August and Everything After: Charlottesville, Virginia 2017

John Unsworth, University Librarian, Uva
@ARL in DC, October 2017
“In August and everything after
You get a little less than you expected, somehow.”

—Counting Crows
‘The white nationalists were allowed to take the university’
A letter to U-Va.’s president

By D.R. Tyler Magill  October 4 at 7:00 AM

White nationalists carry torches on the grounds of the University of Virginia on Aug. 11, the eve of a planned Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville. (Alejandro Alvarez/News2Share via Reuters)
Jason Kessler, Charlottesville protest organizer, indicted on charge of perjury
“WE MUST BE HONEST ABOUT THE ISSUES FACING OUR SOCIETY. IT HAS NEVER BEEN MORE CRITICAL THAN NOW TO ENSURE EQUALITY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL IN OUR COMMUNITY REGARDLESS OF COLOR, IDENTITY, BELIEF, OR ORIENTATION.”

—UVA RECTOR FRANK M. CONNER III

“[WE NEED TO] MAKE SURE THAT THESE EVENTS AREN’T TRAGIC IN TWO SENSES—ONE, THAT THEY OCCURRED; TWO, THAT WE DIDN’T LEARN FROM THEM.”

—DEAN RISA GOLUBOFF
“The events of August 11 and 12 resonated so profoundly across the nation and around the world because they represented not only discrete incidents of violence but also stark evidence of a larger paradigm shift. University officials’ frame of mind was shaped by a decades-long history of non-violent protests on Grounds that led them to approach the march with the assumption that it was constitutionally protected and should be accommodated with minimal police intrusion.”
After hundreds of white supremacists, some carrying torches and Nazi flags, descended upon Charlottesville, Virginia, this weekend, clashing violently with anti-racist protesters, the hashtag #ThisIsNotUS began trending on Twitter.

People used the phrase to express their disdain and disappointment at the hatred and bigotry on display in Charlottesville, and to condemn the violence which resulted in the death of one woman and the injury of dozens. “This is Anti-American,” wrote singer Lady Gaga, using the hashtag on Saturday.

I pray a true leader will rise to expel hatred from America. This is not US! This is Anti-American #ThisIsNotUS #Charlottesville #BeKind

3:12 PM - Aug 12, 2017
You say #ThisIsNotUs but it is. We've been saying it, you just choose to look away because it didn't directly affect you.
7:23 PM - Aug 12, 2017
61 Retweets 3,186 Likes 7,649
Dialogues on Race and Inequity

On Saturday, Sept. 23, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., the University has rescheduled the August 12th events displaying its commitment to mutual respect and inclusion. These Dialogues on Race and Inequity, facilitated by faculty, staff, and students, will cover subjects such as constitutional rights and citizenship; community dynamics and polarization; local history; and a variety of other topics that challenge or undergird a civil democracy. The discussions will be held in Alderman and adjacent libraries and are free and open to the public.

A list of speakers and their sessions are below. Highlights include University Librarian and Dean of Libraries John Unsworth and Dean of Students Allen Groves co-leading a discussion on recent books on free speech, as well as screenings throughout the day of recent documentaries on race and racism and the legacy of white privilege. A full schedule is below.
Demands of the “March to Reclaim Our Grounds”

1. Remove the Confederate plaques on the Rotunda. An appropriate place would be in a museum or in Special Collections.

2. Declare the lawn a residential space. Concealed arms and open flames should not be allowed in this space.

3. Acknowledge the $1,000 gift to the University’s Centennial Fund received from the KKK in 1921; re-invest this amount, adjusted for inflation, into existing UVa and Charlottesville multicultural organizations; and include this racist history at UVA into education surrounding the Bicentennial.

4. White supremacist hate groups, particularly UVA alumni Jason Kessler and Richard Spencer should be explicitly denounced and banned from campus. They have already incited and perpetrated violence against students past the point of free speech.
5. All students, regardless of area of study, should have required education (either inside or outside the classroom) on white supremacy, colonization, and slavery as they directly relate to Thomas Jefferson, the University, and the city of Charlottesville. The current curriculum changes only affect the College of Arts and Sciences and allow students to focus in on aspects of difference of their choice.

6. UVA’s historical landscape must be balanced. The statue of Jefferson serves as an emblem of white supremacy, and should be re-contextualized with a plaque to include that history. Additionally, more buildings name after prominent white supremacists, eugenicists, or slaveholders should be renamed after people of marginalized groups.
7. Expand the working group on University response to the events of Aug. 11–12, 2017 to represent students of color and those affected by the violence of Aug. 11–12.
Many members of our community are still reeling from the events of August 12, 2017. The days surrounding the “Unite the Right” rally and counter-protests saw loss of life, physical violence, and community turmoil significant enough to merit international media coverage in Charlottesville. Our community will be recovering, assessing, and attempting to move forward for a long time to come.

Building the archive

Recognizing the significance of events on the weekend of August 12, the University of Virginia Library is building an archive of materials surrounding the “Unite the Right” rally and counter-protests.

We are interested in your personal digital submissions (including images, stories, audio, or video) from the events at UVA and in the Charlottesville area, so that we may make these materials available to students and researchers studying these events. You have the option to keep your name private if you wish.

Want to donate your media?

Great! Use this Collection Form to contribute your digital materials.

If you have a large number of items, or large-sized files (like video) to contribute:

- The best way to submit materials is through the Collections Form. If your file is too big to upload, you can
EXHIBITION

The University of Virginia in 100 Objects

A Bicentennial exhibition celebrating the history of the University

August 24, 2017 - June 22, 2018

The exhibition galleries of the Harrison Institute and Albert and Shirley Small Special Collection Library as well as over a dozen sites around Grounds. Learn more >>

Get the App

Download The Walking Tours of Grounds app to map and find all 100 Objects around Grounds ...
Proposal Title: The Cross Series

Participating Organization: Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, University of Virginia Library

Summary: Panels and a forum addressing artifacts, curatorship, and hate, featuring local and invited cultural heritage professionals. These events are inspired by the productive debate among library staff over whether to remove a burnt cross from our Bicentennial exhibition, “The University of Virginia in 100 Objects,” following the events of August 11-12.

Cross burned in the yard of the white integration activist and UVA faculty wife Sarah Patton Boyle, 1956. Donated to the University of Virginia Library by Sarah Patton Boyle, 1972.
1. Community Dialogue on the burnt cross, Jefferson School African American Heritage Center Auditorium, November 2017

2. Panel, “Decentering whiteness in historical exhibitions” and “Curatorial Careers” (seminar for students), Harrison Small @ Uva, Spring 2018

3. Panel, “Curating Hate” Jefferson School African American Heritage Center Auditorium, Spring 2018
