CULTURAL COMPETENCE IN THE ARCHIVE: A CASE STUDY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON HIP HOP COLLECTION

by

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DEDICATION

To all of my family, but above all to my Mom and Dad, who crossed the border for me and Soda for being my four legged friend.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABSTRACT</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIP HOP</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARCHIVES</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CULTURAL COMPETENCE</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON HIP HOP COLLECTION</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON HIP HOP COLLECTION</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIMITATIONS</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCLUSION</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

Hip hop is a counter cultural movement that emerged in the 1970s in the South Bronx; it has since grown to be a global movement. It is a counter culture that emerges in the post-segregated, post-industrial, and globalized world. Since 2002, archival collections that document hip hop have manifested within academic institutions. Placing hip hop in academic institutions that have historically served as manifestations of hegemony can lead to codification and commodification. This case study examines the University of Houston Hip Hop Collection and explains the establishment of the archive using the cultural competence framework. It concludes that staff at the University of Houston is culturally competent. The case study suggests that building culturally competent archivists can be tool to ensuring representation within an archive of all facets of society.
INTRODUCTION

The formation of hip hop collections establishes the presence of a 20th century counter cultural movement within archives. Archives, libraries, and museums are commonly seen as sacred spaces were societies’ most cherished, and revered individuals, events, and works are stored, preserved, and displayed. The acknowledgment of a subject, individual, or work by any of these institutions is regarded as a sign of prestige, and respect. Yet, archives have been analyzed by historians and archival theorist as places that historically excluded marginalized groups, and as places where hegemonic processes that promote and develop dominant Western social, cultural, and ideological values manifest themselves (Juhartz & Rishoi, 1997; Jimerson, 2010; Brown & Brown, 1998). For some hip hop scholars this is seen as a demonstration that hip hop culture and hip hop studies have garnered recognition from academia (Cornell University, 2009). Others however, worry that the aggregation of collections that document hip hop by the archive can serve as a form of codification and manipulation of a marginalized culture’s by the dominant culture because as Rose states the archives “produce often a celebration and a form of memory that can hide as much as it reveals” archiving is “a political practice” that has to remained engaged, and must not be seen as “a decision about filing [papers]” (Cornell University, 2009). Analyzing the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland, Juchartz and Rishoi (1997) argued that in a hegemonic structure, such as a museum, it is difficult to capture and codify a culture whose essence is at odds with the mainstream. They argued that if codification is achieved the message of resistance adhered in the culture can be disdained and distorted (Juchartz & Rishoi, 1997). In order
to ensure that the codification and commodification of counter-cultural movements does not occur within hegemonic institutions, it is necessary to analyze these cultural sites (Juhartz & Rishoi, 1997). This case study looks at how archives serve as extorters of hegemonic processes. It proposes that the cultural competence framework can be used as a guide to help archival institutions and archivists ensure that the codification and commodification of hip hop culture does not occur.

Cultural competence is “the ability of professionals to understanding the needs of diverse pollutions, [it] is a high ability to understand and respect cultural differences and to address issues of disparity among diverse populations” (Montiel-Overall, 2009, p.176). The cultural competence framework (CCF) was developed by Patricia Montiel-Overall (2009) for library science professionals and adapted by Botticelli, Montiel-Overall, & Clark (2012) for digital archives. Potentially, the CCF can be used to create a holistic dialogue between creator and collector by examining three areas: cognitive, environmental, and interpersonal (Botticelli et al., 2012). According to Montiel-Overall (2009), these three domains enable an individual to identify to what extent he or she is able to respond to cultural needs, become aware of cultural needs, and understand how one’s cultural background shapes one’s perception of culture. Through this process of self-analysis, the cultural competence framework, also allows for the identification of procedures and actions by institutions that may be deemed culturally insensitive to communities documented within these institutions, as well as create actions that could be commended by these communities. In this way the cultural competence framework can serve as a guide in the formation of counter hegemonic information institutions. By
applying the cultural competence framework, institutions that house hip hop can examine
the extent to which they are constructing codification and commodification within their
archive.

Currently there are three prominent hip hop collections, The Hip Hop Archive at
Harvard established in 2002, Cornell University’s Hip Hop Archive established in 2008,
and the Hip Hop Collection at the University of Houston established in 2012. The
University of Houston (UH) is part of larger coalition entitled the Houston Hip Hop
Archives Network which includes Rice University’s H.E.R.E. project, and whose mission
is to preserve the artifacts of Houston hip hop (University of Houston, 2012). In late
April of 2013 The College of William and Mary Special Collections announced that it
will launch a collection that focuses on Virginia’s hip hop history from 1980 to the
present (McDonald, 2013). From all of the archival repositories, the University of
Houston Hip Hop Collection was selected for this case study because of three factors:
until March 2013, it was the most recent hip hop collection established, it was the only
academic institution that documents hip hop as part of local history, and it is the only
collection where the archivist served as an active participant in gathering the documents.
In the other institutions it was a separate entity: an ex-record producer, a scholar, and a
PhD candidate collected the materials and then established the collections. At UH it was
the archivist that went out into the community, found documents, and acquired them.

This exploratory case study seeks to show how the cultural competence
framework can be used as a guide by institutions that seek to ensure that communities are
represented adequately free of commodification and codification within the archive. Newspaper articles, website articles, conference proceedings from the University of Houston Awready! The Houston Hip Hop Conference and a semi-structured interview with Julie Grob, Coordinator of Digital Projects & Instruction at the University of Houston Special Collections, were used to examine how the cultural competence framework was utilized by UH. This paper concludes that Grob is a culturally competent individual who was able to understand the needs of the community. Grob displayed cultural competence by analyzing the social factors surrounding UH, acknowledging a gap in the collections, acquiring a collection to supplement the gap, processing the collection, and eventually making the collection accessible, as well as by ensuring that the Houston hip hop community was involved in the process. Further research is needed in allocating the process of cultural competence as a tool for building holistic archival records, but the case study suggests that the representation of all facets of society in the archive can be achieved by using culturally competent archivists.

This thesis is divided into six chapters. The first section discusses hip hop culture, the second looks at the ways in which archives impose dominant social, cultural, and economic ideals on society. The third section discusses the cultural competence framework and how it can be used to diminish the imbalances of power found within the archive. The fourth section describes the Houston Hip Hop Collection, its establishment, and the work that is being done with the collection. The fifth section applies the cultural competence framework to the development of the UH Hip Hop Collection. The sixth section contains concluding remarks.
HIP HOP

Hip hop is a cultural movement that developed in the post-legal segregation, post-civil rights, and post-industrialized United States. It enabled the post-civil rights generation to have a voice, and it has become one of the most influential cultural movements in history (Kitwana, 2002). Hip hop is commonly mistaken for rap music, but is one form of the musical aspects of a multimodal urban culture that is composed of four elements: DJ, MC, graffiti, and break dancing (Rabaka, 2011; Krims, 2000). Hip hop culture, in all of its modes, enables marginalized peoples to express their sentiments about society. This expression carries unique local qualities in sound, lyrics, and visual aesthetics. Materials and artifacts that document hip hop culture can give information that shows marginalized population’s unique post-industrial and globalized world experiences, at a local level, as well as stereotypes of African-American and Latino youths. Manifested through music, dance, and visuals, hip hop documents the experiences of the first generation of Americans living in a post segregated society.

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1 DJs would play at block parties or house parties most commonly attended by youth who were not of legal age to enter disco clubs and were not young enough to be at the rec centers, teenagers in other words (Fricke & Ahearn, 2003). These parties were advertised in flyers and distributed amongst the New York City boroughs. The MC, short for master of ceremonies, evolved out the DJ. The first MC, short for master of ceremonies that stood on their own in front of the turntables, as oppose to the back was Keith Cowboy from the Grandmaster Flash crew (Lewis, 2007). As time passed, rhymes became more complex and the MC took center stage. The merging of MCs and DJs is what brings about rap music. Graffiti is a “system of communication and expression depicted by writings, drawings, and scribbling on surfaces” (Price, 2007, 28). Examples of graffiti can be seen throughout human history (J. Oliver & T. Neal (Eds.), 2010). In mid twentieth century graffiti was used by gangs to mark territory. Modern graffiti, however, developed out of the “urban revolutionaries who formed subcultures to rebel against parents, police, and other social authorities for personal satisfaction” (Price, 2007, 28). It has a substantiated political or social critique by the artist, and is only occasionally associated with gangs (Price, 2007). Although graffiti existed in past forms all over the United States, the aesthetic of modern day graffiti, characterized by the complex lettering, bright colors, and extensive size, dates to the late 1960s (Price, 2007). Breaking or break dancing developed because of the break beat. The ability to have the same beat repeated produced the ultimate dance music (Holman, 2004). The movement of the body evolved to the acrobatic stance it is today because groups denoted as crews, competed to show who was the best (Holman, 2004).
Hip hop culture emerges out of the rise of new of medium of communication and the suburbanization of cities caused by the enactment of desegregation, the out sourcing of jobs, urban development, and globalization (Rose, 1992). These socio-political factors affected and caused a rise in the presence of ghettos in almost all major U.S. metropolises (Cutler, Glaeser, & Vigdor, 1999). A ghetto as defined by Cutler et al. (1999) is an area populated predominantly by Blacks. In a study conducted by Cutler et al. (1999), ghetto formation was analyzed as a source of identifying segregation patterns in 20th century United States. The study analyzed three periods: 1890-1940, 1940 to 1970, and the third was from 1970 to 1990. Cutler et al. (1999) show, in 1890, one city had a ghetto, in 1940 55 cities had ghettos, and by 1970, the decade of the development of hip hop, 127 cities had ghettos, and “segregation in America had reached staggering levels” (Cutler et al., 1999, p. 470).

Ghettos began to take shape between 1890 and 1940 (Cutler et al., 1999). In this first phase, the most prominent formations occurred during and after World War I. During this time period Blacks migrated from the rural South to the North, due to the high demand for industrial jobs and the lack of jobs caused by agricultural changes in the South (Cutler et al., 1999). This influx of migrants into Northern cities caused a rise in segregation that begat the creation of predominantly Black areas (Cutler et al., 1999). During the second phase of ghetto formation, 1940-1970, influx of Black migration to the North, caused by similar factors as the first phase, continued. However, during this period the increase of automobile usage and a growing highway system enabled predominantly White working class families to move out of the urban setting (Cutler et al., 1999). In the
South Bronx region where hip hop emerged, the increase in urban mobility began in 1920 with the New York Regional Plan and was intensified with Robert Moses’ 1953 project, The Cross-Bronx Expressway (Chang, 2005; Rose, 1992). Both of these projects devastated the Bronx and by the 1970s over 750,000 people had left the borough for suburbia, leaving areas of the Borough abandoned (Chang, 2005; Rose, 1992).

In the 1970s, the new communication system of mass media outlets disseminated an image of ghettos and their urban populations with the intent of showing the disastrous effects of suburbanization. The South Bronx was the area exemplified in media as the symbol of urban decay. Rose (1992) explains that film and media outlets distorted the images of the ghetto by not including the populations’ input (Rose, 1992). These films, newscasts, and articles would continuously show images that exemplified the tragedy of urban decay but most often would not include statements or stories told directly by residents (Rose, 1992). Rose (1992) theorizes that hip hop emerges in the 1970s because of the inability for Latinos, Afro-Caribbean, and African Americans to express their urban situation within these emerging communication trends. Needing an outlet to manifest their own identities and representation, youth in the Bronx began to develop artistic outlets that enabled for such expression to occur. ²

Rose’s claim that hip hop emerges out of the need for youth to manifest their own identities is supported by Roszak (1971) analysis of the emergence of the 1960s social movements. Roszak (1971) explains the emergence of 1960s social movements as a rise

² DJ Kool Herc, a first generation Jamaican-American, who immigrated to the Bronx at the age of 7, is the credited with the creation of the break beat which is the staple of the hip hop sound (Chang, 2005). Two other prominent individuals are Afrika Bambataa and Grandmaster Flash.
against new technocratic political elite. Technocracy, according to Roszak (1971) is a social form that emphasizes the technical aspect of society’s economy, politics, and culture. Roszak (1971) explained that technocrats are a new sect of individuals that see themselves as a “regime of experts” (p. 7). They garner their powers from the stance that they (the technocrats) are more knowledgeable than the masses in both social and moral issues. The masses, in turn, are asked to devote themselves to the technocrats because they (the masses) do not possess the same level of expertise. In the 1960s the counter cultures emerge because there was a need by the youth to impose their marginalized views on the mainstream. In the case of hip hop, youth created a counter culture that allowed for them to extort what they viewed as erroneous depictions of their neighborhoods in the mass media outlets. In this view hip hop is a counter culture that derived in the mid-1970s from the South Bronx out of resistance to factors that were imposing images that inadequately represented the marginalized community (Rabaka, 2011; Kitwana, 2005; Rose, 1992).

The urban development that enabled hip hop to rise in the Bronx occurred in different forms in all metropolitan cities of the United States, as Cutler et al. (1999) show. Rose states that hip hop was able to disseminate quickly into the mainstream because of modern communication networks. This multimodal expressive form served and continues to serve as a “cross-cultural communication network” that enables “various

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3 Recently, this has brought about claims that contest the narrative of the Bronx as the birthplace of hip hop because of the influence other geographic areas have had on graffiti and break dancing (Hess, 2011). Cornbread and Cool Earl, two graffiti artists from Philadelphia, are credited with developing several lettering styles that influenced graffiti artists in New York (Hess, 2011). According to Prince (2007) and Hess (2012) the modern day graffiti aesthetic is developed with a strong influence from Philadelphia not New York. Break dancing is influenced by Dan Campbell of Soul Train whose telecast was created in Los Angeles (Hess, 2012).
regional postindustrial urban experiences of alienation, unemployment, police harassment, social, and economic isolation” to link to “their local and specific experience” (p. 60). Rose attests that this is why the culture has a high intensified reference to specific geographic regions, cities, and street corners. Locality within hip hop is a product of local experiences by marginalized people, and the manner in which local entities deal with these experiences. As Rose (1992) explains, the need to be identified with a locality in music, graffiti, or dance satisfies Black youth’s need to have their street corners and neighborhoods celebrated and acknowledged in a manner that is dictated by them as oppose to the media. Furthermore, Rose (1992) predicted that the regional differences found in hip hop in 1992, when her analyses was conducted, “have been solidifying and will continue to do so” (p. 60). By the year 2000, eight years after Rose’s analysis, there are various distinct musical sounds from different regions and different MCs identifying with locations outside New York. West Coast “gansta rap” rose in prominence in 1990s. Houston and the South rose to prominence by 1995, and in present time there are significant artists from Chicago, Memphis, Oakland, and Detroit (Hess, 2010).

In present time hip hop has now moved from the stance of counter culture into the mainstream popular culture (Blair, 2004). Hip hop can be seen and is reflected everywhere; in television commercials, magazine ads, and even children movie

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4 Prominent West Coast hip hop figures include Ice-T, NWA composed of Easy-E, Dr. Dre and Ice Cube, Snoop Dogg, and Tupac Shakur. Prominent artist from the South: Outkast, Missy Elliot, Ludacris, Ghetto Boyz. East Coast: Beastie Boys, Wu-Tang Clan, Biggie Smalls, Jay-Z, Mos Def, Talib Kweli.
previews.\textsuperscript{5} To some artists and hip hop scholars this commercialization of hip hop culture is part of the process of hegemony.\textsuperscript{6} Hegemony was first proposed by Karl Marx and furthered developed by Antonio Gramsci who “viewed hegemony as the process where the dominant class uses its privileged access to ideological institutions of that society, such as religion, education, and the media to propagate, its values and reinforce its position” (Blair, 2004, p. 499). Hegemony functions by setting limitations and parameters that dictate what is considered to be “legitimate, reasonable, sane, practical, good, true and beautiful” (Blair, 2004, p. 499). Hegemony is most successful when it achieves the appropriation of alternate views (Blair, 2004). Hip hop artist, community members and scholars that correlate the emergence of mainstream hip hop to hegemony denounce modern mass communication systems, specifically advertisement as the source that initiated the process (Blair, 2004). Advertisement creates social symbols that represent certain status, style, and prestige by appropriating elements of the culture, mass producing these elements, and creating visuals that link an item to a specific group (Blair, 2004; Hill & Ramsaran, 2009). In hip hop, this began to be seen in the 1980s when rappers, break dancers, and DJs became associated with certain brands.\textsuperscript{7} For Black artists

\textsuperscript{5} See: \url{http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l9Fi3E-8PmA} at the end of the preview the controversial song Without Me by rapper Eminem is used to advertise a children animation film.

\textsuperscript{6} The process of hegemony is Elizabeth Blair in “Commercialization of the rap youth music youth subculture”, Simona Hill and Dave Ramsaran (2009) argue that the rise of hip hop culture is do commercialization through media that allow for the reinforcements of old stereotypes by providing a set of images that enable the audience members to allocate themselves in the stratified system. Price (2005) signals to the process of hegemony by displaying the parallels between hip hop and the Harlem Renaissance; Price specifically used the case of Russell Simmons, who in order to take hip hop to “new levels” developed strong relationships with “Whites that financially controlled the [record] industry” (p.61). Rap artists that explore hegemony in their art include Immortal Technique, Dead Prez, Mos Def, and Chuck D.

\textsuperscript{7} Blair (2004) gives the example of Puma, Reebok, Nike, and Adidas. Adidas has become a symbol of hip hop because of the rap group Run DMC’s song My Adidas.
hegemonic processes in music are of concern because of the historical disfranchisement that has occurred, in jazz and rock and roll. (Blair, 2004).

Archives are ideological institutions that have historically been accessed and created by the privileged, and in the same form that advertisement formulates a visual that enables consumption of a cultural element archives can create narratives that enhance certain aspects of society while removing others. When looking at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and what it means for rock and roll culture, Juchartz and Rishoi (1997) state, “[the] moves to universalize the values of rock and roll are analogous to the colonial desire to subsume the interests of marginalized groups under the umbrella of the dominant” (p. 312). Juchartz & Rishoi (1997) explain that the dominant culture by creating a museum (an ideological institution) about rock and roll, which has historically been aligned with marginalized anti-dominant viewpoints, it creates a predetermined narrative that is shaped with the intent of decentralizing the power of the culture. This reestablishes the dominant culture’s power over the counterculture. Archiving a culture such as hip hop, which aligns itself with marginalized narratives, can have the same effect. Archives do not display narratives in the same form as museums exhibitions, but they are contested places where narratives are transfixed by certain processes in order to ensure that a perspective of history is created for future generations’ analysis (Brown & Brown, 1999). In the following chapter archives historical development and the means in which they impose narratives will be looked at.

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8 Examples given by Blair are the explicit promotion of Elvis Presley, were a White artist was used to bring about acceptance by the mainstream.
ARCHIVES

Archives are most commonly seen as places where records of enduring value are stored, preserved, and given access to. Archives permit knowledge to develop because they enable scholars and the general public to conduct research (Jimerson, 2009). However, archives are also considered to be one of the ideological institutions that enable hegemonic process to occur because historically archives have been created with the intent of sustaining a system in power and because they enable a collective history to be generated (Brown & Brown, 1998; Jimerson, 2009). This collective history is created within disputed processes where predetermined narratives are established by different individuals and entities. The documentary heritage of society, housed within archives, is dictated by individuals, political powers, and associations that seek to establish legacies that on occasion exhort hegemonic ideals, and also by the archivist, who selects what enters the archive and what is excluded, and in doing so, serves as a participator in the creation of the historical record (Jimerson, 2009; Brown & Brown, 1998).

At the core of the power of archives lies the ability to create collective memory (Jimerson, 2009; Foote, 1990). Jimerson (2009) explains that archives enable the power of memory to be constructed because they preserve mnemonic devices that enable memories to be recalled after long periods of time “these [mnemonic devices] may include anything from official records of national and international political significance to personal mementoes significant only to a single individual” (p. 192). By revisiting these devises individuals are able to invoke memories that relate to other members of
their family, community, nation, or society. Moreover, through preservation, archives extend the spatial relation between generations and enable the development of common legacies, nationalities, and experiences to occur (Foote, 1990; Jimerson, 2009). However, Foote (1990) shows that archives can alter history, and impose determined narratives by cutting the temporal range of communication with the eradication of mnemonic devices that have been stigmatized by violence and tragedy, or that are in opposition to the narrative. This obliteration is what causes shifting in the developed of memories as well as and completely destroys the creation of others. Foote (1990) speaks about this matter in terms of landscapes and society’s motivation to build monuments for some occurrences and ignore others by effacing the location of the event from the landscape, but in terms of archives, records and documents can be destroyed to create the narrative that is desired. Historically, archives have configured narratives that are determined by the dominant culture and are used to ensure stability in society (Jimerson, 2009).

According to Jimerson (2009) archives have served as a means of storing records of value to individuals in power. Throughout history the archive has been a place where documents that enabled for the establishment and implementation of laws and property boundaries where stored (Jimerson, 2009). For example, in ancient Greece arkheion or archons served as keepers of documents, and their homes served as a space that established and interpreted the law (Derrida, 1996). These archons were seen as people and places that implemented the laws of society, in modern times the perception of archives as the implementers of the law changed but the idea of archives as powerful places, sacred, and revered remained.
The creation of modern archives in the United States begins with the establishment of the Western ideals of capitalism, political sovereignty and individualism (Brown & Brown, 1998). These ideals were in opposition to indigenous knowledge systems and community values that preluded the American conquest (Brown & Brown, 1998; Jimerson, 2009). Capitalism, the new economic system, removed the labor force from households into the factory. The new labor divisions gave rise to individualism which in turn was reinforced by the emergence of Protestantism, and the new political system of nation states (Brown & Brown, 1998). Protestantism stressed the direct relationship of an individual with God, while nation states fostered individualism by establishing borders, territories, and enacting a differentiation between public and private spheres (Brown & Brown, 1998).

The first modern archives were established in the 1700s, and they exemplified the values of the time: a new democratic system, manifest destiny, racial hegemony, and xenophobia. The modern archive emerged out of the need to establish an American identity; this preluded any need to document society (Jimerson, 2009). Reverend Jeremy Belknap and Ebenezer Hazard sought to ensure the preservation of documents of historical significance to the new democracy (Jimerson, 2009). The intent was not to document the lives of citizens; it was to document the establishment of the nation and ensure that the legacies of individuals that were in power were remembered (Jimerson, 2009). Because of this, the narrative of the past was arranged with a specific purpose and narrative where White male authority is profusely seen while minorities and marginalized groups are excluded.
The shifting social paradigms affecting society in the 1960s resulted in a reanalysis of archives in society, which brought to light the manner in which a privileged few controlled the selection processes of what entered the archival narrative. The push to reexamine archives was first initiated by historians who had begun to reexamine history from a non-dominant vantage point (Jimerson, 2009). Historians found that records documenting minorities and marginalized communities were simply non-existent, difficult, and infrequent (Zinn, 1977; Jimerson, 2009). Archivists began to look at archives in an analytical matter and identified the manner in which the process of archiving creates skewed records.

The process of archiving encompasses three definitive processes: appraisal, arrangement and description, and access (Brown & Brown, 1998; Osborne, 1999). Archivists have the ability to construct the archive, first, by the appraisal of records. This mean value is imposed on the documents, records, and artifacts. It is the value that allots the record into the archive. However, once the acquisition of a collection into the archive has been achieved the collection must be arranged and described. Morin (2010) delineates the issues of unused, unstudied collections to the lack of description and arrangement that some collections contain. In order to ensure that the narrative of the newly acquired collection is communicated, the collection must be found by scholars by the archivist enacting the practice of arrangement (Morin, 2010). As Bradley (1999) emphasizes, the inability to have a collection adequately described and arranged negates access. Bradley states it is the “archivists code: cataloguing or classificatory system” (p. 8) in combination with the historian is what enables the creation of history, without the
researcher’s analysis “stored documents and books remain passive in their inert meaning” (p. 8). Therefore, archivists can distort the historical record by their inability to execute the three definitive sectors that encompass archival functions: appraisal, arrangement and description, and access.

The process of archiving begins with appraisal and because of this archival theorists have mostly considered the solution to the eradication of imposed narrative and jaded archival records to developing methodologies of appraisal. Two of these methodologies are documentation strategy (Samuels, 1986) and collection development (Phillips, 1984). They both provide ways in which archivists can identify gaps in their archival records and produce formats that can delineate the value of materials with the potential of being included in the record.

Collection development, as presented in Phillips (1984), is for programs that seek to eliminate future documentation problems. Collection development outlines “the collection purpose and goals, the name of the repository, a description of how the materials will be received, handled, and used, and the establishment of an advisory board” (Gracy, 1975, p. 23-24). In establishing a collection development plan an archive must look at its services and clientele, set priorities and limitation on what is to be collected, and ensure cooperation between institutions.

In “Who Controls the Past” (1986), Helen Samuels states that “a documentation strategy consists of four activities: (1) choosing and defining the topic to be documented (2) selecting advisors and establishing site for the strategy (3) structuring the inquiry and
examining the form and substance of the available documentation and (4) selecting and placing the documentation” (p. 116). Richard Cox, in his exploration of way of documenting local history, urges archivists to utilize documentation strategy. Cox (1996) defines a locality as a “geographic area (from neighborhood to county or city to region) that an individual identifies with because of cultural, political, socio-economic, historical or other reasons” (p. 9). Cox (1996) proposes that documentation strategy be composed of five major points that should lead any documentation initiative: a brief history of the geographical area, evaluation of existing documentation, identification of topical areas that are considered to be under-documented and extremely significant, the creation of a plan of what the product of a locality’s documentation initiative will look like, and plan that sets recommendations for action. Both Samuels (1986) and Cox (1996) state that the documentation strategy needs to be altered to suit each particular documentation initiative.

Both of these methodologies also manifest two different viewpoints as to what the function of the archival profession is. In “The Archival Edge” F. Gerald Ham (1975), evokes the need to move archives forward from passive collecting dictated by academic needs to active collecting dictated by the archivist knowledge of society. F. Gerald Ham (1975) notes that as long as archivists are dependent on the knowledge of others, and bestow value on records utilizing this knowledge, the record will remain skewed, with a narrow set of research interests, because acquisition will be driven, as it always has, by the desires of a few. The need, Ham (1975) states, is to create a “broad spectrum of human experiences” (p. 8) open to the interests of the masses, as opposed to the interests
of the few. The narrative should be a broad, open narrative that portrays all of society. Ham (1975) stressed that the archivist had to become an active participants in the creation of the historical records. This argument was taken by archivists that agreed that the key component to diversification of the historical record was to become experts in different aspects of society. In collection development the archivist as specialist is stressed to a lesser extent to that of documentation strategy because collection development focuses on the repository’s mission and whether or not the collection fits the collection, instead of having the archivist become an active participant. In documentation strategy the archivist must acquire all the knowledge that is possible about a subject, in order to ensure that subject is adequately represented in the historical record, and they must become an active part of the documentation process. In documentation strategy the archivist must also ensure that experts on the subject matter are consulted.

These traditional appraisal methodologies lack two main dimensions that prohibit them from working in ensuring that records free of commodification and codification are created. First, neither of these two methodologies truly considers the effects of arrangement, description and access on a fragmented record. As seen in Morin (2010) and Bradley (1999) arrangement and description have as much fault in a creating narratives as does appraisal. Secondly, these methodologies do not mention cultural needs and expectations of the individuals being documented, which is something discussed in Botticelli et al. (2012). There is a need to ensure that when archivists are documenting cultural materials, the communities are involved in the process (Botticelli et al., 2012). In terms of hip hop, the narrative needs to be set by members of the hip hop
community in order to ensure that the narrative is not dictated by the institution or set by
the collection development or documentation strategy. The need to establish a dialogue
that is consistent between patron and institutions should be sought. In the following
section the cultural competence framework will be discussed and presented as a
framework that has the ability to address and affect all three areas of the archival process,
thus helping to guarantee that an archival record is built free of commodification and
codification.
CULTURAL COMPETENCE

Cultural competence emerged out of the necessity to ensure that the information needs of minority groups are met and represented within library science. As stated earlier, cultural competence defined by Patricia Montiel-Overall (2009) is “the ability of professionals to understanding the needs of diverse populations, it is a high ability to understand and respect cultural differences and to address issues of disparity among diverse populations” (Montiel-Overall, 2009, p. 176). The term “cultural competence” emerged in numerous professions including health, social work, and psychology. Building on cultural competence guidelines in these professions, Patricia Montiel-Overall (2009) proposed a cultural competence framework for library and information science professionals. The cultural competence framework (CCF) helps develop information science professionals who are adequately able to serve communities that differ in cultural backgrounds by analyzing three domains of the information setting: the cognitive, the interpersonal, and the environment (Montiel-Overall, 2009). Individuals, because of their cultural upbringing, can be naturally inclined to be insensitive and restrictive to cultural differences (Montiel-Overall, 2009). However, at the other end of the spectrum, individuals can also be inclined to be sensitive and restrictive about accumulating new cultural perceptions (Montiel-Overall, 2009). The ethos of the CCF is the distinct definition of culture, which extends beyond an individual’s ethnicity, representing “many facets of human behavior” (Botticelli et al., 2012, p.1211) that “encompasses the everyday and the esoteric, the mundane and the elevated, the ridiculous and the sublime. Neither high nor low, culture is all-pervasive” (Rosaldo, 1989, p. 26). The CCF can be
used as a form of ensuring the adequate documentation of a subject matter. It can substantiate and reframe documentation strategy into a methodology that not only allows for the proper documentation of a subject matter, theme, or cultural group, but also permits dialogue and interaction between the records creators and archivists (Montiel-Overall, 2009; Botticelli et al., 2012). Moreover, the CCF addresses all three of the archival processes - appraisal, arrangement and description - because it forces professionals to be accountable and consider their work in terms of the communities they serve by not striving for an outcome, but instead for a process that needs to be reanalyzed and revisited in order to ensure maximum proficiency. Thus codification and commodification can lessen because the CCF pushes forth the need for the archivist to continuously address the community. In their study of digitization projects in Arizona, the inability to analyze cultural groups’ needs and desires within documentation strategy is analyzed by Botticelli, Montiel-Overall, & Clark (2012). Botticelli et al. (2012) adapt the cultural competence framework to documentation strategy as form of:

helping professionals interact more effectively with people of different backgrounds, partly by acquiring greater knowledge of the cultures they’re serving, but also by giving professionals a deeper understanding of their own cultural background – especially as reflected in the decision and activities distinct to professionals. (p. 1209)

Botticelli et al. (2012), acknowledge the need to expand the social role of archives. Botticelli et al. (2012) propose the CCF as a tool for accurate representations of cultural heritage artifacts within the digital archival domain. They explore the CCF as a framework used to “analyze the work of information professional as they collect and describe artifacts representing culture” (p. 1211). It should be noted that although the
domains are stated in a specific order, the domains are actually concentric and analysis
within each domain should be repeated in order to ensure reciprocity between creators
and collectors (Montiel-Overall, 2009; Botticelli et al., 2012). Moreover, it is imperative
that the CCF is seen as a process, not an outcome (Montiel-Overall, 2009; Botticelli et al.,
2012). The three domains of the framework are analyzed in the following manner.

* Cognitive *

In the cognitive dimension of cultural competence, professionals conduct self-
examination of their cultural background, followed by a deep process of cultural
knowledge acquisition. Self-examination centers on the reflection and analysis of one’s
customs, values, and social identities (Montiel-Overall, 2009). By doing this, the
professional is able to “identify action and beliefs within their own culture that may
prevent effective dialogue or understanding and inhibit cross-cultural interactions”
(Botticelli et al., 2012, p.1211). After the realization of one’s biases, cultural background,
and values has taken place, the need for cultural inquiry must occur. According to
Botticelli et al (2012), traditional (i.e. research) and non-traditional methods (i.e. listening
to music) can be used to acquire this knowledge. The acquisition of knowledge of
different cultures is vital in building relationships with the community, as stated by
Botticelli: “Trust is vital in developing a network of confidants, who can help mediate
between the professional and the community” (p. 1212).

* Interpersonal *
In this domain the analysis extends the self-analysis and the knowledge acquired by the professionals to the institution (Montiel-Overall, 2009). Within the interpersonal domain, an analysis of collections, services, and technologies is conducted to ensure “effective interaction within and across cultures” (Botticelli et al., 2012, p. 1212).

Botticelli et al. (2012) note that the cultural differences analyzed in this domain include that of the information profession culture, as well as the centric differences that might exist with the culture the profession is documenting. An example of this is that archives profession mission is to ensure access to materials that are housed within the archive. For indigenous tribes, access to certain artifacts is not permitted due to sacred values, and beliefs. This is a cultural difference between the archives profession and the culture that it seeks to document.

This is an important analysis to conduct since the information professional exercises power over patrons, clients, and donors and the manner in which this power is executed dictates how the cultural interrelation between the two constituents (professional-client) will evolve (Botticelli et al., 2012). Botticelli states that “in this sense, cultural appreciation on the part of practitioners involves deliberately creating opportunities for clients—and by extension the communities they represent—to express their own and expectations regarding the services they are to be provided” (p.1212).

Environment

The third domain is environment. In analyzing the environmental domain, professionals need to ensure that sociological, economical, geographical, and physical
factors that shape cultures are considered when procedures of housing and the use of artifacts are being set (Montiel-Overall, 2009)

Because hip hop is a counter culture with specific elements and issues, the CCF should be used in order to ensure that the culture, community, and creators of the collections entering archival institutions are acknowledged and heard. This could potentially create an archival record that is free of commodification and codification because of the institution and creator are engaging in an internal dialogue that ensues, and is guided by the CCF. .
THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON HIP HOP COLLECTION

Newspaper articles, the DJ Screw digital archive, conference videos, and a semi-structured interview conducted on March 5, 2013 with Julie Grob, Coordinator of Digital Projects & Instruction at the University of Houston Special Collections were used to analyze the creation of the University of Houston, Houston Hip Hop Collection, and explore the form in which cultural competence can be used to create counter hegemonic institutions, that are free of codification and commodification. First, a summary of the hip hop archive’s establishment, the archive’s holdings, and the process of enabling access to the collection will be given. Secondly, the archive will be analyzed through the cultural competence framework. The section will conclude with a discussion about how the cultural competence framework might be used to develop more diverse and holistic archives, free of codification and commodification.

Houston, Texas has a long history of significant musical influence on popular music. Houston’s influence on popular music can be traced to the early 20th century with the development of a distinctive blues musical aesthetic. Much like hip hop, this aesthetic was built by the experiences of African Americans in the urban setting of Houston. According to Oakley (1976), African Americans in Texas experienced a more varied society and “opportunity for status and independence were much greater” (p. 213) than musicians in Mississippi. This caused Houston’s blues sound to be more melodic and relaxed than some of the music composed by Mississippi performers. Houston produced several notable blues artists and influenced a generations of musicians in both the local
and national scene. Julie Grob, pivotal figure of the formation of the Houston Hip Hop collection at the University of Houston, stated in an interview with Dansby (2012), "Our failure to fully document the blues scene in Houston is our justification for collecting hip-hop" (para. 4). The goal of the archive is absolute documentation of a scene that is unique to Houston (Dansby, 2012).

Grob decided that documenting hip hop was important after looking at the University of Houston’s institutions holdings, its geographic location, its demographic, and its patrons’ interests. UH ranks among the most diverse research institutions in the nation. UH is a Hispanic-serving institution with a demographic of 24 percent Hispanic, 14 percent African American, 18 percent Asian American, 30 percent White, and 7 percent international students (University of Houston, 2011). Furthermore, UH has also been attended by two recognized rap artists, Paul Wall and Chamillionaire. The university is located near Houston’s 3rd Ward, South Park, and the 5th Ward. Both the 3rd Ward and 5th Ward of Houston are historical African American neighborhoods. They both developed in the post- World War II era out of increased housing demands and pressures brought about by the war (Beeth & Wintz, 1992). The wards were solidified as minority regions in the 1970s with the implications of Section 8 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (Beeth & Wintz, 1992). Today this area of Houston remains populated with predominantly African Americans and Latinos and continues to cultivate prominent rappers and producers. (J. Lynch, 2010).
The University of Houston Special Collections scope is materials that document Houston’s history, arts, and culture, including the Houston symphony, and ballet, among other subjects. After analyzing her institution holdings, Grob realized that the current holdings produced a narrow look of Houston’s culture. She concluded that if UH was collecting these high art forms (dance, and music), then they should be collecting hip hop, even if it is “popular and underground culture” (Julie Grob, personal communication, March 5, 2013). Furthermore, she thought that future scholars, fifty years from now, would be more interested in what was going on in these areas as opposed to more wealthy neighborhoods, which have historically been represented in archival collection due to their privileged stance.

Upon learning about Robert Earl Davis Jr., better known as DJ Screw, and his deep influence on rap music, Grob felt that he was the type of person that should be included in the UH collection. In the early 1990s, DJ Screw created the sound of music known as “chopped and screwed,” that is now considered the staple of Houston rap. DJ Screw would create his unique sound by placing two records of the same track in separate turntables and then proceed to slow the records’ speed down.

Grob admits that she did not possess any previous knowledge of rap music. She considered herself a “blank slate” and acknowledged that she “disliked (hip hop) for a really long time,” coming from a background that was at complete odds with hip hop and rap music (Julie Grob, personal communication, March 5, 2013). Grob is white, mid-forties, and from an upper middle class background. In her initial remarks of Awready!
The Houston Hip Hop Conference, Grob stated that from her brief experience in the rock and roll world, she knew that she needed to speak to people in order to understand who and what needed to be documented (Grob, 2012). She stated in the interview that she simply put herself in the hands of the people in order to learn about the culture:

I did my homework enough to know who sort of the key players were. And I kind of approached the right people. And as I started to meet people they started saying oh you need to talk to so and so. So and so were here from the beginning. You need to talk to him or her. I think because I was really curious and really respectful and kind of did my homework along the way. People were really willing to tell me the story kind up front from the horse’s mouth. You know I got to learn about Houston hip hop from people who created it, which was just fantastic (Julie Grob, personal communication, March 5, 2013).

Rapport was developed with some individuals faster than with others for example, DJ Screw’s cousins’ confidence took some time to win over. She perceived that the reason for the lack of trust was due to having people continuously approach them with the intention of profiting from DJ Screw’s name. In order to gain their trust she would drive over to their record store on her lunch time and hang out: “So I just essentially bothered them and we had a relationship” (Julie Grob, personal communication, March 5, 2013). At present time Grob considers some of the people she encountered her personal friends.

The collection itself is composed of vinyl records, notebooks, cassette tapes, and ephemera documenting Houston hip hop. The collection’s staple is 1,500 records from DJ Screw’s collection and contains rare recordings by Southern and West Coast artists, as well mixtapes created by DJ Screw (Kuperstein, 2011). The bulk of the collection was
donated by DJ Screw’s father with assistance from the John and Rebecca Moores Endowed Library Fund (Kuperstein, 2011). The collection also documents Fat Pat and Hawk, as well as and Big Moe, all influential rappers and members of DJ Screw’s posse “The Screwed up Click”. In January 2013 Rice University acquired the Swishahouse Record Label collection. Together these institutions form the Houston Hip Hop Archive Network and work collectively to ensure that Houston hip hop is preserved for future generations.

DJ Screw’s collection and adjacent hip hop archive materials are currently being processed and cataloged. Finding aids for the collections will begin appearing on UH Special Collections’ finding aid search site (http://info.lib.uh.edu/about/campus-libraries-collections/special-collections) by the end of 2013. In addition, extreme preservation measures have been taken with the housing of the artifacts. All of DJ Screw’s 1,500 records are currently being catalogued. Prior to cataloguing, the records were cleaned using a solution of water and tergitol (Julie Grob, personal communication, March 5, 2013; Dansby, 2012). After cleaning the records were placed in archival inner sleeving, and then placed in a new surface-cleaned jacket (Julie Grob, personal communication, March 5, 2013; Dansby, 2012). To ensure that the collection of records is complete, Grob and members of UH Special Collections went through DJ Screw’s records and purchased any music by artists that appeared on the record.

The collection will become available to researchers and the general public once processing has been completed. The records are all suppressed until the cataloging is
absolutely done. The main obstacle in granting researchers total access at all times to the archival collection is the records. Preservation is the main concern with the fragile audio format. Grob explained that the details are still being discussed, but that the main idea is that if a patron requests a record that is rare, obscure, or unique to Houston or the South region, and the researcher is unable to obtain access to it by other means, the record will either be reproduced and the patron will be provided a copy, or the record will be played. However, if someone visits the archive wanting to listen to Public Enemy records, they will be denied access because Public Enemy’s music is widely available.

Even though the records are suppressed and the collection is not accessible, promotion and dissemination of information about the hip hop archive has been underway since 2012. UH Libraries has a digital archive of DJ Screw memorabilia and has hosted a national conference on Houston hip hop: Awready! The Houston Hip-Hop Conference; in addition, UH Libraries has curated two exhibits: DJ Screw and the Rise of Houston Hip Hop (March 19-September 21, 2012), which focused on the life and legacy of DJ Screw; and Graffiti, B-Boy, and B-Girl Exhibition (March 27-April 1, 2012), which displayed the three other elements of hip hop culture, and included a showcase were break dancers and graffiti artists demonstrated their art.

Awready! The Houston Hip Hop Conference was hosted by UH Libraries in conjunction with Rice University on March 27-28, 2012. This two day event featured some of Houston’s most prominent artists, including Chingo Bling, ESG, K-Rino, Lil Keke, Paul Wall, Willie D, and Z-Ro (University of Houston, 2012). The central theme
of the conference was DJ Screw and the Screwed Up Click (S.U.C.), which was a group of DJ Screw’s friends and rappers and served as the central business cooperative (University of Houston Libraries, 2012). The conference consisted of six panels that discussed different topics revolving around the center theme of the Screwed Up Click. In addition to discussing the Screwed Up Click the panels discussed unique cultural attributes to Houston hip hop such as cars, and purple drank, a drug made cough syrup and promethazine, mixed usually with Sprite, which also has been the cause of several deaths of prominent artists in Houston including DJ Screw (Lynch, 2010).

The collection focus at the moment is rap music. When asked if there was a plan to collect materials that represent the other elements of hip hop culture Grob stated “there is still a ton of work that needs to be done. I don’t know what we might collect in the future” (Julie Grob, personal communication, April 17, 2013).
CULTURAL COMPETENCE AND THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON HIP HOP COLLECTION

As stated previously, Montiel-Overall (2009) speaks about the spectrum of cultural competency: one end stand individuals who are naturally culturally competent, and at the other end stand individuals who are not culturally competent. In this spectrum of cultural competency, Julie Grob appears to be a naturally culturally competent individual. She did not have a problem acknowledging her cultural-socio background nor acknowledging she did not like the subject matter and was completely unknowledgeable about hip hop. She knew that she needed to seek out individuals that could provide her with accurate information in order to document the culture precisely, and she knew that she needed to acquire knowledge about the subject matter. Grob sought information from the originators of the culture. She conducted traditional methods, such as reading, as well as non-traditions methods, such as hanging out and bothering individuals. She knew that she needed to contact the individuals that were involved with the scene from her previous experiences with the rock and roll community. She insisted in developing a relationship with DJ Screw’s cousins, and she can attest that at the present time she is friends with members of the community. All of these processes of self-examination lie in the cognitive domain of the CCF. However, as stated earlier, the domains are concentric to one another.

As Grob went through several phases of self-analysis in the cognitive domain, she also studied the interpersonal domain: the University of Houston. Realizing that demographic and geographic location represents the hip hop community (African
American, Latino, and Asian) she acknowledged the importance of documenting hip hop. Furthermore, she acknowledged that hip hop is localized and took it not as an entity separate from an urban experience, but rather as an entity that serves to express a particular urban-geographic experience; as Grob stated in Dansby (2012) "it makes sense for a hip-hop collection to be local because the scenes are so localized and unique" (para. 4). Grob could have taken hip hop as a subject matter, not a cultural lifestyle particular to an area, and she could have chosen to remain unknowledgeable about the subject matter because she disliked the music. Instead, she decided to learn about it, and as she stated, found that she really did like it.

The environment of UH has been very conscious of the Houston hip hop community. In order to enable access, dissemination, and promotion, the University of Houston, as stated before, held a conference, two exhibits, and has a digital collection: http://digital.lib.uh.edu/cdm4/about_collection.php?CISOROOT=/djscrew.

The digital collection is composed of 35 items, and features photographs, flyers, hand written rap lyrics, and memorabilia that document DJ Screw and the Screwed Up Click. The highlights include a notebook containing rap lyrics by HAWK and Shunny Pooh, as well as lists of Screw tapes for Lil Keke and others. Botticelli et al. (2012) speak about the need to ensure that the metadata in digital archives represents artifacts accurately. The metadata of the UH digital collection utilizes the epithets that were used by members of the Screwed Up Click. The images include anecdotes about what the image represents. Within these anecdotes, terminology that is indicative of hip hop is
used. The terms used include turntables, DJ, MC, while the provided description allowed the item to be situated in its context. An example of this can be seen in the digital representation of the photograph entitled Al-D and Demo. In this digital object the description given is:

Rappers Al-D and DeMo at Screw's house on Greenstone. Though not related, Al-D and Screw were so close that they described themselves as brothers. In addition to rapping on screw tapes, Al-D also released several solo albums. Four months after this photograph was taken, DeMo ordered a personal tape that would become Screw's most famous and biggest-selling mixtape, June 27th. (University of Houston Libraries Digital Library, 2012)

The metadata given does not use the real name of individuals, instead it address them as in their alias. It also gives background information as to who the individuals in the photograph are and what their relationship to DJ Screw is.

The conference, Awready!, was a form of allowing the Houston populous to enter the environment of the archive, furthermore the entire conference can be viewed through YouTube, which allows for further dissemination to happen, and for access to occur at any given time. The conference centered on the influence of DJ Screw, featuring rappers, family members, and friends of the late DJ. The conference began with opening remarks by Julie Grob, who welcomed the Houston community, gave a small lecture about Houston hip hop, and briefly spoke about the function of Special Collections (UH Libraries, 2012). As the recording shows, Grob proceeded to explain to the community how and why she began the documentation process. Following this she proceeded to ask Hawk’s widow, Mesha Hawkins, to join her on stage. Grob asked Hawkins to say the
names of individuals who have passed way, believing it would be inappropriate to say the names herself. The names were followed by a moment of silence. Grob then had a member of the Screwed Up Click come onstage to explain a bit of what the environment at DJ Screw’s apartment looked and felt like. He stated, “[Grob] wanted me to do this because that is how it was done” (UH Libraries, 2012). He then proceeded to rap, into the microphone. In all of the panels members of the community were present and were the main speakers. The panels were introduced by academics but the questions and stories themselves were presented by members of the Houston hip hop community.

The ability to have the community speak and represent themselves is a very collaborative measure displayed by UH. The conference opened up Special Collections as well as the University to the community. In a video entitled A Day in the Life of Ill Faded, a member of the Houston community stated, “If every day was like this I would go to college” (Ill Faded Productions, 2012 [video]). The spirit of openness and welcoming, as well as ensuring that the collections are discovered by cataloging the contents one year after acquiring them, will help enable the dialogue between patrons and archivists.

As previously stated, the collection will not be available until processing is completed. Then traditional academic institutional restrictions will be imposed. Patrons will only be able to see the collection at times when UH Special Collections is open to the public. However, this restriction is necessary for reasons related to preservation, meaning access must be limited. Digital collections allow for nearly perpetual access, and
digital archives are connectors to the community, for this reason metadata used to
describe the community must be accurate. As stated earlier, access to the records will be
considered on a case by case basis due to preservation.
LIMITATIONS

This case study contains several limitations that need to be acknowledged. First, this case study lacks substantial ethnographic notes about the process of establishing the UH hip hop collection. In order to truly understand how the CCF can be used as a guide to building holistic records, extensive data gathering needs to be conducted throughout the process of acquiring or creating a new collection. Secondly, due to monetary and time constraints I was not able to visit the UH Special Collections. The inability to see the physical environment where the collection is housed does not allow for an analysis of the condition of the physical environment to occur, only the digital environment was analyzed in this case study. Thirdly, the inability to attend Awready!: The Houston Hip Hop Conference only allowed for an examination of what has been documented and disseminated through the Internet. Fourthly, there was a lack of information on the appraisal process of the DJ Screw collection. The significance of the artists was discussed but the considerations that led to the acquisition of DJ Screws collection as oppose to other collections was not analyzed. Lastly, this study was composed of one view point, that of Julie Grob, and it did not recognize different perspectives and different cultural backgrounds. In order to truly understand the manner in which the CCF can be used as a guide staff, students, and faculty at UH and the Houston community should be questioned and extensive qualitative data needs to be gathered throughout the entire archival process.
CONCLUSION

The acquisition of hip hop collection by archives places a counter cultural movement at the hands of a hegemonic instrument that has historically set forth a specific narrative. This can potentially cause codification and commodification. Culturally competent individuals that are able to acknowledge differences between cultures are able to recognize their biases and acknowledge that there are different perceptions as to what is considered to be “legitimate, reasonable, sane, practical, good, true and beautiful” (Blair, 2004, p. 499). By recognizing these differences the process of selective narrative imposed by the dominant processes of hegemony can be altered.

It is too early to know if there has been a narrative imposed on the UH Hip Hop Collection. However there are several issues that can be discussed. First, the collection does contain a lack of representation of the other two elements: graffiti and dance. This particular dilemma is addressed by Gabriel McKee, archivist of the Born in the Bronx Collection at Cornell University Hip, in a panel held at Cornell University Hip Hop Conference (Cornell University, 2009). McKee states that one challenge of collecting hip hop is that aspects of the culture are ephemeral. Graffiti and dance can only be documented in photographs, but these representations are “static, in the case of dance it doesn’t really capture the actual energy of somebody actually dancing; and a photograph of a painted train can’t really capture the majesty of a 40 foot mural” (Cornell University, 2009, min. 19:59). The concern expressed by McKee is legitimate because the inability to truly capture the actual vitality of a cultural element can impose a representation that is
inaccurate on hip hop culture. The matter of the UH collection solely focusing on music can be seen as a manifestation of the ephemerality of the other two elements of the culture. Throughout, her correspondence Grob does acknowledge that there is much work to be done with the collection. She does not state that the collection is complete, she continuously addresses that this is an ongoing process. Furthermore, Grob does admit that she does not know what UH will collect next but as she reiterates the work is immense, Houston is a very fertile area, and the project is just beginning (Julie Grob personal communication March 5, 2013 and April 17, 2013). However, the inability to document the other elements of the culture can result in unbalance record, where the representation is dominated by the musical forms. In turn this can possibly produce an unintended hegemony of rap music in the archival record of hip hop culture.

The mnemonic devices stored in the archive at the moment will only allow for recollections representative of the musical aspects of hip hop to manifest in future generations. UH could rid itself of constructing a narrative by changing the name of the collection to the Houston Rap Music Collection. The name as it stands now signifies that hip hop culture is represented in the collection when in fact it is just but two of the elements. If the collection remains inactive and no further acquisitions are appraised and aggregated the potential for future misrepresentation can occur because the mnemonic artifacts will be analyzed alongside a name that is a misrepresenting the collection. This could potentially alter the meaning of the artifacts and the culture.

Further research is needed in allocating the cultural competency framework as a source for shaping perceptions and creating archivists who are able to build dialogue
between communities. However this case study indicates that if the archivists are willing, able, and apt to look beyond their own cultural perceptions of what is right, legitimate, and moral documentation of communities that are vastly different than that of the archivist is possible. Grob conducted self-analysis and reflection, went and acquired knowledge, and allowed for the environment of the archive to shift in order to suit the needs of the community. She conducted the steps allotted by the CCF without previous knowledge about the CCF. The unique aspect of the UH hip hop collection is that Grob acted as an active participant in the documentation of Houston hip hop. The collection was not collected by a third party entity and then acquired by The University of Houston; it was Grob as the archivist that actively went out into the community to document. This occurred because of Grob’s ability to realize that something was part of her institutions collection scope even though she disliked it (rap music). If she would have allowed her dislike for the music to perpetrate her judgment she might have decided to overlook DJ Screw and this unique aspect of Houston culture would be not documented. Unknowingly Grob utilized the CCF alongside her collection development policy, but as stated earlier further research needs to be conducted, with dense qualitative data in order to truly understand the capacity of the CCF in forming holistic archives.

This case study looked at an individual, who because is cultural competent, unknowingly followed the CCF in the creation of an archival collection. This case study shows that the ability to implement the CCF as a guide for the development of holistic archival records is possible.
In the future, research as to how the CCF can be implemented within archival repositories needs to be conducted. Studies also need to be conducted in order to show the ability of the CCF to serve as a guide in the establishment of holistic, decommodified collections within collection development and documentation strategies. Furthermore, the implementation of education opportunities that promote the CCF also needs to be explored. Cultural Competent individuals have the ability to look beyond their perception of what is important and acknowledge differences in cultural backgrounds and upbringings. Cultural competent archivists can potentially open up the historical record.
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