

TRUST AND THE ARCHIVE: NEW METHODOLOGIES FOR INCLUSION

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OVERVIEW

This diverse, international team of art historians, curators, historians, and literary scholars proposed a project on trust as both a verb and noun--acting to build it with new readers especially those it has historically excluded, and to reimagine the archive as a community trust with a binding relationship of shared responsibility. In the first instance we asserted the need for intentional practices that require time and sustained resources, and in the second, the clear articulation of how trustee institutions will serve the beneficiary public. We had a shared goal to address practices of exclusion. It is rooted in the belief that meaningful work that disrupts exclusionary systems and practices happens not because of DEI workshops but when experts apply their experiences and expertise to a common problem. Trust, we believe is key to ensuring that new practices offer sustainable interventions that can become embedded in every archival mechanism rather than just quick 'tick-boxing' exercises.

During SCI, we agreed that our work was to:

- ❖ bridge gaps between stakeholders
- ❖ catalyze partnerships and collaborations that lead to funding
- ❖ bring new kinds of “experts” into the archives
- ❖ develop community for public-facing scholars, particularly scholars of color
- ❖ launch The Race and Regency Lab

OUTCOMES

I. Listening Sessions

Funder New Jersey Council for the Humanities

We organized five listening sessions for:

- fans of the Regency period
- scholars working to bring archives to the public
- museum professionals
- costume designers and aficionados
- freelance writers

II. Heritage Site Dialogues

Funder: Arts and Humanities Research Council (UK)

Participated in “Addressing the Histories and Legacies of Colonialism in Literary House Museums: Dove Cottage and Beyond.” Participants included heritage house directors from:

Wordsworth Grasmere
Jane Austen House
Carlyle House
Dr Johnson House
Keats House
Charles Dickens Museum
John Bunyan Museum and Library

III. Scholars of Color Program

Funder: Folger Shakespeare Library

Organized manuscript workshop for early career scholar over two days at the Folger. The author and readers met over two days to discuss the manuscript, offer revision recommendations, and plan future book projects.

Author: Patricia A. Lott (Ursinus)

Readers: Kimberly Brown (Dartmouth), Jasmine Nicole Cobb (Duke)

Lara Cohen (Swarthmore)

IV. Objects and the Archive

Funders: John Carter Brown Library/Boston University Center for the Humanities

The John Carter Brown Library acquired two objects: The manuscript map “A Plan of the Belvidere Estate” (1772) and the first American edition of Jane Austen’s novel *Mansfield Park*. Our SCI team planned an event that to [launch](#) The Race and Regency Lab by bringing together scholars, artists, activists, art historians, and archivist together to reflect on new ways to approach the archives and discuss various ways to engage with these objects. Boston University’s Center for the Humanities funded an internship for an art history doctoral candidate to curate a virtual exhibit titled [Visualizing Property](#) about the map. Participants included: Carole Bell, Simon Newman, Nikki Payne, and Constanza Robles.

