Centering narratives from the margins

Interpretive tools for destabilizing colonial foundations

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ABSTRACT

Place matters. It connects people to nature, ancestry and culture, history, and complex emotions that are much harder to name. Place fosters a sense of identity and a sense of belonging. As interpreters, we have a habit of prescribing meaning to place, and after some time, we take that meaning as the only meaning that a place has. We share it with visitors at parks, museums, or other heritage sites, and hope that they garner as much thrill from the place we love as we do. But a place's meaning is not set in stone, nor is it singular. Interpreters can present multiple perspectives, but there will always be other perspectives that they do not know; after all, an interpreter is just one person. The perspectives and meanings of place are complicated, and the narratives that have dominated the field of interpretation, especially in the United States, have been framed by a colonial past, which persists in our present. Centering narratives from the margins, or narratives from groups of people traditionally marginalized, requires intentionality, humility, a willingness to take ownership of mistakes, and dedication to destabilizing colonial frameworks. In this article, several tools for successfully centering narratives from the margins will be explored, as well as a case study of efforts at national parks to begin accomplishing this ongoing work.

Throughout my graduate studies I worked extensively on developing and detailing tools for interpreters to begin shifting the stories shared at a site from *narrative* to *narratives*. It began with an idea influenced by my most cherished place: New Orleans, Louisiana. Under the privileged guidance and continuous feedback from my mentor, I created what I call a "bibliography of place." The wonderful thing about this tool is that it can be created individually or collaboratively, and it reaches into the heart of a place to find what contributes to its vibrance.

Bibliographies are often associated with literature and typically float around in highly academic spheres. The bibliography of place goes well beyond literature and is made to be accessible no matter what sphere you navigate. It collects literature, but it also collects movies, music, restaurants and bars, museums, parks, farmer's markets, stores, libraries, and, really, anything that makes someone say, "This place matters to me. It has a story worth being told, it adds value to the greater community." In particular, queer folks and other marginalized people deliberately create safe spaces within their communities; spaces that work to be insulated from the noise and dangers of dominant community members and their narratives. These intentional places are integral to queer communities, and essential to an inclusive bibliography of place. Parks suffer from the well-intentioned notion of "preservation." The tendency to preserve at all costs often puts parks in a bubble, confining them to a time capsule and effectively sectoring them off from the communities, towns, and cities they exist within. This division prevents parks from operating organically with their communities, from behaving symbiotically. Creating a bibliography of place helps dissolve the arbitrary boundaries that keep parks sequestered away and instead weaves their narratives into greater communal narratives.

The tool that quickly began to develop hand-in-hand with a bibliography of place is the practice of collaborative narration (CN). Collaborative narration works with source communities (that is, communities to whom potential sources of interpretive material belong) to uplift members' voices and share their own stories. It is defined as "a concentrated effort to tell a more complete, truthful story of human experience at sites of memory, which is pursued through dialogue with visitors, respect of individual knowledge, and collaboration with source communities." The integration of a bibliography of place can be helpful in practicing CN.

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The next section of this article will outline my own example of a bibliography of place. Then I will detail the development of CN before presenting a research project that identified various sites of memory utilizing forms of CN. I will explore how CN and the use of bibliographies of place can be assets in centering narratives from the margins. After presenting a case study that emerged from this research, the article concludes with a discussion of the implications of CN.

BIBLIOGRAPHY OF PLACE

The time I spent in the city of New Orleans can be described in two words: "ethereal" and "ephemeral."

The time I spent in the city of New Orleans can be described in two words: "ethereal" and "ephemeral." Arriving here can be likened to lifting a veil and stepping into an amalgamation of times past, and the extent of your stay in the city as a visitor feels like a fever dream the moment you're gone. The scents of decadent Cajun and Creole cuisine waft through the air, tangling into an eternal Battle Royale against the oppressive stench of stale alcohol, urine, and vomit. Street music that ranges from jazz to folk to world fusion bewitches the passerby, and it's hard to find yourself not swaying or dancing along to the rhythm. Among these sensations is the peculiar palpability of intangible cultures seemingly woven into the very fabric of space and time that encompasses the city. To say New Orleans is an interpreter's dream come true would be an understatement. These sentiments led me to briefly call the place home, and I fully intend to call it home again upon the completion of my graduate degrees. These sentiments are also why I continue to seek out new perspectives, stories, and histories of New Orleans. As an interpreter, I believe it my obligation to always learn new meanings, and to never stop broadening my perspectives of a place. To do that, I developed the living document illustrated below: my Bibliography of New Orleans—a bibliography of place (Table 1).

As noted above, a bibliography of place encompasses much more than a catalogue of writings about a particular place. It also includes any other form of cultural production, as well as natural features, that makes the place unique. It can be added to, or subtracted from, at any time; it is truly a living document.

COLLABORATIVE NARRATION

As an employee in parks and museums holding entry-level positions, I struggled to find ways I felt were ethical to uplift multi-cultural, multi-racial, multi-gender, and multi-religious perspectives, as well as those that included and uplifted queer representation. Upon returning to the academic sphere, I made it my goal to investigate tools for people in my position to find success in this process. With inspiration from new pedagogical ideas introduced by my mentors, I began developing the framework for collaborative narration (CN).

Staiff (2016) defines CN as "a concentrated effort to tell a more complete, truthful story of human experience at sites of memory, which is pursued through dialogue with visitors, respect of individual knowledge, and collaboration with source communities." CN is a process that seeks to capture memory, history, culture, and knowledge of a place as robustly as possible. "Place" is the pulpit for ethnic convergence. Groups and subgroups have encountered one another across the expanse of time and space for as long as human records have been created, and likely well before they began. Societal events and mentalities have shaped what actors capture and narrate as human histories. What is considered palatable, the "ideal," and the standard is controlled by these narratives. Cultures, practices, and histories outside of the dominant global spotlight are assigned traits such as "taboo," "exotic," "extinct," and "primitive." With shifting social dynamics and globalization, resistance to a colonial white-washing of place is growing.

CN is what I have termed this process, but I find it important to note here that ideas are rarely original. Though I may not have the names or sources to credit, it is highly probable that others have come to similar conclusions in their lifetimes, and that many of those people may not be positioned in Western academics. It is with this thought that I would like to thank and respect the work of those before me, alongside me, and who will come after me—those who have pushed for a more equitable sharing of human experiences.

The first iteration of CN created a set of tangible and intangible practices that interpreters descended from settler colonists could use to show up as allies to source communities and broaden the perspectives shared at sites of memory. Those practices are as follows.

TABLE 1. Bibliography of New Orleans. Locations marked with an asterisk (*) are either explicitly welcoming of, spaces for, or run by LGBTQIA+ folks.

Texts	Television/Film	Music	Food & Drink *recommendations in italics*	Other Destinations
A Lesson Before Dying by Ernest J. Gaines	True Blood	"Treme Song" by John Boutté	Betsy's Pancake House 2542 Canal Street *Blueberry buckwheat pancakes*	Ogden Museum of Southern Art*
The Persimmon Trail and Other Stories by Juyanne James	The Princess and the Frog	"Drop Me Off In New Orleans" by Kermit Ruffins	Café Beignet 334 Royal Street *Beignets and a café au lait*	Barataria Preserve
Why New Orleans Matters by Tom Piazza	Faubourg Tremé: The Untold Story of Black New Orleans	"House of the Rising Sun" by The Animals	Drago's Seafood Restaurant, Hilton New Orleans Riverside 2 Poydras Street *Charbroiled oysters*	New Orleans Historic Voodoo Museum*
The Dirty Side of the Storm by Martha Serpas	Interview with the Vampire	"The Witch Queen of New Orleans" by Redbone	Galatoire's 209 Bourbon Street *Shrimp remoulade, shrimp etouffée, and a French 75*	St. Louis Cemetery No. 1
Unfathomable City: A New Orleans Atlas by Rebecca Solnit and Rebecca Snedeker	The Originals	"Tremé Mardi Gras" by Kermit Ruffins	Good Friends Bar* 740 Dauphine Street *Gin and tonic*	Lafayette Cemetery No. 1
The World that Made New Orleans: From Spanish Silver to Congo Square by Ned Sublette	Treme	"Mardi Gras In New Orleans" by Professor Longhair	Hotel Monteleone, Carousel Bar & Lounge 214 Royal Street *Sazerac and fleur-des-lis*	Metairie Cemetery
The Hour of Land: Gulf Islands National Seashore by Terry Tempest Williams	Parts Unknown: Cajun Mardi Gras	"Killing Me Softly" by Youngblood Brass Band	Lafitte's Blacksmith Shop Bar 941 Bourbon Street *Gin and tonic (and a pitstop for a bathroom)*	Garden District Houses
Bayou Farewell: The Rich Life and Tragic Death of Louisiana's Cajun Coast by Mike Tidwell		"Down in New Orleans" by Dr. John	Pat O'Brien's 718 St. Peter *Hurricane (another good bathroom stop)*	City Park
Strung Out on Archaeology: An Introduction to Archaeological Research by Laurie Wilkie		"Iko Iko" by Dr. John	Verti Marte 1201 Royal Street *All That Jazz with extra Wow Sauce*	Jackson Square
A Streetcar Named Desire by Tennessee Williams		"Fly Me to the Moon" by Frank Sinatra	Baldwin & Co.* 1030 Elysian Fields Avenue *Cappuccino and your favorite genre of book*	Frenchmen Street
		"Ain't that a Kick in the Head" by Dean Martin	Melba's 1525 Elysian Fields Avenue *Jambalaya, 9th ward gumbo, baked macaroni, and shrimp po boy*	French Quarter
		"Ghost Town" by Hot 8 Brass Band	Molly's Rise and Shine* 2368 Magazine Street *Classic biscuit sammie*	Marie Laveau's House of Voodoo
		"Marie La Veau" by Papa Celestin	Mambo's 411 Bourbon Street *Mambo tini and Mambo's famous oysters*	Reverend Zombie's House of Voodoo
		"Strut and Swagger" by Buku Broux	Muriel's 801 Chartres Street *Shrimp and goat cheese crêpes*	Craig Tracy Gallery
		"Formation" by Beyoncé	Who Dat Coffee Cafe* 2401 Burgundy Street *Dirty Filthy Chai and a latte*	Galerie Vinsantos*
		"Summertime" by Preservation Hall Jazz Band		

Individual Level

- First, consider the ways you may be perpetuating the colonial story of American history at cultural and heritage sites. Evaluate what stories are not being told at your site, and identify if the appropriate people to voice these stories work at your agency. If "yes," find ways to advocate for working towards the telling of the full history of your cultural or heritage site, and recognize what stories are not appropriate for your voice to tell, while ensuring support for voices that are qualified. If "no," champion for sensitivity and unconscious bias training to be implemented at your agency. Use data that support diversity and representation in the workplace to advocate for improved hiring practices. For example, it has been shown that racially diverse teams outperform non-diverse teams by 35% (Reiners and Whitfield 2022).
- Second, cultivate your interpretive toolkit to be specific to your cultural or heritage site. Explore the community surrounding your site, dig into archives, and facilitate meaningful conversations with visitors.
- Third, don't be afraid to shy away from scripted interpretive programs and focus more on organic experiences.
- Last, emphatically work to deconstruct colonial stories as the primary narrative. Attend workshops and conferences that discuss decolonization and indigenizing work. Elevate marginalized voices, and learn that sharing the mic is critical for equity, inclusion, justice, and diversity to flourish. Reject heteronormative narratives and embrace, as Middleton (2020) describes, "Queer Possibility." Simply because the words we use today may not have existed in the past does not mean that queerness didn't exist. "Naming queerness is an essential component to interpreting queer content…" (Middleton 2020: 429).

Institutional Level

- Park interpretation and education must make a pedagogical shift in how our practices are approached. Courses that teach the history of parks and interpretation must include the problematic colonial history, and courses that teach interpretive theory must discuss the flaws behind operating from a prescriptive model (see Tilden 1957).
- The interpretive field must come to acknowledge that our jobs inherently broach the political. "Apolitical" is not the same as "avoidance," and in this line of work, being apolitical is not achievable, as the work itself involves the interpretation of political actions, figures, and movements. The key to defusing tension in these efforts is normalizing the telling of multiple perspectives, as opposed to just the colonial perspective.
- Increase and develop community collaboration efforts in parks and cultural/heritage sites.
- Require the implementation of sensitivity and unconscious bias training at all interpretive sites.

Knapp and Forist (2014: 35) proposed a radically sensible, yet traditionally disruptive way of approaching interpretation in parks and adjacent sites: through dialogue. They state:

> In a dialogic approach, the interpreter is aware of the visitors and the place in which they have gathered. The visitors are no longer seen as vessels to be filled with information or individuals not yet connected to resources. The respectful relationship between interpreter and visitors is at the center of the ensuing dialogue. And, as the authors posit, the resources must be approached through the visitors for a meaningful and memorable dialogue to occur. In essence, the interpreter must "go through" the visitors before he or she can fully delve into the content.

This perspective of interpretation differs dramatically from Freeman Tilden's (1957) approach, which states that interpretation is "an educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by firsthand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information." The emphasis here is on "revealing" meanings and relationships to visitors, as opposed to focusing on what the visitors find meaningful or beneficial. Tilden's (1957) model for interpretation has been widely used as the acceptable approach to parks interpretation, but Knapp and Forist flip an unbalanced power dynamic on its head with their dialogic pedagogy.

In a dialogic approach, the visitors are no longer seen as vessels to be filled with information or individuals not yet connected to resources.

I was fortunate enough to be under Knapp and Forist's tutelage and took this practice into the field. I was able to share conversations with visitors at the parks and

museums in which I worked in which they felt able to share their vulnerabilities, and received positive feedback on my programming from those involved. Knowing that I held this approach in high regard and had personally experienced the benefits of a dialogic approach, I met with Forist to discuss how dialogic interpretation could be extrapolated to bridge the disconnects I was noticing in multi-perspective narratives. We identified further research that could help inform my ideas, and in the first year of my master's degree work, focused on a practical approach to CN.

Staiff (2016) calls our attention to "the complexity of the interaction between people and heritage places and objects or, in a less binary tone, the embodied engagement of places, objects, monuments, and landscapes." His observations made me realize that people are best situated to narrate their own experiences with these places, and that interpreters will never be able to represent all perspectives visitors may align with. Interpreters also will never be able to represent the histories of all peoples, nor the possible histories of all peoples.

People are best situated to narrate their own experiences with these places.

Lara (2017) reflects on the creation of her poetry centering the "[Afro][Latinx][Queer]" intersection, and indirectly but effectively urges the field of interpretation to expand past historical archives, saying, "Honoring the voice of the kohnjehr woman [the title character of one of her books] required that I engage in active research on the lives and experiences of enslaved peoples from this time period. I came up against the usual dilemma faced by many artists and scholars engaged with the history of [Afro] [Latinx] [Queers] in the Americas: the lack of an historical archive." Giving a solution to this chasm in the textual documentation of marginalized histories, Lara introduces "the archives of the imagination," describing it as "spaces where memory is generated through creative and performative acts that serve to create and recreate a sense of history for discontinuous subjects, where memory is constituted by that which has yet to be given form." Lara shows the value of this alternative archive in interpretation, concluding, "If we center the archives of imagination, we also center the other archives of immateriality: the "hauntological," the "ancestral," the "possible."

Lara's "archives of the imagination" as an epistemology is strengthened by the assertions of Middleton's "queer possibility." Addressing museum interpretation practices, Middleton (2020) states:

> Museum practitioners are often concerned about the words an historical figure used to describe their own gender identity and sexuality, but the vast majority of queer people in history predate the coining of contemporary queer identity words like lesbian and transgender, and others were forced to avoid using those words lest they be implicated in criminalized behavior.... Because language changes over time, it is often necessary for museum professionals to put a variety of historical concepts into contemporary language.... Take the words 'renaissance artist' and 'homosexual,' two words that could be used to describe Leonardo da Vinci. 'Renaissance' was coined in 1858 and 'homosexual' was coined 10 years later. These terms were developed 300 years after Leonardo da Vinci's death: he did not have access to either word. Yet which descriptor is contested because he did not use it describe himself?

The crucial scholarship of Knapp and Forist (2014), Staiff (2016), Lara (2017), and Middleton (2020) inform modalities of CN. Dialogue and personal narratives are key components to engaging interpretation, but "the archives of the imagination" and "queer possibility" may open the door for more in-depth, effective interpretations of history.

EVALUATING THE EFFICACY OF COLLABORATIVE NARRATION

As noted above, when I was a lower-level employee of sites of memory (national, state, and city parks; museums; historical sites; and others with similar goals), I began to search for tools that narrate the stories of these places comprehensively, and in such a way that I was not narrating histories that were not my own. As I began to develop CN as a means to do this, I wanted to evaluate the efficacy of this concept in execution, and to illustrate best practices. I settled on a research project built on interviews from professionals at several sites of memory in the

United States, as well as individuals from source communities. These collaborators come from various backgrounds, hold valuable expertise, and have engaged in a form of CN as professionals.

Through a series of interviews, I was able to learn about and discuss ways iterations of CN are happening at these sites of memory. The collaborators on this project worked in national parks and with local land management agencies, as leaders of podcasts, and in museums.

These are the questions asked of these collaborators:

- Did source community members receive compensation for their work (whether monetary or in another form), and if so, what was the compensation?
- In what ways were source communities allowed to design the type of program, choose the topic, and select advertisement language?
- Were source communities treated as the experts on the topic? If so, can you tell me more about the process and its outcomes?
- How did the public engage with the program/exhibit/demonstration?
- What resources did site staff provide to source communities?
- How did the relationship with the source community form? Is it ongoing?

Flexibility was given based on the position of the collaborator and their organization. For instance, if public engagement was not yet active (exhibits in development, program design ongoing, etc.), then we focused on the relationship between the organization and the source community members, as well as what the goal is with the debut of the collaborative work.

RESEARCH SITES

Through convenience sampling, seven collaborators working with five different sites or institutions involved with memory keeping were interviewed. The sites were: Mesa Verde National Park, Mississippi National River and Recreation Area, Indiana University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Wylie House Museum (also at Indiana University), and Access Fund (a non-profit organization). Three collaborators work in, or with, Mesa Verde National Park: Kristy Sholly is the chief of interpretation and visitor services, Scarlett Engle is the Tribal engagement researcher, and Kayla Woodward leads a podcast (*Mesa Verde Voices*) working to uplift the voices and narratives of Native peoples in and around the park. Tucker Blythe works as the superintendent of Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. Sarah Hatcher is the interim director and head of programs and education at the Indiana University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. Carey Champion serves as the director of Wylie House Museum. Briana Mazzolini-Blanchard's work as strategic partnership manager with Access Fund differs slightly from that of the rest of the site collaborators but gives insight to perspectives in the nonprofit sector. Mazzolini-Blanchard herself is Native Chamoru, a group of Indigenous Peoples from the Mariana Islands in the Pacific.

The methods that guided this research were interdisciplinary, utilizing both participatory action research and narrative research principles.

INTERVIEW CODING

The interviews were reviewed and cross-referenced to identify key themes and phrases that each collaborator had identified as a part of their successes in working with source communities. I then analyzed these key themes and phrases to pull out traits that make up pillars for successful CN.

The methods that guided this research were interdisciplinary, utilizing both participatory action research (PAR) and narrative research principles. The motivation for this blending comes from the benefit I have observed in applying folkloric methodology and theory to park-related practices. PAR is described as involving "collaborative research, education and action oriented towards social change, representing a major epistemological challenge to mainstream research traditions" (Kindon, Pain, and Kesby 2007). This method is especially relevant to this project,

which explores building CNs at sites of memory, as a way of analyzing the feedback from project collaborators. Several collaborators, including Mazzolini-Blanchard, Sholly, and Woodward, stated that traditional research epistemologies are harmful to a CN, and to source communities' capacity for trusting institutions that do memory-keeping work. In the book *Connecting People, Participation and Place*, Kindon, Pain, and Kesby (2007: 226) illustrate the value of PAR, saying:

Narrators create their own stories and how a life is imagined has value simply because it depends on the memory and creative storytelling of the individual.

> As geographers, we see the potential of, and value in, ideas about space, place and scale now popularised across the social sciences for enhancing the theories and practices associated with PAR, as well as its political impacts. Throughout the book, contributors have highlighted the difference that space, place and scale make to the understandings, practices and outcomes of PAR. Either implicitly or explicitly, they have drawn attention to the materialities of places that affect everyday emotional and sensual encounters; the power-laden nature of spaces which reflect and reshape social, political, research and knowledge regimes; and the connective spaces of dialogue and learning in-between where transformations are located.

Narrative research is complementary to PAR, and offers value to this project for its approach to how individuals build their own narratives. For instance, Squire et al. (2014: 75–76) state:

> Valuing narrative voice in the ways we have described depends on several assumptions. Key among these are notions of 'possession' and 'authenticity' which assume that the voice of the narrator is their own and that it gives unrivalled access to their lived experience. Such views are supported by the idea that narrators create their own stories and that how a life is imagined has value simply because it depends on the memory and creative storytelling of the individual.

With regard to collaborative narration, PAR could be heavily associated with the "collaborative" part and narrative research with "narration."

PILLARS FOR SUCCESS

Table 2 outlines what each collaborator mentioned during their interviews as a pillar for success in achieving more CN. Examples of collaborator comments regarding different pillars follow.

Trust. Blythe stated that the previous superintendent at Mississippi National River and Recreation area damaged trust with local Tribes. Tucker described that part of his work is "rebuilding trust with the tribes, and it's working really well." He attributes this largely to his staff that are on the ground working day-to-day with Tribal members.

Providing monetary compensation. Woodward explained how she and her team at *Mesa Verde Voices* worked to develop a budget for compensation with the Native descendant communities they interview. She described that before they had set a budget, it was very difficult to get Native folks to offer up their time, and observed that this was likely due to the lack of compensation. She concluded her thoughts by saying, "I'm very glad that we're doing it now, I wish that we were able to offer more, honestly, and I think beyond that, I wish that there was more opportunity to provide more lasting relationships with these individuals."

Cultural humility. When doing work to build CNs, Hatcher said, "You have to have cultural humility. You have to be willing to acknowledge your own ignorance, and your own bias, and be willing to fix those things."

Taking ownership. With regard to the violent histories of colonization and the lasting impacts they have had on the present, Mazzolini-Blanchard said, "We continue this cycle of ignorance. Now as I am working with land managers, as I'm working with representatives from parks departments, with archaeologists and people in academia, as I'm educating people who do work in museum education departments or at local farms … people that are in education

TABLE 2. Pillars for success as identified by each collaborator.

Pillars for Success	Tucker Blythe	Briran Mazzolini-Blanchard	Scarlet Engle	Kayla Woodward	Kristy Sholly	Carey Champion	Sarah Hatcher
Trust	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓
Monetary Compensation		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Respecting Expertise	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
Creating long-term relationships / opportunities	✓		✓	✓	✓		
Providing resources for collaborators			✓		✓	✓	✓
Embodying self-reflexivity and cultural humility		✓		✓		✓	✓
Taking ownership of wrongdoings, and addressing a history of colonial violence	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

roles, I'm opening their eyes to things that they might already be doing that they're crediting to the wrong source. I'm opening them to the possibility that they're wrong, that Western science is really focused on the erasure of these communities, the undervaluing of their knowledge."

CASE STUDY: MESA VERDE NATIONAL PARK

As noted above, three collaborators work with Mesa Verde National Park in a variety of ways. This proved to be a valuable case study for parks stewardship that is actively centering narratives from the margin.

The park is currently working to redesign the Chapin Mesa Museum and is doing so in collaboration with Indigenous communities surrounding the park. The redesign is being advised by a paid council of elected Indigenous people. The park has also designed an internship specifically for Indigenous people that strives to provide training for careers in national parks. Collaborator Scarlett Engle, who interviewed the first two interns of this program, reports that they felt it was a success:

The goal of the whole internship program is to train tribal community members how to apply for federal jobs, because that's really difficult, and to get them interested in and the expertise they need to apply for jobs. It's trying to create a space where tribal community members can then go on and be permanent staff, not just at Mesa Verde, but all throughout the park service. The two interns we had this past summer … both saw the … internship program as a success for that reason. They feel like they've gotten the training … that they need to apply for jobs in the future.

Kayla Woodward, collaborator and host of podcast *Mesa Verde Voices*, has worked on centering not only Indigenous narratives, but queer narratives. In Season Two, Episode Two of *Mesa Verde Voices*, Woodward invites speakers to discuss two spirits, a term used by Native North Americans to identify a person that exists outside of the gender binary, neither man nor woman, but a different gender altogether. Woodward's podcast episode was inspired by a 2017 effort of Mesa Verde National Park to not only welcome queer people, but to identify how queer narratives are directly related to the park. Chief of Interpretation Kristy Sholly made a Facebook post to honor the history of Pride Month, and the queer connections that Mesa Verde has. She articulated in her post the meaning of two spirits, and it opened a greater conversation online, including information about different Tribal names and histories of these people. Most of the comments were positive, but there was some pushback, including that this type of information is not something that parks should be sharing. In her episode, Woodward interviews Brian Forist, former ranger at Mesa Verde National Park and current lecturer in the parks-centered Department of Health and Wellness Design at Indiana University Bloomington. Forist, a gay man himself, shares in the episode that "The National Park Service is the nation's storyteller.… [T]hey have an obligation to tell the whole range of stories that are embedded in the places."

The value of CN as a tool for centering narratives from the margins emerges from this case study. Woodward's podcast episode is made up of many voices and many narratives, as is the redesign of the Chapin Mesa Museum, and the online conversation regarding queer identities via the 2017 Pride Month Facebook post. There is no singular narrative of a place; rather, a multiplicity of narratives meaningful to diverse swaths of people.

DISCUSSION

Through thoughtful interviews and discussion with individuals invested in collaborative work with source communities, keys to cultivating successful CN were identified (refer to Table 1). These perspectives opened my eyes to other important ideas that influence CN. Positionality of the self directly impacts engagement with CN.

Though CN started as a way to privilege and respect visitor experience, it has grown into an attitude dedicated to collaborative work of all forms and is directly influenced by one's worldview. Advocates for CN must be actively anti-racist, anti-misogynistic, anti-xenophobic, anti-homophobic, and anti-transphobic. They must defend the rights of others' bodies, beliefs, and practices with the same vigor that they would defend their own. With these views at the fore, CN advocates will consider and address the ways harmful social systems have affected marginalized communities, and will use their privileges (whatever those may be—race, gender, class, etc.) to uplift the voices of these community members.

Advocates for CN must be actively anti-racist, anti-misogynistic, anti-xenophobic, anti-homophobic, and anti-transphobic.

The following beliefs animate the tenets of CN. Collaborative narration:

- Understands the impacts colonization has had on a global scale and how it has shaped American society into what it is today.
- Champions self-reflexivity and cultural humility.
- Works to develop meaningful, trusting, long-term relationships with members of source communities.
- Understands that financial compensation for collaborative work with source communities is a requirement.
- Upholds vernacular culture, traditional knowledge, and intergenerational wisdom as expertise of the same level as Western science, which can work in tandem with one another, and rather than the former merely awaiting validation from the latter.

These core beliefs make CN possible. CN is a tool for encountering and disrupting violent colonial narratives that perpetuate harm to people of varying source communities, but it is not the only thing that should be done to further this work. CN and the other interpretive tools discussed in this paper suggest an urgency in shifting Western epistemologies so as to elevate other ways of knowing to an equally valuable status.

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APPENDIX: IMPORTANT TERMS

Appropriation is the action of taking something for one's own use without the owner's permission.

Cultural humility involves an ongoing process of self-exploration and self-critique combined with a willingness to learn from others. It means entering a relationship with another person with the intention of honoring their beliefs, customs, and values. It means acknowledging differences and accepting that person for who they are.

Epistemology is a theory of knowledge, especially with regard to its methods, validity, and scope.

Intangible means unable to be touched or grasped; not having a physical presence. As it relates to cultural heritage: Intangible heritage consists of nonphysical intellectual wealth, such as folklore, customs, beliefs, traditions, knowledge, and language.

Intergenerational wisdom encompasses knowledge, ideas, and skills that are shared among generations: children, as well as young, middle-aged, and older adults.

Self-reflexivity means using reflection to see things in a new way and for that new way to be the source for change.

Source communities are communities to whom original materials that are potentially useful for interpretation purposes belong.

Tangible means perceptible by touch. As it relates to cultural heritage: Tangible heritage refers to physical artifacts produced, maintained, and transmitted intergenerationally in a society, such as buildings, artifacts, clothes, etc.

Traditional Knowledge refers to knowledge systems embedded in the cultural traditions of regional, Indigenous, or local communities.

Two Spirit is a modern, pan-Indian umbrella term used by some Indigenous North Americans to describe Native people in their communities who fulfill a traditional third-gender (or other gender-variant) ceremonial and social role in their cultures.

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