



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE

Humanities

DIVISION OF RESEARCH PROGRAMS

## **Narrative Section of a Successful Application**

The attached document contains the grant narrative of a previously funded grant application, which conforms to a past set of grant guidelines. It is not intended to serve as a model, but to give you a sense of how a successful application may be crafted. Every successful application is different, and each applicant is urged to prepare a proposal that reflects its unique project and aspirations. Prospective applicants should consult the application guidelines for instructions. Applicants are also strongly encouraged to consult with the NEH Division of Research Programs staff well before a grant deadline.

Note: The attachment only contains the grant narrative, not the entire funded application. In addition, certain portions may have been redacted to protect the privacy interests of an individual and/or to protect confidential commercial and financial information and/or to protect copyrighted materials.

Project Title:	Civil Rights in Black and Brown: Oral Histories of the Multiracial Freedom Struggle in Texas
Institution:	Texas Christian University
Project Director:	Max Krochmal
Grant Program:	Collaborative Research

## **1 - Statement of Significance and Impact**

Not one but *two* civil rights movements flourished in mid-twentieth century Texas—and they did so in intimate conversation with one another. While most research on American race relations has utilized a binary analytical lens—examining either “black” vs. “white” or “Anglo” vs. “Mexican”—this project bridges cultures by collecting and interpreting four hundred new oral history interviews with members of all three groups, *simultaneously*. Covering the period since the onset of civil rights era, the interviews with African American, Mexican American, and white activists located in fifteen sites throughout the large, diverse state will add new depth to the study of “black/brown” relations past and present. The project will recover the role of local people in the black civil rights and Chicano/a movements in Texas and shed new light on the relationships between local, state, and national actors. It will provide fresh insights into inter-ethnic collaboration, conflict, and everything in between—all grounded in the lived experiences of the grassroots organizers and participants in the black and brown freedom struggles. This multiracial approach will also make the individual movements look different, expanding upon the familiar themes of school desegregation and direct action protests to more fully weave in more recent areas of inquiry such as electoral politics, economic justice, grassroots community organizing, and black and brown power. The project will compare, contrast, and relate the separate movements and their myriad areas of overlap. Texas represents an ideal historical laboratory due to the protracted presence of both ethnic/racial groups, their proximity in the same political units, and the state’s undue influence on (and ability to reflect) larger regional and national developments.

Once complete, the interviews will form the basis of a new, multi-authored book (with the look and feel of a scholarly monograph) that synthesizes and compares the black and brown freedom struggles in Texas from 1954 to the mid-1970s. Along the way, the project will also develop a free digital humanities website displaying video interview clips, each with its own metadata to allow for easy searching across the entire collection. The project will thus contribute both a cutting edge interpretive monograph as well as a new, publicly-accessible source base that will facilitate ongoing research into the historical relationship between the nation’s two largest minorities.

*Civil Rights in Black and Brown: Oral Histories of the Multiracial Freedom Struggle in Texas*

**Substance and Context**

On August 28, 1963, while much of America watched the historic March on Washington, nearly 1,000 demonstrators marched in 102-degree heat from the all-black neighborhood of East Austin, Texas, to the state capitol. Perhaps a fifth of the protestors were white, and a handful of Mexican Americans also participated. Several hundred local black teenagers joined veteran activists of all colors from across the state. Most of the marchers carried signs calling for “Freedom Now,” while others donned homemade placards that linked labor and civil rights: “No more 50c per hour,” blared one, and “Segregation is a new form of slavery.” Still others contrasted Texas Governor John Connally with President John F. Kennedy, at times adding some Spanish flair: “Kennedy *sí*, Connally no.” As the sweaty, sun-baked protestors then gathered under the live oak trees at a nearby park, African American civil rights leader W. J. Durham of Dallas addressed the crowd, but he did so in an unusual manner. “They’ll never separate the Latin-American and Negroes again in politics,” he began. “They’ll never separate the independent white man and the Negro again. They’ll never separate labor and the Negro again. We’re going to march on the street, pray on the streets, sit in the streets, walk on the streets. We’re going to fight at the ballot box and in the courts. . .” Henry Muñoz, a Mexican American union printer from San Antonio, delivered a similar message on behalf of the Political Association of Spanish-Speaking Organizations (PASO). “The Negro today asks justice,” Muñoz said. “We do not answer him...when we reply to the Negro by asking ‘Patience.’ Along with the Negro and in many instances worse off, patiently waiting is the Mexican-American...”<sup>1</sup> (Please see Appendix A – Bibliographic Notes.)

Long since forgotten, moments like these captured contemporary headlines and now draw attention to an understudied theme in the humanities: the relationship between the African American and Mexican American civil rights movements. As the above account indicates, not one but *two* struggles for justice flourished in mid-twentieth century Texas—and they did so in intimate conversation with one another, as well as with organized labor and white liberals.

*Civil Rights in Black and Brown* aims to recover this forgotten history by collecting and interpreting four hundred new oral history interviews with members of all three ethnic groups, *simultaneously*. While most research on American race relations has utilized a binary analytical lens—examining either “black” vs. “white” or “Anglo” vs. “Mexican”—this project uses a multiracial perspective to draw new insights into the black and Chicano/a freedom struggles as well as the intersections between the two movements. Covering the period from the twilight of the Jim Crow era until today, and based on field work in fifteen sites throughout the large, diverse state of Texas, the project promises to uncover “black/brown” collaboration, conflict, and everything in between.

The interviews will form the basis of a multi-authored scholarly book that synthesizes the overlapping black and brown freedom struggles in the Lone Star State from mid-century to present. Previous scholarship has surveyed different pieces of this story, but few works have placed the African American and Mexican American movements into a single, relational narrative frame and none have sufficiently integrated the voices of the struggles’ grassroots organizers. In fact, much of the scholarship on civil rights in Texas continues to utilize a top-down perspective, emphasizing the roles of elite leaders and backroom negotiations, despite the fact that historians of other locales in the South and in California have for some time used bottom-up approaches and community studies to greatly enrich the stories of the two movements.<sup>2</sup> A closer look at men and women who sat in at the lunch-counters, marched in the streets, desegregated the schools, registered the voters, organized the unions, launched the welfare rights movements, and built autonomous community institutions promises to upend the story of civil rights in Texas while also shedding new light on the larger field of black/brown relations. Scholars of African American Studies, Chicano/a Studies and race across the disciplines will look to the proposed book as the first authoritative history of black/brown relations rooted in the voices of ordinary movement participants.

In the process of preparing the scholarly manuscript, project collaborators will utilize an already-functioning online database of digital video and audio interview clips that will also serve as a second end by-product of the grant: a publicly accessible, free, and user-friendly multimedia digital humanities website (<http://crbb.tcu.edu/>). Rather than simply displaying the full interviews and transcripts, the site

breaks the interviews into short clips, each of which carries a series of thematic metadata codes from a project-specific controlled vocabulary (a set of subject terms that are far more detailed than standard Library of Congress headings – see Appendix B – Controlled Vocabulary). End users interact with e-commerce style software to search for narrow subjects across the entire interview collection, to view recommended clips based on their browsing history, and to add their own user-tags to help future visitors. Created specifically for this project using open-source inputs, the site’s innovative software allows not only scholars but also students, teachers, journalists, and the general public to easily search for and examine specific themes for their own research projects, lesson plans, news stories, essays, and beyond.

Both the book and the website unprecedentedly illuminate the lived experiences of black, brown, and white activists on-the-ground as well as their interactions across the color line. Surprisingly, although rich literatures detail the contours of both the African American and Mexican American quests for justice, relatively few works put those movements into conversation with one another. While the role of “local people” has received renewed attention in the literature on black civil rights, the relationships between African American, Mexican American, and white grassroots activists remain poorly understood.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, the scholarly literature on both the “Mexican American Generation” of postwar activists and the Chicano/a Movement of the 1960s and 1970s is just beginning to include community studies and research on the struggle’s on-the-ground organizers. For their part, African Americans remain all but absent except as distant foils in most Chicano/a historiography.<sup>4</sup> Research on labor and working-class history tends to assume that black and brown civil rights activists each abandoned the fight for economic justice in the face of Cold War repression, leaving the movements of the 1960s in the hands of respectable, middle-class leaders who emphasized race alone and prioritized access to public accommodations and schools rather than economic justice or real political power. Opportunities for alliances among black, brown, and white *working* people consequently diminished.<sup>5</sup> Finally, although new scholarship on the youth-led Black Power and Chicano/a movements at times acknowledges the presence of sporadic inter-ethnic “Third World” alliances, the origins, inter-generational character, and on-the-ground activities of those collaborations remain less well understood.

Much of the problem centers on the lack of sources. Manuscript records and newspapers tend to focus on the immediate activities of their authors or subjects. In the age of Jim Crow, segregation in Texas—and across the South and Southwest—required the physical separation of racial groups into separate neighborhoods, social organizations, and schools, while traditions, custom, and language led whites, African Americans, and Mexican Americans into distinct churches, political formations, and even sub-cultures. Geographically, African Americans tended to cluster in East Texas, while Mexican Americans predominated in South Texas and far West Texas (their distribution in the state mirrored in microcosm the nation's larger black and brown population trends). As a result, the written records provide many details on these separate worlds, but they rarely speak to one another across racial lines.<sup>6</sup>

*Civil Rights in Black and Brown* promises to rectify this omission by creating and then drawing upon a new, vast, representative base of oral sources. The life-history format interviews produced by the project will allow both the project directors and future scholars to not only recover events and actors absent from the written record but also to better scrutinize their *meaning*. As the Italian oral historian Alessandro Portelli has noted, the fact that interviews are not strictly factual is not a liability but an asset: the way that narrators tell their stories and the values they ascribe to historical events are themselves useful guides with which historians can improve our analyses of fragmentary written evidence.<sup>7</sup> Over two summers of field research, project faculty and graduate students will fan out to fifteen research sites across the state to collect approximately four hundred new, high-quality digital video interviews. The subjects, or “narrators,” will include a wide range of African American, Mexican American, and white civil rights, labor, neighborhood, religious, educational, fraternal, political, and other community activists. Throughout the process, researchers will code the interview data, upload clips to the online database, and analyze them for use in the scholarly monograph. After the fieldwork is complete, the project directors will complete additional archival research, convene a symposium of all of the project's researchers, and then prepare a multi-authored, interpretive book manuscript. Although individual sections of the text will be drafted by single authors, the directors will revise each other's sections and edit the overall manuscript to give it the seamless feel of a monograph rather than a primary document collection or anthology of

essays (our model is the award-winning *Like a Family* on Southern textile mill workers).<sup>8</sup> Placing the two movements into a single collaborative project and unified narrative frame allows for both comparative and relational inquiry, deepening scholarly understandings of not only the multiracial freedom struggle of Texas but also the national historiographies of the African American and Mexican American civil rights movements and the larger social scientific and cultural debates surrounding black/brown relations.

Historical research on black/brown relations first emerged during the explosion of “whiteness studies” in the mid-1990s. Historian Neil Foley fired the first controversial shot in 1997, contending that Mexican American civil rights activists in Texas after World War II made a “Faustian pact with whiteness” in which they saw themselves as white and attempted to prove their whiteness to achieve legal equality. In suggesting that they were “other whites” treated unjustly as “a class apart,” Foley adds, Mexican Americans at times positioned themselves as hostile to the black freedom struggle and even African Americans generally. Legal scholars have since responded that the attorneys used the “class apart” strategy only as an instrumental tool within the state’s Jim Crow courtroom, while historian Carlos Blanton has forcefully challenged Foley’s depiction of the era’s activists as fundamentally anti-black.<sup>9</sup>

Still, Foley’s introduction of whiteness studies to Chicano/a historiography led to a new wave of interest in the history of black/brown relations in the post-World War II period. Among those who have recovered moments of black/brown collaboration are Shanna Bernstein and Laura Pulido. Both examine the history of Los Angeles and discover deep ties between African American and Mexican American civil rights activists, while each scholar also adds the sympathetic roles played by Jews and Asian Americans, respectively.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, Lauren Araiza finds myriad areas cross-fertilization between the United Farm Workers and five major black civil rights organizations, while Gaye Theresa Johnson, Luis Alvarez and Daniel Widener are pioneering efforts in cultural history to better understand the mutually beneficial borrowing and sharing of popular art forms across racial lines in Southern California.<sup>11</sup>

In contrast, scholars led by California sociologist and attorney Nicolás Vaca have emphasized the numerous instances of conflict between Mexican Americans and African Americans originating in labor markets, discrimination by the state, and struggles for political representation. In his 2004 book, *The*

*Presumed Alliance*, Vaca charges scholars and activists with wearing “rose-colored lenses” when invoking moments of black/brown solidarity during the civil rights movements. Vaca was there, he says, though he provides little other historical evidence.<sup>12</sup> Brian Behnken and Michael Phillips have continued in that vein, using a wide range of archival sources while expanding on Foley’s whiteness framework. Each concludes that disagreement dominated black/brown relations, while Behnken adds that mutual distrust and competition over resources and power doomed any possibility of a multiracial freedom struggle in Texas. Behnken’s work is especially adept at incorporating a diverse range of newspaper sources. Still, few oral histories inform his narrative, and his narrow emphasis on the integration of public accommodations and schools leaves many of the new areas of inquiry proposed in this project relatively untouched. Robert Bauman and William Clayson reach similar conclusions in their studies of black/brown conflict surrounding the War on Poverty.<sup>13</sup> Meanwhile, a parallel literature in the social sciences used telephone surveys to uncover widespread inter-group conflict between African Americans and Mexican Americans in the present moment, concluding that race leaders attempt to form interracial alliances but still remain unwilling to acknowledge that negative attitudes and stereotypes remain pervasive among their constituents.<sup>14</sup>

The newest scholarship has moved beyond the poles of cooperation and conflict toward examining what Mark Brilliant calls “the wide space between.” Brilliant’s path-breaking work on California shows that Japanese American, African American, and Mexican American legal and political strategies all developed along different trajectories and that the separate struggles only occasionally overlapped. Although cooperation occurred, the African American movement became the lens through which allies and observers understood *all* civil rights struggles, obscuring the particularities of the other groups’ movements and blurring the multiple color lines at play.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, Gordon Mantler examines the Poor People’s Campaign of 1968 and concludes that African Americans, Mexican Americans, American Indians, and whites each developed distinct “social constructions of poverty” that led to constant tension between the groups. Still, there were fleeting moments of multiracial coalition in which the recognition of such pre-existing differences helped to produce tangible results.<sup>16</sup> Project Director Max



Krochmal has also contributed to this discussion by highlighting the long process of experimental, trial-and-error coalition-building among black, brown, and white labor, community, and political organizers in Texas. Krochmal argues that distinctions of class, ideology, political tactics, and strategy all at times mattered more than did simple ties of race or ethnicity.<sup>17</sup> Most recently, Sonia Song-Ha Lee and Frederick Douglass Opie have recovered black-Latino/a coalitions in New York City across the century, from postwar organized labor to the black and brown power movements to formal politics.<sup>18</sup>

Together these works have reconnected the two freedom struggles and deepened the study of each, forging a new historical sub-field on black/brown civil rights along the way. Yet each text remains fragmentary, offering portraits of a relatively small number of actors in short periods and specific places. Most of them originated as dissertations, each composed by a single researcher with a necessarily finite evidentiary base. Although all of them incorporated oral sources, none could draw on the hundreds of interviews that a collaborative project can produce. More important, most have limited their analyses to the most visible organizations and leaders and have only scratched the surface of several new areas of inquiry in the larger civil rights historiographies: the ongoing connections between race-based activism and demands for economic justice, especially among working-class activists and union members; inter-generational continuities in the “long” struggles; the role of gender and sexuality; the intersectional and multiple loyalties of individual activists and groups; the connections between grassroots organizing and electoral politics and policy-making; and the variations between urban and rural contexts. As a collaborative, multi-authored endeavor able to coordinate extensive fieldwork in a wide range of settings, *Civil Rights in Black and Brown* promises to dig into these subjects more deeply than ever before.<sup>19</sup>

Texas offers an ideal case study for a systematic, large-scale history of black/brown relations during the civil rights era. The state’s particularly diverse demographics and the protracted presence of African Americans, Mexican Americans, and whites give it historical depth and make it representative of larger trends across the United States. Likewise its unique location in the borderlands of the American South and Southwest combined with its long history of racial conflict and resistance helps to make the Lone Star State microcosmic of the regions it abuts. Although Texas may not be either Mississippi or

California, one can learn much about the surrounding regions by using it as a single case study. The state's rapid population and economic growth since World War II as well as its major, growing cities at the center of the Sunbelt also reflect broader trends in U.S. political economy in the past half-century, as defense spending and migration have tilted resources and people in a southwesterly direction. Texas may also hold significance due to its profound influence on American politics and culture. As the home of three American Presidents in the past fifty years and a site of persistent speculation about its demographic future, it is little exaggeration to suggest that as goes Texas, so goes the nation.

Texas also exhibits some exceptional qualities that make it a revealing laboratory. While studies of California and New York detail black-Latino/a relations in comparatively open and politically liberal contexts on the coasts, the Texas story shines light on black/brown civil rights in the heart of conservative America. Only in Texas did Mexican Americans and African Americans come into contact and collaborate under the weight of the formal, legal Jim Crow structure of the South. Moreover, only in a large, diverse state like Texas can one observe rural and urban versions of both the black and Mexican American civil rights struggles within the same political unit—a fact that carried great weight because it allowed both movements to identify a common enemy and thus find ground for concerted action. The backwoods of East Texas were not unlike the desolate Mississippi Delta, but there is no similar region in California or New York. Nor are there Mexican Americans in other places in the South, even including Florida. Texas sits at the crossroads of unique and broadly representative. The future of black/brown and multicultural relations in America has much to learn from the lived history of the Lone Star State.

### **History and Duration of the Project**

Now underway with private and institutional support, *Civil Rights in Black and Brown* began in the summer of 2013 when project director Krochmal held a series of meetings with project co-directors Moye and Dulaney to assess their interest in a collaborative oral history project.

All of us were engaged in oral history interviewing related to civil rights, and we soon agreed that we could best advance our individual research agendas by working together. We began meeting regularly as a group, exchanged ideas, and identified potential sources of funding. Each of us

reached out to partners at our separate institutions and succeeded in gaining significant commitments of in-kind contributions, staff resources, and space and equipment from the libraries and history departments of three universities—Texas Christian University (TCU), the University of North Texas (UNT), and the University of Texas at Arlington (UTA). The dean of the TCU Library offered us the significant use of two employees' staff time and personally brought together librarians, archivists, and digital systems personnel from all three universities in order to hash out processes for data management, workflow, and archival preservation. TCU's Department of History and AddRan College of Liberal Arts promised to purchase equipment and provide office space and a graduate student assistant for the project. As we prepared this application, the Department of History at UTA committed an entire year of its endowed Walter Prescott Webb Memorial Lectures to the project, enabling us to plan a symposium at which we will begin to synthesize our findings in the final year of the grant. (See Appendix C – Institutional Contributions.)

Most important, in collaboration with TCU's development office, we presented a series of grant proposals to private foundations. The Brown Foundation, Inc., of Houston responded with a charitable grant, and the Summerlee Foundation of Dallas followed suit with an additional donation, half of which will be used during the grant period (see Appendix D – Third Party Funding). Using these funds as well as the contributions from our three universities, the project created the online database and website (<http://crbb.tcu.edu/>) in the spring of 2014, hired a half-time Graduate Assistant and additional student workers and interns this fall, purchased new video cameras and audio equipment, uploaded clips from the directors' existing oral history projects to the *Civil Rights in Black Brown* online database, and began planning for an initial pilot phase of field research that will take place during the summer of 2015. At that point, we will hire four graduate student research assistants for eight weeks of full-time work in Dallas-Fort Worth and in three high-priority remote field sites: East Texas (Tyler / Marshall), El Paso, and the Panhandle (see Appendix E – Map of Field Sites). Additionally, we will begin processing the new interview data using our online database and archiving materials in collaboration with *The Portal to Texas History* and the TCU Library.

In short, the private grants and university contributions are allowing us to fine-tune our methods and workflow so we can hit the ground running when the NEH phase of the project will begin in October, 2015. We will conduct two additional years of field research (2015-17) and two years of writing up the final book (2017-18 and an unfunded fourth year, 2018-19). The web database is already online and will continue to grow as we add all of the new interview clips; it will be available to the public in perpetuity. After the project is complete, Krochmal plans to create a new oral history program at TCU, and Moye will continue to direct the existing program at UNT. Both will integrate inquiries on black/brown relations into their standard questionnaires and graduate student training and will continue to process additional interviews on civil rights using the controlled vocabulary and online database. Dulaney will support both efforts and coordinate research in black and Chicano/a history. All directors will maintain ties with relevant community partners and consultants and will present the project's findings at scholarly conferences and off-campus in the communities under study. They will also continue to work with graduate students who served as research assistants for the project and to help them as they develop their dissertations and careers.

### **Staff**

Max Krochmal will serve as the Project Director. Krochmal is Assistant Professor of History at Texas Christian University. He earned his Ph.D. in 2011 at Duke University under the tutelage of preeminent oral historians William H. Chafe and Lawrence C. Goodwyn, serving for three years as the Research Associate for the *Behind the Veil* project, an NEH-funded effort that documented African American life in the Jim Crow South through 1,300 oral history interviews. Krochmal has taught oral history classes at the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke and at TCU. He is the author of articles in the *Journal of Southern History* and in two important anthologies and is completing his first book, *Blue Texas: African Americans, Mexican Americans, Labor, and the Making of the Democratic Coalition in Texas* (under contract with the University of North Carolina Press, 2016). Although he is a junior professor, Krochmal was recently invited to speak on the "state-of-the-field" of the new multiracial U.S. history at the 2013 meeting of the Organization of American Historians. He spent the 2013-2014 school

year as the Summerlee Fellow in Texas History at the Clements Center for Southwest Studies at Southern Methodist University.

Krochmal will coordinate all components of the project, supervising the year-round Graduate Assistant and summer Research Assistants and facilitating meetings and other communication with the Co-Directors and library staff. In the first two years of the grant, he will spearhead the development of research plans along with partner community organizations and consultants, the populating of the project's online database, and all project logistics. Krochmal will directly supervise field research in Austin, San Antonio, and the Rio Grande Valley and coordinate all four teams from afar. He will also be responsible for monitoring spending and compliance along with the TCU Office of Sponsored Programs. In the third year of the grant, Krochmal will conduct archival research, coordinate the symposium, and write the book chapters on economic justice campaigns and political action. In the unfunded fourth year, he will serve as the editor and lead author of the final manuscript.

Dulaney and Moye will all serve as Co-Directors. The Co-Directors will assist Krochmal in every phase of the project, from training the research assistants to supervising operations in the field as well as conducting archival research, participating in the analysis and coding of data for the project website, and writing of the multi-authored book. Each of them is more than up to the task. Dulaney, Professor and Chair of the Department of History at the University of Texas at Arlington, is a founding affiliate of UTA's Center for African American Studies and the founding president of the Dallas / Fort Worth branch of the Association for the Study of African American Life and History (ASALH), which is now named in his honor. He is the author of *Black Police in America* and the editor of three volumes on African American history as well as the new online *Handbook of African American Texas*. He is completing a manuscript on black history in Dallas and has extensive contacts in the local community as well as the wider field of African American history across the state. Dulaney will supervise the Brazos Valley, Deep East Texas, and Fort Bend / Brazoria counties field sites and write the

chapters on school integration, African American legal struggles, and black power. His department will also oversee the logistics of the project symposium in the third year of the grant.

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Moye is Associate Professor of History and director of the Oral History Program at the University of North Texas. He served as co-chair of the Program Committee of the Oral History Association's 2013 annual meeting and is a series editor of The Oxford University Press Oral History Series. Moye is a distinguished civil rights historian and the author of *Let the People Decide: Black Freedom and White Resistance Movements in Sunflower County, Mississippi, 1945-1986*; *Freedom Flyers: The Tuskegee Airmen of World War II*; and, most recently, *Ella Baker: Community Organizer of the Civil Rights Movement*. Moye will coordinate the training of graduate student research assistants and supervise field research in Houston / Galveston and the Golden Triangle. He will write the chapters on Jim Crow and direct action protests. Moye's staff will also transcribe a handful of interviews per year, create and process interview clips for the web database, and serve as the liaison *The Portal to Texas History*.

Jacob Brown of TCU serves as the Digital Library Specialist. A 2011 M.S. in Information Science and 2008 M.A. in English, Brown is proficient in a wide range of software and programming

languages and has worked on the digital repositories of UNT, Southern Methodist University, and TCU. Beginning in the fall of 2013, Brown developed a working prototype of the project database and website, and he is now overseeing the uploading of data. Brown will continue to support the site throughout the grant period, including training project staff on the use of the custom software, coordinating the uploading of digital video clip files to the site, and transferring the archival copies of the full interviews to the *Portal of Texas History* at UNT. In short, he will be in charge of the digital storage and retrieval systems.

Mary Saffell of TCU serves as the project's Archival Data Manager. Saffell earned an M.A. in History in 1997 and an M.L.I.S. concentrating in archival enterprise at the University of Texas, Austin, in 2000. She served for more than a decade as the Associate Director of the Vietnam Center and Archive at Texas Tech University before becoming the Senior Archivist at TCU in 2013. Saffell will coordinate the archival processing of project data—that is, the *content* of the interviews and any donated manuscript collections or photographs. She will train the project staff to receive written and photographic records while in the field and on the application of metadata codes to the interview clips. She will also coordinate the archiving and digitization of such materials for inclusion in the TCU Library Special Collections. Saffell is charged with maintaining the *content* of the project website, conducting periodic audits of the site for consistency and completeness, and processing any remaining interviews not completed by project staff each summer. She will be assisted by up to three work-study employees.

Katherine Bynum serves as the half-time Graduate Assistant (GA). A doctoral student in history at TCU, Bynum received her both her B.A. and M.A. at UNT, where she also worked for the UNT Oral History Program. Uniquely positioned to facilitate inter-institutional collaboration, Bynum is already on the job and will continue to assist the Project Director in all three years of the project, completing administrative tasks during the school year and helping to coordinate field research activities in each of the first two summers. Bynum will also make contacts with community partners, assist with training and research materials, coordinate travel logistics for all participants, assist in the coding and analyzing of data, and assist with the preparation of the manuscript. She will serve as a research assistant during the privately-funded pilot project in the summer of 2015, giving her firsthand experience that she will use to

assist other graduate student researchers who will come onto the staff during the NEH grant period. (See Appendix F – Abbreviated Résumés of Principal Participants.)

Finally, an additional twelve Research Assistants (RAs) over the two summers will be hired from a national pool of graduate students to conduct interviews in the field. Each student will receive free room and board and a stipend for two months of full-time work. The assistants will be trained in the methods of oral history, will receive feedback and ongoing tutoring while in the field, and will participate in the coding and analysis of interview data. RAs that perform satisfactory work will be invited to return each year and to join the directors in presenting their preliminary findings at the symposium and for inclusion in the collaborative book manuscript. They will return to their home universities able to teach classes on oral history methods and will be free to use the project data for their own research. Needless to say, participation in the project will be a defining moment of their graduate careers, helping to shape their own dissertations and publications and adding to the impact of the project.

## **Methods**

Despite the publication of recent monographs, many of which utilize some oral interviews in addition to traditional sources, the source base for research on black/brown relations remains limited. The problem is especially acute when looking beyond the few leaders who produced the fragmentary written records that managed to survive the test of time and were preserved in archives. Many of the “local people” who constituted the community-level leadership of the black and brown civil rights movements produced few documents, and those that did rarely had secretaries to maintain their files. Others doubted that their story would be of interest to the keepers of history, while others mistrusted preservation efforts. In short, the stories remain in the participants’ heads. Only oral history can add them to the record.

Oral history also carries the advantage of allowing researchers to deeply probe the *meaning* of historical events. While narrators may misremember details or embellish their stories in a variety of ways, they also always describe life events in such a way as to convey which pieces of information really matter and which do not. The details they choose to emphasize point historians toward new areas of inquiry and even overlooked archival documents. Their stories also have symbolic value that enriches



scholarly understanding of black/brown relations at least as much as the attitudes obtained through telephone survey data. Thus, while historians can glean empirical information about particular people, places, and events, they can also uniquely learn *why* certain events, places, people and stories held special significance at different moments in the past. Oral history narrators share in the authorship of the interview and in the interpretive work that follows. (See Appendix G – Sample Interview Questions.)

At the same time, oral history fieldwork can add to traditional archives by recovering new “attic collections” of written documents. Discovering that a particular narrator has carefully protected a few scraps of paper that document his or her activities, field researchers are uniquely positioned among historians to solicit the donation of small archival collections that otherwise would not be preserved or made accessible. To assuage concerns about loss of access, oral historians and archivists can digitize narrators’ records and make copies available online. The relationships, conversations, trust, and follow-through needed to facilitate the collection of these hidden but invaluable collections can only be accomplished through a collaborative project that combines extensive fieldwork with digital preservation and dissemination. Visitors of the *Civil Rights in Black and Brown* website will also be invited to submit their documents, but experience suggests that this will produce fewer results than the fieldwork itself.

The grant will begin with a planning phase during which Krochmal will convene meetings of the directors and advisory board in order to generate a list of community organizations or individual “gatekeepers” who can help our teams gain entrée into the African American and Mexican American communities at each of our fifteen field sites. Partners may include local branches of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), the race-based “constituency groups” of the American Federation of Labor – Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), Democratic Party clubs, and other local immigrant, civil rights, and labor organizations as well as individual community leaders. Once we have identified these gatekeepers and discussed the project by phone, we will negotiate a consultant agreement in which each gatekeeper receives a stipend in exchange for helping us advertise the project to his or her members, constituents, social media, or other networks. Community partners may also agree to provide

space at a central location in which the interviews can be conducted. The budget includes funds for two gatekeepers to assist each team. The budget also includes two-\$1,000 stipends per team for consultants at local universities and historical organizations who will also be able to provide leads for interviewees while also assisting the interviewers on-site. Again, we will identify these individuals and sign agreements with them prior to the beginning of field work. With the help of the gatekeepers and consultants, we hope to have a long list of names and phone numbers and to set up as many appointments as possible prior to arriving in the field.

The next task will be to recruit, hire, and train the graduate student research assistants (RAs). The positions will be advertised nationally via online job boards, and project directors will attend the annual meetings of the Oral History Association and American Historical Association to recruit applicants. They will screen the candidates through online Skype video interviews. We will endeavor to hire a diverse staff of men and women that include a large percentage of African Americans and Mexican Americans, preferably bilingual. After being selected, the RAs will receive a packet of training information that includes required readings on oral history methodology, African American history, and Mexican American history as well as online training modules on the protection of human subjects (See Appendix H – Institutional Review Board Documents). They will also be given a written assignment to complete and submit before the actual project begins.

At the beginning of each summer of fieldwork, the eight RAs will come to TCU and stay on-campus for an intensive hands-on training workshop led by all of the project directors and library staff. It begins with two days in the classroom in which we will discuss the relevant historiographies and oral history methodology as well as offer an orientation on using the audio and video equipment, receiving and processing donations of archival documents, and most important, creating, uploading, and tagging interview clips for the project website. They will then spend one week engaged in on-the-job training, practicing their community outreach and interviewing skills in Dallas and Fort Worth. Throughout this dry run, they will receive detailed feedback and coaching from the directors and get to practice using the equipment, the online database software, and archival processing with help from TCU Library staff. The

RAs will thus be prepared to begin processing the interviews and written evidence while they are still in the field (between interviews and in the evenings).

Following the hands-on training, the eight RAs will fan out across the state in pairs, forming four teams of two. They will contact the gatekeepers and refer to the previously-generated lists of contacts for each site. It is expected that each gatekeeper will help us locate at least a dozen narrators for the first round of interviewing. With two gatekeepers assisting each team, this will generate roughly two dozen initial interviews. Based on those exchanges, each team will then identify an additional two dozen interviewees using the “reputational” method, that is, by asking the initial interviewees to suggest others and to put us in contact with additional narrators. We will prioritize interviewing people whom the initial narrators mention most frequently to ensure that the most significant actors are included. In the end, this method will produce a total of approximately fifty interviews per team and two hundred total interviews in the first summer. The RAs will also collect any donations of written archival documents.

Our combined experience working on numerous oral history projects from California to Texas to Mississippi to the Carolinas confirms that fieldwork remains an uneven process but one that is not wholly unpredictable. Rather, our past work suggests that in general, the first few days or even a week in the field tend to move slowly as contacts are established, relationships are built, and rapport created. After some initial frustration, researchers begin to secure interviews and to conduct them, and eventually they establish a rhythm. The final days or weeks of field research, in contrast, are often characterized by a flurry of apparent dead ends turning into leads that suddenly bear fruit as would-be narrators begin returning phone calls, community partners work to ensure that researchers get what they need before returning home, and as many as four or five interviews get squeezed into single days.

Overall, our experience indicates that we can reasonably expect that each team can conduct an average of two interviews per weekday or a total of fifty over the course of the summer. In the routine in the middle weeks of field work, this translates to one interview in the morning and one in the afternoon, but the exact numbers would vary according to the ebb and flow noted above. In some cases, the RAs will return to a narrator for a follow-up interview. Some work will occur nights and weekends, and the

RAs will be always need to be “on-call” in order to effectively pursue all possible leads. They will also begin processing the interviews, backing up the full video files on an external hard drive, writing a short synopsis of each interview, and—as time and internet access permits—creating clips, applying metadata codes using the controlled vocabulary, and uploading them to the project database.

The co-directors will supervise the teams and will personally visit each team for two weeks during the six-week fieldwork period. They will sit in on some interviews, provide coaching to the RAs to help them improve their methods, and assist with logistics and other snags along the way. The directors will also make contact with local gatekeepers and consultants, survey local libraries and historical associations for additional sources that may be used for the book, and conduct a handful of the interviews directly.

At the end of the summer, the RAs will re-convene on the campus at TCU, where they will work full-time to complete as much of the archival processing as possible. Although they will have started this work in the field, this week gives them additional time in which they will each watch up to 25 interviews, break them into clips, upload them to the database, and enter the appropriate metadata tags and codes. They will also help the directors assess their activities, giving feedback on what worked well in the field, what did not, and which specific areas they would recommend for improved training. After the eight RAs return to their home institutions, Saffell, the Archival Data Manager, will conduct an audit of the database to ensure completeness and accuracy and will assign any remaining processing to the work-study students she supervises.

In the second summer of research, the pattern will repeat itself. Again, eight gatekeepers will help us arrange approximately one dozen interviews each (24 per team), after which each team of researchers will pursue two dozen more. With proper planning and follow-through, each team will again be able to produce approximately fifty interviews over six weeks, and the project as a whole will collect two hundred additional interviews in its second summer, or four hundred total for the project.

Fifteen field sites have been chosen to represent a cross-section of the large, diverse state of Texas (please return to Appendix E – Map of Field Sites). After beginning our fieldwork prior to the

grant period using private funds and then tackling Dallas and Fort Worth during the hands-on training period, we will conduct research in six sites during the first summer of the grant (2016). One team of researchers will visit the Brazos Valley, a heavily agricultural, rural area with large black populations and rich civil rights histories. Although few Mexican Americans inhabited these areas, the African American stories are sufficiently important that they must be collected in order to understand other developments statewide. Another team will spend six weeks in the Houston / Galveston metropolitan area, a third will split time between Austin and San Antonio, and the fourth will work in coastal Corpus Christi and its environs. The latter site was home to the state's two largest and oldest Mexican American civil rights organizations (LULAC and the American G. I. Forum) and will add depth to the internal politics and lives of Mexican Americans in medium-sized cities and surrounding agricultural areas. Additionally, the city was home to periodic interracial black/brown collaboration and a vibrant (though small) industrial labor movement. Research in the state's three major megalopolises (Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston / Galveston, and San Antonio) will shed light on the racial transitions of neighborhoods, schools, political power, and economic opportunities from extreme segregation in the 1950s through the turmoil wrought by the civil rights struggles of the 1960s and 1970s and finally the implementation and long-term impact of three key pieces of federal legislation: the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and its amendments, and the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. San Antonio had a sizable and influential African American population through the 1970s, but it was always dwarfed by the much larger and better organized Mexican American communities of the West- and South-sides. Houston and Galveston, in contrast, was the home of many African Americans but only a small, tight-knit community of Mexican Americans until relatively recently. Finally, research in Austin will tackle the diverse capital city known for its liberalism that has recently exploded into a fashionable, high-tech center with a particularly sharp class divide. The project will help to illuminate who has benefited and been left behind in this transition.

In the second summer of the grant (2017), teams will conduct research in the Rio Grande Valley and Winter Garden regions of South Texas, the Golden Triangle on the Upper Gulf Coast, and two sites in rural East Texas ("Deep East Texas" and Fort Bend / Brazoria counties). Research in the Valley's

medium-sized cities will continue to add to the Mexican American story and also harken back to the area's earlier rural origins. The Winter Garden site remains heavily agricultural and almost exclusively Mexican American; its significance lies in the fact that it was the epicenter of the state's Chicano/a Movement. Research in the Golden Triangle will explore both African American and Mexican American experiences in medium-sized cities and industrial settings, and it will also combine with the research in Deep East Texas to offer insights into black rural life. Fort Bend and Brazoria counties were formerly similar to the other sites in East Texas—rural and African American—but beginning in the 1960s they also became home to sizable Mexican American enclaves. This poorly understood area was home to early African American struggles against the “Jaybird” white primary in the 1940s and again to Mexican American lawsuits under the Voting Rights Act extension of 1975.

As noted in the staff section above, TCU Library staff will coordinate the data and archival processing of the interviews and any donated manuscript or photographic collections. Brown and Saffell will oversee the uploading and coding of interview clips in the online database, manage the collection of other donated written records, and oversee the transferal of archival copies of the full interviews to the *Portal of Texas History*. Brown and Saffell's salaries, benefits, and indirect costs will be contributed by TCU, with the project representing 10% of their normal workloads as year-round, full-time employees. TCU already holds site licenses for all of the necessary software, the use of which will be contributed as in-kind indirect costs. TCU will purchase an additional server using grant funds and will replace it at the end of its 4-5 year life span. TCU Library staff will maintain the site and archives in perpetuity.

Brown has already created the online database and website, and it is now live featuring clips from extant interviews conducted by the project directors. The rather technical details are as follows: the site is a custom built *Ruby on Rails* application that uses *MongoDB* for data storage and *Elasticsearch* for search functionality. It is served by a Puma/nginx HTTP stack and is hosted on a physical server running Red Hat Enterprise Linux 6.5 with a 16-core CPU (Intel Xeon E5640 @ 2.67GHz) with 24 GB RAM. *Rails* allows flexibility while providing numerous pre-built and community-driven tools and libraries for adding new functionality and facilitating the development process. *MongoDB* is fast, flexible, and

relatively schema-free, features that allow the document model to evolve; in practical terms, this means that new metadata fields can be added or removed easily as the project expands or narrows its focus. *Elasticsearch* is a lightweight service that is easy to set up and configure while still providing great performance. Finally, the HTTP stack and server ensure that pages are served in milliseconds even with dozens or hundreds of concurrent users and that videos are streamed with no lag. Video clips are transcoded from existing digital media into access copies with MP4-AVC video encoding and AAC audio encoding at 1280x720 resolution, according to the Library of Congress's recommended best practices for the web. Metadata is provided as Qualified Dublin Core, with additional mappings planned, including linked data formats as JSON-LD. Subject terms are applied to clips according to the project-specific controlled vocabulary. The website streams video using the *mediaelement.js* library, providing HTML5 video with Flash fallback support.

With the above software, Brown has created a tool with which the project directors and other users will be able to easily identify patterns in the vast interview data, seamlessly move from one interview clip to the next, and readily compile information for synthesis and comparison. While most oral history websites require users to work with entire interviews at once, searching solely by name or catalog record, or even watching full streaming videos, this project instead applies a controlled vocabulary of detailed subject codes and user tags to each short (2-5 minute) clips—each segment has its own metadata. Then, as users interact with the database, it responds like an e-commerce site, providing “auto-suggestions” that pop up automatically as users enter text into the query field as well as search refinement tools that allow users to “drill down” to the results that interest them most. Individual record pages provide a list of “similar clips,” which are identified by *Elasticsearch* as having related subjects, titles, or tags. Users also have the ability to view “recommended” clips with similar content that are suggested based on their own unique browsing history. The site, [crbb.tcu.edu/](http://crbb.tcu.edu/), is already functional and is well-indexed by Google, but rich data enhancements using *schema.org* are planned for individual record pages. The site awaits only the uploading of additional clips and accompanying metadata tags (See Appendix I –

Website Screenshots). No previous civil rights history project has allowed researchers to search in this manner, making it simple to find specific subjects in multiple interviews across the entire collection.

In addition to serving as a resource for the general public, these advanced searching techniques will allow the project directors to quickly group the clips together for analysis, interpretation, and synthesis. Writing up our findings will begin with a public symposium, the endowed Walter Prescott Webb Lectures at UTA. Each RA will be invited to write a lengthy conference paper (up to twenty pages) on one aspect of the larger project, and the directors will begin drafting their own thematic essays. We will pre-circulate the papers to one another, and in the fall of the third year of the grant, we will present and discuss them. UTA will sponsor the three-day workshop and pay all related costs as an in-kind contribution. Panels will be compiled according to the proposed themes of the book (see below), and one external reviewer will provide comments at each session (travel funded by UTA). This workshop will allow all of the researchers to get away from their teaching and service responsibilities to spend a few days focused on intensive reflection, conversation, and creative, collaborative production. By the end of the symposium, the book's outline will be finalized and all chapter sections assigned to their respective authors. The directors will combine elements of the conference papers into thematic chapters and conduct additional archival research during winter break. We will then spend the rest of the grant period and an unfunded fourth year completing the manuscript (see details below).

### **Work Plan**

Please see Appendix J – Work Plan Table & Gantt Chart.

First six months – Initial Planning: The project director, co-directors, and Graduate Assistant will identify and contact the gatekeepers and site-based consultants and begin preparing lists of narrators. Moyer will spearhead the development of training modules. Krochmal and Bynum will coordinate all of these tasks and secure lodging and travel reservations and other logistical arrangements for the first summer of field research. The directors will recruit, screen, and hire the eight RAs by March 31.

Second six months: Krochmal and Bynum will finalize contracts with the gatekeepers and site-based consultants. They will complete the training materials and confirm the logistical arrangements for



fieldwork. The eight RAs will arrive at TCU on June 3 for the one-week hands-on training, conduct six weeks of field work at the remote sites, and return to TCU for processing the week of July 25. All of the interviews processed by the RAs will be immediately available online, and Saffell will coordinate the processing of any remaining data by the end of September.

The second year of the grant will parallel and repeat the activities of year one. In the third six months, the directors and GA will meet to assess our first year of work and to evaluate which parts of planning, field work, processing, and dissemination worked best and which need improvement. We will tweak our activities as we contact the next rounds of community partners and consultants; recruit, interview, and select a second crop of RAs (some may serve in both years); and secure the logistical arrangements needed for a second summer of field work. We will also revise the training materials and schedule as needed. In the fourth six months, the contracts for all staff and services will again be secured, the trainings finalized, and the logistical arrangements completed. The eight RAs will arrive at TCU for the one-week workshop on June 2, 2017, will then conduct six weeks of remote fieldwork, and will return to campus for a week of processing and assessment beginning July 24. Again, Saffell will conduct an audit of the site, and she and her work-studies will make corrections and process any remaining data. All 200 new interviews (and 400 total) will be uploaded by the end of September. Meanwhile, the RAs and directors will write their conference papers, circulate them, read each other's work, and send them to external reviewers.

The third year will center on writing the book. It begins with the Webb Lectures symposium at UTA. The directors will continue to write throughout the school year, and each of us will conduct two weeks of archival research at appropriate repositories (exact locations will be determined at the workshop). Each director will write one complete thematic chapter and circulate it for comments by June 1, 2018. A second thematic chapter will be due by September 30.

In an unfunded fourth year, the directors will write short framing chapters for each part as well as an introduction, conclusion, and epilogue. The project director will then re-write the manuscript to give it the look and feel of a single-authored text. We will submit it to a press by the end of summer, 2019.

## Final Product and Dissemination

The final products of this project are a multi-authored academic monograph and accompanying digital humanities website. The book will synthesize, compare, and relate to one another the black and brown freedom struggles in Texas from 1954 to the mid-1970s (see Appendix K – Book Draft Table of Contents). The first section of the text will introduce readers to the world of African Americans and Mexican Americans in Texas in the years prior to the civil rights movements. Moye will write “Living with Jim Crow and Juan Crow,” a survey of not just oppression but also black and brown survival and resistance prior to 1954. The second chapter, “School Integration and Legal Struggles,” written by Dulaney, will survey local struggles related to the two landmark U. S. Supreme Court decisions of 1954: the famous *Brown v. Board* that ruled “separate but equal” schools unconstitutional and the less-known *Hernandez v. Texas* case that barred juries from discriminating based on national origin. Part II of the manuscript will take up the peak of the civil rights movements, broken down into five thematic sections with two chapters each. Moye will survey the early 1960s direct action demonstrations aimed at integrating public accommodations, protests that often involved Mexican Americans. Krochmal will explore political action related to civil rights among both African Americans and Mexican Americans from the Kennedy-Johnson campaign of 1960 through the extension of the Voting Rights Act in 1975. Krochmal will also write a section on economic justice struggles, including grassroots activism surrounding the War on Poverty and the massive strike of Mexican American farmworkers in South Texas in 1966-67. Dulaney will pen a section on the black and brown power movements, a period of struggle often dismissed for its cultural nationalism but actually included extensive community organizing and the development of autonomous self-help institutions. And finally, Dulaney will continue the long, multiracial story of school desegregation between 1954, through more than a decade of white resistance and tokenism, through the beginning of meaningful integration in the early 1970s. The manuscript will conclude with an epilogue on the obstacles the movements encountered beginning in the late 1970s, including white flight, rural and urban economic decline, the limits of affirmative action, and the incorporation of conservative “race leaders.”

The audience for the book will include historians and a wide range of scholars in the humanities and social sciences. As noted above, this will be the first systematic, large-scale study of the history of black/brown relations during the civil rights era and the first history of “local people” in the multiracial freedom struggle in Texas. It will have broad appeal to scholars of race in civil rights from across the nation. For historians, it promises to reconnect economic justice issues and local struggles for political power to the rich literature of community studies of “local people” in the black civil rights movement. It also tests the generalizability of Foley’s “whiteness thesis,” revealing (we expect) a hitherto unrecognized level of militancy and interracial coalition-building among the members of the postwar “Mexican American Generation.” The book will shed new light on black/brown relations during the heights of the civil rights movements (and the black and brown power struggles), draw new attention to the relationship between ordinary African Americans and Mexican Americans in this critical period, and recover the forgotten histories of innumerable instances of black/brown cooperation and conflict. It will for the first time move beyond the particularities of one small time or place or a limited network of activists or organizations to arrive at broader generalizations about the history of interactions between America’s two largest minorities. Its potentially broad impact may explain why the book has already garnered significant interest from Oxford University Press (see Appendix L – Publisher Letter of Interest).

In addition to the book, this project will create as a by-product the online database that will allow users, including future scholars, to find specific pieces of information from among the vast corpus of new interviews. It is currently populated with clips from forty extant interviews conducted by the co-directors during their separate previous research projects. By the end of the summer of 2015, using the private funds obtained from the Brown and Summerlee foundations, the pilot project will upload clips from 100 new interviews that we will conduct in rural East Texas and the cities of West Texas and the Panhandle. The site will thus be both substantive and substantial by the beginning of the NEH grant period. The creation and indexing of clips from the 400 additional interviews conducted with NEH funds will make it a truly statewide, invaluable resource available not only to the project collaborators but to future scholars, educators, journalists, and the general public.