African American Student Experience Retold in Library Collections

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Abstract:

How have research libraries chronicled the lives of African American students on campus?

- What are the subject headings and finding aids for student organizations, dissertations, sororities and fraternities, or oral histories?
- What factors (procedure, personnel, Alumni groups) have impacted the inclusion of materials in library collections?

Some libraries have done an excellent job of acquiring this information and other libraries have the information but it is buried somewhere in the library or university archives within reports and programs. This study will shed light on the how research libraries are collecting, preserving, and organizing information about the African American student experience on campus. In addition to library collections, new collaborative research projects, such as, the Black Metropolis Research Consortium (http://www.blackmetropolisresearch.org/) and The HistoryMakers (http://www.althistorymakers.com/), The Nation’s largest African American Oral History Collection, expand the research opportunities for undergraduates and researchers to access these vital cultural treasures.

Methodology:

- Review CIC library archives and special collections websites (in progress)
- Interview CIC Archives and Special Collections librarians and subject librarians (IRB application)

Potential Outcomes:

Identify best practices of academic research libraries to organize, preserve and provide access to the African American student experience.

Uncovering New Chicago Archives Project (UNCAP) http://uncap.lib.uchicago.edu/
African American Fraternity, Omega Psi Phi Nu Chapter 1921-1998
Aaron Douglas --Nebraska U: A Collaborative History (undergraduate research)
Black Student Handbooks