as creators of the site committed to make visible hidden and under-archived elements of Lafayette's Queer past, the students could claim ownership of this historical record and play an active role in constructing it from their perspective.

The QAP team found several ways to deliberately build the QAP DH site's digital archives to account for Queer histories. They scoured decades-worth of the digitized Lafayette student newspaper, solicited primary source materials from interviewees, and perhaps most importantly, partnered with archivists Elaine and Diane to identify materials pertinent to Lafayette's Queer histories that were distributed across diffuse collections.

Although the college archives include no centralized collections on Queer history at Lafayette, the archivists' sleuthing surfaced a host of materials that we could bring together digitally in the QAP DH site. This dynamic gives credence to Omowale's concern that in archives, "inclusion is dialectically tied to exclusion." Omowale argues that underrepresented lives and communities "should not echo articulations that we do not already exist in the archive. We are not marginal or other to the archive, but integral to it. We may be silenced or made invisible, but we have always been present."[15] As students recognized these truths, they internalized the constructed nature of history as both a problem (in that it can be exclusionary) and an opportunity: they are agents in its construction.

AIDS panel comes to Lafayette for discussion

by Melissa Lennon

Lafayette students and concerned Easton residents filled Colton Chapel Tuesday night to participate in a panel discussion about Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, or AIDS.

The Chapel was packed with people listening to, and asking questions of, Ms. Alice Clark, from the medical profession; a Reverend Calhoun, who helps AIDS sufferers deal with their disease and David, an actual AIDS victim. Most questions asked by the audience were directed towards David.

The actual way or time he contracted AIDS was difficult to pinpoint. Besides the generally well known ways of contracting the disease, by semen, vaginal secretions or blood of an infected person coming in contact with the blood of an uninfected person, all the panel members cited other high risk behavior such as drinking and experimenting with drugs.

Ms. Clark was especially concerned with high school and college-age people because of the their lack of education on the facts about AIDS and its transmission. David reiterated the need for increased education. He also stressed throughout the program that AIDS patients are people too. He explained that it is not actually AIDS that kills, but the disease that one contracts because of the deficiency in the immune system that actually constitutes the illness.

David had twice before been hospitalized for pneumonia. This, he said, was very frightening, because of the treatment he received. The doctors and nurses wore masks and gloves when administering care, and this left David with a feeling of isolation.

The Reverend's main concern in society's handling of the AIDS crisis has to do with treating AIDS victims as fellow human beings. They are not social outcasts and should not be abandoned. David added that love and understanding, not condemnation, is what AIDS patients need.

In the Lehigh Valley there is an organization called the AIDS Service Center. It provides support and care for family and friends of PWA's (Persons With AIDS). They train buddies to support AIDS patients, conduct a support group and also a therapy group.

STRAIGHT EDGE

(Continued from Page 4)

bigger problem.

In conclusion, the next few months will be very interesting. The American voters will have a choice between a qualified candidate and the Governor of Massachusetts (or JoJo the Dog-faced Boy — you never know). Of course, perhaps neither candidate is that wonderful. There's always 1992. There's also 2008 if you're willing to wait for the Straight Edge Guy. A columnist can dream, can't he!

TRUSTEES FUND

(Continued from Page 1)

those who support the college in a leadership capacity, and its inner Marquis Circle. In 1987, Hagel was inducted into Lafayette's Societe d'Honneur, a group which honors the college's 32 most distinguished benefactors.

Lawrence J. Ramer, a 1950 graduate of Lafayette, is chairman of the board of Pacific Coast Cement Corporation. A member of the college's board of trustees since 1976, Ramer was vice chair of the board's financial policy committee and also served two terms as chair of the Marquis Society.

Participating student artists are Ann T. Augustine, Clayton B. Evans, Hugh R. Jeffers II, Mary Kathleen Hooper, Daryl A. Madi, Paul Miller, and David B. Nemetz. Faculty members Ed Kerns and Tom Burke have also donated works.

The project is co-sponsored by three student organizations: the Apartheid Awareness Group, the Association of Black Collegians, and Theta Delta Chi Fraternity. Co-chairs are Tamar Oberman; Evans; and William Wagner, president of Theta Delta Chi Fraternity.

The public is invited to attend the exhibit. Persons wishing to donate to the fund may send a check made out to "Lafayette College-Art Against Apartheid" to the Association of Black Collegians, Box 4020, Lafayette College, Easton, Pa. 18042. For more information, contact Oberman, 215-559-0689; Evans, 215-252-9643; or Wagner, 215-252-9160.

Honors Convocation held Saturday

by Heidi Ludwick

The Academy Awards of Lafayette College were presented to students Saturday, April 23, 1988 at the annual All-College Honors Convocation. Usually held in February, the event proved to be a success due in large to improvements made by members of the Subcommittee on Honors Convocation: Ellen Hurwitz, chairman; David. A. Portlock, Assistant Dean of Academic Services; George G. Souse, Consultant for the Faculty Committee on Honors and Academic Awards; and Lara Culley '89.

Held in the Morris R. Williams Center for the Arts, the afternoon ceremony opened with remarks by Christopher Wilson, Chairman of the Faculty Committee on Honors and Academic Awards, and President of the College, David W. Ellis. Featured speaker, William S. Andrews, class of '71 and past recipient of the George Wharton Pepper Prize, highlighted the celebration by reflecting on his experiences at Lafayette College. During his presentation, he discussed the value of honors to him, recognized a positive relation between the faculty and students in the past, and emphasized not only academics, but the importance of the Lafayette experience as a whole.

The ceremony continued with the awarding of prizes for academic excellence, leadership, character, citizenship, and professional premise in various fields of study including engineering, chemistry, English, languages, and military science. Presenting the awards were Dean of Academic Services, Alan W. Childs, and Chairman of the Subcommittee on Honors Convocation, Ellen Hurwitz. Sigma Alpha Epsilon was honored during the ceremony with a trophy for highest academic achievement for a social living group. According to Lara Culley, everyone received certificates for their awards and some students received cash prizes for excellence.

Following the ceremony, students and faculty continued the celebration at a reception held in the Williams Center lobby. Faculty, students, and guests socialized, congratulated winners, and talked to Andrews while nibbling on cheese and punch and enjoying the background music performed by Lafayette students, Paul Givin, violin, Courtney Ryan, cello, Colleen Mailhot, flute, and Kevin LaBar, piano.

SUPERIOR

(Continued from Page 1)

The winners of the 1987-88 Superior Teaching Awards received a certificate from Student Government as well as flowers. In addition, both Professor Bakins and Professor McCreary will get their names engraved on two plaques in Marquis Hall for permanent recognition.

Figure 4.4. Article published in *The Lafayette* student newspaper on April 29th, 1988 detailing an AIDS panel that came to Lafayette College.

Perspective 3—Student Researcher: Jennifer Wellnitz, 2019, Former QAP Lead Student Researcher

As one of the first student researchers on the QAP team, I found that working on the project was a highlight of my undergraduate experience at Lafayette. I was offered the opportunity to join the project at the end of my sophomore year, after taking Dr. Armstrong's WGS 340: Sexuality Studies class (WGS 340 is referenced extensively on the QAP site), and I actually turned down a research opportunity in my major field of computer science in order to join the QAP team. That decision was a defining moment in my college career and working on the QAP has been the most meaningful thing I've done as an undergraduate.

One of the key benefits of working on the QAP was gaining experience in the field of DH, an area in which I had no prior knowledge. Working on a DH project was eye-opening. I had never considered the role technological advancements could play in the preservation and study of oral histories specifically, or in humanities fields more broadly. Though my main area of study in college was in a STEM field, I have always enjoyed working in the humanities. Being able to combine these interests in a meaningful way was an incredible experience. It gave me the ability to work at the center of a project that felt significant to me for both personal and political reasons while leveraging the skills I had already honed outside of the project as a computer science major.

I was also able to use my experience with computer science in new ways on the QAP site. For example, some of the boilerplate text from the Scalar platform needed to be adjusted in order to accurately reflect our data model and to clearly convey the purpose behind the different Scalar components. For example, in place of Scalar's generic general designation "Tagged," I created designations for "Themes" and even more granular "Keywords." This adjustment became one of my responsibilities on the team, and with the help of the Scalar developers at the University of Southern Page 137 →California, I was able to employ some of my computer science skills to accomplish these goals and directly enhance the project.

As Dr. Nunes discusses in the previous section of this chapter, one of the central issues for the development of the QAP was choosing our platform. Unless a project builds its own web platform from scratch, any data model will be shaped and limited by the capabilities of the platform selected. Hence, the early stages of designing a data model were inextricably tied to the critical process of choosing our platform. Ultimately, because of the complex nature of the data we wished to catalog and the interconnected relationships we wanted to highlight, we chose Scalar

due to its flexibility and highly "relational" nature. In short, our choice of platform was informed by our concept for the data model, and our data model was informed by the capabilities of our platform.

My computer science background helped prepare me for developing a working and sensible data model early in the process of creating the QAP DH site. This process took the majority of the working time for my first four months on the team and it remained a large part of my day-to-day efforts over the year and a half that I worked on the project. We wanted to develop a model that was flexible yet coherent, and which could express the nuance and complexity of the relationships inherent in the material we were trying to document. Oftentimes, when engaged in content-based work such as uploading new archival artifacts, we would discover holes or inconsistencies in the way the model was constructed and be forced to spend the rest of our working time for that session reevaluating the structure and then implementing adjustments to make our model more consistent. Ultimately, we landed on a complex but fairly easily understandable data model that complexly networked related archival artifacts with the LGBTQ+ oral histories at the heart of the site.

Because our data model was inevitably shaped and constrained by the capabilities of our platform, we based the various components of our model on the available functionality in Scalar. Page 138 →Two specific capabilities of the Scalar platform were key to constructing our data model for the QAP: "tags" and "paths." Tags and paths both connect materials in the QAP site. "Tags" form bi-directional, direct links between two pages. "Paths" are links that create a sequential ordering of pages, and can be used to tell a story or make a structured argument using the materials on the site. "Paths" are useful when interpretation is necessary to analyze items relative to each other or to form a narrative about the relationships among various materials on the site.

Oral history interviews with Lafayette LGBTQ+ alumni are the core of the QAP DH site. These narratives are given their own central place in the structure, where they are organized chronologically. As the bedrock of the project, they drive the content of the site and generate the archival materials associated with the QAP. With these interviews at the epicenter, we divided our data model into three main components: "Themes," "Keywords," and "Interpretive Paths." Both Themes and Keywords make use of Scalar's "Tags" feature and both are generated from the content of the interviews. Themes represent broader, more conceptual ideas that tie interviews and archival items together; examples include Gender Discrimination, Religion, and Trans Identities. Keywords represent more granular topics referenced in interviews and are also supported by archival materials; examples include specific on-campus entities (such as the English Department) and the AIDS Quilt. Both Themes and Keywords organize the materials on the site. On the Scalar dashboard, archival items *are tagged by* the page representing the Theme in question and archival items *tag* the page representing a Keyword. A change in JavaScript

enabled us to tweak some of Scalar's boilerplate text to make the language of the site less confusing. "This page is tagged by" became "Themes" and "This page is a tag of" became "Keywords."

Scalar's Interpretive Paths function offered us an opportunity to represent abstractions and conceptual gaps within the site. While many archival artifacts can be seen as representing something relatively concrete (such as a specific on-campus event that Page 139 →corresponds to a Keyword), it is difficult to find artifacts that depict important concepts such as isolation, visibility, or climate. These hard-to-capture ideas are, however, central to exploring the Queer experience, especially at an institution where silence around LGBTQ+ lives has been a predominant theme. Interpretive Paths can be employed to create interpretive essays that tie together several items on the site—both archival objects and interviews—to explore a more complex or nuanced idea than could be captured with a basic Theme or Keyword. Current examples of Interpretive Paths on the site address concepts like "Climate" and "Community."

Taken as a whole, our data model could be conceptualized like this (**Figure 4.5**):

QAP Data Model Element	Scalar Implementation	Examples
Interpretive Path	A media-rich, thesis-driven "path" through the site synthesizes content from across the site (oral history interviews and archival artifacts) in order to tell a story or make an argument about Queer history at Lafayette College.	Sample Path topics: • In/visibility • Passing • Diversity • Allyship
Theme	An intermediary page that corresponds to one of the broad conceptual themes that shape the site. A Theme page can **be a tag of** any number of related interviews, interview clips, and archival artifacts. Themes are generated by the oral history interviews.	Sample Themes: • LGBTQ+ student groups • Greek Life • Campus Events • Interviews
Keyword	An intermediary page that corresponds to a specific, granular concept. A Keyword can **be tagged by** any number of related interviews, interview clips, and archival artifacts. Keywords are generated by the oral history interviews.	Sample Keywords: • AIDS Quilt • Pardee Hall • Women's & Gender Studies Program
QAP Oral History Interviews & Related Archival Artifacts		

Figure 4.5.The Queer Archives Project data model.

Ultimately, my involvement in the QAP was a defining and rewarding feature of my undergraduate career. Whereas my regular course work rarely allowed me to engage in topics that felt personally meaningful, working on this project afforded me the ability to create tangible and long-lasting change (on both the historical and academic levels) to Queer history, even if the scope was the history of only one college. In most of my college experience, the self-contained nature of classroom work made it feel like a purely intellectual exercise, but QAP work produced an actual product from which others could learn as well.

As a Queer person myself, my involvement in this project had a great deal of personal meaning. My first days in the Lafayette College archives during my early involvement in the project showed me a piece of Lafayette College I never knew existed. It highlighted for me both that I am not alone—that others have come before me and that others will come after me—and that since I had never seen this history, it is likely that most of my peers hadn't seen it either. It is vital for Queer undergraduate students to feel a sense of belonging within the institution that is a part of nearly every aspect of their lives. The ability to preserve the narratives of other Queer people and to center and validate the worthiness of oral history and of Queer studies as an academic discipline made my participation in this project feel all the more rewarding, both in terms of posterity and in terms of the accessibility of Lafayette's Queer history to the students of my class year and years to come. I was glad to be able to participate in research that felt important both from an academic perspective and from a social and personal one as well.

Conclusion

As exemplified by Wellnitz's reflection, student contributors to the QAP move toward an iterative mode of archive-building that values collaborative process, that routinely reflects on its limits, and that acts to account for those limits. This work is a profound experiential learning opportunity for *all* students to value difference and seek equity that simultaneously supports progressive movements in the archives field at large. In addition, as Kelly Miller and Michelle Morton argue, working on projects such as the QAP can have an especially powerful and empowering effect on students from non-dominant communities, who "recognize themselves and their communities in the collections, thus increasing the potential for transformative educational experiences."[16]

While the archives field is well-positioned to help students achieve important outcomes of undergraduate education, archives-based undergraduate experiential learning is also highly effective in advancing important movements toward equity in archival practice. In "'To Suddenly Discover Yourself Existing': Uncovering the Impact of Community Archives," Michelle Caswell, Marika Cifor, and Mario H. Ramirez offer the term "representational belonging" to encapsulate the

broad-reaching impact of community-based archives to "empower people who have been marginalized by…memory institutions to have the autonomy and authority to establish, enact, and reflect on their presence in ways that are complex, meaningful, substantive, and positive to them in a variety of symbolic contexts."[17] No matter how they identify personally with LGBTQ+ communities at Lafayette, students working on the QAP help to facilitate representational belonging in the archives. The QAP transforms Lafayette's archival practice by centering the value of equity in archival representation. The transformation of archival practice manifested by the QAP, alongside the curricular innovations to which it is fundamentally linked, combine to drive meaningful institutional transformations at Lafayette College and model a transformative approach to both archival and educational change.

Notes

1. **1** Website: **https://www-crl-edu.ezproxy.lafayette.edu/primary-source-awards**

2. **2** Visit the Queer Archives Project Scalar site at qap.lafayette.edu.

3. **3** The Information Maintainers, D. Olson, J. Meyerson, M. A. Parsons, J. Castro, M. Lassere, D. J. Wright, H. Arnold, A. S. Galvan, P. Hswe, B. Nowviskie, A. Russell, L. Vinsel, & A. Acker (2019). *Information Maintenance as a Practice of Care*. Zenodo. **https://doi-org.ezproxy.lafayette.edu/10.5281/zenodo.3251131**

4. **4** Michelle Caswell et al., "'To Be Able to Imagine Otherwise': Community Archives and the Importance of Representation," *Archives and Records* 38, no. 1 (January 2, 2017): 6, **https://doi-org.ezproxy.lafayette.edu/10.1080/23257962.2016. 1260445**.

5. **5** Jamie Ann Lee, "Archival Legibility: Sustainability through Storytelling across Generations," *Medium*, August 13, 2018, **https://medium.com/community-archives/archival-legibility-legitimacy-sustainability-through-storytelling-across-generations-d0849a4f346d**.

6. **6** Jarrett Drake, "Seismic Shifts: On Archival Fact and Fictions," *Medium*, August 20, 2018, **https://medium.com/community-archives/seismic-shifts-on-archival-fact-and-fictions-6db4d5c655ae**.

7. **7** Elliot W. Eisner, *The Educational Imagination: On the Design and Evaluation of School Programs*, 2nd ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1979).

8. **8** William F. Pinar and C. A. Bowers, "Politics of Curriculum: Origins, Controversies, and Significance of Critical Perspectives," *Review of Research in Education* 18 (1992): 163–90, **https://doi-org.ezproxy.lafayette.edu/10.2307/1167299**.

9. **9** Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction* (Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2012).

10. **10** Jamie Ann Lee, *Producing the Archival Body* (Routledge, 2020), 11.

11. **11** Caswell et al., "Critical Archival Studies;" Marika Cifor and Stacy Wood, "Critical Feminism in the Archives," *Journal of Critical Library and Information Studies* 1, no. 2 (May 3, 2017), **https://doi-org.ezproxy.lafayette.edu/10.24242/jclis.v1i2.27**; Joan M. Schwartz and Terry

Cook, "Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory," *Archival Science* 2, no. 1 (March 1, 2002): 1–19, **https://doi-org.ezproxy.lafayette.edu/10.1007/BF02435628**.

12. **12**   Kevin P. Murphy, Jennifer L. Pierce, and Jason Ruiz, "What Makes Queer Oral History Different," *Oral History Review* 43, no. 1 (December 1, 2016): 1–24, **https://doi-org.ezproxy.lafayette.edu/10.1093/ohr/ohw022**; Nan Alamilla Boyd and Horacio N. Roque Ramírez, eds., *Bodies of Evidence: The Practice of Queer Oral History*, Oxford Oral History Series (Oxford University Press, 2012).

13. **13**   Jamie A. Lee, "In Critical Condition: (Un)Becoming Bodies in Archival Acts of Truth Telling," *Archivaria*, no. 88 (Fall 2019): 168.

14. **14**   Yusef Omowale, "We Already Are," *Medium*, September 3, 2018, **https://medium.com/community-archives/we-already-are-52438b863e31**.

15. **15**   Omowale, "We Already Are."

16. **16**   Kelly Miller and Michelle Morton, "Hidden Learning: Undergraduates at Work in the Archives," *Archive Journal* (September 9, 2012). **https://www.archivejournal.net/notes/hidden-learning/**

17. **17**   Michelle Caswell, Marika Cifor, and Mario H. Ramirez, "'To Suddenly Discover Yourself Existing': Uncovering the Impact of Community Archives," *The American Archivist* 79, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2016): 56–81.

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. Chapter Four:Queer Pasts, Queer Futures: The Lafayette College Queer Archives Project