

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

Los Angeles

Rethinking the Library Response to Black Literacy

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by

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Rethinking the Library Response to Black Literacy

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Professor Johanna R. Drucker, Chair

This dissertation radically reframes the library and information discourse on the African American literacy gap. It argues that special collections libraries are research environments where humanistic knowledge is produced, and that the books they house can provide important insights about the nature of literacy that have been previously overlooked. The research employs a nascent ethnobibliographic methodology in the examination of a range of artifacts from the black press, as it effectively recasts these artifacts as individual nodes in a larger system of knowledge production. By engaging in ethnobibliographic analysis, the study attempts to both identify and explore the bibliocultural link that connects bibliographical materiality with the processes of racial identity construction. The study draws upon data collected from a group of four individual case studies to further situate the research in an argument that advances the idea of a perception gap over the notion of an achievement gap in the institutional response.

The dissertation of Jesse Ryan Erickson is approved.

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Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of Lawrence Clark Powell, whose love for books and reading inspired the dream of a book-centered library for a new generation, and to Miriam Matthews, whose courage and fortitude blazed a trail for future librarians of color in a quest to preserve our diverse culture histories.

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Biographical Sketch

Jesse Ryan Erickson is a bibliographer and researcher in the field of special collections librarianship. He received his certification in descriptive bibliography in 2009 from the California Rare Book School under the tutelage of Bruce Whiteman. In 2010, he graduated *summa cum laude* from the University of California, Los Angeles, receiving his Bachelor of Arts in History with departmental honors in recognition of his senior thesis on the bibliographic history of the *Malleus Maleficarum*. He earned his Master of Library and Information Science in 2014, specializing in book history and librarianship. In 2014, he also completed a full index for the Medieval and Renaissance Manuscript Collection located in the Department of Special Collections at UCLA's Charles E. Young Research Library. Past publications include a published version of his senior thesis, "The History of Malleus Maleficarum: A Bibliographic Study" and, more recently, the article "Revolution in Black: Black American Alternative Press and Popular Culture at the End of the Twentieth Century" which was printed in the 2011 issue of *Publishing History*. Other publications include his reviews for *Humanism and Libraries: An Essay on the Philosophy of Librarianship* by André Cossette and *Modern Print Activism in the United States* edited by Rachel Schreiber. His current research is situated in the areas of ethnobibliography and print culture studies.

Chapter One: Introduction

“In learning to read, I owe almost as much to the bitter opposition of my master, as to the kindly aid of my mistress.”

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*

1. I. Overview: A New Framework for an Aging Question

For years now, the library, as an institution, has taken steps to address the strong perception that there is a crisis in black literacy. This crisis refers to the current statistical gap in literacy rates among African Americans, and especially, young African American males, when compared with the rates of their white peers. The library has already developed well-defined best practices for dealing with the promotion of the acquisition of basic literacy skills—even if it has done so in a largely normative manner.

Throughout its more recent institutional history, that is, primarily since its professionalization as a field at the close of the nineteenth century, the library’s stated mission has celebrated its role as being a neutral repository for the preservation of culture and the free dissemination of information (American Library Association, 2004; Buckland, 2003, pp. 680-684). Similarly, as a node in a larger information network that is facilitated by a library system, the bibliographic object, that is to say the book, has long been viewed as a neutral vessel for the intellectual transmission of symbols, thoughts, concepts, ideas, etc. (Rayward, 1994). Ideally, such systems of knowledge production should also be of relevance to the distinct literacy practices of any given community. The same can be said of the materiality of the bibliographic objects which are believed to transmit knowledge and culture through the replicable communication of ideas. The recognition of this conundrum further complicates past notions of

an objective neutrality, and, thus, begins to reshape our understanding of what constitutes black literacy.

This relationship between discourse and materiality, then, can be seen as being integral to the reception or rejection of a library space as a research environment by a particular community, and in this case, I am referring to communities of color. Manifestly, this study maintains that there are racial and, likewise, cultural characteristics present in the multifaceted nature of the book as a concept which forge a link between books and culture. These characteristics are not just present in a book's text; they are actually embodied within its various physical components. It is the contention of this study, therefore, that an analysis of the more imperceptible *bibliocultural* relationships that exist between books and their readers can further inform library policy in terms of future approaches to engaging with diverse communities. In keeping with this central argument around books and race, this study intends to reframe the current conversation concerning the black literacy gap by looking at the issue from a different vantage point. This study offers an analysis from the vantage point of the bibliographic object. These objects, however, are seen as nodes in a larger system of knowledge production.

1. II. Statement of the Problem: A Persistent Crisis in Black Literacy?

In the summer of 2014, a public rivalry reemerged between rapper, author, and entrepreneur 50 Cent (Curtis James Jackson III) and the champion boxer Floyd Mayweather Jr.? It should be emphasized, here, that the instance of contention in question had emerged between two contemporary cultural icons coming from within black community. Their friendship had already become strained two years prior to this time because of an allegedly miscarried financial situation on the behalf of Mayweather. 50 Cent, having felt cheated in past dealings, continued to

sour relations by initiating a public shaming of Mayweather's rumored illiteracy. Drawing upon the popularity of the so called "ice bucket challenge" phenomenon that swept through the nation that year on social media, 50 Cent (Jackson III, 2014) drew public attention to Mayweather's struggle with literacy with the following Instagram post:

Floyd will you except [sic] my ALS/ESL CHALLENGE: I will donate \$750k to a charity of your choice, If you can read a full page out of a Harry Potter book out loud without starting and stopping... (para. 1)

The post went viral in terms of its circulation in the black social media networks prompting opportunists to capitalize off of the situation. Power 105's "The Breakfast Club" radio show subsequently picked up on the allegations and, in reaction to the rapper's claims, released their unedited audio recordings of Mayweather attempting to read a short promotional statement for the station called a "drop" (Clarke, 2014). The show's host, Charlamagne, first read the drop in its entirety in about ten seconds; and after his comparatively quick reading, he played the audio of Mayweather's attempt to read the same drop (Yvette, 2014).¹ It took Mayweather more than two minutes to read through the following two sentences:

I'm Floyd Mayweather and I've joined iHeartRadio for the Show Your Stripes movement to support the hiring of vets. Go to ShowYourStripes.org, a website that connects veterans with employees and helps businesses find candidates with the best training. (as cited in Clarke, 2014, para. 3)

¹ "Disclaimer: Blacklikemoi.com (BLM) is a [sic] urban gossip and entertainment news site which publishes rumors speculation, assumptions, in addition to accurately reported facts. Information on this site may or may not be true and BLM makes no warranty as to the validity of such claims. The owner of this site does not insure the accurateness of any content on BLM. BLM makes no warranty as to the validity of any claims."

In consideration of Mayweather's markedly high net worth, the audio clip, having exposed his apparently low level of proficiency in terms of a textual literacy, thrust the question of the value of literacy in society and, also, into the larger discourse of black literacy and its achievement gap.

I have commenced my statement of the problem with this story of a public feud gone awry because, in my view, it is a compelling illustration of the public perception of an achievement gap in black literacy. Many of the issues that are deeply embedded in our contemporary construction of the problem on a societal level are unveiled in the minutia of this public dispute. There are matters in this rivalry that deal with black-on-black hostility, notions of long-term behavioral challenges, the social consequences of educational disadvantage, and, perhaps most prominently, the commodification of black masculinity. 50 Cent, at the onset—as a result of his media persona coupled with the lyrical content of his songs and his history of violence in dealing with previous public feuds—might be marginalized by academics and public intellectuals as an uneducated and, hence, unlettered person who figuratively has no moral or intellectual ground to stand on in the literacy debate. Further, there are serious questions concerning the maturity of his decision to use public shaming as a retaliatory measure in a personal dispute.

The fact remains, however, that in addition to having written a sizable catalog of rap songs, 50 Cent has both authored and co-authored several non-fiction and fiction books, including works in the popular genre of urban fiction. The idea that this rapper is also a published writer complicates the stereotype of the “illiterate street thug.” Moreover, the added point of Mayweather's fortune, even as an anomaly, obscures direct correlations between literacy

rates and success because it succeeds in disrupting the very discourse on black literacy with its counterfactual postulation of the “exception” story (i.e. the “illiterate multi-millionaire”). The rivalry as a public, multimedia spectacle, therefore, as it produced and then diffused through the various social networking platforms, speaks both to our conceptualizing of a literacy crisis and the politics surrounding the process of being able to articulate the existence of such a crisis. It is precisely from this injection of pop culture into the literacy debate that we can begin to identify and explore a much larger discourse on what black literacy means in America.

The library as an institution has been attempting, in some form or another, to engage with black literacy since its late nineteenth century professionalization as a field (Dawes, 1978). Contrary to one of the institution’s core missions, throughout its longer history in the United States the library had actually supported past efforts to suppress the proliferation of black literacy (Carmicheal, 2006, p. 109). In his essay *Southern Librarianship*, for instance, James V. Carmichael Jr. (2006) pointed out how the “Atlanta race riot of 1906,” according to the history, “occurred just as the southern library school was graduating its first class, followed by W. E. B. Du Bois’s futile attempt to be served when the library opened in 1902 and a direct petition by black citizens to Carnegie for a branch in 1903” (p. 109).

More recently, however, we find the library seeking to address the literacy issue by making a constructive contribution to black literacy. The result has been the emergence of a number of organized, concerted efforts to develop new protocols intended to guide policy-making. We find the institution drawing upon prevailing directives disseminated across a number of publications and reports in the professional literature as the primary means of realizing targeted improvement objectives. In a highly visible report by Sandra Hughes-Hassell et al

(2012) titled *Building a Bridge to Literacy for African American Youth*, the crisis is introduced to us with an alarming set of statistics. Citing a NAEP study conducted in 2009, the report claimed that, in terms of reading skills, “only 16% of African-American male fourth graders and 14% of African American male eighth graders performed at or above the proficient level” (Hughes-Hassell, Kumasi, Rawson, & Hitson, 2012, p. 2; Lewis, Simon, Uzzell, Horwitz, & Casserly, 2010, pp. 4-5).² The report continued by noting that only around half of African Americans “graduate from high school, and only 5% go to college”—although the rates have since exhibited an upward trajectory (Hughes-Hassell et al., 2012, p. 2). More tellingly, the same report, in a largely rhetorical maneuver, attempted to tie these education and literacy statistics with a series of alarming crime figures. Sandra Hughes-Hassell, Kafi Kumasi, Casey H. Rawson, and Amanda Hitson noted, for example, that teenaged black males “are eight times more likely to die from homicide than white male teens.” And, perhaps most distressingly, the authors have informed us that even though “African-American males make up only 14% of the US population,” they constitute “nearly 40% of prison inmates” (Hughes-Hassell & Rawson, Youth matters, 2014; Lewis et al., 2010, p. 6). The report’s authors, it seems, are implicitly insinuating that a correlation exist between literacy levels, graduation rates, and the potential for upward mobility as diametrically opposed to a descent into a criminal underclass.

Socioeconomic factors, cultural relevancy, behavioral guidance, and life skills are all given sufficient attention in the *Building a Bridge to Literacy* (2012) report, and many of the proposed solutions to the crisis that the authors have put forward, such as a better integration of black popular culture into literacy instruction and a more comprehensive appreciation of people’s backgrounds, are of great importance and warrant further exploration (Hughes-Hassell et al.,

² According to the 2010 National Association for Educational Progress.

2012, pp. 23-27). What is absent from this report, however, is a serious discussion of how discursive factors also play a role in shaping our perception of the crisis. Without such a discussion, we are unable to begin to analyze the role that bibliographical materiality plays in unobtrusively shaping the literacy discourse.

Consider, for instance, an illustration of this oversight derived from my early education. An account from personal experience should shed some light on how this *bibliocultural*, perceptual interplay has operated in an earlier iteration of our current reference regime. Having grown up during the 1980s and '90s, that is, in the early stages of the proliferation of computerized information technology in education, one of the primary reference materials for school research was the print encyclopedia. The *World Book Encyclopedia* was a commonly found set in Los Angeles area public and school libraries at that time where I received my primary education. Consequently, I was able to benefit from an exposure to such a readily accessible source of knowledge, in theory, strengthening my so called "literacy skills." I recall the 1990 edition with a mixed sense of fondness and antipathy. Its bold combination of a red synthetic leather binding with gilt titles and a custom offset World Book Modern typeface designed by Hermann Zapf has left a lasting aesthetic imprint on my cognitive development (World Book, Inc., 1990, p. viii). The reading synesthesia produced by the physicality of the book and the graphic design of the text dually imparted a sense that, by attentively reading the text with comprehension, I was receiving objective knowledge in an abridged format. In other words, the implicit conveyance of red leather with gilt titles and a columnar layout with a font based on functionality (i.e. legibility) is one that lends an air of intellectual authority to both the object and the text it displays. Not as much *gravitas*, perhaps, as the small point sized serif typefaces on fine paper in embossed leather bindings that structure a volume from the

Encyclopedia Britannica, but just enough to cement a veneer of truth over the text—a semblance of objectivity that becomes accessible to the formative learning processes of an adolescent reader.

The *World Book* (1990) article on “reading” itself is illustrative of just how and why ignoring the relationship between the material and discursive elements of the bibliographic object and the race of the reader can be detrimental to seeking to understand the nature of the supposed literacy problem (pp. 156-165). Firstly, in this article the subject of “reading disabilities” is depicted with a young girl of color being instructed by a middle-aged white woman. Secondly, the photographic illustration is positioned side by side with a picture intended to portray “computerized reading programs” (p. 163). The white male child in the foreground of the photo, whose upright and engrossed posture conveys the image of his mastery with the technology, is presented as the very model of advanced literacy comprehension (p. 163). The child of color in the photograph is restricted to the background of the image with the pointing arm of a white instructor signifying a need for assistance. In this superficially neutral image, the message of a black literacy deficiency is stealthily suggested and narratives of white intellectual superiority are quietly reinforced. To the encyclopedia’s credit, it was published during the full burgeoning of the discourse on multiculturalism which has since become a mainstay in both contemporary theory and professional practice. Consequently, each volume makes an almost strained attempt at including a variety of people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds in its numerous illustrations.³ The problem one sees with the article upon further reflection, however, is that the image of illiteracy within it is represented, consistently represented by the face of a minority.

³ Note that World Book, Inc. is owned by Scott Fetzer Company, a subsidiary of Berkshire Hathaway, an American multinational conglomerate holding company that is currently run by Warren Buffett.

If black youth has become the face of illiteracy, and if that illiteracy is viewed at the level of the person, as an inhibitor, and at the level of community, as a crisis, then the act of acquiring that literacy, as a skill, as a technology for achieving success, must accordingly be viewed as a liberating agent. This syllogism is a derivative of an older set of models concerning literacy theory that emerged with its coalescence as an academic discourse. It is a syllogism which still lies at the heart of many of the major approaches to providing literacy instruction to “underserved” populations.

Literacy has long been a sensitive question for the black community. Its adoption has been viewed simultaneously as a constructive and destructive agent—a force which could be, at once, dangerous and empowering, radical and conservative. The relationship that blacks have sustained with literacy has been uniquely shaped by the American experience and the adverse effects of the African slave trade. It is understandable, then, that throughout the history of literacy in the United States, black people have sustained a strong tradition of communal reading. It is a tradition that has been as much oral as textual in character—deeply intertwined with black poetry, black politics, and, most notably, the black church (Johnson S. C., 1999). In the years that the enslavement of black people was integral to the everyday lives of Americans in both the North and the South, access to conventional literacy was typically denied outright to blacks. Existing, non-conventional literacy practices of the peoples of the African Diaspora and their descendants, such as the complex communication system found in the West African *Batá* drumming tradition, were simply overlooked, or even ridiculed as childish and irrational (Gundaker, 1998; Villepastour, 2010). And black writers like Phillis Wheatley, the nation’s first woman poet of color to be published in print, were largely viewed by white America as special cases, anomalous to the mental capacity of the typical black mind. This perception was used to

justify and routinely prevent black people from learning how to read and write (Cohen & Stein, 2012). Nevertheless, from early African American poetry to slave narratives, there have been more than enough examples of advanced literacy practices (and even in the more conventional sense of Western education) within the black community to compellingly suggest that a counter-narrative, a subaltern narrative of emancipation and ethnic autonomy has existed from the earliest points of colonization and the cross-cultural intermixing which occurred with the transatlantic slave trade (Gundaker, 1998).

From the Antebellum Era to the period of Reconstruction much of mainstream America was strongly opposed to black people's engagement with Western education because it was considered to be a potentially emancipatory force (Gilmore, 2010). Yet the African American community at large experienced real gains in the expansion of literacy during the 1880s and '90s, particularly in and among the newly established enclaves of free blacks in the North of the country (Margo, 1990). Communal reading practices in the form of literary societies, bible groups, and public reading experienced increased in activity during the late nineteenth century (McHenry, 2002). The reading groups and book clubs helped to enhance social bonds during what would become an increasingly hostile environment for black education. Strengthening literacy among blacks was especially in crucial in the South where the broad implementation of literacy tests for voting served as a means of disenfranchisement (Gilmore, 2010). The younger generations of black readers who had the benefit of learning to read in public schools helped the older generations acquire functional reading and writing skills. And at times, the more literate readers of the community were known to have read and transcribed essential documents and correspondence for their illiterate neighbors (Young, 1996).

Black readers also helped to keep the community connected to the larger world. Since its early beginnings with the launch of Samuel Cornish Jr. (d. 1858), John B. Russworm (d. 1851), and Peter Williams Jr.'s (d. 1840) *Freedom's Journal* on March 17, 1827, and, later, Phillip Bell's *The Colored American* in 1837, and, perhaps most notably, Frederick Douglass's highly influential abolitionist paper, *The North Star* in 1847, the black press has been among the primary vehicles for voicing the interests of black people in America. It is important to note here that whereas previous definitions of the "black press" have restricted the use of the term to refer only to the black journalistic and periodical productions, I have opted to broaden the term more radically to include also all of the bibliographic manifestations of any expression of a black literary work (Pride et al., 1968). View in this way, the public and shared readings of black press publications and periodicals became a crucial tool in the effort to ensure that both the illiterate and the literate members of the community stayed informed about black social justice projects across the nation. Concomitantly, the sharing of this information worked to forge a sense of national identity among even the most geographically isolated groups (Ernest, 2011; McHenry, 2002). In all, these alternative, dialogical modes of knowledge production and dissemination which have long persisted in the African American community must be contextualized by the history of black reading and looked upon not only as a part of the larger American cultural heritage, but also as a means of cultural survival in a social environment where the national interests had historically been aligned with the intellectual suppression of the black race.

Still, research has shown that, alongside the expansion of public education, the gains in conventional literacy acquisition which accelerated during the late nineteenth century continued throughout much of the twentieth century (Margo, 1990). Illiteracy rates among African Americans had declined significantly during this time to around 25% in 1920 and less than 15%

by the 1950s (p. 8). In the face of these advances, however, the need to address what had been identified as an achievement gap in comprehensive literacy skills among black and white students became apparent by the mid-1960s. In 1965 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the educational arm of the Civil Rights Movement and Great Society, set out to narrow “achievement gaps by providing every child with a fair and equal opportunity to achieve an exceptional education” (Young W. H., 2013). Progress on that front saw mixed results with gains flattening out by the 1970s, and by the 1990s, in the wake of the mandated integration of public schools, the “achievement gap” discourse began to move further toward the dialectics of “crisis” (Harris, Kamhi, & Pollock, Literacy in African American communities, 2000). The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) NAdLitS study conducted in 1992 provided more evidence for this perception when it found that, in testing for multiple proficiency levels in reading comprehension and literacy skills, African Americans had tested at the lowest levels (Harris, Kamhi, & Pollock, Literacy in African American communities, 2000). From there, and with further testing to demonstrate the disparity, the black literacy gap had been tied to a decreased likelihood of lifetime academic achievement and, hence, fewer economic opportunities. The language of crisis began to proliferate over next the two decades, growing to a fever pitch in recent years.

The *learning-related skills* (LRS) approach to literacy instruction is currently a popular choice among researchers and professionals in the library and education fields when it comes to addressing the black literacy gap (Matthews, Kizzie, Rowley, & Cortina, 2010). The LRS model, which, as we shall come to find, has much in common with *self-regulated learning* (SRL) skills, stresses the importance of “task persistence, learning independence, flexible thinking, organization, and attention control” (p. 759). Similarly, the SRL method posits that the

development of such constructive behavioral skills as “self-management, self-evaluation, self-direction, time management, and self-control” is the ideal course when it comes to addressing the literacy gap problem (Matthews et al., 2010, p. 759; StriveTogether, 2014). The difference, according to a University of Michigan study (2010) on the efficacy of learning-related skills is that, whereas SRL is strictly oriented to the mental processes of the individual learner in their cognitive interface with an educative task, the LRS model seeks to apply the same types of behavioral characteristics to the development of the learner in relation to the “social norms and expectations” associated with academic achievement.

The example provided by Jamaal Matthews, Karmen Kizzie, Stephanie Rowley, and Kai Cortina (2010) offers rigorously gathered and assessed statistical evidence in support of the LRS model (pp. 760-765). It underlines the following four factors into its framework of analysis: *socioeconomic status* (SES), referring to a family or individual’s wealth and quality of life, *externalizing behaviors*, or “harmful, destructive or impulsive behaviors” in an educational setting, interpersonal skills with an emphasis on “*prosocial behaviors*” which include “cooperation and sharing” in the learning space, and the *home literacy environment* of the learner (p. 759).

Analyzing a longitudinal data set from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study Kindergarten Cohort 1998-1999 (ECLS-K) collected by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)—a study that looked at 18,211 children from nine different ethnic groups—Matthews et al. determined that black American boys were found to exhibit a greater amount of behavioral problems than other demographics (pp. 760-765). In this sample, the same group, largely coming from a disadvantaged socioeconomic situation, was also more likely to lack a

healthy home literacy environment (p. 765). Mathematically the LRS model appears to be the most effective solution for addressing the black literacy gap. According to their findings, the authors asserted that LRS skills such as “academic persistence, organization, and learning independence may be of particular importance for the literacy growth for African American students” (p. 765). They pointed out that the gains achieved by students that were above the mean on LRS demonstrated achievement trends which were “similar to those of the most privileged students who have the advantage of coming from significantly higher socioeconomic contexts as well as richer home literacy environments” (p. 766). They ultimately have claimed that the effect of lacking a solid LRS foundation in childhood education can lead to later difficulties with learning (p. 766). Home literacy and SES, they concluded, have only a marginal effect on literacy acquisition when compared with that of LRS (p. 766). Resultantly, Matthews, Kizzie, Rowley, and Cortina ultimately submit that the best method of addressing the literacy gap for black youth would be to redirect energies and resources currently spent on disciplinary measures for behavioral problems toward establishing and reinforcing a good LRS foundation for primary school learners (pp. 766-767).

Before accepting the postulation that the LRS model explains and therefore is best suited to address the literacy gap wholesale, it is important for the library as an institution to first recognize the theoretical underpinnings of the model. Again, I assert, that both the LRS and the SRL approach are epistemologically built upon certain conventional models which form the basis of much of the modern literacy theory as it is applied to library science. Among the most pervasive and, hence, one of the most scrutinized of these models is the autonomous model. This model is closely tied to the modernization theory for literacy. In essence, the autonomous model tells us that literacy is an autonomous technology. It is a skill that an individual, a community, or

society can acquire as a means of achieving permanence through the written codification of linguistic signs and, likewise, a means for promoting the production of knowledge (Street, 2006). In the autonomous model, literacy acquisition is viewed as a neutral technology that inherently manifests itself as a civilizing agent. Jack Goody and Eric D. Hirsch Jr. were two major proponents of this model (Fernandez, 2001; Street, 2006). Goody (1968) was instrumental in formulating some of the initial arguments in support of autonomous literacy. He admitted that structural functionalism is inadequate in its scope when applied to the study of literacy (p. 68). He also acknowledged the illusory nature of the same conceptual dichotomies that his arguments simultaneously support (p. 4). Furthermore, he claimed that his view of literacy is not actually deterministic, but only that literacy as a “technology” has “liberating effects” that need to be more fully understood (p. 4). Goody, however, had failed to come to terms with the possibility of the concept of literacy itself being malleable and illusory. The stakes for Goody, it seems, were simply too high.

In *Literacy in Traditional Societies*, Jack Goody and Ian Watt (1968) argued that “the overwhelming debt of the whole of contemporary civilization to classical Greece must be regarded as in some measure the result, not so much of the Greek genius, as of the intrinsic differences between non-literate (or protoliterate) and literate societies” (p. 55). In his view, literacy, being a technology that must intrinsically propagate a hierarchical dichotomy between orality and the textual, has real and observable consequences: The development of an easy system of writing (easy both in terms of the materials employed and the sign used) was more than a mere precondition of the Greek achievement: it influenced its whole nature and development in fundamental ways. In oral societies the cultural tradition is transmitted almost entirely by face-to-face communication; and

changes in its content are accompanied by the homeostatic process of forgetting or transforming those parts of the tradition that cease to be either necessary or relevant.

Literate societies on the other hand, cannot discard, absorb, or transmute the past in the same way. Instead, their members are faced with permanently recorded versions of the past and its beliefs; and because the past is thus set apart from the present, historical enquiry becomes possible. (p. 67)

In this particular iteration of the autonomous model, although Goody went at length to detail cases of communicational hybridity, the stark division between the oral and literary traditions further lends itself to the perception of a similar division between so called “simple” and “advanced societies.” These are the terms he uses in place of “primitive cultures” and “modern civilizations” in his attempt to break with the structural functionalist perspective. And again, it should be stressed that Goody (1968), for the most part, acknowledged the myriad of ways that orality can become intertwined with both print and manuscript traditions (pp. 11-22). He noted how this relationship manifests itself in the “restricted literacy” of religious orders and how oral and literary traditions are combined in various permutations of ritual practices with magical and sacred texts. One of the major conclusions he reached, however, is that such *magico-religious* literacy practices have really functioned as *quasi-literacies* in *quasi-historical* traditions (pp. 23-25). In other words, the alternative ontologies associated with *magico-religious* systems function through a type of literacy that approaches a “truly” literate civilization, but not wholly. Unfortunately, the same division becomes fundamental to justifications of cultural superiority that remain operative in the discursive and material expressions of a broader sociopolitical hegemony in education.

The modernization theory of literacy—which is in many ways an ideological parallel to the autonomous model—further links the skill of reading and writing to industrialization and the macroeconomic development of modern society. In modernization theory, a theory of literacy that is firmly rooted in positivism and structural functionalism, the technology of literacy is thought to contribute not only to the establishment of national history and democratic society, but also social mobility for the individual and scientific advancement and economic development for humanity. It is a strain of thinking which has since encompassed the expansive dimensions of the information age (Hirsch, Kett, & Trefil, 1988). Eric Hirsch (1988), for instance, has argued for a return to a more conservative approach to literacy. In his exposition on the imperative for a national, “cultural literacy,” Hirsch explained:

The function of national literacy is to foster effective nationwide communication. Our chief instrument over time and space is the standard national language. Mature literacy alone enables the tower to be built, the business to be well managed, and the airplane to fly without crashing. (p. 3)

There is a strong trace of an earlier functionalism present in Hirsch’s imperative. Humans who possess the power of literacy have a great deal of much mental agency in this depiction. Hirsch’s case for a national literacy, however, is essentially an amplification of the framework which held signature literacy as the baseline and, hence, the primary reference point for analysis for earlier scholarship on the subject—that is, in that he imagines a developed national literacy as a vitally important utility (Fernandez, 2001, pp. 5-6). Hirsch, moreover, believed that having a shared cultural heritage, as a nation—one which is grounded in valid interpretations of canonical texts—is essential to the growth and wellbeing of our collective society. For Hirsch (1988), then, the

decline of cultural literacy ultimately contributes to a larger decline in the health of the nation. He recognized the contributions of ethnic and racial minorities, but really only insofar as they are able to converse in the language of the national literacy (pp. 22-24). A further decline in black literacy, likewise, according to this perspective signals not only a threat to the humanities, but a comprising of the American democratic social order down to the level of bureaucratic functionality and the maintenance of civic infrastructure.

Hirsch's cultural literacy model, in that case, represents a conservative reaction to the then rising status of the critical approach to literacy theory. If functional literacy essentially views literacy as a technology and a tool, then critical literacy views the same phenomenon as a process, as a social construction. The more political proponents have further described that construction as one of violence; not a tool, but a weapon that can either be directed toward a social justice agenda or the perpetuation of political oppression through erasure and the spread of hegemony (Fernandez, 2001, pp. 37-45). This analogy approximates the version of critical literacy offered by Paulo Freire (1970) in his monograph *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. For Freire, the potential for a coercive literacy rests in one's orientation to a diametrically opposed set of instructional ideologies—that of an oppressor in their attempts to objectify those they view as their possessions, in a process of dehumanization, and that of a liberating consciousness which acts a dialectical humanizing agent for the oppressed. According to this view, a *banking model* of instruction wherein an enlightened instructor simply imposes the mechanisms of literacy upon an ignorant population is but another obstacle put in place for the oppressed in their efforts to actualize their status of humanity (Freire, 1970, pp. 53-75; 128-139). Furthermore, Freire (1970) has suggested that a broader view of literacy—one that incorporates a rigorous analysis of “dialogue” and its pervasive potential for coercion—can help to restore humanity to the

disenfranchised through the introduction of a pedagogical egalitarianism in the learner/teacher relationship. This idea points to the optimism of the *problem-posing* method in that it entails a pedagogy that recognizes the culturally-inflected knowledge base of the learner in literacy education.

Other literacy scholars have sought to build upon the theoretical foundations underlying Freire's vision of a critical literacy. For Ira Shor (1999) critical literacy "challenges the status quo in an effort to discover alternative paths for self and social development" (para. 2). The dialectical relationship persists in this interpretation; interestingly enough, however, the sense of determinism found in the functional models also remains; as Shor (1999) further explained that "[critical] literacy—words rethinking worlds, self-dissenting in society—connects the political and the personal, the public and the private, the global and the local, the economic and the pedagogical, for rethinking our lives and for promoting justice in place of inequity" (para. 2). In this view, literacy is still said to increase agency for those who engage with its practices. By the same token, Charles Dukes and Kavin Ming (2014) found education and literacy to be an inherent human right. They argued that literacy achievement gaps in minority populations constitute a societal injustice because in recognizing literacy's functional necessity in terms of navigating the complexities of contemporary societies and its role in helping underserved demographics to achieve the political aims of expanding enfranchisement any attempts to restrict or discourage its dissemination becomes a tacit form of political suppression. True to form, they have sought a program of literacy that would work to apply the notion of social justice as a "verb" instead of simply maintaining its status as a "noun" (pp. 118-120). The difference between these two understandings, they claimed, is that social justice as a noun roughly represents an abstraction of an ideal whereas social justice as a verb implies political

action. This understanding of literacy instruction is clearly in line with the idea of liberation humanism as outlined by Freire's *problem-posing* methodology in that both of these perspectives hold liberation, representation, enfranchisement, and, ultimately, humanization as their end goals.

If researchers like Freire, Shor, and Dukes and Ming can complicate our concept of literacy as an essentially neutral technology that, upon acquisition, inevitably results in cognitive and behavioral benefits for the individual, other theorists, such as Harvey J. Graff, completely challenge the epistemological foundations upon which the modernization theory is built. In the introduction to his book *The Labyrinths of Literacy*, Graff (1987) declared that he intended to question each of the major "*expectations*" and "*assumptions*" that presuppose previous claims concerning the impact of literacy acquisition on both individuals and societies (p. 17). In his words:

Literacy, I have come to believe, is *profoundly misunderstood*. That is one 'natural' consequence of the long-standing tyranny of the 'literacy myth,' which, along with other social and cultural myths, has of course had sufficient grounding in social reality to insure its wide dissemination and acceptance. Misunderstanding of literacy is as true for the past as for the present; these two elements are in fact but one, we must recognize. And this misconstrual of the meanings and contributions of literacy, and the interesting contradictions that result, is not only an evidential and empirical problem but also a failure in conceptualization and, even more, epistemology. (p. 17)

As a historian, in contrast to the sociologists, anthropologists, and education scholars that are typically represented in the literature, Graff contended that much of the work that had been done

up until that point was seriously lacking in its account of the *sociohistorical* context of literacy (p. 17). Graff has conducted his research from that premise, challenging the previously overlooked “sacred cows” of literacy which have linked it with education, wealth, success, mental health, and even fertility.

This serious consideration given to the contextual and, hence, historical and political components of literacy in the critical approach provided the groundwork for the development of the more recent New Literacy Studies (NLS). Brian Street, among the first to promote the use of the term into the current literacy paradigm, attempted to make a clean break from the autonomous model by offering an alternative in what he has called the “ideological model” (Street, 2006). One of the key differences, Street (2006) affirmed, is that the ideological model “offers a more culturally sensitive view of literacy practices as they vary from one context to another” (p. 2). Like Graff and Shor, Street also stressed the importance of moving past our earlier notions of literacy as a neutral skill to be “imposed” upon a non-literate society for the benefit of global development and shifting toward a new understanding that would view literacy as “set of a social practices” and “social constructions” of self-hood and identity (Graff, 1987; Shor, 1999; Street, 2006).

The integration of a social justice agenda in practice coupled with “the contextual turn” allowed for the larger field of literacy studies and instruction to take up the idea of multiculturalism more earnestly. A more clearly defined multicultural pedagogy that emerged around the turn of the last century still circulates within the literacy discourse today. In a multicultural pedagogy, every culture is acknowledged and respected. It is a pedagogy that is intellectually positioned to recognize that instruction in the classroom can be perceived as a

hostile environment to minority ethnic groups. Teachers who employ its basic framework will often choose to draw upon culturally relevant materials for instruction. They have a tendency to place a higher emphasis on classroom discussion than on lectures and didactic test-driven exercises. Moreover, classroom policies that are intended to reflect this type of pedagogy will seek to understand rather than reprimand cultural differences in language, lifestyle, customs, behavior, etc. (Ladson-Billings, 1995). The development of multicultural pedagogy naturally required the parallel advance of a multicultural model of literacy to support it. The largely relativistic multicultural model for literacy homes in on the contextual in order to integrate alternative knowledge bases of diverse demographics in an improved way (Guzzetti, Alvermann, & Johns, 2002). In practice, it has aimed to combat the assimilationist approach to literacy instruction by diversifying readings and instituting more participatory tasks in the processes of cultivating life-long literacy practices (Guzzetti et al., 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1992, p. 314).

Multiculturalism in NLS has really been at the forefront of many of the recently proposed solutions for the African American literacy gap. The solutions have been distributed across a number of different institutional platforms. Sarah Johnson (1999), for instance—who argued that the most effective way to ameliorate deficiencies in black literacy is to build up a campaign from within the community’s long-standing ecclesiastical traditions—called for literacy programs that allow black learners “to locate their own histories and at school and church,” so that they are better able to “emancipate themselves as a subordinate people” (pp. 41-42). For Alfred W. Tatum (2006) promoting literacy among African Americans should be centered upon an increased engagement with “enabling texts”—essentially texts that “nourish people as they try to function in the society and time in which they live” and “ultimately become part of one’s textual lineage” (p. 23). Although past scholars have recognized the need for having culturally relevant

materials in the library and education systems, according to Tatum, they have been shortsighted in their recognition of the vital role that African American texts play in shaping the perception of reading for black youth (pp. 14-19). His past work has not only served to help educators in identifying this type of text, but it has also offered instructional methods for mediating these texts across cultures. In these solutions we find that more attention needs to be paid to the personal and the experiential. This idea, in many respects, is tied to “the contextual turn” in literacy theory, but with an acute reduction in scope. Along such lines, ethnographic method, which had been used to study what were considered pre-literate and non-literate communities more than a half-century earlier, has been revived anew and used to study the problem of the black literacy gap. Anthony T. Griffith, (2009), for example, studied the lives of black male incarcerated youth in order to make a better determination about how these young men experience the world. His research was predicated on the notion that detailed accounts of the lived experiences can provide insights into the efficacy of instruction on literacy practices in the classroom.

From here, multicultural literacy made its way into the domain of library and information studies. By the turn of the century the multiculturalist perspective had succeeded in introducing many important concepts to discussions on how we identify and redirect the imbalanced saturation of hegemony in Western knowledge systems. In terms of information studies, multiculturalism has helped to guide professional practice toward new directions that embrace rather than discourage diversity. Multicultural literacy in the library has helped professionals to appreciate the dynamic of language barriers in minority demographics (Chu, 1999). It has opened the eyes of professionals to the hostility of the reference interview—that is, one wherein

two incommensurable knowledge systems come into conflict with each other in a sociopolitical context (Chu, 1999).

Building upon past multicultural research, the majority of the recent literature in the library response to the black literacy crisis has similarly employed ethnographic method in addressing the literacy problem. Kumasi (2008), for instance, conducted an ethnographic study on African American literacy practices by organizing an adolescent book club in the library as part of the *Closing the Gap: Community Literacy Intervention Program*. Personal accounts in the participants' responses comprised the primary data for this study. She then used the facilitated discussions as a methodological tool for understanding African American literacy, again, in the context of the experiential and, in this case, the modes of social constructivism.

Even with a reemphasis on both the contextual and the experiential, even in calls to embrace diversity more fully, each of these contemporary accounts of black literacy flatly affirm the existence of a crisis. Hughes-Hassell (2013) has stated unequivocally that the crisis is real and national in nature (para. 18). The current response petitions better cultural competency and a fuller consideration given to the affective qualities of library space and the meaningfulness of collections. The response asks that libraries "enable, facilitate, and empower African American male youth to level the economic, social, and political playing field" (Hitson, 2013, para. 3). In such declarations, again, we find those vestiges of the structural-functionalism inherent to the autonomous and modernization models of literacy. They persist in the very perception of the existence of the crisis in as much as they lurk in the proposed solutions to address it. The library's efforts to pluralize collections and democratize the space are certainly well intended, but questions continue to remain concerning the actualization of such ideals on the mundane

level of day-to-day operations. One must consider the politics of administration, for example, and, always, the cultural milieu of the local environment. The humanizing agenda articulated by Freire is implementable in theory, but discursive mechanisms embedded within the material manifestations of knowledge are more elusive in their identification than many care to concede. What is lacking, then, is a systems-based approach that attempts to explore the multi-modalities of knowledge production more acutely from the perspective of the book. This study, therefore, will look into the finer degrees of granularity that are encapsulated in the node which constitutes the *bibliocultural* link.

1. III. Approach: NLS and Multi-modality in Information Systems

It has been suggested here that, despite a marked attempt to move away from the intellectual cornerstones of past scholarship in literacy, the autonomous and modernization theories have continued to persist in the library's current understanding of literacy, particularly in its response to the apparent literacy gap within the black community. Yet, we continue to be reminded of the underlying assumptions that underscore the "idea" of the existence of a gap in literacy and the social construction of its being in a state of crisis. We are reminded by the very bibliographic objects which are in and of themselves manifestations of the dialectical tensions between objectivity and subjectivity, between singularity (i.e. hegemony) and hybridity (i.e. counter-hegemony), and most discernibly, between orality and literacy. Moreover, we are reminded in the physical spaces in which these objects function as cognitive conduits and data sources in a research process.

The idea that the "acquisition" of literacy is a "neutral skill" that is utterly transformative toward one's benefit warrants further analysis. In the historiographical lineage of Western

thought, the idea harks back to philosophy of Plato, and elements of the rationale remain, even if deeply submerged in the meta-theoretical substrata, within the *raison d'être* of the classical model of the Western library. Admittedly, one must entertain a somewhat ahistorical interpretation in terms of the philosophy by conflating the idea of literacy with that of education, especially when considering the status of orality as an information medium in classical Greek civilization. Any supposed division between the two, however, that is between education and literacy, being perceptual in nature, is fraught with categorical instability. Let us, for one, consider the position of Socrates in Plato's *Gorgias* (Plato, 1952 version):

Is the rhetorician's equipment the same in regard to justice and injustice, beauty and ugliness, good and evil, as it is regarding health and the several subjects of the other arts? Is it, in fact, true that he does not really know what is good or evil, beautiful or ugly, just or unjust, but has devised a means of persuasion about them so that, in the eyes of the ignorant, he seems to know more than the actual possessor of knowledge though he does not really do so? Or is it necessary for him to know? (p. 469)

It is at this point, fairly early on in the dialogue, that the figure of Socrates outlines a pedagogical mission of education that would wed the pursuit of knowledge with a civic agenda. This dialogically expressed desire for community leaders to "really know" cannot be overstated. It is an imperative that calls for public figures (i.e. rhetoricians) to be steeped in an education which, in its teleological *nous*, works toward the greater "good" of society. This idea of an education toward virtue has parallels in the struggle between *negotium*, which upholds the value of civic life and *otium*, which is associated with a life of intellectual frivolity. It has, therefore, been linked with the moral philosophy of Ciceronian rhetoric (Wegemer, 1990, p. 5). The dual

imperatives of education as an essential social good were later amalgamated in the crucible of early modern humanism and shaped by the Renaissance period discourse on the nature of scholarship (Wegemer, 1990). Through this discourse, the notion of civic humanism firmly established itself in the history of Western thought, bringing with it, a vestigial classicism that would inform subsequent ideological paradigms of educational philosophy.

Knowledge in the pursuit of virtuous living, as a societal agenda, involves a search for truth. The contemporary search for knowledge in the pursuits of collective societal advancement (as well as individual social mobility) has yet to divorce itself completely from this model. The epistemological symbiosis survived as the search for truth evolved to entail defining the objective reality of a substance, a concept, an event, a phenomenon, etc.—in essence, discovering the truth of things. The pursuit of knowledge shifted toward assigning an increased epistemological weight to empirical arguments based in “objective” analyses, and the status of the objectivity itself was inflated in its ongoing efforts to refute the deleterious corruption of relativistic sophisms. In the eyes of Plato and Aristotle objectivity constitutes logic; according to Bacon, Spinoza, and Descartes it is rationality and reason; in the views of Comte and Durkheim its positivism; and for Popper it is represented by physicalism (Dick, 1999).

Postmodern perspectives, nevertheless, have, at the conceptual level, all but demolished the epistemological foundations to the “objectivity” rationale. The postmodern assault on the universality of the objective can be gleaned from Jean Baudrillard (2008) when he stated:

Even the scientific object is ungraspable in its reality. Like the stars, it appears only light years away, as a trace on the screens. Like them, by the time we record it, it might also have disappeared. The fact that we cannot determine both the velocity and position of a

particle is part of the illusion of the object and its perpetual play. Even the particles in the accelerator do not smash into each other in real time, and are not exactly contemporaneous with each other. (p. 55)

In this passage, Baudrillard pointedly identified the problem of the phenomenological flux that occurs during the act of *performing* scientific observation. The identification of this problem casts an air of skepticism over the unquestioned legitimacy of objectivity, but the added argument that scientific observation can be gendered, racialized, and temporally situated only deepens our suspicions. Science's claim to a total objectivity, then, is further complicated by the view that the implementation of its methodology, at least in part, is influenced by sociopolitical and economic factors that are inextricably embedded in the discursive mechanisms of knowledge production (Harding, 2002, pp. 140-141). These mechanisms, in turn, contribute to the political hegemony of Western education over alternative knowledge systems based in indigenous, minority, and subaltern cultural traditions (Harding, 2002, p. 141).

The notion of a universal scientific truth, the philosophy of positivism, is wavering and elusive. Even more so for the immaterial *moral* "truth" sought in humanistic thinking—the version of truth described in Plato's *Gorgias*. Yet, how does the social imperative of civic humanism get passed down through each succeeding generation of scholars in the first place? The answer is, in part, through our study of the Western canon (Wisner, 2000, p. 67). Adherence to the Western canon, much like the legitimacy attached to objectivity, is viewed from the postmodern position as both normative and politically conservative. (Goebel, Hall, & National Council of Teachers of English, 1995; Hirsch et al., 1988). Even though it has become somewhat customary to draw attention to this conservatism, let us briefly entertain the manner in which the

supposed conservatism of the Western canon can be exclusionary. Interestingly enough, this idea of “education toward the greater good” so central to Socrates’s argument in the *Gorgias* dialogue is also one that is central to the West African *Odu-Ifa* tradition (Asante, Yoshitaka, & Yin, 2008, pp. 212-214). The tradition of *Ifa*, which is still practiced in country of Nigeria today, basically involves a participatory reading experience between a local priest and a community member wherein the priest consults with the individual about their lives by drawing upon a vast corpus of texts. These texts appear to be essentially oral in nature, but in actuality, they are codified in binary configurations of cowrie shells as they are cast by the priest to form particular patterns on a substrate. Viewed from the perspective of Goody (1968) and the autonomous model, the tradition is not exactly a literate one. It would be viewed as *quasi-literate* in terms of its restrictedness to a broader access to the texts among the community (pp. 11-20, 28). It is this *magico-religious* form of literacy that he associates with Yoruba culture; and the implication, then, is that the practice of reading in the tradition of *Odu-Ifa* is a search not for truth, but for a *quasi-truth*, a fortune-telling. Undoubtedly, this is not the only alternative knowledge system to have been jettisoned from a place of epistemological legitimacy as a result of the inadvertent adherences to Eurocentric privileging so pervasive in the autonomous model (Fraser, 2008, p. 39).

In what ways, then, can we characterize the nature of a critical, multicultural perspective in terms of its contribution to black literacy discourse in the library field? The library itself, we read, is in a state of crisis because of its failure to uphold its humanist foundations (Cossette, 2009). The humanities, we find, are also in a state of crisis. The crisis is thought to have stemmed from losses in funding and revenue and the prioritization of scientific research over the liberal arts (Hutner & Mohamed, 2013). Others have attributed the crisis to bibliographical

decentralization and the inability of the print infrastructure of the academic publishing industry to keep pace with an exponential rise in information technologies (Cmeil, 2010; Darnton, 2009; McGann, 2005). The literacy, library, and the humanities crises, as it follows from the modernization theory, threaten the health of an informed democratic society if unchecked in their persistence (Hirsch, et al., 1988). Each theory has placed the decline of the national character as the end result. The establishment and preservation of the Western canon, then, in the traditional *modus operandi*, becomes a central aim for educators, bibliographers, and librarians (Wisner, 2000, p. 58). It is an agenda that lies beneath our most commonly touted explanations of the black literacy crisis. In other words, the failure to reproduce a shared cultural literacy is seen, in part, as a failure to uplift struggling demographics from their socioeconomic plights. Without this literacy, they will not have the tools necessary to be productive, civically-minded members of society, nor will they have access to the cultural capital required for success in the Western world.

Moving away from the autonomous and modernization models—which, again, are rooted in positivistic and functionalist ideas, demands a not only reconsideration of the canon, but also a greater scrutiny given to the institutional mechanisms that work to produce its roster. Early attempts to address the issue of cultural disparities involved updating the canon in the humanities and revising collection development policies for the library. The same can be said for acquisitions and, as it follows, of authority control (Grosser, 1991). Consequently, as of late, both the humanities and the library have developed in a multicultural direction with each becoming more culturally sensitive in terms of access policies and representation (Goebel et al., 1995). Attempts at amelioration have, for years, focused on democratizing collections so that they would be more pluralistic in terms of accessible materials. Granting that there have been

many gains, the attempts continue to be rooted in the hegemonic structures that are literally embedded within the physicality of the research space. Breaking the mold requires a different approach; an approach that draws upon the critical view. From the standpoint of Freire's vision of "liberation" humanism it is an approach that—while still recognizing the importance of the Western canon—rejects those exclusionary forms of conservatism which have been formulated around attitudes of Western intellectual superiority.

The present study is not based in epistemologies of causality—in the search for a singular objective truth. As an alternative, it offers a perspective that has been formulated around concepts of plurality and the autopoiesis of co-emergence. If it is a search for truth, it seeks a multi-faceted truth that is incessantly being rendered by subjectivities. In other words, it adopts an approach that is more in line, philosophically, with the position of Heraclitus. In contrast with Plato who viewed substance in light of its ideal in the form of "the good" and Aristotle who viewed it as inherent qualities imbued in individual manifestations of "the one," Heraclitus's idea of substance focused on the concept of "change." Accordingly, he was able to perceive multidimensionality in objects and hybridity in phenomenon. He was further able to recognize the constructed nature of singularity. This view is captured in the fragment wherein Heraclitus [Fragment 76a] observed, "Fire lives in the death of earth, air in the death of fire, water in the death of air, and earth in the death of water" (Heraclitus & Robinson, 1991, p. 47). In this statement we can ascertain that whereas the other pre-Socratic philosophers chiefly focused on the primacy of a singular substance (i.e. element) as the defining quality of all matter and information in existence, Heraclitus, despite holding fire (i.e. energy) as the dominant force, managed to recognize the inseparable interplay between the discrete manifestations of substance. And, again, like Baudrillard, he was further able to identify the influence of perceptual flux on

observation. This idea is clearly posited in his [Fragment 6] declaration that the “sun is ...not only new each day, but forever continually new” (Heraclitus & Robinson, 1991, p. 13). These notions of interconnectedness and flux which underscore the fluidity of supposedly fixed objects will be important to maintain throughout the course of this study in its effort to reframe the literacy debate within the context of the library’s institutional response.

To divert from a causality-based approach, what is called for is an approach that reflects a *relativistic monism*, or one that is in keeping with the African humanism alluded to in the communion between the reader and the client in a reading of the *Odu-Ifa* (Asante et al., 2008). The coupling of these seemingly logically incompatible terms describes a model wherein interaction between information(s) (i.e. phenomena) creates the ever-changing primary substance of what is perceived as the objective, yet what is always elusive, precisely because of its continually being shaped by the parameters of mutual transfiguration between subject and object and the contours of process. Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari’s (1987) rhizome model contrasts with orthodox notions of causality in radical terms. In a clever analogical reconceptualization, they have casted the image of “the book” representing “the world” as neither subject, nor object (p. 3). In one vision of “the book of the world” image (i.e. observable nature) the authors described an ontology that reflects the structure of a tree. In accordance with this tree model, relations are rooted from precedence and origins, and they hierarchically distributed in branches which owe their origin and sustenance to the roots. Contrastingly, when cast as a rhizome “the book of the world” is read in the following terms:

The world has become, but the book remains in the image of the world: radicle-chaosmos rather than root-cosmos. A strange mystification: a book all the more total for being

fragmented. At any rate, what a vapid idea, the book as the image of the world. In truth, it is not enough to say, “Long live the multiple,” difficult as it is to raise the cry. No typographical, lexical, or even syntactical cleverness is enough to make it heard. The multiple must be made, not by always adding a higher dimension, but rather in the simplest of ways, by dint of sobriety, with the number of dimensions one already has available—always $n - 1$ (the only way the one belongs to the multiple: always subtracted). Subtract the unique from the multiplicity to be constituted; write at $n - 1$ dimensions. A system of this kind could be called a rhizome. Bulbs and tubers are rhizomes. (p. 6)

With this description, Deleuze and Guattari have completely undermined the conventional model for epistemological justification and, hence, threaten our comprehension of canonical authenticity. The tree-model emphasizes fixity, causality, singularity, and authenticity, and the rhizome underscores flux, multiplicity, and “assemblage,” or linkages (pp. 6-7). This theme is further explored by Ramona Fernandez (2001) who applied the concept of the rhizome to literacy studies directly by exposing the inherent dichotomies of autonomous and modernization thinking in our understanding of the concept—the most primal being that which divides literacy from illiteracy (pp. 21-34). She noted how the *rhizomatic* “vision of literacy does not make a simplistic division between skills and facts, a division underlying Hirsch’s analysis” (p. 69). She affirmed, moreover, that multiculturalism, or what she prefers to call “mixed cultures,” is “one place to begin opening our dualistic thinking about literacy” (p. 19). I would further put forth, however, that the hybridity/singularity dichotomy and its parallel in that which divides hegemony from a counter-hegemony, creates difference and, thus, differences in our understanding of what constitutes literacy cross-culturally (Bhabha, 1994, p. 1). In applying the rhizome model to bibliographic method and in holding a view that race is essentially socially

constructed, we can begin to investigate the *book's* role in shaping identity construction as a route to cognizing black literacy. To achieve this objective, the role of the *bibliocultural* link will be focused on throughout this study, particularly in its relationship to the production of knowledge within the context of library-based research.

Building upon the rhizome model for literacy, the recent integration of multimodalities into the framework NLS is also of relevance to this study. Multimodality in literacy expands notions of literacy from reading, writing, and speech to cast a light on the other “modes of representation,” such as the “visual” and the “kinesthetic” (Street, 2006, pp. 11-12). In essence, it is the idea that literacy “needs to be contextualized within other communicative modes” (Street, 2006, p. 12). When looking at literacy from within the boundaries of contemporary education, “the book” in its materiality should be viewed as an important link in this contextualization process. A book is not simply a self-supporting system of textual apparatuses in terms of its intellectual manifestation and material production; many times, it is an individual node within a larger network of knowledge production. For that reason, it is a subject which needs to be examined in a “web of relations” (Taylor M. C., 2001, p. 211). Although networks can be organized in simple and rigidly fixed sets of relations, they are often systems of complexity which are characterized by perpetual flux and defined, more broadly, by the connectivity of their interchanging combinations (Taylor M. C., 2001). Of course, to complicate this dichotomy further, here we are really dealing with qualities of both sets in one.

In looking at research collections as sites of knowledge production, it is important to understand some of the more prevalent models of knowledge production proposed by past theorists. One of the most cited knowledge production models comes from Michael Gibbons et

al. (1994) in *The New Production of Knowledge*. Looking chiefly at the production of knowledge within science and technology disciplines, the authors coined the terms *Mode 1* and *Mode 2* knowledge production to describe what they viewed as two variant streams—one of which is implicitly commodified through its symbiotic relationship with academic convention. The main differences, according to this model, were defined as follows:

...Mode 1 problems are set and solved in a context governed by the, largely academic, interests of a specific community. By contrast, Mode 2 knowledge is carried out in a context of application. Mode 1 is disciplinary while Mode 2 is transdisciplinary. Mode 1 is characterised by homogeneity, Mode 2 by heterogeneity. Organisationally, Mode 1 is hierarchical and tends to preserve its form, while Mode 2 is more heterarchical and transient. Each employs a different type of quality control. In comparison with Mode 1, Mode 2 is more socially accountable and reflexive. It includes a wider, more temporary and heterogeneous set of practitioners, collaborating on a problem defined in a specific and localised context. (p. 3)

This division of productive modalities was, understandably, also applied to the humanities as well. And as the sciences were depicted by the authors as “autonomous subsystems” within the academy with a marked propensity for adaptation, the humanities—contrary to the typically intuited response—were also defined as having adopted at the least some of the characteristics of Mode 2 knowledge production in a manner which differed from the sciences in several respects. Most notably, these characteristics and differences included the growing acceptance of reflexivity, transdisciplinarity, and contextualization in humanistic research (Gibbons, et al., 1994, pp. 90-110).

Helen Crompton (2003), moreover, has argued that Mode 2 knowledge production is more amenable to innovation than Mode 1, particularly when situated in a milieu of hyper-competitiveness and within organizations that depend on long-term growth (pp. 3-10). Extrapolating a connection from Crompton's account of the differences between these productive modalities, the ways in which Mode 1 knowledge production are closely aligned with Freire's *banking* concept of education become clearer. Being that Mode 1 is based on notions of permanence and hierarchy, it pursues its ends via the transmission of facts from the expert to the novice. Ultimately, such knowledge must always seek to establish consensus of a grand narrative that objectively defines the "truth" of a subject. Conversely, Model 2 knowledge production being more collaborative, dynamic, and process oriented is substantially less reliant on the contributions of single authorities. Accordingly, it is more open to an egalitarian manner of learning that does not privilege the voice of a single expert at the expense of silencing other prospective dialogical influences.

Recall, then, that the book as an object, along with the literacy practices through which they are cultivated and inscribed, is but one component in the larger system of knowledge production. This system, being educational in nature, is primarily concerned with learners and researchers; and being also institutional it is quintessentially administrative. Notwithstanding the relatively recent rise of Mode 2 characteristics, within this system we find a particular web of relations that it is still largely sustained and facilitated through Mode 1 knowledge production. The heart of the cycle is administration (Figure 1). Again, this is because knowledge as a commodity is produced in accordance with the bureaucracies associated with government and information-based industries. Administration basically refers to the hierarchies, policies, funding, and operations that provide the platform needed for the cycle to function. In the university

environment, this built-in relationship between administration and knowledge production is particularly pronounced. The library as a research space, whether situated in the university or not, does not radically depart from the symbiosis. The utility of administration, in this context, rests in the ability of administrators, educators, and informational professionals to facilitate the continuation of the productive cycle from a learner's first encounter with literacy instruction and through every educational stage thereafter in the advance toward original scholarship. The responsibility to facilitate the education of the learner is intrinsic to the academic mission.

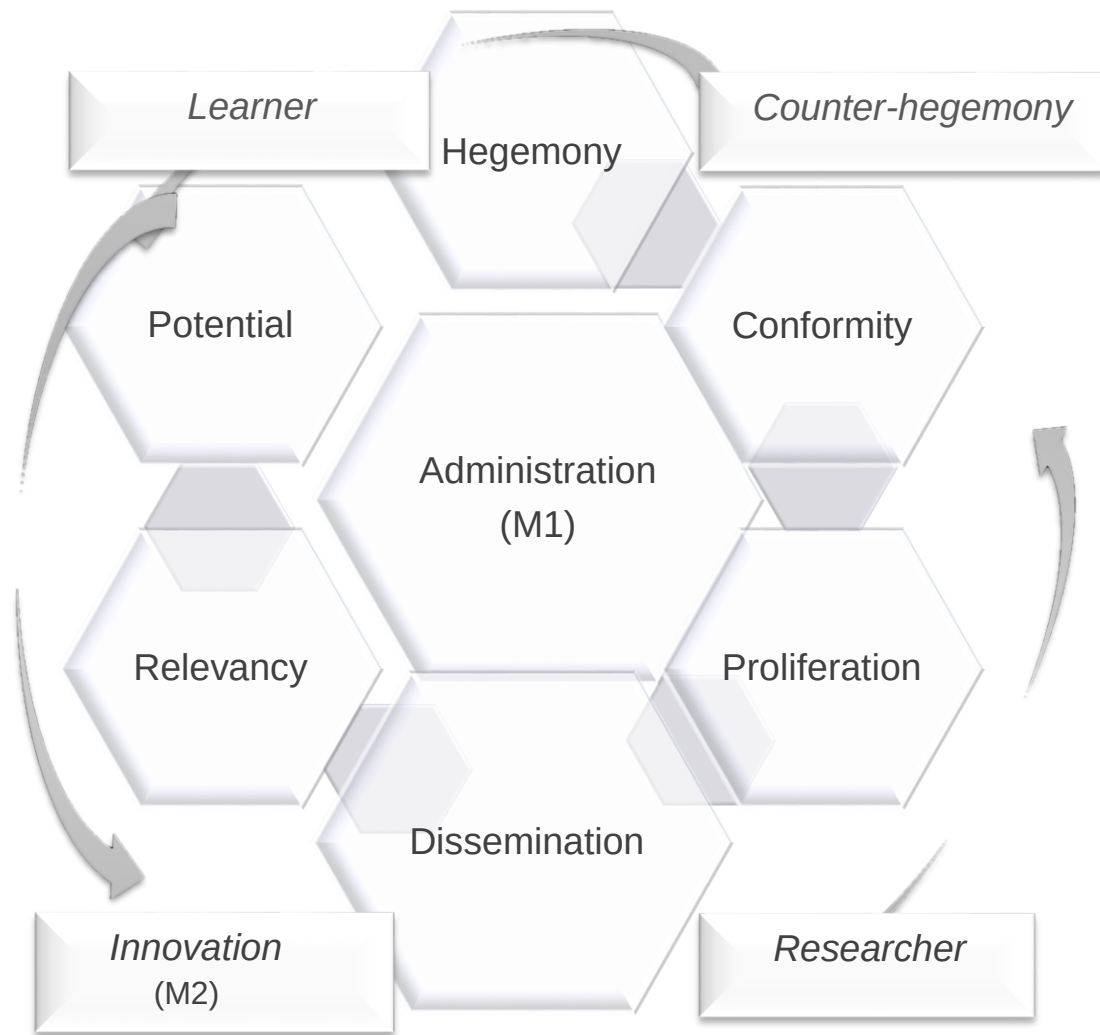


Figure 1. The Administrative Cycle of Knowledge Production

Hegemony, as it follows, is the conservative element of the system. By working to promote the legitimacy of the system, hegemonic agency concomitantly substantiates attitudes of permanence and superiority. It must tell us what a genuine “education” *is*, by perpetually defining what it *is not*. It is necessarily exclusionary. Hegemony, not only functions through the politics of qualification and credentialing, but it is also exercised in the apparatuses of specialization (Day, 2005, pp. 590-591). Postmodern theorist Michel Foucault stated, “Disciplines constitute a system of control in the production of discourse, fixing its limits

through the action of an identity taking the form of a permanent reactivation of the rules” (Foucault, 1966/1970, p. 224). Hegemony, then, not only shapes the way in which knowledge gets produced, it also perpetuates its uniformity in society through the influence of intellectuals that have passed through the administrative cycle (Francese, 2009, pp. 35-37). Furthermore, there are hegemonic ideologies that remain in the production of knowledge that permeate in the culture— ideologies such as the Democratic ideal of education and the Enlightenment model of freedom. Hegemony in this sense fortifies pedagogies and grammatical rules for literacy instruction and information literacy instruction.

Hegemony is reliant upon conformity. Once a learner has learned how to properly conduct research, the wider acceptance of the presentation of his or her work is partly dependent upon the degree to which the work exhibits the various trademarks of its credentialing (e.g. degrees, accreditation, peer review, etc.). Simply put, the work must display the accepted cultural conventions to be taken seriously. French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu’s (1986) concept of *cultural capital*, at its most basic, has been offered in the following terms:

Cultural capital can exist in three forms: in the embodied state, i.e., in the form of long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body; in the objectified state, in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.), which are the trace or realization of theories or critiques of these theories, problematics, etc.; and in the institutionalized state, a form of objectification which must be set apart because... in the case of educational qualifications, it confers entirely original properties on the cultural capital which it is presumed to guarantee. (p. 243)

For cultures which are outside the mainstream, the acquisition of *cultural capital* involves an assimilation process. The farther away the cultural base of the learner is from the mainstream, the greater the amount of effort needed for one to assimilate. Thus, the very acquisition of this form of capital can be a source of cognitive dissonance prompting a learner to reconcile the discrepancy through counter-hegemonic action.

These preceding processes are heavily saturated with the proliferation of material productions of knowledge. As knowledge goes through a process of commodification in its production, it does not solely reside within minds of experts who deliver lectures, presentations, and consultations as part of their professional duties; there is also the material production of marketable commodities in which the knowledge gets embodied in “non-discursive” manifestations (Canagarajah, 1996). Hence, the proliferation mode in the cycle represents the researchers’ material contributions to the production of knowledge. Traditionally these manifestations have principally been printed bibliographic objects (e.g. books, book chapters, journals, articles, reports, etc.), but, somewhat deterministically, the proliferation of productions has increasingly been migrating to digital formats as modern technology has shifted in that direction.

Since knowledge is a commodity in this system, the dissemination of produced knowledge from researchers into academic discourse, and, subsequently, public discourse, cannot be extracted from the administrative hegemony that preserves itself through the enforcement of cultural conformity (Canagarajah, 1996, pp. 442-445). The stakes are high in this mode, for eventually (factoring in some form of academic consensus and an advancement of the current state of knowledge in a particular field or discipline) abridged distillations of the

latest manifestations of the proliferation process will make their way into primary and secondary education in the form of secondary source bibliographic objects and other learning materials—most notably, the textbook.

The fundamental tenets of information retrieval in the library profession are structured around the idea of maximizing the relevancy of information contained in information objects intended for researchers (Bates, 2006). Similarly, relevancy for the learner in the administrative cycle of knowledge production pertains to the learner's ability to identify with knowledge (i.e. information/bibliographic) objects and somehow connect them with the experience of personal identity construction. The arrangement is a pedagogical one. If both the research presented in the object and its formatting and design hold no relevance for the learner, then there is distance between the intended information and cognition. This distance, perhaps, constitutes an altogether different form of literacy gap. In other words, a learner's potential to further the cycle of production and achieve academically often depends upon his or her ability to retain, at least temporarily, the knowledge embodied in the objects that are studied or reviewed in the process of learning.

Additionally there is a counter-hegemony that runs, dialectically, through the cycle. At the most extreme end of the spectrum (e.g. anti-imperialism, anti-colonialism, anti-capitalism, etc.) there is an attempt to revolt against and/or deconstruct the hegemony; and at the more moderate end there is an attitude of encouraging a gradual reform. The counter-hegemonic mode, however, can stimulate change in the system. This type of change can be interpreted as a *disruption* or *innovation* depending on the perspective(s) of the stakeholders involved. In the case of the latter, the interpretation which views the change as signifying innovation, Mode 2

knowledge production in itself represents a paradigmatic shift in the established pedagogical hegemony of Mode 1 (Gibbons, et al., 1994, p. 3). Freire's (1970) *problem-posing* methodology, moreover, is a well-defined example of counter-hegemonic pedagogy in the form of liberation humanism. Kumasi's (2010) cultural inquiry model, a model that shares many characteristics with the Freire's critical pedagogy, represents counter-hegemonic innovation in the library's relationship to black literacy. Nevertheless, the innovations cannot fully be extricated from the hegemonic structures that disseminate them—a point that is evident in the fact that both of these examples have come to into the academic and professional discourses not only through the text that conveys the authors' meanings, but also in the formatting and graphic design that helps to impart a sense of intellectual legitimacy to their works.

So here we have the basic framework for a study that looks at a set of (social) relations amid processes through which books emerge and expire as nodes in a web of relations, not a phenomenological account of subjects (i.e. humans) and their behavioral interactions with objects (i.e. books) in the acquisition of “literacy” as a “skill.” Within this schema we encounter ecologies of the *book* wherein an array of literacy practices travel through library spaces that are situated in diverse research environments.

1. IV. Research Questions

At this point in the discussion we have determined that many of our past assumptions about literacy and how we interact with it are fraught with perspectival biases (Graff, 1987). We have seen that recent attempts to address the problem of black literacy have overlooked the manner in which the articulation of it as a crisis, discursively, has contributed to its emergence. And, lastly, we have acknowledged the insufficiencies of dichotomization (e.g. subject/object,

black/white, orality/text, illiteracy/literacy, performance/study, ephemera [non-book]/book, etc.) when such divisions are employed, either expressly or inadvertently, in the direction of exclusion (Fernandez, 2001). This trajectory leads, then, to a number of fundamental questions that this study directly confronts. First and foremost there is the question of racial identity construction. This study is predicated upon the idea of a *bibliocultural* link; and, again, by using the term “bibliocultural” I mean to convey that culture is embedded in the book as an object in a network of instrumental *assemblages*. Does a link, therefore, exist between the materiality of the book and the social construction of racial identity? If so, how do we discern and examine the ways in which this link becomes manifest in the minutia of the book’s materiality and in its relation to the social dimensions through which the book as an object becomes subjectively operative? And, finally, how can a deeper understanding of this link inform our decisions concerning the development and implementation of institutional policies that shape the library’s relationship with black literacy?

1. V. Applications: The Significance of the Study

It is not the intention of this study to address a crisis in black literacy by determining the best path to improving literacy rates in the classroom, the library, or in any other learning or research environment. The goal involves two objectives: [1] to reframe the discourse surrounding the issue and [2] to draw upon any insights attained through the process of investigating the issue from an alternative standpoint to inform [special collections] library policy. Accordingly, the potential applications for the study would directly pertain to the advancement of bibliographic method, literacy theory, and the evolution of librarianship. In terms of bibliographic method, this study offers a new method in *ethnobiography*. It is a

method that, up until the present research had been carried out, had yet to be implemented in the form of a major academic study. In consideration of projected demographic shifts in the Western World at large, the potential impact of this new method—which focuses on investigating the very granular dimensions of a *bibliocultural* link—could be augmented over time. In terms of literacy and librarianship, this research will help us to broaden and rethink our ideas around literacy pedagogies, collections and their use in the community, and, most importantly, what it means to be culturally viable and socially relevant within a particular community.

Chapter Two: Review of the Literature

2. I. History: The Beginnings of Bibliographic Method

This study is firmly-rooted in the tradition of bibliography. It is situated in its discourse just as much as it is steeped in its methodology. To understand the implications of this orientation, however, requires a looking back; that is, it calls for a foray into the history of libraries, education, and the humanities, and all through the lens of bibliographical thought as it has developed overtime. In order to adequately comprehend the nature of this study, one must also have some sense of the epistemological models that support the method. Consequently, this literature review will cover this history in a manner that highlights many of the central themes which have been at the heart of the debates that have driven bibliographical discourse up until the present day. As there are far too many points of contention within the intellectual history of bibliography to be presented in a single chapter, this review will admittedly offer only an abridged account. Therefore, I shall reiterate that the intention here is to reach the point in the discourse wherein ethnobibliography is found to harbor the potential for further cultivation within this growing body of bibliographical literature.

In its most basic form bibliography as a practice can tangentially be traced to an ancient antecedent in cataloging. Cataloging, of course, in the instance of written agricultural and commercial inventories claims an incontrovertible basis in the earliest years of world civilization (Bunson, 1991, p. 21; Frankfort, 1956, pp. 112-113; Harris M. H., 1995, pp. 18-35). And, without succumbing to any strict notions of causality, cataloging itself must ever so slightly anticipate the book in a “chicken and egg” scenario in which both would become visible in a

symbiotic relationship of co-emergence. Library cataloging, being a practice which essentially works to facilitate documentation and access for an accumulated collection of books, from its genesis has been intimately wedded to bibliography. One, however, must have a working definition for the principal term. To my understanding a serviceable definition would be that *bibliography* is the study of books as physical objects. Arriving at such a definition, however, has proven to be the cause for much dispute. Even determining what exactly is meant by the term “book” has been subject to the most intense academic scrutiny. A brief survey of the history of this basic definition, then, will further serve to elucidate its convention.

Granting that the rudiments of the bibliographical tradition reside in its ancient antecedents, the two figures of Johann Trithem (Johannes Trithemius, d. 1516) and Conrad Gesner (d. 1565) are largely considered to be the undisputed forefathers of this tradition in the West. Trithem’s *Catalogus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum* (Trithemius, Heynlin, Brant, & Amerbach, 1494) is still held in high regard, as it is seen as a foundational text for enumerative bibliography among book historians, collectors, and librarians. The first 1494 edition was printed under the name *Liber de Scriptoribus Ecclesiasticis* in Basel by Johann Amerbach—a protégé of Aton Koberger. It is largely considered to be the first bibliography—surely, the first in print. Setting a high bar, it offers an impressive list of roughly 7,000 titles. There are approximately 1,000 philosophical and religious authorities represented in the catalog, and their respective works range from the classical to the late medieval and early modern periods. Documenting mostly philosophers and theologians, each entry includes both a biographical synopsis and a corresponding list of their attributed titles (Trithemius, *Catalogus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum sive illustrium virorum, cum appendice eorum qui nostro etiam seculo doctissimi claruere* Per

venerabilem virum, dominum Iohānem a Trittenham Abbatē Spanhemensem, disertissime concriptus, 1531).

It seems that from the very beginning, as a tradition based in reference—facilitating source access and promoting genuine scholarship among the learned—the writing of bibliographies has been beset by discursive pitfalls and shaped by the socio-historical modalities within which its various systems of knowledge organization have been devised. The distinct intellectual divisions (i.e. subjects) that have been imposed by its method—a method which itself has been systematically hierarchical and taxonomic in its meta-theoretical structuring—have uniformly sought justification in claims of objectivity and attempts of achieving universality in application that have, at best, resulted only in approximations. The reality, however, is that such divisions have been mired in the subjectivities that have crafted them.

Given that Trithemius's intellectual legacy has typically been associated with the Renaissance in Northern Europe, the *Catalogus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum* can be looked at as a thoroughly humanistic project (Brann, 1981). As indicated by the paratextual epigram that serves as a title page introduction of the fourth edition (Cologne, 1531), even the satirist and humanist Sebastian Brant was a firm believer in the quality of Trithemius's work (Brann, 1981, p. 214).⁴ Yet, being that this proto-bibliographic work was primarily concerned with the organization of information in an ecclesiastical setting, it is also true that the profuse saturation of medieval scholasticism had left its imprint upon it. Traces of scholasticism abound in the *Catalogus*. Definite signs of this influence can be observed in the authorial selection bias that

⁴ Trithemius had an acquaintance with Sebastian Brant during the course of his life. The epigram opens with "In Huius Nobilissimi Operis laudem. D. Sebastiani Brant Epigramma, Scriptores quicunque uelis nouisse probatos Ecclesiae, & quicquid quisque; decoris habet, Abbatis docti legito hoc epitome Iohannis Ex Spanhem," in the fourth edition. In the first edition, however, the epigram concludes the text in the manner of a colophon and opens somewhat differently with "In laude Catalogi scriptoru[m] ecclesiasticorum optimi patris Iohannis de Trettehem abbatis Spanhemensim."

endeavored to constrain its comprehensiveness as a catalog. They are evident in its capacity as an authoritative document, particularly in its biographical glossing.

And there is a scholastic aesthetic, moreover, to many of the elements of its composition and style, much of which assumes some semblance of the late medieval manuscript tradition. Yet, the subtle intellectual hybridity of the catalog—again, one which combines both humanistic and scholastic characteristics—is quietly present in Amerbach’s choice of a solidly blackletter title followed by a mostly roman type text block with guide letters for rubricating. Hybridity in design and function, in fact, was further echoed in the typography of subsequent editions. Peter Quentell’s (1531) edition, for instance, was, again, printed in a budding roman type with strong woodcut initials that were consistent with the aesthetic proclivities of its intended readership. Tritheim’s *Catalogus*, it appears, was not so bound by ecclesiastical conventions to the extent that its compiler was entirely prevented from a judicious endorsement of the spread of humanism (Brann, 1981).

A slightly nuanced demarcation should be made here between the notion of an author and that of an authority (e.g. scriptural commentator, clergyman, theologian, etc.) as far as the primary listings which comprise the catalog are concerned. This distinction reflects the late medieval and early modern modalities of knowledge construction. The demarcation, by virtue of the catalog’s intended audience and desired marketability, was inadvertently inherent in Tritheim’s selection process as a cataloger of books. And if a questionable understanding of authorship complicates our notions of the source, it should be added that many of the works listed in the catalog predate the development of formal titles as a convention. In its place the incipit enjoyed dominance as a primary identifier for centuries prior to the development of the

“title” in Western literature. Uncovering such entrenched biases and complexities in the documentation of titles by confronting the elusiveness of their inherent nature can serve to untangle some of the more abstruse dynamisms that have operated in the fashioning of bibliography’s meta-theoretical framework.

To begin, referring back to this notion of selection bias—and, in Trithemius, this (bias) being within the broader context of an intellectual hybridity between the scholastic and humanistic traditions—one finds, for example, that his *Catalogus* is indicative of the far-reaching penetration of Thomism in late medieval scholastic philosophy, even into the onset of the early modern period. Among the listings it is clear that both Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274) and his mentor, Albertus Magnus enjoy comparatively comprehensive summaries and source lists by virtue of their reputations in the church and their respectively prolific intellectual contributions as theologians to Western thought (Trithemius, *Catalogus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum sive illustrium virorum, cum appendice eorum qui nostro etiam seculo doctissimi claruere Per venerabilem virum, dominum Iohānem a Tritthenem Abbatē Spanhemensem, disertissime concriptus*, 1531, pp. B3, 89.a). Their mutual effort to reconcile Aristotelianism with church theology, moreover, was pointedly noted by Trithemius in each of their biographical summaries. And the office and lifelong ecclesiastical service of both theologians were described by the compiler in a highly religious tone that was acquiescent to the basic rhetorical strictures and demands that were requisite with the clerical conventions of the period.

In terms of representation and inclusion, then, the influences of Senecan stoicism and the scholastic emphasis on the Aristotelian tradition in the catalog appear to outweigh the influences of the Ciceronian rhetoric and neo-Platonic thought which had been revived in the discourse of

the humanistic circles associated with Trithem's intellectual environment. Much of the catalog's humanistic representation restricts itself to its promoters within the church or to those who had already achieved a relatively safe level of acceptance within it. Humanists such as Francesco Petrarca (d. 1374), Leonardo Bruni (d. 1444), George of Trebizond (d. 1486), Niccolò Leonicensi (d. 1524), and Jacob Faber Stapulensis (d. 1536) are listed, but they are spread comparatively thin, it seems, amongst the names of theologians and scholastic philosophers of lesser renown. And even in these cases, some of more controversial philosophical offerings and intellectual achievements of these authors were comparatively downplayed, as ideological conformity and continuity appear to have been prioritized with the aim of maintaining the internal textual integrity of the compiled whole.

Perhaps, the scope of the catalog was additionally tempered by Trithem's own resistance to embracing the pagan thinkers with as much zeal as some of his contemporaries (Brann, 1981). By any comparison, his catalog did not approach the level of humanistic scholarship found in Desiderius Erasmus's (d. 1536) *Catalogus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum*—first published in Basel in 1529 by a relatively obscure printer named Andreas Cratander (d. 1540).⁵ In Erasmus there is a level of engagement with textual criticism in his project of publishing a new edition of a classical work which is absent in the precedent set by Trithem. Likewise, the typography of Erasmus's *Catalogus*, especially in the 1549 Frankfurt edition printed by Peter Brubach, with its deliberately italic typeface and its symmetrical page layouts, are also characteristic of a firm adherence to Renaissance humanism (Hieronymus & Erasmus, 1549; Holder, 2009). Throughout most of Europe and the Western World in the Reformation era, actually, book design had grown thoroughly Roman in nature. England and Spain were slower in adopting the typographic

⁵ Jerome's edition of the Eusebius.

aesthetic, but the dominance of roman types and humanistic book design spread with the humanistic pedagogies that were promulgated through the intellectual discourse of the period (Chappell, 1970). The innovations and techniques implemented by Aldus Manutius, innovations such as the invention of italic type in 1501, his forward-looking pocket editions, and his important advances in cutting accurate Greek typefaces, were carried on in the works of Geoffroy Tory (d. 1533), Albrecht Dürer (d. 1528), and Johann Froben (d. 1527)—Erasmus’s personal friend and editor (Chappell, 1970). These innovations as well as others that would follow from Claude Garamond (d. 1561) to the House of Elzevir moved design further away from the gothic aesthetic that was established at the onset of the incunable period (Chappell, 1970).⁶

Conrad Gesner’s (d. 1565) *Bibliotheca Universalis* offers an example of how the bibliographic tradition continued to advance in accordance with the reigning humanism of its age. Printed in 1545 by Christoph Froschauer (d. 1564), Gesner’s *Bibliotheca Universalis* is much closer to Erasmus’s *Catalogus* in aesthetic terms. More than that, however, the *Bibliotheca Universalis* effectively established a more solid basis for a practice that would be eventually come to called enumerative bibliography—a form of reference which would become increasingly essential to modern scholarship in the humanities.⁷ On the whole, Gesner’s enumerative project sought to encompass a much greater share of the titles of his time than Tritheim had documented. The move reflects the germination of a larger shift wherein cataloging would eventually breakaway from bibliography in the interminable pursuit of codifying all knowledge and arriving at a universal classification system. His *Bibliotheca Universalis* (1545) was among of the first of the bibliographies to include thousands of titles and hundreds of

⁶ Lasting from roughly 1450 to 1500 C.E.

⁷ Christoph Froschauer was also known for his printed editions of Erasmus’s works.

individual authors listed in it. Gesner, consequently, is considered by many to be the first genuine bibliographer, although it is well-known that he had numerous predecessors and contemporaries in the practice (Wedgeworth, 1993, p. 322).

Nevertheless, some of the challenges inherent to developing bibliography persisted as the method of systematically listing authors and their works that was first advanced by Trithem in the *Catalogus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum*, Gesner and subsequent bibliographers consistently maintained that knowledge was a *thing* that could be compartmentalized, and that it could be ordered and preserved in accordance with the harmonies of some grander scheme. As the classical educational divisions of the liberal arts were carried on in the Middle Ages in the form of the *trivium* and *quadrivium*, the processes of paradigmatic reinterpretation that had first helped to shape the humanities (*studia humanitas*) exerted certain typological pressures on the bibliographical schemas that emerged during the study's formative years. Gesner's *Pandectarum* (1548), for example, portrayed a schema of thematic division that was closely aligned with the traditional liberal arts in many respects, but it also exhibited some interesting permutations in terms of its subdivisions (Jerchow & Lerner, 2007, p. 4).⁸ The most obvious deviation appears to be the full-blown expansion of the seven core subjects into a considerably larger scheme. In the placing of grammar as the head leaf in the oratory branch of knowledge—that is, over rhetoric, dialectic, and poetry—the influence of humanistic thinking, again, appears to have been considerable in the early formulation of the schema. Yet, Gesner places poetry within the dual categories of necessary and ornamental knowledge, thus linking the art of poetry with the practice of magic. More informative, in fact—in terms of how this system of knowledge organization is historically situated within its intellectual paradigm—is the way in which

⁸ From the *Tabula de Singulis Pandectarum*.

Gesner's schema lists astrology among the sciences alongside astronomy, music, geometry, and arithmetic; but divination, being linked with poetry, is grouped with magic.

It is also during this early modern period in the history that a range of different types of proto-bibliographic lists had developed along often intersecting lines. Proto-bibliographic subgenres which included bio-bibliographies, inventories, censorship lists, and booksellers' catalogs began to formalize and inform each other's structural templates (e.g. formatting, metadata, etc.) as they proliferated (Walsby & Constantinidou, 2013, p. 4). These templates would often include components such as the essential identifying metadata of author, subject, publication date, folio size, etc. and a bibliographic "entry" format which, in most cases, took the form of a paragraphed list rather than the paragraphed block text found in the essay format of textual composition. Proto-bibliographies such as George Draud's *Bibliotheca Classica* (1611) and, later, Johann Frabicus's *Biblioteka Graeca* (1705) really began to demonstrate the potential application of bibliography as a tool for serious research (Suarez & Woudhuysen, 2013, pp. 372-3).

Draud's *Bibliotheca Classica* (1611) was one of a number of works to have exhibited early signs of the alphabetical subject/author schema that would subsequently persist throughout the taxonomies and encyclopedias of the Age of Enlightenment. Whereas Gesner employed the more conventional method of alphabetically indexing authors by their first names in the *Bibliotheca Universalis*, Draud was slightly ahead of his time when he organized his lists alphabetically by the last name of the authors. Furthermore, in another move toward modernity, Draud unveiled a sophisticated layering of subject division as the overarching organizational structure for the work. His entries were organized within in a set of primary subjects (i.e.

philosophy, poetry, and music) that further encompassed a comparatively robust assemblage of subcategories covering such diverse topics as ethics, syntax, harmonics, motets, and even physiognomy.

Johann Fabricius's *Bibliotheca Graeca* (1705-1728) is another bibliography that displays an incredible amount of scholarship in terms of its depth and granularity. An epitomical example of domain-specific bibliography, Fabricius attempted to cover the entirety of extant Greek literature from Homer to the fall of Constantinople in 1453 (Sandys, 1998, p. 2). The *Bibliotheca Graeca* has some of the most comprehensive entries found in a work of its kind, as Fabricius included copious information on specific editions (Fabricius, Harless, & Heumann, 1790). In Fabricius, moreover, we find that each important detail concerning an author or a work is supported by the primary sources from which the information was derived, effectively demonstrating an early example of citation practices. This work is also supplemented by an authorial index which abridged the more comprehensive information in the bibliography and, in doing so, provided a short list of topics and subjects covered in their works.

The gradual ascendancy of empiricism and science over rationalism which occurred during the seventeenth and eighteenth century provided much of the essential components of the modern bibliography (Eden, 2015). So too, however, did the broadening of the Western artistic and literary canon which expanded generationally. The swelling in the production of both scientific and humanistic literature afforded by the spread of print technology worked to shape the structure and purpose of bibliographic composition. Essentially, bibliographies, as materials of reference, had to meet the rising demand for new information coming from a concurrently burgeoning readership (Katz, 1998). The new information, and often the most comprehensive,

far and wide came in the form of books. The aim of the bibliography in these years was increasingly directed toward identification, documentation, and, in best cases, item retrieval. And the problem of compartmentalizing knowledge effectively became a practical one (Lindberg, Numbers, & Porter, 2003).

This later period was one in which bibliographic study was still to a great extent concerned with collection cataloging and knowledge organization. It becomes crucial to acknowledge here that Francis Bacon's (d. 1626) division of the sciences had been a major influence on bibliographic and encyclopedic subject division for several generations beyond its introduction in 1605 in *The Advancement of Learning* (Anstey & Vanzo, 2012; Lindberg, Numbers, & Porter, 2003). Although several aspects Bacon's theory of knowledge were well-fitted within the Renaissance epistemological paradigm, his ideas advanced the empirical strain of thinking and, in part, helped to clarify the division between speculative and operative branches of science (Anstey & Vanzo, 2012). Bacon essentially divided the mind into three major groups: *memory*, *imagination*, and *reason* (Bacon, 1605/2011). These mental faculties were then further linked to a principal group of disciplines: *poetry* as part of *imagination*, *history* as part of *memory*, and *philosophy* as part of *reason*. Further divisions include the separation of rationalism in the class of *divinity* from empiricism, or sense experience, which is classed with philosophy. The fundamental structure of this tripartite division was echoed, not only in Denis Diderot (d. 1784) and Jean Le Rond d'Alembert's (d. 1783) intellectual tour de force, the *Encyclopedie* (1751-1772), but also in the bibliographies of the eighteenth century (Diderot, 1751).

Adam Clarke's *The Bibliographical Miscellany* (1806), a supplement to his *Bibliographical Dictionary* (1802-1804). Here, even at a time when bibliography was really

beginning to distinguish itself from other areas of research as an acceptable intellectual pursuit, challenges similar to those inherent to the notion of fixed authorship and source identification were similarly woven into the fabric of subject assignment. Consider, once more, that these historicized subject-based classifications systems are inescapably representational of the values, biases, and ontologies of their origin. The classification system one finds in *The Bibliographical Miscellany* constitutes another case in point. Compared with Gesner's categories we find that there was a substantial departure from the traditional divisions of the liberal arts and the humanities (pp. 198-209). In a neatly laid out graphic outline of a bibliographical classification system that Clarke attributed to the models of his predecessors in Bacon, Diderot, and Thiebaut, one finds a system that evokes the enduring presence of the Enlightenment and the Scientific Revolution in early nineteenth century thought (p. 198).⁹ However, considering Clarke's background as a Methodist theologian, the primacy of religion can also be felt throughout this and his much larger, more comprehensive six volume *Bibliographical Dictionary* (Clarke, 1834, p. 382). In the sixth volume, for example, the once sentence entry for Isaac Newton is dwarfed by the entry immediately preceding it, the entry for Martin Luther. Luther's entry, as it turns out, received more than a full page worth of text (Clarke & Harwood, 1804, pp. 347-348).

In this particular scheme of division, knowledge can either be natural and scientific or artificial and technical (Clarke, 1806, p. 206). From there it is further divided into a subset of knowledge that is either sensible or rational in quality or one that is internal or external, and so on (p. 206). Each set of categories in the system is arranged in a taxonomy that divides itself into increasingly granular levels from aspect to subject. Sensible knowledge—which is natural, according to this scheme—encompasses physiology or natural history. This group, in turn,

⁹ The French agronomist Arsène Thiebaut of Berneaud (d. 1850).

contains the subjects of meteorology, hydrology, mineralogy, physiology, and zoology. Tertiary divisions of knowledge include *powers* and *properties* from which philosophy, ontology, pneumatology are derived, *quantities* to which the subjects of arithmetic, geometry, and statistics are assigned, and *relations*, where one finds the anthropocentric subjects of politics and law as a subset of ethics and religion. Bringing to mind the system outlined by Gesner, Clarke's scheme had the subjects of alchemy and natural magic tangentially linked to chemistry and then further tied to perspective and painting—two subjects logically paired with optics (p. 206). The contrast suggests a link to the Baconian precedent which grouped magic, or *magia*, as a branch of physics and mechanics as a correlate of operative science (Anstey & Vanzo, 2012). Furthermore, in this particular system we find that the status of the liberal arts was demoted to a lesser category. The liberal arts are represented, but they have been redefined as a subdivision of science and art in a scheme which has divided subject-based knowledge into five primary categories of which science and art is but one.

Clarke also made significant contributions to what, in my view, had been a major expansion of bibliography from its enumerative application into the domain of historical bibliography. In *The Bibliographical Miscellany*, the study of the book as its own subject is detailed in a fairly comprehensive roster of past writers on a range of topics pertaining to “the book.” Clarke's account of the history covers the period roughly between the Scientific Revolution and the close of the eighteenth century. The focus, however, is mostly on the eighteenth century, suggesting that there was budding interest in matters that could be well-served by bibliographical research during that time (pp. 48-88). The roster lists experts in literary history, the history of typography, library cataloging, and print history—further indicating that bibliography as a study coming out of its formative years was an expansive interdisciplinary field

that could potentially encompass multiple academic specializations in its fold. His *Bibliographic Dictionary*, which was organized alphabetically by surname, contained a balance of literary, historical, biographical, and descriptive information in the entries. The result anticipated the modern annotated bibliography as shown in the following entry for John James Scheuchzer's (1731) *Historia Naturalis Bibliae*:

Physica Sacra; hoc est Historia Natura Bibliae, a Joan. Jacob, Scheuchzer edita, et innumeris iconibus aenies elegantissimis adornata procurante J. Andr. Pfeffel, 1731, & ann. seqq. From 9 to 16 guineas. This is one of the most beautiful and most useful works which has appeared on the natural history of the Bible. The plates are 750 in number, and were executed by the most eminent artists of that time. It was first published in German, in 1731, five volumes, and was translated into Latin, and next into French, and published at Amsterdam in 1732, 8 tom. in the 4 vol. fol. but the plates are far inferior to those in Latin, and much more so to those in German editions: but in all other respects the work is as correct and magnificent as any of the former. (p. 50)

In the above passage we find that, even though he had succumb to the irresistible temptation to interject prejudice and opinion into objective documentation, Clarke had clearly demonstrated an ability to distinguish definitive characteristics among various different types of rare books and categorize them accordingly. He noted distinctions in what qualifies and defines a rare book. In *The Bibliographical Miscellany*, we find that Clarke had been able to recognize the rarity of specialty genres such as incunabula and manuscripts, censored and condemned works, scarce editions and limited runs, large paper and fine press books, works from historical and academic societies, and early library catalogs, among others (pp. 150-161). This rubric for the discernment

of rarity would have been vital information for the antiquarian book dealers, book collectors, and librarians of the period. Clarke's contributions to the study, then, share much in common with that of his bibliophilic contemporary, Thomas Forgnall Dibdin (d. 1847). Dibdin, as we shall see, unwittingly, yet actively, played a major role in shaping bibliography's reputation as one of antiquarianism. And although the association has been hotly rejected by later generations of bibliographical theorists, the charge of antiquarianism still stands on some levels.

Dibdin—who, again, in the eyes of many historians, had been a disproportionately responsible contributor to the study's reputation for antiquarianism—is, nonetheless, a figure who is largely thought to have also popularized bibliography. He has been admired for the book-centered life he enjoyed serving in a career in the English clergy, as often as he has been disregarded for his apparent lack of scholarly exactitude. His *Introduction to the Knowledge of Rare and Valuable Editions of the Greek and Latin Classics* (1802) and his *Bibliotheca Spenceriana* (1814–15) are considered to be among the more serious offerings in his corpus. Looking at bibliography from the standpoint of Dibdin's writings, however, one is compelled to conclude that although bibliography as a serious form of study had more expansively begun to take shape during the first half of the nineteenth century, it was in many respects still confined to the corridors of church, the reading rooms of great academies, and to the shelves of the gentleman's private library.

Dibdin's scholarship is still thought of as having been notoriously imprecise. Yet his books are regularly sought after by present day collectors of the "book on books" genre. Dibdin's simultaneously didactic and conversational style is most conspicuous in more popular works such as *Bibliomania* (1809) or his *Bibliographical Decameron* (1817). Being many generations

removed from the period, however, it becomes apparent that these bibliocentric narratives actually have much to offer in terms of their ability to offer a glimpse into the social atmosphere of late eighteenth and early nineteenth century print culture. Throughout the *Bibliographical Decameron*, footnotes often stretch on in a copiously more elaborated fashion than what is found in the main body of the text. It is in these enthusing dialogues set in the private [rare book] viewings of polite society that scores of bibliographical topics are meticulously deliberated. One such discussion, for example, has two gentlemen, Lorenzo and Philemon, discussing the aesthetic quality and technical execution of an illuminated miniature of *the Crucifixion* found in a Veronesi Missal from the fifteenth century (Dibdin, 1817, pp. clii-cliv). The dialogue provides insights into the nature of the aesthetic sensibilities of the period whereas the footnotes delve into the physical minutia of the book as an object, busily noting material components such as illumination size and sequence.

The conversation immediately following has the same pair of gentlemen referred to above discussing the royal provenance of the Missal of Henry VII (pp. clv-clvii). In this dialogue Philemon points out that the missal constituted a significant gap in the British Museum's collection of royal manuscripts on the account that it was, at that time, in the ownership of the Duke of Devonshire (p. clv). These wide-ranging conversations around the book often deal with provenance and the history of library collections. The frequency to which provenance research (intermingled with diplomatics) can be found in the text is perfectly understandable when taking into account that past bibliographers, such as Clarke, had also included paleography as well as the history of libraries and collections as an important part of bibliographical study. And it is even more understandable considering that for the cataloger and bibliographers of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, the lines between ecclesiastical, state, academic, and

private book collections was very much blurred. The historical legacies behind a number of the world's great collections can attest to this hegemonic confluence, especially in the manner in which these collections have persisted in their function as museums and research libraries, in some cases, over centuries.

The blurring of librarian and bibliographer is especially pronounced in the writings of one of the next major figures in the history of the study of bibliography, scholar and librarian Henry Bradshaw (d. 1886). In terms of his contributions to the field of librarianship and the study of bibliography, it is clear that his feet were firmly placed in both camps. And in concert with his predecessors there is also a heavy emphasis on book history in many of his essays. Having an in-depth knowledge of book history was viewed by Bradshaw as being a crucial part of being a truly competent librarian (Bradshaw, 1889, pp. 371-372). The reason, in part, that Bradshaw was able to arrive at such a conclusion involves a counterintuitive notion that the antiquarian element, when attached to the library, actually lifts its status and prestige to that of a museum wherein the bibliographic objects become artifacts to be preserved for future research. Armed with this understanding of collections Bradshaw drew only a paper-thin line between the role of the bookseller and that of the librarian. He attempted to define the value of his profession in the following terms:

When I define a librarian as 'one who earns his living by attending to the wants of those for whose use the library under his charge exists,' you will perhaps be inclined to ask in what respect my librarian or his assistant differs from a bookseller or a bookseller's assistant. The only substantial difference which I see consists in this: that the bookseller caters for the reader or writer of books, in order to make what living he can; while the

librarian *caters* for the same people, in order to make such living as the trustees of his library assign to him. (p. 376)

This conflation seems confusing on the surface, however, as the author quickly proceeded to explain, all depended “on the individual man.” Citing figures such as William Pickering and C. J. Stewart, Bradshaw contended that both booksellers and librarians could offer a similar service in a genuine knowledge of the “books themselves and not merely their market value” (p. 377). Both as a librarian and as a bibliographical scholar his goal was to uplift the profession by “catering” more to eager students than to the fancies of rich collectors (p. 377). In the hands of Bradshaw, then, bibliography becomes more curatorial in nature.

In keeping with the literature of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, one finds in Bradshaw that special attention is paid to paleography and the study of early typography. Evidences from these specializations were then being applied in the determination of the authenticity of rare books and manuscripts. Bradshaw is known, for example, for having exposed the Constantine Simonides’s *Codex Sinaiticus* forgery.¹⁰ Relying upon a vast bibliographical knowledge base gained through daily experience in the examination of early books and manuscripts, he indicated that he was easily able to see through such fraudulent copies with a relatively standard analysis of the script or type, the paper or parchment, the collation or foliation, the formatting or arrangement, and the distinguishing traces of provenance (Kitto, 1863, pp. 480-481). Focusing on the application of the study of books as objects in the determination of textual authenticity, consequently, became a catalyst for the contraction of bibliography into increasingly sharper degrees of specificity. This contraction process, as we shall soon learn, helped bibliography in its transformation into an academic research method.

¹⁰ The forgery was exposed in Bradshaw’s January 28, 1863 letter to the *Guardian*.

2. II. Theory: Epistemological Foundations of Bibliographic Method and its Scientization

So far we have seen repeatedly in the literature that the roles, functions, and the various priorities of bibliography have been historically situated inasmuch as they have changed over time. The same is true for the bibliographies of the modern age. To summarize, quickly, the history up to this point: initially, the study emerges in the early history of Western civilization, first and foremost as a form of inventory created for the express purpose of identification; next, in dealing with the growing complexities of early modern humanistic research, in addition to source identification, bibliographic study became increasingly concerned with the organization of knowledge; after that, a period of cumulative descriptive granularity and scholarly sophistication would coincide with the proliferation of scientific literature and encyclopedic productions that occurred during the seventeenth and eighteenth century; and, lastly, the study experienced an expansionist period wherein provenance and bibliographic materiality emerged as the chief concerns at its apex. The necessity for the preservation of materials for the purpose of providing access to future generations of researchers also began to be taken seriously as a bibliographical issue in this latter period of expansion. Library studies, as its own discipline, had yet to breakaway from the study of bibliography.

In addressing the question of provenance, then, proper identification had resurfaced as a focal point in the discourse. This time, however, the identification had not been directed exclusively toward the documentation of both new and extant titles, but, instead, it dealt more explicitly with the identification of specific copies and various states and conditions of books as artifacts. Identification, it seems, had remained central in the mission, but it had to be done with authority. Hence, we arrive more formally at the concept of authenticity and authentication (e.g.

documentary and textual). In the modern period of bibliography, we see a bibliography attempting to discard its antiquarian reputation and, instead, embrace a more pragmatic direction. Bradshaw had pointed to a way forward, but his work remained steeped in the eighteenth and nineteenth century antiquarian attitudes that dominated the intellectual pursuits of “polite society” during his lifetime.

For the next generation of bibliographers, the mission was not as restricted to the service of wealthy bibliophiles as it had been in the past; more broadly, it sought to help contribute to knowledge in advancing techniques for analyzing the material traces of book production as evidence in isolating the most definitive versions of the more distinguished titles in the Western canon. As editors, this generation believed that bibliography had the potential to improve the intellectual quality and historical authenticity of scholarly editions and safeguard the legacy of English literature. In other words, they employed bibliography in the service of literary studies. The generation of mostly English bibliographers I have been referring to here has, in the past, been called the “Anglo-Saxon school.” The majority of their collective contributions have served to benefit the very insular specializations of Elizabethan drama and seventeenth century studies (Wagner & Reed, 2009, p. 19). Among its most distinguished representatives were Alfred W. Pollard (d. 1944), Ronald B. McKerrow (d. 1940), and Sir Walter W. Greg (d. 1959). They engaged heavily in discussions as to: 1) the nature of bibliography and its parameters as a study, 2) the function of bibliography as a method of textual (as opposed to item-level) authentication in the determination of an “ideal copy” and, 3) its relationship to literary research and the library. The form of bibliography that they each helped to develop and advance was termed, “new bibliography.”

The beginning of the march away from a period of an unbridled antiquarianism, however, was commenced on somewhat shaky ground. That such works as Pollard's *Early Illustrated Books* (1893), *Shakespeare Folios and Quartos* (1909) and *Fine Books* (1912) contained a prodigious amount of book history within them cannot be denied, and one would be remiss to conclude that such works had failed in their ability to advance the level of analytical precision in bibliographical research. The lofty airs that continued to characterize such titles, however, had also calcified such productions with the same antiquarian sentiments that the study had begun to discard (Pollard, 1912). The question, then, became whether bibliography was an art or a science.

In the views of Greg, bibliography was decidedly more of an art than a science. In his terms, what “may be called bibliography,” has “the characteristics of the science,” but he held to the historical understanding of the study wherein the accepted parameters did not necessarily separate print from manuscript (p. 76). He goes as far as to assert that a study of bibliography must “apply to the transmission of all symbolic representation of speech or other ordered sound or even logical thought” (p. 76). This declaration is in step with the expansive view espoused by his predecessors in Clarke, Dibdin, and Bradshaw—all of whom grouped the history of the book, library history, paleography, and typography in their view of bibliography. As indicated in the following selection from his paper entitled “What is Bibliography,”¹¹ he likewise sought to dispel any ambiguities in this regard:

Those who have followed me so far will not be surprised that I call the field a wide one. It includes the study of book-making and of the manufacture of the materials of which books are made, it includes a knowledge of the conditions of transcription and

¹¹ This paper was originally published in the *Transactions of the Bibliographical Society* in 1912.

reproduction, of the methods of printing and binding, of the practices of publication and bookselling—it includes the whole of typography and the whole of paleography. (p. 80)

To downscale this demonstrably broad view, however, Greg sought to define, more clearly, the limits of the study as well. He, at once, desired to both set it apart from its antiquarian heritage and to help to keep its proponents from losing sight of its primarily academic mission; its book-centered core, as revealed in his stance on the peripheral status of encasings and adornments:

Bookbinding is certainly a province of bibliography, yet it almost merges into a fine art, as do even more clearly book-illustration and illumination. Bibliography has to take cognizance of these subjects, but it can never make them altogether its own. Book-plates have a purely superficial connexion [sic] with books: their study is but a bastard branch of the subject. (p. 80)

Greg's consigning of book illustration to a peripheral status here is striking considering that by doing so he, in many ways, disregards a substantial portion of the contributions made by predecessors such as Dibdin and Pollard.

It was in the advances of McKerrow and Greg that bibliography came to be absorbed in the study's potential application toward an empirically justifiable determination of textual authenticity. Works such as McKerrow's (1927) *An Introduction to Bibliography for Literary Students* and Greg's (1903) *The Bibliographical History of the First Folio* proved that bibliography, in fact, had tremendous potential in this regard. Something as seemingly trivial as the knowledge of when the letter "V" began being used in place of the "U" or the "J" in place of the "I" could be seen as having empirical weight in the identification of the ideal copy

(McKerrow, 1910).¹² The impetus for the methodology was, in part, initiated by Karl Lachmann's (d. 1851) genealogical method for textual criticism. Lachmann's presented his ideas in hopes of countering the problem of arbitrariness in the selection of a given source intended for editing. Lachmann's genealogical method can be summed as follows: Historically significant works have an original source or "archetype," and this singular source provides the basis for which subsequent copies are made; the act of copying, however, over time often leads to the degradation of the original; hence, scholars should locate the original source, or the copy closest in reproductive proximity to it for its subsequent reproduction (Bendix, 1997, pp. 60-63). This rationale is basic theory behind what is known as the "copy text" (Greg, 1966).

With the broader acceptance of this method in the community of editors and literary scholars, the groundwork was laid for the *scientization* of bibliography. Effectively, it was a formalization of the study as an empirical method aimed at the unearthing of buried truths. It was clear to the new bibliographers that the knowledge of book production was a vital factor in singling out the copy text. They were able to build on that theory and complicate it in the discourse. The skill of their having being able to identify the differences among *substantive readings*—intended, authoritative editorial alterations in text—and *accidentals*—those discrepancies to which mistakes in composition, typesetting, or other elements in book production—is a compelling illustration of this point (McKerrow, 1927; Greg, 1966).

In order for the bibliographer or the would-be literary scholar to be able to distinguish the sometimes infinitesimal differences between what was intended by the author and what appears on the page, vital information concerning a text, it was discovered, could be found in the material

¹² Consider, for example, the name *Jacobus Sprenger* in Trithemius, *Jacob Sprenger* being the anglicized form used in modern literature.

dimensions of the book. In this view, the job of the compositor took on a role of particular importance. The establishment of collation formulae—again, which was largely initiated by the works of McKerrow and Greg—provided a new method for bibliographical description. The collation formula, being a recognized set of symbols which, as a series, function as an alphanumeric representation of a book's gatherings, quietly arose as the secret language of the bibliographer. It is a language of abstraction wherein description is the primary vehicle for the analysis of a book's typesetting and layout. Thus we get the names descriptive and analytical bibliography.

As a practice, these formulae reached their culmination under Fredson Bowers (d. 1991) by the middle of the twentieth century. Bower's *Principles of Bibliographical Description* (1949) is still seen as a core text in the larger canon of bibliographical pedagogy. In keeping with its age, as much as the study struggled to hold on to its humanistic roots, a *scientization* process took hold in the depths of its paradigmatic contraction. Moreover, by the time that Bowers joined the discourse the template for bibliographical description had been at least rudimentarily standardized and bibliography itself, as a study, had successfully become embedded in the fabric of academia—illustrated by the circulation of scholarly literature exclusively devoted to the subject. The antiquarianism of its former years was becoming more vestigial in its cultural legacy, and the unrelenting reservations concerning the ability to this antiquarianism to remerge in scholarly investigations concerning bibliographical matters were routinely thwarted by the method's success at tackling difficult literary problems. Collation formulae under Bowers—who, again, was an immensely influential bibliographer in his own right—brought such precision to the method as to cast away any remaining questions as to its lack of empirical rigor (Bowers, 1949). Yet, it was precisely the perceived overemphasis on collation formulae and on typography

that provoked a reaction against the contractionary trajectory. It was the overemphasis on print to the exclusion of, say, paleography that Greg, for one, was reacting to toward the end of his life, despite himself having played a major role in the genesis this descriptive method. Furthermore, the enigmatic nature of these formulae to the outsider was also a growing point of contention (Greg W. , 1966, pp. 77-79). Bibliography as a study, consequently, had to divide itself into distinct schools—a move that served to crystalize its narrowing and ideological diminution for generations to come.

Bowers was openly concerned with demarcating these divisions. He often argued at great lengths as to the nature of their distinguishing characteristics. In his paper, entitled “Bibliography, Pure Bibliography, and Literary Studies,” for example, he singled out enumerative and historical bibliography from that of the descriptive, analytical, and textual schools. According to this new bibliographical regime, enumerative bibliography, as noted earlier, dealt expressly with bibliographical citation and the comprehensive compilation of abridged informational entries intended to document [book] titles. Next, Historical bibliography dealt largely with the history of book production, but in the context of the historical lineage of a particular book, edition, or series (pp. 42-43). The special attention paid to a particular title and its instances of manifestation, then, is what distinguishes it from its approximate in book history—a substantially larger field of study. Descriptive bibliography, a specialization of Bowers, is a process of arriving at the sum total of all pertinent material bibliographic data in an abstracted form to attain a comprehensive understanding of a particular bibliographic object or text. A bibliographer under this tradition will look at various material bibliographic data points to formulate hypotheses concerning the genealogical history and authenticity of a given text (pp. 43-44). Analytical bibliography, as Bowers has defined it, is a “technical investigation of the

printing of specific books, or general printing practise [sic], based exclusively on the physical evidence of the books themselves, not ignoring, however, what helpful correlation may be available with collateral evidence” (p. 40). In his eyes, it was a pure methodology. Textual bibliography, for all intents and purposes, specifically involves the utilization of bibliographical description in a methodological application toward literary research. It can work in concert with or even serve textual criticism which, contrastingly, considers the text of a work to be the principal form of evidence in determining authenticity. Representing, in some respects, the teleology of the others, it has routinely employed the analyses derived from the bibliographic evidence to either lend support to or refute a particular argument concerning those questions involved with the identification of an editorial copy text (pp. 44-45).

In Bowers, then, we can comprehend the tremendous intellectual value and legitimacy of advanced bibliographic method. And if cognizance of the method’s significance for literary research can serve to dispel prior accusations of its bookish frivolity, then bibliographical research in the form of the descriptive and, more notably, the analytical can stand on its own. In Bowers’s words:

Let us, then, look at analytical bibliography. Now if my attempt to delimit this field is at all legitimate, it may follow that some of the fears that analysis is becoming too pure to have general usefulness stem from a failure to distinguish analytical from textual, or critical bibliography. If I am at all right, I should like to view analytical bibliography as by definition a pure method, and critical bibliography as its application to immediate and specific problems. If this view be accepted, it must be allowed to pursue its own investigations in its own way without being forced to justify itself, at least as a principle,

by the necessity for practical application in the service of humane studies. So long as the results filter down through critical bibliography to assist in literary study, as they most certainly do, we should not worry whether it is becoming an end in itself, for in the course of time every fresh conquest of knowledge finds its application. (p. 46)

It was in such declarations that Bowers was able to help redefine the scope and purpose of bibliographical research as a whole. Yet, this move toward literary studies would also push the study further and further away from its cradle of book cataloging and librarianship.

These divisions, we find, were so influential that they were immediately echoed by bibliographers like Roy Stokes (d. 1995) and his book *The Function of Bibliography* (1969) wherein we find a detailed set of discussions based around a practically identical set of bibliographical schools. The only major difference from what is found in Bowers is that historical bibliography had altogether been dropped from the group (Stokes, 1969). The four divisions of enumerative, descriptive, analytical, and textual had, by that time, become the most generally accepted arrangement for the study. With the shedding of paleography, papyrology, and provenance research from the larger umbrella of bibliographical study, the bibliography of the 1960s and '70s began to develop as a much narrower field of inquiry. Fears of academic inconsequentiality continued to overshadow bibliographical research, however, as its antiquarian roots were looked upon by serious scholars with a mild disdain. In terms of the study's "scientific" application to literary history and textual criticism, one can recognize this sense of apprehension in Stokes concerning any vestiges of antiquarianism within its mission:

Although bibliography is concerned with the physical problems and aspects of such material, there is little to be gained, apart from purely antiquarian pleasure, in unravelling

such problems for their own sake. The major interest will always lie in some relationship to the text to be transmitted. (p. 17)

This statement might, on the surface, appear to contradict the position articulated by Bowers in his defense of analytical bibliography, but, upon further investigation, we find that Stokes actually credits Bowers for doing a service for bibliography, not only in narrowing a field that had been far too broad in scope, but also by affording bibliographers with the necessary tools for engaging in research efforts that would ultimately be of intellectual worth to future generations (pp. 17-18).

Finally, in its redirection toward the literary domain, it was also in this generation of new bibliographers when the study experienced its near terminal split from library studies with rare book cataloging as its strongest remaining connecting thread. The break has never been a complete one, but it is a rift that, once begun, set the two on their own separate paths. They have yet to be reconciled to that point of the interconnectedness which had initially defined their mutual origin. Bibliography, in its intellectual contraction, to some extent, moved away from material functionality in terms of access and retrieval. It progressed in its application in the direction of authentication and the analytical, as the emphasis was moving toward the immaterial nature of the ideal copy. Yet, the study persistently required using materiality as its empirical base for epistemological confirmation. The ideal copy being object-oriented could only be discerned through descriptive method by a rigorous recording of the physical details of the earliest extant copies.

Library cataloging and information retrieval, on the other hand—in its documentation of holdings of unique information objects—began to revisit its prior emphasis on perfecting

representational systems for subject classification. For bibliographers like Greg and Bowers, the literary contents of a particular copy of a text can carry little or no relevance to the execution of the descriptive method (Greg W. W., 1966, p. 247; Stokes, 1969, pp. 72-73; Bowers, 1975, p. 42). In the documentary projects of information theorists such as Paul Otlet (d. 1944), it was almost the complete reverse; that is, the materiality of the container of an information object had little to no relevance to the task of delivering the desired information contained within it (Rayward, 1967). The information represented by the text was the key component of his “bibliography of bibliographies.” And the information units extracted from books were intended to collectively convey a global encyclopedia similar to what some had initially envisioned for internet technology. Therefore, even though the basic elements of Otlet’s universal decimal system for the organization of information were unquestionably founded in systems that have their genesis in bibliographical research, it developed as a sharp break from the tradition in that the material object which contains the text was disregarded for the “documentary” approach which privileged the textual information and its identifiers (Rayward, 1967). Moreover, the sheer universality of its design was in stark opposition to the levels of minute bibliographic specificity that the new bibliographers had, up until that point, been endorsing.

The development of information retrieval, its relationship to library cataloging, and its split from bibliography is much too long and complicated of a subject to address at length in this review, but a summary of some of the major changes that occurred, at the very least, must be provided in order to understand how bibliography became less involved with the role of cataloging the world’s sources for knowledge. The most compelling impetus for the split, really, rests in the heart of the second Industrial Revolution when the rapid expansion of printed knowledge in the form of monographs, digests, scientific reports, and, perhaps above all,

scholarly journals made it next to impossible for enumerative bibliography to capture the massive volume of new and existing titles. The need for libraries and librarians, however, to be able to keep up with this expansion was essential for all parties involved. New systems were needed both to cope with the increasing volume of scientific data and humanistic research and to maximize efficiency in providing access to these growing bodies of knowledge for researchers. The field, like many others during that time, simultaneously went through its process of professionalization.

In keeping with the pragmatism of the age, Melvil Dewey's (d. 1931) Decimal Classification System (DDC)—a scheme of subject division based in decimal units—served to address the crisis of a rapidly rising volume of printed literature with a serviceable utility (Dick, 1999). The largescale migration of bibliographical catalog entries from the codex format over to the index card (i.e. the card catalog) was very much a physical embodiment of this utility. Fairly early in the history, bibliographers such as Pollard looked upon universal classification systems such as Dewey's with an air of intellectual derision. In his essay "The Arrangement of Bibliographies," Pollard went as far as to explicitly denounce the entire rationale behind the DDC as arbitrary and absurd (1909/1976, pp. 130-137). He did not acquiesce to notion of the superiority of efficiency in access over the autonomy of scholarly expertise (pp. 137-140). In step with the humanistic tradition of bibliography, he insisted that the subject specialist was best qualified to determine the arrangement of a particular scheme of knowledge organization for a particular discipline or area of research (pp. 130-143). These early twentieth contentions between new bibliographers and library catalogers during the first half of the twentieth century only served to further the widening gap between the two fields.

By the mid-twentieth century, it was well understood, at least intellectually, that “pure” bibliography dealt with the so called “ideal copy” of a work and library cataloging dealt with specific copies and variants (i.e. items) in a collection. Advanced bibliography by that time had made its way into the rigorous training procedures of literary scholarship. The change in status might explain why in *Bibliography and the Modern Librarianship*, Bowers’s (1966) views on the state of librarianship, at least, are somewhat condescending. Regarding one of his encounters with a rare book reading room assistant he recounted, “In those days the official custodian busied himself with light housekeeping tasks on another floor and left the conduct of the working quarters to a she-dragon who had demonstrated her incompetence so successfully in every other division of the library that by process of natural selection she had finally gravitated to the rare-book room” (p. 76). Again, the classist contempt and, far worse, the overt sexism in Bowers’s language is difficult to ignore. Granted, Bowers did manage to exempt those scholar librarians familiar enough with bibliographical terminology to at least converse intelligently upon the subject; nonetheless, his polite exemption precluded an acrimonious polemic against what he considered was a distressing trend of ignorance when it came to the knowledge of bibliography and book history in the practice of modern rare book librarianship (pp. 75-93). His negative attitude, however, as we shall soon learn, did not prevent the field from seriously addressing at least some of his accusations. And not only were some of his techniques for collation partially adopted within the cataloging infrastructure in works such as Paul S. Dunkin’s (1951) *How to Catalog a Rare Book*, but, by the close of the twentieth century his ideas, to some extent, helped to inspire a resurgence of interest for advanced bibliography in library studies (pp. 59-62).

2. III. Further Developments: Challenges and Revivals

As plainly seen, I have opted to portray a chronological succession in this discussion of bibliographical discourse in order to provide historical context to some of the core themes and ideas in the literature. In doing so, I have attempted to highlight the historicity inherent to our understandings of what bibliography “is” at the conceptual level. The recognition of historicity itself, too, is a product of the paradigmatic *situatedness* of the study. As it will be shown here, by the 1970s, the growing critiques against the orthodoxy of new bibliography had split the study once more into yet another two camps. One view took the ultimately expansive position that symbolism, or the semiotic performance of textual representation, is inextricably entangled with the material, thus, making a recognition of the socio-historical context indispensable to the research. The other, more conventional view would disregard this symbolism in favor of an exacting focus on strictly material, empirically-driven evidence and logical deduction. This division was epitomized by the debate that had arisen between McKenzie’s (d. 1999) “sociology of texts” and the tradition of descriptive bibliography under Bowers. Moving forward, however, we find that although each camp managed to progress along its individual path, these paths have since reached a point of convergence. Furthermore, we see both paths enjoying a protracted revival in the library through specialized training book history and special collections curation. Let us first recall, however, the initial reasons for this more recent schism.

In *Bibliography the Sociology of Texts* (1985), Don F. McKenzie (d. 1996) challenged some of the key components of definitions of bibliography previously advanced by Greg and Bowers. For him, new bibliography had become the unchallenged “orthodox” interpretation of

the study. He questioned the arguments which held that the “symbolic meaning” of “signs” that makeup a text were of little or no consequence to bibliographical analysis (p. 1). In his view:

... ‘sociology of texts’, then, contrasts with a bibliography confined to logical inference from printed signs as arbitrary marks on parchment or paper. As I indicated earlier, claims were made for the ‘scientific’ status of the latter precisely because it worked only from the physical evidence of the books themselves. Restricted to the non-symbolic values of the signs, it tried to exclude the distracting complexities of linguistic interpretation and historical explanation. (p. 7)

For McKenzie, the narrow view of bibliography had been ill-conceived. He also believed that historical bibliography’s exodus from the other schools was an erroneous development. In no uncertain terms, McKenzie (1985) declared, “Far from accepting that ‘historical bibliography is not, properly speaking, bibliography at all,’ it is tempting to claim, now, that all bibliography, properly speaking, is historical bibliography” (p. 3). Considering that by the time that Stokes *Function of Bibliography* (1969) was published, historical bibliography was not even included among the other branches, the statement really expressed a radical alternative to the then reigning four category division.

In addition to characterizing the orthodox definition as “too limited,” McKenzie sought, in the re-expansion of the study “to establish the continuity of bibliographical principle to non-book forms” (1985, p. 31). This far-reaching and forward-looking assertion was and, in many respects, still is a revolutionary idea in terms of the commonly accepted notion of what the foundation of bibliography truly represents—that is, necessarily, “books” and, not necessarily, “texts.” As previously noted, however, even for the book historian, or, perhaps, especially for the

book historian—with their concentrated study of the book throughout its various historical manifestations (e.g. clay tablet, scroll, wax tablet, codex, eBook, etc.)—arriving at an absolute definition of what actually constitutes a “book” in its differentiation from a text is riddled with intellectual peril. Nonetheless, McKenzie proposed his way forward; and despite common admonitions against ideological “mission creep,” he argued that:

...one can only be pragmatic and indicative, pointing out what seem to be parallel cases, one where the records have a textual function which is subject of bibliographical control, interpretation, and historical analysis. It may well be that, for present purposes at least, it is more convenient to think simply in terms of homologies, of correspondent structures, suggesting that, whatever our own special field – be it books, maps, prints, oral traditions, theatre, films, television, or computers-stored databases – we note certain concerns. (p.

31)

McKenzie, consequently, argued for the application of advanced bibliographical analysis to objects at the periphery of bibliography’s intellectual domain. It follows, however, that these non-book texts would still be objects in which *textuality* becomes integral as a result of their cognitive mediation through some form of literacy. It has taken decades for this idea to take hold in the discourse, but more recently McKenzie’s criticisms have been embraced with less controversy, particularly in the rise of print culture studies. The connection here resides in the fact that many of the documents associated with books—sometimes even the ones that textual bibliographers would consider as the copy text—are extant in a “non-book” format such as a graphic novel or a serialized magazine novel, or a “non-book” state such as that of an uncorrected proof (pp. 30-32).

Another important point McKenzie made for his sociological approach to bibliography was that, under Bowers, new bibliography had become steeped in the philosophy of new criticism. With his own discussion of the epistemological aims of Greg and Bowers, he was able to situate his own contribution to the discussion within a framework that reflected the intellectual history. He explained, for example:

That orthodox view of bibliography is less compelling, and less surprising, if we note its affinities with other modes of thinking at the time when Greg was writing. These include certain formalist theories of art and literature which were concerned to exclude from the discussion of work of art any intended or referential meaning. They were current not only in the years when Greg was formulating his definitions but were still active in the theory of New Criticism when Professor Fredson Bowers was developing his. The congruence of bibliography and criticism lay precisely in their shared view of the self-sufficient nature of the work of art or text, and in their agreement on the significance of its every verbal detail, however small. In neither case were precedent or subsequent processes thought to be essential to critical or bibliographical practice. (1985, p. 7)

The interpretation couched in the above selection anticipated a breakdown in the study's staunch resistance to critical theory. Here McKenzie had begun to analyze the meta-theoretical motivations for the study's development into, primarily, a method for textual and artefactual authentication based in the physical evidence.

Although these criticisms were articulated in the mid-1980s, in Bowers (1971) *Four Faces of Bibliography* we learn that McKenzie had actually issued his "attacks" over a decade prior to the publication of his *Bibliography and Sociology of Texts*. In this essay, Bowers reacted

to McKenzie's accusations of analytical bibliographical navel-gazing. Providing numerous specific hypotheticals wherein analytical and textual bibliography could be applied to questions of textual transmission, he responded that analytical bibliography and its related branches of study simply existed outside of the purview of McKerrow's critique (1971/1975, p. 106). Further than that, Bowers used the response to exploit the opportunity to remind his audience of bibliography's fundamental value as a method. In an inadvertent acquiescence to the antiquarian and historical strains in bibliography, he explained, "By this means a collector who understandably wants a copy of the first printing of the first edition can recognize it and buy it, instead—in his ignorance—of paying the price of a so-called 'first edition' for a superficially identical copy of the second, third, fourth printings..." (p. 105). Analytical bibliography, in his understanding, can also provide an effective method for arriving at both a complete and accurate publishing history of a work, and, thus, it is well-suited to serve as a supplement to description for collectors and librarians (p. 105). According to Bowers, however, publishing history is itself is a bibliographic peripheral, an outsider to the advanced bibliography (i.e. descriptive, analytical, etc.). Certainly, in his view, it is a branch of the study which can benefit from the more pure forms, yet not to the same degree as literature and literary history (p. 107). And although he pointed out bibliography's potential value for the librarians he concluded this essay, again, in affirming that bibliography must do more than to simply cater to the identification needs of librarians. He warned bibliographers not to let the study be "confined" to the library (p. 107). Bowers, instead, sought to promote the adoption of "all forms of bibliography as the liberal arts as reputable and indeed necessary parts of post-graduate liberal arts training" (p. 107). The supposition places the method solidly in the keeping of the humanities, as it rightly anticipated the future of bibliography.

Bowers, by any measure, succeeded in enshrining new bibliography within future discourses and subsequent pedagogies for bibliographic method. For all of McKenzie's reservations, in many respects his work still sought to build upon the analytical foundations for bibliographic method set by his predecessor. For the most part, McKenzie's revelations concerning the hitherto unforeseen involvedness of historical print production, with its multiple compositors, its non-sequential forms, and other puzzles of that nature, only complicated the creative simplicity of analytical bibliographic abstraction (McKenzie, 2002, pp. 32-33) . It was a matter, then, of exploring arguments through a more "bottom-up" style of inductive reasoning. The comprehensive framework for description and analysis provided in Bowers, however, remained intact. His *Principles of Bibliographical Description* was revisited in Phillip Gaskell's (1972) *A New Introduction to Bibliography*—a book which helped to introduce the method to a new generations bibliographic scholars. In it we find that the methods for collation and the explanations of layout, composition, imposition are presented in a considerably more comprehensible manner than that of Bowers.¹³ Gaskell's (d. 2001) writing, moreover, is less outwardly enigmatic. His didactically-oriented chapter progression, for instance—being one in which each of the major components of "the book" (e.g. binding, paper, type, etc.) receives an individual explanatory chapter devoted to its exposition—renders the work in the style of a "how to" guide. And although the book doubles as a work of book history, covering a large breadth of historical topics in the explanation of each component, its pragmatism is evident in its concluding chapters and appendixes which provide pithy, yet concrete instructions in methodology for neophytes to the study.¹⁴

¹³ Though not as simplified as the abridgement of Dunkin.

¹⁴ Gaskell has sample bibliographic descriptions.

George Thomas Tanselle (d. 2006) was another bibliographer of great repute who helped to carry on Bowers's legacy. Much of Tanselle's writings exemplify the survival of descriptive bibliographical principles in the next generation of bibliographical scholarship, but his ideas, at times, also suggest that he has a firm grasp of the sociological approach. His (1992) "A Description of Descriptive Bibliography," for instance, retreads an earlier conventional definition, but in a new, more philosophically sensitive light. His definition for descriptive bibliography has stated that it is a "genre of writing that aims to set forth the physical characteristics and production history of the objects that we call books" (p. 2). He concluded that the practice is, indeed, a "crucial cultural activity." This conclusion was reached through the following explanation:

Books themselves are works of graphic art and may of course be studied as such; but a large majority of them are also utilitarian objects that serve to convey written directions for recreating dances, pieces of music, and verbal statements (including the ones we call literature). Those directions, not being the works themselves, may at any point be inaccurate reflections of the works,; and every feature of the objects carrying such texts—whether present by design or by chance—is potentially significant for judging how those texts came to be what they are and why they were interpreted as they were in the past. Historically minded readers—those interested in readers' responses as well as those interested in any historical approach must read all the physical clues that books have to offer, not just the inked letterforms, in an effort to decide how the texts should—for their purposes—be constituted. This kind of critical reading (different from what is commonly meant by "critical reading") does not convert literature into a tangible art (though there are of course instances of mixed-media works, like concrete poems, that do combine the

verbal with the visual). Rather, this reading of physical evidence provides the basis for freeing oneself from the limitations of particular objects, from the contingencies of the single past moment reflected in each artifact. (p. 8)

Furthermore, in approaching compliance to the critiques of critical theory, he quickly conceded, “All readers, regardless of their degree of interest in history, must equally face the possibility of altering the texts they encounter...” (p. 8) . Now, in terms of its application, Tanselle’s interpretation broadens the scope of the method’s potential in a subtle, further attempt at paradigmatic re-expansion. Authentication, although still important, takes a back seat to the overall historical value of the physical evidences intrinsic to the book as the material manifestation of a text. In his eyes, the unyielding separation between the two has been, at best, subjective and contextual. The confusion, for instance, surrounding the illusionary division between materiality and textuality that allegedly accounts for conflicting approaches which have set apart special collections practices from those of general librarianship (e.g. academic, public, etc.) is portrayed by Tanselle as a misrepresentation that would eventually lead to further divisions in the study and practice of bibliography (p. 6). In regards to librarianship specifically, the division in question resulted in special collections privileging preservation over access and general librarianship prioritizing access over preservation.

Another recent proponent of new bibliography and descriptive bibliographic method for contemporary bibliographical scholarship is Terry Belanger. Over several decades now, Belanger has rather supportively sought to close many of these internal gaps and rifts between bibliography and antiquarianism, bibliography and the library, and, most importantly, between bibliography and itself. Largely ambivalent to any lingering fears of antiquarianism and its

potential to degrade the study, Belanger has done more than most to keep the fundamentals of new bibliography alive for future generations. His attitudes are relatively conventional when compared with much of the contemporary research in print culture studies at the forefront of bibliography's academic development. In his chapter on "Descriptive Bibliography," for example, in *Book Collecting: A Modern Guide*, bibliography was simply defined as "the study of books;" and "a bibliographer" as "one who studies them" (1977, p. 99). Contrary to his own definition, he went on to note how the commonly used term of "bibliography" lacks precision and cites this point as the reason for its separation into distinct bibliographical schools. His version has seven divisions. Yet, with that admission as to overall vagueness of the terminology he has been able to encapsulate the definition of what makes up descriptive bibliography in stating, simply, that it is comprised of the "close physical description of books" (p. 99). Additionally, it is interesting to note that historical bibliography has once again made its way into the group of bibliographical schools. In this instance, however, it was included as a branch of analytical bibliography, pointing to the author's closer allegiance to the "orthodox" view (pp. 103-105).

In Belanger's description of descriptive bibliography we find an explanation for the method in a condensed summation. His explanation for collation in *Book Collecting* was economized to seven pages (1977, pp. 107-113). Whereas in the *Principles of Bibliographical Description*, Bowers describes techniques for dealing with a multitude of varying circumstances in terms of the application of bibliographical research, Belanger gives only what is essential for the basic comprehension of the idea in his explanation for collectors. Consequently, his distillation of the fundamentals is, perhaps, broadly, the more teachable of the two. These summaries, as indicated in the book's title, provide book dealers, librarians, bibliophiles, and

other book collectors with the baseline knowledge necessary for their hobby, trade, or profession. Beyond ambivalence, viewed in such terms, bibliography could once again embrace its antiquarian heritage. In reality, even at its most academic, the study had always been employed in the service of these various book-centered communities to some degree. Communication among these seemingly autonomous groups has been, for generations, within the ordinary given their intellectual proximity to each other and their shared desire to understand the various facets of rare books and manuscripts more deeply. And by the early 1980s, in response to this shared desire for knowledge Belanger helped to establish the Rare Book School model of bibliographical instruction. It is a model that has since sought to provide an educational environment wherein these book-centered communities can come together and learn from each other (Rare Book School, 2015).

At the same time, another form of bibliographical instruction had taken hold within the pedagogical infrastructure of the library as an institution (Branch & Dusenbury, 1993; Grassian & Kaplowitz, 2009). This form of bibliographical instruction would first specialize in teaching students and other library learners, primarily, the finer points of current citation standards in addition to information as to how best to utilize the library's catalog, databases, and other reference resources. The advance of bibliographic instruction in the library, although distinct from the bibliographical tradition endorsed by scholars such as Pollard, Greg, and Bowers, is not so far removed as one might first assume. We must recall that enumerative bibliography, despite having been largely ignored by practitioners of new bibliography, had, for the most part, continued to develop within the information infrastructure of library cataloging. In this way it had advanced, also, with the growth and proliferation of national bibliographies, subject bibliographies, union/consortium/national library catalogs, and even auction catalogs (for

provenance research). The ascendancy of computer cataloging over card cataloging and the full integration of the database system of information storage and retrieval—changes that had been built upon the bibliographical cataloging infrastructures of past centuries and fashioned by the radical innovations of figures such as Otlet and Dewy—allowed for greater access (Cmeil, 2010, pp. 340-342). However, in order to maximize access and, also, efficiency in access, library users needed to be taught this different form of bibliographical instruction to be able to navigate the search functions of these new systems with a sufficient level of competency (Kent & Hall, 2002, p. 192). In a way, as the role of librarian continued to abandon its position as the arbiter of knowledge—that is, knowledge in the material form of book collections—we find that the study of bibliography proper, in its still relatively contracted iteration, increasingly assumed the role of a methodology and became less of an autonomous discipline as a result.

2. IV. Trajectory: The Postmodern Turn and Beyond

As we have seen now in the literature, the twentieth century witnessed the coalescence of bibliography into an academic research method. As revealed in one of the most long-lived of its debates, however, we also find that bibliography has yet to be recognized as a discipline. In that regard, the history of the book, as a field of research, has been far more successful in achieving, at least, a wider measure of interdisciplinary integration. Thus, advanced bibliography, even in its current state, still constitutes a set of ideas that form the basis of a method intended to be applied in the service of other academic and professional disciplines, especially literature, history, and library studies.

McKenzie once reminded us that the methodology of Bowers was intermingled with the episteme of new criticism (1986, p. 7). Accordingly, Bowers's view of bibliography, which

portrayed it as a method for textual or artefactual authentication, necessarily had to assume the existence of an author or creator of some sort. This assertion, which was left virtually unconsidered throughout the first half of the twentieth century, began to be thoroughly scrutinized during the second half. Roland Barthes's (1977) essay "The Death of the Author," in probably the most visible critique against the concept of authorship to date, drew upon a range of examples from Balzac to Proust to convey the idea of an authorial disembodiment from a text. Barthes has asked us to consider whether or not one can really locate the author in a text and separate it from all the interrelated, *asomatic* influences of temporality and geo-spatiality. Given that the new bibliography of the early twentieth century focused much of its attention on trying to sort authorship out of the attributive chaos that tends to characterize historical traces, it follows that bibliography, as a study, should have encountered this conundrum prior to its injection into the postmodernist discourse. As previously discussed, the problems of authorship, whether not it exists and whether or not it is a useful concept to employ when describing the process of textual generation are important considerations. And one's propensity for misattribution over time should be of special concern to paleographers and incunabulists wherein clear-cut notions of a singular authorship are repeatedly proved to be inapplicable in complex cases.

Whereas figures such as Barthes (d. 1980) and, later, Jacques Derrida (d. 2004), questioned the very existence of authorship at the conceptual level, Foucault (d. 1984) probed the processes involved with knowledge organization. In his book *Les Mots et les Choses* (1966, transl. *The Order of Things*, 1970), Foucault dissects the subjectivities of these systems. Inspired by Borges, Foucault's *The Order of Things* concentrates on the knowledge organization systems of the seventeenth and eighteenth century. In outlining the epistemological lineages, he

elucidated the fictions of objectivity and universality—ideals that these systems have historically either erroneously claimed or tirelessly hunted. Further than that, Foucault attempted to analyze what he calls the “pure experience” of ordering. He was interested in those processes of ordering that have worked to shape our perception of the world. He sought to arrive at some sense of how the “modalities of ordering” become operant across the “reflexive knowledges” of autopoietic taxonomic regeneration (p. xxi). In addition to the agency of “codes” and “signs” in the processes of ordering, close attention is also paid to the intricate interconnections between knowledge, language, and text—their cultural variation as well as their shifts over time. Taxonomy (i.e. *taxonomia*) is distinguished from the primary composites of the classical *episteme* that in his interpretation includes, in addition to this, what he calls *mathesis* (e.g. simple natures; as in, algebra), and genetic analysis, or the active, imaginative ordering agent (pp. 60-62, 68-72). Consider, for example, his conclusions on the reproductive nature of taxonomic classification:

Taxonomia also implies a certain continuum of things (a non-discontinuity, a plentitude of being) and a certain power of the imagination that renders apparent what is not, but makes possible, by this very fact, the revelation of continuity. The possibility of a science of empirical orders requires, therefore, an analysis of knowledge—an analysis that must show how the hidden (as it were confused) continuity of being can be reconstituted by means of the temporal connection provided by discontinuous representations. Hence the necessity, constantly, manifested throughout the Classical age, of questioning the origin of knowledge. (p. 72)

It is clear from the above selection that this analysis does not intend to present an inquiry into the legitimacy of these systems. Instead, Foucault was attempting to understand how we have historically constructed our intellectual environment through ordering to provide insights as to the nature of the process itself.

For decades proponents of a “pure bibliography” were able to resist being swept up in the postmodern tide. Aside from the relinquishment of control couched in the concept of *intentional fallacy*, this rarefied form of bibliography was not eager to integrate postmodern thought into its vocabulary (Wimsatt, 1954). Its intellectual latitude, consequently, for decades was likewise voluntarily restricted to the conventional Western canon and devoted to a sense of nationalism in terms of its overall reach. During this time, the sociological approach introduced by McKenzie represented the most significant break away from bibliographical orthodoxy. His works assumed a greater vitality in bibliographical discourse accordingly. It was Jerome McGann, however, who really demonstrated the true potential for postmodern thinking in bibliography. In *The Textual Condition* (1991), McGann explained how having unexpectedly fallen into the task of producing a new edition of Byron and, as a novice, selecting *The Giaour* as his preparatory editorial project, he began to understand the fashion in which he had adopted Greg-Bowers theory of editing (then called “eclectic” editing) in the process of researching for the work (pp. 19-21). He aptly concluded, then, that a “‘text’ is not a ‘material thing’ but a material event or set of events, a point in time (or a moment in space) where certain communicative exchanges are being practiced” (p. 21).

Slightly further into his analysis, McGann began to reflect upon the numerous socio-historical issues involved with the selection of the source material for a scholarly edition. Using

Dante Gabriel Rossetti's *House of Life* to illustrate the editorial complexities in question, McGann explained how there are actually a number of options that an editor could explore when producing a new edition of these sonnets (pp. 23-30). The primary challenge for producing the edition, it appears, lies in the fact that there are at least four or five different editions which are possible candidates for selection. To address this challenge, according to McGann, one option would be to apply the eclectic theory of Greg-Bowers to the editing process in hopes of isolating the most authoritative version of the work to use as a copy-text (p. 29). Much of the complexities of the document's history, however, with this method would be brushed aside in abstraction with the identification of the ideal copy. A second option, then, would be to provide what McGann called "diplomatic texts" for each edition and collate them in order to demarcate points of difference among the variants (pp. 29-30). Such an approach, though, would both operate to produce and almost inherently convoluted. Another option, an evolutionary approach would try to draw upon the historical evidence to reconstruct a "genetic text" that represents the evolution of the author's process or intent during his lifetime, or a "continuous production text" that seeks to encapsulate the historical evolution of the work during the life of the author (pp. 30-31). More challenging than these other options, however, it seems, is the approach that seeks, more comprehensively, to account for "set of relations," or various sociohistorical dimensions that factor into the dynamic interchanges of texts as "events" (pp. 31-32). For, as McGann perceptively pointed out, in grappling with the act of producing an edition, "every part of the productive process is meaning constructive" (p. 33). One of McGann's more enduring contributions to the field, then, lies in the manner in which he was able to situate the socially constructed nature of the theory underlying conventional advanced bibliographic method. In

doing so, he has helped to transform the once prevailing search for literary truth to a mission, instead, of literary contextualization.

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, we find a new camp of bibliographic study premised upon the notions of the constructed nature of texts. We find a generation, likewise, that both acknowledges and explores the complexities of transnational textual transmission. And a study which had previously been apprehensive in concerning itself with such matters has finally come to embrace nontraditional and critical perspectives. Some of the more recent developments in literary history and, more specifically, in the history of printed texts have clearly followed down the trail that was pioneered by McGann in the 1980s and '90s. Piper's (2009) *Dreaming in Books*, for instance, is a study that focused on the "process of how we became bookish at the turn of the nineteenth century" (p. 3). In this study, Piper looked almost expressly at how the material increase of books in the physical environment helped to shape the social construction of bibliophilic psychologies in the context of what he has argued was a "romantic bibliographic culture" (p. 7). A collection of essays called *Modern Print Activism* (Schreiber, 2013) has identified a relatively nascent area of research within the larger umbrella of print culture studies called "print activism" (pp. 5-7). In essence, the essays intended to explore the various ways in which activist identities, particularly those that have concerned class, race, and gender, have been informed by as well as facilitated through print media (p. 7). The essays advance postmodern critiques in that they begin to shed more light on the influences of Western hegemony inherent in much of the discursive relations of print culture. Fox's (2013) "Give this Copy of the *Kourier* Magazine to your Friend," for example, investigated how the Ku Klux Klan used print publications to propagandize their cause and legitimize their image in the eyes of the wider Anglo-American public (pp. 106-122). Additionally, Robert Fraser is another important

voice in contemporary bibliographical research. Fraser has been instrumental in the foundation of transnational and post-colonial book history. Recognizing the limitations of Eurocentrism in conventional book history, both his *Book History through Postcolonial Eyes* (2008) along with a collection of essays that he co-edited titled *Books Without Borders* (Fraser & Hammond, 2008) have concertedly worked to examine, more fully, the transnational expansion of printing practices in manufacturing, distribution, and reception into the comparatively ignored regions of the “developing” world. The geographically distributed nature of his investigations has served to reveal the major limitations of large national bibliographic projects and outline the difficulties facing the ability of such projects to bolster a national identity.

The national bibliographic projects themselves—projects such as the National Union Catalog (NUC), the British National Bibliography (BNB), Canadiana, the National Bibliography of Canada, and the National Bibliography of Indian Literature (MBIL)—by this time, had swelled to enormous proportions. Their propagation relied chiefly upon those technological affordances brought about by systemic developments in both the print and the digital domains. As the codification of a canon—that is, of cultural knowledge—is achieved in the consolidation of a national literature, having that literature physically represented by bibliographical documentation, then, is viewed as one of the hallmarks of a “civilized” nation-state. Enumerative bibliography in this form has thrived in comparison with its advanced bibliographical offshoots, but in order to maintain relevancy, it has had to utilize digital technologies to deal with issues of scope and scalability. The cataloging systems that enumerative bibliography had initially helped to develop played a reciprocal role in helping to the enumerative branch integrate with the newer digital platforms. The large print runs of these massive national bibliographies have correspondingly assumed a reduced level of importance during the migration process—

sometimes to the point of deaccession or non-inclusion in the collection development policies of the smaller reference libraries.

Prior to High Amory (d. 2001), the term ethnobibliography had only been used sporadically. In the limited cases where we do find the term being used, it was reserved for the enumerative bibliographies that were explicitly devoted to the literatures of different ethnic groups—bibliographies like the *Ethnic Information Sources of the United States: Ethnic peoples: Jamaicans-Yugoslavs. General information on ethnic peoples* (Gale Research Company, 1983). In this regard, Amory's (1996) *The Trout and the Milk: An Ethnobibliographical Talk* was a major advancement for the study into previously disregarded terrain. In terms of the discourse, the move was unquestionably the most instrumental to this research used in this study. In essence, Amory's goal was to cut a middle path between new bibliography and the sociological approach:

Ultimately, I propose to pursue what I have called “ethnobibliography,” an attempt to align my ideal with the “ethnohistory” of James Axell and others, to distance it slightly from what McKenzie has called a “sociology of texts.” A “text,” particularly the mental kind favored by French theorists, has no real location, crossing readily from one culture to another, as when Roland Barthes “reads” the absence of street signs in Tokyo. Books, on the other hand, are almost always individual or tribal objects, and they are far more amenable to cultural or social definition. The few books that have achieved iconic status, such as the First Folio, the Gutenberg Bible, and the Bay Psalm Book, are, of course, another matter. Perhaps my profession is showing, but as a librarian I am conscious that perhaps the majority of the books ever printed have rarely been read; libraries have much

in common with Grandmother's Attic, and a good thing too, but this fact, which forbids us to think of books as texts, in no way exhausts their cultural significance. (p. 51)

There is a great deal of ideological maneuvering happening in this statement. An appreciation of the fundamental understanding of a book's materiality as being the chief differentiating factor from its existence as a "text" has certainly been articulated. One even can infer that there is a not so subtle rejection of McKenzie's views implied by his definition. It cannot be discounted, however, upon further explanation that, in seeking to also comprehend the cultural dimensions of the bibliographic object, and in this case, from a historical vantage point, a tacit embrace of the sociological approach was also present. Another instance of maneuvering in this selection can be found in his reflexive admission of being a librarian. His use of ethnobibliography in the research was essentially historical, but, as Amory was outlining the parameters of the method from the dual perspectives of both a book historian and a library cataloger, there was also a quiet realignment of bibliography with that of library studies in his work. His research, therefore, also conveyed the often shrouded value of descriptive cataloging for historical investigations.

The revelation of the hidden benefit of descriptive cataloging (and, as it follows, of descriptive bibliographical principles) that resides in the manner in which Amory had proceeded to demonstrate ethnobibliography's potential as a research method is an important starting point for the method's application in the study of race and culture. Actually, the ironic title of Amory's talk was not simply meant to be a play on the English translation of Levi-Strauss's (1964) book *Le Cru et le Cuit (The Raw and the Cooked)*. Amory used the *trout and milk* trope to clarify his vision for the method's application. His "trout," for the purposes of his study, is the cultural history of the Pequot tribe—a tribe native to Connecticut. His "milk" is "the seventeenth century

culture represented by the object” (p. 51). In this instance, the (bibliographic) object happened to be an iron salt *pseudomorph* of a medicine bundle that was found in the gravesite of a young Pequot woman who died in the colonial period. Of interest to Amory was that this *pseudomorph* medicine bundle contained a piece of fine cloth that was curiously paired with a fragment from a late seventeenth century small-format Bible. Amory had set out, then, to look into the question of exactly how such a fragment could have been found in an incontrovertibly pagan burial site. Using descriptive bibliographical principles, Amory was able to unearth a number of details concerning the possible origin of the fragment, and, with the help of others, he was able to identify its extracted passage (pp. 58-60).¹⁵ With his historical analysis of Pequot culture, he was further able to provide context for the kinds of relationships the tribe were likely to have maintained with the object (pp. 61-65).

It is clear that Amory’s vision was groundbreaking in the way that it was able to expand the potential application for bibliographic study; on the other hand, there are a couple of serious gaps in Amory’s interpretation of ethnobibliography that I think should be noted here. The first, more obvious point concerns the some of the historical evidence used by Amory to illustrate the Pequot side of his argument. In his account of the Pequots’ likely reaction to print technology, it appears that Amory had almost exclusively drawn upon the voices of primarily white observers like Roger Williams and Gabriel Sagard to build his case. Largely absent are firsthand accounts coming from the evidentiary vestiges of Pequot culture; and indigenous authorities are excluded from his discussion (p. 52). The second oversight involving the intercultural materiality of the book object, does recognize a tendency toward entanglement and cultural re-appropriation, but it stops short of serious investigation in his own account which is largely unidirectional—the

¹⁵ More specifically, Psalm 98.

direction of colonial. What is forgotten is that the reciprocal relations of intercultural exchange have had a mutual role in shaping the contours of the book both in this country and around the world. In other words, the appropriation of languages, letterforms, and, even the elements of book design has been a largely conversational process.

Viewed in this light, ethnobibliography, perhaps, has roots that predate the seventeenth and eighteenth century projects of print globalization that coincided with the Age of Discovery. For, in many cases, the cultures that colonists and explorers had well-established bibliographic and literary cultures that were indigenous and which had developed upon independent lines. As early as 1637, John Fell of the University of Oxford Press had already procured a complete set of punches for an English Arabic, No. 11; and by 1693, the Press's collection of types included a Nissel and Petraeus's Great Primer Ethiopic, No. 51 produced by the House of Elzevir (Morrison & Carter, 1967, pp. 240-246). Lost to our history, however, is the names of those Ethiopian scribes who had perfected the syllographic letterforms that formed the very basis of the typeface in the first place. And so a better understanding of such intercultural manifestations of book history compels us to achieve an even greater awareness of the cultural, intellectual, and aesthetic influences of the non-Western communities.

Regrettably, the introduction to a "new" ethnobibliography as offered by Amory has been limited to this single study. And, again, it is my contention that the ideas he has outlined in this talk warrant further exploration. Ideally, even though Amory himself declared it to be "another matter," in addition to a range of other concerns, ethnobibliography could reasonably be expanded and applied as a method in the examination of, say, the processes involved in a book's cultural ascendancy to an "iconic status." Hence, having established the theoretical foundation

for the method, and having covered the grounds from whence it has emerged in the discourse, I shall now proceed to a discussion on the method's application in this study—that is, in my attempt to employ it in addressing the question of the black literacy crisis and its relationship to special collections research.

Chapter Three: Method

3. I. Methodological Framework

Up to this point I have sought to establish the following: first, that the larger discourses on literacy and black literacy in particular have demonstrated that it is quite possible that our fundamental conception of its state of crisis is one that is currently in need of serious reconsideration; that, second, our notions concerning the black literacy crisis have routinely been skewed by the privileging of normative models based on causality and exclusively positivistic literacy research which have inadvertently served to perpetuate hegemonies in the systematic production of knowledge; next, that prior research on the literacy question has repeatedly treated physical books and libraries only as conduits of knowledge transmission in the expression of literacy practices that, outside of their value in positively contributing to the processes of literacy acquisition, possess little to no intellectual value for researchers in terms of their materiality; and, lastly, that bibliography, which has also developed, for the most part, upon empirical lines, and which has historically worked to bring the importance of bibliographic materiality to the forefront in various disciplines, is, therefore, well suited to account for the discrepancies in the literature by applying bibliographic analysis to our reconsideration of how the research library, as an institution, both views and responds to the achievement gap in black literacy. Having established the basis upon which a study of this nature can further advance the library and information fields, it is important at this juncture to detail at length precisely how bibliographic method, specifically, in the form of ethnobibliography can be applied to the question of black literacy. It is likewise important to explain here how ethnobibliography in this study is employed as a mix-methods approach.

There is a great deal of license afforded to ethnobibliography as a result of such a sizable gap in the literature concerning the parameters of its application. With greater license, however, comes a greater responsibility to be rigorous in establishing the applicatory procedures involved with the collection and assessment of data. Let us recall, however, that there is only a single precedent for ethnobibliographic method found in Amory (1996). My own use of ethnobibliographic method is aligned with the inherent characteristics of Amory's definition. Nonetheless, it constitutes a major departure from his work. The key point of departure sharply moves the method away from ethnohistory in the direction of a broader ethnography (pp. 51-52). In attempting to address a topic of current import and human agency, ethnobibliographic method for this study approaches ethnography in that it utilizes some of its data collection techniques; but I stop shy of a direct implementation in terms of its larger framework because I view ethnobibliographic method as being anchored in the book object and not in human behavior. Moreover, unlike Amory, whose use of the method was strictly limited to the combination of ethnohistory and bibliography, my application of ethnobibliographic method has been informed by a slightly larger group of appropriately selected methodologies—chiefly those that are related or even intrinsic to the method's etymological foundations in *ethnos* (ἔθνος) meaning “people,” *biblos* (βιβλος) meaning “book,” and *grapho* (γράφω) meaning “to write” or “record.” In this study, bibliography as a core methodology approaches the ethnographic in its integration of the multisite case study approach, the grounded theory method (GTM), and the database model of knowledge construction.

As I will further explain at a later point, in terms of the overall design, my use of ethnobibliographic method resembles grounded theory method strictly in that manner in which the granularity of the coding system was developed using data gathered during the initial phase of

my field research. This resemblance, however, in no way denotes a wholesale adoption of the grounded theory method as it was first conceived and then acrimoniously split by sociologists Anselm Strauss and Barney Glaser. It is, instead, more in keeping with the constructionist grounded theory posited by Antony Bryant (2002). In his insightful and perceptive article “Re-grounding Grounded Theory,” Bryant insisted that any potential application of grounded theory method in information science must not be haphazard or ambiguous about the manner in which it is adopted. He reminds us that the foundation for grounded theory, being rooted in the objectification of data, is really a positivistic one that is vulnerable to the misguidedness of scientism (p. 26). He proposed that, in order to combat this vulnerability, researchers should recognize that the very act of deriving a theory through developing a systematic coding schema to be used in the analysis of “raw data” is also an act that involves a constructing of meaning (pp. 34-37). In other words, as much as the grounded theory method has sought to bring the epistemological legitimacy of scientific rigor to qualitative research through claims of objectivity and objective measure, ties to the subjective remain. The data and the processes involved with its collection are likewise inextricably meshed with the biases of the researchers who design the study (p. 32). A vigilant awareness of these of these biases and limitations through a sustained reflexive analysis, however, again, situates the integration of the GTM in a constructionist *modus operandi*. The integration of the database model, then, uses this “grounded” database as a tool of recording empirical evidence used in analysis. The data, the empirical evidence, was obtained directly from four case studies where I engaged in onsite field research over a period of several months.

My use of ethnobibliography can be said to be in closest alignment with the precedent set by Amory (1996) in that we both have approached the method with bibliography as the defining

element. What is offered here in regards to past definitions of the term is not enumerative in either scope or design, but it does attempt to be exhaustive in terms of the depth and granularity of the bibliographic description which provides an evidentiary basis for investigational analysis. Again, it is simply the case that the bibliographic data, viewed in concert with the ethnographic, will be applied toward analysis of the *bibliocultural* dimensions of the book and not toward matters of identification or textual or artefactual authentication. On the surface, this use of bibliography may appear to be radically outside of the tradition, and there is some truth to that statement. However, my use of bibliography, despite its somewhat radical implications, is categorically aligned with earlier missions outlined by past bibliographers that entail a demonstration of the potential value of bibliography for humanities research and beyond. And in this study the method also offers an expansion of bibliography's potential application into literacy theory. This application as a practical option for looking into the literacy question has been, up until this time, relatively overlooked (surprisingly so given the patently material nature of the book in connection to the performance of reading).

3. II. 1. Method Design: Multisite Case Study

The subject of this study is undoubtedly one of vast complexity. Investigating any issue from a systems perspective necessarily presents us with the problem of complexity. The ungraspable complexity of systems, in my assessment, has been among the main reasons why many of the new bibliographers and their successors have typically resisted notions of “non-book texts” and post-colonial books as being in their purview. Strictly speaking, prior attempts to relegate the more marginalized *bibliocultural* manifestations of the book to being outside of the accepted scope of the conventional bibliographic purview are likely to have coalesced, at least in

part, around fears of a taxonomic “slippery slope.” If one is to include printed plays in the study of bibliography, then why not screenplays; if published collections of musical reviews count as legitimate bibliographic objects of study, then why not the booklets found in compact disc cases and vinyl records with liner notes; if illuminated manuscripts count, then why not palm leaf manuscripts from South East Asia, and if so, then why not Incan Quipu?

Similarly, there is always the apprehension surrounding the apparent boundlessness of a system. The systems from which books emerge as well as the systems within which they circulate fall squarely into this characterization. Looking at the book as a physical object from the systems perspective involves, for example, the admission that there is an extensive network of writers, agents, editors, publishers, printers, (and now) coders and IT specialist, marketers, shippers, retailers, readers, and more that are each uniquely part of a book’s manifestation, manufacture, dissemination, etc. Within still deeper levels of granularity there are timber companies, chemical companies, paper manufactures, data centers, cloud servers, machinists, printers, typographers and digital typographers, graphic designers, and so on, seemingly *ad infinitum*.

Studying discrete phenomena as stand-alone objects, on the other hand, is graspable. A well-defined book consisting within an equally well-defined framework of analysis such as the standard template for bibliographic description carries the advantage of also having well-defined parameters insofar as limits are concerned. Yet, in a somewhat roundabout fashion, the limitations themselves can lead to abstractions which can be detrimentally exclusionary. To navigate this tension between the exclusivity of object-oriented abstraction and the difficulty with grappling with systems-based complexity, I have employed a database model of data

collection in a series of case studies. The case study is methodologically suited to contextualize the complexity of a phenomenon in question (Stake, 2010). Multisite case study analysis can do the same for a connective theme shared by each individual case involved with some overarching question or concern (Stake, 2006). I have selected four such case studies to illustrate in increasing detail, the primary facets of the system in which I have situated books and black literacy for this study—namely, in the administrative cycle of knowledge production.

My selection process, then, was one that resulted in a nonrandom, highly specific group of sites. The pool of possible research sites was limited by the relatively small number of institutions fitting the criteria of a potentially suitable sample. In consequence of such an in-depth granularity in terms of the data collection, a small sample was needed, also, to cope with the scale and time constraints of the project. The study, however, with all of the individual case studies combined, is still a longitudinal one. Approximately four months in the year of 2014 were devoted to field research—accounting for arrangements, travel, etc.—with the basic idea being that one month total would be allotted to each site. However, the actual time spent onsite varied widely in some cases, and it was always dependent upon the particular conditions of access to the facilities and collections afforded by each individual institution. Of this four months, then, a total of thirty-nine days was spent actually onsite in the process of data collection. Out of these days, a range of four to six hours was typically spent at the actual location. Research collections were generally open during weekdays and during the day time, so the majority of my time spent onsite coincided with the morning to afternoon hours. The following four collections were selected for their reputation as leading institutions in their respective areas, their importance in terms of collection depth, range, comprehensiveness, and rarity, and, also, their geographic region:

Site One [S.I] – The William Andrews Clark Memorial Library. Otherwise known as The Clark Library, this institution was chosen to stand in for the conventional model of a Western, Eurocentric research collection. It was selected to serve as this model because of its historical ties to the luxury class, its neoclassicism, and, most importantly, because of its comparatively strong collection of fine press printing. Selected works from this collection in particular will be used in this study to illustrate the Western model of the ideal book. It stands to reason, then, that this site is also meant to serve as the primary point of comparison with the others. In addition to its robust collection of fine printing, the Clark Library—which was initially assembled in the early twentieth century by copper heir William Andrews Clark Jr. (d. 1934)—also has a world renowned collection of books and materials either by or relating to Oscar Wilde. And many surely have praised their sizable collections of Shakespearean works and seventeenth and eighteenth century books. The Clark Library is a quasi-autonomous organization in that, once private, is now run completely by the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) library system in conjunction with the university’s Center for 17th and 18th Century Studies. Despite its current relationship with UCLA, however, consequence of its particular history as a private collection, the facilities are not actually located on the university campus grounds. The library is located, instead, in the West Adams neighborhood of Los Angeles. I was able to spend roughly ten days at this site while residing at my home residence in Leimert Park for the duration of my scheduled January time allotment.

Site Two [S.II] - The Amistad Research Center. This site was selected as an example of a major African American research collection based in the Southern United States and

having some of its historical roots also in that region. It can be called a semi-autonomous organization in that it has had, for some time now, a negotiated arrangement with Tulane University for the use of the campus space for its storage and processing facilities as well its offices and its reading room. The Amistad was originally founded in 1966 in the Race Relations Department of the United Church Boards of Homeland Ministries (UCBHM) at Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee as a repository for the records of the American Missionary Association (Amistad Research Center & Johnson, 2005).¹⁶ Since 1969, however, it has been recognized as an independent non-profit organization. By 1970, the center had relocated to Dillard University in Louisiana, eventually ending up at Tulane University in 1987 (Amistad Research Center & Johnson, 2005). In terms of chronology, their collections cover from around the period of Reconstruction to the present day (Amistad Research Center & Johnson, 2005). Their collection strengths include rare Africana, African American fine art, materials on the Civil Rights Movement, the African Diaspora, and independent press publications of the Black Arts Movement. The Amistad is physically located in Uptown New Orleans on the Tulane University campus grounds on St. Charles Ave. I was able to spend a total of twelve days onsite doing field research at this facility; and I stayed in New Orleans with a colleague in the Upper Ninth Ward for about twenty days of the February time allotment.

Site Three [S.III] - The Mayme A. Clayton Library & Museum. The Clayton Library was included in the study primarily because of its reputation as being the largest collection of African American books and other research materials in the Western United States; but it was also selected as a result of its geographic proximity to Site One. Formed in the early

¹⁶ SII-Doc8

1960s by librarian and bookseller Mayme A. Clayton (d. 2006), this library and museum is a completely independent non-profit organization which operates almost entirely autonomously out of a former courthouse building in Culver City, California. The collection specializes in African Americana, historical black films, and works from the black press including a wide variety of ephemera such as posters and pamphlets.¹⁷ Due to the limited hours of public access, however, a total of only six days were spent onsite during the whole duration of the March allotment. As Culver City was only a relatively small distance away from my home residence, I was able to stay at home in Leimert Park during the time that I was conducting this research.

Site Four [S.IV] - The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. In the matter of ensuring that a model for a contemporary African American research collection that would be comparable to the Clark Library in terms of its reputation and standing also finds adequate representation in this study, having the Schomburg Center in the group of the four case studies was absolutely essential to the overall aims of the research. Given its paramount status and reputation in the black community, its exclusion, frankly, was not an option.

Bibliophile, collector, and local historian Arturo (Arthur) Schomburg put together the collection in the early part of the twentieth century, and it still has the distinction of being the largest individually assembled collection of African American books and manuscripts in the country. After a near meteoric buildup of African American research materials tended to with years of independent scholarship and erudition, Schomburg's collection was officially acquired by the New York Public Library (NYPL) in 1926.

¹⁷ SII-D1: HIST

Since the time when he relinquished personal ownership of his collection over to the public, the collection has grown to encompass an impressive array of photographs, artworks, and archival materials on a range of subjects vital to the African American community. There are over 10,000,000 items of rare, historical, or intellectual significance available to researchers and learners onsite. The collection's main historical strengths are in black studies, the African Diaspora, Africans in the Americas and the Caribbean, Haitian history, and, most notably, Harlem history and the Harlem Renaissance. The collection, fittingly, is located on Malcolm X Boulevard in Harlem, New York. In the overall duration of the April allotment, in the spring of 2014, I was able to spend a total of eleven days doing onsite data collection out of the eighteen days that I stayed, unaccompanied, in an apartment in Harlem across the street from Jackie Robinson Park off of 145th St.

These four sites will not be discussed in chronological succession. The research, instead, will be presented in a manner in which each chapter is specifically devoted to a set of primary categories. The categories, then, form the boundaries and the structure of a systems-based analysis in which the information collected from the case studies ultimately becomes the evidentiary basis for a reinterpretation of our past assumptions concerning the black literacy question (i.e. construction of meaning).

3. II. 1. Method Design: The Ethnobiographic Database and its Quantitative Data

Although this study is ultimately qualitative in terms of the primary manner in which the data is analyzed, some of the data included within the framework of the database is unavoidably quantitative. The quantitative data can be divided into two primary groups, the ethnographic and

the bibliographic. The ethnographic group includes data that corresponds to those patently discernible characteristics of individuals populating the site which are decidedly quantifiable. This form of data includes measures of the apparent race, sex, and estimated age group of library patrons (i.e. users, learners, and researchers) for each day of each case study. It also includes numeric totals for the equipment used for research, the vernacular inflection of researchers, and their specific type of apparel and attire. These measures allow for a basic level of comparative demographic analysis among the different case studies. The second group of data, the bibliographic group, includes measures for some of the physical characteristics of a bibliographic object which are also quantifiable. This mainly refers to the overall size of the object, its type, its text, and page amount. The measures of typography and design can also be analyzed across the different studies.

The sample size of noted populations is relative to the number of patron visits and limited to the spatial accommodations provided by each facility.¹⁸ The stratification of the samples—that is, the divisions among race, gender, age, etc.—is in approximate alignment with the population pool. The population pool is, by design, a random one. It is random in the sense that there was always the potential for a different set of collection users, learners, and researchers in each day of my documented field research, even if the same group of individuals at any one of the four research sites would return daily (Aron, 2014). It was necessary for me to refrain from interrupting the daily randomness of the population pool in order to portray a more accurate reflection of the day-to-day research environment.

The research presented here in no way implies that the presence of black press publications in a library alone can account for an apparent rise or decline in literacy rates.

¹⁸ A noted total population of 630 library patrons stratified among four different libraries over thirty-nine days.

Similarly, I do not attempt to advance any hypotheses of a *bibliometric* nature. One such hypothesis, for instance, might pose the question as to whether a higher number of black authored works or black publications in a particular collection would have a direct or causal effect on the literacy rates of a non-random sampled population. I am deliberately avoiding this type of investigation. Moreover, I do not attempt to show that any of the quantifiable characteristics of the physical research space are the direct cause for any fluctuations in literacy rates. This study does not test for or record literacy rates at all in fact. This point might seem somewhat unusual given that the question of literacy underlies much of the research. The main goal here, however, again, is to work toward the reconsideration of the issue, not a redetermination of it. Accordingly, I make no attempt to search for any causal relationships or, even, direct or indirect correlations between these physical characteristics and the behavioral phenomena. Therefore, no bi-variate or multi-variate analysis of the statistical data will be included during the course of this study (Aron, 2014).

3. II. 2. Method Design: The Ethnobiographic Database and its Qualitative Data

The bulk of the analysis in this study will come from the database's store of qualitative data. In concert with the quantitative, qualitative data used here is divided into the same two branches of the ethnographic and the bibliographic with the bibliographic apportioning the greater share. The ethnographic qualitative data includes notes and observations concerning conditions of access, daily operations, community programs and outreach efforts, and the more performative expressions of research and literacy practices. The bibliographic qualitative data is comprised mostly of textual bibliographic description; in other words, those accumulated recorded observations of bibliographic objects which are primarily alphabetic as opposed to

being numeric in their makeup. In addition to recorded information on the physical qualities of the individual books in question, this data set also includes historical information pertaining to the item and, often, relating to its collection and its previous owners. Combined, these two groups of qualitative data form the primary evidentiary basis for both discerning and understanding the *bibliocultural* link which ties ethnic and racial identity and literacy practice to bibliographic materiality.

It must be stressed that the bibliographic qualitative data group is the group that is most integral to the larger framework of the study. Essentially it is books, not the human beings or their behavior, which are the core subjects of the research. Again, this fact might be the cause for some concern considering that this study aims to address perceptions surrounding the very human activities of reading and writing. This concern can only be exacerbated by the fact that this study will, in due course, attempt at a reassessment of the current institutional response to black literacy—a response which, in the past, has played out in the form of outreach programs and policy development. In both of these cases, however, upon further investigation one can see that even in addressing the issue of a black literacy gap and reassessing programs and policies intended to ameliorate the problem, what I am really concerned with here is: 1) the perception surrounding an activity (i.e. ideas) and 2) the institutional-level response (e.g. policies, programs, etc.).

The books and their respective research environments are the actual conduits of the exploration. Those persons who physically inhabit these research environments—although not completely invisible in the observation schema—are certainly never treated as the subjects. Therefore, the kind of information found in the qualitative ethnographic data group—which, as a

corollary of bibliography's centrality to the method, is perpetually tethered to the anchoring bibliographic in a derivative fashion—is strictly limited to general observations which document bibliographic object-oriented activities and, in dealing with these objects as the raw material of primary source research, those transactions, operations, and other communicative exchanges involving the public's engagement with facility policies and its modes of knowledge organization.

Although it is true that a substantial portion of the qualitative data used here is ethnographic in nature, the study in no way constitutes ethnography. The main reason behind this constraint is that ethnobibliographic method's ultimately bibliographic orientation categorically dictates the exclusion of any direct behavioral analysis upon a population in the research. It does, however, allow for the examination of behavioral phenomena using secondary sources to provide more context to the discussions of the various issues in question. In that way it also ensures that any preempted individual interactions between the researcher and the populations are likewise excluded from documentation and data analysis. In keeping with that principle, the research generally excludes any direct documentation or analysis of any individual behavioral characteristics, sentiments, attitudes, or emotional responses exhibited by patrons during the field research or any activities in general outside of public interactions with the research space itself or its staff. Interaction with private persons, entities, or private spaces, including observation, was completely outside of the boundaries of the method for the purposes of this study. Most importantly, I should add that this study does not attempt at any psychological investigation, and it does not, at any point, entertain any temporary or conditional behavioral manipulation of human subjects. The observation of a formally arranged or predetermined sample population or group was likewise abandoned here.

As I have previously discussed at length, a number of other studies have already engaged in literacy testing, behavioral analysis, and ethnography in their attempts to both explain and address the black literacy gap (Kumasi, 2008; Ladson-Billings, 1992; Matthews et al., 2010). And it is clear that this growing body of research has produced a number of noteworthy results which have since served to inform the response in the library and information fields in constructive ways. The research presented here, however, attempts to address a serious gap in the literature concerning alternative means of addressing the issue by paying closer attention to the role that bibliographic materiality plays in shaping our understanding of it. For that reason, I did not find it necessary to conduct surveys or any prearranged interviews of select persons or groups of individuals. And although I deemed it appropriate to include photographic documentation of research sites, there was never any reason for me to photograph any individual library patrons or staff during the course of the field research. Lastly, with respect to privacy concerns, no personal identifying information (names, phone numbers, home addresses, email addresses, etc.) of any individual was ever directly ascertained for the purposes of this study, and this type of information was never gathered or included as part of the data.

3. II. 3. Method Design: The Database Model for Ethnobibliographic Method

As I have previously indicated throughout this chapter, in this study data collected from the research sites has been arranged in accordance with the coded schema of an ethnobibliographic database. Employing the database model in ethnobibliographic method might appear to some as being in contradiction with my effort to avoid falling into past theories of causality concerning the issue of an achievement gap in black literacy. One could reasonably argue that there are elements of the database that have derived from the taxonomic systems

which are emblematic of a modernist rationale. One could point out, for instance, that, similar to grounded method, the database model has been rooted in positivism; and having been dependent upon empirical justification in terms of its epistemology, it has likewise been susceptible to an uncritical scientism. The fundamental concept of the database itself, however, is adaptive, fungible, and non-deterministic with respect to ideology. There isn't anything inherent to the basic matrix structure of a database that would prevent it from being arranged either hierarchically in the service of a normative "tree-root" model of organization or in a "rhizomtaic" manner typified by a faceted, networked form of organization. The actual organizing force underlying the database exists in the mutually supporting rationale for its implementation. Viewed critically and in the lens of narrative consumption, therefore, the database becomes its own model of analysis (Azuma, 2009).

In Hiroki Azuma's (2009) book *Otaku: Japan's Database Animals* we find a serviceable conceptualization of a database model of narrative consumption. In this book, Azuma referred to Lyotard's theory of the decline of the grand narrative as a heralding of postmodernity (p. 28). The grand narrative, in this view, makes up the canonically-circumscribed guiding force of social cohesion which connects the cultural productions of one's own time with that of the social *mores* and symbolisms of the past (p. 28). According to this articulation of postmodern thought, the rupture with the grand narrative became a catalyst for postmodern critiques across a range of academic branches of study. The very concept of the grand narrative—being consummate with the tree-root model and having its preceding corpus of great works and their derivatives tied to its perpetuation in contemporary society—faced a challenge with the introduction of the *rhizomatic* model, with its restructuring that emphasized smaller narratives connected at the surface level in a network which only collectively amounts to a whole (pp. 30-31). The advance

of systems theory in a number of fields has worked to vindicate a larger wave of postmodern paradigmatic shifting which experienced its zenith during the 1990s, and which has since retracted. Azuma, who viewed the narrative structure as double-layered, has extended the argument in his assertion that, even more than the *rhizomatic*, a database model is one that can more closely embody the conceptual restructuring afforded by postmodern narrative consumption in that:

...with the double-layer structure, the agency that determines the appearance that emerges on the surface outer layer resides on the surface itself rather than the deep inner layer, i.e. it belongs on the side of the user who is doing the “reading up,” rather than with hidden information itself. In the world of the modern tree model, the surface outer layer is determined by the deep inner layer, but in the world of the postmodern database model, the surface outer layer is not determined by the deep inner layer; the surface reveals different expressions at those numerous moments of “reading up.” (p. 32)

However, it is my contention that the *rhizomatic* model—in which, according to Azuma, the basis for narrative consumption is set within a system made up of “signs” that are linked “in diverse patterns over the outer layer alone”—is not inherently incommensurate with his expansion of the structuring in the form of the database. One need only consider the possibility that connectivity between the smaller narratives on the surface layer of the network effectively functions as an inner layer that is virtually identical, in the conceptual sense, to the one proposed by Azuma in his double layer, database structure (p. 31).

The idea of the grand narrative is by no means limited to the societal internalization of fictive works or the visual arts. There have been grand narratives, in fact, that have ran

throughout many of the intellectual developments in both literacy theory and the study of bibliography. A common grand narrative, for example, which has guided much of the research into the question of the black literacy gap, tells us that black youth, and young black men in particular, are in state of crisis, and that their literacy skills are correspondingly imperiled by this state. A grand narrative which underlies much of the rationale behind descriptive, analytical, and textual bibliography is that there is a formal object in space which is understood to be a “book,” that books, as recorded objects, are the physical manifestations of texts, and that these texts have a source in their creator and earliest point of materialization (i.e. the copy text), and that the collective corpus of a core text and its derivatives in the form of books can also be traced and recorded.

Being that the research in the study takes a systems approach that is more reflective of the *rhizomatic* model as opposed to the tree model, and given that the data is organized in the structure of the database, deciphering and adhering to the grand narratives which have typically driven past inquires and methodologies concerning the issue will be left behind in place of a “reading up” of smaller narratives from the data points covered by the individual categories. Smaller narratives such as the one which suggests a link between bibliographic materiality and the expression of ethnic identity are the more graspable narratives concerning the complex systems in which “books” and “literacy” are at play. These smaller narratives point to insights that are situated within their individual nodes in a network of informational nodes. These narratives can also provide a lens into learning how traces of the *bibliocultural* link are operational within a particular time and place and a particular community. In this way, the search for a universal truth is supplanted by a network-based analysis and the interpretation of data is redirected through the construction of meaning.

The overall design and structure of the database is intended compartmentalize the intricacies of a complex system into manageable units that function as discrete data points within the larger system. Even in conceding to the notion that the database, at least as a model for narrative consumption, has seen little application in bibliography aside from the basic idea of compartmentalization, the fundamental rubric for analysis set by Amory's precedent remains intact. This claim is most evident in the fact that both of our applications of this method have employed descriptive bibliography in pursuit of a better understanding of an ethnic group. His attempt to forge a middle path between the more positivistic descriptive and analytical traditions in bibliography and postmodern critical thought is also maintained throughout the research. Accordingly, as elements of grounded theory method have been partially adopted in my own use of ethnobibliography, this limited incorporation of GTM is decidedly constructionist in terms of its transparency and its reflexivity (Bryant, 2002). Similarly, a serious effort has been made here to contextualize the database and deconstruct its implementation as a model for informational organization.

In this study, the category is the main unit of the database; it is effectively the primary source data point from which postulations are explored. Categories, then, makeup the various fields in the database. The categorical codes used in the database were developed onsite during the first week of research.¹⁹ Though the granularity of the categories in the database was roughly determined within the first week, the subsequent distribution of raw data recorded in my field notes occurred both during the course of the onsite research (as was necessarily the case for the stratification of the quantitative demographic data) and, especially for the more qualitative and

¹⁹ *GTM, noted here as "day 0" and is not represented in the database.

less purely descriptive data, after the conclusion of the onsite field research and during the initial phases of data transcription and analysis.

3. II. 4. Method Design: A “Grounded” Coding Schema

The individual categories, although considered to be discrete data points, are not standalone units. Notwithstanding their mimetic status as units in a system, there is a substantial degree of interconnectedness to the categories in terms of the domains which they each stand to represent. The particular structure of this database is as organic as it is fungible. The project is not an attempt to standardize ethnobibliographic method into a single descriptive template or analytic agenda. Depending upon the specific goals of one’s research, a grounded database model, once adopted in the framework of an ethnobibliographic methodology, can produce categories that are suitable to a variety of different systems or environmental settings. For my own analysis of the *bibliocultural* link and its agency within the larger system of an administrative cycle of knowledge production and the smaller node of special collections research, the distinct set of categories are divided into primary categories [PCAT], secondary categories [SCAT], subcategories [BCAT], and micro-categories [MCAT]. More specifically, the completed database ultimately contains sixty-nine categories divided into six PCATs, twelve SCATs, thirty-one BCATs, and twenty MCATs. Spread across the thirty-nine days, then, the database consists of a total 2,691 individual data points.²⁰

The case studies are comparative; therefore each day of onsite research within each category group was assigned a degree of difference during the analysis phase. The range was from zero to five degrees. A zero indicated a direct import that had no discernible difference in

²⁰ An expected amount of informational redundancy is part repetitiveness of daily operations in onsite research.

structure when compared to the Western convention. The fifth degree was assigned to those facets of a research site or bibliographic sample that conveyed a marked innovation or a clear difference from the convention. The assignment of the greatest degree of difference constituted the recognition of a new or completely distinctive practice based in alternative (e.g. epistemological or pedagogical) models which have emerged from the cultural difference.

The primary categories of the database form its surface layer. They provide the basic organizational structure of the research and, as grouped pairs, they frame the subsequent layout for chapter division. The six primary categories are as follows: access [ACC], encounter [ENC], representation [REP], organization [ORG], collections [COLL], and performativity [PRFM]. I shall provide a basic summary of each primary category and briefly note each succeeding one with respect to its various degrees of granularity.

Access, the focus of Site Four, is seen as the category which marks the entry point between items (e.g. artifacts, surrogates, facsimiles, etc.) in research collections and the population of library collection users, learners, and researchers that collectively makeup the primary activities of that research environment (Figure 2). Secondary categories for access include: environment [ENV], which refers to the socio-political, economic, climatological, intercultural, and other perceptible conditions of the research environment and its surrounding communities; facilities [FAC], or the architectural and aesthetic qualities of the research space; policies [POL] being, specifically, those policies which govern access to collections and use of the space, and not necessarily those of internal policies pertaining to records management, human resources, or collection development; and, lastly, demographics [DEM], corresponding to the particular, approximated demographic makeup of a research space on a given day and time.

Subcategories for access include, beginning within environment: interior design [INT], a category that accounts for the physical design, decoration, and physical arrangement of the research space and includes information on its permanently and temporally exhibited collections; and within policies, those which are of a restrictive [RST] nature (e.g. limits on cell phone use, prohibited materials in the reading room, etc.); promotional [PROMO], or those which invite or encourage greater access to collections; and preservationist [PRSV] policies, which may also be restrictive, but which have been explicitly intended for the protection of a collection's artifacts from theft and physical degradation. Within demographics, population characteristics are further divided in the largely generic categories of white [W], black [B], nonwhite [NW], Asian [A], Latino [L], Native Indian/Pacific Islander [N/I].

Inextricably tied to the preceding racial and ethnic demographic categories, micro-categories for access include those which cover the approximate sex and age groups of the population. I have separated these categories out, again, into the largely generic classifications of male [M], female [F] for sex and young adult [YA], adult [A], middle aged [MA] and senior [SC] for the micro-categories of age.²¹

²¹ The young adult group is approximately 17 to 25 years old; the adult, approximately 25 to 35 years old; middle aged ranges from approximately 35 to 65 years old; the senior group, from approximately 65 years of age and older.

PCAT	SCAT	BCAT	MCAT
ACC	ENV		
	FAC	INT	
	POL	RST	
		PROMO	
		PRSV	
	DEM	W	M
		B	F
		NW	YA
		A	A
		L	MA
		NI	SC

Figure 2. The Four Levels of Access

Encounter, also the focus of Site Four, is meant to cover any directed institutional engagement with the local community initiated by the institution itself in an effort to connect with its greater population of library patrons and potentially expand its base (Figure 3).

Secondary categories for encounter include: outreach [OUT], relating to those efforts made on the behalf of the institution to promote its actual physical space and its collections by reaching out to its population and/or its surrounding community (e.g. advertisements, programs, mailing

lists, newsletters, etc.); and events [EVT], meaning those free and ticketed events open to the public including the public exhibition of collections. Subcategories for encounter include, as part of events: entertainment [ENT], events purely meant for leisure and enjoyment; community [COMM], events organized either by or specifically for the local community; promotional [PROMO], events intended to promote collections, programs, and the space; and, finally, educational [EDU], those events which are primarily used as teaching opportunities. Each of these subcategories pertains to the overarching character of the event; but, again, the categories can overlap, and in this group, they tend to overlap to a substantial degree. There are no designated micro-categories for the encounter category.

PCAT	SCAT	BCAT	MCAT
ENC	OUT		
	EVT	ENT	
		COMM	
		EDU	
		PROMO	

Figure 3. The Three Levels of Encounter

Representation is unique among the other primary categories because, in addition to being highlighted in Site Three, it is the only category group in which each of its levels applies to all of other the case studies more broadly. On the surface layer, the category locates samples from within a specific collection in a specific research site. Next, the category is further divided into a group of smaller categories in increasingly granular levels. These increasingly granular

levels refer to the description and analysis of the bibliographic sample, the material object of study (Figure 4). Secondary categories for representation include: Bibliography [BIB], which, as it is employed in this study, refers only to descriptive bibliography, historical bibliography, or publication history. Neither textual bibliography nor analytical bibliography will be applied in the methodology of ethnobibliography as it has been framed in this study. The analytic principle still stands, but a teleological position wherein an analysis is applied toward the determination of textual authenticity has been abandoned as a result of its irrelevance to the larger goals of the research.

The descriptive method stands out as a method of primary importance. The material traces of the bibliographic object recorded in exhaustive detail and viewed in relation to a system are expected to serve as primary empirical evidence which can further point to new insights concerning the literacy question. Nevertheless, regardless of the empiricism that underlies the descriptive tradition both the core unit, the bibliographic entry, and the main product, the bibliography, are essentially abstractions. To explain my assertion better, let me employ what I would like to term the “music box analogy.” Basically, a descriptive bibliographic entry to its referent (i.e. the book that it is meant to represent) is like that of a music box to its original song. The original has the potential for wide variety of sonic textures that are often stipulated in its notation and articulated in its performance. The music box, however, can only approximate that potential manifestation. It can provide a simple approximation with just eighteen or thirty notes, or it can offer a rich one of seventy-two or more. Yet, no matter how close the approximation, it forever remains a stripped-down representation of the original. Still, the process of abstraction itself brings visibility to otherwise undetected components of a text—components intrinsic to its materiality.

Bibliographic samples used in this study for my analysis include, first, an assortment of fine press books representing the Western ideal for a printed book and, second, a range of black press books ranging chronologically from the late nineteenth and early twentieth century up to the present, but primarily from the latter half of that time frame (Appendix B). For Site One, in accordance with the humanistic tradition, I relied upon my prior knowledge of the Clark Library's collection of fine printing to determine my sample pool. My search list for bibliographic samples in the three sites which specialize in African American collections, however, was put together using the research of Donald F. Joyce as a guide for selection. Joyce's (1983) *Gatekeepers of Black Culture* is among the most comprehensive studies in black press publication history to date. In this book, Joyce surveyed the greater part of historical and modern black-owned book publishers, effectively documenting and outlining the history of the black press from the early nineteenth to the early twentieth century. His *Black Book Publishers in the United States* (1991) serves both as expansion to his earlier survey and a supplementary reference tool for identifying the various publishers and presses. These sources provided a more than satisfactory range from which to attempt to draw samples and materials for further description and analysis. In the majority of instances, once a sample was first identified and then searched for, requested, and, finally, retrieved, it underwent a repeated process of bibliographic description. The deeper levels of categorical granularity here directly correspond to the granularity of the bibliographic description.

Subcategories for representation include: in bibliography, title [TL] which is the title of the sampled work. The title category provides space for a formal title transcription. Traditionally, this descriptive technique of conveying a book's title in words as it appears on a page was employed in the service of the proper identification of particular editions and the ability to

distinguish their varying issues, printings, states, etc. Here, however, precise transcription is intended to illuminate any major differences or subtle continuities in ethnic forms of bibliographic expression that may operate within standardized rules for title page templates. Generally, these templates rely upon functionality as the primary justification for their worldwide adoption; despite their apparent functionality, however, such templates could still benefit from comparative investigation. Next, publication [PUB] covers any metadata containing information about the date, location, and the contributors the composition, production, manufacture, and dissemination of the work. The binding [BND] category is designated for any materially manufactured bibliographic component intended to gather and preserve the physical integrity or organization of the work. This externalizing stratum can be as simple as staple, an adhesive, or a string and as complex as a blind-tooled Moroccan leather binding with raised bands. In this study, all forms of bindings, or lack thereof, are deemed noteworthy. After binding, the paratext [PRTX] category captures any graphic, visual, or textual material in the work not seen as being a part of the text itself; quite literally, the surrounding text including features such as headlines, pagination, and even marginalia. Next, a collation [COL] category is included, a category that specifically pertains to the sequence and arrangement of substrate assemblages. The arrangement most often refers to conventional bibliographic substrata such as gatherings of folded paper or parchment sheets that comprise the main physical body of the text block. As it applies in this study, the term typically follows the descriptive method of notation for pre-twentieth century books. For twentieth and twenty-first century publications, collation roughly refers to book size and format (e.g. quarto, octavo, etc.). Pagination [PG] records the number of individual pages in a book and not necessarily those pages which have been numbered (notation of the inclusion of a numbered pagination occurs in the paratext category). Paper

[PPR], being the most common material substrate of the samples, also has its own category. Size [SZ] simply refers to the actual size of the text block. The margin [MRG] category records measurements extending from the gutter and the tail of the text block out to the right-hand and bottom edges of the typesetting. Typeface [TYP] is the category for the specific font, group of fonts, or font family used for the book's text. Additionally, the contents [CNT] category allows for a complete transcription of contents as listed in the table of contents or, in the lack thereof, in the chapter of sectional titles. There is a final bibliographic subcategory for notes [NTE] that provides space for any notes on the publication history obtained, in some cases, directly from the historical records of the publishers.²²

Micro-categories for representation include: within the paratext, the bookplate [BP] category designated for graphically stamped or adhered traces of the ownership history, a frontispiece [FP] category for opening illustrations or opening ornamental, or even ekphrastic texts, an acknowledgements [ACK] category for dedications, in most cases, from the author(s), but also from other contributors such as the publishers, an illustration [ILLUS] category intended for illuminations, drawings, etchings, woodcuts, lithographs, mezzotint, aquatint, photographic, or any other types of illustrations recognized as being part of the work, and a closing category for ornaments [ORN] which, in addition to actual page ornaments, covers page and paragraph borders, line breaks, section dividers, ornamental, decorated, *historiated* initials, and other such decorative embellishments and stylistic flourishes found in the sample. In the subcategory of paper there is the lone micro-category of watermark [WTRM] to cover any watermarks found on laid paper.

²² In order to limit redundancy, this field has been intentionally excluded from the selection of sample entries listed in Appendix Two.

PCAT	SCAT	BCAT	MCAT
REP	BIB	TL	
		PUB	
		BND	
		PRTX	BP
			FRP
			ACK
			ILLUS
			ORN
		COL	
		PG	
		PPR	WTRM
		SZ	
		MRG	
		TYP	
		CNT	
		NTE	

Figure 4. The Four Levels of Representation

Site Two will be at the center of my discussion on organization. The organization category refers to the organization of knowledge (Figure 5). It further situates bibliography within the library and information fields. Whereas past bibliographers have stressed a division between bibliography and library cataloging this research recognizes the important role that

knowledge organization has played in terms of shaping the material and historical dimensions of a text (Bowers, 1975). Moreover, as this study attempts at a serious reconsideration of the library's traditional response to the black literacy gap, the method operates on the premise that documentation and analysis of the actual processes involved with the facilitation of the primary source research can provide important evidence into the way books circulate within systems of knowledge production. Again, in a study of this nature one must account for the cataloging infrastructure and citation regimes that play into these research processes. In the teleological sense, the end products that come out of this procedural bridge between the researcher and the collections are presumed to proliferate, to eventually disseminate as the type of knowledge which is taught within our schools and colleges.

Secondary categories for organization include: a reference [REF] category, wherein I account for my selection for each item sampled and discussed in the study and provided notes on reference interview procedures and research technology; identification [ID], which falls down to the item level and, hence, includes the cataloging metadata and the identifying publication information of bibliographic samples; and, lastly, a record [REC] category designed to capture the alpha-numerically coded metadata at the inventory level of identification. As a result of its lateral position in relation to the surface layer—that is, insofar as it maintains the role of a channel which connects researchers to the item through the facilitation of collections and their corresponding cataloging infrastructures—the organization category ceases at the secondary level.

PCAT	SCAT	BCAT	MCAT
ORG	REF		
	ID		
	REC		

Figure 5. The Two Levels of Organization

Along with representation, the collections category was another focal point of Site Three. The collections category is premised by a basic notion that items housed in any given research institution are part of some sort of collection, even if assorted or unnamed. This fundamental precept is suggested by the term “special collections”—a largely self-referential descriptor. Thus, it is a category which further locates an item in its particular node within a larger system of circulating and non-circulating research collections (Figure 6). Although these collections are not limited to bibliographic materials, allowing for a small number of exceptions, this study will focus almost exclusively on collections of printed books.

The sole secondary category for collection is provenance [PROV]. Every item in a collection has unavoidably come from somewhere, whether that somewhere was directly from the publisher or author of the work or from a distributor, a retailer, collector, or any other one-time possessor of the object. The provenance category captures whatever historical information there is concerning item-level transmission. The one subcategory for collection is history [HIST]. The history subcategory, naturally, is set within the secondary category of provenance. The history category provides some details on the historical development of the collection and its housing institution. Micro-categories for collection, again, set within provenance, and further still within history, include ownership [OWN] referring to specific previous and/or current

owners of the object, and residence [RES] which locates the object to the specificity of its current publically accessible address.

PCAT	SCAT	BCAT	MCAT
COLL	PROV	HIST	OWN
			RES

Figure 6. The Four Levels of Collections

Along with organization, performativity was a category that received special attention in Site Two. The category, again, does not seek to analyze any social behaviors that may impact, either positively or negatively, the “acquisition” of “literacy skills.” What the category actually refers to are those practices which are strictly limited to the facilitation of physical interactions with bibliographic objects and materials within broader context of the systems through which these objects operate. The only secondary category for performativity, then, is use (Figure 7). And it follows that all four of the subcategories for performativity are set within the secondary category of use (collection, space, etc.). The first of the four, equipment [EQ], accounts for the equipment used by the researchers to supplement or facilitate primary source research. The next category, that of practice [PRCT], notes any actions coming from the population which make up the routine procedures of collection use; more specifically, it documents those actions initiated by collection users, learners, and researcher. The third category in the set, the activity [ACT] category, reverses the orientation in the practice category and captures any procedurally directed

actions initiated by staff. And, lastly, there is an appearance [APR] category that includes notes on patron dress and apparel.

PCAT	SCAT	BCAT	MCAT
PRFM	U	EQ	
		PRCT	
		ACT	AVE
			AAVE
		APR	FML
			SFML
			CSL
			UFM

Figure 7. The Four Levels of Performativity

The micro-categories for performativity are paradoxical in nature in that even though they have been assigned to the deepest level of granularity, the data they contain can only depict a surface level of performance. This paradoxical relationship that the performativity category has with the database is a direct result of my conscious eschewal of any attempts at psychological or behavioral analysis. Therefore, the micro-categories are limited to: first, in the activity subcategory, American Vernacular English [AVE], meant to numerically tally use of the standard English, and African American Vernacular English [AAVE], which is not reduced to the label of “black slang,” and which, instead, is meant to encompass a distinct subaltern linguistic system with its own fluid grammatical structure; and, second, in the appearance

subcategory, a formal [FML] category for suits, ties, slacks, and dress shoes (e.g. oxfords, etc.), a semiformal [SFML] one for polo shirts, cardigans, Dockers, jeans, button-ups/downs, etc., a casual [CSL] category for jeans, t-shirts, shorts, baseball caps, and jumpers, and a uniform [UFM] category for those patrons who visit the space in their work uniforms.

3. III. Subjectivity, Distance, and Reflexivity in Ethnobiligraphic Method

Having outlined the basic structure and framework of the method, it is appropriate, at this time, to make further mention of some of the major ideological influences which underlie its application. The first of these two major influences is multiculturalism. Amidst the scathing attacks coming from Lynne Cheney and Rush Limbaugh which have claimed that multiculturalism had been distorting history, opposing national unity, and suppressing patriotism, and in the face of more serious intellectual critiques coming from scholars like David A. Hollinger, who further asserted that education should move toward cosmopolitanism and a post-ethnic society, Gary B. Nash, Charlotte Crabtree, and Ross E. Dunn (1997) resolutely reaffirmed that multiculturalism:

...refers to the many cultural affiliations that Americans hold and to the complex fusion of cultural identities and attitudes that each of us carries in our mind. Culture is acquired, but never through one's genes. Nor can it be displayed in the hue of one's skin. Rather, each person shapes and reshapes his or her cultural personality in connection with individual upbringing, religion, gender, social status, family allegiance, schooling, sexual preferences, and more. We manifest culture through speech, aesthetic sensibilities, cuisine, holiday celebrations, work habits, literary predilections, and so on. (p. 77)

Ethnobiobibliographic method does not borrow from multicultural perspective so much as it is an extension of the same multicultural projects developed in the 1980s by Nash, Crabtree, and other historians and education scholars. Criticisms that have characterized the perspective as an anti-patriotic distortion of historical truth, however, have been misguided and, perhaps, even blind to the role that each historian plays in the interpretation of historical evidence and the construction of meaning (Fluck & Claviez, 2003, pp. 104-109). Even those who have cast multiculturalism as divisive and short-sighted in the larger context of a so called “post-ethnic” America have erroneously underestimated the impact of racial and ethnic identity formation (Hollinger, 1995). In the investigation of the *bibliocultural* link, particularly in light of a book’s influence on one’s affective state and the construction of meaning—and in this case, in dealing with cultural expression of one’s racial identity—a dissection of the very mechanisms which manifestly shape the process of construction becomes a byproduct of such an analysis. The idea of Afrocentrism, too, plays an important role in the analysis because the bibliographic specimens in question are all coming from the black press.

Afrocentrism, as it has been expressed by Maulana Ron Karenga, Molefi Kete Asante, William H. Watkins, Kafi Kumasi and a number of other theorists, is a philosophy which situates social and historical developments within the framework of an African ideological center (Kumasi, 2010). In realigning itself, in the pedagogical sense, to allow for black people to exist at the center of their own history and culture, the concept of Afrocentricity does offer a vital counterpoint to Eurocentric hegemony (Asante, 1990; Gordon, 1993; Watkins, 2005). Additionally, it is a perspective that, being indissolubly embedded in the black experience, stresses a vestigial continuity with an African ancestral origin. And as a concept that was vital to

the intellectual productions of the Black Arts Movement, it is a fitting vantage point from which to discern historical traces of the *bibliocultural*.

One must be cautious, however, when it comes to the extent to which an endorsement of Afrocentricity might be proffered. And one must also genuinely consider those critiques which claim that Afrocentrism has been blighted by ethnocentrism, flawed perceptions of cultural unanimity, and ahistorical mythologizing of narratives that lack evidentiary support (Oyebade, 1990). One of the most compelling critiques comes from Robert Gooding-Williams (1998) in his essay, "Race, Multiculturalism, and Democracy." In this analysis of the social construction of race and how our understanding of race should inform our pedagogy, Gooding-Williams found that Asante's argument for the embrace and expansion of Afrocentricity in education was both naïve and problematic. He argued that Asante's theory had utterly failed to recognize the complexity introduced by intercultural symbiosis, and he downplayed the challenge of identifying the actual vestiges of African heritage as expressed in African American culture (pp. 26-30). In response to such complexities, we are told, Asante has claimed that the survivals simply "grow from the soil of the African-American subject's ancestor," very nearly implying an inheritance of culture that can occur biologically (pp. 26-28). Moreover, Afrocentrism, according to Gooding-Williams, has embarrassingly glossed over the profound heterogeneity of peoples who inhabit the African continent and their diverse cultures (p. 28). In his view, moving forward multiculturalism in education should be race conscious, but it should do so while also avoiding succumbing to any ethnocentrism, be it a Eurocentric or an Afrocentric variety (pp. 32-33). His warning against slipping into ethnocentrism is one that is certainly warranted considering the harmful inequalities in education and knowledge production that such ethnocentrism has led to in the past. However, given the saturation of Western hegemony within these systems, as a

counterpoint representing a subaltern voice, I am not certain that it should be fully abandoned in terms of the larger mission of liberation humanism which involves the enfranchisement of oppressed peoples through education and learning (Gordon, 1993). In all, it is clear that with respect to the Afrocentric perspective, the line between cultural survivals and the imagined community is difficult to draw; but, in regards to the literacy question at least, it is one that will be further explored in the ethnobibliographic analysis to follow (Fraser & Hammond, 2008).

The central challenge of Afrocentricity is perspectival in that it is one that involves the relationship between subject and object. And in any research, the question of proximity, of the distance from the subject, is a virtually omnipresent concern (Ginzburg, 2001). Sometimes closeness to the subject is seen as a potentially adverse position in the research process because it is generally understood that such closeness can make researchers more vulnerable to their subjective weaknesses, blind spots, and personal biases. In other situations too much distance from the subject can do the same, but, alternatively, through a complete inability to relate or connect with the subject on a personal level. Reflexivity, the second of the two major underlying influences of this study, is a direct response to the problem of distance.

In more recent scholarship in the bibliographic tradition, the new bibliographers have sought to remove themselves from the subject to the extent of assigning it the status of the uncorrupted, unadulterated object. In the desire to legitimize the tradition, bibliographers such as Greg, Bowers, and Stokes often disregarded their own ability to guide the overall direction of the discourse. The acknowledgement of the personal voice—an example of which can be found in the narrative bibliographic prose of Dibdin—was shunned for fears of a return to antiquarianism. This lack of reflexivity, of course, changed with literary and bibliographic

explorations of McGann, as he had infused it into much of his writing. And in the present ethnobiographic study reflexivity factors in as an indispensable principle.

The concept of reflexivity, as it is understood in this research, is a step in the direction of systems theory and the idea of co-emergence because it recognizes bidirectional agency in empirical observation and subjective influence in the determination of causality. Here, as in many other studies which involve qualitative research, it becomes a formal recognition of my own impact on shaping the research as a researcher. The idea of acknowledging personal agency through reflexive analysis, though, has not gone unchallenged. Some have argued the process does not go far enough to identify the ulterior motivating forces behind knowledge production and epistemological justification. Bruno Latour (1988), for one, contended that reflexive analysis is, in reality, discursive. He suggested that it is a purely rhetorical pretense which seeks to legitimize itself acknowledging that there is an attempt being made by a researcher to separate subject from object, to dichotomize an explanation from that which is being explained (pp. 157-159). Even the pretense of reflexivity in research, according to his understanding, can be discarded without consequence (pp. 167-168). Yet such a claim is amusingly unrealistic given that many of these discursive mechanisms have been in place to promote proper scholarship and maintain the integrity of research, and it is almost an absurdity to suggest that fundamental methodological and compositional formulas in academic discourse can be left behind in a single generation as even theories that have drawn heavily upon meta-reflexivity and deconstruction have become important voices in the larger academic discourse. Rather, it is that the mechanisms themselves need to be subject to the same forms of analytical scrutiny given to the research problems. Reflexivity helps to address that need. And for this study, it was a key part of

developing the coding schema for the ethnobibliographic database insofar as it has been able to support its socio-political contextualization.

In looking at the research process reflexively, being able to both recognize and gage my own sense of proximity to the subject, my personal narrative is of value, and it should be acknowledged as being pivotal to the research process and the study's development. Firstly, it must be stated that I am a black person working in special collections, so my proximity is close enough, nearly, to assume the role of the subject itself. Coming from a mixed marriage parentage, I have a white side of my family from which I am estranged and black side that I feel very close to in comparison. The divorce of my parents during my adolescence led to my being raised, largely, by my mother—a young, single black woman who, during most of her adult life, worked as a medical assistant. She provided a wonderfully warm and cultured life for me during my formative years. Contrary to common stereotypes concerning black people and their appreciation of “high” culture and the fine arts, it was my black mother who introduced me to the Huntington Library and Botanical Gardens, and not my white father. This introduction to rare books was a watershed moment in my life because it would eventually steer me into the pursuit of a career in this field. Yet, in being a black person who is a patrilineal descendant of Caucasians, my sense of “otherness” in the field of rare books and other conservative establishments of “high culture” has been intensified by my past experiences in having to navigate through conflicting ethnic and racially-oriented social spheres—a situation indicative of what William Edward Burghardt Du Bois described as the *double consciousness*, or the *double self* (1903). In his own words:

It is a peculiar sensation this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feel his twoness,—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.

The history of American Negro is the history of this strife—this longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self. In this merging he wishes neither of the older selves to be lost. He would not Africanize America, for America has too much to teach the world and Africa. He would not bleach his Negro soul in a flood of white Americanism, for he knows that Negro blood has a message for the world. He simply wishes to make it possible for a man to be both a Negro and an American, without being cursed and spit upon by his fellows, without having the doors of Opportunity closed roughly in his face. (pp. 45-46)

The statement, even for contemporary black scholars, carries a powerful resonance. Not only did Du Bois voice an understanding of the tension between singularity and hybridity in this declaration, he also pointed his understanding in a new direction by alluding to its self-fulfilling quality. Perhaps paradoxically, in terms of racial and ethnic identity, the one, or singularity, is consumptive upon the other, hybridity, concomitantly singling out difference to seemingly illimitable gradations in order to categorize it as the “other.” The phenomenon is both most complicated and most exemplified in the example of “white passing” among black Americans sharing environmentally conditioned phenotypes which are associated with a perception of “whiteness.” The condition is further convoluted when the individual or individuals involved in

the passing are, themselves, not aware of their African American ancestry. It is clear, then, that the questions posed in Du Bois's concept of the *double-self* are directly relevant to those posed by this study concerning black literacy. Therefore, the concept will be among the chief drivers for my reflexive analysis in the research process, and in a number of instances, will be pertinent to the ways in which the data in the database are evaluated.

3. IV. Limitations to the Method: Structural and Conceptual

Having outlined the basic structure of the method and the types of information included through its mode of collecting data, and having touched upon some of the underlying themes and impelling concepts of the research method, I conclude here with one of the prerequisites of any serious study—and especially one which shall integrate reflexive analysis within its framework; I must close this chapter with a recognition of the methodological limitations. Granted, there shall be limitations that I did not conceive of, research that I failed to consult, questions that I failed to pose, and data that I either erroneously omitted or altogether overlooked. This condition is present in any work of scholarship or major research project. One can only attest, however, to having done their very best to make these factors known, to make them visible on the surface layer. Other unforeseen gaps or misinterpretations shall eventually emerge to the foreground through academic discourse.

Beginning with the manner in which I have collected and processed the data, it is important to remain cognizant of the subjectivities entangled in the database's design. Some of the biases and subjectivities in data collection, such as those mixed-up with a rapid and informal determination of patron demographics, are so subtle as to be virtually impossible to discern at the point of collection. These approximations in the demographic data are somewhat problematic,

but they are not detrimental to the study as a whole. Allowing for a wide range of hybridity, for instance, the singularity of white and black ethnic identity, is, for the most part, patently clear and needing only visual confirmation. Other subjectivities are markedly more contrived. The hierarchy of white male hegemony found in the sex and race categories of the database was purposefully intended to reflect the relationship found within the Western patriarchal hegemonic structures of the system's convention. It does not in any way suggest a complicit internalization of either a personal sense of victimization or racial inferiority. Also, with a quick graphic assessment of the database's schema, one can see that the highest degrees of granularity occur in the access and representation categories. The unbalanced distribution of data points that is afforded to those two category groups is a direct result of their being the *primary* categories which include the data sets on racial demographics, social environment, and bibliographic materiality—the most prominent factors in dealing with the race/literacy issue at the heart of this study.

Next there is the question of missing data from collected sources. These omissions can include points not conceived in the original schema as well as other missing data such as field research from overlooked research sites. Ideally, at least the region of the Midwestern U.S., given its historical significance in the black would have also been represented. There were, however, considerable constraints on the time and scope allotted to this project as a result of its limited resources.

The decision to decline from any use of surveys which would document population sentiments or self-identification was, again, an intentional one, and it is in accordance with the purposes of this study. So too was my refraining from postulating hypotheses that require proof

of statistical significance in terms of drawing a measurable correlation between two phenomenon through causality. The overall research design presented in this study is certainly replicable; but, again, the parameters can change according to the dynamic political, geo-spatial, and temporal conditions that operate within a particular research space or set of materials. The fact remains the wealth of studies that focus on the testing for literacy rates under controlled conditions to isolate variables and draw conclusions on causal relationships are only looking at one piece of a larger picture, and in such a way that is inflected through its own disciplinary ideologies and methodological principles. The very same can be said of those studies that focus, ethnographically, almost exclusively on community relations or the internal relations of a particular group. The situation, then, is not any different for those studies that have placed an emphasis on the psychological dimensions of the literacy question, attempting at a comprehensive understanding of the behavioral conditions and emotional responses of individuals selected for a study in their responsive interaction with selected texts. This study, however, was designed to investigate an institutional response to the question in looking at the actual conditions and policies of the library as they play out in the field without any pretensions or personal interference. It has been formulated with the intention of providing a detailed portrait of the research environment within which books circulate as both the products and the instruments of knowledge production. In doing so, it is believed that we can begin to trace a book's contribution to the perpetuation of the same systems that encapsulate the processes of its dissemination.

Chapter Four: Findings for Access and Encounter

4. I. 1. Access: The Research Space and its Local Environment

What is the meaning of a collection if it is inaccessible? What is the purpose of a collection if only accessible to a select few? What is the price of providing broader public access to collections with regards to their long-term preservation? How do institutional policies designed to maintain environmental norms in the research space encourage or inhibit collection access? These considerations are among some of the more important questions that one must contend with when attempting to understand the role that access plays in the perpetuation of a cycle of knowledge production which both facilitates and is facilitated through various literacy practices. It is fitting that research Site Four, the Schomburg Center, was selected to focus on the subject of institutional access because, coincidentally, it is also the standout example in the group in terms of its cohesion with the local environment and its overall implementation of access policies. And in drawing attention to the entry point between a population and a collection, we also become concerned with how access involves a physical space necessitated by the collections contained therein. I will note, however, that access to the physical space, though it may be desired, is not necessarily intrinsic to the existence of a collection.

I begin with New York City in the earlier part of April in the year of 2014. Regarding the New York Weather, having never been a resident of the nation's most populous city, I cannot personally speak to the experience of its temperature averages. According to a climatology report from the U.S. Department of Commerce, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and the National Environmental Statistics, Data and Information Service (2004) which provided annual averages from 1971 to 2000, the weather that I experienced during my

field research was not dramatically outside of the past range of highs and lows.²³ I believe that there was around a ten degree difference in either direction in terms of annual averages. What stood out, however, was that it felt extremely cold in the wind chill, perhaps due to my own rearing in the comparatively moderate California climate. The news media during this period was in agreement with me. And perhaps one could take a cynical approach and suggest that the stories which covered the weather as part of the tail-end of the winter's "polar vortex"—reputed to have been the alleged cause of the colder than normal temperatures—were exaggerated, but I did find it slightly unusual that on at least one morning I awoke to find the city covered in a layer of snow from a storm which occurred the night before. Not long after this cold spell, however, temperatures warmed up to a comfortable range of around the mid-sixties to the mid-seventies.

It is reasonable to question if the weather bears any relevance to the black literacy gap. Viewed macroscopically, however, in light of a research collection's potential to foster black literacy practices the relevance of the weather becomes manifestly more apparent. Simply put, poor weather can be a serious deterrent to access. On the second and third days of my field research, a brief thunderstorm that was trailed by a dramatic decline in temperatures made even a short commute in Harlem a difficult one.²⁴ I was reminded of my experience commuting to the Clark Library from home in Crenshaw. Even in late January, still very much the winter season, the weather settled around the high sixties which was comfortable compared to the recursively branded "polar vortex" paralyzing the East Coast with biting cold. Back in New York, on the morning of the storm, during what felt like its peak, I found myself huddled in a corner underneath one of the building's overhangs with a small group of the Schomburg's regular patrons—many of whom also seemed to have been caught off-guard by the ferocity of the

²³ The report found an average low of 44.4° and a high 60.0°.

²⁴ SIV-D2:ENV; SIV-D3:ENV

downpour.²⁵ It became clear to me during this experience that poor weather could serve to block access to collections, particularly from those communities that must function without a public transportation infrastructure, or one that even approximates the level of efficiency found in the transportation systems in Harlem and all throughout New York City. Those who had the least amount of wealth and assets in the area were also those who were most impacted by the weather.

This situation also played out at Site Two, the Amistad Research Center, where the late winter weather routinely made a fairly long excursion on the bus and trolley from the Upper Ninth district to the wealthy Uptown neighborhoods surrounding the Tulane campus an arduous one. Furthermore, drastic contrasts between wealth and poverty could be witnessed in full view along the way. The remnants of Hurricane Katrina, from the condemned “shotgun” houses marked with FEMA X-code symbols to the repairs on the trolley track which were the cause for further delay, could be seen and felt all about even though it was nearly a decade later. Potential damage to collections due to extreme weather events, however, turned out to be an important concern for the Amistad’s relocation from Dillard University to Tulane. The result, granting the aesthetic and cultural discontinuities between the campus’s gothic revival facility and the core subjects and strengths of the Amistad’s collections of Africana and African Americana, was that the collections ultimately survived the storm with minimal material losses. One can speculate as to whether or not the same could be stated if it had remained at its former residence which, notwithstanding its status the Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU), had a Southern American antebellum style architecture that had jarring, almost plantation-like appearance to it.

²⁵ SIV-D3:ENV

The phenomenon I have begun to identify in the evidence is a disjuncture which can best be described as an *environmental dissonance* between the residencies of collections and the local community and/or target collection user, learner, and researcher populations. It is important to note, however, that it is often the case that the target population of a special collection is not the local community (Figure 8). In the Amistad case, the reading room's location on the Tulane University campus was not only physically distant from the heart of the black community in Louisiana, but it was also culturally so in terms of its architecture. Still, the clearest example of this form of dissonance was found in the Clark Library's proximity to the neighborhood of Jefferson Park. West Adams, the Clark Library's neighborhood of residence, is one of the oldest neighborhoods in Los Angeles. During the time in which the Clark Library's collection was amassed, West Adams was also one of the most affluent areas to live in the city. Some of the wealthiest and influential residents of Southern California lived in West Adams. The Clark Library's facility and location—with its English Baroque and Italian Renaissance architecture, its lush green lawns, and its Greco-Romanic sculpture—is only a vestige of that once affluent time. At present, the demographics along with amount of wealth in the neighborhood has shifted to reflect increasingly diverse demographics (Los Angeles Times, 2015). In point of fact both West Adams and the adjacent neighborhood of Jefferson Park are predominantly Latino and African American in makeup (Los Angeles Times, 2015). West Adams itself, however, is one of the most diverse areas in the country (Cooper, Lynch, & Kurtz, 2008). During the 1950s and '60s the demographics began to shift with the coming of the freeways and the rise in USC students living in the area (Cooper, Lynch, & Kurtz, 2008, p. 7). By this time the neighborhood had lost its status as one of the wealthiest areas for whites, but affluent blacks replaced the white residents as the neighborhood opened up to minorities.

Looking at its neighbor in Jefferson Park, walking from the Metro Exposition line train stop to the grounds of the Clark Library, far from the Victorian estates and historic houses that emblemize the historicity of the region, one finds dilapidated housing and people struggling with homelessness and mental illness; one observes a grey economy full of street carts and houses converted into storefronts; one takes in the ubiquitous graffiti art plastered upon buildings, bus stops, street signs, and abandoned lots. Casually inquire about what exactly the Clark Library is to the average person in the area, even though it is in the neighborhood, and you are likely to get a reply expressing obliviousness or confusion. One of the reasons, I think, for the lack of local awareness is that even though the Clark Library—representing the conventional model of a Western special collections facility—is actually highly accessible to the local population in theory, that accessibility in practice, for the most part, restricts itself to an insular community of scholars who inhabit the region temporarily strictly for research purposes. The Clark Library’s architecture and design, literally being surrounded by a large, “ivy-shrouded” brick wall, reinforces the “walled-garden” effect that serves to insulate a predominately white demographic of students, scholars, and researchers from the minority populations and communities which surround it. That is how the dissonance inadvertently operates as a demographic filter.



Figure 8. Environmental Dissonance in Access

In stark contrast to the *environmental dissonance* between the physical residency of a collection and its local community found at the Clark, the general aesthetic of the Schomburg matched its regional community seamlessly, simultaneously blending in with the look and feel of its neighborhood while standing out as a major attraction. The Harlem environment, even in the face of clear signs of demographic shifting and some gentrification, was a vibrant Pan-African and, in some respects, Afrocentric community (Center for Urban Research, The Graduate Center, City University of New York, 2011). I am referring here to the Central Harlem North district. East Harlem has been predominately Latino for some time, and it is outside the range of this study geographically (The City of New York, 2011). As I walked up and down Harlem's interior blocks on a daily basis, it was common for me to see the presence of the African Diaspora in everything from African and Afro-Caribbean restaurants to the street merchant selling black history themed wares. I noticed fairly quickly that the sidewalk pavement was lined with emblems commemorating the more celebrated figures of black history, and that many of the avenues and boulevards were also named after black history's most distinguished achievers. The Schomburg Center itself, for instance, resides at the cross streets of 135th Street and Malcolm X

Boulevard (formerly Lenox Avenue). The cohesion between African and African American culture in Harlem is a solid one. Walking to my destination on Martin Luther King Blvd. I witnessed an impromptu afternoon African drum session complete with a random dancer that joined in the spontaneous public square amusement which lasted less than twenty minutes, and which was performed without any expectation for monetary compensation for the public performance.²⁶ Spontaneous dance sessions constituted one of the popular activities of the people enjoying leisure time at the nearby Jackie Robinson Park.

Similar performances could be observed on a regular basis in Leimert Park, the Crenshaw district neighborhood where I resided during my time doing my Los Angeles-based field research. Crenshaw, with a close to 80% African American population, is also a majority black neighborhood that is experiencing the beginnings of a possible gentrification (Los Angeles Times, 2015). In many ways, it represents the heart of the Los Angeles African American community. Like Harlem, there is a Pan-Africanism to its aesthetic and cultural dimensions. In the town square of this neighborhood lined with jacaranda trees and blooming birds of paradise flowers, African and Afro-Caribbean drum circles are the norm; so too are African American art galleries and shops that sell African and Reggae apparel. In terms of this sense of community Afrocentrism, the cultural affinity that Leimert Park shares with Harlem—two neighborhoods separated by a distance of well over 2,000 miles—is both remarkable and unquestionable. Whether or not such manifestations of cultural cohesion are simply signs of an “imagined community” of a Pan-African nation, however, is debatable. Additionally, there are questions regarding the actual degree of any shared practices or cultural affinity with Africans living in Africa. Such reservations, however, should not preclude any attempts to understand, more

²⁶ SIV-D11:ENV

clearly, the nature of the bond between African cultures and black people in America both in the historical context of central Harlem's predominately African American community and in the lasting legacies of Pan-Africanist figures such as Garvey, Du Bois, Hughes, and even Schomburg himself (Obiwu, 2007).

The particular look and feel of contemporary Harlem, as far as the eyes and ears can discern, is not pop. Harlem is more jazz and soul; it is more reggae, more hip hop. It is true that this is the same Harlem of the Harlem Renaissance—a time reputed for jazz infused rent party nights, when syncopated melodies and stride piano sessions could be heard from windows and nightclubs. At present, however, reggae and hip hop culture are undoubtedly the most prominent in the black cultural mainstream of Harlem. Hip hop's virtually ubiquitous pervasiveness in the region should come as no surprise given that hip hop, as a movement, actually began in the late 1970s in Harlem and the Bronx (Keyes, 2002). And, in terms of its early development as a musical genre, as a result of this particular location of origin, there were also many deeply rooted Afro-Caribbean influences in the early formation of the sound (Banks, 2010). Actually, Afrocentric undercurrents are often traced to hip hop, as it has widely been considered to have evolved from the West African *Griot* tradition (Keyes, 2002). And the practice of rapping, having a predecessor in the jazz "scat" tradition, has also been linked to the Black Arts Movement and spoken word poetry. These creative developments also had a strong presence in Harlem's music and literary scenes at different points in the twentieth century (Allen, 1996; Keyes, 2002).

Now recognized as a global phenomenon, hip hop is a term used to describe a collective culture surrounding the art and lifestyle of rapping. The art aspect of this description involves a

poetic form characterized by highly stylized and complex rhythmic combinations of rhyming stanzas that are typically referred to as “bars” (Stewart, 1998, pp. 261-262). Many of the most celebrated “classic” raps also include a chorus line called a “hook” that ties in the main theme of the rap’s narrative. Rapping is done both acapella and over a percussive musical accompaniment called the “beat,” and it can be completely improvised in a practice known as “freestyling.” As for the lifestyle part of rapping, a lifestyle of rapping is centered upon various activities associated with the art such as the composition of rap (i.e. lyrics), the practice of freestyling, the informed consumption of other rap songs and rap related media, an attunement to the latest fashions, beats, and rhyming styles, and participation in rap events that generally include dancing, concert performance, and “call and response” exchanges between attendees and rap artists (Stewart, 1998, pp. 258-259).

On any given day, the most current mainstream and underground rap songs could be heard booming out of car and apartment windows, on store speakers, and from portable speakers set up on street corners, booming with a deep and resounding bass. You heard nationally top-ranking artists such as Rick Ross (William Leonard Roberts II), Drake (Aubrey Drake Graham), YG (Keenon Daequan Ray Jackson), and, occasionally, you heard local legends like KRS One (Lawrence "Krisna" Parker), the Notorious B.I.G. (Christopher George Latore Wallace, d. 1997), and Talib Kweli (Talib Kweli Greene). Again, the scene was largely identical in Leimert Park with the exception of some of the artist preferences among locals. One immediately got the sense that hip hop culture was deeply intermeshed in the fashions, the language, and the gestures of the local population. In other words, it had become an integral part of the manner in which people were expressing themselves on a day-to-day level. Most importantly, for the purposes of this study, was that it was highly visible, even upon the most cursory analysis, in the local print

culture. Walking down Harlem's main streets, I observed the dozens of black press booksellers that lined the streets with their book and magazine stands. I saw a bustling trade in locally-authored, independent urban fiction (also called "street lit"). Amidst the more well-known titles in African American literature sold by street vendors, the street lit' books visually jumped out at me from their place on the stands as I made my way to my location. They quickly grabbed my attention with cinematic, often franchise-friendly titles and highly stylized cover art that depicts common hip hop narrative archetypes and literary tropes which are further indicative of a street lit' novel's particular subgenre (e.g. gangsta', wifey, diva, etc.).

It is true that with little effort, one can find a display or two of the latest in urban fiction in general collection public libraries such as the Mid-Manhattan Public Library, but you will not find such displays in the Schomburg reading rooms. There are questions, then, in terms of library access to local literatures that concern the fundamental nature of this point of difference between the general collection and the research collection. The difference, in this case, cannot be simply due to the fact that the Mid-Manhattan Branch is among the largest of the circulating branches in the NYPL system or because the branch's collection places an emphasis on the popular whereas the Schomburg, by contrast, tends to be looked at more seriously as a research collection. Yet, falling short of an across-the-board association with the operations of a general collections library, the Schomburg, for a special collections facility, is extraordinarily open in terms of its operations and actively sensitive in meeting the needs of the local community.

The fact that there was as aesthetic concord between its modern architecture and its surroundings was patently obvious, even to the most casual onlooker. The renovations that were made from 2002 to 2007 under the direction of the Dattner Architects helped to produce the

initial impression of light, warmth, and openness (Richard Dattner and Partners Architects, 2009). And the complex as a whole is even larger than it appears to the naked eye. The Schomburg Center complex, in its entirety, is a full 75,000 square feet (The New York Public Library, 2015). The complex is actually made of three different interconnected buildings: The Schomburg Building, the Langston Hughes Building, and the Landmark Building (The New York Public Library, 2015). The different buildings, it seems, are devoted to the separate functions of the Center such as exhibitions and curation, research and preservation, and performance and community events. Yet, admittedly, these separate functions often overlap. The atmosphere of openness at the Schomburg's entrance was, from an architectural vantage point, achieved through an installation of a glass façade and "acoustic wood panels" (Richard Dattner and Partners Architects, 2009). It was a warmth and openness, perhaps, absent in the elegant, yet stern Beaux-Arts architecture of its former building which, like the neo-classicism of Winston Albert Cordes and Crosby, Robert David Farquhar, and Barton Phelps and Associates in the case of the Clark Library, exhibited qualities of clear signs of *environmental dissonance*. In contrast, the newer building's sharp, angular edges, its prominent height, and its clear and colorful signage, set it apart from the other buildings on the block in such a way that enticed pedestrians.

Upon entry, after a routine security bag check-in which was substantially more involved than the other three case studies, I was directed to a main level where the Jean Blackwell Hutson Research and Reference Division was located. It included two main areas, the reception area/computer lab and a reference reading room. It was in this area that I began to discern somewhat subtle, yet graduating degrees of distance between the environment of the research space and what appeared to have been the cultural mainstream of the local population. This sense of distance I detected was temporal; it was generational.

Much in the room memorialized and celebrated black history from both a local and a global perspective. There were close to a dozen paintings from the artist Yves Etienne that covered the walls; and, with a not so subtle nod to the particularly heavy diasporic makeup of the community, there was a Haitian flag with the *veve* art of the tradition of Vodoun. In the reception area/computer lab, one of the first objects that I noticed was a sculptural bust from the African American sculptor, Bo Walker (d. 1986). This artist was known locally for his lifelike sculpture of Frederick Douglass which was exhibited at the Schomburg in 1982 as part of their “The Road to Freedom” show (Mitgang, 1982). In this area I found that there was an intellectual sanctity in the general atmosphere; a *gravitas*. Upon further analysis, I understood that the unique interplay of architecture, design, and policy had worked in concert to create this atmosphere.

The reading room in the Jean Blackwell Hutson Research and Reference Division was spacious, quiet, and scholarly. The large circular, softly-lit reading room had about a dozen large marble top study desks with around four times as many swivel chairs than tables that could comfortably accommodate fifty library patrons. Quite arguably, much of the sanctity in the atmosphere could be directly attributed to the combined presence of a non-circulating room reference library and a celebrated Aaron Douglas mural. These two features of the room commandingly surrounded the perimeter, one on the walls at eye-level and the other hugging the ceiling walls. Douglas’s four paneled “Aspects of Negro Life” was a narrative type of painting wherein the images were meant to tell a story to the onlooker. The paintings told a visually dynamic story of the African American experience from slavery through the years of modern commerce and industry.

It was a striking parallel to the ceiling painting found in the Clark Library's drawing room which is by the library and the university's Center for 17th and 18th Century Studies for special events. The Clark's ceiling painting, like the Douglas mural at the Schomburg, surrounds the perimeter of the room. Also like Douglas, the painting is a narrative one, depicting major scenes from John Dryden's *All for Love*. The Clark Library also has a globally recognized Dryden collection, so the painting is closely aligned with the research materials in that respect. It is noteworthy, from the perspective of a researcher of color, that in the painting at least one of the characters from the play, most likely Alexas the Eunuch or Serapion, was portrayed as a dark-skinned African. In Douglas's "Aspects of Negro Life" paintings, African Americans appear as shadows in their own story, but as vibrant shadows moving through life's sonic textures in transcendent jubilation. The presence of "whiteness" is only implied as a subtlety in the painting; it is only suggested, without depiction, as the source of the dominance and oppression that African American peoples have had to struggle against and someday overcome. And, as a living example or reflection of that struggle (i.e. literacy and education), the researchers below, in a sense, were publically exhibited as part of the space. The learners and researchers who studied in this area were exposed to view by a ring of transparent windows that bordered the mural and enabled casual, yet discreet bird's eye observation by visitors on the floor above.

4. I. 2. Access: Daily Operations for Public Reception

Our more recent understandings of black literacy, it should be recalled, have been premised upon access: to literacy, to education, to knowledge and upward mobility (Hughes-Hassell, Kumasi, Rawson, & Hitson, 2012). And in the simplest of terms, in the cases of both the

Schomburg and the Clark access is provided first to literacy (e.g. information literacy), then to the research collections and their bibliographic objects, and, finally, to the potential for more processing, internalizing, and, perhaps, producing more knowledge and, hence, the potential, also, for enriching one's own literacy. In the end, especially for the expansion of black literacy, the access is expected to promote civic participation through greater education, as it is a literacy that gives back to the community (Josey, 1972).

If the library is a storehouse of knowledge, then the heart of access in a library or research collection really lies in a facility's hours of operation. Likely due to the civic nature of the Schomburg's parent library system and the comparatively large size of its patron-base, this institution provided the greatest amount of access when compared to the other case studies. Most conveniently in terms of my research, I was fortunate to find that the Schomburg was open relatively late hours, staying open until 8:00 p.m. most weekdays.²⁷ And, unlike two of the other three research sites, the facility was also open on Saturdays. As expected, there were slightly different hours for the rare book room. More in line with a conventional special collections department, this area was open until 5:00 p.m. with a midday closure for an hour-long lunch period.²⁸

At the Schomburg, light consultations for navigating the library's cataloging system and selecting research material were conducted by professionals at a large and fairly traditional reference desk. Adjacent to the reference desk, there was a paging desk with a semi-automated item retrieval system designed to maximize efficiency. The level of efficiency surpassed each of the other case studies. This area was staffed by assistants and floor-level clerks. In addition to

²⁷ SIV-D1-D11: PROMO

²⁸ SIV-D1-D11: RST

dealing with reference queries, however, the representatives of both the Schomburg's professional and paraprofessional staff, at times, assumed the responsibility of maintaining lower sound levels—implicitly understood to be the environment that is most conducive to study and research. Self-policing among patrons did occur as sound levels varied among the particular demographic makeup that shifted with relative frequency throughout the day. In all, the Schomburg's reading rooms generally provided an ambience of study, an atmosphere of silent, solitary learning that intensified in hierarchical gradations in accordance with the perceived *gravitas* of accessible materials. Restrictions on noise such as the prohibition of cell-phone and loud or disruptive music or conversation were all meant to promote this distinct ambience.

4. I. 3. Access: Confronting Implicit Bias as “Custodians” of Knowledge

In comparison with Harlem's African American population and the city's social environment, it could very well be that such restrictive policies, although quite arguably effective in their ability to shape and manage the intellectual atmosphere of the research space, are still somewhat out of step with the local community. Considering how closely aligned the two are in both function and design, it is difficult to pinpoint all the ways that could account for the subtle rift between them; however, it would be a disservice not to confront at least one instance of it. Whereas in so many other areas—in its architecture and interior design, in its programs, and, in many respects, in its collections—the Schomburg maintains a harmonious relationship with the local community and the demographics of its patronage, in the enforcement of this restrictive policy on “noise” we can begin to discern how certain aspects of this African American research

library have been informed by a conventional Western model of knowledge production, and how the consequences of this relationship can be distancing to Harlem's black population.²⁹

Although there recently has been a growing body of research that has shown counterexamples to the long-reigning narrative in the history of reading that has depicted Western literacy practices as private, solitary, and silent, the narrative still holds sway in the way we conceptualize a "proper" reading environment. In this case it has come to us as the accepted model for library research in the reading room. This is certainly the reigning model of the Clark Library reading room—with its mahogany reference desk, its statuette of Johann Gutenberg, and its taxidermy owl; it is a reading room that simply was not designed to accommodate the collaborative model of producing knowledge.³⁰ Many libraries, in fact, have rapidly advanced toward a collaborative model perhaps less prone to an inadvertent isolation from the community's modalities in literacy practice (Shanbhag, 2006). Yet, considering the sheer longevity of the conventional model's acceptance as a best practice in special collections, it makes sense that these anti-noise policies continue to persist in the Schomburg's reading rooms. In the staff's efforts to safeguard patron comfort and maximize the potential for learning, what was being created, largely as a byproduct of the enforcement of restrictive policy, was a sense of institutional legitimacy.

The problem, however, lies in this idea of "black loudness"—the stereotype that black people are, on the whole, louder than some of the other racial and ethnic groups. It seems peculiar that the question as to whether this notion is only a groundless stereotype based more in implicit bias than in any "real" biological or culturally-rooted factors has been somewhat of an

²⁹ The Mode 1 knowledge production which approximates Freire's *banking model* of instruction.

³⁰ SI-D1-D9: INT

open one; but, lamentably, such uncertainty has manifested itself within the discourse concerning the issue. If we can ascribe credence to theorists such as Stuart Hall (1997) and others that have identified the process of “stereotyping” as a semiotic one that constructs the signifier of “otherness” to cultural outsiders and creates “difference” as a byproduct of the process, then the idea that the phenomenon has any biological foundation should and must be wholly rejected (p. 257). Consider the fact that similar characterizations have been used when describing expressive cultural distinctions among Northern versus Southern Europeans, a characterization that many have found to be a more digestible stereotype. Still, inasmuch as policies for access to collections are concerned, “black loudness” as a perceptual phenomenon has to be considered a contributory factor because it can influence the institutional response in such a way that has a real impact on the lives of people in the community. And even if the perception of the phenomenon is hinged upon a fictive and ultimately biased stereotype, the circumstance of its unreality should not immunize its phantom spectacle from further scrutiny.

In a controversial collection of essays on black stereotypes, John H. Davis (2007), who openly confessed that his assertions were not based in academic research, sought dispel some of the more commonly accepted stereotypes about black people by opening a dialogue with each of them in a conversational style that, at numerous points, approached invective. He asserted that if there was an exaggerated sonorousness in black orality, then it exists, for the most part, within a particular segment of the black community—the segment of black male youth (pp. 42-43). Davis’s rather exaggerated characterization of the situation, however, mostly seemed to reinforce the same negative stereotypes that he claimed to be deconstructing. Nashieqa Washington (2006) shared a similar view about the “reality” of its existence, except that she found instances where black expression is interpreted as being clamorous in the experience of others (e.g. white

people), more definitively, to be an important cultural characteristic of black expression (pp. 49-50). Moreover, she found it even more crucial to distinguish black people talking loudly, which, again, she considered to be an accepted practice in black cultural expression and “loud talking” a term used in African American Vernacular English to describe gossip and its propensity for insult (p. 50). “Loud talking” was also addressed by Vershawn Ashanti Young (2007) in his book *Your Average Nigga*, a largely reflexive and literary analysis of black literacy practices and the performance of black masculinity. In Young’s account, “loud talking” is a rhetorical maneuver that involves loudly insulting someone within earshot without referring to that person directly (pp. 66-68). “This kind of sneak-speaking,” he wrote, “of not being able to address race directly, of being silenced on institutionally unauthorized issues of injustice, transforms BEV [Black English Vernacular] into a subversive strategy, a clandestine linguistic practice that turns its speakers into veritable tricksters” (p. 67). The distinction is of consequence because, as suggested by Young, it resonates with a slight tone of psychological emasculation, whereas the more prevalent stereotype of loudness is associated with the more masculine quality of aggressiveness (p. 143).

Young, in fact, is but one among a larger group of scholars who have sought to contextualize our notions of “blackness” by looking at how race, as a socially constructed phenomenon, gets performed in our daily rituals and lived experiences. Here it emerges in equating “black loudness” with aggression. The questions concerns how individuals might consciously or unwittingly internalize this association. Accordingly, these scholars have focused their attentions, not on the stereotype of blacks being loud on its face, rather on we can better understand that ways in which the associative coupling of the two, sonority and aggression, are articulated in the performance of “black masculinity”—its communicative modes, its gender

roles, its moral codes, social ideologies, socioeconomic apparatuses, etc.—within the larger framework of contemporary American society. For Dawoud Bey, the issue is, for the most part, a conflation of black confidence—a source of psychological self-empowerment informally dubbed “black swagger”—with rudeness or bravado. He notes that the idea of aggression is intrinsic to the very definition of the word “swagger” (Bey, 2012). And even if there is a more nuanced split between them, the conflation is problematic because the leap from “confident” to “aggressive” is perilously short” (p. 150). It is our collective perception of black expression that is key here, as “black boys and men who carry themselves with assurance, with confidence, are perceived as dangerous—sometimes even to those in their own communities” (p. 151).

For decades, certain elements of contemporary black fashion, style, language, and expression—those typically affiliated with rap music and hip hop culture—have routinely been singled out for censure from those who feel threatened by the experience of social, racial, or cultural difference. And, again, these elements have been associated with an articulation of “black masculinity” that is especially contentious. Bell hooks’s singled-out the hip hop industry as an acutely corrosive force in the construction of “black masculinity” (2012). In her view, “coolness” had formerly embodied a stoicism in the black male consciousness that helped minds to endure the perpetual humiliations of racial injustice (p. 73). She argued that this inscrutable and sublime nonchalance once voiced in the blues has recently been usurped and distorted by the image of “today’s ‘cool’ Black male” which has power and domination at its core. Seen in this light, the performance of “black masculinity” renders the stereotype of “black loudness” into an expressive modality (i.e. “black swagger”). And it is one that can be alluring insofar as it remains a symbol of “street credibility”—the cultural capital of the streets. Even contextualized, then, the issue in and of itself continues to reduce what could very well be viewed as an authentic mode of

black expression down to a stigmatized status. It essentially stigmatizes the condition of being an uneducated young black person in America. In rejecting the modality, however, there is the risk of assuming the inverse stigma of “acting white” (Christie, 2010).

Most people would, in reality, aptly deny that there is any credibility to the notion that blacks somehow have a genetically-rooted propensity for boisterousness or vociferation in expression. Others, however, are not really convinced about its existence as a socially constructed phenomenon or even as a manifestation of racial performativity. The idea that there is any agency in the performance of “black masculinity” is almost entirely dispensed with in their approach. Instead, “implicit bias” has been identified as the source of the phenomenon (Losen, 2015). The singular stereotype might play a role as an underlying contributor by feeding into the subconscious formation of the bias, but not in a relationship of causality. This research is based in cognitive science in what has been called “the social neuroscience approach.” Studies in implicit bias apply methods such as Implicit Association Testing (IAT) and Implicit Association Procedure (IAP) to measure levels of implicit bias present in individual persons. Both of these methods monitor brain functioning by scientifically testing response times for word/image associations (Teige-Mocigemba, Klauer, & Sherman, 2010; Amodio, 2013). The implicit bias literature which has sought to measure and test for its presence has established a foundation for other researchers to study its real world effects. In *Closing the School Discipline Gap*, for example, Daniel J. Losen (2015) pointed to how implicit bias has repeatedly led educators to misinterpret the communicative expressiveness of black students and disproportionately penalize them accordingly (p. 76).

Unfortunately, the situation is not limited to a classroom setting—it is arguably endemic to the greater part of interracial relations in this country. In August of 2015, for example, in California’s Napa Valley during a train travel wine tour, the members of the Sistas on the Edge Book Club, a predominantly African American book club, were escorted off their train car for complaints concerning their loudness that the company apparently received from a couple of bothered clients (Rocha, 2015). However, after all of the evidence in the controversy was reviewed by the parties involved—including the fact that one of the members was an octogenarian—it was determined that the book club members had, in fact, been treated unfairly for expressing themselves in such a way that was neither unruly nor disruptive. The once accusing company had to issue a formal apology soon after. The argument for implicit bias, at least in this example, was unambiguous and clear.

At the heart of this discussion lies the following question: Is this practice of using anti-noise policies to check the noise-levels in the reading room atmosphere to create a silent reading environment truly the one which is most conducive to the ways in which black people have constructed knowledge, or does it reinforce the largely antiquated notion of the role of a librarian as a gatekeeper? I found that despite being an African American research collection, alternative modalities of knowledge sharing had no place in the Schomburg rare book reading room. The rarefication implied by the “special” of “special collections” is limited to those items that physically makeup collections. Rare book reading rooms, being places that contain important and unique artifacts, are places that typically have a greater amount of restrictions than others. The Schomburg Center’s rare book reading room, in this sense, was closely aligned with the Western model. Individuals were swiftly and politely reprimanded for any perceived violation in policy. The room itself largely mirrored the interior design of the Clark, only, with an emphasis on black

art. The Schomburg Center's rare book reading room, however, had some of the strictest policies for collection access and use out of the four different sites that I investigated during my research. Most of these policies, such as the requirement of researcher registration forms and the restriction against researcher use of personal paper for note-taking, were more preservation oriented. Other policies, such as anti-noise policies that matched those that I encountered in the reference reading room, were evidently intended to uphold the sanctity of the reading room environment.

The arrangement, though not without its merits, served to perpetuate Freire's notion of a *banking model* of education within the context of primary source research (Freire, 1970). On one occasion, there was an older untidily dressed black person in the room who conveyed the appearance of being a homeless senior and had been showing signs of mental instability.³¹ After numerous warnings for violating the policy against talking loudly—and in this case, the patron had been talking to himself—the individual was politely asked to leave the area. A brief time after their purposefully muted exchange, the individual complied with the request of the staff to remove himself. I personally felt the discomfort in room amongst learners and researchers when the patron had violated the rule against loudness. I experienced this shift in the feeling and mood of the space, despite my being able to empathize with the conditions of poverty and the lack of a stable residence from having endured through similar challenges in my own past. The Clark Library, on the other hand, has had a hidden advantage in targeting its desired patronage to the exclusion of others. Considering the demographic makeup of its surrounding communities, it seems that the Clark Library's *environmental dissonance* has been formidable enough to prevent

³¹ SIV-D3: RST

these kinds of uncomfortable situations that involve, in some form or another, a denial of access, from occurring within the confines of their reading room space.

On a similar note, whereas at the Schomburg student users received the required standardized information literacy lesson explaining use and access policies, comparable undergraduate level introductions to special collections assumed a more advanced student knowledge of collection use. The staff at both of these institutions, however, was simultaneously responsible for providing access to collections—and with the aid of security—helping to prevent material losses of the collection through damage or theft. It is clear, then, that vestiges of the gatekeeper role can be found in the present day reference librarian, curator, or archivist. In this sense, the fact that conventional modes of knowledge production are carried on in the special collections reading room environment is easily fathomable. And it is worth mentioning that in the Schomburg Center's Jean Blackwell Hutson Research and Reference Division reading room, or, more simply, the reference reading room, loud verbal communication among the library's users and learners was, at times, the cause for bickering among strangers over the right to talk and the right to study in silence. Cell phone use and the high volumes of music in some of the younger users' and learners' headphones provoked reactions from other learners and researchers who preferred a quieter space to conduct their work.³² I, too, was put in a somewhat precarious position by the restrictions on talking in the reading room when I was approached at random by an African American patron with a thick West Indian accent who asked me to assist him with his internet navigation because he could not read well enough, in the conventional sense, to perform this activity independently.³³ The policy placed me in the position of having to decide whether or not to violate it in order to help this individual. In all, however, the dynamics created by this

³² SIV-D9: RST

³³ SIV-D4: RST

policy, often being associated with a restrained tension, was not pronounced enough to produce a sustained disruption in the Center's adoption of the conventionality of a quiet reading atmosphere.

4. I. 4. Access: Racial Distribution in Ethnocentric Research Spaces

Mirroring the racial hegemony found in a traditional special collections reading room, the racial distribution of the patron population at the Schomburg during my time spent onsite showed a noticeable parallelism (Appendix A). Fundamentally, both institutions had large ethnic majorities that, despite at least one of these institutions having embodied many aspects of the multicultural ideal, lacked true signs of interracial integration. The Schomburg Center, in fact, with an 80% black patron population and only 15% of the total patron population that was observably white, had one of the largest black majorities of all the case studies. Similarly, a solid 87% of the patrons at the Clayton Library Museum in Los Angeles were black, despite the fact that Culver City is not really considered to be a majority black community.³⁴

As it turned out, the distribution disparity at the Schomburg and the Clayton was roughly the parallel opposite of the demographic distribution of white and black readers at the Clark Library. The Clark had a population that was 89% white and just 4% black in makeup.³⁵ The disparity suggests that these institutions had managed to reach populations with strong historical ties to their collections. They have managed to do so in spite of the many challenges related to the enforcement of restrictive policy or the impact of *environmental dissonance*. At the Clark, again, it appears that *environmental dissonance* has functioned, in part, as a surface level population filter. The facility's imposing structural aesthetic has afforded to it the appearance of

³⁴ SIV-D1-D11: DEM; SIII-D1-D6: DEM

³⁵ SI-D1-D9: DEM

a private and, thus, forbidden air of opulence. *Environmental dissonance*, however, might have had a lesser impact at the Amistad Research Center. This institution was shown to have had a more or less even distribution of black and white patrons. It is likely that the draw of the collections coupled with the nature of the outreach helped to moderate such inhibitors to access.

In the case of the Schomburg, the observational data suggests that the symmetry maintained between the physicality of the research space and its interior helped the library override the inhibitors of restrictive reading room policies that have served to discourage disturbances and protect the collections. Along with a number of other factors—certainly including the robust variety of programs offered by the Schomburg in addition to its collections—it is likely that the high black population of users, learners, and researches at the library has also worked to sustain comparatively high levels of black patronage in such a way that is self-perpetuating. Clearly, the decision to have a high amount of African American demographic representation at every level of the staff has been another contributing factor. In the past, tensions have run high when the administration failed the community in this regard. In 1982, for example, two black protest organizers were arrested for threatening to forcibly remove the then white chief archivist of the Schomburg Center, Robert Morris, from the facility (The New York Times, 1982). The Schomburg's research collection, it seems, has upheld a cultural resonance with its core demographic that is difficult to disregard.

In investigating access in its relation to racial demographics, it is true that it is access to collections that always concerns us. What is meant here by collections, of course, is the assemblage of (information/bibliographic/artefactual) objects; and, again, the bibliographic objects have always remained at the center of the research process. It is only that here these

objects have been investigated in connection with the various (systems-based) aspects of their larger environment—demographics being one of a number of components that make up that environment. At the Schomburg, then, it was clear that the massive quantity of black studies books, artifacts, and archival and research materials was directly reflective of the racial distribution of its demographics. In other words, as the collection’s first intended audience was the black population, its majority black population of patrons had come about by design.

This situation is more than suggestive of the deep level of *de facto* segregation that has existed in major urban environments outside of the South for generations. In looking at the segregated collections in light of the history of segregation in the United States, however, the question concerning the different ways in which the materiality of these bibliographic objects contribute to the construction of racial identity assumes an even greater sense of import. Furthermore, we must also seek to understand how that identity construction is situated within a reading environment. With that understanding, it becomes possible to discern how *bibliocultural* relationships are shaping collection access. As previously suggested by the relative absence of urban fiction at the Schomburg in comparison with NYPL’s general collections, the fact that urban literature technically does not “belong” in a research collection that has the *gravitas* of the Schomburg bears a consequence of failing to capture an important part of the history that is perhaps the lifeblood of black literature in the twenty-first century. Gratefully, this class of black literature has enjoyed moderate representation in the collections, even if it is significantly lesser than what is found in the NYPL’s circulating collections.

4. II. 1. Encounter: Events and Programs as Library Outreach

Libraries in their dual roles as educational and memory institutions, may seek to realize their access potential through their encounters with the public or with the anticipated patron population. This outreach is usually performed through programs and events. The mission of providing outreach, and especially literacy outreach to the underserved, largely has been a public sector project, and has represented a challenge of particular difficulty for special collections and research libraries (Traister, 2003). The ALA's Office of Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services has explicitly articulated its dedication to the avowedly democratic goal of promoting greater literacy within minority populations (American Library Association, 2015). Past responses to the black literacy gap, too, such as the recommendations offered by Hughes-Hassell et al. (2012) have sought to inform the direction of programs and events in an attempt to increase their potential relevancy to the black community. The extent to which such outreach is actually aimed at improving or ameliorating educational conditions for both younger and older learners, then, falls on a spectrum which has, at one end, public institutions that offer a wide variety of literacy-specific programs and open events and, at the other end, the highly specialized research collections that focus more on advanced research fellowships and events that are closed or insular in nature. We find that the Schomburg has heavily invested in youth outreach and community-centered events, whereas the Clark, for the most part, has opted to devote its outreach efforts to advanced specialists and lifetime academics.

At times, as it felt as if the differences between these two institutions could not be any more blatant. The bright and colorful, music filled exhibit spaces of the Schomburg seemed worlds away from the somber sepia-toned artifacts displayed in the Clark's marbled hall display cases. At other times I was reminded of their similarities. Both institutions, for instance, offered regular tours—in fact, facility and exhibit tours were a standard at all four sites—and both have

been known to provide a range of educational and entertainment-oriented events. Even more, both the Schomburg and the Clark Libraries have continued to come up with targeted outreach formulated around collection strengths. One of the primary differences among the two, however, lies in the extent to which the Schomburg has been able to connect with the demographics of its immediate regional community. Judging from the frequency, balance, range, and quality of programs and events, the Schomburg probably displayed the most impressive example of community outreach out of all the individual case studies.

On the surface, Harlem is hip hop and reggae; underneath, however, a steady stream of soul, funk, rhythm & blues, and, of course, jazz pumps through its social and communal veins. If hip hop in this telling is viewed as a semiotic signifier for black youth, then the older genres of black music can stand in for the earlier generations of black folks in Harlem. I found the events at the Schomburg to be profoundly penetrative in terms of their relevance to the local African American population. The concerts, lectures, and exhibits played to the history of black Harlem. In this sense, it is not only through its and collections and its facilities, but really through its outreach efforts that the library becomes an integral part and contributing force in that history. The outcome goes beyond preservation of the history, it is perpetuation which causes that history to live and breathe again.

During my time spent engaged in onsite research, I was able to attend a mid-afternoon event called “Before 5 with Marjorie Eliot and Special Guest.”³⁶ This event was part of a monthly jazz music series that, along with a number of other special events, was both free and open to the public. With approximately 300 people in attendance at a 347-seat professional theatre, the audience was predominantly African American, drawing from the more mature and

³⁶ SIV-D9: COMM

senior segments of the community. There was a noticeable Caucasian presence in the audience as well, but they were definitely the minority in the room. The time and date of the event—2:00 pm on a Wednesday afternoon—encouraged a high attendance among community seniors.

“Straight ahead” jazz music made up the bulk of Eliot’s concert repertoire. The music pulsed with vibrant energy and filled the room with the sonic intensity of improvised melodic dialogues. The concert integrated spoken word and plantation songs and spirituals sung acapella during the interludes to the longer pieces. It was unmistakable from the feeling of comradery in the room and from the sincere and affectionate dedications that came from her collaborators that Eliot appeared to have deep roots in the Harlem community. A community fixture, she was the personal friend of several people in attendance as well as the musicians that performed with her during the concert. She is part of a living legacy. The history of jazz in Harlem is strong. Like New Orleans it is viewed as one of the places where jazz music matured in its early development; it is the city where “stride” piano was born. At its height, the city lauded jazz greats James P. Johnson, Thomas “Fats” Waller, Willie “the Lion” Smith, and Duke Ellington among its roster of leading jazz and swing pianist and composers (Harker, 2005, pp. 98-104). And even if a number of the novelists and academics associated with the Harlem Renaissance harbored their apprehensions toward the wider public perception of the musical form, they still appreciated the achievements of the music’s most successful artists (Harker, 2005, p. 48). As a storied, working jazz pianist, Eliot represented a continuation of that tradition; she was a living link to Harlem’s celebrated past.

I was also able to observe three of the Schomburg’s exhibits during my time onsite. Like the Elliot’s recital and the Before 5 jazz concert series, all three were appreciably in touch with

the older generations of black Harlem. Each was tailored to meet the educational and preservation needs of this demographic. The advertising for these exhibits, with its bold colors and wall-sized text, was large and brightly visible from the streets. The Schomburg's floor-level exhibit, "Funky Turns 40: Black Character Revolution," was a six-month long exhibit that was open through the spring and summer of 2014.³⁷ In a long enclosed octagonal corridor which wrapped around the perimeter of the floor's center and was set apart from the main entrance reception area and performance spaces, this exhibit showcased a variety of mid-to-late twentieth century cartoons. The theme of the exhibit was primarily centered upon images of black folks in children's media and post-Civil Rights era young adult entertainment, but it also sought to draw its learners' attention to the marginalized, yet deeply entrenched presence of African American historical narratives in comics and animation of the twentieth century. In doing so, however, the exhibit chose to consciously confront the long history of negative stereotypes that have been perpetuated in mainstream television and film from the blackface caricatures of the minstrelsy era to the more contemporary criminal and gang-related visual misrepresentations of black people that are still, almost impulsively present throughout today's media landscape.

The reference to funk music in the exhibit's title is not an arbitrary one. Funk music has been a cornerstone in the black community for generations. Vincent (1996) suggested that funk is rooted in early jazz and African music. He located funk's split from jazz and the spirit of liberation that has motivated and defined it in the music's emphasis, instead, on "unity" and "togetherness"—a quality, he felt, reflected a redirection to black solidarity championed during the revolutionary period of the late 1960s and '70s (pp. 13-15). "As long as there is rhythm," wrote Vincent, "as long as there is togetherness, as long as there is a vibe—it's funk" (p. 13).

³⁷ SIV-D10: ENT

The influence of the funk and soul music aesthetic in these late twentieth century cartoons was brought out not only in the works themselves, but also in the exhibit's lettering and graphic design. It was a design that was akin to the brief animated intro to "Soul Train"—the once immensely popular broadcast dance show. The artifacts—animation cells, posters, comic books, and other reading materials from shows like the Harlem Globetrotters cartoon, Fat Albert, and the Jackson 5ive—were colorfully displayed on the walls and in a series of four large, well-built display cases. The object-centric displays were further augmented by looped footage of clips from corresponding animated film and television shows playing on video screens in full audio. For instance, there would be samples from a comic book series dedicated to the biography of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on display with clips from the animated feature *Our Friend Martin* (1999) playing in close proximity to them. This interlaced mixed-media format allowed for a multidimensional experience in "reading" the exhibit's narrative through the space.

The main exhibition room at the Schomburg Center was located on the second floor, close to the gift shop. The somewhat counterintuitive location quietly suggested an institutional favoring of collection research activities over its other educational and more entertainment-oriented functions, but this inference was not immediately perceptible upon my initial observation. As I entered the "Motown: The Truth is a Hit" exhibit, I was immediately inundated by a cacophonous wave of energetic music. I was instantly enticed by the boldly painted blue and gold walls covered by historical artifacts.³⁸ As I read my way through the space and took note of the displayed objects and their captions, I found that the exhibit was telling an abridged story of Berry Gordy and his Motown recording label. It was a narrative that sought to draw attention to Gordy's firm belief in the African roots of the rhythm and blues and soul music

³⁸ SIV-D10: ENT

genres that were at the center of the label's success. The music's strong relationship to the Civil Rights Movement was also publicized in this account. Recording artists and bands such as The Supremes, The Jackson 5, The Temptations, Marvin Gaye, Smokey Robinson, and Stevie Wonder were historicized and commemorated through the displayed objects and video clips. Important recording industry documents, photographs, original vinyl records and album covers, printed ephemera, and stage outfits and performance attire accounted for the greater share of the displays. The symbiotic consonance between this exhibition and Harlem's black community approached the sense of cohesion created in Elliot's afternoon jazz concert. It challenges the idea that the exhibit format of the event, by virtue of its unmistakably Western foundations, must persistently remain a step removed from its subject, when that subject deals with the history of oppressed peoples or marginalized groups.

In her book *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (1992), Pratt reintroduced her term "contact zone" to describe the "space of imperial encounters, in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict" (p. 8). The term was later interjected into the museum studies discourse in Clifford's (1997) *Routes: Travel and translation in the Late Twentieth Century*. More recently, Schorch (2013) noted how this dialectical application of the term in the context of the museum as a dialogical space—with museums as perpetuators of a dichotomization between the cultural "other" and the hegemonic through categorizations that demarcate cultural difference—had to account for the problem of translation and how it contradicts pure notions of hegemonic fixity (p. 69). And Schorch, in his attempt to empirically analyze these concepts, astutely argued that Babha's idea of the "third space" addressed the problem in that it afforded a spatial dimension to

the “processes” of translation wherein symbolic and semiotic fixity become illusory by a privileging of the interpretive (pp. 69-70). In this more nuanced understanding of translation, interpretation, the starting point for any interaction, becomes the nexus of meaning making in cross-cultural dialog (pp. 70-75).

Much of the past research into this issue has looked at how “contact zones” and “liminal spaces” have operated in postcolonial and cosmopolitan societies (Schorch, 2013, pp. 68-69). In instances where the subjugated peoples represent the indigenous population, these processes of translation between these “zones” and “spaces” typically have the potential to be informed by indigenous cultural histories that are inextricably wedded to the local geography and landscape. The history of the enslavement of African peoples, however, being a unique example that involved several hundred years of involuntary geographic dislocation, must necessarily take on different dimensions. The Afrocentricity of the Schomburg’s exhibits, for instance, appeared to have had a stronger visibility in the artifacts themselves than in the various structural and procedural factors that comprise the current standard of library and museum curatorial practice. It is not that structure and procedure are utterly exempt from a translation process which, in this case, accentuates a Pan-African vision of blackness within a traditionally European and historically imperialist institutional medium; it is that these factors are being negotiated and reinterpreted in ways that are comparatively opaque.

The Donald Andrew Agarrat photography exhibit in the Schomburg Center’s rare book reading room exemplified this characteristic of opacity in several respects.³⁹ For one, Agarrat (d. 2013) was a powerfully countercultural artist whose work challenged the societal status quo in delicate, almost subconscious ways. He was Harlem-based artist who, like Lorna Simpson, used

³⁹ SIV-D2-D4: EDU

photography as the primary medium for his works. His love for both jazz and house music positioned him as a generational bridge between the younger and older generations of black artists.⁴⁰ And he was an avid supporter of black artists and their art during his life. The purposefully black and white photographs had an everydayness about them, but somehow captured all of the weight and depth of a lifespan in the expressions of his subjects.

The jarring contrast between the Motown exhibit and the display of Agarrat's work in the reading room leaves an impression that is difficult to ignore. The invisible clash of the high-volume and visual intensity of the Motown exhibit with the quiet, reserved atmosphere of the Schomburg Center's rare book reading room produces a distinct shift in the atmosphere of the space. Due, perhaps, to the sight of the researchers combined with the room's round columns, sculptures, and reference materials, visitors who entered the room exclusively to see the Agarrat exhibit routinely conformed to the expected, quiet decorum of the space. Nevertheless, in circumambulating through the reading room space as an exhibit rather than a reading room, the Afrocentricity of both the collections and the environment still stand out.

That sense of Afrocentrism conveyed in many of the Schomburg's public events was also something that I encountered in some of the programs at the Mayme A. Clayton Library and Museum. On a Monday evening, March 24, 2014, for instance, I attended a screening of Woodie King Jr. and Herbert Danska's film, *Right On!* (1970), as part of the 4th Monday Screenings film series.⁴¹ The film starred a collective of radical black poets—Gylan Kain, David Nelson, and Felipe Luciano—who dubbed themselves "The Last Poets." Basically, it was made up of a string of *recorded performances* that featured a politically uncompromising sampling of revolutionary

⁴⁰ SIV-Doc5

⁴¹ SIII-D4: COMM

poems set against the hidden space (back alleys, rooftops, staircases, etc.) of Harlem, New York City. The provocative style of poetry seemed to anticipate the rap medium that would emerge a decade later, but it also demonstrated the strong commitment that black intellectuals of the late 1960s and early 1970s had to an Afrocentric ideal. The use of African rhythms as the backbeat to the militant lyricism was, in a sense, evocative of that ideal, at least in aesthetic terms. The filmed provoked a lively discussion that touched on issues of black oppression, black history, our relationship with Africa, and, above all, the question of whether or not Black Arts Movement poets like Sonia Sanchez, Nikki Giovanni, and others had managed to impart to some of their values on the hip hop generation. At the Clark, I found, that there was notably less transparency about the racial dimension of its programs and events. Absent too, I believe, was any stated recognition or contextualization of its tacit Eurocentrism.

4. II. 2. Encounter: The Insularity of Academic Events in Research Spaces

At a conference that I attended at the Clark Library during my time onsite, the Eurocentric nature of the proceedings would have been completely imperceptible save the presence of myself and one other attendee of color.⁴² Regardless of our racial difference, however, the accepted academic communicative modes and the expected norms of conference etiquette in the humanities served to nullify the perception of difference denoted by our complexions. In other words, adherence to the social customs, in this case, outweighed any manifestations of cross-cultural hybridity; in its place there was a construction of cultural singularity personified by the group of scholars in Western “high culture” literature in attendance as well as the speakers and their respective papers. As one of only two people of color at the conference, the proceedings were as much as a process of enculturation as they were educative.

⁴² SI-D5: EVT

I attended “Double Falshood and Cardenio: Theobald, Fletcher, Shakespeare, Cervantes” on January 31, 2014—one day of a two-day conference. During the course of the day I was able to see a series of presentations that explored the question of the authenticity of the play “Double Falsehood” as a Shakespearean work. Many positions were put forward as others were intellectually dissected about the authenticity of the play that was declared to be definitively Shakespearean a little more than a year later by Boyd and Pennebaker (2015). As a number of the conference speakers took an approach that sought to apprehend a more comprehensive intellectual history surrounding the debate, Boyd and Pennebaker, claimed that their combination of artificially manufactured psychological signatures and statistical text analysis provided compelling indications as to a Shakespearean origin (Boyd & Pennebaker, 2015). The themes of the conference, in this instance—authenticity, authorship, and Shakespeare—were remarkably in step with the traditional focus of literary and bibliographic research in the West. And in addition to the communicative modes and intellectual themes of the conference, the surrounding conference activities involving, leisure, networking, and socialization could be characterized by privilege and a predisposition toward academic insularity. The privileges extended to this group included an open viewing of Shakespearean and other important sixteenth and seventeenth century works. Crowning the impressive selection of items loosely arranged on tables in even more impressively decorated and stately rooms was a First Folio (1623) edition of Shakespeare that attendees were permitted to carefully thumb through without guidance if not without supervision. Of course, all of the conference attendees could enjoy such luxuries regardless of their racial or ethnic background, but it is important to restate that, much like the Clark’s reading room, the demographic makeup was solidly Caucasian.⁴³ Only in the performance of the actual

⁴³ SI-D1-D9: DEM

"Double Falsehood" was there real any presence of racial diversity. As it turned out, many in this small troupe of UCLA student actors that performed that night, including some of the lead actors, were performers of color.

Next to the Schomburg Center's robust lineup of outreach activities and events, the Clark's outreach is relatively limited. It is true that they are both special collections. It is also true that they are both research facilities. One, however, is attached to a university library system; the other to a public. Accordingly, whereas the Before 5 concert tickets were free and readily available, tickets for musical concerts at the Clark which feature performances by chamber music ensembles in its drawing room are offered through a lottery system. Some of the Clark's smaller events that have, perhaps, a lower profile than others are promoted mainly through paper advertisements on tables and posted in the reception room. And, regrettably, engagement with the surrounding communities of West Adams and Jefferson Park has been virtually non-existent.

Chapter Five: Findings for Representation and Organization

5. I. 1. Representation: The Early Black Press and the Rise of the Humanizing Text

In a 1974 episode of *Good Times* titled “Michael Gets Suspended” the youngest son in the family, Michael, is suspended for what he perceives is the transgression of his very blackness (Manings, Lear, & Knight, 1974). The technical reason for the suspension, we soon learn, was over his refusal to denounce his view that President George Washington was a racist. When interrogated as to why he held such a controversial viewpoint, Michael explained that it was on the account that President Washington owned slaves. When asked where he first obtained the information concerning this inconvenient piece of history, we discover that Michael read it in a book on black history that he found at the library. After reading this history, he became cynical and discontented with the way that it had been deliberately left out of the standard curriculum. Consequently his parents, Florida and James Evans, felt strongly compelled to convince him to apologize to his teacher so that he may return to class and continue with his education. Without comparison, Michael, a young adolescent of ten or twelve, was the best student out of the three children. As the youngest and smartest child in the family, his parents undoubtedly felt that he had the most potential for success in life. Nonetheless, after his mother and siblings failed to reason with him, his father was driven to threaten harsh corporal punishment as a final result.

Michael was prepared to take a stand and accept his punishment regardless of the physical pain he expected to have to endure. He was actually committed to nothing less than dropping out of school altogether over the issue. James Evans, however, who naturally had a soft spot for his youngest son, hesitated as he tried instead to explain the severity of the situation by

relating the generational plight of the workingman. James, it seems, did not intend for his son to follow in his footsteps by ending up washing dishes for a living. He sternly warned his youngest son to take his education seriously. And then a plot twist occurred when Michael unintentionally sparked his father's interest in black history during their rather lengthy the post-lecture exchange. In their discussion, Michael educated his father about the American revolutionary martyr, Crispus Attucks, as well as a stream of lesser known, but still widely accomplished figures in black history. James was becoming increasingly inspired and excited by what his son had to teach him, and Florida walked in on the unexpected scene of the father and son happily conversing with each other about the various merits and achievements of African Americans throughout history. Together, they all came to the mutual understanding that there is, in fact, at least some value in the traditional education system, even if the system is a flawed one. James, having felt an even greater sense of pride for his son, apologized to him—an unprecedented act of clemency and humility in the show. Michael was so moved by his father's heartfelt apology that he declared his intention to apologize to his teacher and return to school.

In this episode, Michael is being punished for his embrace of a radical counter-narrative. To retard the punitive actions from further obstructing his potential for success he must reconcile his new foundation of knowledge with a seemingly incommensurate model perpetuated by a standard that actively works at suppressing the cultural “other” upon which his very identity is defined. It is not the case, then, that Michael does not have enough literacy; in fact, he has too much of it. All the same, the heart of the matter is the vehicle which moves the narrative—the library's book on black history. In this story, the black press artifact serves to liberate not just Michael's consciousness, but also that of his father. The narrative encapsulates, in its hyper-condensed format, a reverse generational passing of the torch in terms of the way of that African

Americans have engaged with books and the texts that they embody, similar to when freeborn black children taught their formerly enslaved parents the conventional literacy skills that they had learned in school. On the one hand there are hints of the late nineteenth/early twentieth century split between the Washingtonian and Du Boisean models for promoting advancement and upward mobility in the black community. Larger and more obvious than that, though, is the narrative's allusion to the sharper schism among the diverging agendas of the Civil Rights and Black Power movements. With this interpretation, the dispute between Michael and his parents, particularly in their support of the conventional education system, mirrors the key differences between those in support of civic participation such as Bayard Rustin (d. 1987) and Martin Luther King Jr. (d. 1968) on one side of the spectrum and reactionary-minded, militancy oriented thinkers like Kwame Turé (born Stokely Carmichael, d. 1998) and Huey P. Newton (d. 1989) on the other. In this particular episode of *Good Times*, the book represents a utopian vision for the future of the black race; it is a vision of autonomy. The textuality embodied in the books and literacy practices of the African American community, consequently, is an amalgam of both the material and the oral. What lies before us is the deeper history of the black press. By reviewing material bibliographic artifacts and looking at them as spaces for discourse, we can begin our journey to understand the bibliographic in its relation to racial identity construction in the United States.

It is prudent to commence with Africa because there is a long and rich literary and bibliographic history there; and, truthfully, it would be disingenuous to attempt to disentangle that point from any discussion on the early history of the black press (Fraser, 2008). And contrary to a historical revisionism which would reduce the continent to the sub-Saharan, this would have to also include the deeply-rooted literary cultures of Egypt to the north and Ethiopia

to the east of the West African center of the transatlantic slave trade. As previously pointed out, various intertextualities and various points of intersection between the literacies and texts of Europeans and those of Africans existed during the transatlantic slave trade. In *Signs of Diaspora, Diaspora of Signs*, for example, Grey Gundaker (1998) noted that in “Bahia, Brazil, in the early years of the nineteenth century, Hausa and Yoruba Muslim slaves precipitated a series of revolts. Schooled in Arabic literacy through memorization of the Qur’an” (Gundaker, p. v). Moreover, Gundaker found that “about that same time, famed slave insurrection leader Nat Turner, expressed his mission to lead African Americans to freedom by stressing knowledge of both roman script and literacy and sacred hieroglyphs in which God’s instructions to revolt were written in blood on the leaves of trees” (Gundaker, 1998, p. v). Both are examples of *bibliocultural* intersection—a “third space” between the oral and the textual and between script and glyph, writing and the performative, and Western and African textualities.

Henry Louis Gates (1988) perceptibly stated, “The notion that the Middle Passage was so traumatic that it functioned to create in the African a tabula rasa of consciousness is as odd as it is a fiction, a fiction that has served several economic orders and their attendant ideologies” (p. 4). Gates put forth, this reasonable if not somewhat controversial statement in his discussion of the nature and function of the “signifyin(g)” text. In this argument Gates linked the shared African and African American tradition of “signifyin(g)” to an West African source—the mythological construct of the “trickster” deity of the Nigerian Yoruba, the orisha Esu-Elegbara. The connection has been drawn, in part, on the account that in Yoruba cosmology, the orisha (meaning god, or demi-god) Eshu (Elegba, Elegbara, etc.) is meant to open the threshold of communication between the invisible realm of the ancestors and the world of the living. Gates has found various antecedents and analogous qualities in this cosmology throughout the history

of black literature and literary criticism (pp. 26-49). Thus, he referred to signifyin(g) as a rhetorical doubling (of narrative, meaning, interpretation, etc.) which, in its semiotic parallelism, produces critical parody. In essence, this largely African tradition survived and permeated throughout virtually the whole of African American textuality, in spite of the obstinacy of Western conventionality in textual production. Gates aptly draws upon Bakhtin to explain the “doubled text” in the rhetorical maneuvering of the signifyin(g) tradition (pp. 121-122). For Gates, Bakhtin’s notion of a third order discourse that is “double-voiced”—a level of discourse that encompasses parody and a “hidden polemic”—offers a fitting analogy for the “narrative forms” in African American literature because it describes a form of discourse wherein the speech is adopted and reconfigured by another in such a way that is both reflexive and invisibly subversive (p. 122). The invisibility, of course, is achieved through an anteriority. In accordance with this view of the transatlantic text, as a space for dual representation—a domain for parallel hermeneutics—the slave narrative emerges as the exemplary genre for the black press during its formative years. For the most part, as Joanna Brooks (2012) summarized in “The Unfortunates: What the Life Spans of Early Black Books Tell Us About Book History” both the emergence of the slave narrative and the early period of the black press in which it developed can be characterized by such factors as discontinuity and disruption, adaptiveness and mobility, entrepreneurial authorship, institutional and bureaucratic subsidization, and a committed cognizance of power relationships.

One of the most famous and commercially popular examples of the slave narrative was Frederick Douglass’s (1845) *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*. Curiously, as Julia Sun-Joo Lee revealed in her book *The American Slave Narrative and the Victorian Novel* (2010), the “British frontispiece departs significantly from the frontispiece in the American edition of

Douglass's narrative published in that same year" (p. 4). Douglass was understandably offended by the contrived docility that was conveyed in Henry Adlard's engraving for the 1845 British edition. He indicated as much, retrospectively, in an editorial in the April 7, 1849 issue of *The North Star*. The peculiarity of the Douglass's expression in the rendering of artist Bell and the engraver Adlard is immediately noticeable when compared with the trademark expression of piercing intensity seen in the engraving for the American edition. With this comparison, however, Lee has inadvertently drawn the outline for an ethnobibliographic analysis of the black press book. We discover, for one, that Douglass must have had a keen understanding of how his work would be mediated across a black and white readership. This phenomenon will show up again in this analysis because it is a subtle, yet pervasive one. The precedent set by Douglass, both ideologically and materially, was advanced in a larger project of "humanization"—a vindicating project which was chiefly concerned with demonstrating to the world, undeniably and without question, the humanity of the black race. The bibliographic instruments of the black press that served to materialize African American textuality, perhaps through their propensity for reconfiguration and textual doubling, were often on the front lines of this project. The choice of maintaining the continuity of convention was in no way an arbitrary one. The works of this period accepted the established bibliographic mediums not only to demonstrate that black people possessed the intellect to communicate in the "civilized" world of letters, but also to convey a sense of intellectual legitimacy in the work. Looking at these texts less as records of history and more as historical events, then, new information can be found in both their contents and their material composition (McGann, 1991).

Estimates for African American newspapers released after Emancipation have a range of several hundred. No small feat considering that African American pioneers of the press and

journalistic entrepreneurs alike were targeted and singled out for attack and risked property destruction. Correspondingly, a reasonable degree of operational autonomy was necessary to the project, and the need for equipment and skilled workers of color was similarly essential. It was not as if the free black community completely lacked individuals with such capabilities. Showing more than an operational knowledge, as early as 1878 a black inventor named William A. Lavalette patented two improvements on the Gordon platen printing press, one of which accounted for the flush meeting of the plate and the bed upon rotation (U.S.A. Patent No. 208,184, 1878). And some of the first black owned and operated presses, such as the press of David Ruggles (d. 1849), were likely to have been in charge of their own equipment and labor. In addition to having helped in securing Douglass's freedom in the North, when Ruggles opened and ran one of the nation's first black-owned bookshops in 1834, it doubled as a press for pamphlet and job printing (Hodges, 2010). Here, the iron hand press was the most probable choice for an in-house operation, but other, primarily periodical-centered presses partnered up with local churches to use their equipment if they were not compelled to rely upon some other means to print their papers. It is really not until the coming of Marcus Garvey (d. 1940) that we see one of the first truly largescale black publishing enterprises. Garvey's *Negro World Weekly* newspaper was a venture that employed thousands of African Americans, and which would subsequently sow the seeds of a radical departure from the mission of "acceptance" in the cultural mainstream (Moon, 2007).

This "humanization" project that was embedded within the underlying ideological framework of the early black press was advanced further in the first part of the twentieth century. The Murray Brothers Printing Company, which ran from 1908 to the close of the twentieth century, was really an exemplar of the turn-of-the-century black owned press. The brothers

established a long-lived and successful printing firm that produced high quality works of African American literature intended mainly for the black intelligentsia of the period. During the course of subjecting various bibliographic samples to methodic investigation, I was able to examine an extant copy of a Murray Brothers publication at Site Three, the Mayme A. Clayton Library and Museum. The Clayton Library, it should be noted, is in possession of a relatively impressive collection of early black press literature; and the depth and range of the collection enabled me to cross compare with other materials. The Murray Brothers Printing Company was founded by Raymond, Morris, and Norman Murray, in part with the aid of their father Freeman Henry Morris Murray (“Colored printers celebrate birthday,” 1915). In addition to printing works of poetry, art, history, and criticism, the firm sustained their business with job printing and the production of ephemera. By 1921, the company had a modern Goss printing press from which they were able to publish *The Washington Tribune* which ran until 1946 (Joyce, 1991).

The following statement from Rob Giampietro (2004) in his otherwise groundbreaking essay “New Black Face: Neuland and Lithos as Stereotypography” is typical of the difficulty that white audiences can encounter in attempting to perceive the doubling effect in black bibliographic materiality:

Primarily because of both constant anti-African-American sentiment and the socioeconomic status of African-Americans during and after the Civil War, African-American graphic culture in the United States prior to Neuland’s release in 1923 and before the Harlem Renaissance in general was unimportant at best and nonexistent at worst. In short, African-Americans did not have the buying power or the social acceptance required to cultivate a significant graphic culture. What graphic culture they

did have centered around their depiction in advertisements for products associated with slavery: tobacco and cotton. (para. 8)

Absent in this claim is a cognizance of the bibliographic space as a “third space” between the dichotomy of black and white visual interpretations. In washing over a rich bibliographic history of the black press, the statement is analogous to maintaining that blacks did not have a history in this country at all on the account that it was founded upon Anglo-American structures and institutions. And yet we know that such claims are misguided, and that, in actuality, there is a history within a history there. Granted that there have been instances of passing; more specifically, there has been at least one documented instance of an African American in the print trade, Grafton Tyler Brown (d. 1918), who attempted to conceal all traces of his blackness through a demonstration of technical excellence and a mastery of the Western conventions (in design). In a sense, the simultaneous racial and commercial “passing” of this lithographer—the first black lithographer to establish his own lithographic printing company the Western United States—could be likened to the “cultural dualism” of the black bourgeoisie class and its effort to assimilate the literary trappings of the white mainstream both in its poetry and in its prose (Palmquist & Kailbourn, 2000). In Murray’s editions, which were undisguisedly printed for an African American readership, one finds this dualism present in the material components of the text. Each typographic design element ultimately represents a choice; and each use of convention quietly takes a stand against dehumanization by virtue of its manifestation. Recall that black people were, at that time, collectively cast as subhuman and, thusly, were thought to have been incapable of acquiring advanced literacy skills. This engagement with convention is, in some respects, a stance of defiance because it rejects a view of black people being lesser than. It is also

assimilative, however, insofar as it must be mediated in accordance with the standards of a white social and cultural hegemony.

Walter E. Todd's (1909) *Fireside Musings* is a fairly illustrative case in point.⁴⁴ The maroon publisher's cloth binding with its gilt title on the front-cover and spine declares a statement of quality, authority, and craftsmanship upon visual and tactile contact. The use of textura blackletter for the book's title page and poem titles edify the poems and provide them with a Western sense of tradition and antiquity. The old style roman that follows it in the body of the work is highly typical of late nineteenth century and early twentieth century Americana. It features such paratextual reference mechanisms as an introduction (introductory), pagination, and an index (a table of contents). And it also displays clear signs of aesthetic augmentation. The book has a frontispiece, for instance, that used a photographic plate of the author for the illustration. There is also an ornamental letter "I" in the text, and the book bears a printer's device on its title page.

The Murray Brothers printer's device, furthermore, makes a delicate statement that suggests, again, an allegiance with the mission of humanization. The device, the motif of the winged torch, was a gentle mark of class and intellectual surety (Trevaldwin & Aylward, 1895). The symbol of the winged torch historically has been tied to the torch of the Erinyes. Contrary, perhaps, to the more negative undertones of these deities in Greek mythology, however, as indicated by Efimia Menelaos Christopoulos, in the *Oresteia* "at the end of *Eumenides*—in the final procession accompanied by Athena—the torch represents the triumph of light" (Christopoulos, Karakantza, & Levaniouk, 2010, p. 137). Although the symbolic connection has been somewhat lost over time, we find that this torch, the "torch of knowledge," was a familiar

⁴⁴ SIII-D6: B5

ornamentation in bookplates and printer's devices throughout much of the early modern and modern history of the book in the West. In this instance, the design offered a message of black enlightenment wherein letters and learning are guiding readers through the darkness of ignorance and barbarism. Some of the Murray's other devices have included motifs such as the triple oak leaf ornament—a symbol of wisdom and fortitude, a T-shaped column formed from acanthus leaves, and a book surrounded by oak leaves and crowned by an illumining candle.

Much of Todd's poetry was composed with a grammar which was as standard as the typography. The use of convention here, again, did not nullify the process of signifyin(g), it actually served to substantiate it. Note, for example, in the following passage from "My Visit at the School" the reflexive self-awareness of the speaker as he participates in the rhetorical game of doubling through his use of parody:

So I called up at the grammar class
That had a large attendance,
Says I, "Can any one of you
Tell me what is a sentence?"
So one little boy held up his hand,
Says I, "Tell me without fail."
"A sentence," says he, "Mr. Teacher,
Is thirty days in jail." (p. 19)

Many of the poems in this book contain such biting witticisms. Far from an attempt at passing, here the use of *voice* speaks properly, yet improperly. And the function of employing the convention in the "humanizing" project assumes more of an intraracial dimension in its ability to

provide a greater sense of self-reliance and intellectual autonomy for the black race. These early black press books had declared over and over again, “We are black, and we are human; we can read, so we are civilized; we have our own poetry, and so too our own culture, and that culture has been cultivated by learning.”

Sure enough, in Todd’s poetry one also sees traces of the doubling effect in his relatively conservative incorporation of African American Vernacular English in the language. The author, for example, uses the word “study’n” in place of “studying” to emphasize the stylized vernacular of the black oral tradition. Gates links this practice to the “speakerly text” which, in his words, is a text that “privileges the representation of the speaking black voice” (Gates, 1988, p. 112). What we encounter, then, is an early instance of a phenomenon that has had a tangible and enduring presence in black press book production.

Correspondingly, there are also some references to Africa in his poetry. Yet such references are, like his use of AAVE, as calculated as they are scant. His “Minister to Dahomey” poem made use of the affective sentiment toward the historical West African kingdom of Dahomey among the early twentieth century African American intelligentsia as a metaphorical code to playfully satirize African American popular culture. The poem’s symbolic African connotations also served to caricature instances of exploitation at the hands of trusted opportunists, and perhaps even coming from within the culture.

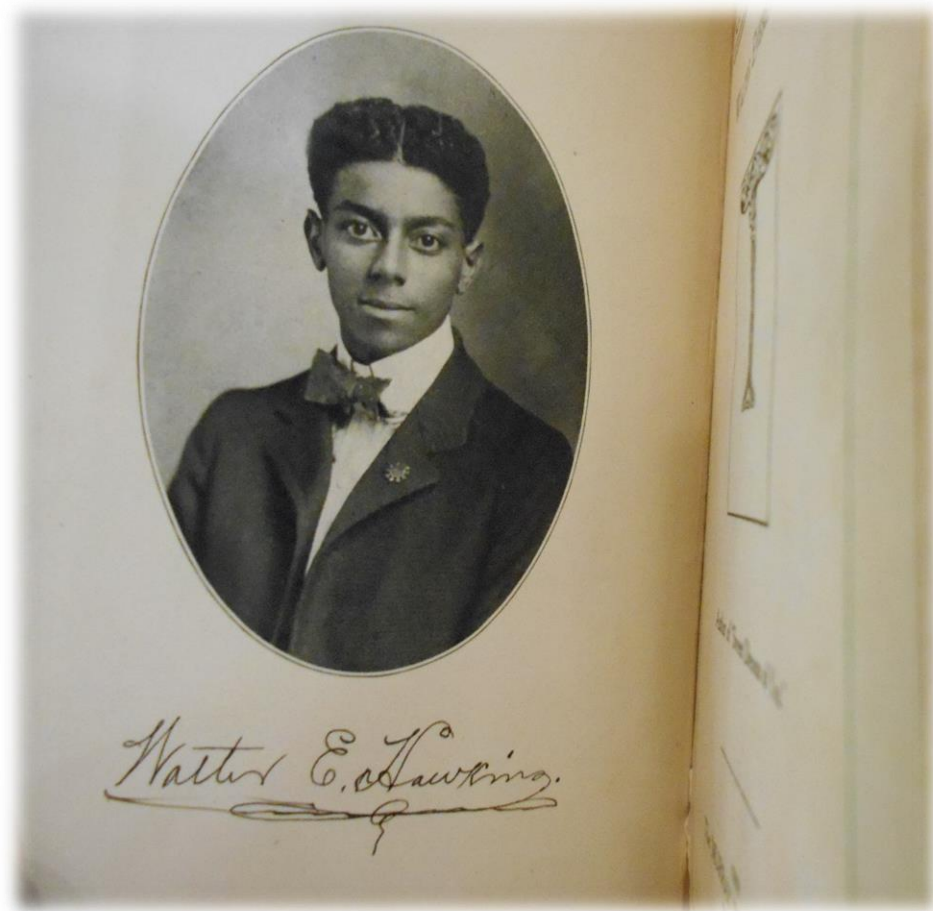


Figure 9. Frontispiece for *Chords and Discords* depicting Walter Everett Hawkins. Courtesy of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture.

Compared with Walter Todd's poetry, the language found in the 1909 Murray Brothers edition of Walter Everett Hawkins's *Chords and Discords* is slightly more formal.⁴⁵ His frequent use of Shakespearean English was, perhaps, somewhat old fashioned for the times. The passionate commitment to Pan-Africanist ideals found in his poetry, however, is unquestionably visible to the present day reader. His "Ode to Ethiopia" was especially transparent in its appreciation for African history and civilization. In the language and in the polemical themes,

⁴⁵ SIV-D4: B3

once again, there is a doubling effect at play, and it is an effect that is distinct to each edition. The *bibliocultural* relationships shift with the context of each individual object's manifestation. The broadening of intended readership, for example, coupled with the racial background of the publishers are likely to have accounted for the various subtle, yet noteworthy differences in the 1920 Murray Brothers edition from that of the Gorham Press. Hawkins's dedication to "a galaxy of Brothers and Sisters, whose kind indulgences have inspired my dreams" was revised in the Gorham edition to acknowledge the "sons and daughters of promise wherever they abide." Furthermore, you will not find poems that so expressly celebrate Africa as "Ode to Ethiopia" in the Gorham version; nor will you find the two poems which engage with the long-reigning intellectual dispute between Booker T. Washington and W. E. B. Du Bois.

A number of these changes were made, no doubt, by Hawkins himself. Others were likely to have been the result of editorial discretion. We can reasonably expect, however, that at least some of the differences in the edition, more specifically, the material components of the book and its overall design, came at the hands of the publisher. In this particular example, that individual would have been the publisher of "poetry and *belle lettres*," Richard G. Badger, who ran The Gorham Press in the city of Boston during that time. Nevertheless there is not anything poetic, nor beautiful in explicitly racist works such as *The Negro: A Menace to Civilization* (1907), which came out of that press about a decade prior to the revised edition of Hawkins's book. It figures, then, that in this so called "vanity press" version the text, the authorial frontispiece portrait—a feature found also in Murray's edition of *Chords and Discords*, and a prominent feature, really, in black press books of this period in general—has been altogether omitted (Figure 9). Likewise, in the printer's device of the Gorham edition of *Chords and Discords* one finds the image of a muscular white man printing on a hand press set on top of the

words “*Arti et Veritatiti*.” The figure conveys a bold, visual declaration to readers that, even if unintentionally, cues the eye to privilege the white European source (viz. Teutonic birthplace) of letterpress technology, and, thusly, connote the Anglo-American as the implied “rightful” inheritor of Western civilization.

Moving into the period of the Harlem Renaissance, one of the samples I reviewed during my research in the Schomburg’s rare book reading room was Langston Hughes’s (d. 1967) debut 1930 novel, *Not Without Laughter*.⁴⁶ At this point in the history of black print, in order to successfully achieve the humanizing goals of the age serious alliances and partnerships had to be made with white stakeholders. The greater amount of exposure that Knopf (d. 1984) was able to provide to Hughes in terms of readership, even if intermediated through figures like Carl Van Vechten (one of Harlem’s most influential white socialites), is just one of a number of noteworthy examples of this partnership (Gutjahr & Benton, 2001). In publishing his first novel under the Knopf’s Borzoi imprint, Hughes’s writing had the potential for crossover into the literary mainstream from the start. And Hughes continues to be recognized not only as one of the greatest black poets in the history of American literature, but also as one of the most renowned poets of the twentieth century. It is impossible for us to disregard the contributions that white socialites like Van Vechten and supporters like the Spingarn family made in providing a platform for black literature to reach a larger audience and to be taken more seriously. Far from “selling out” to white exploitation of black creativity, the fact that Hughes dedicated his first novel to Joel Elias and Amy Spingarn is further illustrative of his nuanced understanding of the complex dynamics of race and culture in America.

⁴⁶ SIV-D3: B2

Harlem Renaissance writers like Hughes were not opposed to assuming some of the legitimizing material characteristics of mainstream publications, but they always had the deeper purpose of giving voice to those denied one because of their skin color. Hence, in the coming of age tale which comprises the novel's core narrative, issues such as black assimilation of white social and aesthetic standards and the lived experience of cultural heritage as it is passed down through alternative ethnically-rooted pedagogies are addressed, dialogically, in Hughes's depictions of black families. Perhaps somewhat controversially for his purposes, Hughes instilled cultural authenticity in his characters through an artful use of black vernacular. Moreover, by doing so he critically dissected the issue of Western hegemony in education. Hughes even went as far as to reference the intraracial contentiousness of using black vernacular in black literature. The instance arises when the economically impoverished and educationally disadvantaged protagonist, Sandy Rogers, comes under the care of his bourgeois Aunt Tempy who has married into the black upper class (Hughes, 1930, p. 259). "The Negro," the narrator explained, "was represented by Chestnut's *House Behind the Cedars*, and the *Complete Poems* of Paul Lawrence Dunbar, whom Tempy tolerated on account of his fame, but condemned because he had written so much in dialect and so often of the lower classes of colored people" (p. 259). In the story, Sandy's aunt seeks to legitimize her status by an exhibition of her ability to appropriate white standards in language, dialect, behavior, and appearances.

The design of the book achieves much of the same in a similar attempt to convey a sense of intellectual legitimacy in the object. Knopf had the book typeset by the Plimpton Press in Norwood, Massachusetts (Hughes, 1930, colophon). In the Knopf edition, the use of Linotype Bodoni—a modern roman font—performs a similar legitimizing function. Ottmar Mergenthaler's linotype machine, after all, clearly was a democratizing technology in terms of

the history of print and communication, as it expanded the productive capabilities of typesetting and letterpress printing (Comparato, 1971). The typographic move away from an old style font was a move away from the rigid *hierarchicalism* of the past, and a slight push toward the idealistically utopian egalitarianism of modernism at its heights. In its subtle affirmation of modernity, it anticipated the expansion of cross-cultural racial discourse that would accompany its eventual existential breakdown. Yet, also present is a resistance to move too far, too fast. The typographic conservatism has each of the chapters adorned with a Lombard ornamental capital and acanthus leaf dingbats that frame the chapter titles and space them from the ensuing body of the text. Gutjahr and Bent (2001) have noted how in other Harlem Renaissance period publications, Knopf used similarly antiquated typographic stylings to convey specific aesthetic and social messages regarding both the quality of the literature being set and the case for a historicized vision of aesthetic beauty in mass market books. Effectively these design choices worked to combat stereotypes concerning substandard writing and low production quality in black literature.

5. I. 2. Representation: The Period of the Revolutionary Black Press

The project of humanization remained a central goal throughout much of the Civil Rights Movement. All the same, the intraracial hierarchies and class divisions that existed in the material and textual structures of the early black press also continued to exert considerable influence on book production throughout much of this period. Hence, once cutting edge Harlem Renaissance figures such as Hughes and his contemporary Arna Bontemps (d. 1973) had become voices of the convention by the early 1960s. And these voices sought to stay relevant as they entrusted the legacy of black literature to a new generation of writers, poets, journalists,

academics, and activists. In the second 1963 printing of the 1960 pamphlet, *The American Negro Writer*—a journal that featured contributions from Hughes and Bontemps—the tensions were brought to the surface in both the discursive and non-discursive arguments.⁴⁷ Given that this particular journal was comprised of published conference papers from the March 1959 First Congress of Negro Writers, and considering that this journal was published by The American Society of African Culture (AMSAC) which was established two years prior, each of the articles engaged, on some level, with issues of ethnic and racial autonomy for black Americans; and they each confronted difficult questions concerning the reestablishment and promotion of African heritage in African American literary production. Civil Rights activist Julian Mayfield's (d. 1984) article, "Into the Mainstream and Oblivion," most notably, offered a strong warning against total conformity with the white mainstream. Yet, with all the calls for an African American aesthetic, and with all of the relatively mild warnings against textual assimilation, this pamphlet is still conservatively formal in both structure and design. The choice of a transitional roman in a setting with fairly standard one inch margins in combination with its accurate pagination and formatting help provide visual cues for its acceptance as a legitimate academic document.

That sense of structural and expressive continuity can be observed, also, in the ninth, 1967 edition of the first volume of Joel Augustus Roger's (d. 1966) *Sex and Race*.⁴⁸ Originally published in 1940 as an unillustrated edition, the typography, the formatting, and the graphic design were all set in strict conformity with the reigning conventions of Western scholarship in the mid-twentieth century. Included are appendices and footnotes, references, running headlines, a list of illustrations, and pagination. To many, Rogers was an independent scholar in no

⁴⁷ SIII-D5: B2

⁴⁸ SIII-D6: B4

uncertain terms. As a self-trained anthropologist and historian, Rogers also wrote fiction and was active in journalism (Appiah & Gates, 1999). And so, as an independent scholar and as an independent publisher he must have understood the importance of these paratextual mechanisms not only for demonstrating, properly, one's implementation of a research methodology, but also as instruments of evidentiary documentation. It was most likely the independent part of that equation that allowed for a comparatively high amount of decision-making power in terms of the production of his editions. The ninth edition, in fact, is the first edition to appear after Rogers's death under the imprint of his wife, Helga Martha Rogers (Andrews). They ran the publication operation jointly, it seems, until his passing. With Rogers's background as a biracial Jamaican immigrant to the United States and his wife's background as a German immigrant, the racial and ethnic categories of their persons were just as complicated as the racial questions that Rogers sought to address in his anthropological studies. The comprehensive academic layout of Rogers's study set out to convey a sense of intellectual neutrality; even so, these typographical subtleties were controversial in the manner in which they sought to lend authoritative weight to the controversial arguments of a "self-taught" academic. The situation, of course, was exacerbated by the uncomfortable circumstance that this internationally recognized and respected "negro" scholar was presenting a sophisticated, well-researched argument on the illusory, historicized, and, most importantly, constructed nature of race and racial categories.

The larger argument of Rogers's *Sex and Race* is one which suggests that Europeans not only have been intermixed with Africans throughout the larger part of their history as a people, but, further than that, that some of the key elements of their civilization, even some of the more important ancient Greek deities, actually have African origins. It is an argument that has been tied to a proto-Afrocentric revision of the Eurocentric model for world history, proportionate in

its antithetical symmetry. Much like Leila Amos Pendleton's *A Narrative of the Negro* (1912), which was published independently a generation prior to Rogers's study, the book's argument is closely aligned with a "great persons of color" model of history wherein vindication and humanization is pursued through highlighting or commemorating the past achievements of the most accomplished of the race.⁴⁹ In Rogers, however, the project of humanization reached beyond the extent of what was permissible according to the parameters of knowledge production in a Eurocentric system of education, specifically because his views challenged the purity of European identity as an expressly racially-based construct. He provided copious details on a range of important European historical figures of African or West Indian descent like, in the domain of the history of Western music, Joseph Bologne (John VI) the Chevalier de St. Georges in Portugal (d. 1799), George Bridgetower (d. 1860) the once celebrated violinist lauded by Beethoven, and the composer Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (d. 1912) whom Edward Elgar had personally endorsed. All of these figures, although being Creole or biracial by birth, have since been looked upon as black. Notions of racial hybridity in the middle of the twentieth century were far more contentious then they are now, as they have since gained more of a solid footing in the Western psyche, in part through interracial marriage (a heterogeneity paradoxically maligned as *mongrelization* or miscegenation) and the rise of multiculturalism. Yet, there seems to be a lasting inclination in the American cultural landscape toward racial singularity.

The inclination for a dichotomized racial singularity (i.e. white/nonwhite, black, other) is the conative force which renders the normally traditional frontispiece in *Sex and Race* which innocently depicts the eighteenth century British monarch, Queen Charlotte Sophia, into a radical statement of black humanity. The frontispiece is a photographic plate of a painting that is not

⁴⁹ SIII-D6: B6

without controversy itself. It is among the only plausible evidence for the assertion that this Queen had black ancestry (through her distant, fifteenth century Portuguese relation, Margarita de Castro e Souza)—evidence which most historians think is scanty at best. Mario de Valdes y Cocom Valdes, however, has contended that the painter Sir Allan Ramsay wished to make a political statement against the institution of slavery in the British Empire during the eighteenth century by depicting, with accuracy, her African phenotypes and physical characteristics (Chin, 2004). A radical idea, indeed, as it would imply that the Windsor line is part black. The theory, of course, was vehemently refuted on the accounts that even if there was a relation there, the nine to fifteen generations that separated her from this line would have reduced any genetic inheritance to negligible levels, and that the dubious claims of the “African” source as authentically African made the claim still more tenuous. The statement of the frontispiece, therefore, is a subtle instance of graphic signifyin(g), not entirely invisible to its white audience for it challenges notions of racial hegemony. The conventionality of the title page border cannot fully obscure the doubling effect of the contentious image of blackness on the English throne. Nonetheless, with all of the comprehensiveness of Rogers’s research and the conformism in the book’s composition and formatting, Rogers’s grand-narrative had remained far from receiving wide acceptance in the American academic community. Self-education and the absence of legitimate academic credentials were the supposed charges against the legitimacy of Rogers’s theories—an unfair attack considering that the educational system had historically placed serious restrictions and barriers to acquiring such credentials if you were a black person in America at that time.

Yet another instance, even more subtle, of visually signifyin(g) with graphic design is found in the book jacket and binding. The hardcover faux leather on pasteboard binding has a

gilt title on the front cover and spine, but the gilt title is in cartoon lettering.⁵⁰ The titles on the red toned, illustrated book jacket are done in a vernacular swash. The visual cue of these letterforms invites a broader readership with its confidence and graphic panache, whilst the formality of the frontispiece and the bordered title page declares its status as a work of scholarship and research. In fact, to maintain the idea that the physicality of the graphic representation in language has no semiotic potency is to ignore the many different functions of diverse modalities in textual communication. In the world of script and holograph notation, for instance, the use of handwriting (i.e. cursive, notarial, etc.) over what one would call print (non-cursive) writing can imply, specifically, intimacy or formality depending on the context of its manifestation (Harris & Hartley, 2000). Different script-based typefaces have developed along these same lines of imparting meaning through association and aesthetic. In this fashion, the claim that typography is objective and neutral is in incongruous with the history. It is a conceited attempt to gloss it over. It is clear that typography, from its beginnings, has been a political force loaded with gendered and racial connotations and assimilative intents. Initially the religious and then the national character of typefaces were among the first to be scrutinized; next, the idea of the gendered nature of letterforms began to receive some attention; but now we must also look at the racial dimensions.

In their discussion on typography in relation to literacy, James Hartley and Joyce L. Harris (2000) began to identify the myriad of typographic artifices that influence the manner in which we internalize text—the different substratum-level meanings of typography and layout. “Different typefaces,” these authors lucidly argued “carry different connotations or emotional meanings” (p. 113). Common examples have included, according to these authors, the use of

⁵⁰ Note that, early in his career, Rogers spent some time working as a columnist and cartoonist for *The Pittsburg Courier*.

italic for wedding invitations, the use of blackletter for formality, or in announcements, or to signify the macabre, and the use of Times New Roman to signal academic rigor (pp. 109-110). The same connotative and affective messaging has, in their view, applied to layout, which includes the size of body of the text in relation to the size of the page, the format, which includes the style and punctuation in the text as well as the structure of the paratext (references, pagination, headings, etc.), and typographic cueing such as the calculated use of color and capitalization. All of these factors, in Hartley and Harris's view, influence how we internalize and engage with print literacy. These are the metanarratives embedded in the materiality of text.

The doubling metanarrative present in Rogers's use of swash and cartoon lettering on a hardcover bound work of nonfiction quietly foreshadows what was one of the most radical shifts in black book production since its beginnings. The argument laid out in *Sex and Race*, which was really about racial mixing, in turn, helped to inspire Afrocentric theories, because when stripped down to its fundamental premises, it initiated a discourse that reoriented the study of the history of Western civilization toward an African source. Ironically with respect to the more nuanced argument that Rogers had attempted to make, Afrocentrism took on an insular development of the cultural, intraracially, as opposed to embracing identities constructed around integration and cultural assimilation interracially along more universally humanistic lines. Yet, the shift toward identity politics was an important one, as it would help to usher in the maturation of the black aesthetic with the Black Arts Movement and the revolutionary (Black Nationalist) press.

The poetry of the Black Arts Movement offers some of the more potent examples of this aesthetic shift. The movement ran through the black press much like the Arts and Crafts Movement informed Morris's work in fine printing (Thompson, 1999). In a conscious effort to

develop the independent black voice in both art and literature, presses like Dudley Randall's Broadside Press, Amiri Baraka's (born LeRoi Jones) Jihad Productions, Joseph Okpaku's The Third Press, and Don L. Lee's Third World Press pushed beyond the barriers of previously accepted conventions in terms of composition and design, as part of the larger message of revolution (Boyd, 2004; Thompson, 1999). Without succumbing to notions of determinism, the role that the proliferation of mimeograph technology played in helping to advance greater aesthetic affordances in book production among low capital producers should not be underestimated. Invented in the 1870s, not shockingly, by Thomas Edison, and manufactured by A. B. Dick Company as the Mimeo Machine from the period of 1884 to 1890, the mimeograph provided individuals and organizations with a less expensive alternative for the production of small print runs and ephemera (Cole, Browning, & Schroeder, 2002). The impressions are made from a stencil that presses the ink onto sheets of paper which are ran through a rotating ink drum encased by a stenciled woven paper which contains the master, and serves the purpose of the form. Typesetting as the skilled labor that it demands in monotype and linotype is not required with the mimeograph, and operating knowledge of the machine can be acquired with comparatively lesser time and effort. As a less expensive and more user friendly method of printing, the technology was widely adopted in developing countries to produce inexpensive literature; and in this country it was used by the mid-twentieth century to print subgenre fanzines, business documents, and other frequently ephemeral bibliographic productions in what was called the "Mimeo Revolution." In rough terms, more financial autonomy translated into greater decision making power in composition and design.

I took a detailed look, for example, at broadcast director and activist Ebon Dooley's (born Leo Thomas Hale, d. 2006) *Revolution: a Poem* published out of the Third World Press in 1968

during my time spent doing onsite research at the Clayton Library.⁵¹ As Dooley's sole collection of published poetry, the work reflects the intellectual and artistic environment of the black revolutionary bookshop of the late 1960s. In fact, Dooley managed the Timbuktu Bookshop in Atlanta after writing the poems for *Revolution* (Gore, Theohari, & Woodard, 2009). He published these poems after a year spent in Chicago studying writing in workshops with figures like Gwendolyn Brooks—somewhat of an inspiration to Dooley (Giovanni, 1969). The book, with its hard paper, illustrated staple binding, radical typography, and thematic Afrocentrism, is typical of Black Arts period publications. These publications are generally commercially affordable, visually bold, and politically rousing in nature. It is notable, for instance, on the first glance that the title on the book's front cover is in a graffiti script. The introduction of graffiti script on the title is important in terms of its ability, as a graphic statement, to express an urbanism and postmodernity—a visual breakdown in the modernity suggested in its use of sans serif in the text's body (Gundaker, 1998). The communicative mode of graffiti, being based on the traditional European letterforms and scripts, represents a hybrid text. Yet, the hybridity, at least in this example, is not a referent to the racial heterogeneity of the representation. Instead, the referent applies the textuality embedded in the object. In her book *Signs of Diaspora*, Gundaker (1998) appropriately identified a distinction between the concept of hybridity and creolization. She argued that “hybridization is often said to ‘blend’ formerly divergent sources into a new entity,” whereas, “creolization draws on sources to make new forms but does not necessarily obliterate them in the process” (p. 11). The hybridity emerges from graffiti's capacity to reconfigure and refashion the meanings of conventional letterforms and add layers of interpretation that are accessible, almost singularly, to those “literate” in its cryptic codes and

⁵¹ SIII-D5: B3

symbolisms (Gundaker, 1998). Without mutual exclusivity, there is a creolization that acts upon the letterform in the print. Employed in the print medium, particularly in the instance of its appearance on the cover page of *Revolution* as well as others from the period like Sterling Plumpp's (1970) *Half Black/Half Blacker*, the hybridity of the text moves toward the singularity of a black aesthetic in a racialized bibliographic "third space."⁵² A graffiti title primes the reader for the reception of a radical typography.

Dooley's radical poetry attempts to reorient black culture, history, politics, and aesthetics to a black (i.e. African) cultural identity. Some of these poems, such as "Death of the Enemy" and "Viet Nam Cotillion, or Debutante Ball on the Pentagon, or The Statue of Liberty Has Her Back to Harlem," contain incendiary and unconventional language. Also unconventional are the different typographic and grammatical choices which comprise the text. One of the more prominent, commonly used typographic cues is the emotive use of capitalization (p. 18). There is a calculated separation of compound words such as "whiteness" as "white" and "ness" and a conscious generation of fresh compounds such as "blackchild" (pp. 9, 31). And the choice of an austere sans for the type coupled with a minimalist layout is almost emblematic of Black Arts period poetry as a genre. The typographic cueing subverts the egalitarianism façade in the typeface's sense of modernity, subtly deconstructing it (Ryan & Minneapolis Institute of Arts, 2001). Consider, for a moment, the publisher's note:

[Sic] The third world is a liberating concept for people of color, non-europeans—for Black people. That world has an Ethos—a black aesthetic if u will--and it is the intent of Third World Press to capture that ethos, that black energy. We attempt to give an initial exposure to black writers. We publish black (poetry, historical notes, essays, short stories,

⁵² SII-D2: B1

and hopefully novellas) for Africans here (most often referred to as “negroes”) and Africans abroad. And because we publish black—profit is not our thing/not our thing.
(para. 1)

From onset, then, a book like *Revolution*, being a Third World Press publication, was able to experiment and explore a textual radicalism which would have not been tolerated in the more mainstream presses. The self-sacrificing ethos, as it turned out, all but completely ruled out the ability of these small publishers and presses to become “profit making” enterprises. Yet, in some cases this ethos led these young poets and publishers to consider external funding sources as an option.

If some degree of operational autonomy is required for the maturation of a black aesthetic in print, then the finances of the small Black Arts publishers warrant further investigation. What does it mean, for instance, that in 1973 activist poets Tom Dent (d. 1998) and Kalamu ya Salaam’ (born Vallery Ferdinand III) received a grant for a \$1,000 from the Coordinating Council of Literary Magazines for their *Nkombo* literary magazine (Coordinating Council of Literary Magazines, 1973)? Necessity was a compelling enough factor to be sure. The magazine—which was a poetry-centric publication of the Free Southern Theater’s BLKARTSOUTH Workshop—managed to release just nine issues between 1968 and 1974 when it had been in operation. Yet the historical evidence for the production of this magazine indicates that black publishing in the 1960s and 70s maintained a fortitudinous devotion to its autonomy, both locally and nationally, regardless of the problems of operating with comparatively little monetary resources or financial capital. Costs included the initial investment for operational and administrative equipment and outsourced printing services, paper, bindery services, distribution

materials, intellectual and creative content, and, of course, time and labor. Dent's records showed that, in 1970, his equipment investment for operations of around \$740.00 included a Gestetner Stencil Duplicator machine and an Econoscope Colorchange Kit with line-faced paper, cover stuck paper, and mimeo-wove paper (Gestetner Company). The invoice indicated that Dent paid an additional \$52.47 for the cost of the legal, letter, newspaper, green, and white paper. And there are receipts, moreover, that show that some of the later issues had outsourced printing and binding services done by New Orleans-based companies such as Bag's Instant Printing, located, at that time, in a room on Tchoupitoulas Street and Edwards Printing at 3412 Washington Avenue (Nkombo Publications, 1971). So in 1972, for example, Dent was able to have 1,000 books printed for \$859.35 (Edwards Printing, Inc., 1973). With administrative and operational costs alone, then, expenses already approached the \$1,000 mark for the project. And then he also had to account for content and distribution. In terms of content, Dent's (1972) financial records showed that he made payments of in between \$15.00 to \$20.00 per author; and there was a balance of \$950.00 for the combined author fees, staff, tax, and shipping costs. The total annual cost for printing the magazine ran anywhere from \$2,000 to \$3,000—a low cost for a periodical publication, but still expensive if, to begin with, one already has with limited financial resources.

At its height from around 1970 to 1973, the magazine was distributed in black press and other specialty bookstores, libraries, and academic institutions across the country. The list of book stores included the Afrocentric bookstore Jolly Brown Giant and the Chantham Bookseller in New Jersey—a literary and scholarly focused bookstore that, as of 2015, is surprisingly still in operation (Nkombo Publications, 1970). Academic institutions that carried the magazine ranged from Miami-Dade College to more prestigious schools like Tulane University in New Orleans, the University of California, Berkeley, and Harvard. The magazine was even picked up by the

University of Zambia in Africa. And this small, independently published magazine reached an even wider audience by distributing issues in the major public libraries of cities like Seattle, Chicago, and New York (Nkombo Publications, 1970). With the price of \$2.00 per copy at around 1,000 copies for a larger run, however, one can easily understand how simply staying afloat presented a challenge. Looking at the figures it becomes clear that, much like the ethos expressed in the mission statement of the Third World Press, making a profit was not the primary objective here.

The mission of advancing the black aesthetic in Black Arts poetry books was an important one. In *Nkombo*, the text was situated within the framework of the humanities, but it still maintained a creative distance from a direct conformity with academic convention. Much of its typography and composition, like in previous examples, reflected this complicated tension. The final June 1974 issue, in particular, exhibits a number of noteworthy features in this regard (Dent & Salaam, Tom Dent papers, 1861-1998, The Amistad Research Center (Box 43, Folder 1), 1974).⁵³ It has headlines and section headers; but its sections are given unconventional, locally-tinged names such as “Food for Thought” and “From the Gumbo”—the original name of the magazine before it was changed to embrace its African etymology more intimately. In keeping with the precedent set by the mainstream literary magazines, *Nkombo* has a layout that places photographic illustrations adjacent to its text (Figure 10). Yet, unlike much of the mainstream publications of the period, *Nkombo*’s illustrations celebrated black beauty and praised black culture. What’s more, the magazine’s editors had an acute awareness of their aesthetic statement and its relation to the hegemonic structures from which they sought to break away. The introduction to the June 1974 issue stated explicitly, “Maybe the magazine is a

⁵³ SII-D12: B10

dinosaur. Maybe but really no matter, because a magazine is form whereas the real part is the content, the insides, and meaning/style that we are struggling to keep alive” (p. 5). The editors were striking out a sense of difference in contesting the pillars of classical philosophy and rhetoric in noting that, “[sic] After all aristotle A is not always A, A is A only A don’t change. And since we live in a world of constant change, A does not equal A, but at best approximates A” (pp. 4-5). Using lowercase for Aristotle’s name next to the pyramidal capital “A” is a not so subtle political statement.

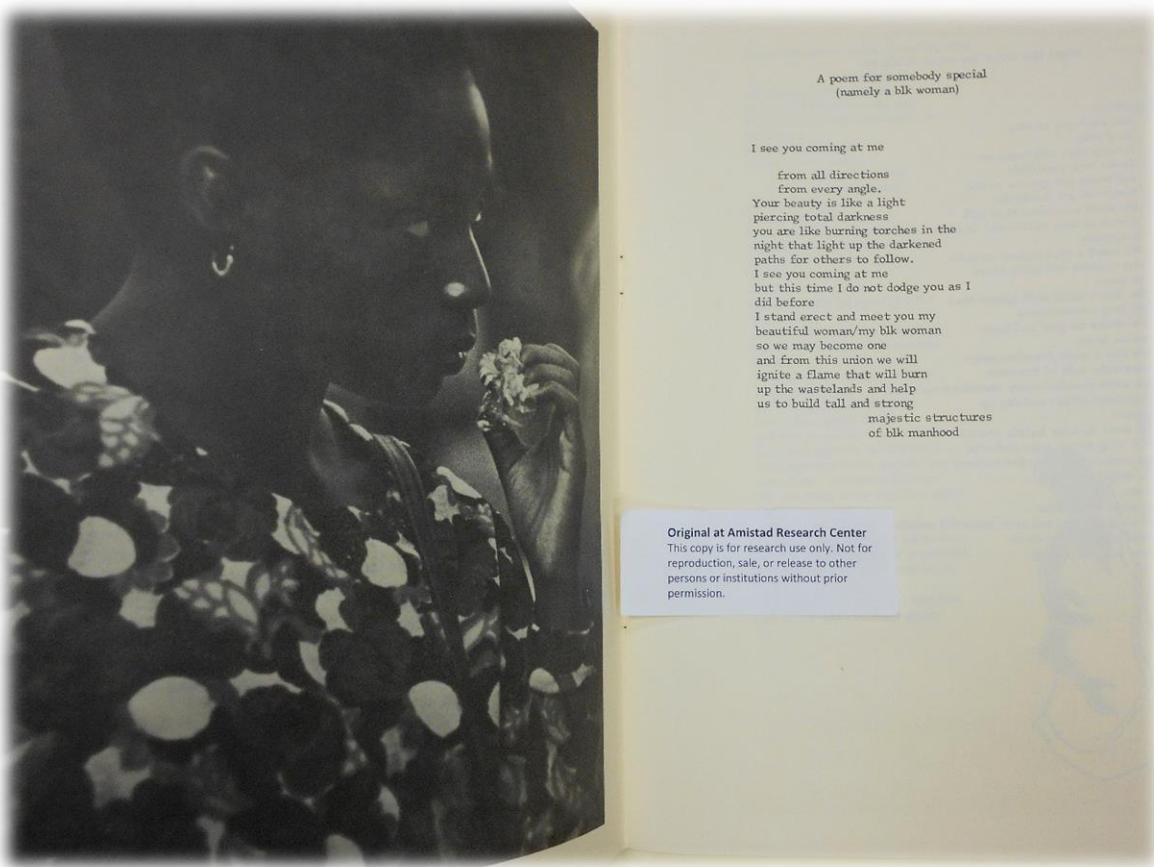


Figure 10. The final issue of *Nkombo* magazine. By permission of the Amistad Research Center.

All throughout the various poems there is an aesthetic of difference, paralleled in its inversion of our expectations of form and space. One finds, for example, the frequent use of a

lower case "i" in place of its capital. There are numerous instances of shorthand such as "blk" in place of "black," "thot" instead of "thought," and informal contractions and compound words like "Dontcha" (pp. 2-5). Phrases like "*****/amess/age/an age/of mes/misses/sage/be wise" visibly push the limits of legibility as much as they stress the boundaries of a layered interpretation of the text (Gex, 1974, p. 6). The synesthetic qualities of their bibliographic form suggest that the editors and the authors alike subscribed to the philosophy articulated by Quo Vadis Gex that "poems must be word motions," and that each is a "song to be sung for poets" (p. 6). With contributors like New Orleans-based poet Octave Lilly Jr. and poet and novelist Alice Walker, Gex was definitely in good company.

As lead editor, however, Dent was largely responsible for maintaining the integrity of authorial forms of expressive punctuation. For in-house operations, proofs, and early issues, Dent had a variety of fonts to work with including: roman, roman italic, shadow, condensed, and outline fonts—an exposure that was sure to provide him with firsthand experience in typographic design. Slab serif was the family of choice for the poetry for the last issue, and Clarendon Bold, a slab serif that has the distinct association of being at once commercial, industrial, and suggestive of the look of the "frontier," was selected for the magazine's title on the cover page. The prose is set in sans to differentiate genre and meaning. In that respect, at least, it is somewhat of an anomaly. In addition to text and type, Dent chose the illustrations, and he determined their placement and arrangement in the space. Layout graphic, arrangement and the order of contents were given careful consideration by the editor(s), and Dent drafted his layouts with the same dynamism embodied in the Black Arts style. The organic lines of the cover art, freeform in contour and Afrocentric in representation, fade into the of dark tan hue of the hard paper, staple binding in such a way that evokes the ethereal nature of the deities or ghosts that the illustration

is likely meant to depict. What especially stands out is the artist's name, Skunder, written in both street style roman letters and what appears to be the Ethiopian Ge'ez script. Documented, too, by Dent were scenes of the local environment. As one might imagine, evident, even at this stage of black urbanization, was an embryonic form of today's street graffiti (Dent, 1971).

It is evident, then, that the black aesthetic, in print, was able to mature and flourish during the period of the Black Arts Movement, in part, because of the dedication of the creators involved to not privilege profit-making or widespread acclaim over innovation and the celebration of cultural heritage. It was the almost sole dedication to the purpose of celebrating black culture by developing that aesthetic which propelled these small press to pursue such artistically ambitious projects (Ward, 1991). Yet, not so far from Hughes and their other predecessors, their capacity to come to terms with the need to achieve professional and financial stability in a society premised upon cultural assimilation, it appears, must have urged a more pragmatic approach in practice if not in rhetoric and aesthetic. Ebon Dooley, after all, had his start working in Nashville's Fisk University, as the managing editor of the Fisk literary magazine and newspaper; and he was a graduate of Columbia Law School before the first issue of *NKombo* was ever released (Alkalimat, 2006). Octave Lily Jr. had been an insurance executive in addition to his work as a writer and poet. And, perhaps most notably, a handful of poets and writers to emerge out of the Black Arts period, like Alice Walker, Amiri Baraka, and Nikki Giovanni, would later manage to achieve broad crossover appeal.

5. I. 3. Representation: Black Press Books for the Hip Hop Generation

Signs of the *bibliocultural* relationship become visible with the most cursory analysis of the material aspects of black press publications, especially when viewed alongside some of the

more relevant textual evidence that they often contain. With the tacitly accepted absence of urban fiction in research collections, our bridge from street lit' to the African American literature of the hip hop generation comes in the form of Shakur's (1999) posthumously released *Rose that Grew from Concrete*. In the world of hip hop, Tupac Shakur (d. 1996) has been viewed as a transformational figure, and he has reached an iconic status. It is true that one will not find urban fiction on display in the loftier research spaces of the Schomburg Center like its reference reading room, but I was able to obtain a non-circulating copy of this book for onsite review. And it is fitting, here, that Shakur's posthumously release is a book of poetry. He was among the first rappers to have full-credit courses at major universities (e.g. Berkley and Harvard) devoted to his work (Monjauze, Cox, & Robinson, 2008). Songs like "Changes" and "I Ain't Mad At Cha" have been appreciated for their deep penetration and insight into the many problems that still plague underserved communities of color (Shakur, 1996). His writings have even been curated in a yearlong 2015 exhibition at the Grammy Museum in Los Angeles, California (The Grammy Museum, 2015). These developments are helping to secure this small book of poetry's place in the larger canon of black literature, and they working to move Shakur's work toward a broader acceptance in the American cultural mainstream. And, similar to the work of Langston Hughes, Claude McKay, and other Harlem Renaissance writers, even though his book was published by mainstream publisher Simon & Schuster, it can be looked upon as a black press work by authorial association—constituting a retraction of an earlier radicalism that threatened a complete break from the establishment press.

Shakur's poetry—which covered a range of topics including politics, love, relationships, and spirituality—was largely written in the voice of contemporary black America, particularly in the voice of black male youth. His manuscript was composed using the aesthetic and poetic

devices of the Black Arts Movement. Shakur's mother, Afeni Shakur, had been involved in the political arm of the Black Power Movement, having been a former Black Panther herself, and she exposed him to the Afrocentric perspective and its literature at an early age. As a child, Shakur grew up in the presence of Black Arts poets like Sonia Sanchez—a personal friend of his mother (Monjaube, Cox, & Robinson, 2008). Nikki Giovanni, another one of the leading poets to have emerged from the movement, wrote the introduction for the posthumously printed edition. Like his Black Arts predecessors we find that Shakur often used shorthand and numerical substitution (e.g. “2” in place of “two”) to convey his thoughts, and he liberally peppered his writings with glyphic and quasi-pictographic textual expression. Note the language and phrasing in the following selection from his “Under the Skies Above” poem:

My child is out there somewhere
under the skies above
waiting anxiously 4 u and me
2 bless it with our love
A part of me a part of u
and a part of this love we share... (p. 9)

Important typographical choices were made in the effort to preserve the integrity of most of the devices found in the rhyme book. The shorthand and numerical text were correctly transcribed, but the glyphic expression (e.g. “♥” in the place of “heart”) was translated into alphabetical text. This form of expression has been tied to similar iterations of black textuality such as gang signs, street memorials, grave messages, quilting, and even the *veve* art of the Afro-Haitian Vodou religion (Gundaker, 1998). The use of a transitional roman typeface, particularly one which

approximates a slab serif, in the printed transcription helped to provide Shakur's street script handwriting with a greater sense of literary *gravitas*. Yet, the publishers also opted to include Shakur's manuscript in facsimile on the verso page of each new poem; and they used his street style hand for the book's title page. To those with an understanding of the literacy of the "streets" the effect of this visual cue is one that immediately conveys the author's "street credibility." Here, a rhyme book, a bibliographic object which was at once relatively common and previously ignored, is now memorialized as a cultural artifact in print. The recent abandonment of the rhyme book in favor of cognitive memorization and digital recording apps has only increased its significance as a document, and this artefactual augmentation applies to both the published facsimile and the original manuscript (XXL Staff, 2011). At this point, then, we can begin to see how the typographic choices of the editors, publishers, and designers can present us with visual evidences of cultural transmission and authorial legitimacy in black literary history. And legitimacy, in this instance, takes on a different meaning in that, on the one hand, the physicality of the printed typeface affords intellectual legitimacy to the text and, on the other, there is a self-referential quality to the urban visual aesthetic embodied in the style of script. The same process of hybridization through appropriation, in fact, is present in the use of blackletter in gang writing—a practice which essentially "vulgarizes" the inherited decorousness and formality of textura-based letterforms by redirecting their association toward an aesthetic of criminality.

The emergence of revolutionary rap, conscious rap, and *gansta* rap, having had such substantial ties to the Black Power period of black history, was really a culmination of the dichotomous identity politics in black poetry that experienced its fruition during the late 1960s. Shakur's poetry, much like poet and author Sister Soujah (b. Lisa Williamson), was coming out

of a revolutionary platform which paid homage to the “streets” by giving it a literary voice. The black literature of the (mostly college educated) hip hop generation authors, however, has been defined by a set of characteristics that have sought to elevate it to a higher status than its “low culture” derivative in urban fiction. In *Writing the Future of Black America* (2009)—which, interestingly enough, has its title set in a *wildstyle* graffiti font—Daniel Grassian illustrated this division by the authors he chose to highlight in his book on the literature of the hip hop generation.⁵⁴ The literature covered in his book, by his definition, is “more academic and intellectually dense than the novels of Souljah and Turner” (p. 16). The writers that Grassian selected for analysis, Trey Ellis, Jake Lamar, and Suzan-Lori Parks, and others, are defined by their inclusion of complex themes in their works, complication of racial identities, psychological analysis of characters, and an approach to the problem of white racism which is subtle, jocular, apathetic, or even fatalistic.

In 1989, Ellis would group these characteristics under the larger rubric of the “New Black Aesthetic.” In his view, this new aesthetic had shifted away from the strictly dichotomous identity politics of Black Nationalism which casted blacks as oppressed victims in perpetuity (Grassian, 2009, p. 23). He admitted that such issues are still addressed in the new aesthetic, but in the creative works of his generation issues are often discussed within a context complicated by notions of *transracialism* and intraracial diversity and introspection. Nonetheless, his novel *Platitudes* (1988), like those of other writers in his generation, sustained a meta-theoretical awareness of the unnoticed cognitive and affective stimuli contained within the material and paratextual components of the book.⁵⁵ This awareness of the “non-discursive” components of

⁵⁴ Although contemporary black literature is the subject of Grassian’s research, he is not writing about the subject from the perspective of a black writer.

⁵⁵ SIV-D7: B6

discursive texts certainly had a role in the unveiling and subsequent progression of the novel's plot in which a striving, peculiarly post-racialist author, Dwayne Wellington, contends creatively with a radical black feminist writer named Isshee Ayam.⁵⁶ The plot is essentially an allegory of the temporally situated, ideological divisions that have existed among successive generations of black writers and artists (i.e. Black Nationalism versus post-racialism); but consider, here, in this segment from the fictional story in the novel which serves as the compositional battlefield for its metanarrative, the attention Ellis devoted to highlighting a *bibliocultural* response:

On the bookshelf in the back stands a small library of worn Afro-American paperbacks. Earle sights down his finger at one title, another, another, until his finger arrives at a thick brown book. He hooks his finger over the top of the book and, by pulling downward, rotates it out and free from the shelves' strong compression. A woman of color, her nostrils flare, a shredded straw hat on her head, in her mouth a long dried-grass stalk, her eyes burn from the cover of the book. Over her head the words *Hog Jowl Junction* and *By Isshee Ayam* and *Best-selling Author of Heben and Chillun o' de Lawd*. Under the artwork: *The Uhuru Contemporary Afro-American Fiction Series* and *Soon to Be a Major Motion Picture!* (pp. 131-132)

The passage details a striking example of how image, perception, and racial identity are intermixed even upon our first impressions of bibliographic materiality. And Ellis also made a subtle critique here on the Afrocentrism of the 1960s and '70s, suggesting that the philosophy had been based upon an imagined "African" community as opposed to a concrete and tangible one and that past nationalistically-driven divisions have been too rigid to characterize the black

⁵⁶ Note the ironic reference to Afrocentrism (e.g. Isshee Ayam can be deciphered as "is she a yam?") and the black middle class (e.g. Dwayne Wellington) in the character names.

experience. The critique was suggestive of the argument on the networked nature of the transatlantic consciousness made by Paul Gilroy a few years later in *The Black Atlantic* (1993). Ellis's novel, moreover, tested the literary standards of form, design, and language. His handling of onomatopoeia, African American Vernacular English, and the manipulation of paratextual apparatuses as narrative devices, at once, submitted to the legitimizing power of these apparatuses, in keeping with the conventions of the early black press, and parodied them much like what previously had been done in the revolutionary period.

Another noticeable example of an acute awareness of the *bibliocultural* in design in can be found in the published Theater Communications Group version of Parks's play *Venus*.⁵⁷ In the first 1997 edition of this play, Parks, with the aid of designers Scher and Govan, exerted a visible creative authority over the layout. Parks herself has expressed wonder as to why her unconventional typography and layout has not received more intellectual scrutiny (Lyman, 2014, p. 90). Like concrete poetry, samizdat literature, Dadaism, Futurist poetry and other artistic and literary genres that sought to explore the elusiveness of the "non-verbal" in printed text, Parks unveiled a typography that was, at once, kinesthetic in function and architectural in appearance (Lyman, 2014, p. 91). In stark contrast to a naturally anticipated tension, note the counterintuitive fusion between motion and immobility in the selection from the author's notes on stage direction:

A Spell – An elongated and heightened (*Rest.*). Denoted by repetition of figures' names with no dialogue. Has sort of an architectural look:

The Venus
The Baron Docteur

⁵⁷ SIV-D10: B9. Copyrighted in 1990.

The Venus

The Baron Docteur (Parks, 1997, pp. 33-34)

In the printed play, textual and typographic cues work together to direct the physicality of reading, recitation, and performance. There is movement, then, through the “architecture” of a reading space that is interpreted through the immutability of its formatting and layout.

On the front cover illustration and in the typographic layout on the title page, designer Scher added a thought-provoking statement in graphic design by having an elongated capital “U” in “Venus” superimposed upon the enlarged posterior gluteal region of the play’s protagonist, Sarah “Saartjie” Baartman (d. 1815). The title’s typography was rendered corporeal with this simple alteration of size and position. The title, thusly, personified the principal themes of the play in its letterforms. Diction, layout, and typography were carefully positioned to impart subtle codes and messages regarding race, sex, classification, commodification, and colonialism (Lyman, 2014). In the passage below, for example, the reader is faced with the issue of bodily exploitation:

THE BROTHER

Tomorrow I’ll buy you the town.

For now lift up yr skirt.

There. Thats good.

(She lifts her skirt showing her ass. He gropes her.)

THE GIRL.

I dont —

THE BROTHER.

Relax.

Presenting “The African Dancing Princess!”

THE GIRL.

Hahahaha!

I dont think I like it here.

THE BROTHER.

Relax.

Relax.

Its going to be fantastic.

(They kiss and touch each other. He is more amorous than she.)

THE NEGRO RESURRECTIONIST.

Footnote #1

(Rest.)

Historical Extract. Category: Theatrical.

(Rest.)

The year was 1810. At one end of town, in some circumstances, a young woman, native of the dark continent, bares her bottoms. At the same time but in a very different place, on the other end of town in fact, we witness a very different performance. (Parks, 1997, pp. 33-34)

With this brief excerpt alone, one can see that the printed version of the document stands on its own in terms of its informational and cultural significance. The bibliographic object has not assumed a servile or supplementary role to the actual performance of the text. In the passage above, for instance, in addition to the kinesthetic messaging denoted by the “*(Rest.)*” markers and the layered semiotic facets of the shorthand and missing punctuation, the specific manner in which Parks employed a citation mechanism to move the narrative accentuated the historical basis of the plot.

The plot of the play swirls around the life of the character of “The Venus,” a character intended to portray, unequivocally, the historical figure of Baartman. A Khoikhoi woman by birth, Baartman was “discovered” by Westerners, sold into bondage, and toured around Europe in the nineteenth century exhibition circuit as a primitive, anatomical curiosity. During her exhibition, her very humanity was a subject of debate. And there is a sad “footnote” to her biography in the way that her remains were affronted in the name of “science” upon her passing. Likewise, in the taxonomically-structured design of the “footnote” section in the passage above,

the consumptive aspects of the categorization schema refers literally to the fetishization, exploitation, and eventual consumption of Baartman and her body by Western entrepreneurs and scientists—most notably by Cuvier who performed an autopsy on Baartman after her death and published a book out of his “research.” Cuvier’s research notes, as it turned out, were perplexingly infused by Parks into the play’s text (Canning & Postlewait, 2010). And the “scientific” conclusion reached by the real life Cuvier after he had examined and preserved Baartman’s corpse was that he had solid evidence to show the primitive nature of Baartman’s physiology and, thus, prove the contemporaneously reigning assertions concerning the so called “animalistic traits” of the Khoikhoi and Khoisan peoples (Crais & Scully, 2009).

Although Grassian (2009) considered Parks’s plays as technically outside the domain of hip hop theater, the distance achieved by Parks in her critical acclaim may not be so great (p. 167). As a hip hop generation playwright, Parks is still dealing with themes relevant to black popular culture. The theatrical rendition of Baartman’s story brings to mind the question of the exploitation of women in the hip hop industry and the objectification of black female bodies on the covers of urban fiction novels and hip hop magazines. Glancing at hip hop magazines on the carts of Harlem street vendors, the fetishization of the black female buttocks is undeniable. “Butt augmentation” procedures are considered fashionable in twenty-first century celebrity culture. Are these indications of an objectification of black women, the fetishization of our perceptions of black feminine corporeality, or is it, contrary to the other two scenarios, really a celebration of the black female form?

Richardson (2006) has argued that depictions of women in hip hop and urban fiction that are sexist, misogynistic, and exploitative on the surface, images such as the “bad bitch”

archetype embodied by a rapper like Nikki Minaj, have a multifaceted relationship with the consciousness of their consumers in terms of how they form and shape their literacy practices (pp. 60-66). She noted, for example, how the central narrative for Sista Souljah's *The Coldest Winter Ever* (1999) articulated tensions between status, literacy, and knowledge construction within a framework that portrayed "the Black female body as the site of competing discourses" (Richardson, 2006, p. 45). And in her analysis of how young routinely black women consume sexist imagery in the hip hop industry, the figure of the "tip drill"—a term used by mostly young black women to describe a "well-built healthy woman with a fleshy backside"—was paralleled with positive symbolism of an approximate image in traditional sub-Saharan African cultures. Richardson, however, also paired this consumption with the image's fetishization, as she linked the imagery to a commodification of the black female body that occurs through a self-internalization process which inextricably accompanies the visual consumption (pp. 49-55).

Viewed from a traditional standpoint, in the art of letters and printing in the Western world alternative typographic aesthetics and graphic design—like the engendered, racialized title page layout found in *Venus* or the many recently developed fonts based on graffiti scripts—are not looked upon as progress; instead, more often than not they are seen as an aberration or a distortion of conventional form. The West, as we have seen so far in this research, has had a similar understanding of both African American Vernacular English and the black female body. Both aspects in the dynamic interplay of culture and biology deal with the tensions that are seemingly intrinsic to expression and embodiment. The very idea that graffiti lettering could become the basis for a typeface, then, is a radical one, just as the concept that a "well-built" black women with a "fleshy backside" could become an ideal of attractiveness is a challenge to the dominance of a Western standard for feminine beauty which appreciates virtually

diametrically opposite physical characteristics (e.g. thin, fair, proportional physique, etc.). In many ways these developments in typographic design come about through a combination of shifts in terms of the politics of race relations and the expanding affordances of emerging printing and digital technologies.

5. I. 4. Representation: The Hegemonic Eurocentrism of the “Ideal Book”

The comparatively radical design elements that I discovered in looking at the more recent examples of black literature became especially perceptible to me following my meticulous analysis of a range of quintessentially Western bibliographic samples from the Clark Library. Yet, in addition to the material and formal departures from tradition observed in bibliographic samples from the black press, there is a departure, too, in the appropriation and reproduction of Western form and feature. Soberly sustaining such an awareness involves contending with and ultimately grasping the Eurocentrism of letters as a manifestation of intellectual hegemony. Evidently, informational legitimacy, literacy, and the state of being educated are predicated not only around the paratextual apparatuses of the book, but also around the letterforms themselves. Literacy is believed to be dependent upon legibility, but the legibility itself can be both culturally and temporally situated. To put it differently, the ways that we construct and produce knowledge act reciprocally upon the material dimensions of the corresponding recorded artifacts. The move from the early primacy of blackletter to the ascendancy of roman types in print is demonstrative of this symbiotic phenomenon. Blackletter types would have taken on far richer degrees of legibility for a medieval clergyman or scholar than they would have for a Renaissance humanist optically trained to interpret the visual cues of humanistic roman fonts and early modern graphic design. This relationship between the practice of literacy and the interaction with a physically

embodied, spatialized text gives the materiality the important role, not simply of vessel, container, or the instrument of literacy, but as an aspect of textuality that is inseparably wedded with literacy's social construction as a performative practice. Therein lies the *bibliocultural* link to one's identity.

Legibility equates to function; and function, therefore, persists as one of the primary justifications for the perpetuation of the hegemonic elements of in Western writing and print. More conspicuously, this hegemony exists in the paratextual apparatuses which are intended to supplement rapid reference. Yet in books and in literacy alike, one cannot even reach that point without the existence of alphabetic letterforms. Type designer Frederic W. Goudy (d. 1947) was a prominent proponent of the function of legibility in letters. Goudy argued that simplicity and legibility should supersede artistic flourish and personal flare in design. Appropriately, the very first book that I analyzed at the Clark Library was Goudy's (1942) *Alphabets and Elements of Lettering*.⁵⁸ This book in particular maintains close connections with the Clark Library in that the book is a University of California Press publication. At the request of the first chief executive of UCLA, Edward Dickson, Goudy even designed a type exclusively for the University of California's use (Bidwell, 1991, p. 8). In fact, the University of California Old Style typeface was the primary font used in his *Alphabets and Elements of Lettering*. Cowan (d. 1942), Clark's principal librarian and bibliographer, as an esteemed connoisseur of books was well acquainted with Goudy's works—although, I should note that this particular title must have been acquired by the university subsequent to Cowan's tenure as Clark's librarian.⁵⁹ The larger idea here,

⁵⁸ SI-D1: B1

⁵⁹ Robert E. Cowan (d. 1942) was a bookseller turned librarian. Working for Clark for more than twenty years as his librarian, he had a highly influential role in the early development of the original Clark Library collection. He was an expert in early Californiana and Western books, and he contributed a notable accomplishment in these areas with

however, deals with Goudy's historic impact on book design as an American typographer and his influence on bibliophilic "taste." By the late 1930s, his type could be found in books like *The Bible, Designed to be Read as Living Literature* out of Simon and Schuster and a Heritage Club edition of Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment* (Harter & Glick, 1939, pp. 2-3). His typefaces were favored by the Grabhorns, the Book Club of California; and they could be found in a range of books from the Viking Press to the Nonesuch Press (Harter & Glick, 1939, pp. 2-8). Goudy's legacy persists even in the present day in the digital versions of his typefaces.

In *The Alphabet and Elements of Lettering* (1942), Goudy offered a condensed chronology of the rationale behind letterform design from the inception of writing up to the period of his lifetime. Throughout the book he traced the roots of good design to a Roman aesthetic of stoic essentialism. He asserted that the "great merit of Roman capitals is simplicity; every useless and meaningless line has been eliminated" (p. 46). And because he firmly believed that "pleasing legibility is the great desideratum," he cited the work of the incunable period printer Nicholas Jenson (d. 1480) as the purest example of the ideal for good design in a book (p. 91). Goudy did recognize the need to balance functionality with beauty as, like William Morris before him, he reminded us how difficult it has been for the modern mind to appreciate the beauty of medieval scripts when, hitherto, it has been accustomed to monotonous and bland typefaces driven by the commercialization of design in book production. Yet, his recognition of the "charm" of early scripts shows itself only through a modest integration of typographical flourish in his own printing.

The *Alphabet and Elements of Lettering* viewed solely as a material, bibliographic object is an impressive balance between aestheticism and legibility. It adheres to rules concerning limitations on the amount of typefaces used for the text, but the old style roman type has strong serifs with ligatures for an added ornament of antiquity and typographic grace. Even though it is not necessarily a true example of fine printing it has approached this art in that it displays many of the trappings of a fine press work. The book enjoys a blackletter title in gilt, high quality rag paper, and comparatively wide margins.⁶⁰ Taking note of the book's author, its close ties with its institutional residency, and its moderately ornate design, this particular sample has not only suggested a knowledge of letters, it has also hinted at a privileged assumption of one's possession of both the means and the skills for shaping and producing them.

Goudy's legacy of fine press printing and type design is a child of the William Morris generation of bookmaking. I was able to examine Morris's highly regarded fine press edition of the Caxton edition of *The Golden Legend* (1892) at the Clark Library. Morris's *Golden Legend* has reached an iconic status in the world of fine printing.⁶¹ The insularity of the original 1892 edition reflected a similar quality in the Clark's research culture, its narrow outreach agenda, and, especially, in its enclosed physicality as a research space; in all, it intimated its extravagance. Piper (2012) has drawn attention to how, throughout early modern and modern history, a book's frontispiece (meaning, literally, "to look head on") often took on architectural facets, especially those which used a depiction of the architectural façade to introduce readers to both the author and the text (p. 29). In looking at the intricate Burne-Jones woodcuts of the illustrated title, with the impressively interwoven knotwork vine motif that makeup its borders, I was reminded, at once, of the vine-covered walls that surround the library grounds (Figure 11).

⁶⁰ 70mm x 57mm (2 3/4" x 2 1/4")

⁶¹ SI-D2: B2



Figure 11. Engraved title page in Morris's *Golden Legend*. Courtesy of the William Andrews Clark Memorial Library.

Evidently, with its finely decorated capitals, its uniquely crafted Golden Type roman font, and its laid paper with deckled edges, the book is a luxury object. Morris's aesthetic statement is widely noted to be one of the most self-assured declarations in the modern development of fine press printing in the West (Peterson, 1991). Books, as we understand them in the West, historically were extremely expensive commodities available almost exclusively to the rich and wealthy. With a championing of craft over industry in his design, however, Morris—who we must recall was a Pre-Raphaelite, an aesthete, and a pioneer of the Arts and Crafts Movement—was protesting against the very same force of mechanization that was a crucial factor in the democratization of access to books for the broader consumer public (McGann, 1991). Morris's design aesthetic, if impractical was more than slightly infectious among the

more intellectually-minded designers and publishers of the period. And, in accordance with some of his more complex views on the role of design in industry, a vestige of his design principles managed to survive in Dent's Everyman's Library series—a series later revived in 1991 with the support of the Knopf and Random House publishers (Peterson, 1991). The homage paid to his legacy in mass-market works, however, have only afforded an even higher status of rarity and collectability to the originals, increasing the financial worth and, likewise, the social regard for books such as the Clark's copy of *The Golden Legend*.

Looking contemplatively upon Morris's *Golden Legend*, one finds that much of the aesthetic beauty as well as the grandeur it conveys as an object is achieved in its balance of the darkness of the ink to the spatiality of the whiteness of the page. The lavishly illustrated engraved pages fill the space with ornate knotwork, vine bordered scenes whereas the prose pages were pressed with precision leaving characteristically breathy margins and an especially spacious tail. In fine press printing, the binary of ink and paper black and white first identified, really, by Jonathan Senchyne (2012) is all the more intensified. In traditional Western print in general, and in fine printing in particular, the purity of the white paper is yet another status symbol of affluence and luxury. "The way whiteness functions in white paper," noted Senchyne, "begins to look like the function of the whiteness under racial dualism: it is representative of supposed refinement and desirability and only loosely associated with the visual experience of a certain color" (p. 146). Correspondingly, it has been the blackness of the printer's ink which, historically, has carried the more negative connotation of (social/moral/visual) impurity. In this view, the ink is always an instrument of potential ruination through its ability to stain the whiteness of the paper, just as dangerous texts have the potential to corrupt morality upon reception (p. 145). Hence, the apparent reluctance on the part of fine press printers such as Eric

Gill and the Grabhorn brothers to appropriately portray racially-tinged dimensions of blackness in their aesthetic choices was deeper than some of the more superficially obvious reasons for misrepresentation and absence like outright racial exclusion.⁶² There is the issue, too, of the balance of dark to light on the page. Such is the case, as attested by each of these printer's respective editions of the *Song of Solomon*. In both instances the image of the blackness is distorted by the printers, even when that image is directly referenced in the text. In Gill's version, the only black figure one finds, much like in the ceiling paintings of the Clark's drawing room, is portrayed as a primitive figure in servitude to Europeanized protagonists. In Grabhorn all of the narratives characters are depicted as white. The "blackness" in the verse "I am black, but comely/O ye daughters of Jerusalem/As the tents of Kedar," actually refers to the "sunburnt" complexion of the Qedar (i.e. of Arabic descent) women, denoting class. Representing the literal "brownness" of the metaphorical "black" in the binary medium of the inked space on white paper, as noted by Senchyne, poses an aesthetic challenge to the dichotomized conventions of Western bibliographic illustration (The Holy Bible: King James version, 2007, p. 330; Senchyne, 2012).

Granting that the construction of racial difference in the materiality of the book object may seem stark with such comparisons made at the more granular levels of scrutiny demanded by ethnobibliographic method, but we must recall that, in the library, to this day the "book" is still perceived as a neutral vessel for literacy acquisition and information consumption. Overlooking the subtle and, sometimes, not so subtle ways that the book helps to shape that process of identity construction can contribute to unnoticed misrepresentations of blackness in both black press literature and the literature of the mainstream. In terms of book production,

⁶² SI-D6: B3; SI-D7: B4

particularly where it concerns typography, typesetting, and design, these misrepresentations would manifest themselves in undesirable aesthetic characteristics that traditionally have been avoided in the fine press. As Giampietro (2004) pointed out, in some instances, this form of bibliographic misrepresentation can be observed in the practice of typographic racial stereotyping (what he termed “stereotypography”)—or the constructing of racial caricatures through one’s use of type or letterform design. In such instances, racial mimicry in typography becomes a performance of letterform minstrelsy. This process can take place almost invisibly and before the naked eye. One needs only to take a hard look at the “orientalist” letterforms on the front cover of Leo Politi’s (1978) *Mr. Fong’s Toyshop* to witness a historical example of this practice that is hardly an isolated one. It is crucial to recognize, however, that the practice of *stereotypography* is rarely the product of conscious or nefarious motives. Instead, its existence is more commonly propelled by a combination of ill-considered intentions, commercial trends for marketing, and, in most cases, implicit associations that have emerged through historical accident. Historical accident, for example, can explain how Giampietro came to view Rudolf Koch’s (d. 1934) Neuland font and its derivative in Lithos as an exoticized image of black culture—a form of typographical blackface.⁶³

Koch’s original vision for the Neuland typeface, according to Giampietro, was a marriage between the modernity of sans and the much older tradition of blackletter. Koch, as it turns out, was a devoted admirer of Morris’s work, and in some respects, was influenced by his style (Cinamon, 2000). Koch’s work, however, particularly in sculpture and design, had also been influenced by the Art Nouveau and Art Deco movements. It conveyed an aesthetic that evoked a philosophy of “Primitivism”—a term that is now viewed in a pejorative sense. And although Art

⁶³ The term “blackface” is a “doubled” term meaning both the black letter origin of the font and the performance of blackface minstrelsy.

Deco had managed to penetrate “high art,” as Giampietro pointed out, the movement was associated with jazz music and the “decorative” arts—both of which had been excluded from “high art” during their heights of their popularity (Giampietro, 2004, para. 14).

When Neuland was adopted in the United States, it quickly proliferated in printed ephemera and advertisements. The font had been a popular choice for labels and cigar boxes, and it was often the type of choice in advertisements that used minstrel caricatures to sell their products. Eventually, as its use moved from pulp fiction to “negro” literature and the black press, the typeface became an unspoken typographic cue for primitiveness, native Africa, the exotic jungle, and African Americanness (Giampietro, 2004). Are such implicit associations, however, examples of stereotypography in every case? How can they be when black authors and publishers have embraced these fonts for use in their own works? It is easy to point to examples of its use in shows and movies like *Tarzan*, *Jurassic Park*, and *The Lion King* in defense of the argument that Neuland has become irreversibly stereotypographical in its connotative association. It is harder to make that argument when you can point to examples of its use for black authored works like Alain Locke’s (1925) *The New Negro* and Richard Wright’s (1940) *Native Son*.⁶⁴ Either way, the frequency to which it shows up in the graphic design and cover art of works of contemporary African and African American scholarship, black children’s literature, and African folkloric anthologies is common enough to warrant further investigation into such questions.

This practice of stereotypography—a practice which dichotomizes an “otherness” from Western aesthetics and its ideals—can also be observed in less obvious expressions than exotic typefaces. It is surely the case, for instance, that Madeline Forgue of the Distaff project and the

⁶⁴ See, for example, the front cover of the 1993 HarperPerennial edition.

Black Cat press never intended to engage in a form of typographic racial mimicry in their “Greetin’s from a Admirer”—which was printed in 1939 for the Distaff side in *Goudy Gaudeamus*. As a woman in the male dominated world of the small press and fine press printers, she would have had an awareness of the essential inhumanity of such practices when realized in their most extreme manifestations. This gender disparity, in part, was what the Distaff group of women bookmakers had been attempting to address with their productions. And the Black Cat Press, too, it should be noted, printed a number of titles on President Lincoln and emancipation, demonstrating a belief in the American ideals of liberty and equality for all. Forgue participated in this mimicry, however, when, in a very tongue-in-cheek way, she purposefully set lines of poorly composed verse in a way that sought to imply that the typesetting had been done haphazardly by an amateur printer:

I’M kinda worried ‘bout this greetin. It ain’t the thing a beauty I thought ‘twould be.
SoMeone’s been playin’ with the type, Or I got in the pi or somethin’. As a rank beginner
I ain’t allowed in the good type. buT even though most folks think diffрут, i says
appearances ain’t so important noHOW. It’s what’s behind em that counts. (para. 8)

The poor design, sloppy composition, and bad speech, likely meant to satirize the ignorance of the working class, simultaneously combine to signify racial difference. The signification or, perhaps, meta-signification, operates in the same manner that associatively ties the similar visual characteristics to Neuland in printed ephemera and African American genre books. In a word, the representation again falls to “Primitivism.” It cannot be a mere coincidence, then, that Forgue must complete her illusion of “low” or “vulgar” printing by printing the text on what she calls

“rare” bargain-counter paper. Strikingly, it is the only gathering in the text block made up of thin, dark brown newsprint paper.

Forgue’s tacit mimicry is not anomalous; nor is it without precedent. Beyond the misappropriation of construct and meaning which has occurred with Neuland, “vulgar” printing has long provided the basis for a class-based dichotomization of “high” versus “low” culture. And that dichotomization in American print culture took on racial dimensions alongside the split fairly early in the history. A chapbook (printed ca. 1800) of late seventeenth century verse that I was able to inspect at the Clark Library tells the tale. The chapbook, which has the short title of *The Poor Unhappy Transported Felon*, is one of the Clark’s comparatively few extant samples of ephemera that touches upon the institution of African slavery in America.⁶⁵ In that way, it offers a relatively early instance of when associations of racial mimicry in typography and graphic design began to form within the American psyche. Jamel Revel’s lyrics tell a story wherein whites and blacks were enslaved together. “My fellow slaves were just five Transports more/With eighteen Negroes, which is twenty four,” described Revel, “We and the Negroes both alike did fare/Of work and food we have equal share; But in a piece of ground we call our own/The food we eat first by ourselves were sown” (p. 5). The author goes as far as to express sympathy for his fellow captives stating, “More pity the negro slaves bestow’d/Than my inhuman brutal master show’d” (p. 6). As one considers the prevalence of this trope in early black press poetry, it becomes clear that the informal contraction found in the vernacular lends a sympathy to the rhyming couplets that starts to approach a form of mimicry. It is the style of language coupled with the quality of print and materials which work to achieve the effect. As a chapbook, a format which has relatively few extant items from the seventeenth century on the

⁶⁵ SI-D9: B6

account of their low quality and rapid deterioration, it would have been a comparatively inexpensive imprint to produce (McKay, et al., 2003). Along such lines, the lower class vernacular corresponds with the crude, lackadaisical typography, rough kerning, worn-out type, and cheap wove paper to devalue the object, vulgarize the text, and to create an aura of undesirability around the chapbook for the wealthy bibliophiles and scholar/collectors of its day.

With this stark contrast between the black press and the fine press and, likewise, fine printing and the popular press, it can be put forth that the image of black press books and black literature that has emerged in the consciousness of the mainstream is one that has been characterized as exotic, subpar, throw-away, and, ultimately, inferior. Fine press printing, in this image, becomes the ideal from which to define the boundaries of the bibliographic “otherness” of the black press. And the same racial divisions that have emerged in society have also emerged in our relationships with the material and physical qualities of the book.

5. II. 1. Organization: Library Catalogs as Access Points to the Black Press

To quickly review, bibliographies are not catalogs. Recall that they had initially existed as “two sides of the same coin,” but their split from each other began more than two centuries ago. Recall also that the fundamental difference that had emerged between these two domains is as follows: whereas catalogs are lists which always locate a material item in a physical place, bibliographies, particularly descriptive bibliographies, typically use a meticulous, systematic documentation of the tangible components of the earliest or most authoritative manifestations of a printed work to describe a largely conceptual abstraction of its ideal copy—a copy text that transcends the many accidentals, alterations, and discrepancies of its subsequent editions. Hence, since the start of this applicatory schism, bibliography and cataloging have developed along

separate, only occasionally intersecting paths. As I previously noted at length, one of the more recent moments of intersection occurred with the Amory's (1996) introduction of ethnobibliography into the bibliographic discourse. Amory had the insight of a seasoned rare book library cataloger to use elements of descriptive bibliographic method combined with an ethnohistorical analysis to comprehend what he considered a bibliographic curiosity (i.e. printed biblical fragment) wrapped in a unfamiliar cultural artifact (i.e. the medicine bundle). The subject of bibliographic analysis in Amory's study, partly by his decision not to disregard the bearing of the catalog when engaging with bibliography as a research methodology, was actually a unique physical item as opposed to an abstracted ideal. Returning now to the present study which, in the process of reexamining our current understanding of black literacy, has systematically investigated books within the context of a physical environment, considering that the specific environment in question primarily involves the research and special collections library, a spatially-oriented, item-level approach similar to Amory's had to be adopted. Therefore, my discussion of library cataloging within an ethnobibliographic framework should not disqualify this study's legitimacy as a work of bibliography expressly because it is not an effort in cataloging or even a sustained exploration into cataloging theory.

Having proceeded through history of black press literature and its material production by focusing on the manner in which these books have, in part, contributed to the construction of racial identity, it should be clear by this point that this study is principally ethnobibliographic in its design. Accordingly, it is mainly concerned with discerning the various cultural meanings and racial dimensions that are constructed through our interactions with those printed manifestations of knowledge production that we call "books." Also of concern throughout this analysis, however, has been the publication metadata tied to these items. The metadata for these books, as

it follows, exists in a symbiotic relationship with systems of knowledge organization that function as blueprints for their categorization, collocation, and spatial placement. Such systems encompass everything from citation standards and cataloging codes to call numbers and name authorities. They operate through indexes and directories, in integrated library systems (ILS) and online public access catalogs (OPAC). Finally, these systems are performed through library reference interviews, research consultations, and information literacy instruction sessions and courses. Above all, it seems, these systems of knowledge organization structure the marking, tracking and retrieving of physical objects and artifacts in library, archival, and museum collections. It constitutes a virtually invisible set of reference mechanisms and operations which become invisible to researchers insofar as they serve their purpose to connect readers to their desired sources.

The conventional systems of knowledge organization that are often embedded within still larger systems of knowledge production can play a role in a reader's interaction with the material text—that is, the item or the particular copy in hand. The various institution-level mechanisms such as digital catalog records, call numbers, and the identification markings that are built around such systems are really the products of generations of theoretical development. Having already discussed the theoretical foundations for library cataloging as they were first articulated by figures like Dewey and Otlet, it is important to recognize that other theorists such as Anthony Panizzi (d. 1879) and, perhaps most notably, Charles Cutter (d. 1903) were also highly influential in the development of the underlying schemas that would come to dominate knowledge organization throughout most of the twentieth century. The transformative and historically renowned librarian for the British Library, Panizzi, for one, institutionalized the author-subject system that had risen to ascendancy during the eighteenth century (Taylor, 1993).

Similarly, Cutter's rules for cataloging and his table for author codes greatly impacted the direction of knowledge organization in the United States. As indicated in his *Rules for a Printed Dictionary Catalogue* (1876), the basis for Cutter's rules rested on the following core principles:

1. To enable a person to find a book of which either

(A) the author

(B) the title } is known.

(C) The subject

2. To show what the library has

(D) by a given author

(E) on a given subject

(F) in a given kind of literature

3. To assist in the choice of a book

(G) as to its edition (bibliographically).

(H) as to its character (literary or topical). (p. 10)

In terms of retrieval through the metadata, Cutter called for access points at the level of author and title as well as subject, form, and edition (p. 10). The title and author (or creator) of a work were the primary access points. Here, at the summit of industrialism, we entered an information world wherein bibliographic objects were so voluminous that a pragmatic, standardized approach with strict rules for documentation and access appeared to have been among the few options available for dealing with the monumental mission of organizing, cataloging, and tracking ever-expanding library collections. In Cutter's rules, however, *description* to the physical

manifestation of a work (i.e. the item, or object) and *access* to the intellectual manifestation of the work (e.g. record metadata) are entirely intermeshed.

Cutter's pragmatic model, in fact, would not be seriously reconsidered until the "father of modern cataloging" Seymour Lubetzky (d. 2003) stressed the catalog's potential function of collocating works with multiple authorial identities under a unifying, authorized term (Wilson, *The objectives of the catalog and the means to reach them*, 1989). Similar to the analytical and descriptive bibliographic discourse, the challenge for enumerative bibliographic description and library cataloging was initially presented as one of authorial identification. Some authors obviously have multiple aliases, spellings, and variants. If the author is the access point to the texts, how does one account for these differences and still ensure an acceptable rate of recall and precision in the search results? Having a single name authority to unite all others sought to ameliorate this dilemma. This idea is also the basis for authority control, name authorities, and authority records. Applied to guidelines for subject division, vocabulary controlled systems such as the faceted system of Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH), Sear's List of Subjects Headings (SLSH) and the National Library of Medicine's Medical Subject Headings (MeSH) have attempted to address similar issues involving taxonomic plurality and terminological variants. Based on the 1961 Paris Principles, the widely adopted Anglo American Cataloging Rules (1967) formed the cornerstone of late twentieth century cataloging. The subsequent Michael Gorman and Paul W. Winkler edition. AACR2 (1978), brought the rules in alignment with the ISBD standard; moreover, it was among the first set of standards to distinguish description (of the object) from access (to the work) (Denton, 2007). As a project under the direction of Lubetzky, then, and with the need to both establish and conform to an international standard in a bibliographic and information universe typified by plurality and arbitrary

classification, authority control was more fully integrated into the AACR2 cataloging regime in its guidelines for a main entry for all records (Joint Steering Committee for Revision of AACR, 1978). Any variants, under this model, would have to be classified as an added entry, bringing a hierarchical order to the system wherein one version of a work or text is selected for primary representation above others—namely, the authoritative or original version, creator, title, etc.

Just as Cutter's rules helped to provide the foundation for the card cataloging system, and just as the AACR2 and the Machine Readable Cataloging Record (MARC) schema were tailored to meet the nascent demands of mechanized and electronic records, the establishment of the Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records (FRBR) at the close of the twentieth century attempted to meet the anticipated expectations of cataloging in the digital age. Built upon Cutter's *Rules*, the International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) initiated the framework for FRBR to introduce an entity-relationship model (i.e. *work*, *expression*, *manifestation*, and *item*) into cataloging operations. It sought to expand Cutter's "Principle #2 to give users more scope and power" (Denton, 2007, p. 47). One major achievement of FRBR, thus far, is that it has conceptually managed to divide works into intellectual (work/expression) and physical states (manifestation/item). Another achievement is that it has become the underlying model for the Resource Description and Access (RDA) guidelines which are currently being integrated into the library and information cataloging infrastructure. Yet another concerns the greater elasticity it affords in terms of access points and collocation (Koehler, 2015). One must always keep in mind, however, that the purpose for all of this effort is primarily intended to serve collection access.

All things considered, when approaching knowledge organization and library cataloging, we must deal with a network of individuals and mechanisms who work in concert to create both a cataloging superstructure comprised of models, standards, and guidelines, and an underlying infrastructure at the ground level of each facility's collection. Knowledge organization, in fact, is so inextricably intermeshed with the cataloging and reference infrastructures, that I have grouped them all under the one umbrella category of "organization." At work here are really two levels: first, there is an abstract level, the information to be identified and retrieved in the form of a work, which is the domain of reference; next, there is the physical, marked, and tracked object to be retrieved in the form of an item in the collection, the subject of the identification and cataloging. On the reference side of the equation, more recently there has been motion in the direction of user friendliness and models of information seeking behavior (Bates, 1989). New schemas and markup indexing utilities such as Dublin Core have been specially fitted to capture the vast array of para-bibliographic information objects born in the digital environment. Yet with all of the innovative attempts to make these systems more flexible and user friendly they have remained complex and convoluted. Consequently, such systems commonly require at least some amount of information literacy instruction for proper use.

Standardization (in cataloging) seeks to simplify the complexity (in classification), but the simplicity is inherently elusive in accordance with the sheer scope of the mission. With all its penetration, however, it appears that top-down standardization cannot generate uniformity at the ground level. When conducting my catalog searches for each of the case studies, it was necessary for me to be able to read and interpret cataloging metadata that, despite being governed by the same overarching cataloging rules, varied drastically in terms of the degree of conformity and implementation. These differences, it can be reasoned, must have emerged in accordance with

the distinct practices and resources of each individual facility or institution. In almost every case it was the same superstructure with different infrastructures.

I found that knowledge organization at the Schomburg Center, for instance, as part of the larger New York Public Library system, was comparatively streamlined.⁶⁶ Many of its functions for retrieval have already been mechanized, the access points for the collections have been digitized, and reference assistance is readily available to assist with catalog navigation. Yet, mechanization aside, at the Schomburg Center a researcher is still required to fill out an item request form for each item, manually, and in holograph, with the necessary information extracted from the metadata found in the catalog record. Actually, this practice of filling a brief penciled-in request form was a standard practice across most of the individual cases. Veering away from the convention, however, the Schomburg also has its own in-house classification system functioning underneath the NYPL cataloging system layered on top of it. Contrastingly, the Clayton Library did not have a working collection catalog in operation during the entire time of my research.⁶⁷ As a result of this particular situation I decided instead to simply send a list of the exact publishers and unique items of interest to my research directly to the professional staff. The staff subsequently followed up with me regarding which items they had managed to identify in the collection and whether not I wished to have them retrieved for review. This almost entirely human-driven, analog, and manual version of reference and retrieval service certainly has precedence in the smaller collections from the early modern to the modern period libraries. And although the system is somewhat laborious and opaque, it is still functional.

⁶⁶ SIV-D1: REF

⁶⁷ SIII-D1-D6: ORG

A blend between these two extremes, however, was the reference system in operation at the Amistad Research Center. Given that my time onsite was to be spent as a visiting researcher, I was able to correspond with a staff archivist directly concerning materials of interest, and the staff arranged to have the items that I needed ready upon my arrival.⁶⁸ In part, I am certain that both the subject of my research and my own professional history gave me a degree of entrée into the process that would have been virtually unreachable to those outside of the special collections field. Unlike the Clayton situation, however, I was able to conduct a catalog search prior to my first visit. Similar to the situation at the Clark Library, the Amistad's partnership with the Tulane University library cataloging system provided me with access to the standardized catalog records necessary for routine item retrieval. Onsite, source identification and item retrieval were conducted via the usual channels of the reference interview and the item request form.⁶⁹ Reference interviews in the Amistad reading room could range from brief, single source identification sessions to extensive research consultations which could last more than an hour.⁷⁰ I was compelled to conduct my online catalog searches offsite, however, because of the fact that direct access to the Wi-Fi was not available to visiting scholars and the reading room's internet terminals had been temporarily out of service. Without the internet, however, one could still independently consult of a wide range of room reference resources including African American collection catalogs and finding aids, collection guides, encyclopedias, African language dictionaries, African American biographical directories, indexes to black periodicals/article, and numerous bibliographies on black literature.⁷¹

⁶⁸ SII-D1: REF

⁶⁹ SII-D2-D3: REF

⁷⁰ SII-D9:REF

⁷¹ SII-D2-D12: REF

Outside of the reference interview, searching for sources in the library may seem intuitive, but there are numerous approaches available to researchers and student patrons. Thomas Mann's (1993) *Library Research Models* divides them into the following: subject/discipline model, the traditional library model, type-of-literature model, actual-practice model, and the methods-of-searching model. Each model, in Mann's view, seeks out primary and secondary sources in accordance with its own set of parameters. The subject/discipline model, for example, focuses on looking at all the material in a particular subject according to the literature of a particular discipline, whereas the actual-practice model is an informal approach that recognizes the way that such research is carried out through recommendation, browsing, footnotes, and other casual methods of discovery. In my selection of bibliographic specimens I somewhat intuitively took an approach which combined the traditional and actual-practice models with the type-of-literature model that is typical of graduate research. I placed an emphasis on the black press and black press literature. At the Amistad, for instance, after an advance search in the catalog using the publisher as my primary access point, I identified and then selected specimen one, *Half Black/Half Blacker* (1970), an example of black press poetry, specifically because of its ties to the Blacks Arts Movement.⁷² All of these processes are experienced with relative seamlessness, but there are advanced skill sets in reference and research which are being utilized on both ends to maximize recall in search results, identify important items for review, and to retrieve those items accordingly.

The cataloging and organization infrastructures which allow human agency to efficiently move a bibliographic object through space are visible in the markings of their physical traces. Without special training and instruction, however, such markings remain as incomprehensible as

⁷² SII-D2: REF

the theories that have formed the very basis of the coding schemas and computerized catalog technology in the first place. The LC call number for specimen one, PS 3566.L79 H3 Dent, both encodes and refers to the work's genre and its subjects.⁷³ The class "P" stands for "literature," the subclass "PS" represents "American Literature" and the "3500" subclass indicates that it is a post-1960 work. The collection's creator (Thomas Dent), the publisher (Haki Madhubuti) and the author (Sterling Plumpp) are all assigned control numbers and name authorities. Madhubuti, who was still using his name, Don Lee, at that time, has the name authority of Madhubuti, Haki R., 1942- (Lee, Don L.). The control numbers include an alphabetical prefix and codes for the year and the serial number in the authority coding. Moreover, the traces of the tracking system, stickers, identification slips, and the institutional ("Amistad RC) stamps were marked on the physical item at various places on the object.⁷⁴ Collectively, these individual components are working together to categorize and locate a material item in a physical space.

5. II. 2. Organization: Counter-cataloging Textual Hybridity

I only provided a brief overview of the great amount of complexity involved with contemporary cataloging and integrated library systems. And it is true that many scholars and researchers are not aware of the vast amount of sources that they could be overlooking because they do not perceive nor comprehend the theories which underlie these structures. It is not common for individuals to consider the complexity of these systems as they use them because there is a veneer of simplicity surrounding the whole experience of engagement. With all of its virtues, however, knowledge organization in the West is not without its faults. One of the troubling of them, notwithstanding claims of objectivity and universality, concerns the biases of

⁷³ SII-D2: ID

⁷⁴ SII-D7: REC

the “organizers” themselves. Librarians admirably wish to address what the institution perceives as deficiencies in black literacy skills. Rarely do we stop and reflect upon the ways in which the biases of conventional knowledge organization are tied with that perception. Even more rarely do we consider how these organizational mechanisms can contribute to cultural erasure over time. The fact that the last cataloging regime which is only beginning to wane in supremacy was openly named the “Anglo-American” Cataloging Rules makes a rather unambiguous statement concerning the nature of the hegemonic power relationship. That point, however, is low-hanging fruit. Terminology, as it turns out, especially in those instances when that descriptor is meant to collectively refer to a system of rules for the categorization and compartmentalization of knowledge, does matter. Much of the criticism in this direction, it seems, has been aimed at the nineteenth century historicity of cataloging systems like the Dewey Decimal System and its assumption of Protestant, “Anglo-American” patriarchal values (Fields & Connell, 2004; Koehler, 2015). It is, at this point, a cliché to lambast the DDC’s 290s for its attempt to reduce all of the non-Christian religions into a comparatively thin slice of the asymmetrically allocated, numeric scheme of division; but non-Western literatures suffer the same form of reductive discrimination (Scott, 1998). And it is fairly well recognized across the field now that certain terms in the controlled vocabulary systems, considered by some populations to be offensive, have persisted because the superstructure of cataloging standards can be slow to respond to outside pressures for change. During the course of this research, for instance, I discovered that the term “miscegenation”—a term which currently has more of a negative connotation than it did in the past when interracial marriage and parenting was less socially acceptable—was still being used as a LC subject heading. I found it being used as a board term (BT) subject entry in the subject field of Roger’s *Sex and Race* (1940). It is difficult to imagine of a scenario in actual

practice wherein a student or researcher would use such an outmoded term as an access point when searching with intuitively extrapolated keywords such as “blacks,” “Western civilization,” and “interracial” is a considerably more readily available possible route of discovery.

It became clear pretty early on in my research that the rigidity of subject headings can actually serve to bury items in the catalog. The use of headings for reference can produce far better results in terms of the recall and precision ratio if one is trained in the proper use of computerized library catalogs; yet, for average patrons a subject search is greatly inhibited by a widespread unfamiliarity with the controlled vocabulary and the ability to search the catalog through such means. If, for example, a researcher finds their way to the advanced Boolean search function of the catalog—a search tool with which one possesses a considerably greater degree of maneuverability in terms of shaping their search results—this does not guarantee that they will be able to produce the most desired results. To illustrate this point, limiting a search to the Clark Library within the UCLA library catalog’s advance search tool, searching for the terms “African American” and “print”—two major focal points of my research area—yields a lonely two results. The operator “and” in the Boolean method, it should be mentioned, filters out all results that do not contain those two keywords. Thus, removing the word “print” increases the results to a more respectable, but still comparatively small eighteen. Change the term “African American” to “negro” and nearly double your results at twenty-seven including a remarkably cloaked first edition of Wheatley’s (1773) *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*. Tellingly, you will find that carrying out the same search using the subject option in place of the keyword produces even less results. Searching for the terms “African American” and “print” as the subjects, a move that might intuitively seem reasonable, will disappointingly return no results. Removing “print” from the search terms will increase the retrieval from zero to five items of

varying relevance. Curiously, replacing “African American” with “negro” in a subject search will reduce the five results to just two. Complications such as these compelled me to utilize the publisher as the primary access point for retrieving relevant titles in a routine fashion. It was my understanding that with all the models for efficiency that were intentionally built into the system, the advanced search function of the catalog could still lend the impression that it is a device which is intimidating, unwieldy, and difficult to comprehend. The efficiency of the controlled vocabulary can be, in this way, to some extent nullified by the pervasive disconnection between the mental models of researchers and the rules and standards of cataloging theorists and experts who determine, select, and authorize the expanding body of dominant terms in current usage.

Conventional knowledge organization really breaks down, however, when it attempts to confront, capture, and edify works and literatures that are inherently antithetical to the rules which have come to define it. The most unfortunate possible result of this paradoxical conundrum is the erasure of subaltern representation; and, along such lines, arguably one of the most potent examples of this phenomenon lies in the erasure of gang literature—the fringe of urban and street literature—from the larger corpus of cataloged African American literature. The proliferation of street gangs in underserved inner-city communities is widely viewed as one of the paramount challenges crippling the lives of black people across the nation (See, 1998). Cultural critics like Bill Cosby, Stanley Crouch, and Bill O’Reilly have consistently attributed the late twentieth century rise of gangs and black-on-black violence to a breakdown in family values and media the problem (Crouch, 1995). This stance maintains that responsibility must be placed squarely on the shoulders of the individuals who choose to participate in that lifestyle. Some hold the view that gang activity is symptomatic of what Joy DeGruy first described as a “post-traumatic slave syndrome”—a reactionary condition in which antisocial behavior in black

youth is but one of the effects of the profound sense of hopelessness encapsulated in one's experience of the lingering impacts of African slavery and the deep-rooted, multi-generational psychological conditioning of the black mentality to accept a status of racial inferiority and servitude (Rossiter, 2015, p. 19). In keeping with arguments that favor the psychological dimensions of the issue, others have formulated explanations that emphasize the possibility that the emasculation of the black male in the family dynamics of black households could be another major factor (Kunjufu, 1985; Priestley, 1974). This notion of a wounded black masculinity which was introduced into the discourse on race in America in the 1965 report *The Negro Family* by Daniel Patrick Moynihan, is closely aligned with explanations for black-on-black violence that stress the power and influence of "rage" in the black male psyche (Moynihan, 1965). These feelings of rage are believed to be fueled by the perpetual humiliation and social impotency that accompanies one's position as the intended target of institutional racial discrimination. In addition, there is a belief that the failure to integrate African Americans into mainstream society and the depressed socioeconomic conditions of the ghetto coupled with the lack of opportunities for black men to achieve success in the broader workforce are among the primary contributive factors fueling gang activity. As Cheris Kubrin (2005) perceptively stated, "Growing recognition of the utility of an integrative approach has led researchers to consider the relationship between structural disadvantage, cultural and situational responses to such disadvantage, and the perpetuation of violence within African American communities" (p. 361). In this approach, mainstream American society must assume some responsibility for the problem of gang violence because of its long adherence to racially determined social inequity.

As a social phenomenon that has prevalent in majority black neighborhoods for several decades, discussions on the nature and causes of street gangs are not limited to discourses in the

study of social problems and deviant behavior. Some have actually advanced the difficult position which argues for a more holistic view that acknowledges the positive contributions that gangs and gang members have made to their communities in the past. Useni E. Perkins, who took the deeper history of black gangs into consideration in his 1987 analysis *Explosion of Chicago's Black Street Gangs*, noted how earlier in the history, during the 1960s and 1970s, some of the Chicago gangs had been organizations that helped bring a sense of identity, pride, and structure for young black men in the community as well as protection from violent white hostility. Not only had some of the gangs been involved intentionally constructive projects such as Operation Bootstrap which sought to open a cooperative dialogue between local gangs and business leaders, but groups such as the Black Panthers were known to have recruited gang members on the account of their drive and leadership abilities.⁷⁵ The rapper Tupac Shakur, who believed American history was founded upon gangs from the Freemasons to the police unions, felt that the gang members in the ghetto had the potential to redirect their energy from violence and drug and sex trafficking to community betterment and political activism (Dyson, 2001). Moreover, James C. Howell and Elizabeth Griffiths (2015) argued that many of the automatic associations that we make about gangs as a society, such as the idea that “gangs, drugs, and violence are inexorably linked,” are not based more in myth than in fact (p. 28). They pointed out how some of the other, less talked about functions of gangs like identity construction, recreation, and social bonding are often the most important concerns of these marginalized groups.

Regardless of whether one sees gangs only as a destructive social problem or as a potential source of constructive energy among black youth, however, the fact remains that a literature exists within even the most shunned and criminalized strata of contemporary

⁷⁵ Slauson gang member Alprentice “Bunchy” Carter founded the Southern California Chapter of this organization in 1968.

American society. We are just beginning to understand now that it is not the role of librarians to judge what is good or bad in terms of what constitutes a literature, and that it serves librarians best to engage with different knowledge and information systems on their own terms (Srinivasan, 2012). It is true that the more distinguished arbiters of black culture would prefer that all of the attention be lavished upon literary figures like Langston Hughes and Maya Angelou only to ignore authors in the likes of Iceberg Slim (b. Robert Beck) and Stanley “Tookie” Williams. It cannot be denied, however, that Iceberg Slim’s *Pimp* (1967) has been in print for decades, and that it continues to circulate widely. We cannot change the fact that Stanley “Tookie” Williams has authored several successfully published books from prison. And there are enough black gangsta’ novels in print to fill a city library. Ex-Four-Trey Gangsta Crip Terry L Wrotten, for instance, wrote his novel *To Live and Die in L.A.* (2011) to fictionalize his journey out of the street life and into the life of a fulltime writer. It is the kind of book that one would find sold almost exclusively in black bookstores, at black book fairs, or by black by black street vendors. Similarly, the gang lifestyle magazine *Allhood Publications* includes poetry, local histories, and biographies that written and published by gang members. I could go on listing titles at length because, without question, gang members, both former and current, are producing books and texts. What is at question is the degree to which this literature can be conformed to the standards of cataloging convention.

Library catalogs have been fashioned in a way that is adequately suited to categorize academic studies conducted by researchers about gangs. Yet even in these cases challenges emerge. Consider, for instance, the myriad of categorical terms in use within gang culture. In Chicago alone there are the Black P. Stones, the Gangster Disciples, the Black King Cobras, and literally dozens more. Subject headings cannot be expected to be narrowed to a level of

specificity that could capture such diversity; and the rapid terminological mutation of these names is a further impediment to their use in main entry vocabularies. It is next to impossible for researchers and catalogers to be able assimilate gang terminology from within because the association of the criminality establishes an incommensurability between the two necessarily conflicting knowledge-bases and their dichotomized ontologies. Any attempt, in fact, for black gang culture to communicate and express through print culture is an instance of an unanticipated bibliographic creolization. It counters the stereotype that black criminality must be synonymous with black illiteracy, and that gang members uniformly harbor a disdain for reading and writing. Consider, next, the intense degree to which black gang culture has engaged with letters in the form of script. The fact that the same scripts used for writing “rhymes” (i.e. lyrical poetry) in rhyme books are the same that appear on car details, tattoos, gang-writing (i.e. territorial graffiti), “pieces” (i.e. large-scale works of graffiti art), and graffiti “black books” (i.e. sketch books used for perfecting graffiti letterforms) shows that this form of textuality is not simply vandalism; more than that, during the past half-century or so it has really emerged as a subaltern tradition of letters and literacy.

Any attempt to categorize gang writing and graffiti in accordance with the current standards in library cataloging is a forced attempt to restrain a medium that defies conventional categorization. With its layered meanings, graphic symbolism, and coded names urban graffiti is a hybrid text that is able to convey unique and sometimes vital information both literally on and about the streets. And, as Gundaker (1998) has likewise suggested, graffiti lacks permanence in its condition as a mobile text (pp. 184-200). It is a text that is mobilized both through its vulnerability to being crossed out, written over, or cleaned and in its potential to be simultaneously expressed and manifested on a mobile surface such as a bus or a subway car. And

its hybridity is achieved in [its ability to subject both gothic and roman letterforms to semiotic reconfiguration. These qualities alone make this form of textuality both resistant to rigid categorization and, conversely, suited for memetic leakage into the writing cultures of the mainstream. It is the paradox that makes the erasure of gang print culture, at once, unavoidable and unfavorable. The situation becomes unfavorable precisely because if one wishes to work to preserve the memory of these graffiti scripts as such scripts continue to migrate to the world of digital fonts—that is, if one wishes to do so within an institutional environment such as the library—to make the history of these letterforms accessible to future students and researchers, one has only comparatively conventional means of organizing the knowledge (Masilamani, 2008). It is understandable, then, why the Clark Library’s copy of *Los Angeles Barrio Calligraphy*—a work which documents the early history of gang writing in East Los Angeles—can be accessed using the term “calligraphy” as a subject access point, but, curiously enough, not “gang writing.”

Chapter Six: Findings for Collections and Performativity

6. I. Collections: The Collectors and their Bibliophilic Legacies

At this point, I have provided ample evidence to support the assertion that both books and libraries are not neutral repositories of knowledge. Yet, if the book “in hand” cannot be said to exist within a vacuum, neither can the collection of which it forms a part. Provenance matters. If it did not, then a book from George Washington or Thomas Jefferson’s library in the possession of a library or research collection would be treated as any other, and, along such lines, should be permitted to circulate if the library was a circulating one. It is virtually inconceivable, however, that’s such a scenario could play out. Furthermore, a collection’s history, too, is not a triviality. In the library setting a book can never be a standalone object. Of course, a book can be a standalone object in the private possession of a single owner, or as an object discarded or abandoned, but in the library a book is always, at the very minimum, part of a library’s general collection. Consequently, when discussing the nature of black press literature in its relationship to literacy, racial identity construction, and especially within the larger context of knowledge production in the special collections research environment, in addition to looking at the books, it is also necessary to look at the collections of books as unique entities.

The fact that book collections in rare book and special collections libraries are usually the product of some collector’s legacy is well known. What receives comparatively less attention is the way that, in addition to collection development, such legacies can shape the access policies and daily operations of a library. Even less understood is the impact on the library’s aesthetic in terms of architecture and interior design. Understanding the role of founding collector(s) in shaping the future of the special collections libraries that spawn from private ownership into the

domain of the academic, I would argue, can provide greater insight into library mediation and its facilitation of the various processes involved with knowledge production. Consider, for example, the heightened level of *environmental dissonance* between the Clark Library and its bordering Jefferson Park community. The starkness of the contrast, to a considerable degree, in fact, can be directly attributed to the personal proclivities and aesthetic sensibilities of its founder. Here, the founder's legacy cannot be separated from the collection and its spatiality. The legacy of Clark is one of education, cultural preservation, and research, yet all three of these philanthropic benefits have been expressly situated within the boundaries of Western civilization. Its cultural semiosis, then, is literally epitomized by the physical space. Signifiers of Clark's wealth and pedigree are still visible in the library's grand architecture and ornate interior design. Admittedly, by the time that Clark began his life as a book collector he was approaching his middle ages. Indeed, by the time that he had begun building his collection in earnest, the family fortune was heading toward its eventual decline.

William Andrews Clark, Jr. was the son of a copper magnate who made amassed a more than a hundred million dollars in copper. Having a background in trade, his father was able to break into the copper industry through rapacious banking practices. Later in life, Clark senior served as a U.S. Senator from Montana—although many believed that he had bribed his way into office. Despite his own reputation as a “social climber,” however, Clark ensured that his own children would be raised in all the trappings and traditions of the aristocratic class. Clark junior, as one might expect, would make his from Los Angeles by way of Paris, France at the age of six (Conway & Stevenson, 1985, p. 3). Clark had an international education during his youth which culminated in 1899 with a bachelors in law from the University of Virginia. The considerable wealth he would have inherited notwithstanding, Clark did, in fact, continue to maintain business

offices both in Butte, Montana and Van Nuys, California where he directed the family's extensive mining operations which stretched from Montana to Arizona (Conway & Stevenson, 1985, pp. 3-4).

Clearly, Clark had the means of building an impressive collection. He collected unsparingly in his personal intellectual interests and pursuits. His collecting began with Dryden and Shakespeare, peaked with Wilde, and was crowned by an enduring foray into fine printing (Conway & Stevenson, 1985, pp. 12-14). It is difficult to discern the full extent of Clark's bibliophilism. Unquestionably, Clark was a dedicated bookman. This dedication is evident in the great amount of scholarship that he invested into researching his editions during his collection building. First and foremost, however, Clark's chief passion in life was the study and performance of classical music. And the library itself was named after his father, pointing to his father's mutual love of books. His gift of the library to the university was especially admirable and very much in keeping with the cultural philanthropy of the period, but one cannot ignore the fact that a greater share of Clark's philanthropic activities was devoted to his establishment of the Los Angeles Philharmonic orchestra. Be that as it may, Clark's biography is written all over an estate that has continued to function as one of UCLA's research libraries since his death in 1934. Clark's zeal for collecting Dryden, for instance, is memorialized in the *All for Love* themed ceiling painting found in the drawing room.⁷⁶ A painting of Clark's librarian, Robert Ernest Cowan, looks pensively upon exclusive concerts of first-rate chamber music alongside portraits of Clark's beloved literary greats.

⁷⁶ SI-D5: INT

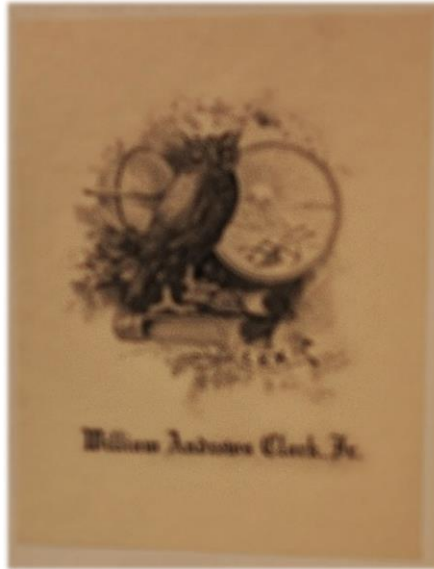


Figure 12. The William Andrews Clark Jr. bookplate. Courtesy of the William Andrews Clark Memorial Library.

The provenance of the books and artifacts in the collection can neither be less impressive, nor daunting than the anthropomorphized spatiality that fortifies the cherished objects as it relates the biography of Clark in virtually every room and brick; for each of the books, too, that comprise the library's core collection, embodies a buried provenance which can provide further insight into the nature of the objects and the various ways that they have been engaged with over time. At the Clark Library it is a provenance that can be traced in every owl bookplate that was symbiotically adhered to the artifact as a permanent reminder of the collector (Figure 12).⁷⁷ A number of the Kelmscott press books and materials in the fine printing collection, for instance, had been acquired by Clark through the connections of Pasadena bibliophile and collector Alice Millard (Conway & Stevenson, 1985, p. 13). Millard had negotiated the exchange directly through none other than Sir Sydney Cockerell, private secretary for William Morris. In addition

⁷⁷ SI-B1: BP

to working for Morris, Cockerell, like Millard, Cowan, and Clark, was also a well-respected collector of books—a collector in a wider network of collectors.

Many of the nation's great collections began in a gentleman's private library. The philanthropic legacies of the collectors have often come at the twilight of their collecting years. The initial drivers for book collecting at the John Carter Brown, John Pierpont Morgan, and Henry Huntington in the West, however, were also fueled by the age-old spirit of competition. Without a doubt, Clark's resources for collecting were not on an equal footing with Huntington, and their collecting habits were vastly different, but this spirit of gentlemanly competition must have been a factor in his acquisitions.

The collecting of Arturo (Arthur) Alfonso Schomburg, founding contributor of the Schomburg's collection of "Negro history," however, was generally not concerned with competing among the upper echelons of society for the thrill of the hunt and the trophy of the acquisition. Nor did he ever possess the income to have such purchasing power to collect in medieval manuscripts, incunabula, or fine printing. He could, however, amass books of rarity that had been largely undervalued on the account of their status as "Negro literature." Tellingly, Schomburg's original bookplate was based on abolitionist Josiah Wedgwood's famous 1786 anti-slavery medallion.⁷⁸ The engraving on the bookplate shows the image of an enslaved African supplicating in genuflection on top of a banner which reads, "Am I not a man and a brother." There are, perhaps, certain qualities or characteristics that many book collectors over time and throughout the world may have shared with one another—qualities such as a love of "the hunt," or the love of learning, or tradition, or craftsmanship, an appreciation for *belle lettres*, or even the familiar scent of antiquarian editions. Nevertheless, the fortunes of these two men,

⁷⁸ SIV-B1: BP

Clark and Schomburg—who, it should be noted, were contemporaries, relatively close in age—differed widely; and so too did their reasons for collecting and, ultimately, their respective legacies. Racial difference and the dynamics of class and wealth, assuredly, must have formed some of the strongest roots out of the many that had branched over a lifetime of experiential divergence.

Schomburg was truly a bibliophile extraordinaire. A largely transatlantic figure ethnically, he was born on January 24, 1874 in San Juan Puerto Rico to African and German ancestry (Sinnette, 1989). Still, his mixed identity notwithstanding, from an early age he identified as a “Negro,” and throughout his life he both spearheaded and promoted the Pan-Africanist charge to unite black people throughout the Americas and the world. Like many great book collectors of the past, Schomburg was a mostly self-educated independent scholar and bibliographer. He immigrated to the U.S. in 1891, establishing himself in the city of New York, by working in semi-skilled labor and trades. During these early years, Schomburg even had some experience working in the printing industry before moving into community organizing and political activism (Sinnette, 1989). He spent his initial years in this work as a secretary for Las Dos Antillas in support of the independence movements of Puerto Rico and Cuba. After close to a decade in the U.S., however, his politics shifted toward combating the racial discrimination of African Americans (Sinnette, 1989, p. 26).

With a hunger for learning and a sense of purpose to provide a record of black history for the region’s community of black artists, writers, scholars, and learners, he amassed a massive collection of materials for research in black history and culture. Unlike Clark, however, as a mixed race child born out of wedlock, Schomburg did not have the benefit of inheriting neither

the wealth nor the prestige attached to his surname (Sinnette, 1989, p. 14). Although restricted by a limited income, Schomburg's penetration into the Harlem literati was still very deep. His collection was looked upon as a vital asset within this community. Schomburg himself had been active in organizations like the American Negro Academy and other groups and initiatives devoted to black scholarship. He had been an instrumental figure in the early development of black freemasonry. And he did his best to serve some the greatest black minds of his day including Alexander Crummell, Claude McKay, and Marcus Garvey. He once received a direct appeal, for example, from Amy Jacques Garvey, Garvey's wife, asking him to sign a petition (with "hundreds of thousands of signatures") of appeal to President Coolidge for her husband's release (personal communication, May 11, 1925).

For years prior to his service as a New York Public Library curator, Schomburg had been the unofficial librarian of the African American intellectuals of Harlem. And when his collection was purchased by the New York Public Library with a Carnegie grant of \$10,000 in 1926, Schomburg not only agreed to personally shepherd the collection's transition into public hands, but, by doing so, he would outline its potential for the promotion of black culture and learning (Sinnette, 1989, p. 137). That same year, Schomburg was able to make his only trip to Europe where book hunting was to be part of the agenda (Sinnette, 1989, p. 92). Considering that he was only paid a salary of \$2,400 for his truly invaluable service to posterity, it is not shocking that that he could not make more trips of this kind (Sinnette, 1989, p. 160).⁷⁹ During his time as curator from 1932 until his death in 1938, however, Schomburg was regularly consulted by teachers, librarians, scholars, and writers as an authority of African American studies and literature. He curated important exhibitions of black artists, organized events, and gave lectures

⁷⁹ Roughly \$30,000 a year in today's money.

in addition to his work as the collection's curator. A flier for the October 14, 1936 evening service for the Metropolitan Missions Training Institute which lists Schomburg as giving a talk called, "The African Background of the Negro," is reliably illustrative of the kinds of subjects and issues that he chose to tackle in his lectures.

He not only recommended titles to others, but he received recommendation for books and new avenues of research from friends and colleagues alike. The African American composer W. C. Handy, for one, wrote to Schomburg in the summer of 1937 about the music of composer William Grant Still. Along such lines, much like the fine print editions at the Clark Library, the provenance of some of the books in Schomburg's core collection provide physical evidence of the collector's personal friendships and social ties. The particular copy of Hughes's *Not Without Laughter* that I examined during my onsite bibliographic research almost immediately revealed traces of the long-standing relationship between collector Arthur Schomburg and author Langston Hughes. The copy was signed by the author. The signature effectively renders the object into an artifact. However, the instance of a signature here also quietly hints at Hughes' hand in actually shaping Schomburg's collecting. The wildly generous and enthusiastic tone in a correspondence that he sent to Schomburg while working and touring in Moscow in 1933 better elucidates the system of bibliographic reciprocity delineated by the presence of a signed copy of his debut novel:

I found your letter awaiting me here on my return from Soviet Asia. I was happy to learn that you met my friends in Havana, and that you also have a high regard for Guillen's poetry. I would like very much to aid in putting this poetry into English, but I am afraid I could do nothing about it soon. If you have anyone else in mind who can do the job now,

get hold of them. At present I am putting into English Mayakovsky's two Negro poems that he wrote in Havana, and his poem about the Pushkin statue that stands in the heart of Moscow.....A postcard photograph of this statue is enclosed. (2 copies)... Whatever material of the sort I see, I shall send you. (personal communication, February 5, 1933)

Hughes went on to describe the hidden treasures in the Russian rare book shops, and asked if the library would like him to make some acquisitions on their behalf.

The fact that one of the Schomburg's three buildings and two of its event spaces were later named after Langston Hughes honors the intellectual relationship between these two men inasmuch as it commemorates the accomplishments of the author. As we saw with Clark, the biography of the collector can be wedded both to the physical space and the cultural legacy of the collection's greater lifetime. This situation has played out time and time again with varying degrees of complexity. The longevity and continuity enjoyed by both Clark Library and Schomburg Center's collection is certainly not a given. At times, the negotiated conditions of the transfer between collector and institution can inadvertently be outside of the interests of the local community. One of Schomburg's conditions of sale was that the collection was to be part of the NYPL research collection and not beholden to a particular branch (Sinnette, 1989, pp. 137-139). Consequently, at certain points, Harlem residents have had to fight to keep the collection from being absorbed by the "main branch" (Stephen A. Schwarzman Building) on 5th Avenue and 42nd Street. Schomburg's original vision, however, had also allowed for the collection's continued expansion. And the current, more culturally relevant, renovated facility that houses the vastly larger twenty-first century collection of black studies materials honors the legacy of the founder in more than name alone.

One of the more interesting examples of the interplay between the collector's legacy and the physical residence of the collection can be found in the case of the Mayme Clayton Library and Museum. The Clayton Library is unique in a number of ways. First, it does not have the benefits nor the drawbacks of being attached to a larger library system. Secondly, in accordance with the consent of her eldest son, Avery Clayton (d. 2008)—who was in charge of the collection in 2004 when the family was searching for a permanent home to house it—the items were ultimately housed in a public, non-library facility. Lastly, the volume of her collecting, given the time during which she was collecting and the nature of the materials, was considerably higher than both Clark and Schomburg. Her original collection tallied at over a staggering 30,000 books by the time major institutions such as the Huntington Library in Pasadena expressed interest in acquiring it. The books, were part of larger collection of over a million items.

How did Clayton manage to amass such an impressively voluminous collection? Summed in brief, it must have been in part due to her strength of mind and strength of character. She worked professionally as a librarian throughout her adult life, working in the UCLA and USC library systems, but then her mission for building a collection was very much aligned with Schomburg's aspirations to build a central repository for black knowledge and showcase African American literary and artistic production (MCLM Staff, personal communication, March 3, 2014).⁸⁰ In the 1970s, she had worked as an organizer and in fundraising, founding educational nonprofits such as the Western States Black Research and Education Center (WSBREC). And like Schomburg and many of her other predecessors in black press book collecting, she did not simply dabble in an independent book selling venture, she became a co-owner of Universal Books before opening her own book store called "Third World Ethnic Books" (MCLM Staff,

⁸⁰ SIII-D1: PROMO. Biographical information received from the MCLM "open house" tour given by the staff on a regular basis.

personal communication, March 3, 2014). Born in 1923, just three years before Clark would officially announce his plans to gift his library to UCLA and Schomburg would sell his collection to the New York Public Library, Clayton came to enjoy the life of affluence afforded to the patrician class of African Americans in Los Angeles. Not only did she earn her Master in Library Science from Goddard College, she also held a doctoral degree in the humanities. She resided in West Adams on Cimarron Street, fascinatingly enough, only a couple blocks from the Clark Library (MCLM Staff, personal communication, March 3, 2014). Recall briefly that from the 1940s through the 1970s West Adams was one of the more popular neighborhoods for affluent blacks in Los Angeles. Clayton's academic prestige combined with her role as an activist for black history and education must have helped her to thrive socially in such a community. And adding on the fact that she was also a skilled and avid golfer, Clayton acquired a reputation in the city for being a spirited socialite, worldly in her travels (MCLM Staff, personal communication, March 3, 2014).

The manner in which Clayton's biography has been enshrined in the collection space differs from both the Clark Library and the Schomburg Center in some interesting ways. The biographical history of Clark cannot be extracted from the building because he had full control of the choice of architects and the much of the furnishing and interior décor prior to its transfer. Schomburg, who had comparatively little control over such decisions, relied upon the parent library system to integrate his legacy into the space and pay tribute to his name therein and thereafter. However, after the Clayton family accepted Culver City's invitation to house the collection in the city's former courthouse, they had come up with unique ways of commemorating the founder in a repurposed space. Working with the staff and volunteers, the family had one of the building's rooms fully dedicated to Clayton's memorialization. In this

room one finds a quasi-replica of her collection its original “garage-front” state. Having an exhibit modeled after the collector’s home environment provides the illusion of intimacy that is, in many respects, based in a level of reality that is inherent to the Clark Library, given that the gentleman himself had actually habited the space during his lifetime.

In any event, the decision to repurpose a former courthouse into a research library has had other noteworthy consequences; in particular, there have been certain outcomes related to what parts of the collection can be accessed, by whom, and how the Clayton family sustains operations. It is worth here restating here that, in addition to tens of thousands of books, Clayton also built an extensive periodical collection of newspapers and magazines which was, as it turns out, part of a larger ephemera collection made up primarily of programs and pamphlets. She collected manuscripts, photographs, sheet music, and records (MCLM Staff, personal communication, March 3, 2014). Most remarkably, however, is that Clayton was also a serious collector and promoter of black films; so much so, in fact, that she founded the Black American Cinema Society in 1976. Over time, this aspect of her collecting legacy has proven to be distinctly well-suited to the particular amenities that a courthouse facility has to offer. Whereas a very small amount of the space has been allotted for readers to conduct onsite research—in fact, the site did not have an official reading room in any capacity during the time of my research—the old courtrooms are tailor-made for the library’s regular film series which screens multiple films a month. In this case, the circumstances of the transfer, its geographic location, and its physical space together prompted stakeholders to find innovative ways to engage the community through the collection in a largely nontraditional research environment.

6. II. 1. Performativity: African American Vernacular English and Hip Hop Literacies

I have pulled a series of micronarratives from the data in order to unearth some of our assumptions regarding the neutrality of the book and the traditional library response to the black literacy crisis. Having done so, it is prudent at this point, to launch into a discussion of the performance of black literacy in the library setting. As noted in the introduction, previous studies typically begin with literacy because “the book” is seen only as a material vehicle of textual transmission. According to this view, the act of reading is committed upon a text as knowledge is transferred through a pedagogy which favors an “injection” or banking model of education (Freire, 1970). Using ethnobibliographic method, however, this study has pursued a different route of investigation to show how racial identity and the book object can be tied together, particularly within the context of the library research environment. The practice of literacy, then, within this context, must also be constructed along racial lines.

The *bibliocultural* relationships that exist among books, race, and the performance of reading can be inculcated with our earliest encounters with literacy instruction. Multiculturalism in the classroom, for all the criticisms it had received during its initial implementation, was really a reaction to a perceived deficiency in pedagogical representation and cultural relevancy in teaching materials (Ladson-Billings, 1992). And the fact remains that there is a delicate balancing act that must be performed in the classroom space when the subject of racial difference is pulled out into the open through, say, the oral recitation of written text. Perhaps the most well-known example of this phenomenon had occurred when, prior to the release of the sanitized 2011 NewSouth edition, black students in predominately white classrooms had been routinely compelled to read aloud passages from Mark Twain’s *Huckleberry Finn*. The absence of black

literature in this context, or even the absence or demeaning representation of people of color in canonical literature, works in concert with the materiality of these texts to forge associations between letters, communication, identity, and learning at our most formative years.

The further back in the history one looks, the more hostility toward black literacy in the pedagogy one discovers. A black student in the late nineteenth or early twentieth century was likely to have learned their ABCs and 123s with a book such as the 1873 version of *The Ten Little Niggers*—printed jointly in both London and New York. There are numerous layers of messaging and interpretation at play here for the black novice reader (Schmidt-Wulffen, 2012). First and perhaps most immediately perceptible is the blatant disregard for black life; moreover, this lesson of misanthropic indifference is delivered innocuously in comic illustrations and song lyrics simultaneously intended to teach children to read and count. One of the more disturbing lyrical phrases, for example, reads, “Seven little boys chopping up sticks/one chopped himself in halves, and then there were six” (1873, n.p.). There is a diminutive if not faintly optimistic message of assimilation for readers of color, too, at the song’s conclusion which reads, “One little nigger with his nice little wife/ lived all his days a very happy life” (n.p.). The corresponding illustration depicts a wholesome black couple with the apparently “literate” husband reading a copy of *Daily News* in an armchair with his conservatively dressed wife knitting around the hearth fire in the fashion of the model Victorian home. Yet, again, less obvious is the peculiar manner in which the black bodies are used to construct the letterforms and the message that their construction—both in the literal and the figurative senses—conveys to readers. Unlike the similar example found in Park’s *Venus* where the letter “U” is symbiotically superimposed upon the corporeality of the black female buttocks, the young black men that construct the letters of this songbook communicate the sense that they are laboring, acrobatically

to contort themselves into the proper shapes of each letter. Each letter works with the other to form the word, a word which spells out a number.

These insensitivities, whether overt or covert, being driven by racial difference, constitute acts of aggression insofar as they attempt to eliminate cultural difference through assimilation. The chief instrument of assimilation, as astutely noted by Fernandez (2001) in her discussion on Hirsch's "cultural literacy," is the binary. The binaries exposed by her critique are those which have erroneously propped up the invisible boundaries between written/oral, text/non-text, book/non-book, literacy/illiteracy, and, ultimately, white/black. How, then, can we start to recognize and understand the way that black literacy is practiced when we can only see literacy in terms of binaries? Reaching the point of Fernandez's argument wherein multiplicity and performativity are the dominant identifiers, and recognizing, like Richardson, the linguistic complexity of hip hop literacies, has taken generations serious of scholarship and research into the literacy question.

In black literacy studies, spoken language has always been a key factor. As early as 1969, an influential early collection of essays on the subject, *Teaching Black Children to Read*, began to highlight some of the more problematical difficulties that can arise from the dichotomization of dialect, particularly when conventional pedagogies are applied in basic literacy education for black youth. The first step in a long journey toward the legitimization and broad acceptance of African American Vernacular English in the mainstream—an aim, admittedly, which has yet to achieve fruition—arguably started with its earlier recognition as a dialect. In the opening essay of the collection, "Dialectology and the Teaching of Reading," Raven MacDavid, Jr. (1969) observed the phenomenon with a cultural lens:

Dialect associations of phonemes and graphemes may vary strikingly from one part of the culture to another. English patterns of phonemic-graphemic correspondence involve several layers of cultural convention, and some of the practices of some subcultural subdialects may be sharply at variance with normal practices of a speaker. These complexities of association make it difficult for someone not only to spell a word he normally confines to the spoken informal style, but to pronounce a word which he is accustomed to meeting only in print. And if words of the last group are frequently mispronounced in oral reading, there is a reasonable supposition that they will be as frequently mispronounced in silent reading. (p. 2)

McDavid had the insight to perceive cultural difference in the supposition, but the argument was still firmly rooted in the autonomous model, and, thusly, it dichotomizes difference in terms of black and white, literate and illiterate. Moreover, this position fails to acknowledge that there could be alternative modes of literacy at work in the dialect. For the most part, it seems the position is still largely maintained in contemporary linguistics.

In Joan Baratz's (1969) "Teaching Reading in an Urban Negro School System," an essay which comes later in the series, the classic argument for the black literacy is laid out in the typical pragmatist and functionalist terminologies. According to Baratz, black children are "failing" in schools and suffering from a relative lack of education. This failure, with illiteracy at its core, contributes not only to the lack of self-esteem, but it also limits one's potential for success in the job market (p. 93). Yet, there are also forward-thinking aspects of Baratz's agenda (i.e. to understand black dialect and integrate that knowledge into literacy instruction). "All the linguists studying Negro non-standard English agree that these differences are systematized

structured rules within the vernacular,” we are told, and “they agree that these differences can interfere with the learning of standard English, but they do not always agree as to the precise nature of these different rules” (p. 100). The first part of the supposition, perhaps inadvertently, is the most pioneering; for it concedes to the notion that there is a systematic element to AAVE and challenges the idea that the language is simply being based in syntactical randomness or an ungrammatical articulation of standard English, no matter how much it thrives on its own creativity. As noted by Baratz, “This language difference, not deficiency, must be considered in the educational process of the black ghetto child” (p. 101).

After thirty years of investigation into the issue, the discussion culminated with a contentious debate that commenced with the Oakland Unified School District Board of Education’s passing of the 1996 Oakland *Resolution on Ebonics*. A radical departure from even the most sympathetically progressive discourse of the period, this resolution boldly declared that Ebonics—a term that was being used to describe black vernacular in those years—was not actually a dialect, but a Pan-African language form linguistically rooted to its West African ancestor (para.2). The resolution required that Ebonics had to be integrated into the classrooms of Oakland’s schools in order to assist with young black students with literacy education (para. 12). Teachers fluent in both English and Ebonics, it followed, had to be fairly compensated for their bilingualism (para. 13). Furthermore, under these guidelines “code switching”—a process which involves oscillating back and forth between different dialects, inflections, tonalities, or languages in accordance with the circumstances, *mores*, and decorum in the act of communication—was likewise viewed as an educationally constructive practice.

Recently, a more nuanced understanding of black language has emerged with the increased usage of the term African American Vernacular English (or Black Vernacular English) in the discourse in place of Ebonics. Along such lines, the entire issue has been reassessed with the view that race is a socially constructed phenomenon. In short, when race is looked upon in this way, AAVE becomes a performative act insofar as it acts to create cultural difference (i.e. singularity) through the creolization of speech. In Young's (2007) understanding, then, the attempt to bridge the cultural divide through code switching in the classroom is not necessarily an effective method of addressing the problem of AAVE's status as an inhibitor to education. He advocated, instead, that teachers practice "code meshing"—or the natural, casual interspersing of AAVE into standard English lessons—in situations where an integration of the two would be deemed culturally appropriate (pp. 142-143). This practice, Young observed, was something that had been naturally occurring anyway, regardless of the numerous attempts by the academy to designate one as "proper" and the other, frankly, as the "other." If the definitive characteristics in black press literature, from its language to its graphic design, both reflect and reinforce the use of AAVE in black speech, especially as a performative vehicle of black expression, then the radical notion of allowing for a more robust integration of these alternative communicative modalities into the apparatuses of academic knowledge production loses its edge. Hip hop literature, in particular, has a synergetic bond with AAVE that cannot be disentangled. As Richardson (2006) has argued, the literature, viewed as a whole, constitutes a discourse that is situated within AAVE. It possesses its own cannon, and it has both a pedagogy and a literacy onto itself.

The pedagogy of hip hop, is clearly one that is characterized simultaneously by poetry and song. Ironically, the pedagogical framework of *The Ten Little Niggers* works from a similar principle. I make note of this curious example not to infantilize the pedagogy. To the contrary,

the fact that two diametrically opposed literacies could share an underlying pedagogical underpinning is a further acknowledgement of the unrecognized ubiquity of the oral in written culture. The same is true of its inverse, and, as with the case of poetry, there is much that is written embedded within the oral. These song poems, first and foremost, have functioned as pneumatic devices. The basic idea behind the song poems that resides within hip hop, when defined by a broader historical scope, has its precedents in various literary traditions; moreover, the literary traditions of sacred texts from the Vedas to the Psalms have been especially wedded to the form. Still, although these songs can be studied in accordance with the accepted methodologies of musicology and ethnomusicology, in these disciplines, the pedagogical modalities in the songs themselves are typically examined from an objective as opposed to a subjective standpoint, creating boundaries between the two modes of producing knowledge and constructing truth.

It is the synesthetic hearing of the listener and the existential intonation of the performer which creates the subjective bonds necessary for the activation of these secreted pedagogies into worldly materialization. The definitive performative characteristic operating here, whether it be isolated between author and reader, or set within the larger “context” of its place in “the world,” is interaction. The conundrum that, at once, bears out and undermines truth, perhaps, is best explained McGann’s (1989) *Towards a Literature of Knowledge*. To counter the idealism of Kantian thought which describes poetry and art as cerebral abstractions that are transcendently divorced from society, McGann articulated that poetry, as a text, was very much a part of the world, its failures, its controversies, and its limitations. For McGann, the lens of “truth-experience” had supplanted the “author function” and, ultimately, the “truth function” of the text (pp. 2-8). Essentially, poetry is born from the lives and experiences of the poets, and, in this

context, it is saturated with various motives and agendas. In that way, according to McGann, poetry is political. A poem must have a life beyond its author. That life is defined by the trails of its reception, interpretation, misinterpretation, quotation, and other forms of interaction. “Poetry,” McGann posited, “is not irrational; rather, it is the one form of discourse we have which displays the fact that human reason—the mind—has more comprehensive means for dealing with the truth than suggested by the traditional arguments of philosophy” (p. 7). Poetry, then, for McGann, exists within a discourse, and the “physique of poetic discourse is the ultimate ground of its radical incommensurability, and that physique can take many forms within the three general areas in which discourse occurs: linguistic, bibliographic, trans-active” (pp. 7-8). Explained in this way, the performative nature of poetry in its capacity to represent truth, represents the truth of its mundane, lived experience as a social text. McGann was able to illustrate his point in his discussions of “the work of Blake, Byron, D. G. Rossetti, and Ezra Pound,” but an analysis of the work of Shakur could have easily led to the same position—especially considering that the line between his art and his life, and even the circumstances of his death, had been remarkably thin (p. ix).

Graft onto this social dimension the interplay of the text with one’s racial identity and cultural background and arrive at the epistemological purpose that hip hop and its literature serves for black people across the globe. The Pan-Africanist linking of hip hop with the West African griot tradition is of particular importance in this regard, for it is the bridge which connects deejays and rappers with its ancestor in African textuality (Miller, 2004). This textuality, in particular, as scholars such as Gates (1988) and Fraser (2008) have clearly revealed, has a comparatively fluid and dynamic structure wherein improvisation within a framework of established narratives is a valued aspect of the pedagogy that supports it. The textuality, too, has

been more amenable to the reconfiguration of these narratives as Fraser has indicated in his discussion of the continuity of “orature” from *The Egyptian Book of the Dead* to the Yoruba tradition of *Ifa* (Fraser, 2008, pp. 42-43). And, by his account, this continuity had traversed these historically and geographically distant “modes of articulation” despite the chief difference among them which has resulted from “the fact that in the ancient Egyptian practice it is the words that are written down, and in West Africa or Cuba a numerical code on the basis of which the words are recited and then selected (there being two stages of randomness, one subject to destiny, and the other to individual choice)” (p. 43).

Translated into contemporary African American literacy practices, this textual reconfiguration through “orature” can be likened to the arts of freestyling and remixing (Miller, 2004). Such practices, for those who regularly engage with hip hop and its literature, simultaneously reinforce and perpetuate the truth experience of reception, whether that reception is aural or visual, or even both. Seen as a whole, what emerges is an alternative ontology which forms the basis of a counterhegemonic system of knowledge production directly relevant to the language and moral codes of black youth. Thus, when Richardson (2006) situated the literacies of hip hop as a legitimate manifestation of African American Vernacular Discourse (AAVD), she did so with the understanding that these literacies are born out of a transatlantic history and experience. Being part of a diasporic discourse, in fact, these literacies have been shared among African Americans and blacks in the West Indies who have mutually informed each other in terms of linguistic development and stylistic flourish in poetical and rhythmic composition. Accordingly, hip hop literature itself becomes one of the most quintessentially performative forms of textuality, not only signifying, but in that process, also contributing to racial identity construction (Banks, 2010; Grassian D., 2009; Richardson, 2006).

If hip hop is effectively a living, breathing example of a constantly evolving AAVD, then Young was, perhaps, correct when he asserted that his performance of AAVE was really an exercise in the preservation of his sense of cultural difference and racial autonomy (Richardson, 2006; Young, 2007). Recall that Young felt that his performance of conventional literacy practices within the mainstream American system of education had really been a performance of whiteness which resulted in a loss of cultural capital among fellow blacks, especially individuals in the low-income and working class brackets. His feelings were not limited to his own experience, as the sentiments are shared by many black academics, especially those working at major universities with mostly white populations (Harvey, 1998, p. 145). Young wrote:

Literacy habits, like reading novels of a certain kind and speaking what might appear to be standard English, have always made me seem more queer, more white identified, and more middle class than I am. When I fail to meet the class, gender, and racial notions that others ascribe to me, I'm punished. In some ways, living in a mostly white town and being an assistant professor at a Big Ten school heightens—not lessens, as I had hoped—the conflict that stems from the sometimes converging, but oftentimes diverging, racial and gender expectations that are held out for black men and that we hold out for each other. (p. xv)

The kind of cultural capital which is lost in the above selection, effectively one's "street credibility," is an essential requisite for entry into the social circles where hip hop literacies are most prominent. The fundamental problem in Young's reflexive analysis resides in the implicit awareness that adopting the distinctive combination of language, style, and personal appearance

that makes up hip hop culture, particularly as black men, can leave us open to racial profiling and implicit bias at the hands of our white colleagues.

The casual use of AAVE in formal settings can also have serious consequences. To be more specific, whereas literacy in both standard English and in AAVE does not generally ensure one's success, being literate only in AAVE is likely to ensure failure, at least in terms of the conventional workplace. The mainstream aversion to AAVE begins at birth with the act of naming, and it is carried on from there in a subsequent, utter rejection of the various vehicles of expression that are entirely relevant to the identities of marginalized blacks. In his book *Acting White* (2010), Ron Christie cited the research of Roland Fryer and Steven Levitt, and the subsequent economic analysis of Robert Barro in an argument that attempted to reveal a link between overtly black names such as "DeShawn, Shanice, and Deja" and poverty and the lack of social mobility (as cited in Christie, 2010, p. 127). If this research can be applied to the population at large, then at some of the responsibility for the incommensurability in literacies here lies with this primal antipathy. Overt admonitions against the style and apparel of African American youth—a style which is very much informed by hip hop—follow the same line of vocational impedance. The combination of style and language in particularly inopportune situations involving law enforcement has proven to be fatal in recent days. Nevertheless, despite attempts at culture shaming from Bill Cosby and other cultural critics, year after a year finds a gradual increase in the virtually imperceptible injection of AAVE into the mainstream (Christie, 2010; Grassian D., 2009). Terms like "twerking" and "on fleek" have experienced widespread usage through internet communication, and, at present, they can even be heard in broadcast

media.⁸¹ The rise in saturation is perhaps a natural outcome of demographic shifts in this country which have favored minorities and a maturing hip hop generation.

6. II. 2. Performativity: African American Vernacular English and Library Literacy Practices

Having discussed, in some detail, the specific process in which AAVE can breed its own discourse within the literacies and literatures of hip hop, the question remains as to the present degree to which special collections libraries are institutionally open to embracing these counterhegemonic modes of textual expression and knowledge production (Appendix A). The *environmental dissonance* that separates the Clark Library from the relatively sizable population of black people that live in and around its adjacent neighborhoods also manifests itself within the unwritten linguistic protocols that define the literacy practices which are performed daily behind its vine covered walls. The Clark library, if you will recall, had a Caucasian researcher population of approximately 89% over a two-week period. As one would expect, I found that during my research there was not a single occurrence of AAVE being used as a medium for conversation in this research environment. Again, the standards of communicative decorum here had been set by the conventional models of Western education and library operations. At the opposite end of the spectrum was the Clayton Library whose 87% black patron population saw roughly 84% of its representatives communicating comfortably in AAVE. The most fascinating case, it seems, was the Amistad Research Center which rested in the middle of the spectrum with 23% of its 44% African American population conversant in AAVE. Of particular interest here is the fact that the distribution between blacks and whites at this site was the closest to being equally divided. In the face of its geographic isolation from the heart of the New Orleans African

⁸¹ The word “twerk” refers to a feminized, club style of pelvic dancing that is often perceived as being sexually provocative. The term “on fleek” translates to a well-executed statement of fashion, especially one in involving apparel and/or cosmetics.

American community, whites constituted only around a ten percent higher share of the total patron population. Still, even with the relatively high percent of black students and researchers, standard English remained the dominant language of communication. The evidence suggested to me that the relative *gravitas* of the research atmosphere was enough to effectively suppress the use of AAVE in the reading room by privileging a strict adherence to an even more professional version of the standard. In other words, the use of standard English in this context has been a self-evidently normative literacy practice. This explanation could very well account for the comparatively reduced presence of AAVE among an African American population which, again, at the Amistad had been relatively high.

The formality which is engrained in the Clark's architecture, interior, design, programs, books, collections, and linguistic predilections, is mirrored in the appearance of its researchers. There were not any officially advertised dress-code policies in place that I could find, but the atmosphere of the research environment combined with the nature of the activities which occur within it seemed to have encouraged researchers to select either formal or semiformal apparel such as ties, button downs, and dress shoes, and business blouses, scarves, and long skirts for women. The combination of semiformal and formal attire accounted for 95% of the Clark's researcher population. The only barely visible intimation of black culture exhibited among the researchers (apart from myself) in the reading room came from the only other student researcher of color there who had stickers depicting black basketball players on her laptop computer—a practice, I should add, that could also be observed at the Schomburg Center.⁸² Casual attire was a popular choice among the Schomburg's many patrons and visitors, accounting for 66% of the

⁸² SI-D3: APR; SIV-D8: APR

facility's total population.⁸³ Jeans and t-shirts, sportswear, shorts, high-tops and sneakers were common enough.⁸⁴ It is reasonable to infer that Schomburg's status as a public collection in a major metropolitan district, not to mention its role as a tourist destination, would have accounted for the high proportion of casually dressed patrons.

If there was a noticeable outlier among the cases, however, then it would have to have been between the findings at the Amistad and the Clayton. The Amistad, with its considerably light presence of AAVE in its reading room, had a considerably high frequency of casually dressed individuals within its population. I am not suggesting that there is any kind of direct correlation between the number of AAVE speakers and the casually dressed; I am simply attempting to get at some sense of the degree to which the special collections reading room environment is open to these forms of expression. Above all, such forms of (cultural) expression are, in effect, inseparably intertwined with the performance of literacy in a public setting. Therefore, the fact that the Clayton Library was the case study that had the greatest amount of AAVE speakers among its patrons, but, much like the Clark Library, 94% of its patron population dressed in formal and semiformal wear, had clearly more to do with the age of these patrons than their choice of linguistic expression. I found that senior patrons and researchers tended to prefer formal and semiformal wear—the conventional style of dress for the special collections reading room. For black patrons, these semiformal and formal styles were not necessarily direct imitations of the American mainstream; rather, what I found was a combination of adoption and conscious integration of these styles with often subtle, and sometimes striking differences. One group of senior African American patrons visiting the Amistad, a group of potential donors, exhibited a fashion reminiscent of the Black Arts

⁸³ SIV-D2: APR

⁸⁴ SII-D4: APR

Movement. Some of the elders, for example, wore bold African print on their apparel and African style head wraps. Yet, considering that the majority of the Amistad's patron population were undergraduate students from Tulane, it is understandable that close to 70% of the population was dressed casually. Basically the university's undergraduate student culture had succeeded in breaking down some of the unspoken expectations in terms of proper reading room dress and attire; nevertheless, the relatively substantial numbers of black patrons drawn to the Amistad's collections by virtue of a cultural affinity have failed to do the same for the expectations of proper linguistic expression. Whereas seniors and graduate researchers favored the convention, younger students and the hip hop generation millennials tended to favor a more casual look.⁸⁵

It is difficult, if not virtually impossible, to discern all of the ways in which language and appearance shape the act of performing research in a special collection. It can certainly structure communication between patrons and staff, but it can also impact the interactions that patrons have with each other. The impact can be positive, such as in cases where AAVE speakers can have a more robust conversation about their research on the account of their mutual understanding of relevant terminologies, or it can be negative, as in the example where a patron's habit of listening to rap music through headphones at a high volume was the cause for reading room quarreling and complaints. Granted, the practice of listening to rap music in the reading room was one which was almost exclusively limited to the black youth demographic. It is that very demographic, however, which is in question. And even among this key demographic, the practice was relatively uncommon. Despite the many changes that have come to libraries with the advance of digital technology, many readers still opted to study in the conventional manner

⁸⁵ SII-D9: APR

using a laptop or notebooks with a pencil to take notes on their selected books and archival materials.⁸⁶ In each case, silent reading and quiet study were still among the most widely shared literacy practices in special collections research.

6. II. 3. Performativity: Role Reversal in Literacy Instruction at the Amistad Research Center

To end my discussion on the performativity of literacy practices in the special collections library, and to close the description and analysis of my findings overall, I will note in some detail one of the most peculiar, yet also one of the most important instances of a performance of black literacy in the reading room space that I had encountered during my research. I encountered this instance at the Amistad Research Center in Tulane. My immediate impression of the Tulane University campus was that it had a relatively high population of white students compared to students of color. The largest minority presence, in fact, appeared to be concentrated in the janitorial, grounds keeping, and food service staff. My experience, in fact, is validated by the demographic data released by Tulane's own admission's website which reports a 73.46% for Caucasians compared to just 3.43% for African Americans (Tulane University, 2015). During my time spent onsite, very little AAVE was heard being spoken by black students both inside and outside of the reading room. Moreover, the very slight presence of AAVE, which was often only peppered in speech with the more popular terms and phrases, was not limited to students of color. Contrastingly, when, during my time in New Orleans, I made a brief visit to the Dillard University campus upon the invitation of one of the university's professors, I noticed that AAVE had clearly been the preferred form of linguistic expression among students there.

⁸⁶ SI-SIV: EQ

This comparatively high ranking university among the HBCUs had a mostly black population, and the nearly ubiquitous presence of AAVE seemed to be a fully accepted part of the campus culture. Much research has already gone into the exploration of this phenomenon. A study by Lamuel Watson (1998), for instance, found that the environmental factors at HBCUs contributed to a greater level of satisfaction and success among black students because of the strong support networks and deep cultural understanding that black students are greeted with on these campuses. Conditions, according to Watson, are quite the reverse for black students in “predominantly white institutions” (p. 81). It is likely that the same is true for black students at Tulane, but that is not the focus of the present study. What is important to note here, however, is that as a direct result of the Tulane’s special relationship with the Amistad certain opportunities have been available for the university’s black student body to connect with their history through primary source research and cultural heritage programs.

One of these programs in particular consisted of a course attached to Tulane’s Student Service Learning Projects. The Service Learning Projects allow students to earn credits through community engagement. The Amistad Research Center is technically open to the public, and, as such, it is a valuable asset to the New Orleans’s robust African American community. Students that selected the Amistad as their service learning site had the option of concomitantly improving their foreign language skills by working with a course instructor to assist with the processing and curation of African language materials. The objectives for the project were defined in the course catalog:

Amistad holds original materials dating to 1859 that reference the social and cultural importance of America’s ethnic and racial history and the Yoruba African diaspora.

These records include papers, photographs, art and other important documents. The goal of the Diaspora Yoruba public service course is to help organize, select, catalogue, and process Yoruba materials as one of Amistad's special collections. Learning about Diaspora Yoruba through archival collection provides a hands-on approach to studying the subject matter. (Tulane University, 2014, p. 27)

This course, as it was taught onsite, involved a substantial amount of literacy instruction in a West African language that has numerous ties to Pan-Africanism and black culture, especially in Cuba where it is deeply infused in the country's prevailing religious tradition known as Santeria.

The course instructors were native Yoruba speakers, and they were essentially responsible for guiding the students through a series of translation work. Yoruba is a tonal language wherein the difference in tone can change the meaning of a word.⁸⁷ This distinction, it stands to reason, could be problematic for non-native speakers when dealing with translation. These Nigerian born instructors were able to teach their students the nuances of tonality in Yoruba words and phrases. Needless to say, the process—purely out of necessity—was not one which reflected the conventional expectations of a quiet research atmosphere.⁸⁸ Moreover, in keeping with the demographics of the campus, the majority of the students enrolled in the course were white, and relatively very few students of color could be found engaged in this work.⁸⁹ The students of color that did participate conducted their work in standard English when communicating with the instructors or the other students. The English of the instructors, though accented, was particularly polished. Hence, here we have a case where black instructors are teaching predominantly white students African literacy in standard English. This example is a

⁸⁷ SII-D4-D8, D12: EDU, PRCT, ACT

⁸⁸ SII-D10: PRCT

⁸⁹ SII-D4-D8, D12: EDU, PRCT, ACT

stark reminder, then, of the limits of racial dichotomization in literacy. Here, all of the attempts to cognitively transform that which is steeped in hybridity and creolization into the singularity of a single racial identity breakdown in the complexity of lived experience.

Chapter Seven: Conclusion

7. I. Contextualization of Spatiality

The problem I sought to address in this research—the problem of the library’s current response to black literacy—is simple on its face, but underneath there are numerous issues at question. I have employed an ethnobibliographic analysis in order to reframe the discussion in a different light. We must, however, return our attention toward the greater implications of this research. What can it recommend for both bibliographic theory and library policy? More centrally, how exactly has this discussion on black literacy been reframed by my findings? In order to answer these questions, it is best to refer back to the most recent response to the perceived crisis coming from Hughes-Hassell et al. (2012) and their pioneering report *Building a Bridge to Literacy for African American Youth*. Hughes-Hassell et al., we find, made a number of recommendations for libraries across the nation to consider when addressing the black literacy issue, and they are recommendations that any working professional would be hard-pressed to disregard. Their report suggested that libraries should work to challenge stereotypes by both identifying and overcoming some of the implicit biases that could deleteriously impact encounters with black male youth. The authors recommended that librarians actively refuse to view this demographic through a “deficit-oriented lens that represents the race, culture, language, and other characteristics of black male youth as limitations” (p. 13). They propose that open and collaborative spaces are the most amenable to black learning, and further that these spaces should include interior design choices that reflect the black community (p. 14). They stress the importance of forging partnerships and fostering mentorships in the community (p. 13). And, most notably perhaps, the report advocates for a robust integration of “enabling texts” (pp. 5-7).

For the most part, my own position is very much in accord with these suggestions—that is, as discrete, individual ideas that can be applied in a number of cases. Yet before I can close this study by fully rearticulating the very heart of the issue of there being a crisis in black literacy, I must begin with a brief summarization, based on my findings, of my own recommendations for a directional shift in our thinking in terms of our response as an institution. The situation, I would put forth, should be approached as protocols on the following three orders of engagement:

1. Contextualization – This first order protocol of engagement seeks to increase the visibility of dynamics that may exist or may have existed in the past between the history and culture of a library facility and its collections with the history and culture(s) of a patron population (e.g. students or researchers) and the communities that make up the local population (e.g. neighborhood, town, district, county, etc.) of its residency—this population being the immediate beneficiary of local outreach efforts.
2. Synthesis – This second order protocol of engagement will continue in its diversification of collections; however, the diversification shall proceed with an acute awareness of the relationships between culture and the materiality of bibliographic objects as cultural artifacts. In doing so, the formal boundaries of both the definitive qualifiers of what constitutes a bibliographic object and the systems of knowledge organization by which these objects are cataloged and arranged can undergo a similar process of diversification.
3. Adaptation – This third and final order protocol of engagement acknowledges the legitimacy of alternative literacies and counterhegemonic pedagogies to the extent

that it allows for an integration of these modalities into its own systems of knowledge production, effectively committing to transformation on a fundamental level.

The first order, contextualization, will be dealt with here. Simply put, contextualization as a protocol of engagement (with black literacy) is a conscious acknowledgement that the library, both institutionally and locally, can never be an objectively neutral entity (Day, 2005; Furner, 2007; Wilson, 1968). Libraries have histories which are political, they have missions with political aims—like providing literacy instruction to promote civic participation, and they are often absorbed in the politics of their funders and stakeholders. With regards to the question of a politicized mission, contextualization helps to identify blind spots and biases. And, most notably perhaps, this process can also assist with both the detection and the better comprehension of cases of *environmental dissonance*. In some instances this first order protocol can begin lessening the negative impacts of this dissonance.

When I wrote of the dissonance between the Clark Library and the South Los Angeles African American community, I was writing as a South Los Angeles resident of several years, aware of the library's local mystique in the neighborhood. I also framed the discussion as an issue of access. Some of the recent literature on access in the library and information fields has focused on information access and remote access to information objects using information technology (Lievrouw & Farb, 2003). The issues of resource equity and the digital divide have enjoyed their fair share of attention in studies of this kind (Lievrouw & Farb, pp. 504-527). This study has looked at access in terms of the local environment and the physical space of the library. The physical space was of particular importance to the present study because the material (special/research) collection is nearly always housed within it, and, up until very recently, it is

where of the most primary source bibliographic research is actually conducted. I have also acknowledged that the knowledge organization infrastructure is, in and of itself, a material structure. It is a structure increasingly populated with encoded digital artifacts that take the form of remotely accessible digital surrogates. This study has not focused on remote access through the digitization of special collections (Star & Ruhleder, 1996). Instead, the aim has been to review samples from the core collections as they are situated in their immediate residencies because when investigating primary sources, particularly those that are bibliographic in nature, it is crucial to understand that the digitized versions constitute their own unique surrogate objects, but they are not the actual artifacts they affect to encode and display.

The center of gravity for special collections as far as knowledge production is concerned is in the physical space. Accordingly, in this study the role of the library space and its relationship to the community has supplanted the role of data dissemination in my reframing of the black literacy question. It has been the key to unlocking a process of contextualization. It is a process, for instance, that considers the physicality of the library space when establishing a base of library operations. The current response, in fact, comments astutely on this point:

Effective libraries are also places where Black male youth see their cultural heritage represented, respected, and celebrated. Cultural diversity is woven throughout the collection, and in the books, on recommended reading lists, showcased in displays, and targeted for book discussions, in the pictures on the walls, and the staff who work in the library. Effective library spaces extend beyond the four walls of the library to provide both physical and virtual access to resources, services, and programs. (Hughes-Hassell, Kumasi, Rawson, & Hitson, 2012, p. 14)

These are all reasonable and principled goals; nevertheless, no matter the amount of effort and resources devoted to achieving them, they simply cannot be realized in every circumstance. Without thorough contextualization, we will fail to understand precisely why and how these objectives may or may not be achieved from one situation to the next.

Library and information professionals addressing the issue of black literacy, consequently, in addition to educating themselves about their own building's history and the history of their collections, should remember to also familiarize themselves with the African American community and its culture and history; in other words, librarians should contextualize when and wherever possible. Let us return, for example, to the Clark Library's dissonance with the local African American community. Does this institution have any sense of this culture, or where it lives? Where does black culture live? Does it live in the rap music playing in parking lots or in the preachers evangelizing from street corners? Does it exist in the gang signs that a passerby might be greeted with walking on the block on, say, Los Angeles's Crenshaw Blvd, or in the young tattooed gang members "throwing" them up? Maybe it expresses itself in the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day celebration or the Soul Food festival held annually on that same boulevard. Perhaps the culture dwells in the barbershops that line this street and so many like it across the country. It might even live in all of those McDonald's dine-in chess matches, or in the many deep and philosophical discussions that occur daily in these places. Does it live, then, in gospel songs and church hats, or socialize with the Jack and Jills and the Eastside Boys? Does it dance with the Mardi Gras parades in New Orleans and sound out in their brass bands and drumlines? Does it laugh with the young basketball players practicing daily in Harlem's Jackie Robinson Park, or cook with the Jamaican restaurants that thrive there in the company of shops that specialize in reggae music and apparel? Did it stand up in the Black Lives Matter rallies of

Leimert Park? The answer, of course, is that the culture must live in all of these places and in all of these instances, as it is driven by the lives of the individuals that, as a network, form the fabric of these local communities. For that reason, when seeking to understand the Clark Library's *environmental dissonance* with the African American community, it becomes important for us to understand that black culture resides, too, in the living history of West Adams and its adjacent neighborhoods, just as African American architect Paul R. Williams's (d. 1980) Golden State Mutual Life Insurance building—the former historic center of Los Angeles's black middleclass—still stands vacant on the corner of Adams and Western as a towering reminder of its past glory. Similarly, it is also important that we understand the role that William Andrews Clark Jr.'s legacy played in shaping the library's architecture, interior design, and collection development in order to comprehend the ways in which this legacy has contributed to the ensuing dissonance over time.



Figure 13. Holding cell at the Mayme A. Clayton Library and Museum

In a sense, the Clark is not wrong for adhering to its Eurocentrism. In order to expose itself to a broader demographic, however, an imposing and heavily historicized collection such as Clark's requires contextualization through cultural attunement in lieu of its lost symbiosis with its local environment. What is needed is an account of that loss before one can truly rebuild connections and relationships with the community, incrementally. The risk of opting out of this

process and continuing in the edification of cultural difference in policies and operations is a continued loss of cultural relevancy on the local level. Lost, too, is the opportunity for cross-cultural education and exchange. It is not for a lack of historical material or potentially connective themes. Given that the Clark Library is also home to the UCLA's Center for 17th and 18th Century Studies, and being that there was a substantial amount of transatlantic literature produced during that period concerning the transatlantic slave trade, slave revolts, liberation movements, black entrepreneurship, and other aspects of black history, it has a number of realizable options for broadening encounters with students of color and expanding outreach to the local community.

On the other side of things, as we begin to contextualize the library space, we also discover the latent opportunity to explore our obligation to convention. At this place we can begin to discern whether or not adherence to the convention in all circumstances is actually the best practice. I found that each of the African American special collections had adopted the conventions set by institutions like UCLA's Clark Library with varying degrees of difference. None of the Afrocentric special collections offered a complete replica the Eurocentric model, yet I found that, in some cases, they opted to integrate exclusionary policies that were somewhat contradictory to the stated mission of improving the conditions for black literacy enrichment in the library. The report from Hughes-Hassell et al. (2012), for instance, calls for open and collaborative spaces. Policies designed for the preservation of the traditionally quiet reading room atmosphere serve as barriers to the possible implementation of this rather reasonable recommendation. Moreover, the lengthy and intimidating registration forms that readers and researchers must fill out after passing through the necessary security checks—although, admittedly, an essential part of circulation and reading room operations—may be at odds with

the comfort-levels of local amateur historians, younger students, or novice researchers. They can act as filters that rest on top of many layers of filters—layers which begin with the power of exclusion afforded to the space on the account of its intellectual sanctity or architectural grandiosity.

The reality is that physical spatiality can impact many aspects of access, encounter, and use of a library's collection. Of the three African American libraries I focused on in this study, for example, the Clayton Library demonstrated the greatest potential for innovative uses of its collections. It was clear that these innovations were at least in part out of necessity and from a lack of funding and resources. Without a fulltime reading room space and without a working library catalog, the space shifted its emphasis from research to community engagement. Most of the activity in the space now entails culturally relevant events that showcase collection items according to specific themes, all while celebrating the legacy of the collector. The benefits of a relatively high degree of autonomy and creative potential, however, are inhibited by some of the structural and aesthetic challenges that are physically embedded within the space. One of major challenges facing the Clayton library facility involves the repurposing of the building's old jail cells retained from its time served as Culver City's main courthouse (Figure 13). What is there to do with a real jail cell in a library? The library's professional and volunteer staff working with community seniors and local mentors have used this cell in a program to teach black youth about activism in the Civil Rights Era.⁹⁰ In simple terms, young black adolescents undergo a simulated arrest and lock-up to get a sense of what it was like the many activists who had been imprisoned for protesting during this period. The foremost intention of this activity has been to foster a more profound appreciation for the struggles of the community's elders. A deeper contextualizing of

⁹⁰ SIII-D2: FAC, EDU

the current state of incarceration for black youth, however, especially for young black men in America, would quickly reveal to these stakeholders why their unequivocally good intentions may be perceived by some as distasteful and potentially damaging to the psyche of this key demographic.

7. II. Bibliocultural Synthesis

The process of synthesis, the second of three protocols of engagement, moves from the point of contextualization and begins to recognize that the book, like the library, is not a neutral entity. It is a recognition that every decision that a library makes which alters the physical characteristics of the book transforms the various codes that are inherent to that book's material production, just as the cold sterility of a standard library binding can serve, effectively, to institutionalize the first encounter with the book object by covering the earlier typographic and visual cues in the fashion of a palimpsest manuscript. When it comes to books, the response from Hughes-Hassell et al. (2012) places all of the attention on the role of the text. The materiality of the book is virtually a non-factor in the authors' overall assessments. Yet, alongside market trends in design and manufacture, there are unspoken materially-embedded codes which are communicated along the lines of gender, class, nation, and status. My research has shown that they are also communicated along racial and cultural lines. It is one of the reasons why I believe that Eastern books, being manufactured differently than those in the West, have a different aesthetic quality to them than those in the West. It is a phenomenon which reveals itself even in the typographic stylings of store sign letterforms and the ethnic fonts which are specifically tailored to meet the design needs for commercial ephemera in major metropolitan ethnic enclaves.

The larger point is that, as special collections, we must be prepared to deal with a range of diverse bibliographic artifacts in a manner which is in accord with the cultural representation which such objects are understood to embody or reflect. An African American special collection in particular should be uniquely methodologically positioned as well as professionally equipped to integrate this protocol. If possible, each of the nation's major black studies collections should open themselves to the acquisition of a book such as Augustus's *Black Queen* (1990)—an independently produced book of poetry. While walking down Crenshaw Blvd. one afternoon I was stopped by a young black poet who was selling some of his work to interested pedestrians. I only needed to take a brief look at his book before I knew that I wished to purchase a copy for myself, which I did for less than five dollars. I also purchased one of his self-produced hip hop albums on compact disc for around the same price.

The book in hand—a thin, illustrated Xeroxed volume with a staple binding, is inexpensive looking and unassuming to the naked eye—but examining it with an awareness of the *bibliocultural* dimensions wrapped within will give the holder a greater appreciation for what it represents when it comes to racial identity construction and the production of knowledge in the black community. The creolization of roman letterforms and a Greco-Roman aesthetic is evident from the book's cover page illustration. Here the reader is greeted by a large page border made of two massive Greek columns, crowned by a decorated balcony, and buttressed by stairs that lead into the center of the page. In the center one finds a black and white image of our solar system and galaxy. The type one finds on each page bears a serif-based roman font in italics, but unlike earlier generations of black literature, legitimization and humanization are not really the unstated intentions of this instance of typographic cueing. Firstly, being that the poem is essentially a love poem, and considering the empowering qualities of the verse, it becomes clear

that the cues are actually meant to provide an air of romance and elegance to the text.

Simultaneously, a sense of earnestness and strength is signified by the architectural page borders.

It is true that typographic cues may be found in both European and Anglo-American books which are nearly identical to the example I have just described. So how does one identify the different racial codes embedded within them? In this case, a better understanding of the poet's racial identity will serve to unveil the meaning of that which is stated in the materiality as a subtlety:

even though we fell into hell

to experience the worst human tragedy

during the dark, weary centuries of U.S. slavery:

A government in a country

seeking to make our destiny

a white universal democracy

by forcing us to give up

the knowledge of our black self

and our glorious past identity (n.p.)

It is poetry, yes, but not poetry that is written in the meter of Keats or the free verse of Milton or Whitman. It also happens to be the kind of literature intended to connect with black youth on the street level about their community and their history. Composed almost entirely in an eloquent

standard English, Augustus signaled a textual nod to his black readers when he wrote, in this single instance of AAVE in the poem, “talk to ‘em for you and me/tornados and hurricanes/will drive all their multitudes insane” (n.p.).

With the understanding that the author is speaking to a specific (black) audience, the Greek columnar page borders take on a different meaning than if the same design choice was made by a white poet or publisher. And considering the radical nature of the message compared to the American mainstream, knowing that it is a self-published book changes the way one looks at the inexpensive zine-like quality of its production value. Additionally, this is not the kind of book which is sold in stores or in bookshops. In fact, if I had not been in touch with the community in the first place, a book like this one would have never come into my hands. It is true that its scarcity creates its rarity, but it is also true that it is only a small peek into the vast amount of black literature which is born from and circulates in the streets.

When engaging in a process of *bibliocultural* synthesis the delineating limits of the book coming from Bowers, Stokes, and Gaskell are perhaps too rigid (Kallendorf, 2015). For our purposes, the more expansive views of McKenzie, McGann, and Fraser are to be preferred. Why exactly would Augustus’s *Black Queen* be acquired as a work of poetry and not his accompanying hip hop album, *Young Black Brothers Stop Killing One Another*? Why does its musical quality set it in a different category? In approaching these other concerns what is needed is a new model for the book. We need a model that is, at once, more elastic, dialogical, and convergent. Based on my research, I have begun to outline such a model. It is a model which places process at the center of relationships which connects books with their readers (Figure 14). It is a model of *bibliocultural* co-emergence.

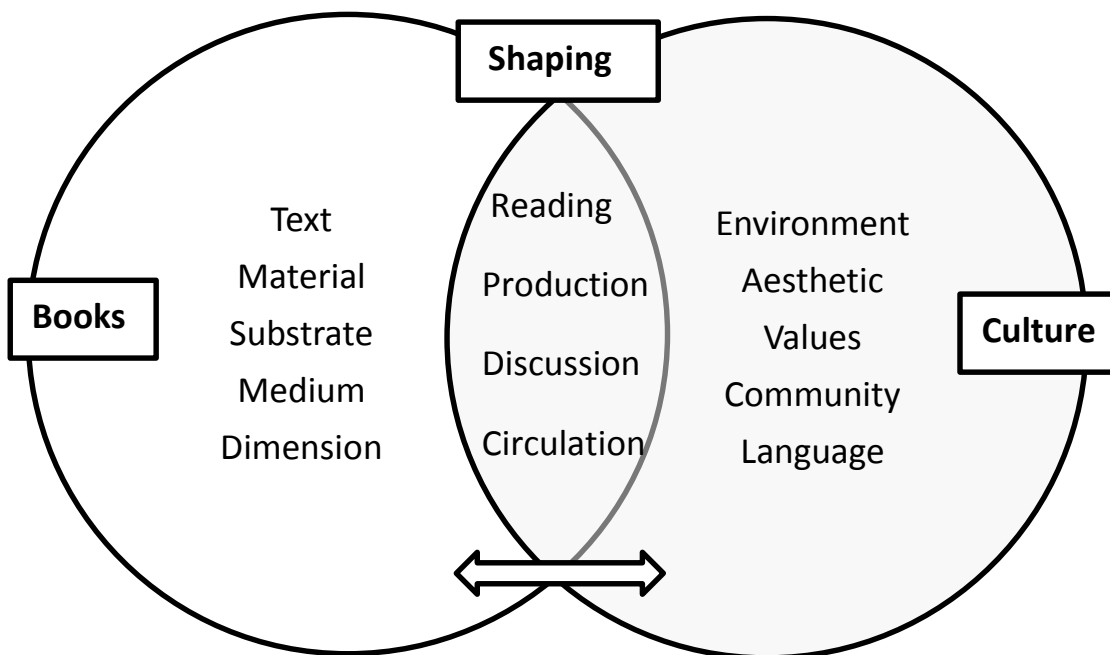


Figure 14. Ethnobibliographic Model of Bibliocultural Co-emergence

Using this model, we can begin to revisit currently prevalent descriptors like binding, paper, region, type, format, collation, contents, publisher, and language, and rearticulate them into more flexible terms like container, surface, display, structure, style, substance, composition, culture, voice, and iteration. It is not as if we should abandon the principles for bibliographic description established by McKerrow, Greg, and Bowers; rather, it is that we should continue to move in a direction of bibliographic expansion as opposed to narrowing moving forward, regardless if in doing so, we risk losing sight of what actually defines what a “book” is. That is how we can truly start to reform cataloging policy in a further embrace of alternative ontologies (Srinivasan, 2012). And under this new paradigm the code meshed, creolized folksonomies that serve to organize counterhegemonic knowledge systems can begin to be integrated into the more conventional cataloging schemas and their corresponding citation regimes (Bowker & Star,

1999; Crawford, 2007). And expressed information can attain greater legitimization and literary warrant by being cataloged bibliographically (Bates, 2006).

7. III. Adaptation as a Response to Black Literacy in the Library

Adaptation, the third order protocol of engagement, unites contextualization with synthesis in order to open up the library to the possibilities of counterhegemonic innovation. It offers an altogether different view of the literacy practices of black youth than the currently reigning understanding of there being an “achievement gap.” Throughout its long history, the library has harbored a genuine interest with the psychology of reading (Butler, 1933/1961). The institution has sought to understand their patrons’ reading habits and the different motivations behind them. And librarians have long been invested in finding new ways to cultivate better reading habits. As far back as 1933, for instance, we find library theorist Pierce Butler making a case for a more complex, multi-dimensional view of reading:

The important thing to be observed is that not all reading can be lumped together as a single and homogeneous behavior activity. Without recognition of the variety of motives there can be no just discrimination between the different origins of actual performance. No one actually reads merely because he desires at the moment information, pleasure, diversion, or occupation. Any one of these needs may be satisfied in other ways. Before a person will use a book for the purpose he must have, not merely a possible access to literature, but a psychological impulse in that direction. (p. 69)

The statement is a compelling move forward from the more homogenous view of reading that librarians held at that time. Yet, although he was able to concede to complexity, Butler was not willing to abandon the temptation to establish hierarchies among these various motives. Much in

keeping with the civilizing missions of late nineteenth and early twentieth century progressive librarianship, he pointed out the many literacy practices that he believed were psychologically unhealthy:

Reading motives other than the desire for information may be equally morbid. In some forms they are downright vicious. Here must be classed any engrossing delight in the literary dalliance with pornography, crime, and anti-social unconventionality. In a similar fashion a use of books for diversion and pastime may sometimes be the weakling's flight from reality. (p. 68)

For better or for worse, Butler issued a moral decree by this exercise in textual ostracizing. Under this paradigm, reading to obtain knowledge for knowledge's sake alone is depicted as the most praiseworthy kind of reading.

The true centerpiece in the response from Hughes-Hassell et al. (2012) is the imperative to commit to Tatum's vision for the integration of "enabling texts" (pp. 5-7). This imperative, however, essentially follows in the footsteps of Butler's normative path because it seeks to provide literacy in an autonomous mode for aims which have socioeconomic development and civic participation at their source. The results are intended to be both socially and culturally constructive. "Effective library resources," the authors noted, "also include enabling texts—texts that are developmentally appropriate to both the reading level and the physical and social developmental level of Black male youth—and counterstories" (p. 15). Under Tatum's guidance this normative path of literacy development is redirected from the larger American society toward the improvement of the black male psyche. The project to use texts and literacy instruction to inculcate certain values is a moralizing one. In Tatum's manual for teaching black

male adolescents, *Reading for their Life* (2009), this moralizing project is transparently outlined in clear terms (p. 136). Tatum advocated for the selection of texts that, in addition to improving literacy skills, could also help to develop the self-respect and moral compass of young black men.

Given the overall state of black literature in public schools and libraries, the imperative for the integration of “enabling texts” assuredly has its virtues. Nonetheless, adaptation, as a protocol of engagement, attempts to move beyond the moralizing of literacy practices in the library setting. If libraries and books are not neutral entities, neither are the programs for literacy instruction. These programs are not historically unblemished or wholly constructive. The acquisition of Western literacy practices are thought to be a civilizing process, it should be noted, from the perspective of the Westerner, but we must always remember that for those whose indigenous culture and language lies vulnerable to creolization or erasure from conventional literacy instruction, the process of learning to read and write in this way may not seem so benevolent. Furthermore, the moralizing of literacy—for religious or civic values, for learning, or even for economic success— signifies a condescension, especially if involuntarily foisted upon the recipient. So what is needed in our mission is to accept black literacy practices for what they are and how they are truly lived. We must accept, too, that traditional education is not the only means toward achieving financial stability for those who lack it. And we even must accept the high likelihood and, in many cases, the stark reality that there will be a great deal contained in both Western canonical literature and black press literature that depicts negative stereotypes—even the more malicious stereotypes that can potentially reinforce a negative self-image among blacks. Under the first order protocol of engagement, however, we can contextualize these stereotypes and reduce their potential for causing harm; and through synthesis, we can further

identify and contextualize the racial coding found not only in the text of a bibliographic object, but in its materiality.

Lastly, embracing adaptation means being open to the argument that there is not really a crisis in black literacy at all (Graff, 1987; Fernandez, 2001; Richardson, 2006). If a crisis does exist somewhere, it is more likely that is located in our perception and in our misunderstanding of the incommensurability between two, often dialectally opposed knowledge systems. The achievement gap, in accordance with this view, can never be permanently reduced to zero unless there is a total and complete cultural assimilation among black people into the white American cultural mainstream. If we were to achieve such an end, however, we also stand to lose something of ourselves as a people. Hughes understood this conundrum, as did Dunbar before him; and James Weldon Johnson could also perceive it during his lifetime. His discussion on the mainstream attitude toward ragtime music, I think, is analogous to the present discussion of black literacy, especially when it comes to the literacies of hip hop:

American musicians, instead of investigating ragtime attempt to ignore or dismiss it with a contemptuous word. But that has always been the course of scholasticism in every branch of art. Whatever new thing the *people* like is pooh-poohed; whatever is *popular* is spoken of as not worth the while. The fact is, nothing great or enduring, especially in music, has ever sprung full-fledged and unprecedented from the brain of any master; the best that he gives to the world he gathers from the hearts of the people, and runs it through the alembic of his genius. In spite of the bans which musicians and music teachers have placed upon it, the people still demand and enjoy ragtime. One thing cannot be denied; it is music which possesses at least one strong element of greatness; it appeals

universally; not only the American, but the English, the French, and even the German people, find delight in it. In fact, there is not a corner in the civilized world which it is not known, and this proves its originality, for if it were an imitation, the people of Europe, anyhow, would not have found it a novelty. Anyone who doubts that there is a peculiar heel-tickling, smile-provoking, joy-awakening charm in ragtime needs only to hear a skillful performer play the genuine article to become convinced. I believe that it has its place as well as the music which draws from us sighs and tears. (1915/1995, p. 47)

The word “ragtime” could be easily replaced with “hip hop” and the meaning would still stand. And still, like ragtime, there continues to be resistance to the creative, communicative modalities that thrive in the cultural experiences of black youth.

It becomes a question, really, of integration versus segregation, for what confronts us are twenty-first century institutions which are fundamentally segregated along racial lines. This idea may or may not be acceptable to you depending on your individual position on integration, but what is more troubling, perhaps, is the fact that these African American collections have adopted different elements of the Western model largely without a critical look into the extent to which this model can exist in accord with the cultures of African American people. The library’s answer to this kind of diversity has been to try to “fit a square peg into a round hole.” Instead, the shapes need to work like a mosaic in order to forge an environment which is kaleidoscopic in its dimensionality and interconnectedness. The inclination to appreciate cultural difference in these contexts is multiculturalism at its best.

As Tatum (2009) appropriately stated, “Connections among reading, writing, speaking, and action are salient in the history of the literacy development of African American males, from

old men on the corner talking shit to the literature on guerilla warfare” (p. 136). When it comes down to it, we, as black people, are aware of our own literacies, and by extension, of our value as a people. And by following the protocol of adaptation, be it in a segregated or integrated context, the library can serve as a bridge between conventional literacy practices and the literacy practices of the black community. Tupac Shakur had been influenced by the work of William Shakespeare. If a young African American hip hop enthusiast discovers this aspect of Shakur’s biography and desires to learn more about Shakespeare as a result, I have little doubt that this individual would be culturally enriched by this newfound learning. However, the benefit of this cultural enrichment can only truly be appreciated with an understanding that the poetry of Shakur is also a legitimate source of cultural enrichment for this young black reader. Each corpus must stand by its own merits. And that way, through adaptation, we can actually begin doing the truly difficult work of integrating new and alternative pedagogies into the framework of library literacy instruction and special collections operations. We can start to look at the value of embracing remix culture, the doubled text, graffiti, and hip hop literacies in future African American research collections (Gates, 1988; Gundaker, 1998; Miller, 2004; Richardson, 2006; Young, 2007). We can learn lessons from nonprofits like Words Beats & Life and the Temple of Hip Hop who have achieved some success in a cultural convergence of this kind by using hip hop as a medium to reach black youth for educational purposes (Words Beats & Life, 2014).

Now, building living collections of graffiti art black books that could be marked-up by patrons, or establishing turntable remixing stations in a special collections reading room might seem antithetical to current best practices because such measures require seriously rethinking everything from preservation to security concerns; but those are exactly the kinds of steps that could bridge the *perception gap in the library’s understanding of black literacy*. From here we

could change not just the process, but also the objects of knowledge production. And as these new productions, as they proceed through the administrative cycle, become increasingly relevant to students of color, they stand to generate a renewed interest and enthusiasm for learning among those who have become disinterested in the (mainstream) educational process as a result of a cultural divide.

Appendix A

Tables and Graphs

Table 1. Case Study I – Demographics

<i>Race</i>	<i>Density</i>
White	75
Black	3
Nonwhite	3
Latino	2
Asian	1
Native	0
Patron Total	84
SD =	27.3007936
μ =	14

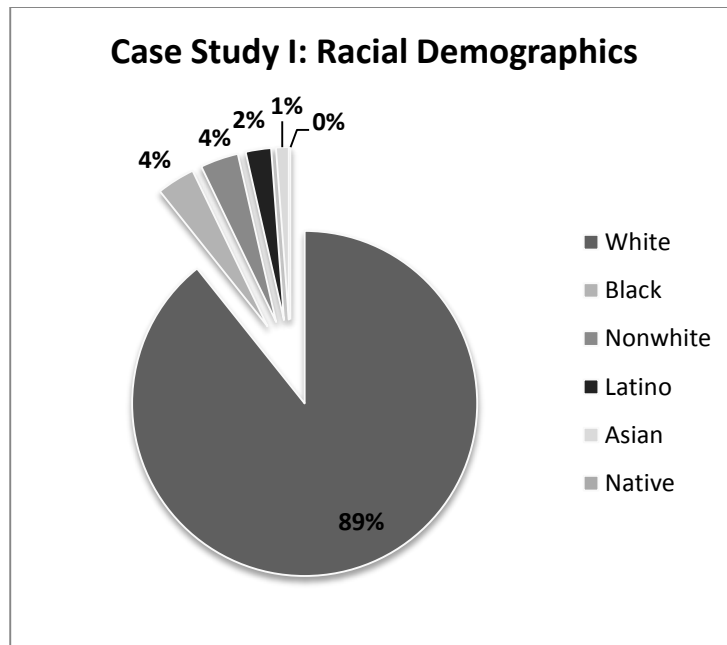


Table 2. Case Study I – Language

American Vernacular English	84
African American Vernacular English	0
Patron Total	84
SD =	42
μ =	42

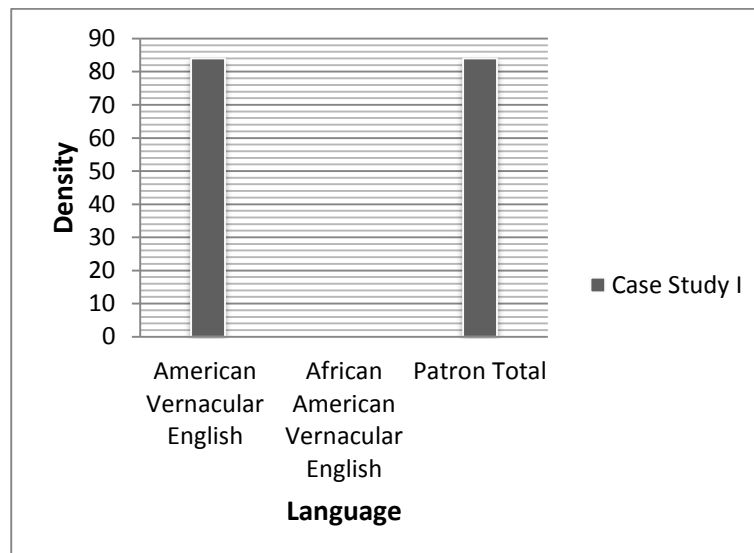


Table 3. Case Study II – Demographics

<i>Race</i>	<i>Density</i>
White	55
Black	45
Nonwhite	0
Latino	0
Asian	3
Native	0
Patron Total	103
SD =	23.4194838
μ =	17.1666667

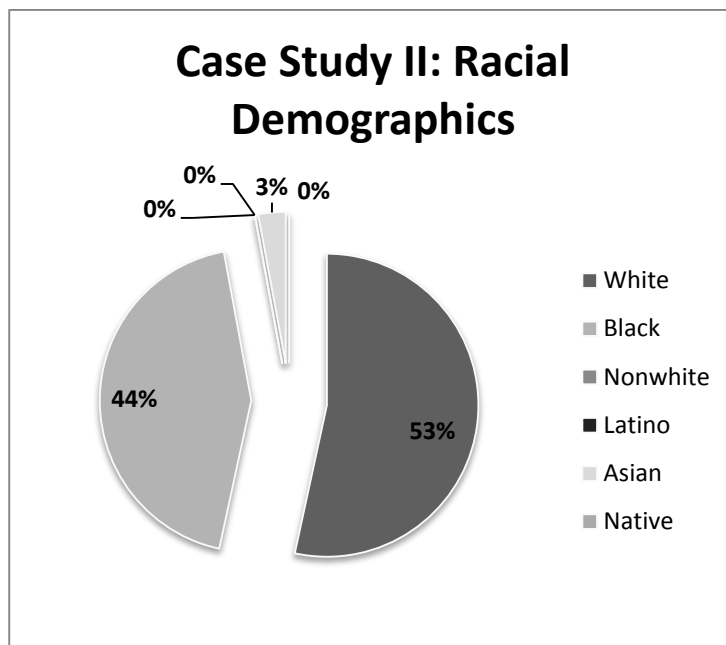


Table 4. Case Study II – Language

American Vernacular English	79
African American Vernacular English	24
Patron Total	103
SD =	27.5
μ =	51.5

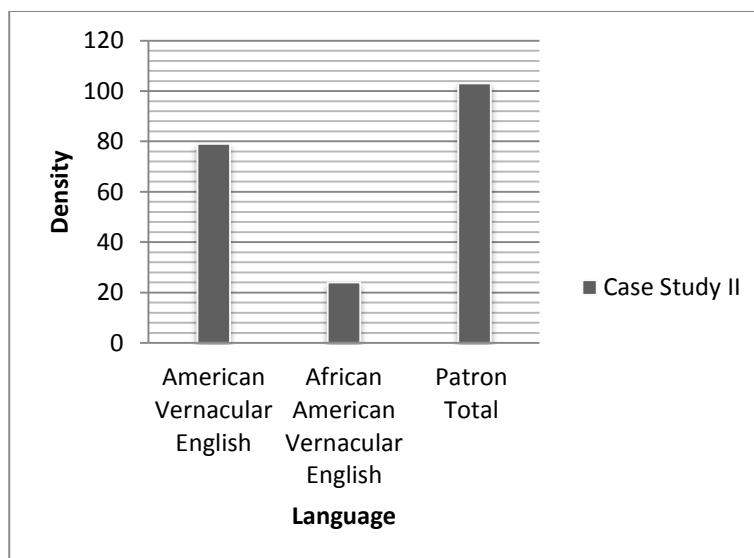


Table 5. Case Study III – Demographics

<i>Race</i>	<i>Density</i>
White	10
Black	97
Nonwhite	1
Latino	3
Asian	0
Native	0
Patron Total	111
SD =	35.273928
μ =	18.5

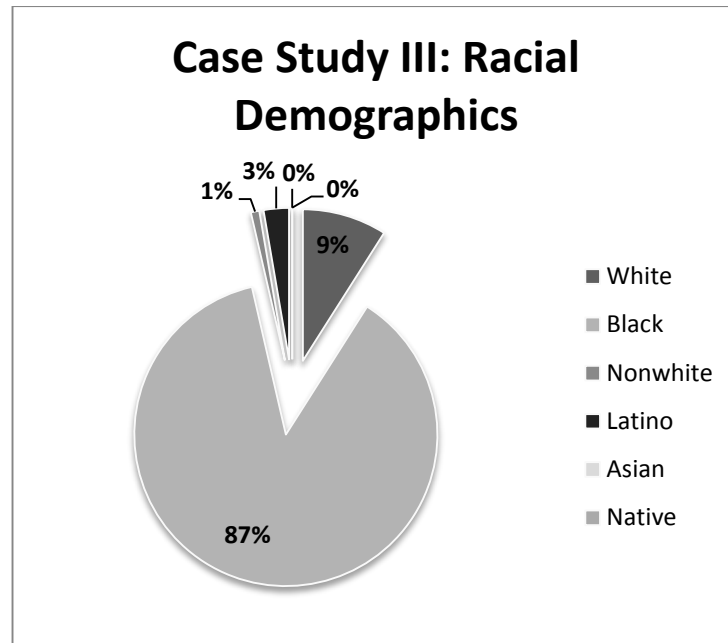


Table 6. Case Study III – Language

American Vernacular English	17
African American Vernacular English	94
Patron Total	111
SD =	38.5
μ =	55.5

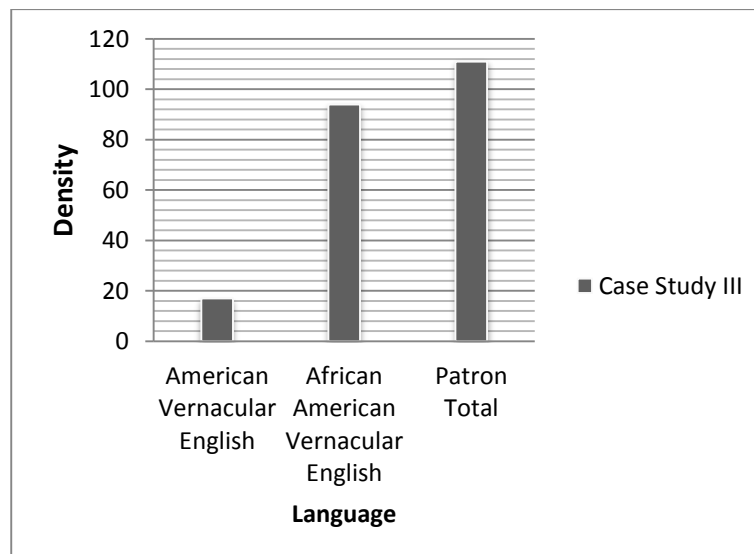


Table 7. Case Study IV - Demographics

<i>Race</i>	<i>Density</i>
White	49
Black	265
Nonwhite	3
Latino	7
Asian	8
Native	0
Patron Total	332
SD =	95.1992063

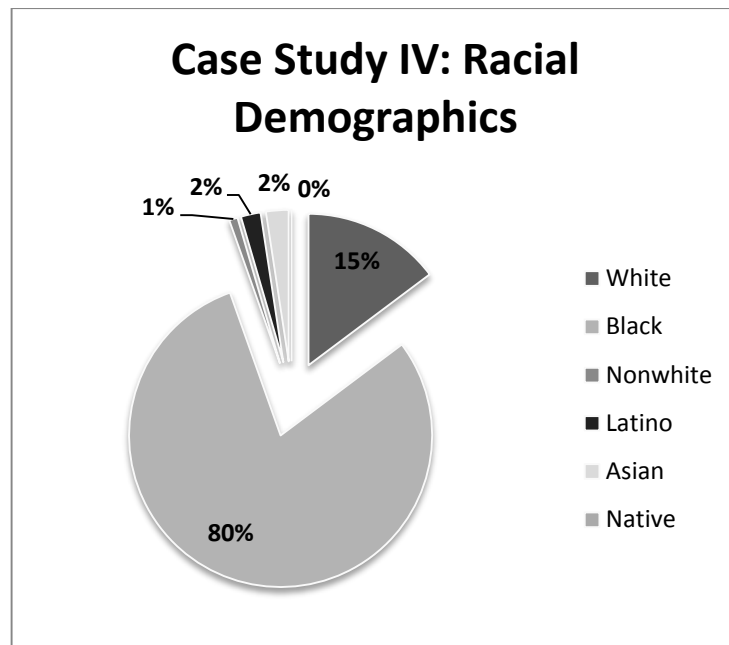


Table 8. Case Study IV – Language

American Vernacular English	196
African American Vernacular English	136
Patron Total	332
SD =	30
μ =	166

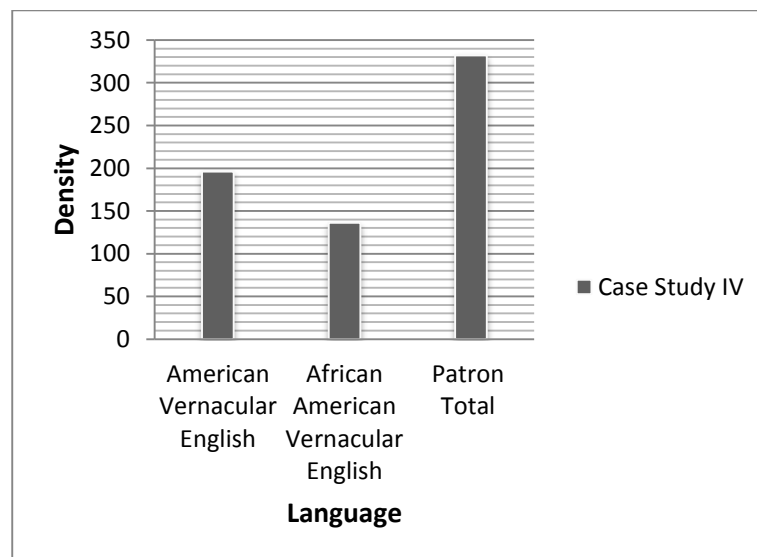
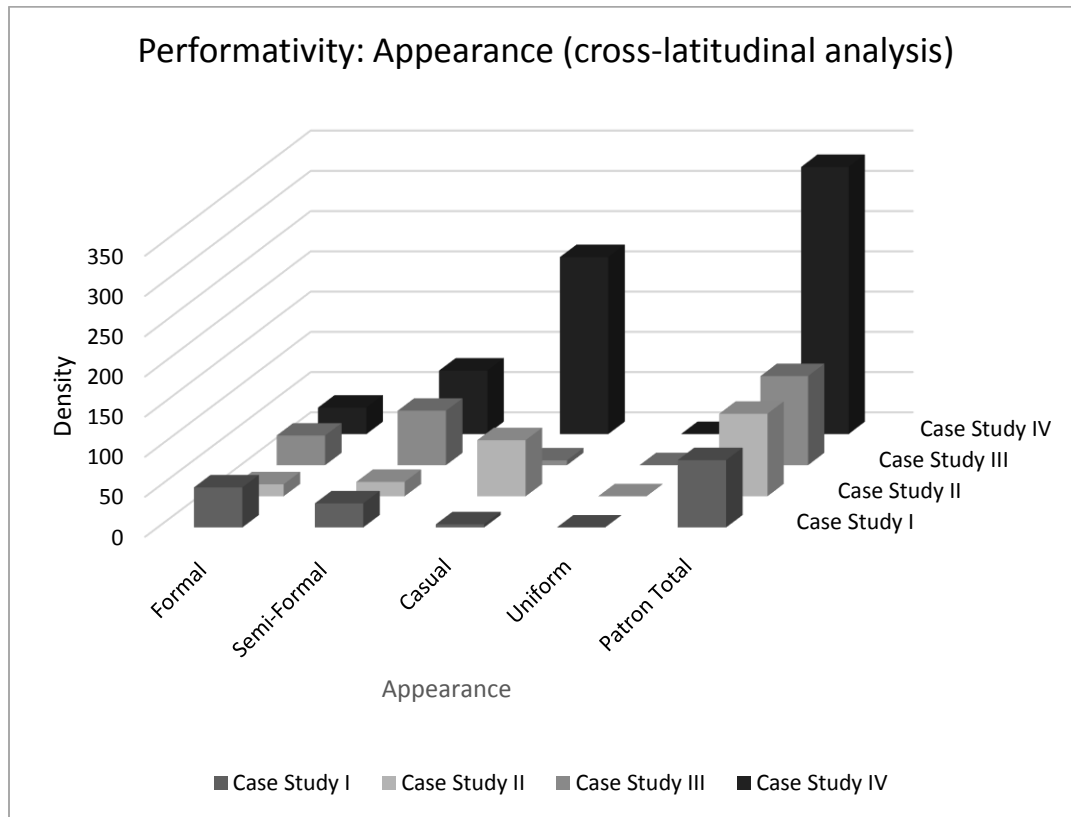


Table 9. Appearance (cross-latitudinal analysis)

	Formal	Semi-Formal	Casual	Uniform	Patron Total	Standard Deviation	Mean
Case Study I	50	30	4	0	84	20.3224	21
Case Study II	15	18	70	0	103	26.44215	25.75
Case Study III	37	68	6	0	111	27.1512	27.75
Case Study IV	33	79	220	0	332	83.92556	83



Appendix B

Descriptive Bibliographic Entries for Representation

Bibliographic Sample SI-B1

Title: The||Alphabet||AND ELEMENTS OF LETTERING||REVISED AND
ENLARGED||WITH MANY FULL-PAGE PLATES AND OTHER||ILLUSTRATIONS
DRAWN & ARRANGED||BY THE AUTHOR ||FREDERIC W. GOUDY|| L.H.D., LITT.D.||
[printer's device]|| BERKELY AND LOS ANGELES||UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA||1942
[in Blackletter and Old Style]

Publication: 1st edition, Goudy Edition. Los Angeles, CA: UC Press, 1942 (1st Kennerley ed. 1918, W. E. Rudge). Composed by University of California Press. Printed by University of California Press (letterpress)

Binding: Publisher's Cloth (Pasteboard) Binding: [University of California Press] solid color maroon Smyth sewn, Bancroft Linen with gilding

Bookplate: Ex Libris: William Andrews Clark. Owl on books with globe, Lex [in Gothic]

Frontispiece: Front page illustration by F. Goudy

Acknowledgements: "In memory of Bertha M. Goudy"

Para-text: 5 endleaves; pastedown; frontispiece; publisher's note; title page; preface; introduction; contents; marginalia; headlines; pagination

Collation: 4to

Pagination: [15], [1], 1-158

Paper: American 100% Rag paper, cream white, sub. 60

Watermark: n/a

Size: 241mm x 317mm (9 1/2" x 12 1/2")

Margin: 70mm x 57mm (2 3/4"x 2 1/4")

Type: Roman (Various Monotype: University of California Old Style hand set, Monotype University of California Old Style on title page and other display). Great Primer to Double Pica

Illustration: Designed by Samuel T. Farquhar, Frederic W. Goudy, A.R. Tommasini. Illustrations from Oakland National Engraving & Gravure Company. Includes plates by F. Goudy

Ornamentation: Lombardic initials (ornamental capital)

Contents: CONTENTS, [xiii]; CHAPTER INTRODUCTION, 1; FIG. 1 INSCRIPTION ON THE ARCH AT ROME [CIRCA A.D. 72]; I: THE BEGINNINGS OF THE ALPHABET, 5; FIG. 2 CUNEIFORM WRITING ON A CHALDEAN CLAY BRICK, FIG. 3 FORMS OF LETTERS IN FIVE SUCCESSIVE ALPHABETS; II: WHAT LETTERS ARE, 22; FIG. 4 AN OSCAN INSCRIPTION, FIG. 5 GREEK LETTERS FROM THE TEMPLE OF POSEIDON ON LAKE TAENARUS IN LAKONIA. [476-473 B.C.], FIG. 6. GREEK LETTERS FROM AN INSCRIPTION IN THE TEMPLE OF ATHENE POLIAS. [THIRD CENTURY B.C.] ALMOST EXACT SIZE, THE LETTERS WERE FILLED IN WITH RED AFTER CUTTING, FIG. 7 ROMAN STONE-CUT CAPITALS, PROBABLY SECOND CENTURY. EXACT SIZE. FROM A RUBBING MADE BY THE AUTHOR FROM A TABLET IN THE LOUVRE; III: LETTERS IN GENERAL, 30; FIG. 8 LETTER 'O' AS CONSTRUCTED BY GEOFFROY TORY, FIG. 9. LETTERS, SHOWING CONSTRUCTION, FROM AN OLD ITALIAN BOOK, 37; FIG. 11 'FORUM' CAPITALS BY F.W.G. [1911], SIGEAN TABLET, ILLUSTRATING BOUSTROPHEDON, FIG. 13 SIGNET OF CAIUS JULIUS CAECILIUS HERMIAS, FIG. 14 STONE-CUT CAPITALS FROM THE TRAJAN COLUMN. [A.D. 114], FIG. 15 LETTERS FROM AN INSCRIPTION IN THE CHURCH OF ANASTASIA [A.D. 1261]. SHOWING AN UNUSUAL FORM OF AN INSCRIPTIONAL 'Y,' A LETTER OF LATE IMPORTATION INTO THE LATIN AND ORIGINALLY USED ONLY IN WORDS BORROWED FROM THE GREEK. FROM A RUBBING MADE BY THE AUTHOR; CHAPTER V: LETTERS BEFORE PRINTING, 48; FIG. 16 SQUARE CAPITALS FROM VIRGIL'S AENEID. [FOURTH CENTURY], FIG. 17 RUSTIC WRITING OF THE FIFTH CENTURY, FIG. 18 ROMAN UNCIALS OF THE SEVENTH CENTURY, WITH RUSTIC INITIAL FROM THE SPECULUM OF ST. AUGUSTINE, FIG. 19 ROMAN SEMIUNCIALS, FIG. 20 IRISH UNCIALS, FIG. 21 ENGLISH UNCIALS, FIG. 22 SQUARE CAPITALS, UNCIALS, AND MINUSCULES IN A CAROLINE MS. [TOURS, NINTH CENTURY], FIG. 24 GOTHIC TYPES OF EHRHARD RATDOLT. [ENLARGED]; VI: THE NATIONAL HANDS, 59; FIG. 25 'LOMBARDIC' [PAINTED] CAPITALS BY F.W.G., FIG. 26 PAINTED LOMBARDIC CAPITALS OF THE FOURTEENTH CENTURY, FIG. 27 LOMBARDIC WRITING OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY, FIG. 28 LOMBARDIC CAPITALS OF THE THIRTEENTH CENTURY, FIG. 29 'LOMBARDIC' CAPITALS BY F.W.G. FIG. 30 'CAXTON' INITIALS [F.W.G. FOR A.T.F.CO.], FIG. 31 SPANISH CAPITALS, FROM ARISTOTLE'S ETHICS. [CIRCA 1458]; VII: THE DEVELOPMENT OF GOTHIC, 65; FIG. 32 24-PT. 'TORY,' 12-PT. 'FRIAR,' AND 24-PT. 'MEDIAEVAL', FIG. 33 MEDIEVAL GOTHIC MINUSCULES, FIG. 34 VARIATIONS OF GOTHIC CAPITAL 'A', FIG. 35 'GOUDY TEXT' CAPITALS, DRAWING FOR TYPE, FIG. 36 'GOUDY TEXT' LOWER CASE, DRAWING FOR TYPE, FIG. 37 DRAWING FOR 'LINING GOTHIC' TYPE BY F.W.G. [1924]; VIII: THE BEGINNINGS OF TYPES, 72; FIG. 38 TYPES CUT FOR THE NATIONAL PRINTING OFFICE AT PRESS FROM THE TYPES OF THE BAMBERG BIBLE OF 36 LINES, FIG. 39 ASHENDENE PRESS TYPE, BASED ON THE TYPE OF SWEYNHEIM & PANNARTZ, FIG. 40 18-PT 'GOUDY MODERN'; CHAPTER IX: THE QUALITIES OF LETTERING, 81; FIG. 41

'HADRIANO' TYPE BY F.W.G., BASED ON STONE-CUT LETTERS OF THE FIRST CENTURY, 42. SIX VARIATIONS OF LOMBARDIC 'A', FIG. 43 DEVELOPMENT OF LOWER-CASE 'G' FROM THE ROMAN UNCIAL; X: SOME PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS, 90; FIG. 44 LOMBARDIC PEN FORMS. [13TH CENTURY], 90. XI. NOTES ON THE PLATES, 93; FIG. 45 KEY TO PLATES, FIG. 46 'GOUDY LANSTON,' ILLUSTRATING JENSON'S PRINCIPLE OF SPACING TYPES, FIG. 47 24-PT. 'GOUDY OPEN,' A MODERN TYPE FACE, FIG. 24-PT. 'KENNERLEY ITALIC' CAPITALS. THE PLATES ['A' TO '&'], 105

Bibliographic Sample SI-B2

Title: THE GOLDEN LEGEND [in Golden Type]; THE GOLDEN LEGEND||Of Master William Caxton||Vol. II| [in Golden Type]; THE GOLDEN LEGEND||Of Master William Caxton||Vol. III [in Golden Type]

Publication: In three volumes, one of 500 copies. Frederick Ellis (ed.). Upper Mall Hammersmith, Middlesex County: Kelmscott Press, (finished) Sept. 12, 1892. Printed by William Morris (d. 1896). Originally written by Jacob de Voragine (d. 1298), translated and reversion by William Caxton (d. 1492)

Binding: Fine Press (Pasteboard) Binding: light granite colored paper on pasteboard, half Holland linen shelf back, covered raised bands and printed paper label on spines [in Troy Type]

Bookplate: Blue and gold special edition bookplate with owl image with William Andrews Clark [in Sans]

Frontispiece: n/a

Acknowledgements: n/a

Paratext: 4 endleaves; pastedown; half-titles; title page; preface; 4 column table; colophon; collation marks; marginalia; pagination

Collation: 4to (in eights)

Pagination: Three large quarto volumes. xii, [2], 103, [4], [1], [105]-244, [1], [1], [245]-464; [1] [1], 465-864; [1], [1], 865-1286, [2]

Paper: Laid paper with deckled edges (Vol. 3, pp. 371-2 uncut)

Watermark: Daisy

Size: 208mm x 290mm (8 1/4" x 11 1/2")

Margin: 65mm x 55mm (2 1/2" x 2")

Type: Roman (Morris Golden Type) [42 line]

Illustration: 2 wood-engravings depicting hagiographic imagery. Illustrations are wood engravings designed by Sir Edward Burne-Jones. Decorative woodcut borders and initials. Woodcut title designed by William Morris

Ornamentation: Decorative initials (ornamental capitals)

Contents: Volume I. Title [a1] [i-ii]; Preface by William Caxton [a2-a3] [iii-v]; Table [a3-a4] [v-viii]; Another Table By Letter [a5-a6] [xi-xii]; Wood-cut title (Burne-Jones); Text, "Of Thaduent Of Our Lorde" [b1-h4] [1]; Text, "The Lyf Of Adam" [h5-r2] [105]; Woodcut illustration; Text, "The Lyf Of Saynt Andrew" [r3-z8] and [aa1-gg8] [245]. Volume II. Title; Text [hh1-zz8] [aaa1-iii8] [465]. Volume III. Title; Text [kkk1-zzz8] [aaaa1-mmmm6] [865]; Colophon [1276]; "A List Of Some Obsolete Or Little Used Words" [nnnn1-nnnn3] [1277], "Memoranda, Bibliographical & Explanatory" [nnnn3-nnnn5]; Colophon [nnnn6] [1286]

Bibliographic Sample SI-B3

Title: THE SONG OF SONGS [dingbat] BEING||LOVE SONGS FROM
ANCIENT||PALESTINE [dingbat]||TRANSLATED BY MORRIS JASTROW

Publication: Copy 122/310. San Francisco, CA: Book Club of California, 1922. Printed by Edwin & Robert Grabhorn. Translated by Morris Jastrow. Preface by Helen B. Jastrow. Introduction by Franz Cumont

Binding: Limp Parchment (Pasteboard) Binding: a light parchment with gilt title on spine

Bookplate: Cream and gold special edition bookplate with owl image with William Andrews Clark [in Sans]

Frontispiece: n/a

Acknowledgements: n/a

Paratext: 3 endleaves; half-title; pastedown; title page; preface; introduction; colophon; collation marks

Collation: 8vo

Pagination: [10] 1-28

Paper: Wove [Whatman] paper (handmade, high quality)

Watermark: Text [England]; MAN 1921

Size: 120mm x 195mm(5" x 7 7/8")

Margin: 50mm x 35mm (2" x 1 3/8")

Type: Roman (Goudy Antique). Printed in black and red; captions and colophon in red; initials in blue [23 line]

Illustration: One headpiece illustration (Two lovers kissing and embracing in the woods) by Harold von Schmidt

Ornamentation: Dingbat, Initials by Joseph Sinel

Contents: Preface, iii; introduction, v; I. Love's Ecstasy [3]; II. The Saucy Maiden; III. Love's Song [4]; IV. The Delights of Love [5]; V. Love's Consummation [6]; VI. SPRINGTIDE OF LOVE [7]; VII. Foxes in the Vineyards; VIII. Love's Dream [9]; IX. The Bridal Procession [10]; X. The Beauty of the Beloved [11]; XI. Come and Be my Bride; XII. Sweetness of the BRIDE [12]; XIII Love's Sweet Fruitage [13]; XIV Another Sweet Dream [14]; XV. The Beauty of the Lover [16]; XVI. Love's Garden [18]; XVII. Beautiful Beyond Compare [19]; XVIII. Dance of the Bride [21]; XIX. Love in the Fields [23]; XX. Be My Brother [24]; XXI. The Power of Love [25]; XXII. The Chaste Maiden [26]; XIII. My Vineyard is Mine [27]; Colophon [28]

Bibliographic Sample SI-B4

Title: THE||SONG OF SONGS||CALLED BY MANY THE CANTICLES OF CANTICLES
||PRINTED AND PUBLISHED AT THE GOLDEN COCKERELL||PRESS AT WALTHAM
ST. LAWRENCE IN BERKSHIRE||IN THE YEAR MCMXXV [printer's device (Cockerell)] [in Roman (Caslon)]

Publication: Waltham St. Lawrence, Berkshire: Golden Cockerell Press, 1925

Binding: Fine Press (Pasteboard) Binding: cream to beige colored cloth with gilt title on spine and Cockerell device on front cover

Bookplate: Ex Libris: William Andrews Clark. Owl on books with globe, Lex [in Gothic]

Frontispiece: n/a

Acknowledgements: n/a

Paratext: 4 endleaves; title page; and pastedown; preface

Collation: 4to [a]⁴ (-a⁴), b-f⁴

Pagination: [8], 9-10, 13-42, 43-44

Paper: Batchelor handmade paper

Watermark: J. Batchelor Hand; book with crown and cross

Size: 185mm x 250mm (7 1/4" x 10")

Margin: 60mm x 40mm (2 3/8" x 2 1/4")

Type: Roman (Caslon Old Face type). Printed in black and red. Great Primer [20 line]

Illustration: 11 wood engravings by Eric Gill depicting various erotic scenes

Ornamentation: 9 elaborate ornaments by Eric Gill

Contents: Preface [9]; ACT I. Scene I. IN SOLOMON'S HAREM [17]; Scene II. [18]; ACT II. Prologue [23]; SERENADE [24]; ACT III. [28]; ACT IV. Scene I. [34]; ACT IV. Scene II. [35]; ACT IV. Scene III. [38]; ACT IV. Scene IV. [41]; EPILOGUE [42]; Illustration [43]; Colophon [44]

Bibliographic Sample SI-B6

Title: The Poor Unhappy||Tranſported Felon's ||Sorrowful ACCOUNT||OF||His Fourteen Years
Tranſportation || at Virginia in America||In SIX PARTS||BEING||A remarkable and ſuccinct
Hiſtory of the LIFE||of JAMES REVEL, the unhappy ſufferer ||Who was put Apprentice by his
Father to a Tinman, near Moor-||Fields, where he got into bad Company and before long
ran||away, and went a robbing with a Gang of Thieves, but his||Master ſoon got him back: Yet
would not be kept from his||old Companions, but went a thieving with them again; for which he
was tranſported fourteen Years. With an Account of the Way the tranſports work, and the
Punishment they receive for com||mitting any Fault.|| Concluding with a Word of advice for all
young Men [printer's device (ship)]

Publication: Printed and sold (ca. 1800) at Aldemary Churchyard. Written by James Revel (ca. 1680) [One Penny]

Binding: Chapbook

Bookplate: n/a

Frontispiece: n/a

Acknowledgements: n/a

Paratext: Title page serves as front cover; pagination

Collation: 4to

Pagination: [2], 3-8

Paper: Early wove paper (very poor quality with heavy foxing and discoloration) [trimmed]

Watermark: n/a

Size: 165mm x 100mm (6 1/2" x 4")

Margin: 25mm x 42mm (1" x 1 11/16")

Type: Roman (Old Style)

Illustration: n/a

Ornamentation: *Unintelligible string of letters and numbers at the head of page

Contents: PART I [1]; PART II [3]; PART III [5]; PART IV [6]; PART V [7]

Bibliographic Sample SII-B1

Title: Half Black||Half Blacker||by||Sterling Plumpp||INTRODUCTION BY DON L. LEE||third world press||[printer's device]|| Chicago, Ill. 7850 South Ellis Ave. 60619 [in Roman (Sans)]

Publication: 1st edition, 2nd printing. Chicago, IL: Third World Press, 1970, 1971. Cover design by Brother Omar Lama [\$4.00]

Binding: Illustrated Paperback Staple Binding: title/author name in street lettering with illustration of black male and tower on a brick wall motif on the front cover and a photograph of the author on the back cover

Bookplate: n/a

Frontispiece: n/a

Acknowledgements: "For my wife, inspirer: Falvia"

Paratext: Title page; Third World Press "Statement of Purpose" and publications list (front and back); acknowledgements; table of contents; introduction; pagination

Collation: 8vo

Pagination: [6], 7-32

Paper: Chemical wood paper

Watermark: n/a

Size: 135mm x 215mm (5 5/16" x 8 1/2")

Margin: 17mm x 10mm (11/16" x 3/8")

Type: [Mimeograph] Roman (Transitional); Sans Serif

Illustration: Image on front cover (see binding). Author's photograph on back cover. Cover design by Brother Omar Lama

Ornamentation: n/a

Contents: An Introduction that's Really Not Needed, 7; From Manless Sisters to Big Bad Black Rappers, 9; Black Messages, 10; The Living Truth, 11; Heaven Here, 12; Last Ride, 12; Three Black Movements, 13; Wide River to Cross, 16; Flight, 18; Tabulator, 20; I See the Blues, 21; Daybreak, 23; Egypt, 24; To Return, 25; Lucille, 26; I Told Jesus, 27; Calling on a Black God, 28; Black Psalms, 29; The Promise, 20; Half Black, Half Blacker, 31

Bibliographic Sample SII-B10

Title: NKÔMBÔ||© copyright Dec. 1968 Free Southern Theater [in a lower case script, set in an African spear border]||Cover design/Judy||Richardson||Artwork/Val||Ferdinand

Publication: 1st [mock up] edition. New Orleans, LA: Free Southern Theater, 1968. P.O. Box 51536 N.O.L.A. 70150. Artwork by Val Ferdinand. Cover by Judy Richardson

Binding: Cardboard Paper Wrappings: dark tan wrapping with staples and tape fasteners.
Subtitle[?] "Echoes from the Gumbo, FST" on front cover in bold [poster] script letterforms

Bookplate: n/a

Frontispiece: n/a

Acknowledgements: n/a

Paratext: Front cover serves as title page. Introduction (Echoes from the Gumbo); Nkombo contributor list; contents (back cover)

Collation: 4to [single sheets]

Pagination: [7], 8-67

Paper: Chemical wood paper (multi-colored typing paper)

Watermark: n/a

Size: 215mm x 280mm (8 1/2" x 11")

Margin: 55mm x 41mm (2 1/8" x 1 5/8")

Type: Sans Serif (Humanistic)

Illustration: Artwork by Val Ferdinand. Cover by Judy Richardson

Ornamentation: Poster lettering, including bubble and cartoon script

Contents: Introduction, 7; Contents, 9; The New Integrationist, 11; The Cure All, 12; A Sign on A Vacant, 12; Statistics, 13; Two Poems/ Sketches from a Black-Nappy-Headed Poet; Pains With a Light-Touch, 14; On the Discovery of Beautiful Black Women, 15; The Beauty of It, 16; Only A Few Left, 17; Bloodsmiles, 18; The Self-Hatred of Don L. Lee, 19; The Only One, 20; In the Interest of Black Salvation, 21; The Black Christ, 22; The Primitive, 24; The negro, 25; The Wall, 26; Message To A Black Soldier, 27; Contradiction In Essence, 28; A Poems for Black Minds, 29; The Death Dance, 30; The Traitor, 32; No More Marching, 33

Bibliographic Sample SIII-B2

Title: The American||Negro Writer||AND HIS ROOTS||SELECTED PAPERS FROM||THE FIRST CONFERENCE OF NEGRO WRITERS||MARCH, 1959||PUBLISHED BY THE||American Society of African Culture||1960. NEW YORK CITY|| 15 East 40th St. New York 16, N.Y. [in Roman with Italics]

Publication: 2nd printing, 1963. New York, NY: American Society of African Culture, 1960. Conference Planning Committee, John O. Killens, Chairman; William Branch, John Henry Clarke, Julian Mayfield, Lofton Mitchell, Sarah E. Wright. Standard Press and Graphics, Inc./New York City

Binding: Hard Paper Staple Binding: two-tone salmon and beige wrappings with title [in Roman] on bottom half of page over a modern abstract design consisting of short, bold, ascending lines which form a column behind the title's lettering [Pamphlet]

Bookplate: n/a

Frontispiece: n/a

Acknowledgements: n/a

Paratext: Half-title; title page; preface; contents; copyright; pagination

Collation: 8vo

Pagination: [6],1-70, [2]

Paper: Machine wood paper

Watermark: n/a

Size: 135mm x 210mm (5 5/16" x 8 1/4")

Margin: 28mm x 22mm (1 1/8" x 7/8")

Type: Roman (Transitional)

Illustration: Abstract design on front cover

Ornamentation: Triple line borders on titles and subtitles

Contents: Preface, iii; I. SAUNDERS REDDING, The Negro Writer and His Relationship to His Roots, 1; SAMUEL W. ALLEN, Negritude and its Relevance to the American Negro Writer, 18; JOHN HENRY CLARKE, Reclaiming the Lost African Heritage, 21; II. JULIAN MAYFIELD, Into the Mainstream and Oblivion, 29; AURTHUR P. DAVIS, Integration and Race Literature, 34; III. LANGSTON HUGHES, Writers: Black and White, 41; WILLIAM BRANCH, Marketing the Products of American Negro Writers, 46; IV. ARNA BONTEMPS, Ole Sis Goose, 51; LOFTEN MITCHELL, The Negro Writer and His Materials, 55; SARAH E. WRIGHT, Roadblocks to the Development of Negro Writers, 61

Bibliographic Sample SIII-B3

Title: REVOLUTION||a poem||by||EBON||[printer's device]||Third World Press [space] Chicago, Illinois

Publication: 1st edition, 2nd printing. Chicago, IL: Third World Press, 1968. © 1968 by Ebon Dooley (Leo Thomas Hale), Third World Press, c/o Ellis Bookstore, 6447 South Cottage Grove Ave. Chicago, Ill. 60637. Cover art by Jeff Donaldson. Photography by Robert Sengstacke [\$1.00]

Binding: Hard Paper Staple Binding: illustrated with photograph on back cover

Bookplate: n/a

Frontispiece: n/a

Acknowledgements: "Dedicated to Leo and Beatrice"

Paratext: Title page; Third World Press statement of purpose; publications list (front and back); acknowledgements; pagination

Collation: 8vo

Pagination: 31, [1]

Paper: Chemical wood paper

Watermark: n/a

Size: 135mm x 215mm (5 5/16" x 8 1/2")

Margin: 40mm x 15mm (1 5/8" x 5/8")

Type: Sans Serif

Illustration: Illustration on front cover (Jeff Donaldson). Photographic image on back cover (Robert Sengstacke)

Ornamentation: n/a

Contents: BLACK, WHITE, THE POET, THE POEM, 3; BLACK IS BEAUTY FULL, 4; LEGACY IN MEMORY of 'TRANE, 5; DANCING GIRL for Gaye, 7; SKETCHES FOR A BLACK WOMAN, 8; TO OUR FIRST BORN, OR THE PROPHET ARRIVES, 9; PRELUDE: A WARNING, 10; THE PROPHETS WARNING, OR SHOOT TO KILL, 11; PORTRAIT of the ENEMY, 12; WHITE XMAS, 13; PORTRAIT OF KING TOAD, OR HOME ON THE RANGE, 14; PRESIDENTIAL PRESS PARLEY, 15; VIET NAM COTILLION, OR DEBUTANTE BALL ON THE PENTAGON, OR THE STATUE OF LIBERTY HAS HER BACK TO HARLEM, 16; PRELUDE: Prayer, 17; WEDNESDAY NIGHT PRAYER MEETING, OR RAPPIN' TO MY BOY, 18; DEATH of the ENEMY, 19; THE EASTER BUNNY BLUES, or ALL I WANT FOR XMAS IS THE LOOP, 20; TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES, OR WILL THE REAL JESUS CHRIST PLEASE STAND UP, OR AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL, OR AN HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE MOVEMENT 1619 TOMORROW OR.....,27; AFTERMATH, 30; QUERY, 31

Bibliographic Sample SIII-B4

Title: [ornamental border] SEX AND RACE [in Old Style (Handtool)]||NEGRO-CAUCASIAN MIXING||IN ALL AGES AND ALL LANDS||BY||J. A. ROGERS||Author, From Superman to Man; World's Great||Men of Color: Nature Knows No Color-Line, etc. [in Garamond]||[single line break] Volume I [in Italics]||THE OLD WORLD||[double line break] J. A. Rogers [ornamental line break] HELGA M. ROGERS 1270 Fifth Ave. New York, N. Y. 10029

Publication: 9th edition. New York, NY: Rogers, 1967. © Helga M. Rogers New York, NY
[\$6.95]

Binding: Hardcover Binding: faux leather on pasteboard binding with gilt title on front cover and spine [in Cartoon]. Includes red toned illustrated book jacket with title in vernacular [Swash] script letterforms on front cover and spine

Bookplate: n/a

Frontispiece: Photographic plate of painting depicting Queen Charlotte Sophia of Great Britain

Acknowledgements: n/a

Paratext: 7 endleaves; pastedown; frontispiece; half-title; title page; foreword (1952); comments on the works of J. A. Rogers; "The Author" biographical statement; appendices; notes; references; list of illustrations; headlines; pagination

Collation: 8vo

Pagination: [2], [1], 1-303, [1]

Paper: Machine wood paper

Watermark: n/a

Size: 155mm x 225mm (6" x 8 3/8")

Margin: 30mm x 18mm (1 3/16" x 3/4")

Type: Roman (Old Style, Transitional)

Illustration: Approximately 46 illustrations. Photographic plates portraying various examples of black and biracial peoples throughout World History and Western Civilization (pp. 8, 9, 13, 26-7, 33, 35, 38-41, 43, 45, 47, 49, 53, 55, 64-5, 69, 73, 75, 81, 83, 87, 93-4, 98-9, 102, 104, 106-7, 109, 113, 117, 123, 125, 139, 155, 157, 159-61, 163, 165, 167, 171, 173, 175, 177, 179, 181, 183, 185, 193, 197, 199, 203, 205, 216, 218, 220, 225, 227, 236-7, 247, 249, 253, 255, 267, 269, 271, 279, 280)

Ornamentation: Ornamental, bold, and asterisk line breaks and page border

Contents: I. RACE TODAY, 1; II. WHICH IS THE OLDEST RACE?, 21; III. THE MIXING OF BLACK AND WHITE IN THE ANCIENT EAST, 37; IV. BLACK AND WHITE IN SYRIA, PALESTINE, ARABIA, PERSIA, 58; V. WHO WERE THE FIRST INHABITANTS OF INDIA?, 62; VI. WHO WERE THE FIRST CHINESE?; VII. THE NEGRO IN ANCIENT GREECE, 79; VIII. NEGROES IN ANCIENT ROME AND CARTHAGE, 86; IX. WERE THE JEWS ORIGINALLY NEGROES?, 91; X. RACE MIXING UNDER ISLAM, 95; XI. RACE

MIXING UNDER ISLAM (cont'd), 111; XII. MIXING OF WHITE AND BLACK IN AFRICA SOUTH OF THE SAHARA, 120; XIII. MISCEGENATION IN SPAIN, PORTUGUAL, AND ITALY, 151; XVI. MISCEGENATION IN HOLLAND, BELGIUM, AUSTRIA, POLAND, RUSSIA, 169; NEGRO-WHITE MIXING IN GERMANY, ANCIENT AND MODERN, 176; THE MIXING OF WHITES AND BLACKS IN THE BRITISH ISLES, 196; XIX. MISCEGENATION IN FRANCE, 221; XX. ISABEAU, BLACK VENUS OF THE REIGN OF LOUIS XV; THE BLACK NUN-MULATTO DAUGHTER OF MARIA THERESA, QUEEN OF FRANCE, 246; XXII. BAUDELAIRE AND JEANNE DUVAL, 254; APPENDICES, Race-mixing in European Literature, 261; Did the Negro Originate in Africa or Asia?, 263; Black God and Messiahs, p. 265; History of the Black Madonnas, 273; Notes and References to the Negro under Islam, 284; List of the Illustrations and Notes on Them, 288

Bibliographic Sample SIII-B6

Title: A NARRATIVE OF||THE NEGRO||[single line break] ||BY||MRS. LEILA AMOS PENDLETON||Formerly a Teacher in the Public Schools of Washington D.C.; founder||(in 1898) of the Alpha Charity Club of Anacostia, and for thirteen years|| it's president, founder and president of the Social Purity Club of||Washington; Vice-President for the District of Columbia of the||Northeastern Federation of Women's Club; Secretary of||the National Association of Assemblies of the Order of ||the Golden Circle, Auxiliary to the Scottish||Rite of Freemasonry, S. J., U.S.A.|| [printer's device (winged torch with book)]||WASHINGTON D.C.|| Press of R. L. PENDLETON, 609 F. STREET, N. W. ||1912 [in Roman]

Publication: 1st edition. R. L. Washington D.C.: Pendleton Press, 1912. © Copyrighted by Mrs. Leila Amos Pendleton, 1912. Printed at 609 F St. N.W., Washington D.C.

Binding: Publisher's Cloth (Pasteboard) Binding: navy blue crisscross, diamond-pattern cloth with blind stamped rectangular border and title in gilt on front cover

Bookplate: n/a

Frontispiece: Photographic plate of author

Acknowledgements: n/a

Paratext: 5 endleaves; pastedown; title page; frontispiece; preface; contents; headlines; pagination

Collation: 8vo

Pagination: [4], 5-217, [2]

Paper: Wove paper

Watermark: n/a

Size: 140mm x 210mm (5 1/4" x 8 1/4")

Margin: 30mm x 25mm (1 3/16 x 1")

Type: Roman (Old Style) with initials in Slab Serif

Illustration: Map of Africa, 8; Ancient Civilization, 13; Rionga, a Native Chief Receives Baker, 19; A Native Youth of Modern Africa, 26a; Native King and Council, Hinterland, Sierra Leone, 38; Liberian Soldiers and Citizens, 44; The President's Palace, Port Au Prince, Haiti, 54; A Maroon Town in Jamaica, 64; Ancient Slavery, 74; Phillis Wheatley, 90; Negroes In The Battle of Bunker Hill, 101; Negro Sailors in the War of 1812, 108; Bishop Richard Allen (Founder of the African Methodist Episcopal Church), 119; Frederick Douglass, 133; John Brown at Harper's Ferry, 146; Battle of Fort Wagner, 157; Howard University, 168; Dr. Booker T. Washington, 190; Dr. W. E. Burghardt Dubois, 196

Ornamentation: Vignette (on p. 202)

Contents: Preface [3]; Chapter I. A TALK WITH CHILDREN, 5; Chapter II. GEOGRAPHY OF AFRICA, 9; Chapter III. ANCIENT CIVILIZATION, 13; Chapter IV. EXPLORATIONS IN AFRICA, 19; Chapter V. MODERN AFRICA, 27; CHAPTER VI. SIERRA LEONE, 38; Chapter VII. LIBERIA, 44; Chapter VIII. HAITI and Santo Domingo, 54; Chapter IX. BRAZIL, JAMAICA, AND BERMUDA, 64; Chapter X. SLAVERY, 74; Chapter XI. THE NEGRO IN THE COLONIES, 81; Chapter XII. THE DAWNING LIGHT, 90; Chapter XIII. THE NEGRO IN THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR, 101; THE NEGRO IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, 108; THE LIGHT GROWS BRIGHTER, 119; Chapter XVI. FREDERICK DOUGLASS; Chapter XVII. AN EVENTFUL DECADE, 146; Chapter XVIII. THE NEGRO IN THE CIVIL WAR, 157; Chapter XIX. FIFTEEN YEARS OF FREEDOM, 168; XX. HELPS AND HINDERANCES, 178; Chapter XXI. TWO WAYS OF THINKING, 189; Chapter XXII. THE LIGHT DIFFUSED, 202; CONTENTS, 219

Bibliographic Sample SIV-B1

Title: BIBLE MASTERY||[single line break] We get a general knowledge of the Bible by reading it, and a clearer insight|| to its truths by studying its|| subject matter||[line break]||By||Rev. Sterling N. Brown, A. M., D. D.,||Howard University||Washington D. C. ||[single line break]||FOURTH EDITION||[single line break]

Publication: 4th edition. Washington, D.C.: Murray Bros. Print. Co., 1925. ©1925. Printed by Murray Bros. Printing Co.

Binding: Library Binding (Ocker & Trapp Co.)

Bookplate: The New York Public Library. The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. Image of chained, enslaved person of African descent in supplicating genuflection. Engraved by P. Reason after Wedgewood's abolition medallion

Frontispiece: n/a

Acknowledgements: Dedication: "To that company of young men whom the author has instructed from time to time, during a period of many years, at the Howard University School of Religion, and to all seekers after a general knowledge of God's Word"

Paratext: 9 endleaves; pastedown; title page; dedication; preface to first edition; preface to second edition; preface to third edition; preface to forth edition; commendations; contents; introduction; headlines; citations; tables; graphs; pagination

Collation: 16mo

Pagination: [9], 255, [12]

Paper: Wove paper

Watermark: n/a

Size: 100mm x 165mm (4" x 6 1/2")

Margin: 16mm x 15mm (5/8" x 5/8")

Type: Roman (Old Style)

Illustration: n/a

Ornamentation: n/a

Contents: Preface, iii; Commendations, viii; Contents, ix; INTRODUCTION, Reading the Bible, 1; Studying the Bible, 4; Scope of the Book, 10; PART ONE, Bible Introduction, 11; Book Outlines of Old and New Testaments, 29; Important Question, 60; Chronological Table, 100; Chronological Table, 100; Bible Lands, 101; PART TWO, Bible History, Period 1. The Beginning of the Human Race, 110; Period 2. The Chosen Family, 139; Period 3. The Israelitish People, 149; Period 4. The Israelitish Kingdom, 167; The Divided Kingdom: Kingdom of Israel, 184; The Kingdom of Judah, 206; Contemporary History, 221; Period 5. Period of Jewish Province. 227; The Captivities, 227; The Restorations, 229; Interval Between the Old and New

Testaments, 230; Period 6. The Life of Christ, 233; Period 7. The Apostolic Church, 246; The Institutions of the Bible, 250; PART THREE, Historical Tables, 257

Bibliographic Sample SIV-B2

Title: [ornamental (sunflower) border] NOT WITHOUT
LAUGHTER||BY||LANGSTON||HUGHES||ALFRED A. KNOPF||[Borozi printer's
device(running wolf)]||NEW YORK 1930 LONDON [in Sans Serif (Bold)] [in black and
maroon]

Publication: New York, NY: Knopf, 1930. © Alfred A. Knopf. "Manufactured in the United States of America." Printed by the Plimpton Press and H. Wolff Book Manufacturing Company

Binding: Library Binding (Ocker & Trapp Co.). Originally bound by the H. Wolff Book Manufacturing Company

Bookplate: n/a

Frontispiece: n/a

Acknowledgements: "To J. E. and Amy Spingarn"

Paratext: 5 endleaves; pastedown; author inscription; half-title, title page; headlines, pagination

Collation: 8vo

Pagination: [8], 3-324

Paper: Wove paper (high quality, cut, with blue tint on head edge)

Watermark: n/a

Size: 130mm x 185mm (5 1/8 x 7 1/4")

Margin: 30mm x 25mm (1 3/16" x 1")

Type: Roman (Bodoni)

Illustration: n/a

Ornamentation: Broad acanthus leaf borders with decorated initials

Contents: I. Storm, 3; II. Conversation, 16; III. Jimboy's Letter; IV. Thursday Afternoon, 38; V. Guitar, 50; VI. Work, 62; VIII. Dance, 58; IX. Carnival, 107; X. Punishment, 121; XI. School, 130; XII. Hard Winter, 138; XIII. Christmas, 153; XIV. Return, 168; XV. One by One, 176;

XVI. Nothing but Love, 188; XVII. Barber-Shop, 195; XVIII. Children's Day, 205; XIX. Ten Dollars and Costs, 215; XX. Hey, Boy!, 221; XXI. Beyond the Jordan, 243; XXII. Beyond the Jordan, 243; XXIII. Tempy's House, 250; XXIV. A Shelf of Book, 258; XXV. Pool Hall. 265; XXVII. Beware of Women, 282; XXVIII. Chicago, 294; XXIX. Elevator, 309; XXX. Princess of the Blues

Bibliographic Sample SIV-B3

Title: [single line border in green] CHORDS and DISCORDS ||[double underline]||BY||WALTER EVERETT HAWKINS|| [printer's device (acanthus leaf vine wrapped around a t-shaped Greek column)]|Author of "Sweet Dreams of You"||[single line break]||1909||The MURRAY BROTHERS Press||Washington D.C. [in Roman]

Publication: 1st edition. Washington D.C.: Murrary Bros. Press, 1909. © Walter E. Hawkins

Binding: Library Binding

Bookplate: The New York Public Library. The Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. Image of chained, enslaved person of African descent in supplicating genuflection. Engraved by P. Reason

Frontispiece: Photographic plate of author

Acknowledgements: Dedication: "To the memory of a resolute Father, whose stern Christian Character finds agreeable balance in the pliant devotions of a kindly Mother, and to a galaxy of Brothers and Sisters, whose kind indulgences have inspired my dreams, I dedicate this volume

Paratext: 5 endleaves; pastedown; title page; contents; dedication; introductory; preface; pagination

Collation: 16mo

Pagination: [4],5-80, [5]

Paper: Thick wove paper (high quality)

Watermark: n/a

Size: 106mm x 170mm (4 1/8" x 6 3/4")

Margin: 12mm x 12mm (1/2" x 1/2")

Type: Roman

Illustration: n/a

Ornamentation: Single line page borders in green and two oversize initials

Contents: Contents, [3]; Dedication, [4]; Introduction, 5; Preface, 7; A Spade is Just a Spade, 18; Be True, 19; Criticism on Biography, 17; "Dixon Shall Not Play Tonight," 78; Dunbar, 68; Evolution, 51; Here and Hereafter, 66; Immortality, 32; Love's Unchangeableness, 47; Money, 29; Ode to Ethiopia, 32; Off to the Fields of Green, 9; "Remember Brownsville," 60; Song to Our Women, 66; Steptoe Brown, 74; Song to the Pilot, 72; The Black Soldiers, 44; The Church Seeker, 35; The Birth, 14; The Falling of a Star, 21; The First Lie, 54; The Mob Victim, 63; The Poet's Adieu, 81; The Song of the Free, 69; The Voice in the Wilderness, 56; The Warbler and the Worm, 41; Too Much Religion, 20; To Booker T. Washington, 48; To the Hypocrit, 37; To "The Guardian," 25; To W.E. Burghardt DuBois, 39; Wail on a Wicked Bachelor, 15; Where Air of Freedom is, 30; Wrong's Reward, 27

Bibliographic Sample SIV-B6

Title: Trey Ellis [in Sans] PLATITUDES [in Roman]|| & "The New Black Aesthetic"||With a new foreword by Bertram D. Ashe||Northeastern University Press||Boston

Publication: 1st edition. 2nd printing. The Northeastern library of Black Literature Series. Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press, 2003 [1988]. © 1988 Trey Ellis. Vintage Books, republished by Northeastern by agreement with Trey Ellis Productions, Inc. Library of Congress in Publication data. Reprint. Originally Published by Vintage Books: New York, NY. ISBN-I-5553-5860. Manufactured in U.S.A. Printed and bound by Sheridan Books, Ann Arbor Michigan (pbk: alk: paper). Photographs by Lorna Simpson. Foreword by Bertram D. Ashe

Binding: Paperback (Adhesive) Binding: Two African American young adults engaging each other in front of the entrance of a deli/café)

Bookplate: Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. Geometric Abstract African Design

Frontispiece: n/a

Acknowledgements: n/a

Paratext: End leaf; half-title; title page; other title's list; contents; foreword; [meta]narrative references; pagination; synopsis; promotional blurbs (include Ishmael Reed, Henry Louis Gates Jr., Clarence Major, and John A. Williams)

Collation: 12mo

Pagination: [8], 203, [1]

Paper: Chemical wood paper (House Natural Hi-bulk, acid-free stock)

Watermark: n/a

Size: 132mm x 205mm (5 3/16" x 8")

Margin: 30mm x 22mm (1 3/16" x 7/8")

Type: Roman (Transitional and Modern), Sans Serif

Illustration: 8 photographs by Lorna Simpson, mostly architectural

Ornamentation: Section dividers

Contents: foreword, viii; Platitudes, 3; The New Black Aesthetic, 185

Bibliographic Sample SIV-B9

Title: VENUS [downward in Sans Serif]|| A Play by||SUZAN LORI-PARKS||Theatre Communications Group

Publication: 1st edition. New York, NY: Theatre Communications Group, 1997. © 1990, 1995, 1997 by Suzan-Lori Parks, Venus, published by Theatre Communications Group, Inc. 355 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10019, September, 1997. Cover design by Paula Scher. Text design by Lisa Govan [\$12.95]

Binding: Illustrated Paperback (Adhesive) Binding: glossy cover with illustrated title embedded within a solid blue and black colored image of Sarah "Saartjie" Baartman on front cover and author photograph and commentary on back cover

Bookplate: Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture. Geometric Abstract African Design

Frontispiece: n/a

Acknowledgements: "With Loce from The Rockefeller Foundation's Bellagio; Theater Communications Group; Liz Diamond; Bonnie Metzgar; Stephanie Ellen; David Harris; Saartjie Baartman." "Le travail humain," Jean-Luc Godard, the film Masculin * Feminin, 1966 Agros Film "You don't believe in history," Virginia Woolf, Between the Acts © 1941 V. Woolf, Harcourt Brace, Jovanovich, NY

Paratext: Half-title; production history; role list; character list; list of scenes; author notes, running titles (bottom page); glossary of medical terms; glossary of chocolates; author biography; author photograph

Collation: 12mo

Pagination: [1], 168

Paper: Publisher's stock paper (pbk. : alk. paper)

Watermark: n/a

Size: 132mm x 210mm (5 3/16" x 8 1/4")

Margin: 21mm x 15mm (13/16" x 5/8")

Type: Roman (Transitional) and Sans Serif

Illustration: n/a

Ornamentation: Ornamental Initial

Contents: Production History, vi; The Roles, The Characters, vii; List of Scenes, viiii; Author's Notes: From "The Elements of Style," ix; Overture, 1; Scene 31, 10; Scene 31: May I Present to you "The African Dancing Princess/She'd Make a Splendid Freak, 10; Scene 30: She Looks like She's Fresh Off the Boat, 19; Scene 29: "For the Love of the Venus." Act I, Scene 3, 25; Scene 28: Footnote #2, 28; Scene 27: Presenting the Mother Showman and Her Great Chain of Being, 29; Scene 26: "For the Love of the Venus." Act II, Scene 9, 38; Scene 25: Counting Down/Counting the Take, 40; Scene 24: "But No One Ever Noticed/Her Face Was Streamed with Tears, 42; Scene 23: "For the Love of the Venus." Act II, Scene 10, 48; Scene 22: Counting the Take/The Dead That Was, 50; Scene 21: The Whirlwind Tour, 58; Scene 20A: The Venus Hottentot Before the Law (Footnote #6 Historical Extract: Musical. From R. Tolle-Scott's "The Circus and the Allied Arts"), 62; Scene 20B: The Venus Hottentot Before the Law (continued) (Historical Extract), 64; Scene 20C: The Venus Hottentot Before the Law (continued) (Dictionary Extract: From Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, page 545), 65; Scene 20D: The Venus Hottentot Before the Law (continued) (Witness 1 and Witness 2), 68; Scene 20G: The Venus Hottentot Before the Law (continued) (Exhibit B), 70; Scene 20H: The Venus Hottentot Before the Law (continued) (Witness 3 and Witness 4), 71; Scene 20I: The Venus Hottentot Before the Law (continued) (Historical Extract), 74; Scene 20J: The Venus Hottentot Before the Law (conclusion) (Historical Extract), 78; Scene 19: A Scene of Love(?), 79; Scene 18: She Was Always My Favorite Child, 81; Scene 17: You Look Like You Need a Vacation, 85; Intermission, Scene 16: Several Tears from Now: In the Anatomical Theatre of Tübingen: The Dis(-re-)memberment of the Venus Hottentot, Part I, 91; [Intermission (continued): (Historical Extract. Musical: The Song of Jack Higgenbottom)], 99; Scene 15: Counting Down,

100; Scene 14: In the Orbital Path of the Baron Docteur, 101; Scene 13: Footnote #7; Scene 12: Love Idubnt What/She Used to Be, 11; Scene II: "For the Love of the Venus." Act II, Scene 12, 121; Scene 10: Footnote #9, 124; Scene 9: Her Charming Hands/ An Anatomical Columbus, 125; Scene 8: "For the Love of the Venus: Act III, Scene 9, 132; Scene 7: She'll Make a Splendid Corpse, 135; Scene 6: Some Years Later in Tübingen (Reprise), 147; Scene 5: Who is She to Me?, 150; Scene 4: "For the Love of the Venus" (Conclusion), 153; Scene 3: A Brief History of Chocolate, 155; Scene 2: The Venus Hottentot Tells the Story of Her Life, 157; Scene 1: Final Chorus, 160

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