

Seeking Records Research Curriculum and Search-A-Thons
Summer 2017

Introduction Statement

The Colored Conventions movement generated many different kinds of documents that allow current researchers a window into this movement for Black civil rights: the proceedings themselves, speeches that were--and sometimes were not--included in the printed materials/proceedings. Newspapers printed “calls” or announcements about upcoming meetings and vigorous debates sometimes ensued. And then there was the coverage that took place afterwards, spreading the word--quite intentionally--beyond the physical limits and time of the gathering itself. Finally, delegates often created legislative petitions to advocate for voting, jury and educational rights, for examples. The Colored Conventions Project seeks to locate these documents and make available in one place for the very first time. To do this, we need your research skills, energy and growing expertise. Join us! View all conventions for which we are seeking records here.

Curriculum

Steps for Teachers

- Choose an aligned convention to assign for the class. You may also choose a convention + exhibit. Is your focus geographical? Is it regional or temporal? Is it thematic? We can help you choose the right convention for your class or research interests!
- Months before: contact your university librarian to create a library guide--introduce them to our CCP librarian, Carol Rudisell, and share this link with them.
    - Set up a research session with your librarian to introduce students to your guide and practice using databases.
- Include a written component to end this unit. We suggest a portfolio that includes student research logs, their printed out found documents and a 3-5 or 5-7 page (depending on the level of your class) research reflection at the end of research.

Where to Seek Documents

- Databases
    - University of Delaware Library database search criteria have been documented here. This document delineates research methods for databases like *Accessible Archives*, *African American Newspapers, 1828-1998*, and *Chronicling America*. It also includes a full list of known conventions in chronological order and names of key figures in the conventions movement.

- Manuscript and Archival Collections (Historical Societies, Special Collections, State Archives, City Libraries (Local History Collections, Black History Libraries and Archives (Schomburg, Moorland-Spingarn, Vivian Harsh, Auburn Avenue, etc)

Types of Documents We Are Seeking & Where to Find Them:

Newspapers often provide a treasure trove of information about the conventions. The delegates were quite deliberate in extending the reach of the movement by hosting debates, calls and discussions within friendly and Black edited papers. White reaction to Black gatherings was also documented in the news. It's important to note that not all papers have been digitized. Many local papers, and many African American papers, had very short runs. Local libraries and historical societies often have original and microfilmed papers that are not yet available online. In which case it might turn up in a search of a library catalog, as a book. It might also have appeared in a newspaper. An example of the type of document is provided in the link.

- Newspaper Coverage
  - Calls before the event
  - Advertisements (for lodging, for example)
  - Debates and coverage before the event
  - Addresses during the event
  - Proceedings of the event
  - Editorial/Commentary during and after the event
  - Reports (eg: "Committee of Outrages Reports/Demographic and Statistical Reports")

Manuscripts and Printed Documents in Archives and Special Collections: Finding these rare and important items will call on faculty and students to be creative and strategic researchers. Relevant convention "items" or documents (see list below) can exist in manuscript (handwritten) form, or as items/documents that were printed individually or as part of a longer document. Most of the types of documents listed will be print, but there may be exciting manuscript items that have not yet been found. For example, an original, handwritten letter will probably be found within an archival collection. For other types of documents from this list, you may need to search either a catalog/database OR the description ("finding aid") of an archival collection. It is important to be aware that an item might be cataloged as a book in a library, or as part of an archival collection.Therefore, proper search strategy will vary depending on where the item is found. For additional examples, see the archival research guide in the appendix.

- Manuscripts and Print Documents
  - Addresses
  - Speeches?
  - Letters
  - Petitions and Memorials (See definitions and distinction here)
  - Invitations

    - Reports (eg: “Committee of Outrages Reports/Demographic and Statistical Reports”)
- Images and Photographs
- Printed Pamphlets

Research

Please document your findings using this template for student research log. See the University of Delaware’s and national affiliate CCP research guides here for search tips, publications of interest, and descriptions of key databases. Save a PDF copy of newspaper articles, images and historical documents you find in databases. PDF icons are usually located in the menu bar. So that the Digital Archives team may assess your findings appropriately, please include a screenshot of the document in question in the research log as opposed to the entire PDF.

File Naming Conventions Give PDFs clear and specific names following this formula:
Short name of article_short name of newspaper_MONTH.DAY.YEAR.pdf

Ex: 1879 Tennessee State Convention.pdf

Ex: Wise Teacher_Colored American_7.23.89.pdf

Attribution & Rights Any use of images must be accompanied by complete citations from sources and publishers. Please guide your students to seek out images and other media in the public domain. (For assistance finding usable images, please see the research guide and biographical entries).

If you find any images on the library databases, try to replicate the find in the Library of Congress, Google Books, Documenting the American South, Project Gutenberg, Hathitrust.com, Schomburg Library; Google Images allows you to paste in images to search for similar ones. Always indicate where you found the item and link to the website or source. Make sure you include “specs” for images, that is, include the dimensions of the original image if available. Please do not crop and use the largest .jpg you can possibly get.

Permissions (for Graduate Classes) In order to share the documents you find with the thousands of researchers and interested viewers at ColoredConventions.org, we need to obtain “permissions” from the digital or physical repository that presently hosts them. Please provide complete attribution. Graduate students can also obtain permissions as well. See CCP language for permissions here. For further information on documenting permissions specifically for University of Delaware library databases, see page 12 of the CCP Orientation Handbook.

Appendix

1. Records Sought
2. CCP Search Criteria for Digital Archives
3. Examples of document types
    a. Call before the event
    b. Advertisements
    c. Debates and coverage before the event
    d. Address during the event
    e. Proceedings of the event
    f. Editorial/Commentary during and after the event
    g. Report
    h. Petitions and Memorials (See definitions and distinction here)
4. Resources for Colored Conventions Research at the University of Delaware including national affiliate research guides, search tips, publications of interest, and descriptions of key databases.
5. Student research log
6. CCP Orientation Handbook
7. CCP Language for Permissions