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A web-based community-building archives project: A case study of Kids in Birmingham 1963
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Abstract:	Recent archival literature on social justice emphasizes activism - the importance of documenting social activism and activists, and activists' use of archives for promoting social justice. Left out of these discussions is the role archives can play in helping to capture the experiences of bystanders - passive participants - during times of tumultuous social change. Recording those stories provides a more nuanced view of times of great change in society and helps people place their own experiences in historic context. Civil rights activists and their opponents' racist violence in 20th century Birmingham, Alabama, , in the United States, have been well documented. The experiences of passive participants have not been entered into the historic record. This case study examines a web-based hybrid heritage project that provides a forum for people raised in Birmingham to share their experiences in the watershed year, 1963. Kids in Birmingham 1963 (referred to as Kids) contains curated first-person accounts and educational tools. The project acts as a clearinghouse, proactively marketing its content and making its contributors available for direct interviews with the media, educators, and students. The Kids project has created a new community that could not have existed 50 years ago because of segregation. Contributors and users find benefits in opportunities to inspire younger generations to join the cause for social justice. The authors propose using the techniques employed in this project and its sister project, Desegregation of Virginia Education (DOVE), to develop a model that can enable communities to create a rich historical record and make it widely available through mass media, social media, and educational outlets.
Response to Reviewers:	Kids reviewers' comments and authors' responses. While the authors provide a good overview of the literature, this is the section where I suggest reworking.

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Laura Caldwell Anderson is the Archivist / Oral History Project Director at the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute (BCRI) in Birmingham, Alabama, in the United States. Her publications include *Civil Rights in Birmingham,* a collection of historic photographs and "Promoting Civil and Human Rights Worldwide through Education: A Case Study of the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute" in *Museums in a global context: National identity, international understanding*. Past President of the Society of Alabama Archivists and a graduate of the Jekyll Island Management Institute of the Southeastern Museums Conference and the Getty Leadership Institute's NextGen program, she has presented at conferences of the Oral History Association, the American Alliance of Museums, and the Society of American Archivists. In her 11 years of work with BCRI, Anderson has met veterans of and witnesses to the movement for civil and human rights that took place in the 20th century Southern United States, many of whom were "kids in Birmingham" in 1963. She holds a Masters of Arts in American Studies from University of Alabama and a Masters of Arts in History from University of West Georgia.

Chanda Temple is director of public relations for the Birmingham Public Library in Alabama, United States. Before joining the library in 2012, she worked as a reporter for 19 years. Chanda has received numerous awards and recognition for her writing and community work. In 2001 and 2002, she covered the murder trials and convictions of the last two living suspects connected to the 1963 deadly bombing of Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama. In 2013, Temple worked on various projects at Birmingham City Hall as Birmingham leadership implemented programming for the 50th anniversary of the civil rights movement. The commemoration attracted thousands of people to Birmingham and ended with the 50th anniversary of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church bombing in September 2013. Temple often makes presentations on public relations. She is a member of the YWCA Central Alabama Board of Directors, the American Library Association, the Public Relations Society of America, and the Foundation for Progress in Journalism Board. She is a graduate of the University of Alabama.

A web-based community-building archives project: A case study of *Kids in Birmingham 1963*

Introduction

Recent archival literature on social justice emphasizes activism – the importance of documenting social activism and activists, and activists' use of archives for promoting social justice. Left out of these discussions is the role archives can play in helping to capture the experiences of bystanders – passive participants – during times of tumultuous social change. Recording those stories provides a more nuanced view of times of great change in society and helps people place their own experiences in historic context. Civil rights activists and their opponents' racist violence in 20th century Birmingham, Alabama, , in the United States, have been well documented. The experiences of passive participants have not been entered into the historic record. This case study examines a web-based hybrid heritage project that provides a forum for people raised in Birmingham to share their experiences in the watershed year, 1963. *Kids in Birmingham 1963* (referred to as *Kids*) contains curated first-person accounts and educational tools. The project acts as a clearinghouse, proactively marketing its content and making its contributors available for direct interviews with the media, educators, and students. The Kids project has created a new community that could not have existed 50 years ago because of segregation. Contributors and users find benefits in opportunities to inspire younger generations to join the cause for social justice. The authors propose using the techniques employed in this project and its sister project, Desegregation of Virginia Education (DOVE), to develop a model that can enable communities to create a rich historical record and make it widely available through mass media, social media, and educational outlets.

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Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. called 1963 "the year of Birmingham" (Bass 2001, p. 226). That year, the city, known for segregation[1] and violent attacks on African Americans, became the epicenter of the United States civil rights movement. King, the Rev. Fred L. Shuttlesworth, and others organized a campaign that led to the passage of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act.[2] In many ways, the Birmingham story is the story of young people – from the African American activists in the Children's Crusade[3], brutalized by police dogs and fire hoses, to the deadly bombing of Sixteenth Street Baptist Church in mid-September 1963 and the loss, that day, of six young lives.[4]

A variety of sources – primary and secondary, popular and scholarly, nonfiction and fiction – record the experiences of young activists in Birmingham during the Civil Rights era. Oral history interviews housed in the archives of the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute (BCRI) contain firsthand accounts of young activists in Birmingham that are included in a volume of edited interviews, *Foot soldiers for democracy: The men, women, and children of the Birmingham Civil Rights Movement (*Huntley and McKerley 2009). For young readers, *Birmingham Sunday* (Brimner 2010) and *We've got a job: The 1963 Children's March* (Levinson 2012) shed light on African Americans' motivations for being involved in the demonstrations.

Left out of the literature are the city's black and white children who were not directly involved in demonstrations in the early 1960s. These children were not mere onlookers; in a sense, they were *passive participants*. While this term could be viewed as contradictory, it is a

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[1] See for instance, Connerly C (2005) *The most segregated city in America: City planning and civil rights in Birmingham, 1920-1980*.

[2] *But for Birmingham* (Eskew G 1997) and the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Carry me home* (McWhorter 2001) explore the meaning of Birmingham and its place in the larger picture of the movement for civil and human rights in the United States.

[3] The *Children's Crusade* or *Children's March* refers to a series of marches and arrests involving thousands of young people in Birmingham, Alabama, over a period of eight days in May 1963.

[4] Addie Mae Collins, Cynthia Wesley, Carole Robertson and Denise McNair were killed in the bombing 15 September, 1963. Later the same day two other young African Americans were murdered in related incidents – police shot Johnnie Robinson in the back for purportedly throwing rocks and two white teenagers murdered Virgil Ware.

shorthand way of describing people who, while they were not actively engaged in the protests, had their world shaken by the dramatic events of those years. Growing up in the city dubbed *Bombingham* meant that all of Birmingham's young African Americans at that time suffered losses: the loss of safety and security, cancelled school traditions, even the death of friends.[5] The threat of police brutality and possible loss of livelihood for their parents and guardians caused fear and anxiety. African American youth directly involved experienced the traumas of jailing and police brutality. Those who did not take part in civil rights actions may have suffered guilt over not participating or anger over being forbidden to participate. The segregated nature of Alabama and the lack of press coverage isolated white children in Birmingham and its suburbs from many of the events of that year. Only a handful of white youth took a stand against segregation and inequality. However, the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church opened the eyes of many of those white children to the true nature of the segregated society in which they lived.

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After discussing archival literature on social justice activism and community archives, this article will present the goals of the Kids project and analyze the extent to which it met those goals. This article will then describe a model for user-centered community archives based on best practices from the Kids project and a sister project Desegregation of Virginia Education (DOVE).

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[5] Eskew (1997, p. 53) attributes the name "Bombingham" to the estimated 50 dynamite attacks on African Americans that took place between 1947 and 1965.

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Literature review

A dominant thread in archival literature equates *social justice* with activities and activism, rather than with a set of beliefs. [6] Dunbar (2006) provides a goal-oriented definition of the term:

  • To provide a vision of society in which the distribution of resources is more equitable
  • To seek vehicles for actors to express their own agency, reality or representation
  • To develop strategies that broker dialog between communities with unparallel cultural viewpoints
  • To create frameworks to clearly identify, define, and analyze oppression and how it operates at various individual, cultural, and institutional levels (Bell 1997, pp. 3–4) (Dunbar, p. 117).

This definition resonates with the Kids project, although the project goals are narrower in scope. Duff, Flinn, Suurtamm, and Wallace (2013), in evaluating the impact of social justice of archives, find that the Dunbar definition aligns to their conceptual framework. Duff et al. support Brophy (2005) in measuring the impact of library services in terms of changes in behavior, not in terms of changes in perceptions. Brophy's model relates to impact of services on individuals whereas Duff et al. focus on how "archives impact larger social groupings and give them the tools needed to work toward social justice" (Duff, p. 337).

Harris (2007) and R Jimerson (2009), among others, have written about the potential of archives for promoting social justice. Biko (2005), Harris (2002, 2011), Lile (2010), and Caswell (2010) write about the use of archives and memory as a catalyst for social change; to document and publicize human rights violations; and to provide evidence for redressing past injustices. R Jimerson (2007) argues that archivists have an obligation to use archives for social justice.

Archives and heritage institutions have been found to assist in healing communities with shared past injustices. Harris (2007) and others discuss the restorative strategy of the South

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[6] See Duff, Flinn, Suurtamm, and Wallace (2013) for an in-depth discussion of the philosophical, political, sociological, economic, and religious dimensions of *social justice* as used by archivists and other disciplines.

African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which used archives to uncover abuses of the apartheid regime. In Mississippi, truth commissions modeled on international truth and reconciliation commissions help bridge the gap between black and white communities on issues of racism and violence (Glisson 2014). Their "Welcome Table" technique "increases the range of voices of those who are deemed credible enough to tell the truth" (Glisson p. 5). Mayor David Vann proposed development of a "museum-like facility" to help in healing Birmingham after he visited the Holocaust museums in Israel in 1978 (Woolfolk undated).

In South Africa and elsewhere, opening up records and conversations about painful pasts is not without detractors or problems. Opponents to the Vann's proposed museum, which became the BCRI, raised concerns that it would open old wounds rather than heal them (Woolfolk undated). Danielson (2004), Peterson (2005), and Speer (1999) provide examples of privacy issues that are raised when access is granted to covert record-keeping or surveillance programs maintained by governments tracking individuals and organizations suspected of political activism. While providing tools can help obtain justice for victims of past injustices, access to such records can also put victims at further risk. Fobear (2014) sees risk of exposure as limiting lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered LGBT participation in refugee oral history social justice projects.

Documenting social activists themselves is now commonplace, in contrast to the early days of Ham's "The Archival Edge" (1975) and the oft-cited Zinn (1971), who criticized the archival profession for failing to document the full spectrum of society, not just the power elite (Abraham 1991). Despite progress, activist communities continue to form independent repositories, sometimes in response to perceived documentation gaps in traditional archives (Flinn, Stevens, and Shepherd 2009). Flinn et al., Caswell (2014), Nestle (1990), and others find that autonomous archives are also formed because activists lack trust in established repositories and want to control how their history is preserved. Other authors including McKemmish, Faulkhead, and Russell (2011); Bastian (2013); and Caswell (2013) raise concerns about the archival profession's mistrust of communities stewarding their own records.

Community-based history preservation projects are referred to by a variety of terms. Cox (2008) and others have written about *citizen archivists* who form archives outside of the established repositories. The Black Metropolis Research Consortium (BMRC) in Chicago uses the term *second space* to describe archival holdings in private collections and community

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organizations (Calahan 2010). Wong, Ikeda, Cachola, and Ibanez (2014) write about the role of Asian American *community-based archival organizations* in reshaping ideas of archival practice. Perhaps the most common term, particularly in the UK, is *community archives*, which Flinn defines as "the (often) grassroots activities of creating and collecting, processing and curating, preserving and making accessible collections relating to a particular community or specified subject" (2007, p. 153).

Creation of community archives can also be an explicit part of social activism. Flinn, Stevens, and Shepherd (2009) discuss the close relationship between anti-racist movements and community archives in the UK. The community-based Queer Newark Oral History Project, in working with LGBT activists, "purposely staged our first round of histories in the public sphere, using them not only to document the queer past, but also to celebrate, commemorate, and honor it in an open, collective setting—which would then become generative, inspiring further work" (Moore, Satter, Stewart-Winter, and Strub 2014, p. 4).

A mix of traditional institutions and community groups can also document social justice issues. Closest in its purpose to Kids in Birmingham 1963 is Desegregation of Virginia Education (DOVE), a history preservation collaboration of librarians, archivists, historians, community organizations, and private citizens (Yaco and Hardy 2014).[7] Sonia Yaco, then head of Special Collections at Old Dominion University Libraries in Norfolk, Virginia, formed DOVE with the goal of locating, cataloging, and preserving records that document the state's school desegregation process. The project has gained national attention for creative use of community organizing and digital technology to document and share this history. DOVE has created an online catalog that provides a guide to primary and secondary sources on the topic from repositories in Virginia and elsewhere, such as University of Illinois at Chicago. DOVE and its host institution Old Dominion University have developed a digital collection that offers online access to digital objects including oral histories. DOVE has trained community volunteers and professionals to conduct record surveys and oral histories. In 2012, American Association of Retired People (AARP) Virginia and civil rights groups joined with DOVE to create the *School*

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[7] DOVE is a sister project to Kids. Yaco founded DOVE; Jimerson is now the DOVE co-chair. Yaco is Senior Advisor to both groups.

Desegregation: Learn, Empower, Preserve initiative – community discussions that included a traveling exhibit and oral history gathering. [8] More than 5,000 people saw the exhibits and approximately 100 have contributed oral histories. For many, these community events were the first time they had talked publicly about how school desegregation affected their lives. With a few exceptions, people who engaged in the discussions were not activists, but were students, teachers, and community members whose lives were profoundly affected by desegregation.

Archives could help to capture the experiences of other passive participants during times of tumultuous social change. The DOVE and Kids projects provide evidence that passive participants are potential donors. This idea is seldom discussed in archival literature and is not a common focus of archival collections. Oral historians Reisch and Andrews (1999), writing about the McCarthy era, provide one example of this absence: "Those social workers most affected by the period's repression rarely left written records" (Reisch and Andrews p. 88). Reisch and Andrews cite Reinharz (1992) in concluding that, "Oral histories however provide historical perspective on events and the consequences that are often omitted from archives" (p. 88). The field of oral history has a tradition of providing narratives of "social non-elites" (D Miller 1994, p. 131) and "the ordinary everyday citizen" (Janesick 2007, p. 111).

Literature is also silent on how archivists should respond to patrons, in Birmingham and elsewhere, who lived through times of social change and want to put their experiences in context. Some expect to see their life events represented in collections, such as the Virginia patron wanting, "any evidence of the cross burning, abusive late-night phone calls and death threats he had endured when he enrolled in a previously white rural south-side high school. Where was it recorded?" (Yaco 2012). Veterans of the Civil Rights Movement often visit the BCRI Archives, according to BCRI Archivist and Oral History Project director Laura Caldwell Anderson, "seeking to find their voices in the 'official records' of the Movement but are sometimes frustrated to learn that there is no record of their participation. Many were too young to have their names documented in police records, even though they were held, often times for days, in large pens with other young people." (personal communication, October 2014)

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[8] In 2013, the Society of American Archivists presented the J. Franklin Jameson Archival Advocacy award to the Virginia AARP and Dr. Warren Stewart for their work with DOVE.

Anderson says that non-activist patrons have different needs:

My encounters with "passive participants" find me more in the position of a counselor or therapist than an archivist. Persons who were affected by the Civil Rights Movement, but unable to participate in any direct ways, want to tell me their stories of being denied permission to participate or not even knowing that a movement was underway. They want to talk about the bubbles in which they were forced to live either by parents or whole communities. Typically, they come to the archives as learners or researchers – seeking to familiarize themselves with a narrative that they realize they could know firsthand, or that they feel they should know firsthand, but do not. (personal communication, October 2014)

Existing research on the needs of patrons seldom explores what content users prefer. Studies of archives' users instead focus on information seeking behaviors in different patron communities. A case in point is "Where Is the List with All the Names? Information-Seeking Behavior of Genealogists," (Duff and Johnson 2003, p. 79) which sought "to improve the design of archival information systems." Tibbo (2003) examines how historians look for primary sources and concludes that in designing discovery tools archivists should prioritize user needs and user education. Duff, Yakel, Tibbo, Cherry, McKay, Krause, and Sheffield (2010) and others decry the lack of user studies in archives, but again primarily focus on studying usability and information seeking behaviors. The Archival Metrics Toolkits they created serve to evaluate users' experiences with facilities, services, and staff.

In-depth analysis of literature on utilizing social media for community building is beyond the scope of this paper. The reader *A different kind of web: New connections between archives and our users* (Theimer 2011) explores the use of social media for archival outreach. A survey of special collections in the United States and Canada using social media in outreach finds a perception that blogs, Facebook, and Twitter are effective for highlighting collections and events, particularly for larger institutions in larger metropolitan areas (Heyliger, McLoone, and Thomas 2013).

Background and Methodology

In 2012, Ann Jimerson participated in two projects that related to social justice in the Southern United States. As a child, she lived in Birmingham in the early 1960s. From 1961 to 1964, her father, Reverend Norman C. Jimerson, as director of the Alabama Council on Human Relations, was the state's only white fulltime paid civil rights worker. Rev. Jimerson gained the trust of both white moderates and African American civil rights leaders (Morgan 1964, pp 127-134). When Dr. King and his colleagues shifted attention to Birmingham, Rev. Jimerson was active behind the scenes, convincing key players, both black and white, to convene for negotiations. On 15 September, 1963, a few hours after the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, Rev. Jimerson collected pieces of the shattered stained glass windows from the street. These shards and the memories of the events surrounding them stayed with the five Jimerson children. In 2012, as the 50th anniversary of the bombing approached, Ann Jimerson worked with her brother Randall Jimerson as he wrote a family memoir, *Shattered glass in Birmingham: My family's fight for Civil Rights, 1961-1964* (2014).

In 2012, Jimerson became involved in the DOVE history preservation project. She helped to organize community events where people who integrated schools talked about their experiences. Jimerson was struck by the importance participants placed on being able to contribute their stories to the DOVE oral history collection. Strengths of these DOVE events were their community focus and the chance DOVE provided for participants to informally share, compare, and contrast their stories with others.

Jimerson realized that she wanted to provide a similar community dialog for people raised in the Birmingham area to reclaim their own childhood experiences and add their voices to the documented history. Her project, *Kids in Birmingham 1963*, set out to achieve three goals:

- Provide a platform for people who share a common past to connect with Birmingham's 50th anniversary commemorative events and to tell their stories. The project would help people find their place in history.
- Develop content that shows a broader picture of the Birmingham story. The project's stories bring to light a more nuanced view of the effect of the "year of Birmingham," showing the diversity of experiences, not only the differences between black and white children, but the

range of engagement young people in each of those groups had with the civil rights movement and with current events in their community.

- Market/promote content to media, educators, and students. *Kids in Birmingham 1963* connects journalists and students to people who are willing to be interviewed about their Birmingham experiences. The project creates ways for young people to feel personally connected with civil rights history and the ongoing fight for human and civil rights.

Kids in Birmingham 1963 project

Once Jimerson formed the idea for the project, she chose a name (*Kids in Birmingham 1963*) that is politically neutral and allows members of both black and white communities to self-identify. The word "kids" steers away from association with the Birmingham Children's Crusade, which was an all-African American youth protest in 1963. She chose not to seek a formal attachment to any one local organization or repository, allowing the project to approach and appeal to all.

In early 2013, Jimerson began looking for potential storytellers. Laura Caldwell Anderson put her in touch with several people who had contributed to the BCRI Oral History Project and/or accessed the oral history project collection for research. Jimerson also made local and national connections in Washington, DC, where she lives, reaching out to potential users of the content the project would generate, specifically media and educators. Jimerson asked journalists what would interest them in using such a website. She learned, for example, that reporters would not feature the posted first-person accounts unless they had the opportunity to interview the storytellers. She built a database of reporters who were following the story of the civil rights anniversary, especially those based in the American South. She spoke with educators, too, to learn how to make the material appealing to teachers and useful in a classroom. Her contacts included educational groups such as Operation Understanding DC and Teaching for Change.

Jimerson determined that the project would have two public faces: a website and social media. The Kids website would contain stories – first person accounts – along with tools for collecting and using those stories. An important feature of the site is the ability for visitors to request interviews with the storytellers. She felt that putting users directly in touch with the storytellers might inspire them – and show them how – to work toward social justice. The project

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would use social media, specifically Facebook and Twitter, to provide interactive participation and to share secondary sources – news about related projects, press coverage, local happenings. Additionally the project would use social media to draw attention to the Kids website and to establish the project as a "go to" source for news about the 50th anniversary.

Along with introductory text, the website's homepage contains photographs and names of each storyteller and the most recently submitted story. The public can access stories by clicking on a photograph or on a storyteller name or using the site's search engine. Several pages contain content directed at reporters and to educators and students, including an invitation to request a direct interview with one or more of the site's storytellers. Tips for teaching about the "year of Birmingham" and a lesson plan are also on the *Class Room* page. The *Timeline* page graphically portrays the events of 1963 starting from the inauguration of Alabama Governor George Wallace, who pledged "segregation forever," and ending with the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. The *Find Friends* page contains promotional text about the site's Facebook presence and a request for site visitors to send relevant news to the project via e-mail.

The *Share Your Story* page provides instructions for submitting a story and is geared towards passive participants. The page lists possible starting phrases including, "One day of 1963 that stands out for me is the day," and, "The thing we never spoke about was." The linked story submission form asks for each contributor's name, biography, some demographics (but not race), and whether the story has been published elsewhere. The form also contains three separate permission checkboxes for publishing their story on the Kids website, their photograph on the Kids website, and for promotional use of both "in print or on the Internet." Contributors can check a box if they would like Kids to contact them about inquiries from "reporters, historians, and others," with a link offering advice for speaking to the press.

In late March 2013, Jimerson announced the launch of the project with graphically attractive e-mail messages tailored for specific audiences, such as extended family and friends, the media, potential storytellers (people who were children in Birmingham in 1963), and the general public. Simultaneously the project populated its Facebook page and Twitter account with announcements about the project and news about Birmingham's 50th anniversary commemorations. Reaction to the rollout was positive; the first five storytellers were pleased with the result.

Jimerson serves as editor and publisher for the stories. Some stories came from people she found, or whom other storytellers or collaborators referred to Jimerson. Some people learned about the site from the media and decided on their own – without invitation – to contribute a story. Jimerson edits the stories if necessary but always seeks clearance from the contributor before publishing an edited version. The majority of the stories required only minor edits for spelling or punctuation. On several occasions, for the sake of clarity, Jimerson asked storytellers for authorization to correct dates or the names or spelling of organizations, places, or people. For four of the 49 stories, Jimerson worked with storytellers to construct a story from an interview or previous publications. In all cases, the authors/storytellers agreed to the final version of the story before Kids published it. Visitors to the site can also request the unedited versions of stories. The project took care to maintain trust with the storytellers. Even for stories that were freely available elsewhere online, the project requested explicit permission from the author to publish on the Kids website. If a storyteller requested a change following publication, Jimerson made these edits promptly.

Once a critical mass of posted stories was reached, entries flowed in with little coaxing. Some of the storytellers themselves urged their friends and family to send in reminiscences. To keep storytellers and readers engaged with Kids, each time Jimerson posted a new story on the website, she also created announcements to post on Facebook and Twitter, and subscribers received an e-mail announcement. Jimerson made frequent – daily during peak periods of the anniversary commemoration – posts on relevant topics on Facebook and/or Twitter.

In addition to social media, the project pursued a variety of avenues to actively search for more people who would share their stories, such as e-mail lists for high school reunions and the Birmingham View blog. An important move was Jimerson's trip to Birmingham three weeks after the launch. She made significant connections with people in the local community by having face-to-face meetings. Contacts at BCRI, Birmingham Public Library, the office of the Mayor, University of Alabama at Birmingham, and Public Radio WBHM offered productive connections. Jimerson met a former editor and reporter for The Birmingham News, Carol Nunnelley. Nunnelley volunteered to recruit a larger and more diverse group of storytellers, introducing the project to several professional writers and journalists who had begun writing about their childhood experiences and were pleased to find another outlet at the Kids website.

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In May 2013, a group of alumni from African American Birmingham high schools, including storyteller Shirley Holmes Sims, organized a prom to make up for the proms that were canceled in 1963 to punish students for participating in the Children's Crusade (Sims 2013). In prom gift bags, organizers included Kids promotional postcards that Jimerson created to attract storytellers. She slanted the postcard text towards those who were not activists, although she made it broad enough to include activists also:

> You lived it 50 years ago. YOU have a story to tell.
>
> Harold Jackson was 9: "Our parents' focus on education was uppermost in our minds when my older brother Don and I were confronted by two older youths who said black students were boycotting school that day for King's demonstrations."
>
> Brenda Phillips Hong was 17: "There was the threat of being expelled, and there was that chance your mother would get you because she told you not to go downtown and march in the first place"
>
> Round out the history of that tumultuous year.

Fig 1 Kids promotional postcard

Jimerson created variations of this invitation that were aimed even more clearly at passive participants, being devoid of any mention of protests, often including, "If you lived through Birmingham in 1963, you have a story to tell." Jimerson, BCRI, Birmingham Public Library, and other organizations distributed postcards. Nunnelley created a flyer that she distributed at Birmingham events in June inviting people to "share your memories and enrich history."

As the September anniversary of the bombing of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church drew near, national attention to the topic increased and so did project activity. The project posted a lesson plan, prepared by two schoolteachers and complete with objectives, interactive

activities, and a rubric, to help educators easily incorporate Kids material into their classrooms and commemorate that event.[9] The project announced the launch of the lesson plan through e-mail notices, social media, and a posting in the newsletter of the National Council for the Social Studies. Jimerson distributed a press release to her media contacts. On Facebook, storytellers and fans offered comments, shared posts, and in a few cases interacted directly with one another.

After the church bombing anniversary date, the website added more stories yet at a slower rate, while use by students increased. Beginning in October 2013, the Kids project began acting as "matchmaker" between storytellers, educators, and high school students. Student groups contacted the project to request interviews with storytellers. A group of high school students from California, for example, interviewed storytellers in preparation for an intensive study tour to Birmingham and other sites in the American South. During the students' tour, Birmingham-based storytellers met with the class at the Birmingham Public Library to share their experiences.

The project's outreach to educators began to pay off in early 2014. In January, an African American educator invited her white former teaching colleague, Virginia Jones, to her classroom after seeing Jones' story on the Kids site. In February, Teaching Tolerance, a project of the Southern Poverty Law Center, posted a recommendation for the Kids website to its Twitter followers. The same group has identified five of the Kids stories to incorporate into their literacy-based, anti-bias curriculum *Perspectives for a Diverse America* for primary and secondary schools. In March, high school students in Philadelphia contacted Kids as part of their National History Day project. The students won first place in the Pennsylvania contest for their website *Confronting Bombingham* (Li C, Liu K, and Yang 2014). The website contained interviews they conducted with storytellers located through the Kids project, including Dale Long, who was inside the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church during the bombing. In Iowa, students interviewed six storytellers in order to write a drama for National History Day. *Taking responsibility, walking for rights, hearing the voices: the 1963 Birmingham Children's Crusade* (Stutting A, Stutting D, Watkins A, and Wilmott H 2014) won the state contest. The Iowa and Pennsylvania groups met during the national contest, held in Washington, DC,. The Zinn

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[9] Beth Jimerson and Casey Kelly created the lesson plan for primary and secondary grades four through 12.

Education Project included a link to the Kids project in their teaching materials for *Mighty times: The Children's March*.

In April 2014, two primary schools asked Kids to connect them with storytellers. A fifth grade teacher in Durham, North Carolina, used the Kids website as a classroom resource for a writing assignment on the Children's Crusade. Her students created questions for storytellers, several of whom responded to the students via email. The principal of a middle school in Elko County, Nevada is planning a semester project for 20 eighth graders starting in October 2014 to interview storytellers and have the students write a book from those interviews.

At the end of April, Mike Paolucci, a publicist acting on behalf of United States Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney, the Fire Department of New York City (FDNY), Uniformed Fire Officers Association, and First Lady of New York City Chirlane McCray, contacted the Kids project. Paolucci offered to fly a storyteller to New York for an event "commemorating the historic day when the FDNY stood up for social injustice and condemned the Birmingham, Alabama fire department for its actions against the children of The Children's Crusade and the Civil Rights movement."

Jimerson plans to continue the project, with no set end date. Although the 50th anniversary commemoration in Birmingham has passed, the invitation in New York City for a 51st anniversary event suggests that the Kids site will still be of use in the future. The project's name clearly ties it to a single watershed year in history, and the project will maintain its focus on that time period. New storytellers are welcomed, but the project plans to devote less time to recruiting storytellers and more to offering content to groups working in social justice and in education. Ultimately, the project hopes that Kids' content will continue to be disseminated in a variety of forms, such as inclusion in the curriculum of *Perspectives for a Diverse America* and History Day projects. Jimerson is currently evaluating possible repositories to ensure systematic preservation of the Kids website and content after the life of the project.

Results

A year after the *Kids in Birmingham 1963* project began, Jimerson queried 40 of the most active storytellers via e-mail to determine if the project had met its first goal of providing a platform. She asked why they contributed a story, what they gained from their association with Kids, and whether they felt they were part of a new community. Eight storytellers responded.

The storytellers said they valued the Kids project as an outlet to discuss the impact of the events of 1963 on themselves and their families. As Deborah Walker said, "I gained a safe place to be completely open and vulnerable about this period in my history." James Nelson noted that he gained "much personal release" from the writing of his story for the Kids website: "I have fondly remembered one of the girls killed in the Sixteenth Street bombing, Cynthia Wesley, but suppressed my grief for too long. I thought this would be a great way to release such inner torment by sharing my story…Even my family members, including my sister, said she never knew my 1963 feelings until she read the story." Judy Toxey used Kids as a forum to describe her father's experiences, and found that "just to express my admiration for the courage of my Dad in that 1963 environment of racial unrest, even so many years after his death, was so freeing for me." For Katherine Ramage, too, Kids offered an opportunity to help other people to understand her father's actions, "in a public forum, the website, so others can read it to start filling in missing pieces of the Birmingham 1963 story."[10]

Storyteller Carol Nunnelley said that for people who had grown up in Birmingham there were ongoing discussions of "how we began understanding the events of 1963." Having access to the Kids platform helped storytellers to understand their place in that history, especially for those who had not been civil rights activists. Some of the white storytellers in particular stated that they valued the chance to acknowledge the guilt and shame they had felt for participating, even as children, in a racist culture. Anne Whitehouse wrote in her story, "For years I – and many others of my generation – felt pained by our city's shameful past. In laying claim to the civil rights movement and in celebrating it, Birmingham has sought to replace hatred with a vision of brotherhood." Virginia Jones described the experience of being interviewed by students (through Kids), noting: "Being able to share my story with a generation that has such a different perspective has been hard at times for me. It is difficult to admit that we lived in segregation and accepted it." Yet another white participant, Kathy Stiles Freeland, spoke of the opportunity Kids provided for "realizing I wasn't alone in the confusion, sadness, and anger over that terrible year of tragedy."

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[10] Her father Edward Vandiver Ramage was one of the eight white clergy to whom Martin Luther King, Jr., had addressed his Letter from Birmingham Jail (1963).

Some of the storytellers see their contributions as an opportunity to further social justice, especially by sharing their experiences and values with young people. Storyteller Deborah Walker describes her experience with Kids as being "a part of a community of warriors who still are speaking their truth and who still (in their own ways) fighting the good fight." Anne Whitehouse summed it up this way: "I am honored to be part of an interracial, progressive community celebrating the triumphs of the civil rights movement in Birmingham."

It seems clear that the *Kids in Birmingham 1963* project met its primary goal of providing a platform for people to share their stories and acknowledge their experiences.

The project's second goal was to develop content that shows a broader picture of Birmingham's civil rights history. In her description of the contribution of the Kids project, Chanda Temple, the director of public relations at Birmingham Public Library, suggests that the project met this goal. "Sure, we've heard the stories about the dogs, the fire hoses, and the marches. But what the *Kids in Birmingham 1963* project has done is to help add faces to familiar stories. I love that. It helps the reader 'touch' Birmingham and gain an even richer perspective of 1963." (personal communication, May 2014)

In its first year, the Kids website published stories from 49 people who now live in 13 states and the District of Columbia. Twenty-three of the storytellers still live in Alabama. The storytellers' ages in 1963 ranged from six to 23 years. The majority of Kids storytellers, 42 out of 49, were not activists in the 1960s, including three survivors of the bombing of Sixteenth Street Baptist Church. Seven out of 49 of the storytellers were activists in the sense that they actively participated in civil rights or political organizing as children or youth. They took part in the Children's Crusade, were jailed, attended rallies, sat in at lunch counters, or organized bi-racial discussion groups. The storytellers are almost evenly white (25) and black (24). Twenty-eight are female and 21 male. For 36 storytellers, the narrative posted on the Kids website had never been published before. In terms of race and activism, the previously unpublished and published groups are similar (see Table 1).

Table 1 Storyteller characteristics by publishing status

The website offered a broader perspective even for the storytellers and their families. The sister of one white storyteller told Jimerson that until she read Harold Jackson's story, it had

never occurred to her that some African Americans in Birmingham were opposed to the tactics of Martin Luther King, Jr. Several African American storytellers expressed astonishment that Jimerson's family had moved to Birmingham to join the civil rights movement.

The third goal of Kids was to market content and interviews to media, educators, and students, and through them to a broader public. The project used social media, e-mail, and networking to market the website's content and actively promote the opportunity for direct interviews with storytellers. Jimerson keeps an informal record of requests for interviews and where and how the media and educators have used project materials. Twenty-two storytellers were interviewed by one or more people. Reporters based in Washington, DC; Birmingham; Bellingham, Washington; New York City; and in Wales conducted interviews with the storytellers and quoted them in newspaper and magazine articles. Jimerson utilizes Google Analytics, which showed that as of October 2014, the five most frequently accessed stories were written by four passive participants (two African Americans and two whites) and one African American activist. Reporters and students commented that direct contact with people who lived through the historic period added significantly to interviewers' understanding of the topic. Recruiting experienced teachers to develop the lesson plan, rather than having a non-educator do it, created credibility for the project, according to Deborah Menkart, Executive Director of Teaching for Change.

The project helped to make connections for others in search of Birmingham's children. Paolucci, the publicist for the New York City 51st anniversary event, told Jimerson that it was easy to find the names of activists from the Children's Crusade, but almost impossible to find contact information for them. In his invitation e-mail Paolucci wrote, "Having a firsthand account of the terror that happened that day is paramount to giving these events their proper recognition." Because of Kids, Janice Wesley Kelsey attended the event in early May 2014. As a result of the American Psychiatric Association's Office of Minority and National Affairs contacting Kids, storyteller Jeff Drew spoke at a conference on "Transcendence and Resilience Following Trauma: Celebrating the Triumph of the Human Spirit: The 50th Anniversary of the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church Bombing."

Not all attempts to make the stories more widely accessible worked. For example, a playwright proposed to create a theatrical piece based on the stories, but several of the project's storytellers expressed concern about their experiences being fictionalized or misrepresented, so

that effort did not go forward. Additionally Jimerson realized that the release form signed by storytellers limited use of stories to the Kids website. In order for nonprofit groups to distribute the stories, for example, Jimerson would have to ask specific permission of each storyteller.

Analysis

The Kids project offers a platform that does not exist in any other place. Chanda Temple assesses its success: "This project gives people, especially the unsung heroes of 1963, a chance to finally share their story beyond their mind. No longer can people wish for someone to know about their story. This project gives them the power to share their story with the masses." Laura Caldwell Anderson points to the value of both the independence and the voluntary nature of the *Kids* project:

> As an institution, BCRI has collected over 500 oral histories over the course of twenty years. The purpose of this work is to make interview materials – life stories – available to researchers, and our collection has primarily documented the experiences of persons involved in direct action protest to bring about change. Because the Kids site is independent – unaffiliated with an institution – and populated with content voluntarily contributed by persons who have expressed interest in telling their stories broadly and from a variety of perspectives, it is incredibly useful as an objective resource to which we may direct requests for contacts with veterans of the Birmingham experience. We cannot forget that there are persons who possess, for understandable reasons, inherent lack of trust for institutions of any kind. Such persons have, therefore, never donated their stories to an institution. There is value in the fact that *Kids* project stories and storytellers are offered to the public independent of any institutional affiliation. (personal communication, May 2014)

> Flinn and Stevens' discussion of anti-racist community archives in Britain supports Anderson's statement: "… while many community archives are willing to work in partnership with a range of mainstream heritage and other bodies, experience has made them often cautious about such relationships and they frequently maintain a strong sense of independence and autonomy in their decision-making and governance." (2009, p.6)

> Among the strengths of the Kids project are that it provides a virtual platform and real-world connections for storytellers. One example is the gathering of Kids storytellers and visiting

secondary students that took place at the Birmingham Public Library, where Temple works. This event was significant because it pulled together local storytellers – black and white – who indicated, by virtue of joining the *Kids in Birmingham 1963* community and willingness to speak together to visiting students, an interest in community-building and shared reflection.

The body of stories created by the Kids project is a community archive that is not a traditional community or a traditional archive.[11] In many ways, the Kids project created a community that should have existed in the past but did not. Its core members – the storytellers – mostly share the experience of living in Birmingham during 1963, yet they did so in segregated communities defined by race. One white storyteller, Mike Marston, referred to one of the black storytellers, Nathan Turner, Jr., in a Kids Facebook post: "In a sane world, Nathan and I might have been classmates. As a teacher, my Mom might have known his parents. My world is smaller for having not had the opportunity."

The Kids project's use of Facebook and Twitter played a crucial role in building that new virtual community and archive. A 2010 research study by Pew Research Center's Internet & American Life Project found that "Social media users are significantly more likely than other group participants who go online for group activities, to say that the internet has a 'major impact' on their ability to engage with their groups" (Rainie 2011, p. 4). Readers and users of the project's website and its Facebook page have become part of the virtual community, too. Many have been in touch with each other by e-mail and phone, as students and journalists interview the storytellers, making meaningful and personal connections.

From a traditional archives perspective, the Kids project might not be considered archival because its documentation does not conform to the customary definition of provenance and because Jimerson provides minor editing of the stories published on the Kids website. Oral historians routinely make minor edits to transcriptions that they typically review with interviewees, just as Jimerson does. This practice is part of a tradition of "shared authority" between interviewers and interviewees (Frisch 1990). Janesick (2007) finds that "by using oral history to advance social justice goals, the oral historian/qualitative researcher maintains an

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[11] For a fuller discussion of the various interpretations of *community* and *archives* in *community archives* see Flinn (2007, p. 153) and Flinn and Stevens (2009, p. 5).

active voice in the project and may contribute to social projects in ways which attempt to equalize and balance the historical record" (p. 119).

The project does reflect Nesmith's concept of "societal provenance," in which a community's experience can be considered as a form of archival provenance (Nesmith 2006). Additionally, the original unedited stories are preserved and available upon request. The site notes, "Minor edits have been made to some stories for the sake of clarity, in collaboration with the authors." Flinn and Stevens point out that, "Most community archives collect many materials (including objects, all manner of recordings, works of art, ephemeral items such as leaf lets, posters and badges, and a range of other printed materials and grey literature) that do not conform to traditional notions of what is a record or an archive" (2009, p. 5). Classifying the project as an edited journal or online exhibit is another option. However, Flinn and Stevens suggest that such distinctions "are not at all precise nor necessarily very useful" (2009, p. 6).

Despite being an untraditional archive, the project has many of the characteristics of a classical documentation strategy, as defined in the Society of American Archivists Glossary

> Documentation strategies are typically undertaken by collaborating records creators, archives, and users. A key element is the analysis of the subject to be documented; how that subject is documented in existing records, and information about the subject that is lacking in those records; and the development of a plan to capture adequate documentation of that subject, including the creation of records, if necessary. (Pearce-Moses 2005, page 131):

Kids is a collaboration between records creators and end-users, in essence because Jimerson designed the Kids project around end-users' needs. The project began by considering how children's experience in Birmingham was currently documented and what was missing in those records. Jimerson developed a plan to expand documentation of that subject, by creating new stories and repurposing existing documentation. In addition to publishing new stories and new voices, the Kids project brought those new stories together with stories of those who were already in the historic record. The 49 stories on the Kids website do not constitute "adequate documentation," but these stories do begin to present to the world a broader picture of Birmingham's history.

At the same time, while the project expands the range of voices of young people who lived in Birmingham, it does not yet present a full range of points of view. Jimerson edits the narrative pieces before she publishes them on the Kids website. This makes the project distinct from a raw oral history or diary, and more like an edited memoir, for whether the storytellers contact the site editor about joining the project or are contacted by the project, the stories are all mediated before being posted on the Kids website. The site includes stories of those who reflect on past prejudices, hatred, or misunderstanding, but not those who claim to hold such values today. Missing from the site are the stories from children who threw rocks or shouted slurs – on either side. One reader declined to add a personal story because she said she is still too angry about events of the time.

Cox reminds us of the value of including these other voices, "[archives] are also not just devices to create community, and self-respect or pride, and improve identity of particular societal groups. In fact, if we were doing our jobs well, we often will hold archival materials challenging the identity or role or even value of other groups" (2009, p. 257). He concludes that "we need to make sure that our involvement with these communities does not allow notions of pride, identity, image and other positive attributes to overwhelm the essential significance of records and record keeping for evidence (warts and all), accountability (often with its unpleasant aspects), and memory (just as often contested as not)" (2009, p. 262).

Interestingly, marketing the site for use by media, educators, and students may broaden the range of voices on the topic and the reach of the history. As journalists and students interview storytellers, they bring in their own perspectives. The Kids project could add these secondary sources to the site to diversify the archive. However, publishing user contributions raises other issues. Mayer (2013) in a case study of user-contributed content and metadata, found problems with authenticity in that "users often do not contribute content in a way that allows other users to identify or assess it." (2013, p. 42) She goes on to quote Horava, "…trust saves the user's time, keeps the user's attention, and provides an implicit stamp of quality" (2010, p. 145). If additional sources are added to the Kids website, they should be clearly identified and authenticated.

Analysis of these responses to the *Kids in Birmingham 1963* project shows that it has been successful in meeting most of its goals. The enthusiasm with which project participants and storytellers responded to their engagement finds echoes in the positive responses received from teachers, students, journalists, and community activists. The success of these projects suggests an

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opportunity to develop a model for community-building projects using archival documentation, oral history, and community participation.

Creating a model for community-building archives

Kids and its sister project DOVE have created tools and methods with an eye to their practical use by communities that wish to tell fuller and more inclusive versions of controversial or sensitive histories. The Kids project has already made its techniques available to others. Jimerson has spoken to church and community groups in the Washington, DC, area about methods for documenting a community's history. DOVE adopted some of Kids' social media promotional techniques, as well as adding an online story-gathering feature to its website. Similarly, Jimerson modeled Kids' emphasis on community building on DOVE's technique of holding community events to gather oral histories. Combining the methodologies and lessons learned from both projects, the authors are beginning to create a model of best practices for archivists to use in guiding communities in documenting and sharing their histories, ensuring that community-building archives projects feature both activists and passive participants. This emerging model will include a toolbox of guidelines and techniques for engaging affected communities, addressing the themes described below.

Linkages among stakeholder groups

The key to success for a community-building archives project is developing partnerships among stakeholder groups. Any successes achieved by the two projects that inform the new model depend in great part on linkages created among stakeholders. DOVE relied on its connections with repositories and community groups to gain access to people affected by school desegregation. Relationships with various stakeholders have opened the door to local and state groups, which in turn have offered funding, access to records in existing collections, media coverage, expertise for developing educational resources, and ideas for new sources of content. The Kids project, too, relied on building relationships among community members, the media, historical institutes, libraries, and educators, even without formal ties to an archival institution. Stakeholders for these kinds of projects may include:

- Members of the affected community who were passive participants

- Community members who were activists

- Primary, secondary, and postsecondary educators and students

- Producers and promoters of educational materials

- Scholars

- Journalists, the media

- Community organizations

- Libraries, archives, and other heritage institutions

Any of these stakeholders are potential record creators, potential end-users, and potential community builders. Birmingham Public Library, for instance, referred patrons and prospective storytellers to Kids, was a gathering point for a tour of students to meet the storytellers, and will be adding Kids postcards to its archives. For each stakeholder group, the project must identify appropriate outcomes. Market research, user studies, and ongoing monitoring help to tailor for each stakeholder group the most appropriate methods of collection to undertake, outreach channels to use, and the products and services to offer.

Methods of collection

Community-building projects can draw from a variety of options in collecting and organizing information relevant to documenting the affected community. Both Kids and DOVE created primary sources and made these publicly available. For the Kids project, content consisted of written stories in a searchable online archive and the opportunity for direct contact with storytellers. DOVE created a union catalog of sources relevant to school desegregation in Virginia, collected records and oral histories, and made a digital collection available online.

By offering several ways for stakeholders to contribute content, a project can broaden its historical collection. In both projects, online forms invited members of the affected community to write their own stories, adding to the community's collection. DOVE and Kids provide community members with several options for documenting their personal stories and adding to the collections: record an oral history; write a story; share a previously written or recorded story or interview; or donate photos, papers, or other records. At the DOVE traveling exhibit, archivists scanned visitors' images and documents, which were added to the DOVE digital collection.

Elizabeth Zanoni, an immigration historian who works with the DOVE project, commented in discussions about the proposed model that we need to develop ways for people to add their life stories anonymously to community archives, particularly in refugee communities (personal communication, October 2014). Laura Caldwell Anderson agrees, citing passive participants who want to talk about their experiences in Birmingham in the 1960s but require anonymity. How trustworthy are such narratives? Says Anderson, "As archivists, we collect and preserve these first-person stories and this type of evidence. It is ultimately up to scholars to confirm the veracity of any individual account or artifact." (personal communication, October 2014)

Although the *Kids in Birmingham 1963* project developed some innovative approaches, it also built on existing models of heritage projects that create and package material for education and/or the media. One important influence is StoryCorps, an independent nonprofit oral history project that has collected over 45,000 interviews throughout the United States since 2003. Filine (2012) found that "StoryCorps invites ordinary people to see their personal experiences as history." As with the Kids and DOVE projects, excerpts of StoryCorps interviews are available in a variety of formats. National Public Radio airs a 2- to 3-minute clip from one edited interview each Friday morning, and 496 of these aired clips are available on the StoryCorps website. A series of animated stories created from edited clips of interviews appeared in a half-hour PBS documentary *Listening Is an Act of Love*. Segments are also played individually on PBS stations, YouTube, and the StoryCorps website. Compilations of edited stories have been published in book and CD format. Access and discovery of other StoryCorps interviews is limited. The interviews are preserved at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress in Washington, DC. Researchers must visit the Center in person to hear the interviews and only staff members have access to the interview database. Says Filene (2011) of accessing StoryCorps material, "The current choices are narrow and binary: raw interviews in a distant archive with uneven metadata and almost no exploratory capacity, and highly polished extracts of a tiny, tiny, fraction of that rich documentation" (p. 136). Stories collected in specific communities or as part of special initiatives are available elsewhere, a few of which are listed on the StoryCorps website.

DOVE engaged archivists and nonprofessionals outside the affected community to conduct record surveys. Using instructional designers and archivists, the project created a survey

methodology and a training curriculum that would ensure that the uncovering of sometimes-sensitive or tightly-held materials were properly handled. DOVE also collaborated with School of Education professors to train students to conduct oral histories as part of a program to prepare future teachers to document and disseminate community-level histories.

Media outlets may contribute to a collection by being a research resource or donating relevant material. The DOVE project located a treasure trove of material on school desegregation, and many other topics, in a collection of cast-off 16mm film from a local television station in Norfolk, Virginia. Yaco (2013) arranged to have the collection donated to Old Dominion University and obtained funding to digitize key portions. Magazine and newspaper articles served as a resource for the Kids collection; several of the stories came to the attention of the project after they were first published or broadcast in the media.

DOVE was designed to broaden the availability of records and oral histories related to school desegregation in Virginia, even when that content was housed in collections focused on other themes. The project has engaged dozens of libraries and history institutions throughout Virginia and beyond to make these materials available through DOVE's online catalog, greatly increasing the discoverability of resources on this hidden history.

Outreach channels

Projects should select channels to engage community members and end-users based on stakeholders' current media use and their level of trust of the messengers and channels. Both the Kids and DOVE projects reached out initially to affected communities through key informants who were trusted by community members or through direct contact by e-mail or phone. Once these early respondents had contributed to the collections, they were encouraged to recruit friends and family to contribute as well, and they did this through in-person contact, phone, e-mail, and social media. Champions in local organizations proved useful.

Engaging the media to share historical content with a broad public requires a sound communication strategy. Kids created and maintained a list of media contacts by following reporting on Birmingham and civil rights through daily Google Alerts, Twitter and Facebook feeds, and e-mail notices from stakeholders. Both projects issued news releases when they could tie their announcements to upcoming events or trending news topics.

Products and services for end-users

Another critical component of a community-building archives project is providing clear and tangible benefits and services for end-users. The DOVE and Kids founders designed the projects from the outset with end-users in mind. They researched the needs of potential groups of users to ensure the products and services offered would be attractive and would get used. For example, Jimerson wanted to get the newly-collected history out broadly through mass media. She prototyped the website design and shared it with several media contacts, asking for their reactions. Understanding their needs inspired the addition of a *Press Room* page on the website and the opportunity to contact storytellers by e-mailing the project to request an interview. The Kids website offers its storytellers tips on how to deal with the media. When queried by DOVE, Virginia historians identified oral histories as their primary school desegregation research need. Patrons contacted Yaco at Old Dominion University Special Collections to find material about integration in their communities. These content requests were the basis for the oral history gathering component of DOVE traveling exhibit and a mapping function in the online catalog.

In order to use collections, educators need effective educational tools that are tied to Common Core and/or state Standards of Learning and that are age-appropriate. Learning about the death of young people at the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church would be traumatic for kindergartners, but not for secondary school students. A speakers' bureau similar to what Kids offers might be even more effective if speakers/storytellers were provided with training on communication with children or if the bureau categorized speakers by commonly requested criteria. For instance, the request for a storyteller to travel to New York City specifically asked for someone who had been part of the Children's Crusade. Secondary and postsecondary educators and students, as well as scholars, may need less mediation and more access to primary sources in the collection. For the DOVE project, this is a union catalog of sources on Virginia's school desegregation as well as digital collections. The Kids project found a speakers' bureau and the option to interview storytellers by e-mail, phone or in person to be useful to secondary students.

Teacher resources could include techniques similar to those created by existing social justice education groups. Teaching for Change offers tools for classroom and community activities such as a parent organizing program, *Tellin' Stories*. Teaching Tolerance provides packaged films, DVDs, and teachers' guides.

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Treating content contributors as potential end users can reveal additional ways to improve the products and services. Many of the Kids storytellers who offered interviews to media or students describe the benefits they gain from participating: a chance to share their stories with people who are interested or satisfaction that their stories can motivate young people to learn from history and to join the ongoing struggle for human rights.

Skill sets needed

The experiences of Kids and DOVE suggest that while the traditional skill sets of archivists are essential, other skill areas are needed to build communities and to ensure broad use of the collections. These include the skills needed to:

- Use communication channels and mass media, including local radio and social media such as Facebook and Twitter, to enhance community building and sharing of historical records. The new model could offer sample news releases, and tips and examples for use of social media.
- Conduct user needs analysis and use data from ongoing monitoring to make continuous improvements.
- Collaborate with professional teachers and educators to create lesson plans that make the project's content accessible to students in various grade levels and in a way that complies with current educational standards for teaching history and other subjects. The model could provide sample lessons and tips for teachers.
- Engage colleges and universities in helping to implement this model of history-building. These postsecondary classes can use the new historical collections as content for teaching critical thinking skills, educational methods, creative writing, and history.

Possible next steps to define, describe, and replicate the model include a pilot study with one or two new under-documented communities in order to refine the existing tools to reflect the broader experience, making the model accessible to all. An institute could be established to support new and existing community archives, similar to projects funded by the National

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Archives in the UK (Flinn 2007). [12] Such an institute could offer training and technical assistance in how to adapt and apply the ready-made tools to meet community needs as well as offering in-person and remote consulting on an ongoing basis to communities as they adopt the model. Workshops, conferences, and online communities of practice with others engaged in similar documentation projects would further learning and application.

Conclusion

The archives world has come a long way towards understanding the importance of documenting social justice activism. One of the strengths of *Kids in Birmingham 1963* is that it also preserves the history of those who were affected by social turbulence and helps them to place their experiences in historical context. Kids contains elements that are included in other social justice community archives – providing a platform for unheard voices, community control of content, online access to resources, story gathering, and virtual community building through social media. Some elements of the Kids project are less common – curated content, online story gathering, and serving as a clearinghouse for interviews of storytellers by journalists and students. The project's methods and its stakeholder-centered design further our understanding of the role archives can play in social justice. Combining the methodology of Kids and DOVE suggests a model toolbox for use by other communities who wish to save and share their history.

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[12] The funded projects included the Community Access to Archives Project, Community Archive Development Group, and Community Archives Network.

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Figure 1
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Table 1

Table 1. Storyteller characteristics by publishing status		
Publishing status	Characteristics	Number
Had not previously published the story Total: 36	Black	18
	White	18
	Activist	5
	Passive participant	31
Had previously published the story Total: 13	Black	7
	White	6
	Activist	2
	Passive participant	11
All stories Total: 49	Black	24
	White	25
	Activist	7
	Passive participant	42