

NEH Application Cover Sheet (HK-250720)

Digital Humanities Implementation Grants

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INSTITUTION

Vanderbilt University
Nashville, TN 37240-7830

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Title: *Revitalizing the Ecclesiastical and Secular Sources for Slave Societies Digital Archive: A Proposal to Improve Technology & Promote Collaboration*

Grant period: From 2016-08-01 to 2018-07-31

Project field(s): African American History

Description of project: In 2002 the Ecclesiastical and Secular Sources for Slave Societies Digital Archive was launched with NEH support. Since that time international teams of historians trained in languages and paleography, IT specialists, bibliographer and archivists have collaborated to preserve over 400,000 unique images dating from the 16th-19th centuries, documenting the history of four to six million African and Afro-descended individuals. Having outgrown our dated technology and platform, we seek support to revitalize this archive, transfer these data to SOBEK and create metadata and transcriptions that will enhance both use and long-term preservation. At project's end, we will also host an international conference of our collaborative network of digital humanities scholars and a post-conference workshop to share digital preservation expertise with institutions in the region that have limited cyberinfrastructure.

BUDGET

Outright Request	325,000.00	Cost Sharing	311,700.00
Matching Request	0.00	Total Budget	636,700.00
Total NEH	325,000.00		

GRANT ADMINISTRATOR

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Revitalizing the Ecclesiastical and Secular Sources for Slave Societies Digital Archive: A Proposal to Improve Technology & Promote Collaboration

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List of Participants

Principal Participants

1. Jane Landers, Gertrude Conaway Vanderbilt Professor of History, Vanderbilt University (PI)
2. Kara D. Schultz, Vanderbilt University (Post-doctoral fellow)
3. Angela C. Sutton, Vanderbilt University (Post-doctoral fellow)
4. Cliff Anderson, Jean and Alexander Heard Library, Vanderbilt University (Scholarly Communications Director)
5. Jody Combs, Interim Dean of Libraries, Vanderbilt University (Outreach Coordinator)
6. Paula Covington, Jean and Alexander Heard Library, Vanderbilt University (Bibliographer)
7. Dale Poulter, Department of Library Digital Services, Jean and Alexander Heard Library, Vanderbilt University (Digital Archive Coordinator and Technical Advisor)

ESSSS Team

1. Courtney J. Campbell, Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow, Tougaloo College (Mellon Partners for Humanities Education Digital Preservation Workshop Instructor)
2. Pablo F. Gómez, Assistant Professor of History, University of Wisconsin (Mellon Partners for Humanities Education Digital Preservation Workshop Instructor)
3. David LaFevor, Assistant Professor of History, University of Texas-Arlington (Digital Preservation Specialist and Mellon Partners for Humanities Education Digital Preservation Workshop Instructor)
4. Paul E. Lovejoy, Professor and Canada Research Chair in African Diaspora History, York University (Research Team, Cuba)
5. Mariza de Carvalho Soares, Laboratório de História Oral e Imagem, Universidade Federal Fluminense (Research Team, Brazil)
6. Renée Souloudre-La France, Professor of History and Associate Dean, King's University College at Western University Canada (Research Team, Colombia)
7. David Wheat, Assistant Professor of History, Michigan State University (Research Team, Cabo Verde)

DHSlavery Collaborative Network

1. *Collaborative for Historical Information and Analysis* (CHIA), University of Pittsburgh, www.chia.pitt.edu
2. *Baptism Record Database for Slave Societies* (BARDSS), Michigan State University, <http://chi.anthropology.msu.edu/2015/12/bardss-baptism-record-database-for-slave-societies>
3. *Coerced Migration Research Alliance*, University of North Texas, [https://educopia.org/sites/educopia.org/files/presentations/Chrysalis%20Project%20Poster%20\(1\)_1.pdf](https://educopia.org/sites/educopia.org/files/presentations/Chrysalis%20Project%20Poster%20(1)_1.pdf)
4. *Studies in the History of the African Diaspora-Documents* (SHADD), York University http://www.tubmaninstitute.ca/the_shadd_collection

**Revitalizing the Ecclesiastical and Secular Sources for Slave Societies Digital Archive:
A Proposal to Improve Technology & Promote Collaboration**

Abstract

The Ecclesiastical and Secular Sources for Slave Societies (ESSSS) Digital Archive was launched in 2002 with the support of a National Endowment for the Humanities Collaborative Research Grant and is hosted at Vanderbilt University. The NEH grant funded the preservation of the oldest African history in Cuba and Brazil and additional grants from the British Library Endangered Archives Programme, Vanderbilt University, the Catholic Church and the Historic St. Augustine Research Institute have allowed preservation of additional records in Cuba, Brazil, Colombia, and Spanish Florida, which are the oldest in the nation. Teams of historians trained in languages and paleography, IT specialists, bibliographer and archivists have worked collaboratively for over a decade to create the ESSSS Digital Archive that now contains over 400,000 unique images dating from the 16th-19th centuries. These records preserve the history of between four and six million African and Afro-descended individuals and the ESSSS teams have built a network of digital humanities scholars who work on slavery in the Americas and draw on our collections for their own projects. Scholars are now producing conferences, doctoral dissertations, journal publications and monographs using our data and our most recent Google Analytics data reports the ESSS website averages 10,000 unique visitors per month.

The primary mission of the ESSSS teams to date has been the preservation of precious and rapidly disappearing documents, but our original infrastructure can no longer support what has become a massive amount of data. This proposal seeks support to revitalize the ESSSS Digital Archive and enhance its access and utility to better contribute to humanities scholarship and

teaching. With NEH support, the ESSSS team will transfer the ESSSS records to SOBEK, an open-source system that promotes sharing and interoperability with other scholars and databases and convert the data into a standardized, modern format for both ease of use and long-term preservation. At the end of the grant period, we will host another international conference to exchange new findings with our existing network of digital humanities scholars working on African history in the Americas and a post-conference workshop to share digital preservation expertise with institutions in the region that have limited cyberinfrastructure, including HBCUs such as Fisk, Tuskegee, Tougaloo and Howard, with whom we already have partnerships.

Narrative

- **Project Background:**

The Ecclesiastical and Secular Sources for Slave Societies Digital Archive was launched in 2003 with an initial Collaborative Research Grant of \$150,000 from the National Endowment for the Humanities to project director Jane Landers of Vanderbilt University and her co-directors Mariza de Carvalho Soares of the Universidade Federal Fluminense (Rio de Janeiro, Brazil), and Paul E. Lovejoy, of York University (Toronto, Canada). The team's goal was to locate and digitally preserve endangered ecclesiastical documents for Africans and Afro-descended individuals in Cuba and Brazil. In the ensuing thirteen years we have expanded our geographic scope, our digital humanities scholarly network, and the collections of our ESSSS Digital Archive. The critical support of the Jean and Alexander Heard Library has allowed us to store these unique materials on multiple servers and to create a website that allows researchers to access images from diverse archives in four countries. <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/esss/index.php>

- **Significance for the Humanities:**

The Ecclesiastical and Secular Sources for Slave Societies (ESSSS) Digital Archive (<http://www.vanderbilt.edu/esss/index.php>) preserves the oldest records for Africans in the Americas. The ESSSS database is hosted at Vanderbilt University and contains over 400,000 unique images, dating from the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries, from Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, and Spanish Florida. The archive documents the history of between four and six million African and Afro-descended individuals, as well as indigenous Americans, Chinese indentured laborers, and other European-descended individuals who lived alongside them. The ESSSS Digital Archive not only protects imperiled cultural heritage, it makes possible important new research on under-studied and historically neglected populations in the Americas. It also democratizes knowledge by making materials preserved in remote, and often difficult, locales, accessible to the global public that would be unable to access them otherwise.

The Catholic Church mandated the baptism of African slaves in the fifteenth century and extended this requirement across the Catholic Americas. Baptismal records thus became the longest and most uniform serial data available for the history of Africans in the Americas. Once baptized, Africans and their descendants were also eligible for the sacraments of Christian marriage and burial. Through membership in the Catholic Church, Africans and their descendants generated a host of other religious records such as confirmations, petitions to wed, wills, and even, on occasion, divorce actions. In the Iberian colonies, Africans joined church brotherhoods organized along ethnic lines, through which they recorded not only ceremonial and religious aspects of their lives, but also their social, political, and economic networks. The diverse types of documents preserved include, among others, 16th century black and Indian baptisms, marriages, and burials from the Cathedral of Havana; 18th century black wills and testaments from the Diocese of Nova Iguaçu, Brazil; 18th and 19th century black brotherhood records from Brazil and Cuba; and 19th century burials of unbaptized "asiáticos" (Chinese indentured laborers) from Matanzas, Cuba.

Secular records preserved by the ESSSS teams in Colombia and Brazil include purchase and sales of slaves and land, wills, manumissions, deeds, bonds, dowries, maps and other records of social, economic, and political importance. Notarial records from the former gold mining region

of the Chocó in Colombia include land titles, death records, and registers of slave sales that offer information about slave's age, sex, occupation, and in some cases, appearance and health, charting the history of epidemic disease in the region. Eighteenth-century land grants (*sesmarias*) digitized on the ESSSS site from the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Paraibano, in the northeastern Brazilian state of Paraíba, chart the uneven distribution of land in the region that began in the colonial period and continues today.

Each of the countries whose records we are helping to preserve and display, including our own, still struggles with the political, economic, and social legacies of slavery. Colonial documents like these not only record an important part of history, but have been instrumental in helping indigenous groups in Brazil, such as the Tabajara, lodge formal claims to land. In Colombia and Brazil, the state has also acknowledged its historical and civic neglect of black communities and has offered legal and cultural recognition as well as recognition of ancestral communal land ownership. Guerrilla warfare, environmental damage, and decades of neglect have endangered or destroyed many of the documents. The ESSSS Digital Archive makes these endangered and difficult-to-access manuscripts available to academic researchers, genealogists, and members of the communities whose history we are tracking.

- **Enhancing the Humanities:**

Since the ESSSS project's launch, a series of grants from the British Library Endangered Archives Program have allowed team members to expand to new areas and preserve additional ecclesiastical and secular records in Cuba, Colombia and Brazil, while grants from the Catholic Church and the Historic St. Augustine Research Institute funded additional preservation in Florida and Cuba. These grants are listed below.

Year	Granting Institution	ESSSS Team Participants	Site of Digitization	Type of Archive Digitized
2007	British Library Endangered Archives Programme (EAP)	Oscar Grandio Moráquez	Matanzas, Cuba	Records from municipal and provincial archives
2009	British Library EAP	Pablo Gómez, Jane Landers, David Wheat, David LaFavor	Chocó, Colombia	Notarial records
2011	British Library EAP	Jane Landers, Pablo Gómez, José Polo Acuña	La Guajira, Colombia	Notarial and ecclesiastical records
2013	British Library EAP	Jane Landers, Pablo Gómez, José Polo Acuña, David LaFavor, Renée Souloudre-LaFrance	Córdoba, Colombia	Secular and ecclesiastical records

2013	British Library EAP	Courtney J. Campbell	São João do Cariri and João Pessoa, Paraíba, Brazil	Secular and ecclesiastical records
2013	Catholic Diocese of St. Augustine	Jane Landers, Pablo Gómez, David LaFevor	St. Augustine, Florida	Ecclesiastical records
2014	Historic St. Augustine Research Institute	Jane Landers, David LaFevor, Paula Covington, Fernanda Bretones	San Agustín de la Nueva Florida (Ceiba Mocha), Matanzas, Cuba	Ecclesiastical records
2015	British Library EAP	Courtney Campbell, Marshall Eakin	Mamanguape, São João do Cariri, João Pessoa, Paraíba, Brazil	Criminal and notarial records
2015	British Library EAP	David LaFevor	Bayamo, Santiago, and Baracoa, Cuba	Ecclesiastical records

Since its inception, the ESSSS Digital Archive project has been committed to training local teams to value and preserve this important history. At each of our sites, we have trained undergraduate and graduate students as well as interested community members in digital preservation workshops. Many of the Cubans, Brazilians and Colombians we train are themselves Afro-descended and often live in impoverished communities where there are few other educational opportunities. As they learn professional skills that may advance them, our modest stipends have kept many in school. After training in paleography and basic preservation techniques, student teams inventory parish and notarial archive holdings, clean and digitize images, transcribe selected documents, and create metadata for the materials. A number have also produced original research from the records they helped save and some have pursued higher education. Since 2003, several generations of Vanderbilt graduate students and graduate students from Canada, Brazil, Cuba, Colombia, and Florida have also worked on the ESSSS project, and some are now incorporating their own students into ESSSS projects.

- **Methods and digital technology:**

After years of “guerrilla preservation” in Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, and additional work in the United States, our ESSSS teams have accumulated the largest and most diverse collection of historic documents pertaining to Africans in the Americas. Our infrastructure can no longer support the amount and range of documentation we have collected, and thus we seek funding to revitalize a site that is an important tool not only for academic researchers interested in the history of the African diaspora, but also for the individuals who reside in the communities whose history we are helping to preserve.

The current ESSSS website utilizes two distinct technology frameworks. The primary landing page uses a Content Management System (CMS) based on PHP called OmniUpdate (<http://omniupdate.com/products/oucampus/index.html>). This system is supported by Vanderbilt University. The second framework utilizes a locally-developed Perl-based framework to display

the actual images. ESSSS metadata is stored in a MySQL database and uses a Dublin Core-based structure (<http://dublincore.org/documents/dces>)

Switching between two content management systems is not only an inefficient way to store, upload, edit, and display the documents, it is cumbersome for visitors to our site. With funding from an NEH Digital Humanities Implementation grant, we will switch to the Omeka platform (<http://omeka.org>). Omeka has recently been adopted by the Vanderbilt University libraries to manage their newer digital collections and exhibitions. Omeka was also the favored platform among our DHSlaavery partners when we met at Vanderbilt University in October 2015. Using the same platform as other sites dedicated to the history of slavery in the Americas will further facilitate interoperability. Omeka users note the utility of the platform's Geolocation plugin, which will allow us to save information on an item's original location and will automatically create a Google map of all items with geolocation data, and the ease with which one can create digital exhibitions of a variety of media. Under our current locally-developed Perl framework, users click on a volume and are then directed to a page of image thumbnails. Users are not able to click between pages; they must return to the thumbnail view. We have developed a framework that will "stitch" individual images together and allow users to flip through pages as they would with a digital book. Other planned enhancements include converting all self-contained volumes to PDFs so that users can download an entire volume and work offline; making it possible for users to add or edit transcriptions online; adding metadata compliant with Metadata Encoding and Transmission Standard (METS) standards (the format for objects within a digital library maintained in the Library of Congress); and transcribing the oldest and most unique documents from each location hosted on our site. Finally, we plan to encode geographical data in the GeoJSON format (<http://geojson.org/geojson-spec.html>) to create interactive, layered maps that will depict documents' original locations, plantations, chapels, municipal buildings, and other sites of historical interest. These maps will enable visitors to visualize the environments in which the documents were created and how those spaces changed over time.

- **. Environmental scan:**

Since launching our NEH funded collaborative project in Brazil and Cuba in 2003, the ESSS project has been developing an international network of scholars interested in collaborating on the study of the African Diaspora in the Americas. The Coalition for Networked Information (<http://www.cni.org>) recognizes that large-scale digitized collections such as ESSSS require a continuing review of "information creation, aggregation, exchange, reuse, and preservation." Linking data from many different sites allows for discovery of new ideas and hidden connections. To accomplish this goal, in October 2015, Vanderbilt University hosted a two-day international workshop which brought together a group of noted scholars and Information Technology specialists engaged in similar efforts to identify, preserve, analyze, and disseminate rare and endangered documents for the history of slavery in the Americas. Participants included York University, Emory University, the University of Wisconsin, the University of Texas-Arlington, Michigan State University, Tulane University and Middle Tennessee State University, among others. (See appendix). The goal was to investigate how we might systematize collection, storage, and display of these unique materials and develop common coding and management platforms so that our collective data bases and archives might be cross-referenced and new knowledge produced. Our major digital humanities projects on the history of slavery have been developed in isolation from one another and, while each offers

important advances in our knowledge of this centuries-long and world-altering institution, they do not currently engage with one another. Much as the development of railroads had to finally be coordinated and systematized for utility and efficiency in the nineteenth century, we plan to systematize the collection, storage, and display of these unique materials and develop common coding and management platforms so that our collective databases and archives might be cross-referenced and new knowledge produced. The projects of our collaborators each enrich humanities teaching and scholarship, but we believe the ESSSS Digital Archive is unique in its temporal range, geographic scope, the serial and standardized nature of its religious records, and the variety and content of the secular records it makes accessible to researchers.

- **Work plan:**

Objective	Tasks	Dates	Personnel
Year One			
<i>Initiate grant</i>	Purchase hardware and software	September 2016	PI, with assistance from Coordinator and Technical Advisor
<i>Enhance functionality and operability</i>	Begin migrating data to Omeka platform	September 2016-October 2016	Coordinator and Technical Advisor
	Begin transcribing the oldest documents from each site	November 2016-April 2017	Postdoctoral Fellows
	Begin converting self-contained volumes to PDFs	November 2016-April 2017	Postdoctoral Fellows
	Begin adding metadata for each volume, including GIS locations of original documents	November 2016-April 2017	Postdoctoral Fellows, with support from Bibliographer
<i>Add new content</i>	Conduct survey of Cape Verde and the Dominican Republic to locate surviving documents, create inventories, and digitize them for addition to the ESSSS Digital Archive	May 2017-August 2017	PI, Postdoctoral Fellows, ESSS Team, and Coordinator and Technical Advisor
Year Two			
<i>Progress report</i>	Progress report	September 2017	PI
<i>Enhance functionality and operability</i>	Complete Omeka migration	September 2017	Postdoctoral Fellows, with assistance from Coordinator and Technical Advisor
	Run OCR recognition	October 2017	Postdoctoral Fellows,

	software on all typewritten documents		with assistance from Coordinator and Technical Advisor
	Continue adding metadata	October 2017-September 2018	Postdoctoral Fellows, with support from Bibliographer
	Create feature to allow users to add or edit transcriptions online	November 2017	Coordinator and Technical Advisor
	Encode geographic data in GeoJSON format; create maps (benchmark: 1 per month)	October 2017-September 2018	Postdoctoral Fellows
	Finish converting self-contained volumes to PDFs	October 2017-September 2018	Postdoctoral Fellows
	Continue adding transcriptions	October 2017-September 2018	Postdoctoral Fellows
<i>DHSlavery Collaborative Network conference</i>	Organize DHSlavery conference	April 2018	Postdoctoral Fellows, with support from Scholarly Communications Director
	Host DHSlavery conference	May 2018	Postdoctoral Fellows, with support from Scholarly Communications Director; attended by Collaborative Network Partners
<i>Digital preservation workshop with Mellon Partners for Humanities Education</i>	Host Mellon Partners for Humanities Education Digital Preservation Workshop	May 2018	Mellon Partners for Humanities Education Digital Preservation Workshop Instructors, PI

Enhance Functionality and Operability (Platform Upgrade, Metadata, Transcriptions):

The ESSSS Digital Archive has grown beyond our imaginings and it has become critical that we move to a more standardized platform that will enable better preservation and dissemination of the unique records and information we are capturing. We must enhance the functionality of and access to the ESSSS Digital Archive by transferring existing files with enriched and standardized metadata to new and improved software platforms. ESSSS team members will transfer the two existing frameworks into a single system utilizing SobekCM open source

software (<http://sobekrepository.org/>). SobekCM utilizes C# programming language to process metadata stored as METS (<http://www.loc.gov/standards/mets/>) but provides a crosswalk to TEI (<http://www.tei-c.org/index.xml>). Microsoft SQL will be the database, although the system is also MySQL compatible. Only three versions of the images are created and stored for processing and these images are optimized, thus requiring less storage. This more standardized platform will not only anticipate the future growth of the site, but facilitate sharing and interoperability with other databases and digital initiatives.

The primary efforts of the ESSSS teams to date have been to preserve the invaluable materials that we are losing daily to neglect, climate, fungi and other damage. We race against the clock. But we also recognize that there is great demand for better access to these documents. While team members have created a small number of transcriptions of these materials, many remain in Spanish and Portuguese paleographic forms that only trained scholars can recognize. We ask for support to fund an additional post-doctoral fellow already expert in these languages and difficult scripts to transcribe the oldest and most unique of the materials, create additional metadata, and assist in creating new GIS maps for the site. Both fellows would be encouraged to produce new research based on the ESSSS Digital Archive, disseminate it at professional and public conferences, and add their credited essays to the website.

DHSlavery Collaborative Network and Mellon Digital Preservation Workshop:

At the conclusion of the grant, we will host another DHSlavery workshop during Black History Month to share new research findings and technological innovations. We will extend this network further by inviting to the workshop students and faculty from Vanderbilt's Mellon Partners for Humanities Education Program at Tougaloo College, Berea College and Tennessee State University. Like many of the foreign institutions in which the ESSSS teams have worked, these institutions have limited cyberinfrastructure to exploit digital resources, and their faculty and students have had little, if any, previous training in digital humanities. To address these inequities, we will also offer a post-conference workshop such as those we have conducted in Colombia, Brazil and Cuba so that interested attendees can receive training in digital preservation and preserve the important patrimony of their own communities. Experienced ESSSS team members and Vanderbilt IT specialists will conduct the workshop and expenses for the workshop will be covered by Vanderbilt's Mellon Grant.

Added Content (supported by external funding):

In the first year of the project, we plan to expand the geographic reach of material preserved on the site by making exploratory visits to two sites, Cabo Verde and the Dominican Republic. In 2015 Landers attended the international meeting of the UNESCO Slave Route Project in Cape Verde as the newly appointed representative for the United States. U.S. Ambassador Donald Heflin has offered her some assistance to return with an ESSSS team to locate and inventory any surviving records for the earliest slave trade to the Americas, for later addition to the ESSSS Digital Archive. The Portuguese-speaking team would begin with the records of the fifteenth-century church of Nossa Senhora do Rosário in Cidade Velha (formerly Ribeira Grande) on the island of Santiago, a UNESCO World Heritage site. The team would also search for surviving records from the island's sugar plantation chapels. Any travel costs beyond the Embassy's contribution would be covered by Vanderbilt University.

In Year One, a Spanish-speaking team would also travel to the Dominican Republic, where Landers has previously conducted research and digitized the earliest black confraternity records available in the Cathedral of Santa María la Menor of Santo Domingo, the oldest Cathedral in the Americas. With the support of Father José Luis Sáez, she would return with ESSSS team members to locate and digitize surviving records from San Juan de la Maguana (founded 1503) and Azua de Compostela (1504). These are the sites of the earliest sugar plantations and African slave revolt in the Americas. The Spanish-speaking team would also search for additional materials from the sixteenth-century gold mining region of Concepción de la Vega, a site explored archaeologically by the University of Florida. The ESSSS team will apply for a British Library Endangered Archives Programme grant to cover the cost of this project.

- **Staff**

Jane Landers (PI) will supervise postdoctoral scholars, serve as liaison with the DHSlavery network, and represent the ESSSS Digital Archive nationally and internationally.

Cliff Anderson (Scholarly Communications Director) will provide additional workshop training for postdoctoral scholars and serve as consultant for the DHSlavery network.

Paula Covington (Bibliographer) will provide additional support with editing and quality control of data entry and transcriptions. She will also add content to the resources section of the website as it becomes available.

Dale Poulter (Digital Archive Coordinator and Technical Advisor) will supervise and provide additional training for postdoctoral scholars; supervise data migration and metadata creation; and manage all technical enhancements of the ESSSS Digital Archive.

Kara Schultz and Angela Sutton (Postdoctoral fellows) will create, update and maintain the DHSlavery Listserv and Website. They have training in mapping technologies such as ArcGIS and Mapbox and project management tools, including Trello and Pandoc; with Omeka and data visualization tools like Gephi, and are learning to use GitHub and Text Encoding Initiatives while working in markup languages like Markdown and XML as well as query languages like SPARQL and XQuery. Kara Schultz will continue paleographic transcription of the oldest documents in Spanish and Portuguese and produce histories of the Spanish and Portuguese sites. Each will continue training as new on-campus workshops offered by Cliff Anderson's Scholarly Communications Office are announced. They will also share ESSSS updates through Listservs and social media outlets. Sutton and Schultz will also begin to create GIS interactive mapping projects to enhance the site.

David LaFevor, Courtney J. Campbell, and Pablo Gómez (Mellon Partners for Humanities Digital Workshop Instructors) will lead workshops in digital preservation with participants from Tougaloo College, Berea College, and Tennessee State University. Each has led similar workshops in Brazil, Colombia, and Cuba, and will offer the same instruction to participants.

- **Final product and dissemination**

Volume records for the ESSSS Digital Archive are catalogued in WorldCat as they are uploaded to the site. Announcements about new collections and related events are also posted on Listservs such as SALALM, H-Net, H-LatAm, H-Atlantic and H-Slavery, among others. ESSSS team members have made presentations on the ESSSS Digital Archive at conferences and meetings in Brazil, Cuba, Colombia, Morocco, Portugal, Spain, England, Ghana, Canada, Cape Verde, and the United States. The ESSSS Digital Archive has also been featured in popular media such as TEDx, newspapers, and radio and television interviews. ESSSS projects funded by the British Library Endangered Archives Programme appear on their website and are featured in their tenth-anniversary publication, *From Dust to Digital*. The ESSSS Digital Archive was also featured in the *Hispanic American Historical Review* and in a special issue of *Slavery & Abolition*, edited by Landers. The team will also make use of social media to reach a public audience and engage with undergraduates, public historians, history buffs, and other members of the community who are more comfortable on these platforms. They will make use of twitter to tweet updates about the site and archives, and Instagram to show the latest additions and rare finds and generate public conversations about the ESSSS Digital Archive. These resources will also generate more traffic for the website.

Sustainability Plan

In order to revitalize the ESSSS database and allow it to more substantively contribute to humanities scholarship and public knowledge in the humanities, this project will require funding for staff to transfer the existing files with enriched and standardized metadata to new and improved software platforms while ensuring for the long-term preservation of these images and metadata in METS format to go into a dark archive. In processing the data into a single system with Sobek Content Management, the metadata will be stored as METS, and will have a built-in crosswalk to TEI, which the many of the current Digital Humanities initiatives use, so that data from ESSSS can more easily be mined and linked to other databases. If funded, this data, along with the document images, all related source code developed in connection with this grant project, under the General Public License Version 3.0 (GPLv3) and the Creative Commons Public Domain Declaration (CC0 1.0 Universal), may be exported at any time, by any person or institution through the database website, and Github (<https://github.com>).

Vanderbilt University Library has become a member of the Digital Preservation Network, which will allow much of the ESSSS project to be stored in a dark archive following the conversion of data. This will ensure that the content will be available in perpetuity, and that the future of the database will not be dependent upon specific individuals. This also protects against the risk of catastrophic loss due to technology, organizational or natural disasters. If funded, the ESSSS team will have sufficient staff to convert all files, code all documents, and migrate all the data over to the new, more standardized platforms and into the dark archive within a two year period.

Once this conversion and migration is complete, our librarian and digital services coordinator, with the help of occasional freelancers paid for out of the ESSSS research budget,

will be able to grow the database organically through processing all new data (such as document images from Cabo Verde, the Dominican Republic, and other data which scholars from around the world share with the database) in this format as it arrives. This keeps the long-term financial needs of the project to a minimum, yet the option remains for more significant expansion of the database as future funding allows.

Data Management Plan

Data: All of the metadata on the ESSSS database is located on the Vanderbilt University Website, stored in a MySQL database which uses a Dublin Core based structure. This requires the production and storage of five versions of each image in order to produce the display. It is stored on network servers with multiple layers of protection and regular backups, and all files are copied onto virtual tapes. For additional security, the system is mirrored at an off-site location. In order to ensure the long-term preservation of these images and their metadata, however, we must encode them according to the Metadata Encoding and Transmission Standards (METS) in XML and then move them to the dark archive in the Digital Preservation Network (DPN), which allows indefinite storage in a failsafe repository. Only three versions of the images are created and stored for processing, allowing them to be optimized to require less storage and fewer resources. If funded, our staff will have sufficient support to encode all of the images and convert them for the DPN.

Interface: The current ESSSS website utilizes two distinct technological frameworks. The content management system is based on PHP (OmniUpdate) and the second uses a locally-developed PERL-based framework for presenting the actual images. Most other humanities databases and archives in use today have moved away from these individual frameworks and toward standardized, open-source systems using TEI or MySQL. This means that without significant manual labor, data from the ESSSS database cannot be effectively integrated with those of others. Despite this, Google Analytics demonstrates that the ESSSS database has a wide readership and that scholars from all over the world use this data in their research. In order to allow optimized data-sharing our staff will transfer the existing files with enriched and

standardized metadata to new and improved software platforms. ESSSS team members will transfer the two existing frameworks into a single system utilizing SobekCM open-source software (<http://sobekrepository.org>), which utilizes C# to process metadata stored as METS but also provides a crosswalk to TEI. Therefore, all of the information in our current system will be integrated into one software that is designed to work with the types of software the most current Digital Humanities databases utilize, making them interoperable.

Sharing: Every aspect of the database, from the metadata, to the images, interface, and the software used will be made freely available to anyone in the world. All source code developed in connection with this grant project will be released under the General Public License Version 3.0 (GPLv3) (<http://www.gnu.org/licenses/gpl-3.0.en.html>) and publicly distributed through Github. All metadata will be dedicated to the public domain via the Creative Commons Public Domain Declaration (CC0 1.0 Universal) (<https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/legalcode>). All images, both the high-resolution as well as the access images, will likewise be dedicated to the public domain via CC0 1.0 Universal (unless prior licensing restrictions have been attached). Metadata will be made available through Github with direct access to images.

APPENDIX

1. Representative documents from the ESSSS Digital Archive
 - A. Libro Barajas, Bautismos, 1590-1600, Sagrada Catedral de San Cristóbal de La Habana, Havana, Cuba
 - B. Libro de Escrituras, 1938, Tomo 2, Notaría Primera de Quibdó, Colombia
2. Google Analytics data, <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/esss/>, January 1-December 31, 2015
3. ESSSS and DHSlaavery Conferences and Workshops
 - A. "Ecclesiastical Sources in Slave Societies," 2002
 - B. "New Sources for the Study of Slavery: A Conference to Launch Vanderbilt University's New Ecclesiastical and Secular Sources for Slave Societies Digital Archive," Vanderbilt University, February 2-4, 2012
 - C. "Digital Humanities and the History of Slavery: A Workshop to Enhance Graduate Teaching, Research, and Collaboration," Vanderbilt University, October 15-17, 2015
4. The ESSSS Digital Archive in the News
 - A. Lew Harris, "Dancing while Digitizing," *Acorn Chronicle* (Jean and Alexander Heard Library), Fall 2005
 - B. "A escravidão nos arquivos católicos," *Nossa História* (Rio de Janeiro), February 2006
5. Scholarly Production
 - A. Jane Landers, Pablo Gómez, José Polo Acuña and Courtney J. Campbell, "Researching the history of slavery in Colombia and Brazil through ecclesiastical and notarial archives," in *From Dust to Digital: Ten Years of the Endangered Archives Programme* (Cambridge, UK: OpenBook Publishers, 2015)
 - B. Table of Contents, "New Sources and New Findings: Slavery and Abolition in the Atlantic World," *Slavery and Abolition*, September 2015



el Notario Público Suplente,

Antônio G. G. G.
José F. Rengifo

MILNO TREINTA Y SIETE (37).---

En la ciudad de Quibdó, Capital del Distrito del mismo nombre y de la Intendencia Nacional del Chocó, República de Colombia, a diez y nueve (19) días del mes de Abril de mil novecientos treinta y ocho (1938), ante mí, JOSÉ FRANCISCO RENGIFO T., Notario Público Suplente del Circuito Notarial de Quibdó, y en presencia de los testigos instrumentales que en su lugar se mencionarán y firmarán, COMPARSICIO personalmente a esta Oficina de la Notaría, hoy a mi cargo, el señor CAMILO VILLA CARRASQUILLA, Secretario de Hacienda de la Intendencia, debidamente autorizado por el señor Intendente Nacional del Chocó, expuso:-- que por escritura número CUARENTA Y DOS (42) de veintitres (23) de Junio del año de mil novecientos treinta y cuatro (1934), el señor ELADIO MARTÍNEZ, constituyó fianza hipotecaria a favor del Gobierno de la Intendencia, para asegurar su manejo como Selector de Hacienda Abulante de Medio Atrato, por la cantidad de TRESCIENTOS PESOS (\$300,00) en legal, puesto para el cual fué designado por Decreto número ciento sesenta y siete (167) de fecha diez y ocho (18) del mes de Junio de 1934; que de conformidad con la Resolución número cuatro (4) de este año (Enero 31), la cual presenta para su inserción en esta escritura y que copiada a la letra dice como sigue:-- RESOLUCIÓN NÚMERO 4 DE 1938.--- (Enero 31) por el cual se ordena la cancelación de una caución hipotecaria.--- Por oficio número 47, de 21 del presente mes, el señor Auditor Fiscal del Chocó remite a esta Oficina la escritura número 42 (fianza # 135), de 23 de Junio

Search reports & help

- Overview
- esss
- Intelligence Events
- Real-Time
- Audience
 - Overview
 - Active Users
 - Cohort Analysis BETA
 - Demographics
 - Interests
 - Geo
 - Behavior
 - New vs Returning
 - Frequency & Rec...
 - Engagement
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Active Users

Jan 1, 2015 - Dec 31, 2015

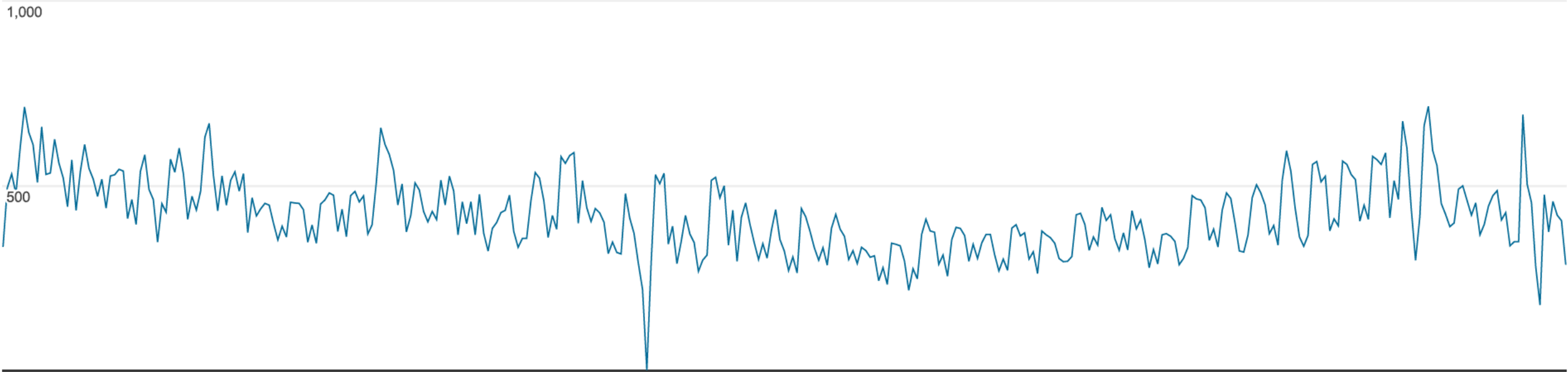
Email Export Add to Dashboard Shortcut

All Sessions
100.00%

+ Add Segment

Active Users

- ☒ 1 Day Active Users
- ☐ 7 Day Active Users
- ☐ 14 Day Active Users
- ☐ 30 Day Active Users



	April 2015	July 2015	October 2015	
1 Day Active Users				30 Day Active Users
286	2,411	4,809	10,000	
% of Total: 100.00% (286)	% of Total: 100.00% (2,411)	% of Total: 100.00% (4,809)	% of Total: 100.00% (10,000)	

This report was generated on 2/12/16 at 7:07:49 AM - [Refresh Report](#)

ECCLESIASTICAL SOURCES IN SLAVE SOCIETIES



a project of
Vanderbilt University,
the Universidade
Federal Fluminense
and York University

New Sources for the Study of Slave Societies



February 2–4, 2012

A Conference to Launch Vanderbilt University's New Ecclesiastical & Secular Sources for Slave Societies Digital Archive

<http://www.vanderbilt.edu/esss/index.php>

Thursday, February 2

The Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities Annual
Black Atlantic Lecture

Introduction: **Richard C. McCarty**, Provost and Vice Chancellor
for Academic Affairs

María Elisa Velásquez, Instituto Nacional de Antropología
e Historia (INAH), Mexico

"Africans and Afrodescendant Women in Mexico City during Colonial
Times: Social Relationships and Cultural Reproduction"

4:00, The Bishop Joseph Johnson Black Cultural Center

Reception to Follow

Friday, February 3

All day at the Community Room, Jean and Alexander Heard Library

9:00, Introduction: **Timothy McNamara**, Vice-Provost for Faculty
and International Affairs

9:15–10:30, New Sources for African History

Chair: **Jim Epstein**, Department of History

Paul Lovejoy, Harriet Tubman Institute for the Study
on the Global Migrations of African People, York University

"The British Library Project to Digitize the Public Archives of Sierra Leone"

Angela Sutton, Vanderbilt University

"Sources for 17th-Century Slave Society in the Collections of the
Royal Slave Trading Companies of the Netherlands and Prussia"

10:45–12:00, New Sources for Brazilian History

Chair: **Marshall Eakin**, Department of History

Mariza Soares, Universidade Federal Fluminense

"Ecclesiastical Sources and the Study of Slave Society in Rio de Janeiro"

Joanna Elrick, Vanderbilt University

"Portuguese Inquisition Trials: A New Source for Studying European
Participation in African-based Religions in Angola, Cuba, and Brazil"

2:00–3:15, New Sources for Cuban History

Chair: **Celso Castillo**, Department of History

David Wheat, Michigan State University

"Havana Cathedral's *Libro de Barajas*: A New Source
for the Social History of the Early Spanish Caribbean"

Oscar Grandío Moré, York University and The University of San Francisco

"Uncovering the Origins of African Slaves in the Historical and Ecclesiastical
Archives of Matanzas, Cuba"

Jane Landers, Vanderbilt University

"Ecclesiastical Records: A New Source for the History of Anti-Slavery
Movements in 19th-Century Cuba"

3:30–5:00, New Sources for Colombian History

Chair: **Lesley Gill**, Department of Anthropology

Pablo Gómez, Texas Christian University

"Black, Sick and Forgotten: 18th- and 19th-Century
Sources from the Colombian Pacific and La Guajira"

Renée Soulodre-La France, King's College,
University of Western Ontario

"Sailing through the Sacraments: Parish Books
on Board and Ashore from Cartagena de Indias
in the Early 19th Century"

Reception to Follow

Saturday, February 4

All day at Jean and Alexander Heard Library, 800BB

Digital Archive Workshop

9:00, Introduction: **Jody Combs**, Associate Dean,
Jean and Alexander Heard Library

9:15–10:45, Vanderbilt University Collections for Research on Slave Societies

Paula Covington, Jean and Alexander Heard Library

"Vanderbilt's Colombian Collections; The Manuel
Zapata Olivella and Helguera Collections"

John Maddox, Vanderbilt University

"The Manuel Zapata Olivella Collection at Vanderbilt:
Diary of an Afro-Hispanic Renaissance Man"

William Luis, Vanderbilt University

"Researching the Chinese Diaspora to Cuba
in the ESSSS Digital Archive"

Mona Frederick, Vanderbilt University

"Who Speaks for the Negro? Digital Archive"

10:45–noon, Creating and Maintaining Digital Archives

Marshall Breeding, Vanderbilt University Libraries

"Technology Issues in Support of ESSSS:
Progress and Challenges"

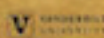
Courtney Campbell, Vanderbilt University

"Creating Metadata and Managing the ESSSS Website"

David LaFavor, Barry College

"Teaching Digital Preservation to Colombian University
Students in Quibdó and Cartagena"

Audience Participation and Exchange



Co-sponsored by the Center for Latin American Studies, the Jean and Alexander Heard Library, the Circum-Atlantic
Studies Seminar of the Robert Penn Warren Center, the Department of History, and Vanderbilt Web and Creative Services

DIGITAL HUMANITIES & THE HISTORY OF SLAVERY

A WORKSHOP TO ENHANCE RESEARCH,
COLLABORATION & GRADUATE TRAINING



October 15–17, 2015

Community Room of the Jean and Alexander Heard Library,
Vanderbilt University

Thursday, October 15

- 5:30 pm: Welcome & opening remarks: Chancellor Nick Zeppos, Provost John Geer, Dean Laurie Benton
6:15 pm: Informal Opening Discussion

Friday, October 16

- 9:00 am: Welcome from Dean Jody Combs
9:15 am: Preservation Projects
Ecclesiastical & Secular Sources for Slave Societies:
Jane Landers, Fernanda Bretones, Andrew McMichael, Kara Schultz, Renee Souldre-LaFrance, Angela Sutton, Erin Stone
British Library Endangered Archives Projects:
Paul Lovejoy, Pablo Gomez, Courtney Campbell, Marshall Eakin, David LaFavor, Oscar Grandio
11:00 am: Databasing Projects
SHADD Biography Project: Paul Lovejoy, Nelson Bezerra, Richard Anderson, Daniela Cavalheiro
Slave Biographies: the Atlantic Database Network:
Walter Hawthorne, Jorge Felipe, Andrew Barsom

Friday, continued

- 1:30 pm: Visualization & Website Projects
Marronage: Jean-Pierre Le Glaunec, Molly Mitchell, Jeremy Williams
Liberated Slaves: Henry Lovejoy
Civil Rights: Anthony Siracusa
2:45 pm: *Mapping & GIS Projects:* Matt LaFavor, Zada Law
3:30 pm: Collaborative Research
Global Data Collection: Patrick Manning
Libraries, Museums, and Digital Humanities:
Martin Halbert, Ibrahima Seck, Laurie Taylor, Paula Covington, Viviana Quintero

Saturday, October 17

- 9:45 am: *IT & Digital Humanities Panel:* Cliff Anderson, Dale Poulter, Todd Hughes, Jeremy Williams, Guylaine Petrin, Henry Lovejoy
11:15 am: Group Discussion
1:00 pm: Closing Discussion & Networking



Jane Landers directs Digital Humanities & the History of Slavery, which was made possible by the generosity of the Vanderbilt University Central Discovery Grant Award, with additional support from the Robert Penn Warren Center for the Humanities and the Department of History.

Dancing While Digitizing

BY LEW HARRIS

in
Cuba

Jane Landers (right) visits with Graciela Milian Martínez, director of the Provincial Archives of Matanzas, in the courtyard of the 19th-century home of the most famous poet of Matanzas, José Jacinto Milanés. Landers and others are trying to find a way to help Martínez repair the home, which houses the archives.

The sound of drums and the music from a Reggaeton band practicing in a Cuban street filled the air. Meanwhile Vanderbilt History Professor Jane Landers and her research team occasionally found themselves dancing to the serenade while rapidly taking digital photographs of sacramental records of African slaves who were imported into Cuba from the 16th through the 19th centuries.

Unfortunately, the decaying documents being photographed are in danger of being lost forever. Most of the records are held in religious archives of local Catholic churches and are at risk from climate, bug infestation and other damage.

In February, 2005, Landers made her second trip to Cuba with a seven-member team from Cuba, Canada, Brazil and the United States. The team from Vanderbilt consisted of Landers, her graduate student David Wheat and Paula Covington, the Latin American bibliographer for the Heard

Library. Covington not only helped digitize records but also searched out and bought rare and difficult-to-obtain Cuban books for the Heard Library's Latin American collection. Also joining the contingent was Vanderbilt graduate Andrew McMichael, now an assistant professor of history at Western Kentucky University; York University graduate students Oscar Grandío Moráquez and Henry Lovejoy; and Brazilian archivist, Antonio Meneses.

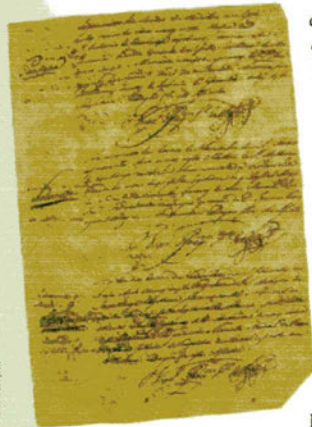
Using techniques McMichael dubbed "guerrilla preservation," the researchers captured more than 40,000 digital images of records from churches in Havana, Regla and Matanzas. These documents ranged from 16th-century black marriages in Havana to burials of unbaptized Chinese who labored alongside African slaves on plantations in Matanzas.

Through the auspices of Vanderbilt's Jean and Alexander Heard Library, Landers' digital project has access to

A escravidão nos arquivos católicos

Projeto recupera e digitaliza registros de escravos e libertos guardados em dioceses do Rio de Janeiro e Cuba

Tanto no Brasil como em Cuba, ou na Colômbia, os escravos africanos e aqueles nascidos deste lado do Atlântico eram logo batizados pela Igreja Católica. Tal procedimento acabou produzindo o que pode ser considerada a série documental mais longa e uniforme entre todas as fontes disponíveis para o estudo da escravidão nas Américas. É justamente isso que a equipe do projeto *A escravidão africana nos arquivos eclesiásticos* vem constatando nas dioceses de Nova Iguaçu, Niterói e Rio de Janeiro, onde já foram digitalizados mais de 30 mil documentos, entre assentos de batismo, óbito e casamento, tanto de cativos como de alforriados e livres, desde princípios do século XVII até fins do XIX.



"Já foi reproduzida e organizada em caixas adequadas toda a documentação da diocese de Nova Iguaçu. Em Niterói, já foi digitalizada boa parte das fontes, e estamos em entendimento com a diocese de Petrópolis, para começar o trabalho agora no início de 2006", informa Mariza de Carvalho Soares, professora de História na UFF e coordenadora do projeto no Brasil, que conta com financiamento da agência norte-americana National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). Em Cuba, Jane Landers, professora na Universidade de Vanderbilt, no Tennessee, Estados Unidos, coordena as atividades nas dioceses de Havana e Matanzas. Uma lista de fontes já coletadas e textos sobre metodologias e resultados de pesquisa poderão ser conferidos no [site www.historia.uff.br/curias](http://www.historia.uff.br/curias), ainda em construção.

Ao lado, registros de batismo de escravos do século XVIII, na região de Jacutinga; documentos guardados em dioceses do Rio de Janeiro são fontes preciosas para o estudo da escravidão nas Américas

Aficionada pela origem

A curiosa história da empresária que mergulhou na busca pela árvore genealógica

Quem não tem vontade de buscar a árvore genealógica de sua família, mas tem preguiça para começar a aventura? Se você conhecesse a determinação de Beatriz Gerber, talvez se estimulasse a mergulhar nos trabalhos. Depois de identificar seus antepassados na Suíça e tomar contato com os primos de lá, a empresária se apaixonou pela saga dos tataravós italianos do marido. Sem medo de parecer uma intrusa, começou a buscar tudo que podia sobre a aventura dos Tancredi em direção ao Brasil.

"Eu ligava para os parentes do meu marido e as reações eram variadas. Tive gente com medo de eu ser seqüestradora, pelo tipo de informação que pedia", lembra ela. Aos poucos, foi montando o quebra-cabeças a partir de documentos, como a lista de famílias

transportadas pelo navio *Città di Genova*, o registro na Hospedaria dos Imigrantes, na capital paulista, o Censo de 1907 e a entrada daquele grupo familiar nas fazendas em São Carlos do Pinhal.

Em um ano de pesquisa, Beatriz já chegou ao começo do século XIX. Agora, ela conta com ajuda de familiares para montar um [site](http://www.orkut.com.br) com o resultado das buscas e muitas entrevistas com os membros mais velhos da família. "Criei uma comunidade com o nome da família no Orkut ([site](http://www.orkut.com.br) de relacionamento da internet) e já encontrei outras pessoas. O Brasil é realmente um país sem memória. Meus parentes suíços acharam normal quando os procurei", garante Beatriz, que faz questão de divulgar seu e-mail (beatrizgerber@uol.com.br) para o



contato com outros aficionados em histórias de origem. "Só vou sossegar quando conseguir promover o encontro da família daqui com os tios-avós de meu marido, na Itália."

A família descansa na praia: esta foi uma das fotos resgatadas por Beatriz em sua pesquisa

9. Researching the history of slavery in Colombia and Brazil through ecclesiastical and notarial archives

*Jane Landers, Pablo Gómez,
José Polo Acuña and Courtney J. Campbell*

This chapter addresses the history of slavery and development in two of the most African locales in colonial South America: the Pacific and Caribbean coasts of modern Colombia and northeastern Brazil. Both modern nations have recognised the historical and civic neglect of the “black communities” within their borders and now offer them legal and cultural recognition, as well as, at least theoretical, recognition of ancestral communal land ownership.¹ The endangered archives digitised under the auspices of the British Library’s Endangered Archives Programme enable researchers, as well as these neglected populations, to know more about their often hard to discover past.²

1 “Ley 70 sobre negritudes”, cited in Aline Helg, *Liberty and Equality in Caribbean Colombia, 1770-1835* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), pp. 1-2; “Lei No. 7.668, de 22 de agosto de 1988”, http://www.planalto.gov.br/ccivil_03/leis/L7668.htm; “Programas e ações”.

2 In 2005, with funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Vanderbilt University launched a major international initiative to begin locating and preserving ecclesiastical and notarial records of Africans in Cuba and Brazil, Ecclesiastical and Secular Sources for Slave Societies (<http://www.vanderbilt.edu/esss/index.php>). With funding from the British Library, the project was expanded into Colombia (EAP255, EAP503 and EAP640) and into additional areas of Brazil (EAP627).

SLAVERY & ABOLITION

Volume 36

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