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“Strangers from a Different Shore”: Examining Archival Representations and Descriptions of the Chinese in America Before and During the Chinese Exclusion Act (1860-1943)

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“Strangers from a Different Shore”: Examining Archival Representations and Descriptions of the Chinese in America Before and During the Chinese Exclusion Act (1860-1943)

A thesis submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree

Master of Library and Information Science

by

Jeannie Yujing Chen

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

"Strangers from a Different Shore": Examining Archival Representations and Descriptions of the Chinese in America Before and During the Chinese Exclusion Act (1860-1943)

by

Jeannie Yujing Chen
Master of Library and Information Science
University of California, Los Angeles, 2018
Professor Anne J. Gilliland-Swetland, Chair

This thesis seeks to examine archival representations of Chinese in America in collections dating from before and during the Chinese Exclusion Era (1860 – 1943), both in mainstream institutional archives/special collections repositories and in smaller community-based archives. Using critical race theory as methodological framework and an interpretivist case study approach, this exploratory study shows a continued lack for transparency surrounding archival description and archival representations within such collections, an uneven distribution of resources across institutions that collect and preserve materials on early Chinese in America, the difficulties of balancing evolving terminologies and changing archival descriptive standards/technology, and the need for collaboration among bibliographers, catalogers, archivists, historians and activists in creating archival descriptions in collections about the Chinese in America. Due to the paucity of current archival studies scholarship on early Chinese in America, this work intends to highlight the presences (or lack of presence) of Chinese in America in various archives and to enhance awareness of their historical influences and contributions within archival records. Such an understudied subject poses an especially significant area of research for future professional and scholarly work in the library and information sciences field.

The thesis of Jeannie Yujing Chen is approved.

Min Zhou

Gregory H. Leazer

Anne J. Gilliland-Swetland, Committee Chair

University of California, Los Angeles

2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

Acknowledgments

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The history of Asian Americans offers an important lesson. In the telling and retelling of their stories, these immigrants and their descendants contribute to the creating of a larger memory of who we are as Americans. They reassure us that we can be ethnically diverse and still one people, restlessly and hopefully striving toward "a more perfect Union." Bursting with their varied visions of America, Asian Americans rebel against the ethnocentrisms embedded in Hirsch's enclosing cultural literacy and Schlesinger's exclusionist view of the past. Urging us to *rethink* the way we think about our nation's history, these "strangers from a different shore" tell us the time is opportune for the redefining of America.[1]

— Ronald Takaki, "Strangers from a Different Shore" (1998).

If we do not want our forbearers to be consigned to permanent oblivion, or, at best, to what the British social historian Edward P. Thompson has called the "enormous condescension of posterity," we must recover their voices and assert, on their behalf, their agency.[2]

— Sucheng Chan and K. Scott Wong, "Claiming America" (1998).

Context of the Study

Despite a significant trend towards locating intersections with critical race theory, postcolonial studies, and ethnic studies, archival studies literature in the United States has continuously left out a significant population from its reach: the Chinese in America. Archival materials on the Chinese in America, especially in the late 19th and 20th centuries, are fragmented and difficult to piece together, based on a search of historical and archival collections of Chinese in America. According to Yan He, who is the China Documentation Center librarian at George

[1] Ronald Takaki. *Strangers from a Different Shore: A History of Asian Americans, Updated and Revised Edition*. Revised and Updated edition. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1998.

[2] Sucheng Chan and K. Scott Wong, "Preface," *Claiming America: Constructing Chinese American Identities during the Exclusion Era*, ed. K. Scott Wong and Sucheng Chan (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998): viii.

Washington University libraries, "existing collections and archives now contain a wide range of topics from the early records of Chinatowns to the contemporary stories of new immigrants."[3] However, a special issue on Chinese American archives, collections, and libraries (edited by He) indicates that very few professional archivists have written or published about how such collections were acquired, arranged, processed, and/or described, even if these have been recorded in internal documents. In addition, most of the scholars who have done work with Chinese American archival collections appear to be non-archival scholars and researchers interested in the histories of underrepresented communities, as evidenced by the work in He's collections.

The period leading up to and during the Chinese Exclusion Era may be one of the most critical in Chinese American history. The struggles that Asian American and other immigrant communities have faced throughout history can seldom be discussed without first recognizing the lasting impact and generational effects of the passing of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, a "watershed" event that "heeded the call of Californians and other westerners to protect them from the so-called Chinese invasion."[4] Prominent politicians and influential figures in Californian history, such as Leland Stanford and the "Big Four" railroad magnates (Collis Potter Huntington, Mark Hopkins, and Charles Crocker), were outspoken proponents for Chinese exclusion and anti-Chinese in the public discourse—yet in the face of dire labor shortages and impending strikes from their existing workforce, they later reversed their decision, eventually

[3] Yan He, "Special Issue Introduction: Chinese American Archives, Collections, and Librarians," *Chinese America, History and Perspectives* (Chinese Historical Society of America, 2016): 1.

[4] Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration During the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003): 24.

reaping the personal and financial benefits from the skilled labor of Chinese workers in completing the Central Pacific Railroad project.[5]

Beginning with the Page Law of 1876, the U.S. federal government launched a series of systematic, legalized exclusionary measures against immigrants of Chinese descent, a period which spanned over six decades from 1882 to 1943. These legislative acts were also the result of mounting anti-Chinese sentiments, the question of where Chinese laborers fit into post-slavery America, and America's own coming-to-terms with immigration and influx of 'foreign' Americans. With the signing of the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882, the United State Congress effectively set the tone for the "restriction and exclusion of other immigrant groups" and established "precedents…for the admission, documentation, surveillance, and deportation of both new arrivals and immigrant communities within the U.S."[6] However, as historian and American legal scholar Lucy Salyer has contended, even though the Chinese faced much "harsher restrictions" and were "excluded…in much greater proportions than the laws governing the admission of non-Chinese immigrants," the Chinese were still able to "[take] advantage of the opportunity for judicial review" due to "the writ of habeas corpus and judicial evidentiary rules"—with the support of a network of Chinese American service and family associations, they "proved to be tenacious and sophisticated litigators" in federal trial courts.[7] Despite the prevailing "negative, stereotypical view of the Chinese" and "support…of the Chinese Exclusion

[5] Jack Chen, *The Chinese of America* (San Francisco: Harper & Row, Publishers: 1980), 66-67.

[6] Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration During the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003): 24.

[7] Lucy Salyer, "Captives of Law: Judicial Enforcement of the Chinese Exclusion Laws, 1891-1905," in *The Journal of American History* 76, no. 1 (1989): 93-94.

policy" by federal court judges and commissioners, Salyer argues that in the cases of Chinese in America who fought for their rights to enter and stay in the United States, "institutional obligations [often] triumphed over personal loyalties."[8]

In 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the Magnuson Bill, which placed "Chinese immigration" back "under the same quota system regulating European immigration under the 1924 Immigration Act," and set a limit for one hundred visas per year from most Asian countries.[9] This repeal certainly did not signal an end to legalized racism, however, and the impacts of the Chinese Exclusion Era have continued to resonate through time, from the Civil Rights Era into the Asian American Movement of the 1960s. Asian American studies and history scholar Mae Ngai notes that an enmeshment of Chinese American communities in 1950s Cold War era politics instigated "sensationalized investigations against [immigration] fraud" and "reproduced racialized perceptions that Chinese immigrants were unalterably foreign, illegal, and dangerous."[10] And as historian Erika Lee has emphasized, "Chinese exclusion…also introduced gatekeeping ideology, politics, law, and culture that transformed the ways in which Americans viewed and thought about race, immigration, and the United States' identity as a nation of immigrants", issues that continue to remain at the forefront of American politics today.[11]

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[8] Lucy Salyer, "Captives of Law: Judicial Enforcement of the Chinese Exclusion Laws, 1891-1905," in *The Journal of American History* 76, no. 1 (1989): 117.

[9] Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration During the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003): 245.

[10] Mai Ngai, "Legacies of Exclusion: Illegal Chinese Immigration in the Cold War Era," in *Journal of American Ethnic History* 18, no. 1 (1998): 27.

[11] Erika Lee, *At America's Gates: Chinese Immigration During the Exclusion Era, 1882-1943* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2003): 24.

When the Immigration Act of 1965 passed, it merely "removed the discriminatory national origin quotas dating back to the Immigration Act of 1924" and "established a preference system based on reuniting families and meeting the needs of the American economy through the entry of professional and skilled workers."[12] Legal scholar Angelo Ancheta notes that this shift in legislation also resulted in a "post-1965 era of implicit discrimination based on citizenship and immigration status."[13] At the same time, sociologist Min Zhou recognizes a pattern in contemporary Chinese American communities that is deeply rooted in this legacy of legal exclusion, for, unlike the "majority of Italian, Jewish, and Japanese Americans" who are now "maturing into third and fourth-plus generations,… Chinese Americans at the dawn of the twenty-first century are primarily of the first generation (i.e., foreign-born: 63 percent) or the second (the U.S.-born children of foreign-born parents: 27 percent). The third generation accounts for only 10 percent."[14]

Ancheta, Zhou, and other scholars engage in these critical excavations not only as ways to re-construct untold histories from a fragmentary past, but to begin and continue what Sucheng Chan and K. Scott Wang have called "the challenging task of resurrecting the existence of people

[12] Angelo N. Ancheta, *Race, Rights, and the Asian American Experience* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2010): 34.

[13] *Ibid*, 35.

[14] Min Zhou, "Characteristics of Contemporary Chinese America," in *Contemporary Chinese America: Immigration, Ethnicity, and Community Transformation* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009): 44.

who have been neglected and hence silenced or even totally erased from historical memory."[15] Bringing such crucial conversations into the realm of archival studies means that archival scholars and professionals can understand and begin to recognize how they may play some of the most vital roles in such efforts, especially when producing archival representations on Chinese in America.

Purpose of the Study

As Terry Eastwood has stated, "certain instruments of archival practice, such as the description of archives in finding aids, generate and communicate scholarship."[16] In the following chapters, I explore using a critical race theory approach to examine archival representations and descriptions of Chinese in America before and during the Chinese Exclusion Era (1860s-1882 and 1882-1943), both in mainstream institutional archives/special collections repositories and in smaller community-based archives. The theoretical framework for this research is derived in part from Anthony Dunbar's introduction of critical race theory to archival discourse, and from Daniel G. Solórzano and Tara J. Yasso's interpretation of critical race methodology in education. Informed by what Todd Honma argued for in his 2005 article, "Trippin' Over the Color Line: The Invisibility of Race in Library and Information Studies," this project aligns with the view that "in order to address the gaping racial divide in LIS, looking at

[15] Sucheng Chan and K. Scott Wong, "Preface," *Claiming America: Constructing Chinese American Identities during the Exclusion Era*, ed. K. Scott Wong and Sucheng Chan (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998): viii.

[16] Terry Eastwood, "Nailing a Little Jelly to the Wall of Archival Studies," in *Archivaria* 35 (1993): 233.

ethnic studies fields such as African American Studies, Asian American Studies, Chicano Studies, and Native American Studies can help LIS to successfully theorize oppression and bridge the gap between the university and communities of color." [17]

The archival representations that can be found in collections about the Chinese in America may reflect histories not only of prominent figures, but also the everyday experiences of individuals and families in those communities, yet they are an understudied topic in current archival studies literature. In this thesis, a full critical race theory (CRT) analysis was not possible to implement within the given timeframe, but it does aim to raise awareness of how acts of selection, prioritization, and representation in archival collections are shaped by racial dimensions. Moreover, while beyond the scope of this particular study, utilizing a CRT approach can also aid in surfacing the systemically biased nature of "best practices" in archives because they do not operate equally in different contexts. The significance of this exploratory research lies in highlighting Chinese presences in archives and enhancing awareness of the historical influences and contributions of the Chinese in America in the archival records.

Research Questions

Since very little published scholarly literature can be found specifically on archival representations of the Chinese in America, I seek to fill this void by addressing the following questions. What kinds of archival representations of the Chinese in America before and during the Chinese Exclusion Act can be found in archives? More specifically, how are these archival

[17] Todd Honma, "Trippin' Over the Color Line: The Invisibility of Race in Library and Information Studies," in *InterActions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies* 1, no. 2 (2005): 19.

representations expressed through archival descriptions, such as finding aids, collection guides, inventories, and other relevant documents describing the materials, and how are these shaped by institutional descriptive practices/standards and the individuals responsible for processing and/or describing such materials? How can a critical race theory approach be used as a lens to interrogate these archival representations and descriptions, especially within the larger contexts of the institution/ns and societal norms that produced them? I will focus specifically on studying archival representations and descriptions in the archives and special collections of academic institutions and in community-based archives across California. In pursuing this topic, I am also aware that varying definitions of *representation* exist across disciplines, such as in archival studies, sociology and Asian American Studies, and will attempt to address these differing interpretations through the following definitions of key concepts.

Definitions of Key Concepts

Archival Representation

I adhere to Elizabeth Yakel's definition of *archival representation*, which "refers to both the processes of arrangement and description and is viewed as a fluid, evolving, and socially constructed practice."[18] While *archival description* refers to the "process of analyzing, organizing, and recording details about the formal elements of a record or collection of records", the term *archival representation* "more precisely captures the actual work of the archivist in

[18] Elizabeth Yakel, "Archival Representation," *Archival Science* 3 (2003, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Netherlands): 1.

(re)ordering, interpreting, creating surrogates, and designing architectures for representational systems that contain those surrogates to stand in for or represent actual archival materials."[19]

I consider *archival description* as one of the integral components of *archival representation*, especially in the construction of *finding aids*—highly structured documents that have been traditionally created by archivists to provide descriptive information regarding archival collections and to help users locate primary source materials—and *collection guides*—an alternative, more broadly defined term for *finding aids* that includes collections in museum and cultural heritage organizations. The Online Archive of California (OAC)—a centralized hub that "provides free public access to detailed descriptions of primary resource collections maintained by more than 200 contributing institutions"—suggests using the term *collection guides* for researchers who may be unfamiliar with *finding aids* and other archives-specific terminology.[20]

In this particular research context, the language and terminologies used in the *archival descriptions* of finding aids will comprise one of several key components of *archival representation* and will be one of the main focal points of study along with other important facets. As the research primarily centers on use of the OAC, the terms *collection guide* and *finding aid* may be used interchangeably throughout depending on the specific context.

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[19] Elizabeth Yakel, "Archival Representation," *Archival Science* 3 (2003, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Netherlands): 2.

[20] "About OAC," *The Online Archive of California*, accessed April 15, 2018. http://www.oac.cdlib.org/about/.

Representation in other disciplinary contexts

Archival descriptions also reflect voices and narratives of the materials collected in archives. *Representation* as used in a more general sense—such as in the wider library and information studies (LIS) fields, Asian American studies, sociology, psychology, and literature studies—may be less concerned with the detailed administrative processes and practices specific to the archival studies field, and conceived of more broadly, such as with visual representations, cultural representations, representations in literature, underrepresentation within library/archives/other professions, and mis-representations or lack of representation of the Chinese in America within mainstream institutions and media. For example, Asian American literature and culture scholar Floyd Cheung details the anxious and ambivalent representations (and mis-representations) that were constructed around Chinese men during the 19th century in American popular discourse through emasculation and the manipulation of feelings of desire and fear.[21] In this context, the concept of *representation* is considered in a more symbolic way such as in literary and visual forms. I proceed with these multiple understandings of *representation*, keeping in mind the distinction between the term as used in the archival studies sense (*archival representation*) and the term as used in other contexts (*representation in other disciplines*).

Chinese in America

I use *Chinese in America* to refer to immigrant/foreign-born Chinese, the U.S.-born children of foreign-born Chinese parents, and subsequent generations of Chinese. As sociologist Min Zhou has observed, "the Chinese American community" as we know it today "remains an

[21] Floyd Cheung, "Anxious and Ambivalent Representations: Nineteenth Century Images of Chinese American Men," in *The Journal of American Culture* 30, no. 3 (2007): 294.

immigrant-dominant community, even though this ethnic group arrived in the United States earlier than many groups of southern or eastern European origin and earlier than any other Asian-origin group."[22] Thus, the term *Chinese American* alone would not do justice in describing the tremendous diversity present within the broad classification of 'Chinese' or as can be seen in the many diasporic populations of Chinese living in countries all around the world. The concept of citizenship (and what makes a person 'American') also continues to have difficult implications today, particularly in a country that owes its realization and establishment as a world power in large part to the labor and contributions of immigrants. *Chinese in America* thus seems a more fitting and precise way to denote both Chinese and Chinese American communities in the current research setting. This will be elaborated upon further in the findings and discussion.

Special Collections and Archives

By *special collections and archives,* I refer to the organizational unit or department by the same name, usually (but not always) located within the same physical building as the library of an academic institution. Christian Dupont and Elizabeth Yakel cite two definitions of *special collections* as published by the Association of Research Libraries (ARL)—one in the 2003 ARL statement of principles *Research Libraries and the Commitment to Special Collections,* and the other from the 2009 report on Special Collections in ARL Libraries.[23] The 2003 definition

[22] Min Zhou, "Characteristics of Contemporary Chinese America," in *Contemporary Chinese America: Immigration, Ethnicity, and Community Transformation* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009): 44.

[23] Christian Dupont and Elizabeth Yakel, "'What's So Special about Special Collections?' Or, Assessing the Value Special Collections Bring to Academic Libraries," in *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice* 8, no. 2 (2013): 13.

designates *special collections* as "compris[ing] manuscripts and archival collections unduplicated elsewhere and one-of-a-kind or rarely held books," which may "extend beyond paper to other formats" and are "significant for their focused assemblages or published materials so comprehensive as to constitute unparalleled opportunities for scholarship."[24] The 2009 definition posits *special collections* more broadly as "any kind of vehicle for information and communication that lacks readily available and standardizes classification schemes, and any that is vulnerable to destruction or disappearance without special treatment."[25]

Dupont and Yakel offer an alternative approach to defining *special collections* and their value to an institution, arguing for a move away from this "collections-centric approach" towards a more "user-centric approach."[26] In this study, *special collections and archives* will be used in combination mainly to denote the context of mainstream academic research universities and higher education institutions.

Community-Based Archives

Andrew Flinn cites the following definition offered by the Community Archives and Heritage Group for *community-based* or *independent archives*:

> Community archives and heritage initiatives come in many different forms (large or small, semi-professional or entirely voluntary, long-established or very recent, in partnership with heritage professionals or entirely independent) and seek to

[24] Christian Dupont and Elizabeth Yakel, "'What's So Special about Special Collections?' Or, Assessing the Value Special Collections Bring to Academic Libraries," in *Evidence Based Library and Information Practice* 8, no. 2 (2013): 13.

[25] *Ibid*.

[26] *Ibid*.

> document the history of all manner of local, occupational, ethnic, faith and other diverse communities.[27]

Flinn goes on to define *community* as "seek[ing] to encompass all manner of community identifications including: locality, ethnicity, faith, sexuality, occupation, shared interest or a combination of one or more of these" and also observes that this definition allows for more flexible conception of "organizational forms".[28] Broader definitions of *community*, *community-led* or *community-based archives* need not exclude or reject those larger, more well-resourced, well-established academic institutions, which are considered more often through a binary relationship with community archives, rather than a parallel one. Linda Trinh Võ offers a complex view into what constitutes *community* in Asian American Studies:

> Additionally, communities are interpreted as non-territorial spaces, formed by individuals residing in various locations who share similar interests or objectives. They can be created as a result of people being excluded or treated interchangeably, thereby compelling them to come together, or they can be forged by internal notions of sameness, as a result of which aggregates cohere and differentiate themselves from those outside certain territorial or ideological boundaries. For Asian Americans, these collectivities are often projected as welcoming and unified; however, they also can be exclusionary and divided, so in certain contexts the term has a beneficial and affirming connotation, while in other cases it is perceived as oppressive and restrictive.[29]

Thus, community as a means of classification holds different meanings depending on who is defining it, and even then, not every individual may identify or agree with it. Some community-

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[27] Andrew Flinn, "Independent Community Archives and Community-Generated Content: Writing, Saving and Sharing Our Histories," Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies 16, no. 1 (Los Angeles: SAGE Publications, 2010): 41.

[28] *Ibid*.

[29] Linda Trinh Võ, "Community," Schlund-Vials, Cathy J., Linda Trinh Võ, and K. Scott Wong, eds. *Keywords for Asian American Studies*. NYU Press, 2015: 31.

based archives in the U.S. may also have apprehensions toward allowing their historical materials to be absorbed into larger institutional archives. This complex state of affairs necessitates developing archival practices and competencies that reflect the needs of the communities documented within, rather than those of the academic institutions.

Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Critical Race Methodology

At the basic level, and as an indicator of its development from origins in critical legal studies (CLS), CRT "challenges the privileges of dominant culture—particularly whiteness—as the normative benchmark of social acceptability" and "offer[s] tools, such as counterstories, which are helpful in exposing microaggressions within both interpersonal interactions, as well as marginalizing dynamics within social institutions"[30] Archival representations—specifically, archival descriptions in the form of the finding aids and collection guides—are one of the primary areas where a critical race theory approach can be applied. CRT and critical race methodology constitute the broad theoretical frameworks for the current research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Research on Chinese in America in Archival Studies and Other Academic Disciplines

One of the possible factors behind why so little focus has been given in archival studies literature to the early Chinese in America has been articulated by anthropology scholars Ryan Harrod and John Crandall, who point out that "historians and others have had, in general, only the records and perspectives of non-Chinese Americans to rely on. Unfortunately, these accounts

[30] Anthony Dunbar, "Introducing critical race theory to archival discourse: getting the conversation started." *Archival Science* 6 (2006): 113.

often offer a biased, superficial account from which to reconstruct the lives of Chinese laborers."[31] It makes sense that in consulting (mainly) English-language accounts of Chinese in America, many resulting historical accounts have been written by non-Chinese individuals; however, what remains to be unearthed in Chinese-language materials comprise a daunting, but critical part of gaining a more multidimensional view of Chinese in America. Using bioarchaeological and skeletal analyses to examine the remains of 19th century Chinese male laborers, Harrod and Crandall attempt to paint a picture of the physical traumas, overall quality of life, and wellbeing of Chinese transcontinental railroad workers. More importantly, their re-analysis of the remains reveal not only the significant mental and physiological stresses that Chinese workers were under while building the railroad, but also uncover evidence of violence and fatal injuries, surmised to be part of the result of dangerous working conditions, occupational hazards, and attacks.[32]

Even with such revealing bioarchaeological investigations and lab work on the human remains of early Chinese in America, these can only be a partial or supplementary method at best, and scholars may have to, and should, look elsewhere, such as in archives, to uncover the voices and narratives of the individuals left behind in records created while they were still alive. Such voices and narratives may be found in both small community and larger mainstream archival collections in California, which present valuable sources of information for the current project. However, as archival scholar Tom Nesmith has pointed out:

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[31] Ryan Harrod and John Crandall, "Rails Built of the Ancestors' Bones: The Bioarchaeology of the Overseas Chinese Experience," in *Historical Archaeology* 49, no. 1 (2015): 148.

[32] *Ibid,* 159.

> Users of archives invariably want to look straight through archival institutions, their work, and their records, at something else in the past of greater importance and interest to themselves. Conventional ideas about archiving reflect and reinforce this view.[33]

Likewise, scholars in other academic disciplines may not always actively analyze how the contents and materials in these archival collections have been shaped, acquired, processed, and described by archivists when they first begin conducting research with archival collections. Sucheng Chan and K. Scott Wang add that "it is difficult for historians to think in terms of fragmented subjects and elusive, floating signs without any moorings…. Most historians are not yet ready to jettison the idea of an object world made up of parts that bear some discernible relationship to one another."[34] It is important to take another step back from these materials in order to more deeply understand how archival representations and descriptions can contribute or influence the way scholars carry out their research on Chinese in America, especially from historical materials dating from before and during the Chinese Exclusion Era. Such an approach could potentially benefit the interdisciplinary understanding of both archival studies literature and enrich the literature produced in other academic fields, as well as increase the range of scholarly perspectives represented across these multiple disciplines.

In the 1960s, scholars who were Chinese American themselves began to write more keenly about Chinese American communities and history. With the seminal work of Chinese American activist and historian Him Mark Lai, archival materials on the Chinese in America

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[33] Tom Nesmith, "Seeing Archives: Postmodernism and the Changing Intellectual Place of Archives," in *The American Archivist* 65, no. 1 (2002): 27.

[34] Sucheng Chan and K. Scott Wong, "Preface," *Claiming America: Constructing Chinese American Identities during the Exclusion Era*, ed. K. Scott Wong and Sucheng Chan (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1998): viii.

became more actively collected, researched, and later written upon in academic circles.[35] Virginia Jing-yi Shih, Head of Southeast Asia Collections at UC Berkeley, also used the term 'archivist' to describe Lai and his career because of the significant contributions he made towards building perhaps the largest collection of research materials and primary sources on Chinese in America in the United States.[36] Lai is considered by many Asian American studies scholars to have played a pioneering role in establishing Chinese American history as a legitimate topic of study. His research and publications, consisting of over thirty-five years of detailed archival research using Chinese-language primary sources, have been an invaluable source for many later scholars from which to build a more robust knowledge base of Chinese American history. Research such as that established by Him Mark Lai meant that more scholars could recognize the value of studying and conducting research on Chinese American history, especially through archival collections.

In addition to Him Mark Lai, Gordon Chang, professor of American history at Stanford University, has utilized existing and emerging scholarship in archaeology to launch a large-scale, interdisciplinary project called the Chinese Railroad Workers in North America Project, which has "[brought] together over 150 U.S. scholars in archaeology, anthropology, American studies, cultural studies, ethnic studies, history, literature, overseas Chinese studies, political science,

[35] Virginia Jing-yi Shih, "Him Mark Lai 麥禮謙, Dean of Chinese American History: A Scholar's Intellectual Legacy at the University of California, Berkeley," in *Chinese America: History and Perspectives, suppl. Special Issue: Chinese American Archives* (2016): 3.

[36] *Ibid,* 1.

and other fields".[37] The purpose is to trace and uncover the path of Chinese laborers as they built the Central Pacific Railroad under the "Big Four" railroad magnates: Leland Stanford, Collis Potter, Mark Hopkins, and Charles Crocker. Most critically, Gordon Chang and Shelley Fisher Fishkin—co-director of project—write that the history of American railroad construction has been told largely through the lens of "manifest destiny" as the nation's "first step in healing the divisive wounds of the Civil War," and that the narratives persisting today continue to highlight the "story of businessmen who benefited from [Chinese] labor" rather than the voices of the laborers themselves.[38] They pose important questions concerning the lack of representation of Chinese workers' lived experiences within the documentation found in archives and archaeology, versus the lasting illuminations surrounding the Big Four's achievements in the construction of the Central Pacific Railroad:

> Challenging the narratives that focus on national triumph and the business elite is very difficult….[B]eyond the ideological, the task is immense simply because the extant documentary record overwhelmingly favors the elites. The Big Four left voluminous personal archives (correspondence, diaries, and financial records) that tell the story from their points of view. The enormous (almost endless) paper archives of the railroad companies reflect managements' points of view. From the Chinese workers, however, there is virtually nothing left today—not one letter, diary, memoir, or even a brief note.[39]

When railroad crews drove the last "golden spike" marking the completion of the railroads at Promontory Summit, Utah in 1869, many of the 10,000 – 12,000 Chinese

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[37] Gordon H. Chang and Shelley Fisher Fishkin, "Fragments of the Past: Archaeology, History, and the Chinese American Railroad Workers of North America (过去的碎片：考古，历史与北美地区的铁路工人)," in Special Issue of *Historical Archaeology* 49, no. 1 (2015): 1.

[38] *Ibid.*

[39] *Ibid.*

workers whose labor built the railroad were not included in official photographs.[40] From an archival studies standpoint, joining this interdisciplinary effort is crucial if scholars, professionals, and community leaders are to piece together a more representative, multidimensional view of these early Chinese in America. Examining the archival theories and practices that shape the materials within archival repositories—as well as archival representations of Chinese in America—can become another way to contribute to this effort and bring the archival studies field into closer contact with other disciplines, such as those that are now involved in the Chinese Railroad Workers in North America Project.

Another prominent scholar is UC Berkeley professor Ling-Chi Wang.[41] He helped to establish Asian American and Asian Diaspora Studies at UC Berkeley, and criticized the institution's collecting practices of archival and library materials on Chinese American history. Wang observed that "when Asian American Studies was established [at UC Berkeley] in 1969, we found the libraries on campus either woefully inadequate or inaccessible, because of the way the catalogs were stored and classified, for teaching and research in Chinese and Asian American studies."[42] In 1977, Wang joined a collective effort to establish the first Chinese American

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[40] [Completion of the Pacific Railroad: meeting of the Union and Central Pacific Lines... [Promontory Point, Utah]], Robert B. Honeyman, Jr. Collection of Early Californian and Western American Pictorial Material,BANC PIC 1963.002:0001-1886, The Bancroft Library, University of California, Berkeley. http://www.oac.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/tf4k4009sw/?order=1.

[41] Madeline Hsu, "Foreword: The Life and Times of Him Mark Lai," in *Becoming American: A History of Communities and Institutions*, ed. Him Mark Lai (New York: Altamira Press, 2004), 12.

[42] Ling-chi Wang, "Overcoming Intellectual Racism and Preserving Overseas Chinese Research Materials: The Case of Chinese in the United States," in *Amerasia Journal* 33, no. 1 (2007): 107.

research collection at UC Berkeley to combat the exclusionary collecting policies which he attributed to a "pervasive intellectual and institutional racism."[43] He envisioned it to be part of a "special collection housed within the departmental library, fully under the control of Asian American Studies faculty."[44] Him Mark Lai was also notably a member of the archives advisory committee, and later a consultant to the newly created Chinese American research collection. Today, the UC Berkeley Ethnic Studies Library "contains one of the most comprehensive and unique Asian American Studies Collections in the United States, including materials on the cultural, political, and socio-economic life of Asian Americans and Chinese Overseas," as well as "the largest Chinese American archival collection in the world."[45]

Sucheng Chan is a Professor Emeritus of Asian American Studies and Global Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara. As another scholar of note in the field of Chinese American studies, Chan has conducted significant historical and archival research into Chinese American history and most of her scholarly works emerged during the 1980s to the 2000s. Notable examples of her books and edited volumes include: *This Bittersweet Soil: The Chinese in California Agriculture, 1860-1910* (1986); *Asian Americans: An Interpretive History* (1991); and *Entry Denied: Exclusion and the Chinese Community in America, 1882-1943* (1991).[46] In

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[43] Ling-chi Wang, "Overcoming Intellectual Racism and Preserving Overseas Chinese Research Materials: The Case of Chinese in the United States," in *Amerasia Journal* 33, no. 1 (2007): 106.

[44] *Ibid*, 110.

[45] The Bancroft Library, "Guide to the Chinese in California Virtual Collection," UC Berkeley Bancroft Library, 2002. https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt5p3019m2/.

[46] Sucheng Chan papers, IHRC Archives, University of Minnesota http://archives.lib.umn.edu/repositories/6/resources/4938. Accessed March 15, 2018.

this sense, Chan's work, along with that of Him Mark Lai and Ling-Chi Wang, have laid an important foundation for many younger writers and later scholars to grow and disseminate their own influential research—including author/journalist Iris Chang, best known for her works on *The Rape of Nanking* and *The Chinese in America*, and sociologist/Asian American studies scholar Min Zhou, whose work focuses on Chinese immigration patterns and diaspora studies, and contemporary Chinese American communities.

Iris Chang was another noted author and scholar on Chinese and Chinese American history. While she is primarily known for her research and documentation of the Japanese Imperial Army's role during World War II in the Nanking Massacre (*The Rape of Nanking*), she wrote a third book called *The Chinese in America*, where she raised the question of the complexities encompassed in the formation of Chinese American communities, and presents a thorough historical overview of the push-pull flow governing patterns of emigration from China to the United States in the early 19th to late 20th centuries.[47] Chang also conducted considerable archival and scholarly research to aid in the completion of her writings, and similarly to Him Mark Lai, has become internationally recognized for her significant contributions to contemporary understandings of Chinese America. Chang's strategies in archival research on Chinese in America are both relevant and important for the design and implementation of the current research. Some of the repositories she consulted or visited in the course of her own historical research included the Autry Museum of Western Heritage in Los Angeles, the Museum of Chinese American history in downtown Los Angeles, immigration case files in the National

[47] Iris Chang, *The Chinese in America* (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), 1-403.

Archives in San Bruno, California, as well as the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California.[48]

Dr. Min Zhou is recognized as one of the foremost scholars on contemporary Chinese America, Chinatowns and the emerging 'ethnoburb' phenomenon, but her research has also explored historic Chinese immigration patterns and Chinese diasporic populations around the world. Her main research interests include international migration, ethnic and racial relations, immigrant entrepreneurship, education and the new second generation, Asia and Asian America, and urban sociology.[49] Most recently, Zhou was appointed Head of the newly reconfigured Asia Pacific Center at UCLA (previously the Asian Studies Institute), and she is jointly appointed at UCLA in the Departments of Sociology and Asian American Studies, respectively. Zhou has published a critical corpus of work contributing to more recent research surrounding the overseas Chinese and their resettlement not only to the U.S., but also to Latin America, Southeast Asia, Thailand, Singapore, and other locations.

In the introduction to *Contemporary Chinese America: Immigration, Ethnicity, and Community Transformation*, Zhou provides a comprehensive historical overview of the larger Chinese Diaspora and patterns of emigration/immigration within and outside of countries in Asia, spanning over 800 years from the early 12th century all the way into the late 1990s. She posits that the current state of contemporary Chinese America is in many ways, a direct reflection of "legal exclusion" of the Chinese beginning in the late 19th century, which was

[48] Iris Chang, *The Chinese in America* (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), xiv-xv.

[49] "Min Zhou, PhD," *UCLA College of Social Sciences*, accessed January 4, 2018. https://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/soc/faculty/zhou/.

"augmented by extralegal persecution and anti-Chinese violence."[50] She found that "the number of new immigrants from China dwindled from 123,000 in the 1870s to 14,800 in the 1890s, and fell to a historical low of 5,000 in the 1930s" and that "this trend did not change significantly until the 1960s—two decades after Congress repealed the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943."[51] Zhou's work helps deepen understandings of both past and contemporary Chinese American history, and has pushed Chinese American studies as a field to a higher level.

Min Zhou and other scholars have also made apparent the potential correlations between the aftermath of the 1965 Immigration Act—which allowed greater numbers of Chinese to immigrate to the U.S. than in the past—and a mounting impetus on mainstream institutions and archival repositories in those general vicinities to collect and preserve more materials reflecting Chinese American history. Min Zhou, Yen-Fen Tseng, and Rebecca Y. Kim observe that:

> In the wake of the new millennium, the Chinese American community still remains largely an immigrant community despite its long history of immigrant settlement and its current phenomenal population growth. Between 1960 and 2000, the number of Chinese Americans grew more than ten-fold: from 237,292 in 1960, to 1,645,472 in 1990, and to 2,879,636 (including some 447,051 mixed-race persons) in 2000. As of 2007, the ethnic population reached 3.5 million.[52]

Especially notable are the sociological and historical influences of these diasporic patterns and American immigration policies on the formation of Chinese American archival collections in

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[50] Min Zhou, "The Chinese Diaspora and International Migration," in *Contemporary Chinese America: Immigration, Ethnicity, and Community Transformation* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2009), 44.

[51] *Ibid*.

[52] Min Zhou, Yen-Fen Tseng, and Rebecca Y. Kim, "Rethinking Residential Assimilation: The Case of a Chinese Ethnoburb in the San Gabriel Valley, California," in *Amerasia Journal* 34, no. 3 (2008): 58.

various institutions in California. While it is true that the individual historical materials and artifacts on Chinese in America do date from the mid-19th to mid-20th centuries, they did not 'exist' as so-called 'collections' until individuals and institutions made the effort to acquire, process, and describe them as such. It follows that the corresponding inventories, collection guides, and finding aids were not created until or well after the 1960s, especially with the onset of the Asian American Movement. Lastly, during the 1970s and 1980s, greater populations of ethnic Chinese settled within what Zhou calls "ethnoburbs" and "ethnic enclaves". In Los Angeles, communities in Monterey Park and the wider San Gabriel Valley figure most prominently in terms of highest numbers of Chinese and Chinese American residents.[53] The increase in population in these areas may have played a role with a raising of ethnic consciousness in the 21st century that has compelled local and state institutions to not only collect, but also preserve and make accessible a greater, more complete historical record of Chinese American history, for communities to use now and into the future.

There are also a few cross-professional, scholarly activities and collaborations of non-archival scholars who have worked closely with Chinese American archival collections and community organizations. These non-archival scholars include curators, special collections librarians, and professors who are actively working to fill in the gaps of Chinese American history, including the following major figures: Sheau-yueh J. Chao, professor and faculty librarian at Baruch College in City University of New York, whose work touches on Overseas Chinese studies, Chinese family history/genealogy, and Chinese oral histories; Ann Shu-ju Chiu,

[53] Min Zhou, Yen-Fen Tseng, and Rebecca Y. Kim, "Rethinking Residential Assimilation: The Case of a Chinese Ethnoburb in the San Gabriel Valley, California," in *Amerasia Journal* 34, no. 3 (2008): 69.

assistant special collections and faculty liaison librarian at the Chinese University of Hong Kong; Ralph Gabbard, senior curator for Asian Studies at Arizona State University Libraries; Yan He, China Documentation Center librarian at George Washington University Libraries; Peter Nien-chu Kiang, professor and director of Asian American Studies Program at University of Massachusetts, Boston; and Ruan Lian, head librarian at University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and past president and executive director of the Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA).[54] These cross-collaborations not only play an important role in bridging some of the boundaries between published materials and archival collections on Chinese in America, but they also demonstrate the need for mainstream institutions to find productive ways to co-operate with community-based organizations that consist of more than simple acquisition and processing work, where the focus should be on access, findability, and usability by communities who are invested in those materials. Again, some standards, practices, and methods that may be widely used in an academic/institutional setting may be inappropriate or inadequate in community settings.

Reliability and Authenticity of Archival Records on Chinese in America

Reliability and authenticity pose a particular challenge when studying archival representations of materials on Chinese in America in the 19th and 20th centuries. In a review of Estelle Lau's study, *Paper Families: Identity, Immigration Administration, and Chinese Exclusion*, Min Zhou touches upon the distinctive phenomenon of "paper families," a term which

[54] Yan He, "Special Issue Introduction: Chinese American Archives, Collections, and Librarians," *Chinese America, History and Perspectives* (Chinese Historical Society of America, 2016): 83.

came to "refer…to fictive families formed in Chinese America as a direct response to legal exclusion,"[55] and "[o]ver time, paper families became institutionalized in a complex system in the Chinese immigrant community to resist legal exclusion and facilitate continual Chinese immigration."[56] Lau's intensive consultation of archival material and combined use of historical ethnography also serve as useful models to draw from for my own research methods. However, locating and tracking down archival documents on Chinese paper families or paper sons for use in research may pose significant challenges in the eyes of archival scholars and practitioners. Anne Gilliland and Hariz Halilovich note that "the notion of diaspora and the distribution, paucity and ephemerality of the documentary record of transnational communities and human experiences across different jurisdictions, agencies and cultures raise considerable and specific challenges for archival conceptualizations, theories, practices and institutions."[57]

As evidenced by the intricate patterns of Chinese emigration, early records associated with or created by the Chinese in America may likely be scattered across international borders and bridge multiple cities and/or states, revealing the fragmentary nature of archival records that were created among this largely sojourning, migratory community. This is compounded by the likelihood that many remaining records may also be written in older Chinese dialects or classical forms that are no longer commonly used today by younger generations in contemporary

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[55] Min Zhou, Review of *Paper Families: Identity, Immigration Administration, and Chinese Exclusion*, by Estelle T. Lau, *American Journal of Sociology* 114, no. 2 (September 2008): 528-529.

[56] *Ibid*.

[57] Anne Gilliland and Hariz Halilovich, "Migrating memories: transdisciplinary pedagogical approaches to teaching about diasporic memory, identity and human rights in archival studies," in *Arch Sci* 17 (2017): 81.

academic or colloquial discourse. Such realities may form considerable barriers to archival professionals and scholars who work to process, arrange, describe, and make accessible these collections.

During the late 19th century, the continued occurrence of Chinese arriving to the U.S. during Chinese Exclusion allowed individuals to subvert and take advantage of loopholes in the legislation.[58] In 1898, J. Thomas Scharf, the United States Chinese Inspector at the Port of New York, published a piece in *The North American Review* regarding the legislative "measures" such as the Geary Law of 1892 which "sought to execute the will of the people of the United States to exclude Chinese laborers. For a time, each act in turn had been deemed effective, but the immigration has continued in spite of legislation forbidding it."[59] Scharf describes there even being a time when "the purpose of the treaty was not only defeated, but its negotiation caused a large increase in Chinese immigration.…It was plain to be seen that the Chinese were coming into the country in utter defiance of the restriction acts."[60] According to writer/historian Iris Chang, the 1906 San Francisco earthquake was a key turning point in this process, which "destroyed most of the city, but most important for the Chinese, it destroyed city birth and citizenship records. The loss of these municipal files allowed many immigrants to claim that they were born in San Francisco, not China, thereby enabling them to establish U.S. citizenship."[61]

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[58] J. Thomas Scharf, "The Farce of the Chinese Exclusion Laws," in *The North American Review* 166, no. 494 (1898): 91.

[59] *Ibid*.

[60] *Ibid*.

[61] Iris Chang, *The Chinese in America* (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), 146.

From an archival standpoint, this raises important questions about authenticity and reliability. As Gilliland and Halilovich observe, in the case of records created by members of migratory communities, "such items may subsequently be difficult to authenticate as juridical evidence or to appraise for historical value because they do not carry sufficient legal weight, or because they have 'lost their stories.'"[62] Yet the "fictions" that Chinese paper families participated in for the sake of survival eventually became synonymous with everyday reality; most fully adopted their "fictitious family histories" and "were forced to change their names" in order to escape notice by immigration authorities.[63] Subsequent records generated by later generations of these Chinese paper families do not fit neatly traditional definitions of authenticity and reliability and are difficult to trace. Applying this restrictive, uncompromising interpretation would mean obstructing meaningful reflection upon alternative ways in which these records can be interpreted beyond just their reliability and authenticity.

Heather MacNeil and Bonnie Mak offer a way out of this dilemma by illustrating varying definitions of authenticity throughout history and across different disciplines; their findings show that when considered in the larger perspective, "authenticity is sensitive to differences in individual cases and contexts, and is therefore necessarily marked by change" because the "conventions of authenticity are always in flux, responding to changes in the world in which it is

[62] Anne Gilliland and Hariz Halilovich, "Migrating memories: transdisciplinary pedagogical approaches to teaching about diasporic memory, identity and human rights in archival studies," in *Arch Sci* 17 (2017): 82.

[63] Min Zhou, Review of *Paper Families: Identity, Immigration Administration, and Chinese Exclusion*, by Estelle T. Lau, *American Journal of Sociology* 114, no. 2 (September 2008): 529.

embedded."[64] Taking a slightly different turn, Julia Kastenhofer builds upon MacNeil's conception of authenticity as "never fixed or certain" but "instead a process" to argue that "the difference between an authentic and reliable record and a forgery is not at all obvious."[65] Kastenhofer states that "an archive will never be full of completely authentic records and users will never be absolutely sure that the records they are looking at are what they purport to be" and that, in light of such possibilities, conventional ideas and logic about archival authenticity are most likely unrealistic and warrant significant reconsideration.[66] I recognize these poignant issues on the authenticity and reliability of historical and archival records and their impact upon the study of archival representations of Chinese in America, especially in materials dating from the late 19th century.

Archival Representations of Chinese in America in Special Collections and Archives of Academic Institutions

Efforts towards making archival studies more interdisciplinary, diverse, and inclusive have continued to overlook issues related to Chinese in America. Within archival studies literature, there is still little to no published work that specifically engages with Chinese American histories within archives. It has largely been left up to scholars in other fields such as sociology, anthropology, history, and many others, to fill in the gaps of knowledge about

[64] Heather Marie MacNeil and Bonnie Mak, "Constructions of Authenticity," in *Library Trends* 56, no. 1 (2007): 29-30.

[65] Julia Kastenhofer, "The logic of archival authenticity: ISO 15489 and the varieties of forgeries in archives," in *Archives and Manuscripts* 43, no. 3 (2015): 167.

[66] *Ibid,* 169.

Chinese in America. More often than not, they must engage with primary sources and archival research to complete the pieces of these puzzles. Ling-Chi Wang emphasizes the importance for more scholars to engage with and actively study Chinese-language archival collections:

> What has been missing has been the Chinese American perspectives, sentiments, feelings, and aspirations hidden in the Chinese-language sources. Chinese American history cannot and must not be written exclusively from the perspectives of … white dominant society…[through] the exclusive use of English-language sources, as important as they are. Such history is at best one-sided and incomplete and at worst, derogatory and exclusionary.[67]

While Wang has a valid point, it is also worth noting that many Chinese in America, especially those whose families have been in the U.S. for several generations, have lost touch with their Chinese-language reading and speaking skills, and therefore may face similar struggles in accessing materials from their own history without the assistance of a translator or someone with the ability to interpret classical Chinese characters. Traditionally, finding aids have been advertised as tools that aid in access and retrieval, but scholars such as Richard Cox have observed in recent years that "archivists…tend…to prepare their finding aids in a language and manner they are more comfortable with than are the researchers seeking to use archives, and they maintain the same content and format of the finding aids even as they have learned that researchers and their expectations are changing."[68]

Archival professionals and scholars cannot hold onto assumptions about who their users are, as not all individuals can be expected to immediately understand the archival terminologies

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[67] Kelvin White and Anne Gilliland, "Promoting Reflexivity and Inclusivity in Archival Education, Research, and Practice," in *Library Quarterly* 80, no. 3 (2010): 104.

[68] Richard Cox, "Revisiting the Archival Finding Aid," in *Journal of Archival Organization* 5, no. 4 (2007): 8.

and concepts that inevitably emerge throughout the process of accessing archival collections. If users are to find and access the materials they desire, it is imperative for archivists to seek to understand the kinds of language they would use to describe their own communities and histories. And although scholars in disciplines outside of archival studies, such as the ones mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, have done considerable research on the Chinese in America, few have taken a critical look at archival representations and questioned the institutional practices and detailed processes that have shaped these archival representations. A review of the literature indicates that, to date, there have been no critical analyses performed on archival representations of Chinese in America, although some scholars have done research on archival representations of other communities.

In addressing issues of archival representation, Wendy Duff and Verne Harris delineate traditional notions of arrangement and description in relation to the archivists themselves:

> The archivist's role in relation to records is to reveal their meaning and significance – not to participate in the construction of meanings – through the exercise of intellectual control. The archival intervention, including arrangement and description, is at once insulated from the processes of records creation and from broader societal processes. And the archivist, who should aspire to the role of impartial craftsperson, can remain outside the hurley-burley of power relations.[69]

The idea of impartiality in archival descriptive practices has been challenged on several fronts. Anne Gilliland has stressed that impartiality as a core archival value was already in fact 'dead upon arrival' – by the time the International Council on Archives (ICA) released its Code of Ethics in 1996, many scholars were already calling 'impartiality' into question, as were

[69] Wendy Duff and Verne Harris, "Stories and Names: Archival Description as Narrating Records and Constructing Meanings," *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 264.

community archivists and archivists working with materials pertaining war crimes and human rights abuses.[70] She argues that "impartiality leads to indifference and passivity in the face of moral exigencies and injustices", and calls attention to a growing movement in archival studies that has "pressed the field on the impossibility of neutrality and objectivity", particularly in a "profession that manages records that are integral to fundamentally inequitable systems and processes" and which "exercises so much power over the selection, description and transmission of those records to future generations."[71] Such is also true for records of Chinese in America from the 19th century, which until recently, were underrepresented in mainstream constructions of American history. Historians, archaeologists, and ethnic studies scholars can play a significant role in this, but archivists may play the most fundamental of them all, in their capacity to reinforce and/or counter the narratives that come out of collections they work with.

Gilliland calls for scholars and professionals in archival institutions and information schools in higher education institutions to "engage critically, reflexively, and meaningfully with…issues [of archival neutrality, social justice, ethics and diversity] in ways that support the public trust in archives and the archival profession."[72] This can be supported through experiential service learning opportunities at local and community-based organizations, as well as courses that incorporate critical discussions surrounding social justice and activism in the classroom. At

[70] Wendy Duff and Verne Harris, "Stories and Names: Archival Description as Narrating Records and Constructing Meanings," *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 94.

[71] *Ibid*.

[72] Anne Gilliland, "Neutrality, Social Justice, and the Obligations of Archival Education and Educators in the Twenty-First Century," in *Archival Science* 11 (2001): 193.

the conclusion, Gilliland asks the audience, specifically, archival educators and practitioners, this critical question:

> When one considers some of the other characteristics that are also associated with neutrality (detachment, disinterestedness, non-engagement, non-involvement, non-participation, and non-interventionism), where *is* the line between neutrality and failing to act to counteract negative aspects related to the power of the record or the archive?[73]

Duff and Harris make explicit the post-modern lens with which they view archival representation, "as a form, or mode, of re-presentation" where "description is always story telling – intertwining facts with narratives, observation with interpretation."[74] Furthermore, Duff and Harris argue that "the power to describe is the power to make and remake records and to determine how they will be used and remade in the future. Each story we tell about our records, each description we compile, changes the meaning of the records and re-creates them."[75] Archivists cannot deny the very act of constructing meaning in which they are inextricable participants, for "archivists are, from the beginning and always, political players…in the dynamics of power relations", where the "boundary between constructive and oppressive power is always shifting and porous."[76]

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[73] Anne Gilliland, "Neutrality, Social Justice, and the Obligations of Archival Education and Educators in the Twenty-First Century," in *Archival Science* 11 (2011): 207.

[74] Wendy Duff and Verne Harris, "Stories and Names: Archival Description as Narrating Records and Constructing Meanings," *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 276.

[75] *Ibid,* 272.

[76] *Ibid,* 277.

Duff and Harris come from vastly "different traditions and modes of archival discourse" – one from the "traditional stream" and the other a "postmodernist".[77] Wendy Duff is a former Information Studies faculty (now Dean) from the University of Toronto and has worked extensively to develop national and international descriptive standards.[78] Verne Harris is the Director of Research and Archive at the Nelson Mandela Foundation and was a premier force during the first decade of South Africa's post-apartheid democracy, a context in which he deems the aforementioned standards to have "no 'resonance'".[79] He participated formerly in "structures which have transformed South Africa's apartheid archival landscape, including the Truth and Reconciliation Commission" and was also a "former Deputy Director of the National Archives."[80] Together, Duff and Harris call for archival scholars and practitioners to reflect upon and rethink existing archival descriptive practices and standards. They challenge information professionals to "strive to hear voices which are marginalized or silent…[to] confront our own story telling and seek ways of telling better, more inclusive stories…[and to] face our own complicity in the exercise of power…[rather than] squeeze the concept of accountability to users

[77] Wendy Duff and Verne Harris, "Stories and Names: Archival Description as Narrating Records and Constructing Meanings," *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 264-265.

[78] For more about Wendy Duff's background and research interests, please visit her University of Toronto profile at https://www.ischool.utoronto.ca/faculty/wendy-duff, and her faculty profile: http://www.archimuse.com/erecs97/W_DUFF.HTM.

[79] Wendy Duff and Verne Harris, "Stories and Names: Archival Description as Narrating Records and Constructing Meanings," *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 265.

[80] For more about Verne Harris, please see his profile at the Archive and Public Culture Research Initiative: http://www.apc.uct.ac.za/apc/researchers/hrf/verne-harris, and his work as featured on SAA, entitled "Archives and Justice: A South African Perspective": http://saa.archivists.org/store/archives-and-justice-a-south-african-perspective-pdf/3691/.

into a neat, manageable box or descriptive template."[81] More importantly, they stress that when strict descriptive standards are applied outside of mainstream academic and archival institutions, they are often not always appropriate to the specific settings and situations, nor do they acknowledge the "unquestioning replication of the power relations within which [different] sites and localities are embedded," such as community-based organizations that are themselves working to preserve marginalized histories that have been systematically excluded from or poorly represented.[82]

Norwegian archival scholar Ine Fintland argues that archival descriptions, as principal elements of archival representation, "function [not only] as framing narratives" but also as "frames of understanding" for the users who encounter them.[83] Fintland applies *paratextuality*, a concept defined by French literary theorist Gérard Genette, to the practice of archival description. As *paratext*, a finding aid is "more than a boundary or a sealed border," but becomes, rather, "a threshold, or…a 'vestibule' that offers the world at large the possibility of either stepping inside or turning back."[84] Borrowing a phrase from the French writer Philippe Lejeune, Genette characterized *paratext* as "a fringe of the printed text which in reality controls

[81] Wendy Duff and Verne Harris, "Stories and Names: Archival Description as Narrating Records and Constructing Meanings," *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 280.

[82] *Ibid*, 283.

[83] Ine Fintland, "Archival Descriptions through the Looking Glass: Paratexts in Wonderland," in *The American Archivist* 79, no. 1 (2016): 140.

[84] *Ibid*.

one's whole reading of the text."[85] Thus, what is included and/or left out of such 'frames of understanding' can "influence how another text, the archival records, should be received."[86]

Archival Representations of Chinese in America in Community-Based Archives

Looking beyond solely academic settings towards community archives and community archivists may help widen notions of what archives and archival representations can be, as well as encourage the possibilities radically different kinds of work by archival scholars/professionals. In working with South Asian American communities and their materials, Michelle Caswell cites George Gerbner as one of the first to develop and use the term "symbolic annihilation", which refers to the lack of representation experienced by certain individuals, groups, and/or communities in the fictional realms of television and media communications. [87] Gerbner argued that the lack of this "social existence" correlated to the virtual absence of "dramatic importance" and "social power" in these mediums.[88] His work has sparked a proliferation of newer scholarship in public history and feminist studies, among others. Within the archival studies context, the term "symbolic annihilation" has since been adapted in Caswell's work to "denote

[85] Gérard Genette, "Introduction," *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997): 2.

[86] *Ibid*.

[87] Michelle Caswell, Marika Cifor, and Mario H. Ramirez, "'To Suddenly Discover Yourself Existing': Uncovering the Impact of Community Archives," in *The American Archivist* 79, no. 1 (2016): 58.

[88] George Gerbner, "Violence and Television Drama: Trends and Symbolic Functions," *Television and Social Behaviour*, 1, *Content and Control*, ed. G. A. Comstock and E. Rubenstein (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1972): 44.

[the way] members of marginalized communities feel regarding the absence or misrepresentation of their communities in archival collection policies, in descriptive tools, and/or in collections themselves."[89]

Using the South Asian American Digital Archive (SAADA) as an example—of which she is the co-founder—Caswell builds upon previous definitions from Andrew Flinn, Mary Stevens, and Elizabeth Shepherd to support an understanding of community archives as "independent grassroots efforts for communities to document their own commonalities and differences outside the boundaries of formal mainstream institutions."[90] Community archives (which are manifest in a multitude of ways in various cultural and national settings) also have a vital role to play in confronting and remedying the systematic exclusion/misrepresentation of immigrant and ethnic minority populations from mainstream archival institutions, particularly in the U.S.[91] Therefore, community archives such as the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California (CHSSC) are important and authentic sources of information for the proposed study of archival representations of Chinese in America before and during the Exclusion Era, although they are located away from major archival institutions.

With the increased usage of terms like "community" and "community archives", there is also an attendant questioning of what these terms imply for everyday archival practices. When

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[89] Michelle Caswell, Marika Cifor, and Mario H. Ramirez, "'To Suddenly Discover Yourself Existing': Uncovering the Impact of Community Archives," in *The American Archivist* 79, no. 1 (2016): 59.

[90] Michelle Caswell, "Seeing Yourself in History: Community Archives and the Fight Against Symbolic Annihilation," in *The Public Historian* 36, no. 4 (2014): 31.

[91] *Ibid*.

such terms are overused, it is easy for them to become meaningless. Scholars such as Cristine Paschild have warned that when individuals working within community archives focus too myopically upon such concepts as "identity and subjectivity," they may do so to the detriment of minding "the successful management of physical space and materials".[92] The intention here, however, is not to abandon identity or marginalization as crucial central organizing themes, but to acknowledge the practical concerns and needs that can potentially impact new or emerging relationships between community archives and mainstream institutions – as Paschild suggests, such relationships need not always be contentious or oppositional by nature, nor should they be preemptively categorized as "inherently fraught or estranged".[93]

Similar concerns face smaller community-based organizations as the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California (CHSSC) as to the question of how and where their archival collections should be preserved: in larger, well-resourced academic institutions such as the UCLA Special Collections and Archives, or in the CHSSC Headquarters in downtown Los Angeles, which lacks climate control, adequate staffing, and preservation resources. In a study of twelve Southern California community archives by Zavala et. al, Annie Tang—an interviewee and a former volunteer at the CHSSC—commented upon "the necessity of community and cultural competency by those who staff archives with collections created by people of colour; a

[92] Cristine N. Paschild, "Community Archives and the Limitations of Identity: Considering Discursive Impact on Material Needs," in *The American Archivist* 75 (2012): 141.

[93] *Ibid*, 142.

competency which may not be valued by mainstream institutions."[94] According to Tang, having cultural competency and relevant collecting areas with appropriate staffing are some of the key factors in stewarding collections on marginalized communities in mainstream institutions; simply acquiring a collection in pursuit of what she calls "brownie points for tokenism" is not an appropriate reason for doing so, especially in the face of other issues such as barriers to access, geographical location, and legalities pertaining to copyright.[95] Therefore, the question of where such collections are ultimately housed (including digital repositories) can inevitably influence the ways in which potential users access those collections, as well as the kinds of users who may have access to them.

Critical Race Theory as Analytical Lens to Examine Archival Representations

The critical perspective for this project is inspired foremost by critical race theory (CRT). Critical race theorists position their arguments at the intersections of race, power, and the law within social relationships and institutions, with archivists and archives being no exception. Anthony Dunbar lays out central concepts from CRT such as racial microaggressions, social justice approaches, and counternarratives in order to advocate for their relevancy in archival theory and practice.[96] He notes that CRT can function as a useful methodology for archival

[28] Jimmy Zavala, Alda Allina Migoni, Michelle Caswell, Noah Geraci, and Marika Cifor, "'A process where we're all at the table': community archives challenging dominant modes of archival practice," in *Archives and Manuscripts* (2017): 6-7.

[95] *Ibid*, 7.

[96] Anthony Dunbar, "Introducing critical race theory to archival discourse: getting the conversation started." *Archival Science* 6 (2006): 109-129.

research by "contribut[ing] to a diversified archival epistemology that can influence the creation of collective and institutional memories that impact underrepresented and disenfranchised populations and the development of their identities."[97] By utilizing the "context, terms, and social emphasis of CRT to…archival discourse", Dunbar emphasizes the importance of recognizing "racial issues" and offering "alternative discussions or counter-narratives" to what is already being said and published in archival literature.[98]

Daniel G. Solórzano and Tara J. Yasso advance a critical race methodology as applied to education research, pointing out several main themes they observed: white privilege and master narratives (or majoritarian stories), deficit social science storytelling in discussions of educational inequality, and counterstories that allow for stories of agency and power to be told of marginalized communities.[99] Todd Honma, writing in the early 2000s on American public libraries as institutions and the library information sciences (LIS) profession, critiques the "contemporary discourses of 'diversity' and 'multiculturalism'" on their "inability to adequately represent the racial discrepancies in the field" and performs an investigation into the "legacies of such ambiguous racial(ized) scholarship by examining the epistemological exclusions that prevent the issues of race and racism from being more fully integrated into LIS."[100]

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[97] Anthony Dunbar, "Introducing critical race theory to archival discourse: getting the conversation started." *Archival Science* 6 (2006): 109.

[98] *Ibid*, 110.

[99] Daniel G. Solórzano and Tara J. Yasso, "Critical Race Methodology: Counter-Storytelling as an Analytical Framework for Education Research," in *Qualitative Inquiry* 8, no. 1 (2002): 23-44.

[100] Todd Honma, "Trippin' Over the Color Line: The Invisibility of Race in Library and Information Studies," in *InterActions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies* 1, no. 2 (2005): 3-4.

In "Race and Culture: An Ethnic Studies Approach to Archival and Recordkeeping Research in the United States," Kelvin White introduces an African American perspective to archival studies literature, using the Susie Guillory Phipps case to demonstrate the disparities between individual conceptions and legal definitions of racial identity (such as blackness)—in this case, Phipps had identified as a white woman her whole life, until state records informed her that she had two black parents and was thus seen in the eyes of the law as black, not white.[101] White likens the racial stereotyping of African Americans as having "an overall lack of intelligence" to the stereotyping of Native American and Asian American communities as "loyal sidekicks or aggressive alcoholics" and "passive and politically inactive", respectively.[102]

By utilizing an African American studies lens in archival research, White joins a multitude of scholars who are beginning to incorporate ethnic studies and other interrelated theoretical approaches in their own writing, in order to address the pervasive stereotyping of communities of color. More importantly, White's work also brings the "conceptual frameworks in ethnic studies"[103], sociological research, and archival scholarship into conversation with each other to contend that the archive itself can be construed as a "sociocultural construct"[104] and that the "role of culture is key to understanding the interacting dynamics of race, archives, and

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[101] Kelvin L. White. "Race and Culture: An Ethnic Studies Approach to Archival Recordkeeping and Research in the United States," in *Research in the Archival Multiverse*, ed. Anne J. Gilliland, Sue McKemmish, and Andrew Lau (Melbourne: Monash University Publishing, 2017): 352-381.

[102] *Ibid*, 356.

[103] *Ibid*, 352.

[104] *Ibid*, 357.

power."[105] White's work presents a viable model of inquiry for the current study into archival representations of Chinese in America before and during the Exclusion Era.

Eric Ketelaar's work is also relevant to the conceptualization of the proposed study. He argues that archival practitioners and scholars must go beyond "the administrative context" of archives to "interrogat[e]…the social, cultural, political, religious contexts of record creation, maintenance, and use."[106] Citing Jacques Derrida and Terry Cook, he posits the "archive [as] an infinite activation of the record" and the record itself as "membranic" with permeable boundaries.[107] Kelvin White and Anne Gilliland stress the "the need to rethink, transform, and expand the traditional underlying archival paradigm so that it is more reflective of the shifting cultural, social, technological, and political demands and changes that are occurring in the twenty-first century."[108] This shift represents a push towards adopting a systematic re-examination of the role of archives in larger societal frameworks, as well as for increasing the levels of self-reflexivity and consciousness in archival processes.

In 1978, the Palestinian-American literary critic Edward Said published a book entitled *Orientalism*, which has since been recognized as one of the foundational texts in postcolonial theory/studies. Said's work adds more dimensions to CRT and ethnic studies approach. Said

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[105] Kelvin L. White. "Race and Culture: An Ethnic Studies Approach to Archival Recordkeeping and Research in the United States," in *Research in the Archival Multiverse*, ed. Anne J. Gilliland, Sue McKemmish, and Andrew Lau (Melbourne: Monash University Publishing, 2017): 358.

[106] Eric Ketelaar. "Tacit Narratives: The Meaning of Archives," in *Archival Science* 1 (2001): 141.

[107] *Ibid,* 137-138.

[108] Kelvin White and Anne Gilliland, "Promoting Reflexivity and Inclusivity in Archival Education, Research, and Practice," in *Library Quarterly* 80, no. 3 (2010): 247.

identifies Orientalism as a "created body of theory and practice" that "depends for its strategy on [a] flexible *positional* superiority, which puts the Westerner in a whole series of possible relationships with the Orient without ever losing him the relative upper hand."[109] He continues with the observation that:

> …within the umbrella of Western hegemony over the Orient during the period from the end of the eighteenth century, there emerged a complex Orient suitable for study in the academy, for display in the museum, for reconstruction in the colonial office, for theoretical illustration in anthropological, biological, linguistic, racial, and historical theses about mankind and the universe, for instances of economic and sociological theories of development, revolution, cultural personality, national or religious character.[110]

Said's argument distinguished between two entities—the Orient and the Occident—which, when seen as part of a complex of oppositional relations, presupposed a "kind of intellectual authority over the Orient within Western culture."[111] This sort of discourse has extended into the contemporary era, and continues to spark critical discussion among multiple academic fields. One such thread centers on "decolonizing" history, research, and archives pertaining to indigenous communities around the world.

As indigenous studies scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith argues, decolonization is less about the "total rejection of all theory or research or Western knowledge" and more about "recovering our own stories of the past… inextricably bound to a recovery of our

[109] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978): 7.

[110] *Ibid*, 7.

[111] *Ibid*, 19.

language and epistemological foundations." [112] Decolonization is about "centring our concerns and world views and then coming to know and understand theory and research from our own perspectives and for our own purposes."[113] Research conducted by and for indigenous communities, however, still poses some pitfalls, as Smith is quick to caution readers about the importance of having "a critical understanding of some of the tools of research – not just the obvious technical tools, but the conceptual tools, the ones which make us feel uncomfortable, which we avoid, for which we have no easy response."[114]

In a similar turn of thought, Said acknowledges the danger in "Orientalizing the Orient."[115] He calls for a careful negotiation of the "East/West division, … the have/have-not one, the imperialist/anti-imperialist one, the white/colored one."[116] Furthermore, he urges constant, critical interrogation of sometimes commonly accepted "political and …ideological realities inform[ing] scholarship today."[117] Said emphasizes the need for scholars to be sensitive, critical, self-reflexive, and cognizant to ethical practices and research when tackling terms like "Orientalism" so as to avoid the pitfalls

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[112] Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (New York: Zed Books, 1999): 39.

[113] *Ibid*.

[114] *Ibid*, 40.

[115] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978): 327.

[116] *Ibid*, 328.

[117] *Ibid*, 327.

of dogmatism and "unthinking… acceptance of authority and authoritative ideas."[118] Said's *Orientalism* centers mainly around problematic Western representations and studies of Islam and the Middle East, while Smith's *Decolonizing Methodologies* draws attention to Māori communities and the development of the *Kaupapa Maori* research approach in support of more "culturally appropriate research protocols and methodologies".[119] Nonetheless, both set the stage for considering how some ethnic minority communities in the U.S. were also 'Orientalized' and depicted as passive subjects of (and were thus automatically subject to) Western researchers and methodologies—particularly Chinese in America during the late 19th to mid-20th centuries. Such is the danger in the study of this topic, and researchers must also be aware at all times of their power to re-marginalize the communities they are studying through the words they choose to describe them.

Summary

Scholars in academic disciplines outside of archival studies have contributed to promoting further understanding and exploration of historical materials on Chinese in America. Him Mark Lai's rare bilingual proficiency in both Mandarin Chinese and Cantonese as well as his consistent collecting and archiving efforts allowed the corpus of previously inaccessible Chinese-language materials to become more widely available to writers, scholars, activists, and others across the disciplinary spectrum in the telling and

[118] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 327.

[119] Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (New York: Zed Books, 1999), i.

re-telling of Chinese American stories and narratives. As colleagues and contemporaries of Lai, Ling-Chi Wang, Iris Chang, Min Zhou, and others have demonstrated through their work that the various interactions, interventions, and critical encounters they have had with archival collections on Chinese in America were a necessary and critical part of their research processes.

Considering the fragmentary nature of archival materials on the early Chinese in America, as well as various circumventions and manuevering which allowed Chinese immigration to continue despite legal restrictions during the Exclusion Era (such as the 1906 San Francisco earthquake which destroyed birth and citizenship records), reliability and authenticity become much more ambiguous. For users consulting archival materials on Chinese in America, as well as for processing and reference archivists, it remains difficult to find much in the way of archival studies literature engaging in this topic, and such challenges are compounded by language barriers of non-native speakers as well as the gradual loss of culture and language on the part of younger generations within the Chinese American communities. Additionally, community-based organizations such as the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California (CHSSC) have typically taken on the multiple roles of collecting and preserving materials that face systematic exclusion or under-/misrepresentation in mainstream institutions. All of this evokes deep consideration of power relations and the shifting boundaries between archival studies field and other disciplines, as well as the location of sensitive and valuable materials on Chinese in America. Moreover, factors such as location and other access restrictions can have a

significant impact on which users can access the collections and how they go about finding them.

The thesis strives to locate this vital intersection between archival studies and Asian American Studies, and to provide a link between current conversations and debates on significant archival issues to the still-incomplete understandings of Chinese in America. The paucity of research on the specific topic at hand—that is, the archival representations of Chinese in America before and during the Chinese Exclusion Act—necessitates a broader consideration of the existing literature in multiple disciplines. As such, critical race theory can provide a useful framework for examining archival representations of Chinese in America within archival collections in California.

Chapter 3: Methods

Methodological Frameworks

This research is situated within a broader critical race theory (CRT) framework that builds upon Anthony Dunbar's important work on introducing CRT to archival studies discourse and positions itself within Daniel G. Solórzano and Tara J. Yasso's conception of a critical race methodology "grounded in the experiences and knowledge of people and color."[120] It is also informed by Todd Honma's work on incorporating an ethnic studies model in LIS education and

[120] Daniel G. Solórzano and Tara J. Yasso, "Critical Race Methodology: Counter-Storytelling as an Analytical Framework for Education Research," in *Qualitative Inquiry* 8, no. 1 (2002): 23.

scholarship.[121] The findings of this exploratory study are situated within an interpretivist paradigm, as articulated by information systems scholar Geoff Walsham: "Interpretive researchers are not saying to the reader that they are reporting facts; instead, they are reporting their interpretations of other people's interpretations."[122] Archival description as a form of interpretation constructs narratives; they reflect and are in turn influenced by personal perspectives and biases. Situated within a specific set of worldviews and understandings of the topic, I turn an interpretive lens upon these interpretations, using a critical race theory approach to studying archival representations and descriptions in collections on Chinese in America from 1860s-1943. The intent is not to target specific individuals or institutions or make indiscriminate critiques—rather, this approach strives for an honest and deeper understanding of the individual elements and construction of the finding aids, and invites consideration of the structural and environmental influences upon their construction. It also allows for participation in the continued development of a body of interdisciplinary research, in which scholars from multiple disciplines and professions have utilized a critical race theory approach.

Information studies scholars have written about how language is used as a method of classification and control in knowledge organization systems (KOS).[123] Selecting from a directory of controlled vocabularies such as Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH) or

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[121] Todd Honma, "Trippin' Over the Color Line: The Invisibility of Race in Library and Information Studies," in *InterActions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies* 1, no. 2 (2005): 19-20.

[122] Geoff Walsham, "Interpretive Case Studies in IS Research: Nature and Method," *European Journal of Information Systems* 4 (1995): 78.

[123] Birger Hjørland, "What is Knowledge Organization (KO)?" in *Knowledge Organization* 35, no. 2 (2008): 86-101.

more specific specialized terms from the Art & Architecture Thesaurus (AAT) asserts some level of control over materials and, in theory, doing so should support greater access for its users to those materials. In an academic special collections and archives repository, some online archival finding aids also include a list of subject headings and indexing terms that are used to provide access to the collection through the institution's library catalog.

In his work on classification systems and information ethics, Jonathan Furner introduces critical race theory as a "potentially useful approach to the evaluation of bibliographic classification schemes" and adds that "as social constructions…[they] inevitably reflect the biases and prejudices typical of the context in which they are produced."[124] Furner points out that removing the "basic racial categories" from Table 5 (calling it "Ethnic and National Groups" instead of the original "Racial, Ethnic, and National Groups") in the Dewey Decimal Classification system (DDC) "sustain[s] the hegemonic status quo in which discrimination and economic and social inequities in favor of whites are institutionally maintained.."[125] Continuing this train of thought, Molly Higgins deconstructs the notion of bias within knowledge organization systems and the ways in which they have been used to describe "Asian Americans" as a self-identifying category. Citing George Lipsitz, she asserts that "KOSs, as systems that deal in knowledge, can be examined, to see whether they encourage a continued investment in whiteness," an approach that could be similarly relatable to the ways such classification systems

[124] Jonathan Furner, "Dewey deracialized: A critical race-theoretic perspective," *BePress* (2007): 17. https://works.bepress.com/furner/14/.

[125] *Ibid.*

intersect with archival description in finding aids.[126] Although these examples highlight how librarians have interrogated racial categories in subject headings and KOSs, the research here seeks to build a similar momentum from an archival standpoint, and by examining the decisions to include specific subject headings and indexing terms as part of the archival description in finding aids, this can also enhance understandings of how entrenched biases replicate the power structures of the time. It can also point to the expectations and omissions made about the kinds of users who are assumed to frequently access these collections materials.

Positionality Statement

As an Asian American and first-generation American-born Chinese, I approach this work with the intention of highlighting the importance of studying materials by and about Chinese in America within archival research. Moreover, coming from an academic background in humanities and Asian American literature and transitioning into the social sciences and LIS, I have consistently sought to maintain a critical approach throughout my body of work. I did not begin to have an interest in Asian American Studies, much less the study of Chinese in America, until well into my undergraduate studies in literature and my MLIS program. Around this time, I began taking more classes in Asian American literature, politics, immigration and law. It was through this exposure that I learned about major scholars in critical race theory and postcolonial studies, and first about the Asian American Movement in the late 1960s. Iris Chang makes a similar observation when she states in her introduction to *The Chinese in America*:

[126] Molly Higgins, "Totally Invisible: Asian American Representation in the Dewey Decimal Classification, 1876-1996," *BePress* (1998): 1-14, https://works.bepress.com/molly_higgins/21/.

> …it was not until the mid-1990s, when my husband and I moved to the San Francisco Bay Area, that I really became interested in the history and complexity of the Chinese American population.… At first, I feared the subject might be too broad, but I couldn't let go of the idea of exploring the history of my people. Moreover, I believed I had a *personal obligation* to write an honest history of Chinese America, to *dispel the offensive stereotypes* that had long permeated the U.S. news and entertainment media.[127]

Documentary filmmaker Robin Lung had a similar sense of purpose driving her search for the story of Li Ling-Ai, the uncredited Chinese American female film producer of the documentary film *Kukan: The Battle Cry of China* and which was primarily attributed to the American journalist/photographer Rey Scott. *Kukan* revealed to American audiences, many for the very first time, moving images of war-torn China during WWII, when the Japanese Imperial Army launched large-scale attacks and bombings in several major cities, including Shanghai, Chongqing, and the original capitol, Nanjing. In a 1993 interview with Turner Broadcasting, an 85-year-old Li Ling-Ai stated matter-of-factly: "I'm going to reach the people. I want to reach the colleges, 'cause I'm *tired* and *sick* of being called Chin Chin Chinaman."[128] Growing up and living in a time of legalized racism, Li Ling-Ai had very clear and understandable motivations for pursuing the making of *Kukan* and seeing it to completion. *Kukan* later earned an honorary Academy Award in 1942, and after the war, was deemed permanently 'lost' until 2009, when it was discovered through Robin Lung's efforts and restored by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

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[127] Iris Chang, *The Chinese in America* (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), xiv-xv. (*emphasis mine*)

[128] *Finding Kukan*, directed by Robin Lung, aired May 2018, on PBS World's America Reframed Series, http://www.nestedeggproductions.com/.

I cannot deny that I have similar intentions in this work, because I believe that a critical race theory approach to archival representations and description in collections on the Chinese in America is essential to acknowledging and responding to the racial stereotypes and mis-representations, many of which have continued to pervade the society we live in today. Iris Chang, Robin Lung, and Li Ling-Ai each found their own unique ways to engage with and promote discussion of these issues in their respective professions. Furthermore, I acknowledge my positionality as one constantly in flux – I consider myself a hybrid, an insider-outsider who 'passes' amongst multiple worlds. To some, I may hold some general semblance of an 'insider' status with Chinese American communities, perhaps by virtue of my physical appearance or perhaps due to my research interests. However, from my perceived 'insider' position, I see myself as mostly an 'outsider'. I speak and understand Mandarin Chinese fluently with no perceivable 'foreign' accent to other native speakers, yet my Chinese reading and writing skills are lacking from my prolonged residence in the United States. Even with this Chinese American heritage, I encounter a different, more nuanced set of barriers—subcultures, dialects, regional mannerisms—that extend well beyond those broad categories of 'Chinese' ethnicity, language or culture.

Iris Chang observed that "the majority of [contemporary] Chinese in America probably have no forty-niner ancestors; they are, as I am, either part of labor waves or children of those who arrived here more than a century after the gold rush."[129] I am not a descendant of the Chinese who arrived to the U.S. in the mid-19th century, yet I still feel a sense of obligation to write about them and those who came after. I grew up in the suburbs of Los Angeles, and do not

[129] Iris Chang, *The Chinese in America* (New York: Penguin Books, 2003), ix.

know what it is really like to live in a Chinatown, much less what life was like in the Chinatowns that existed in the late 19th centuries. My mother originally came from China to the United States to pursue graduate school and an academic career in the 1980s. Eventually becoming an American citizen, she was one of many beneficiaries of the passing of the 1965 Immigration Act that lifted the "racially discriminatory national origins policy, which had been in place since the early 1920s."[130] I have only read about Chinatowns and early Chinese American history through the fictional stories and narrative histories written by other people. How do I write about people with whom I may share broad ethnic and national ties, yet have little to no familial connections or personal experiences in common? To others in America, we (that is, those of us who came from China or are descended from Chinese immigrants) may look like some strangers from a different shore, but in truth, with time and the gradual loss of language abilities and inheritance of cultural knowledge, we have also become strangers to our own shores. As a second-generation Chinese American, I am caught between those two shores.

I do not purport to be 'neutral' or unbiased in my undertaking of this project, and I also admit to the implausibility of finding any 'safe' middle ground when it comes to writing about something that I feel so strongly about. This kind of dilemma did not stop Iris Chang, Li Ling-Ai, or Robin Lung, and if anything, fueled them to go further than could be imagined possible. I believe that studying archival representations of Chinese in America is one way to address at least some of the silences and gaps left behind. Through this self-reflection, I identify an urgent sense of responsibility to make evident the contributions and influences of Chinese in America to

[130] Catherine Lee, "Family Reunification and the Limits of Immigration Reform: Impact and Legacy of the 1965 Immigration Act," *Sociological Forum* 30, no. S1 (2015): 528.

the history and development of the U.S. as more than just "strangers from a different shore". Ultimately, acknowledging my positionality serves as a way to recognize both the limitations of my research and the potential for generating different perspectives and ways of doing this kind of work.

Limitations

This thesis attempts to focus on an area that has been paid minimal attention from an archival studies perspective—archival representations in collections on the Chinese in America before and during the Chinese Exclusion Era. More specifically, I focused on analyzing archival descriptions found in the finding aids and collection guides accompanying the collections, using the Online Archive of California (OAC) as the main point of entry. Due to the limited scope of the thesis, I selected a small sample size, analyzing three finding aids from collections on Chinese in America using a case study approach. The case study approach is also situated within an interpretivist paradigm, meaning that the research findings do not seek to present "factual" or unquestionable truths; rather, they support a view of my interpretations of archival descriptions—i.e., finding aids and collection guides—as interpretations themselves.[131]

According to Geoff Walsham, the interpretivist case study approach also yields other possible types of generalizations, including "the drawing of specific implications" and "the contribution of rich insight."[132] The findings from this research are still potentially significant in

[131] Gillian Oliver, "Investigating Information Culture: A Comparative Case Study, Research and Design Methods," *Archival Science* 4 (2006): 298.

[132] Geoff Walsham, "Interpretive Case Studies in IS Research: Nature and Method," *European Journal of Information Systems* 4 (1995): 79.

that they address some of the current gaps in archival studies literature and identify possibilities for meaningful intersection between the archival studies literature and other disciplines regarding Chinese in America. Since a large number of Chinese in America residing on the West Coast have historically settled in cities such as San Francisco and Los Angeles, I felt that narrowing the scope to finding aids for California-based archival collections would also help generate more compelling and relevant findings.

Institutional Overview and Finding Aid Selection Process (3-5 pages)

I utilized the Online Archive of California (OAC)[133] database as the main point of entry to perform the search and selection of finding aids for California-based archival collections and materials on Chinese in America, from before and during the Chinese Exclusion Era (1860s to 1943). This process was comprised of two main stages: 1) an initial overview of institutions in California containing archival collections and materials pertinent to Chinese in America before and during the Chinese Exclusion Era; and 2) the analysis of three purposively selected finding aids following the institutional overview process.

Some practical and physical limitations to the research project included the fact that there may be institutions with materials on Chinese in America and Chinese Exclusion who may not be contributing members of OAC. Still others may utilize localized, internal systems of documenting and describing their materials or use paper-based inventory systems, thus, such collections would not be findable through OAC's search. Moreover, even with the use of

[133] "Homepage," *Online Archive of California (OAC)*, http://www.oac.cdlib.org/. Accessed June 19, 2018.

archival descriptive standards like Encoded Archival Description (EAD) and Describing Archives: a Content Standard (DACS), every institution may vary individually in the practices under which their archival collections are acquired, arranged, processed, and described.

RECORDEXPRESS, a free online finding aid creation tool offered by OAC, does not allow the inclusion of information beyond the bare minimum of required descriptive elements: collection title, dates, collection number, creator/collector, extent, repository, abstract, language of material, access, preferred citation, acquisition information, biographical/administrative history, scope and contents of collection, and a few subject headings and indexing terms. In cases where RECORDEXPRESS is the only choice of software for finding aid creation, the box and inventory lists can alternatively be created through a word processing software and then uploaded as supplemental PDF files to the finding aid. The amount/type of descriptive information that can be included in the finding aid may affect how the collection appears in OAC search results. Lastly, the number of relevant collection guides and finding aids available on the OAC may fluctuate across time as new collections are added or existing collection guides are re-described and updated. Other time-related factors include evolving institutional practices, changes to descriptive and encoding standards, and new and emerging technologies. Therefore, the data presented in the initial institutional overview tables and finding aids analyses constitute an approximate 'snapshot' of the institutions and finding aids as they existed on the OAC during the time of the research.

As few institutions can claim to have processed the entirety (100%) of their holdings, it is possible that there may have been more relevant materials existing within backlogs (not as publicly accessible collections). Unprocessed collections can be a persistent issue not just for

smaller, non-profit institutions and cultural heritage organizations, but also for many major research and academic institutions, where accrual of archival collections and materials over the period of many years has exceeded the existing financial resources or human capacity to process them. Needs for specialized knowledge/training, access to technology, and funds to process collections also pose considerable barriers to certain institutions for processing collections. Some institutions, such as those within the University of California (UC) system, have applied minimal processing and descriptive procedures to their collections in keeping with the 'More Product, Less Process' (MPLP) approach to archival processing.[134] In some aspects, MPLP appears to advocate for 'new' concepts or practices which are not necessarily 'new' to archivists or existing archival practices, while in others, it recommends a more extreme method of minimal processing that promotes 'access' to newer collections, in an attempt to address significant backlogs that archival repositories across the country may still face.

Institutional Overview

The purpose of the institutional overview was to generate a preliminary understanding of the types of institutions that have both joined as contributing members of the OAC and uploaded online finding aids/collection guides. This overview included archival collections from institutions (of any type) in California that were contributing members of the OAC and were related to the Chinese in America before and during the Exclusion Era (1860-1943). I conducted several keyword searches on the OAC, looking at the numbers of search results returned,

[134] Mark Greene and Dennis Meissner, "More Product, Less Process: Revamping Traditional Archival Processing," in *The American Archivist* 68, no. 2 (September 2005): 208–263. https://doi.org/10.17723/aarc.68.2.c741823776k65863. Accessed June 7, 2018.

evaluating the relevance of search results to the chosen topic, and using a combination of general-to-specific search terms to observe corresponding changes in search results. The results of the keyword searches were then organized into tables that provide a broad overview of institutions and collections in the OAC relevant to Chinese in America before and during the Exclusion Era (1860-1943). Percentages were calculated by dividing the number of collections in the second column and the number of institutions in the fourth column by their respective totals. Percentages were rounded to the nearest tenth of a decimal point and thus do not add up exactly to 100.

In the first search, I used the phrase "Chinese American" (with quotation marks), which yielded a total of 376 collections in the search results. When I experimented with using the same search phrase without quotation marks, the number of search results increased exponentially to 2,197. It was observed that towards the final pages of these 2,197 search results, the collections appeared to have lesser to no relevance to the Chinese in America, since the key terms, "Chinese" and "American", would appear independently of each other within the finding aid texts rather than together as one phrase. Table 1 displays the search results for the phrase: "Chinese American", with quotation marks. In the second search, I used the slightly more specific phrase "Chinese in America", which yielded a narrower set of results—30 collections in total. See Table 2.

In the next four searches, I experimented with a different set of search terms, including terminologies which are considered 'outdated', offensive, and/or derogatory by today's standards. The chosen search terms included: "Chinese exclusion," "Chinaman," "Chinese question," and "anti-Chinese." Such terms, if not appropriately contextualized or explained

within the historical context of Chinese Exclusion, can continue to perpetuate centuries-old negative stereotypes of Chinese in America. The reasoning behind this approach was to observe how such terminologies continue to be circulated within the texts of online finding aids, whether in the descriptive summaries or in the words used to identify and describe the historical materials themselves. Studying the search results from these attempts helped me to gauge the general extent and frequency of these particular descriptive terms as they appeared within the finding aids and other associated metadata.

For the final search, I experimented with using the terms "Leland Stanford" (in quotations), which returned 2,086 search results alone in the OAC database. According to its "About" page, the OAC hosts over 20,000 online collection guides and finding aids from more than 200 contributing member institutions in California.[135] For comparison purposes, I used the total number of finding aids on OAC (20,000) as an approximate figure from which to calculate a rough estimate. Collections whose finding aids mentioned the phrase "Leland Stanford" (2,086 out of 20,000) comprised about 10% of the current total, and stands in stark contrast to the percentage of collections whose finding aids mentioned the phrase "Chinese American" (376 out of 20,000), which comprised barely 1% of that same total.

[135] "About OAC," *The Online Archive of California*, accessed April 15, 2018. http://www.oac.cdlib.org/about/.

Table 1: OAC search results for “Chinese American”

Institution Category	***No. of Collections in Search Results***	***Percentage of Total No. of Collections (%)***	***No. of Institutions Which Hold Such Collections***	***Percentage of Total No. of Institutions (%)***
Public Library	14	3.7	5	8.3
University Library Special Collections and Archives	304	81	28	47
Historical Society	17	4.5	4	6.7
State Park	0	0	0	0
State Archives	1	0.3	1	1.7
Research Center, Other Type	40	11	22	3.7
Total	376	100	60	100

Table 2: OAC search results for “Chinese in America”

Institution Category	***No. of Collections in Search Results***	***Percentage of Total No. of Collections (%)***	***No. of Institutions Which Hold Such Collections***	***Percentage of Total No. of Institutions (%)***
Public Library	0	0	0	0
University Library Special Collections and Archives	25	83	6	60
Historical Society	0	0	0	0
State Park	0	0	0	0
State Archives	0	0	0	0
Research Center, Other Type	5	17	4	40
Total	30	100	10	100

Table 3: OAC search results for “Chinese—United States”

Institution Category	***No. of Collections in Search Results***	***Percentage of Total No. of Collections (%)***	***No. of Institutions Which Hold Such Collections***	***Percentage of Total No. of Institutions (%)***
Public Library	0	0	0	0
University Library Special Collections and Archives	24	86	3	50
Historical Society	2	7	1	17
State Park	0	0	0	0
State Archives	0	0	0	0
Research Center, Other Type	2	7	2	33
Total	28	100	6	100

Table 4: OAC search results for “Chinese exclusion”

Institution Category	***No. of Collections in Search Results***	***Percentage of Total No. of Collections (%)***	***No. of Institutions Which Hold Such Collections***	***Percentage of Total No. of Institutions (%)***
Public Library	0	0	0	0
University Library Special Collections and Archives	30	75	7	54
Historical Society	1	2.5	1	8
State Park	2	5	1	8
State Archives	1	2.5	1	8
Research Center, Other Type	6	15	3	23
Total	40	100	13	100

Table 5: OAC search results for “Chinaman”

Institution Category	***No. of Collections in Search Results***	***Percentage of Total No. of Collections (%)***	***No. of Institutions Which Hold Such Collections***	***Percentage of Total No. of Institutions (%)***
Public Library	2	2.9	2	8.3
University Library Special Collections and Archives	50	74	14	58
Historical Society	2	2.9	1	4.2
State Park	0	0	0	0
State Archives	0	0	0	0
Research Center, Other Type	14	21	7	29
Total	68	100	24	100

Table 6: OAC search results for “Chinese question”

Institution Category	***No. of Collections in Search Results***	***Percentage of Total No. of Collections (%)***	***No. of Institutions Which Hold Such Collections***	***Percentage of Total No. of Institutions (%)***
Public Library	0	0	0	0
University Library Special Collections and Archives	20	95	5	83
Historical Society	0	0	0	0
State Park	0	0	0	0
State Archives	0	0	0	0
Research Center, Other Type	1	4.8	1	17
Total	21	100	6	100

Table 7: OAC search results for "anti-Chinese"

Institution Category	***No. of Collections in Search Results***	***Percentage of Total No. of Collections (%)***	***No. of Institutions Which Hold Such Collections***	***Percentage of Total No. of Institutions (%)***
Public Library	1	2.6	1	7.7
University Library Special Collections and Archives	33	85	9	69
Historical Society	1	2.6	1	7.7
State Park	1	2.6	0	0
State Archives	0	0	0	0
Research Center, Other Type	3	7.7	2	15
Total	39	100	13	100

The distribution of finding aids on the OAC, as observed from the institutional overview, reflected a tendency towards greater representation of collections from major academic institutions and research centers. This is unsurprising, considering that the OAC is maintained by the 10 University of California campuses.[136] However, the institutional overview also revealed persistent gaps and low representation in OAC's overall membership for smaller institutions such as historical societies and community-based archives. Out of these smaller institutions, some play a major role in preserving collections on underrepresented communities, especially those that have been neglected or overlooked by mainstream archival repositories in academic settings. This prompted some reflection on my part, on the need for archival descriptive practices that

[136] "About OAC," *The Online Archive of California*, accessed April 15, 2018. http://www.oac.cdlib.org/about/.

place the narratives and experiences of Chinese in America at the center, not at the edges, of documents such as finding aids, and more importantly, should strive to do so with words and terminologies that acknowledge the multidimensionality and complexity of these communities' experiences. The process also highlighted how the privilege and concentrated authority of a select few have shaped an "extant documentary record" that "overwhelmingly favors the elite," while historical records left behind by Chinese in America have not been closely studied until relatively recently.[137] As Gordon Chang asks: "How do we understand lived experience if we have nothing from the actors themselves?"[138] This dilemma presents both a challenge and an opportunity—to understand how archival representations and descriptions within collections on early Chinese in America also have the power to influence how Chinese American history is told.

Selection of Finding Aids

Selection of finding aids followed a qualitative approach using a nonprobability sampling technique, or more specifically, a purposive sampling method. Through the institutional review, relevant collections and contributing institutions were identified, and out of these, three finding aids were then purposively selected in accordance with the following criteria: 1) relevance of archival materials in the collection to Chinese in America dating from before and during Exclusion Era (1860s-1943); 2) type of institution; 3) relative length of the finding aid / extent of

[137] Gordon H. Chang and Shelley Fisher Fishkin, "Fragments of the Past: Archaeology, History, and the Chinese American Railroad Workers of North America (过去的碎片：考古，历史与北美地区的铁路工人)," in Special Issue of *Historical Archaeology* 49, no. 1 (2015): 1.

[138] *Ibid.*

the collection; and 4) level of detail and/or comprehensiveness of description provided within the finding aid, especially in the following areas: descriptive summary, administrative information, scope and content notes, repository information, and inventory/box lists. In selecting each finding aid for analysis, I adhered to the scope of the original research questions, which focused on studying archival representations and descriptions of Chinese in America (1860-1943) in archives and special collections of academic institutions and in community-based archives across California. While the scope for selection did not include finding aids created within the contexts of public libraries and museums, these might be good subjects for future research on how professionals working at such institutions arrange, process and describe historical collections on early Chinese in America.

Additionally, as limited available resources were a factor in data collection and analysis, finding aids that were more than a few hundred pages long and which involved multiple collections, creators, and repositories fell outside of the constraints for this thesis. One such example is the "Guide to the Chinese in California Virtual Collection, 1850-1925" from the Bancroft Library at University of California, Berkeley. Although it conformed to three of the four criteria identified, the length of the finding aid itself (412 pages long) and the extent of the collection (2,710 digital library objects or 5,349 items total) made it prohibitive to include this finding aid for study alongside several other selected finding aids. Analysis for its many complex facets would require a somewhat different set of research questions, framework and methods, as well as a significantly greater investment of resources and time so as to enable detailed, nuanced analysis of the finding aid and the multiple associated collections, repositories, and individuals involved.

Selecting a small, purposive sample for this study supports a fuller in-depth investigation into each finding aid while contending with the reality of constricted resources, thereby limiting the sample of finding aids to a more practical size. As critical sociologist Nick Emmel has commented:

> Collecting data from a larger population will always be a trade-off between depth of investigation and breadth. Attempts to collect detailed accounts, which are the common currency of qualitative research, from a large population will, inevitably, lead to further challenges to resources. In designing research there are resource implications to consider not only in collecting data, but also in organising, presenting, and analysing these data. With these considerations in mind, researchers will inevitably choose to focus their study in some way. That is, they will decide on a practical sample with which to carry out an in-depth and detailed study.[139]

While the findings may not be as broadly generalizable to a wider population, selecting a practical sample size made it possible to dedicate greater attention to in-depth analysis of individual finding aids while keeping to a manageable scale. Bent Flyvbjerg observed that "the goal" of such an approach "is not to make the case study be all things to all people," but rather "to allow the study to be different things to different people."[140] In "describing the case with so many facets—like life itself," I recognize that "different readers may be attracted, or repelled, by different things in [each] case."[141]

During the institutional overview, I observed a phrase that appeared relatively frequently with respect to collection titles within the search results; this was "The Chinese in California".

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[139] Nick Emmel, "Sampling and Choosing Cases in Qualitative Research: A Realist Approach," *SAGE Research Methods* (2014): 5.

[140] Bent Flybvjerg, "Five Misunderstandings about Case Study Research," *SAGE Qualitative Research Methods* (2011): 20.

[141] *Ibid*.

Two institutions that stood out were the University of California, Riverside and the University of California, Berkeley (as previously mentioned). The UC Riverside collection is entitled "The Chinese in California Collection, 1850-1989" and primarily contains scholarly research materials and photographs pertaining to the Chinese in America around the period leading up to and during the Chinese Exclusion Era.[142] This collection's finding aid was selected due to relevance to the topic in question, affiliation with the special collections and university archives of an academic institution, relatively compact length (7-page PDF), and the moderate level of detail and comprehensiveness in the descriptive elements.

The second finding aid was selected from Stanford University, a private academic institution outside of the UC system. Its collection is entitled, "The Leland Stanford Papers, 1841-1897," and its primary focus is on materials pertaining to the life and career of Leland Stanford, one of the "Big Four" associated with the Central Pacific Railroad.[143] This finding aid was selected for its relevance to the topic in question, affiliation to special collections and archives (specifically, the university archives) of an academic institution, moderate length (26-page PDF), and the high level of detail and comprehensiveness in the descriptive elements. Another factor influencing the decision to choose this particular finding aid was a curious lack of description about Chinese in America, as well as a list of 27 access terms highlighting the names of corporations, geographic locations, and prominent individuals (none of which were Chinese).

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[142] "Collection Guide to Chinese in California Collection," MS 095, Special Collections and University Archives, Rivera Library, University of California, Riverside, accessed July 11, 2018, http://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt6p3040cr.

[143] "Guide to the Leland Stanford Papers," SC0033A, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Green Library, Stanford University, accessed July 11, 2018, https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/tf6c600570/.

This particular finding aid constituted a unique case critical to the current research focus, and thus merited a closer investigation and analysis for its potential to generate a productive, critical discussion.

Finally, the third and last finding aid was chosen from the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California (CHSSC), for a collection entitled "The Chace and Evans Collection, 1865-1869."[144] The primary focus of the collection is on archaeological research related Chinese artifacts dating back to the mid-19th century as well as writings illustrating the lives of early Chinese in America. The finding aid was selected for its relevance to the topic in question, affiliation to a community-based archives at a non-profit organization, its brevity of length (2-page PDF), and the minimal level of detail and comprehensiveness in the descriptive elements. A notable characteristic of this finding aid lay in the minimally processed status of the collection, as well as the fact that an inventory, box list, or other supplementary materials had not been appended to the finding aid. Based on previous experience as a volunteer and archives committee member at the CHSSC, I wanted to address some of the factors influencing the creation of the collection's finding aid within the particular context of a community-based archives in Southern California.

I made these selections with the understanding that these finding aids are not expected to represent the full spectrum of available institutions and collections in California. In addition, they are not a random selection, but purposively selected due to identifying qualities within each selection that make them significant in some aspect for further analysis. The analysis and

[144] "Collection Guide to Chace and Evans Collection," 2017 M.S., Chinese Historical Society of Southern California, accessed July 11, 2018, https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8s46z54/.

discussion of selected finding aids follow the guidelines set out by the research questions and scope, but do not seek to claim absolute truths or provide conclusive answers to those questions, acknowledging that new questions may be posed and further potential directions for research may be identified in the process. In addition, I do not seek to make these selections in anticipation of any specific expected results, but rather to explore archival representations of Chinese in America within a variety of different contexts.

Data Collection

Data collection took place over the course of several months, from the institutional overview through to the selection and analysis of specific finding aids. The institutional overview consisted of a series of experimental and iterative searches on the online OAC database. This process required access to a stable and readily available internet connection and a desktop or portable laptop computer with web browsing capability. While there was some flexibility in terms of physical environment, data collection for this project also necessitated access to a quiet or secluded working space, preferably in areas that offered either a wired ethernet or wireless internet connection. I anticipated that a moderate amount of time would be spent on exploring and carrying out keyword searches using both general and specific search terms, as well as evaluating and selecting finding aids from search results according to a defined set of criteria (see Data Analysis). The goal was to explore using multiple search terms that would reflect both early and contemporary terminologies used to describe Chinese in America and Chinese exclusion, while also retrieving search results that could be incorporated in the institutional review. If search terms were too broad or vaguely defined, the OAC search results

would become too expansive, making it difficult to locate finding aids for collections that fell under the research scope. If too specific or too many search terms were entered into a single search, there would be little to no meaningful or relevant search results. At the end, search results were documented, recorded, and tallied by hand, and then organized into structured tables using a laptop computer and word processing software.

One challenge I encountered during the initial search and data collection was the inability to limit search results in the OAC to a date range containing multiple decades (in this case, the 1860s-1940s). Search filters on the right-hand side only allow users to select an individual decade—1860s, 1870s, 1880s, and so on. Clicking on each decade thus only displays search results for collections that fall into that decade alone, with no option to filter and display search results over a series of decades. By placing an "advanced search" option under the search bar that can provide this filtering function (similar to those seen in most university library catalog search engines), the OAC could greatly improve its services and benefit those users may wish to filter searches, such as by starting and ending year, rather than restrict searches to a single decade.

In the finding aid selection stage, the data collection process became slightly more straightforward. Once the three finding aids were selected, I created a table for each one, placing the 27 facet names in the left-hand column, and the basic information pertaining to each facet in the right-hand column. I was able to retain or summarize most of the original information corresponding to facets in the finding aid. However, due to the considerable length of some facets—such as the abstract, scope and contents note(s), and historical/biographical note—these were given a brief word-count and summary in the table, and longer analysis provided in the

findings and discussion following each table. Each table was given a footnote referencing the online finding aid and providing a link to the requisite OAC page(s). The purpose of representing the facets in the table format was not to reproduce or replicate selected finding aids in their entirety, but to use the table as an organizing mechanism and to group each of the 27 facets in the order they were analyzed. The analysis focuses on each finding aid in their specific contexts, from one collection at a public academic research institution, one collection at a private academic research institution, and one collection at community-based archives/organization, respectively.

Data Analysis

I approached this stage of the process using a qualitative content analysis approach. A total of 27 facets within each finding aid were identified for further analysis, as outlined in Table 7. These 27 facets were then analyzed in three main groups—labeled Facet Groups 1, 2, and 3—to assist with comprehension, organization, and coherence of the findings and discussion. Facet Group 1 was named *Language & Terminology* and included the collection title, abstract, scope and contents note, historical / biographical note, subject headings / indexing terms, language(s) of material, levels of arrangement, levels of description, size / extent of collection, and box / inventory list. Facet Group 2 was named *Institutions and Individuals*, and included the processor(s) of collection, arranger(s) of collection, individual responsible for machine-readable finding aid, creator(s), immediate source(s) of acquisition, preferred citation, repository information, contributing institution(s), and conditions governing use / access. Facet Group 3 was named *Changing Archival Descriptive Standards and Technologies* and included dates

(inclusive), dates of collection creation, date of acquisition, date of finding aid creation, date of processing, copyright date / attribution, archival descriptive standard(s) used, and typ(s) of software / application used to generate the finding aid.

Table 8: Facets for analysis in finding aids (27 total)

Facets for Analysis in Finding Aids	
① collection title	② immediate source(s) of acquisition
① abstract	② preferred citation
① scope and contents note	② repository information
① historical / biographical note	② contributing institution(s)
① subject headings / indexing terms	② conditions governing use / access
① language(s) of material	③ dates (inclusive)
① levels of arrangement	③ dates of collection creation
① levels of description	③ date of acquisition
① size / extent of collection	③ date of finding aid creation
① box / inventory list	③ date of processing
② processor(s) of collection	③ copyright date / attribution
② arranger(s) of collection	③ archival descriptive standard(s) used
② individual responsible for machine-readable finding aid	③ type(s) of software / application used to generate finding aid
② creator(s)	

Legend

① Facet Group 1 – *Language and Terminology*

② Facet Group 2 – *Institutions and Individuals*

③ Facet Group 3 – *Changing Archival Descriptive Standards and Technology*

More generally, these groups were created as an endeavor to analyze and organize facets so as to examine the language and terminologies used in the archival descriptions, the roles of individuals and institutions in the creation of archival finding aids, and the ways that changing standards and technologies also impact archival representation and descriptions of Chinese in America before and during the Exclusion Act. If information in any of the 27 selected facets were absent or missing, I indicated this by adding the label “not specified” next to the facet in the

table. The three "Facet Groups" are not meant to be mutually exclusive, and are expected to overlap and interconnect in some areas of the analysis.

I then considered several factors related to the 27 previously identified facets. These factors are as follows: 1) the kinds of terminology/descriptive language used and whether they were drawn from the collection, a controlled vocabulary or the processor(s) themselves; 2) roles and backgrounds of individuals responsible for processing, arranging, and describing the collection, as well as creating and/or modifying the machine-readable finding aid; 3) whether what is listed in the folder and box lists is also listed in the descriptive summary and/or collection overview at the beginning of the finding aid; 4) any institutional practices and/or descriptive standards in use at the time the finding aid was created; 5) whether any content within the collection has been digitized; and 6) in the case of digitization, whether the collection was re-described, reprocessed, or anything added or removed from it at any point.

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion

When the legacies of a few are immortalized and the records of certain groups have historically been overlooked and/or neglected from mainstream narratives, the need to examine how a "language of erasure" operates in descriptive practices becomes far greater.[145] Through this perspective, it is possible to understand that archival representations and descriptions are not exempt or immune from institutionalized racism and personal biases, and that naming

[145] Annie Tang, Dorothy Judith Berry, Kelly Bolding, and Rachel E. Winston, "Towards Culturally Competent (Re)Description of Marginalized Histories," *Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting: ARCHIVES * RECORDS 2018*, 16 Aug. 2018, Marriott Warden Park, Washington, D.C., Education Session.

conventions, descriptive language, and choice of terminologies can play powerful roles in shaping knowledge.

The following analyses for each of the three cases were conducted to uncover various ways in which finding aids can be read and understood, not merely as products of a series of administrative processes, but as living documents which are themselves interpretative in nature, fundamentally influenced by the assumptions and worldviews of the individuals and institutions creating them—which can themselves be critically examined, interpreted, and discussed. To reiterate, the three selected finding aids are: 1) the Collection Guide to "The Chinese in California Collection, 1850-1989" at University of California, Riverside's Special Collections and University Archives; 2) the Guide to "The Leland Stanford Papers, 1841-1897" at Stanford University's Department of Special Collections and University Archives; and 3) the Collection Guide to "Chace and Evans Collection, 1865-1869." A total of 27 facets were identified for analysis and discussion, as categorized into three main Facet Groups. Facet Group 1 is entitled *Language and Terminology*, Facet Group 2 is entitled *Institutions and Individuals,* and Facet Group 3 is entitled *Changing Archival Descriptive Standards and Technologies*.

Case Study No. 1: Collection Guide to "The Chinese in California Collection, 1850-1989" (University of California, Riverside)

Table 9: University of California, Riverside, "Chinese in California Collection, 1850-1989"[146]

Facet	Description / Information
① collection title	"Chinese in California collection"
① abstract	63-word description paraphrasing information found in the scope and contents note
① scope and contents	94-word description of materials (photographs, correspondence, press clippings, typescripts, and other material) and topics covered in the collection (preservation of regional Chinatowns, scholarly research on Chinese history and culture, railroad construction, agricultural labor, Gold Rush, and life in multiple Chinatown locations)
① historical / biographical note	465-word description on history of Chinese in California
① subject headings / indexing terms	• Anthropological studies • California • Chinatowns • Chinese • Immigrants Riverside
① language(s) of the material	English and Chinese
① levels of arrangement	The collection is arranged into three series: • Series 1. Academic Writings on Chinese History and Culture, 1875-1989, undated; • Series 2. California Chinatowns, circa 1870-1988, undated; • Series 3. Chinese in Western U.S. History, circa 1850-1989, undated.
① levels of description	multi-level description: collection-, series-, and folder-level
① size / extent of collection	4.59 Linear Feet (11 boxes)
① box / inventory list	yes
② processor(s) of collection	Juliana Schouest and Sara Seltzer
② arranger(s) of collection	Juliana Schouest and Sara Seltzer
② individual responsible for machine-readable finding aid	modified by Eric Milenkiewicz
② creator(s)	not specified
② immediate source(s) of acquisition	not specified
② preferred citation	[identification of item], [date if possible]. Chinese in California collection (MS 095). Special Collections & University Archives, University of California, Riverside

[146] "Collection Guide to Chinese in California Collection," MS 095, Special Collections and University Archives, Rivera Library, University of California, Riverside, accessed July 11, 2018, http://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt6p3040cr.

② repository information	Rivera Library. Special Collections Department. Riverside, CA 92517-5900
② contributing institution(s)	University of California, Riverside Library – Special Collections & University Archives
② conditions governing use / access	copyright unknown / collection is open for research
③ dates (inclusive)	circa 1850-1989, undated
③ date(s) of collection creation	not specified
③ date of acquisition	not specified
③ date of finding aid creation	not specified
③ date of processing	2008
③ copyright date / attribution	2017 / The Regents of the University of California. All rights reserved.
③ archival descriptive standard(s) used	Describing Archives: a Content Standard (DACS)[147]
③ type(s) of software / application used to generate finding aid	not specified

Facet Group 1: Language and Terminologies

A collection title may appear simple enough on the surface, but can evoke a host of different meanings depending on the individuals reading it. The broadness or specificity of a title also reflects, to some degree, decisions that were made concerning which individuals or communities are represented within the collection. This process of naming can implicitly highlight and/or obscure the significance of specific individuals and communities in relation to one another. The terms used in a collection title not only communicate certain kinds of information about the collection's contents, but also convey a subjective "value" to each individual user. Citing Jacques Derrida on "deconstructing the processes of naming," Wendy Duff and Verne Harris write: "What we name we declare knowable and controllable. In naming,

[147] Next Generation Technical Services POT 3 Lightning Team 2, "Guidelines for Efficient Archival Processing in the University of California Libraries," University of California Libraries, Sept. 18, 2012, https://libraries.universityofcalifornia.edu/groups/files/hosc/docs/_Efficient_Archival_Processing_Guidelines_v3-1.pdf. Accessed July 15, 2018.

we bring order to chaos. We tame the wilderness, place everything in boxes, whether standard physical containers or standardized intellectual ones."[148] Naming imparts power to the individuals doing the naming, not necessarily the individuals being named.

What information does a title such as "The Chinese in California Collection" reveal, then? During initial stages of searching the Online Archive of California (OAC), I noted that this phrase "Chinese in California" and variations of it appeared multiple times in a number of other collection titles, including "The Chinese in California Virtual Collection" at the University of California, Berkeley and "The Chinese in America Collection" at the University of California, Santa Barbara, among others. According to Describing Archives: a Content Standard, Second Edition (DACS) 2.3, choosing a "devised title" is a decision on the part of the individual processing, arranging, and describing the collection, and is meant to "incorporate the form(s) of material that typifies the unit and reflects the function, activity, transaction, subject, individuals, or organizations that were the basis of its creation or use."[149]

In the case of UC Riverside, the title "Chinese in California Collection" gave me some sense of the subject (Chinese) and geographical location (California) of the collection contents. As a unit, as individuals, and as subjects of a collection's creation, the meaning of "Chinese" seems to get homogenized into the nebulous mix of all the other similarly named collections—it requires excavating information in the dates (inclusive), abstract, scope and contents notes, and historical / biographical note in order to disambiguate one "Chinese in California" collection

[148] Wendy M. Duff and Verne Harris, "Stories and Names: Archival Description as Narrating Records and Constructing Meanings," *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 281-282.

[149] Society of American Archivists, "2.3 Title (Required)", *Describing Archives: a Content Standard (DACS), Second Edition* (2013).

from another. The issue with this naming convention is that such a title might imply a certain level of comprehensiveness to the collection (whether this is intentional or not), when realistically, it only covers a small part or sampling of perspectives. It obscures what uniqueness the materials might have, sets up certain expectations about the contents, and creates a superficial sense of "representation" when so much still remains unknown and unstudied about Chinese people's experiences as individuals before and during the Exclusion Era. In part due to the context of migration, records left behind by Chinese in the 19th century span not only across state lines, but also over international borders throughout centuries of shifting contexts, interpretations and labels, which is why archaeological research plays a large role in reconstructing some of those timelines and patterns of movement.[150] The plausible reality is that a very small portion of those materials then become the entities that are known today as "collections" in the context of special collections and archives in an academic institution.

As a second-generation American-born Chinese, I recognize that use of such a phrase as "Chinese in California" or "Chinese in America" might constitute a naming practice that corroborates views of Chinese as 'perpetual foreigners', a group that, in Western eyes, did not belong and were 'unassimilable'. Such beliefs became the foundation upon which to justify the legalized exclusion ('aliens ineligible for citizenship') and propagate negative stereotypes of Chinese based upon popular misrepresentations and misunderstandings. Arguably, this complicates my own decision to use the phrase *Chinese in America* to refer to both Chinese and

[150] Gordon H. Chang and Shelley Fisher Fishkin, "Fragments of the Past: Archaeology, History, and the Chinese American Railroad Workers of North America (过去的碎片：考古，历史与北美地区的铁路工人)," in Special Issue of *Historical Archaeology* 49, no. 1 (2015): 1.

Chinese Americans. Although the intention is to acknowledge the complexities of citizenship, and to introduce a transnational perspective not limited to just the U.S. context, there is also not a single 'catch-all' term that can encompass the experiences and identities of being 'Chinese.' Writing from an American context, I recognize that many terms used to describe race and ethnicity are necessarily constructed from Westernized perspectives.

Such conceptions can also be observed in the abstract, scope and contents note, historical / biographical note, subject headings / indexing terms, and language(s) of material specified in the UC Riverside collection finding aid. These facets are categorized under "Collection Details" in the OAC web interface.[151] I examined the descriptive language and terminologies America in each of these facets, noting the historical associations with certain phrases and their influence upon *representations* of Chinese in America, as can be understood in a more general sense. Here, I use representation as it is used in Asian American Studies and other disciplines.

I identified three specific facets which stood out in terms of descriptive language: the historical / biographical note, subject headings / indexing terms, and the levels of arrangement (series titles). The historical note was significant for two reasons: the length and thoroughness of the information provided (465 words), and the terminologies used to describe Chinese in America. I observed that an appreciable effort was made to provide context and detailed descriptions acknowledging the major issues which affected life of the Chinese who came to America. That being said, the process of unraveling the descriptive language revealed some terminologies that merit mentioning due to their connotations and historical associations. As I

[151] "Collection Guide to Chinese in California Collection," MS 095, Special Collections and University Archives, Rivera Library, University of California, Riverside, accessed July 11, 2018, http://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt6p3040cr.

delved deeper into the historical note, an interesting thread emerged as to how the choice of words simultaneously evoked concepts of agency and disempowerment.

For instance, I identified words which described Chinese as "victims", members of an "unskilled labor force," residents of "enclaves" or "Chinatowns" which were commonly seen as an "exotic curiosity" for American tourists, and as a group singled out by white workers for "causing the nation's demise."[152] These terms may or may not be seen as problematic on their own, but when placed within the wider context of Chinese American history, some of the complexities within become more apparent. portrayals in the past of Chinese people as a nameless, voiceless 'mass' and as second-class citizens who became sources of entertainment for privileged mainstream white audiences and convenient targets for racially motivated acts of violence. While these characterizations may be part of a well-intentioned attempt to express the level of exclusion and discriminatory conditions faced by Chinese, they also build upon enduring notions that have positioned race/ethnicity itself as a problem, not the racism and nativism of the white workers, the state labor union, and the federal government. These qualms arise not from the use of those terms on their own, but rather the ways in which they are placed in conjunction with others to form an image of race relations in California—specifically, one in which racism is implied but not explicitly named. This leaves a question in the mind: why "racism" or "racist attitudes" as terminologies themselves are not included.

I also examined two phrases, "Sino phobia" and "anti-Chinese hysteria," and the ways in which they locate race and ethnicity in a Euro-centric framework. "Sino phobia," defined as a

[152] Collection Guide to Chinese in California Collection," MS 095, Special Collections and University Archives, Rivera Library, University of California, Riverside, accessed July 11, 2018, 2-3. http://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/kt6p3040cr.

"fear and hatred of the Chinese," seems in line with racist depictions of Chinese as a 'yellow peril,' a 'menace,' and a threat or disease to white Americans."[153] "Anti-Chinese hysteria" also indicates some form of pathological condition which negatively affects the wellbeing of the individual sufferer and which also appears to be rooted in being ethnically Chinese.[154] In other words, if there were no Chinese, would there also be no more 'hysteria'? When these two phrases are used in tandem, they continue a narrative that renders whiteness as the norm and Chineseness as deviating from the norm—something to fear and hate rather than understand more about.

There is an "implicit stereotyping" present in contemporary contexts where overt expressions of racism are no longer socially acceptable, and have been replaced in everyday interaction by a "new manifestation of racism [that] has been likened to carbon monoxide, invisible, but potentially lethal."[155] Such manifestations are just as likely to be unconscious as well as benevolent in intention; some are the products of outdated beliefs and assumptions as transmitted over the span of multiple generations, both among individuals and across institutions. Instead of "Sino phobia" and "anti-Chinese hysteria," I draw from recent discussions on metadata justice to suggest using terms such as "nativism" and "Orientalism" as descriptors

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[153] "Sino-, comb. form1". OED Online. July 2018. Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/180253?redirectedFrom=sino+phobia (accessed October 07, 2018).

[154] "hysteria, n.". OED Online. July 2018. Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/90638?redirectedFrom=hysteria (accessed October 07, 2018).

[155] Derald Wing Sue, Jennifer Bucceri, Annie I. Lin, Kevin L. Nadal, and Gina C. Torino, "Microaggressions and the Asian American Experience," in *Asian American Journal of Psychology* S, no. 1 (2009): 88.

instead.[156] Here, 'phobia' and 'hysteria' may unconsciously "pathologize [the] values/communication styles of people of color [as] abnormal" while "nativism" and "Orientalism" point to the attitudes motivated by political interest as well as personal prejudice and bias.[157]

Identifying, and more importantly, naming "racism" and "racist attitudes" as the root of such fear and hatred shifts the focus away from ethnicity as a 'problem' and shines a spotlight upon the prejudice harbored within individuals against that ethnicity. Reframing the way race/ethnicity is currently understood and disentangling historically associated stigmas from them can open up space for Chinese to be represented as intelligent human beings, with their own set of unique values and valid communication styles and who are just as worthy of citizenship and belonging as any other beings living in that country.[158] However, as Min Zhou has noted, anti-Chinese attitudes did not just stem from racial prejudices, but also manifested in economic, moral, and political interests that at times petitioned simultaneously against *and* for Chinese exclusion.[159]

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[156] Melissa Stoner, Lillian Castillo-Speed, and Sine Hwang Jensen, "Metadata Justice: Representing Diversity and Inclusion in Our Collections." *The Third National Joint Conference of Librarians of Color*, 28 Sept. 2018, Albuquerque Convention Center, Albuquerque, NM. Roundtable Presentation.

[157] Derald Wing Sue, Jennifer Bucceri, Annie I. Lin, Kevin L. Nadal, and Gina C. Torino, "Microaggressions and the Asian American Experience," in *Asian American Journal of Psychology* S, no. 1 (2009): 90.

[158] *Ibid*.

[159] Min Zhou, "Week 2 Lecture: Early Chinese Emigration and Chinese Exclusion." *Chinese Immigration*, Apr. 9, 2017, University of California, Los Angeles, Los Angeles, CA. Lecture.

Such discussion relates well to the subject headings / indexing terms as well as the levels of arrangement and levels of description. The following two subject headings are examined: "Chinatowns" and "Immigrants." A constructive suggestion to be made for improving the description is consultation of additional resources that have emerged in more recent years since the creation of the finding aid. One such text to consult could be the *Keywords for Asian American Studies*, published in 2015, which can serve as an accessible resource for understanding critical and evolving language from an ethnic studies perspective.[160] Works such as this are known more generally as keywords texts, and often take the form of anthologies that have been written and edited for Chicano Studies, Asian American Studies, African American Studies, and more. Entries are contributed by ethnic studies scholars from these respective fields about the history, meaning, and scholarship surrounding selected terms, such as "Chinatown" and "enclaves".[161] Each chapter is devoted to a single key term/phrase and related key terms/phrases; authors not only outline the origins and developments of these terms, but also reflect upon the inevitable tensions that arise with the changing and ever-expanding universe of terminologies being used in Asian American Studies and other fields.

Such concerns also align with current discussions on library cataloging, Library of Congress subject headings, and intersections between bibliographic classification systems and

[160] Melissa Stoner, Lillian Castillo-Speed, and Sine Hwang Jensen, "Metadata Justice: Representing Diversity and Inclusion in Our Collections." *The Third National Joint Conference of Librarians of Color*, 28 Sept. 2018, Albuquerque Convention Center, Albuquerque, NM. Roundtable Presentation.

[161] *Ibid*.

archival description.[162] Yoonmee Chang presents the debate regarding the terms "Chinatown," "enclave," and "ghetto" as they relate to the aforementioned questions of agency and disempowerment for their inhabitants. She brings to light "earlier depictions of spaces like Chinatown as sites of impoverishment, filth, and intractable crime—in short, as ghettos."[163] This imagery ties only too comfortably into assumptions of criminality associated with the "cinematic spectacle" of Chinatowns, as constructed within American imaginations by mainstream film and television industries.[164] Chang points out that a later shift to using "enclave" in Asian American Studies scholarship was an attempt to impart some sense of economic agency to the individuals; yet, describing Chinatowns as "enclaves" can also serve to "privilege…*cultural* agency and…obscure… racialized *class* inequity."[165] Selma Siew Li Bidlingmaier comments upon popular Western conceptions of Chinatowns in mainstream media, via the following analysis:

> Images of debased and ludicrous Chinese laundrymen were common characters in short motion pictures such as *Fun in a Chinese Laundry* (1894 and 1901). Sociologist Jan Lin describes the "Yellowman" image being often portrayed by "white actors who wore Chinese shirts, baggy pants, and Qing-era queue hairpieces [b]umbling and prone to opium addiction staged as pagans unable to accept Christianity and Western morality" (176). In the 1910s and 1920s, Tong

[162] See Jonathan Furner, "Dewey deracialized: A critical race-theoretic perspective," *BePress* (2007): 1-36, https://works.bepress.com/furner/14/; and Molly Higgins, "Totally Invisible: Asian American Representation in the Dewey Decimal Classification, 1876-1996," *BePress* (1998): 1-14, https://works.bepress.com/molly_higgins/21/.

[163] Yoonmee Chang, "Chinatowns," Schlund-Vials, Cathy J., Linda Trinh Võ, and K. Scott Wong, eds. *Keywords for Asian American Studies*. NYU Press, 2015: 72.

[164] Selma Siew Li Bidlingmaier, "The Spectacle of the Other: Representations of Chinatown in Michael Cimino's Year of the Dragon (1985) and John Carpenter's Big Trouble in Little China (1986)." *Current Objectives of Postgraduate American Studies* 8, no. 0 (2007). https://copas.uni-regensburg.de/article/view/95.

[165] Yoonmee Chang, "Chinatowns," Schlund-Vials, Cathy J., Linda Trinh Võ, and K. Scott Wong, eds. *Keywords for Asian American Studies*. NYU Press, 2015: 72.

> wars and Chinese criminal syndicates became popular themes. Cinematic representations of Chinatown always utilized visual cues such as smoky interiors, shadowy figures with long fingernails and daggers, heightening the public's perception of Chinatowns as mysterious and dangerous. Without detailed explanation, merely the titles of these early motion pictures give us an insight of Chinatown depictions: *The Chinatown Mystery* (1915), *Chinatown Villains* (1916), *Chinatown Nights* (1929), *Captured in Chinatown* (1935), *Shadow of Chinatown* (1936), etc.

All of this to drive home the point that terms such as "Chinatown" are not merely givens or norms that developed 'naturally' in the English vocabulary, but are racially loaded, socially constructed descriptors that should be utilized with care, cultural awareness and sensitivity—subtleties which Library of Congress subject headings do not always make clear on their own. Similarly, it has been suggested in more recent dialogues that subject headings such as "Immigrants" should be replaced with "Diaspora" or "Refugee".[166] Using "Immigrant" identifies individuals within narrow legal confines of a particular country, whereas using "Diaspora" and/or "Refugee" can make evident the transnational currents and imperialist elements that played a role in shaping these individuals' experiences.[167]

Keywords texts do not hold all the "answers" for which terms are "best", but citing them in the finding aid can help illuminate the complexities of the terms as they are used to describe specific individuals and communities. As this particular case demonstrates, the process of choosing terminologies is a messy but crucial step in naming and describing Chinese in America so as to acknowledge the multidimensionality of their experiences. Individuals responsible for

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[166] Melissa Stoner, Lillian Castillo-Speed, and Sine Hwang Jensen, "Metadata Justice: Representing Diversity and Inclusion in Our Collections." *The Third National Joint Conference of Librarians of Color*, 28 Sept. 2018, Albuquerque Convention Center, Albuquerque, NM. Roundtable Presentation.

[167] *Ibid*.

generating archival descriptions for the finding aid could turn to keywords texts for insight and even point their users to these texts via bibliographic references appended to the historical / bibliographical note. Just as citing sources in scholarly work and research papers lends validity and strength to the writers' premise and chosen approach, doing so for the finding aid of "The Chinese in California" collection also contributes a greater level of accountability and better understanding of the research that went into the writing of these descriptions. Even if the research originates from sources inside the collection, making a clear indication of these connections can help users understand and evaluate how the descriptive information was constructed.

The final facets for the Facet Group 1 discussion are the levels of arrangement and levels of description. These are: "Series 1. Academic Writings on Chinese History and Culture, 1875-1989, undated; Series 2. California Chinatowns, circa 1870-1988, undated; and Series 3. Chinese in Western U.S. History, circa 1850-1989, undated." Each series was assigned its own scope and contents note. Materials in Series 1 and 2 were mainly comprised of more contemporary scholarly writings and correspondence created by both Chinese and white American scholars, while Series 3 contained many photographic depictions of Chinese people and culture dating back to the 19th century. The language(s) of the material also indicate that there are contents in both English and Chinese languages, but it is not apparent from the finding aid whether individuals describing the folder contents made attempts to translate what was in Chinese and/or consult Chinese-language speakers to find out the meaning. Translating Chinese-language materials inside might provide insights and overlooked information missing from accounts

written in English, as well as supplement descriptions in the scope and contents note and historical note.

Facet Group 2: Institutions & Individuals

Analyzing archival representations in finding aids necessarily involves looking at the roles and backgrounds of the individuals who contributed to their creation. In considering who the processor(s) and arranger(s) of the collection are, as well as who the individual(s) responsible for the machine-readable finding aid are, I consulted publicly available institutional newsletters, articles, interviews, and other official sources. To ensure respect of individual privacy and to keep discussions on backgrounds and skills strictly within the realm of professional endeavors, no use of social media or other personal information sources was permitted. However, it is also worth reiterating that bias and assumptions are part and parcel of how individuals interpret the world around them; no one can be truly exempt, not the staff, volunteers, interns, student assistants, users or other information professionals working with archives and archival representations, myself included. That being said, the processing note includes attribution to two individuals, Julia Schouest and Sara Seltzer, with a specified date of processing listed as 2008. Eric Milenkiewicz is identified as the individual responsible for modifying the machine-readable finding aid. Specific roles were unclear, as to whether the processors/arrangers worked together or separately upon the collection or how much time was spent to complete the project; there was also no information indicating which descriptions were authored by which individuals. This does not seem to be an uncommon occurrence in such finding aids, as certain information will inevitably be foregrounded, de-emphasized, and/or hidden from public view depending on their assumed ‘value’ to users. Other information will be left out or placed within internal

documentation, as determined by the institution. Such facets that appear only in internal documentation fall outside the scope of the current study.

Little information was available regarding Julia Schouest beyond basic education.[168] On the other hand, there were several public sources that mentioned Sara Seltzer, including newsletters, interviews, and featured articles.[169] Eric Milenkiewicz is currently listed in the UC Riverside Library Staff Directory as the digitization services program manager whose current role is to "lead the library in both on-going and future development of a comprehensive program to generate, manage and preserve born-digital and digital surrogates, and to build value-added services on top of these digital assets."[170] This general overview indicated that the individuals processing and arranging such materials as the UC Riverside "Chinese in California" collection seemed to have come to the project with a variety of interdisciplinary educational backgrounds (in this case arts, sciences, and/or humanities), as well as undergone some forms of training,

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[168] "Julia Schouest," *Chronicle Vitae*, accessed 25 Aug. 2018, https://chroniclevitae.com/people/284765-juliana-schouest/profile.

[169] See the following official sources: Society of American Archivists at UCLA, "UCLA Information Studies: Fields of Endeavor || Featuring Sara Seltzer (UC Irvine Special Collections and Archives)," *Society of American Archivists at UCLA*, accessed 25 Aug. 2018, https://uclasaa.wordpress.com/2014/04/01/ucla-information-studies-fields-of-endeavor-featuring-sara-seltzer-uc-irvine-special-collections-and-archives/; "New Staff Fill Important Roles in the Libraries," *UCI Libraries Update: A Newsletter for Faculty*, accessed 25 Aug. 2018, https://update.lib.uci.edu/fall13/11.html; "How the UCR Library Launched the Career of Alumna Sara Seltzer '08," *UCR Library Newsletter*, accessed 25 Aug. 2018, https://library.ucr.edu/about/news/how-the-ucr-library-launched-the-career-of-alumna-sara-seltzer-08; Sara Seltzer, "Archives Help Tell the Story of J. Paul Getty's Life and Legacy," *The Iris: Behind the Scenes at the Getty*, accessed 25 Aug. 2018, http://blogs.getty.edu/iris/archives-help-tell-the-story-of-gettys-life-and-legacy/.

[170] "Eric Milenkiewicz," UC Riverside Staff Directory, accessed 30 Sept. 2018. https://library.ucr.edu/about/directory/staff/eric-milenkiewicz.

work experience, and/or graduate studies in library and information sciences. Although relevant educational background and professional experience are instrumental aspects of working with archival collections and developing a career as an archivist, I understand the development and practice of skills in cultural competency as an equally, if not even more important, component in influencing how archival representations and descriptions are realized within finding aids.[171] In a recent presentation for the 2018 Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting, Annie Tang introduced archival (re)description as a way to develop cultural competency in archival practice:

> Culturally competent archival (re)description is the documenting of materials with an awareness of one's own cultural identity as well as the cultural identities of donors, sellers, custodians, creators, subjects, and users. It includes the ability and willingness to continually learn and develop in applying those skills and knowledge in writing descriptive metadata.[172]

Tang also cited Helen Wong Smith's definition of cultural diversity competency (CDC), which is "the ability to function with awareness, knowledge, and interpersonal skill when engaging people of different backgrounds, assumptions, beliefs, values, and behaviors."[173] While cultural competency level would be difficult to assess or quantify, this analysis of the "Collection Guide to Chinese in California Collection" revealed that while there was some level of historical research and knowledge involved in constructing the archival descriptions, there were also

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[171] Annie Tang, Dorothy Judith Berry, Kelly Bolding, and Rachel E. Winston, "Towards Culturally Competent (Re)Description of Marginalized Histories," *Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting: ARCHIVES * RECORDS 2018*, 16 Aug. 2018, Marriott Warden Park, Washington, D.C., Education Session.

[172] *Ibid*.

[173] *Ibid*.

potential areas which warranted further attention and care.[174] Much of this also comes from the way archival representations and archival descriptions as a whole have been traditionally construed and carried out in practice. What would this added dimension of cultural competency and awareness look like if incorporated into the fundamental training, project workflows, and concrete day-to-day actions of individuals working in the archives? How would cultural competency affect the kinds of descriptions that can be included, such as creating bilingual finding aids or allowing multiple descriptions to represent multiple people/perspectives?

Especially for individuals who are unfamiliar with or just learning about the context of Chinese American history in the 19th century, an awareness of the biases and assumptions shaping archival descriptions should also be developed, either through explicit language inserted to the finding aid itself, the institution's website, and/or the public-facing OAC page associated with the institution. Providing "access to information about the world-views of the archivists who appraised, acquired, arranged, and described archival records" is one of the ways that Wendy Duff and Verne Harris identified which could help "document and make visible these biases."[175] Continuing this argument, they observe:

> Archivists need to state upfront from where they are coming and what they are doing. They need to disclose their assumptions, their biases, and their interpretations. Just as archivists document the historical background, internal organizational or personal cultures, and various biases or emphases of record creators, they need also to highlight their own preconceptions that influence and

[174] Annie Tang, Dorothy Judith Berry, Kelly Bolding, and Rachel E. Winston, "Towards Culturally Competent (Re)Description of Marginalized Histories," *Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting: ARCHIVES * RECORDS 2018*, 16 Aug. 2018, Marriott Warden Park, Washington, D.C., Education Session.

[175] Wendy M. Duff and Verne Harris, "Stories and Names: Archival Description as Narrating Records and Constructing Meanings," *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 278.

> shape the descriptions and consequently the meanings of the records they re-present to researchers.[176]

If archivists-in-training and archives professionals are to claim finding aids as works of their shared intellectual and physical labor, then disclosing their positionality, however briefly, is another step towards claiming responsibility for the way these archival records have been described—it also explicitly acknowledges to users that no archival "representation can be complete."[177] Some may disagree or consider these as threats to the 'neutrality' of archives. Moving away from such notions may be unnerving because it also touches upon users' trust in the archives as stable entities. However, opening the boundaries separating users from collections and taking the first step towards acknowledging the need for multiple experiences and realities to be represented can help build, rather than erode, trust. This leads into the following discussion in Facet Group 3 of how changing institutional practices, archival descriptive standards, and technologies might also play a role in archival representations of Chinese in America across time.

Facet Group 3: Changing Archival Descriptive Standards and Technologies

Connected with recent calls for archival (re)description are the institutional practices, archival descriptive standard(s) in use at the time of finding aid creation, types of software / application used to generate the finding aid, not to mention the various dates facets: dates (inclusive), dates of collection creation, date of acquisition, date of finding aid creation, date of processing, and the copyright date / attribution. These are significant because where specified,

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[176] Wendy M. Duff and Verne Harris, "Stories and Names: Archival Description as Narrating Records and Constructing Meanings," *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 278.

[177] *Ibid*, 275.

they might provide some information as to how finding aid creation might have changed or evolved as old standards of archival description such as *Archives, Personal Papers, and Manuscripts (APPM) and Anglo-American Cataloging Rules (AACR2)* were superseded and new standards like *Describing Archives: a Content Standard* (DACS) and *Resource Description and Access (RDA)* were developed. Currently, the finding aid for the UC Riverside collection only specifies 2008 for date of processing, and 2017 for the copyright date. Seeing as DACS was adopted by the Society of American Archivists (SAA) as the "official content standard of the U.S. archival community in 2005" and the finding aid indicates the collection was processed in 2008 (only three years afterwards), it is likely that DACS may have been used or was just in the process of being implemented at the time.[178] In 2013, the SAA updated and released *Describing Archives: a Content Standard, Second Edition* (DACS) in order to "harmoniz[e] its rules to the standards of the International Council on Archives (ICA), which are the *International Standard for Archival Description* (ISAD) and the *International Standard for Archival Authority Records – Corporate Bodies, Persons, and Families* (ISAAR-CPF)."[179]

However, it is not clearly indicated which descriptive standards or software were being used to guide the writing of this specific finding aid on "The Chinese in America" collection, or how institutional practices might have responded to this transition. The software used to create finding aids was likely Archivists' Toolkit, as evidenced by an Archivists' Toolkit Manual that

[178] "Preface to Describing Archives: a Content Standard, Second Edition (DACS)," *Society of American Archivists*, accessed 28 Sept. 2018, https://www2.archivists.org/standards/DACS/preface.

[179] Karen F. Gracy and Frank Lambert, "Who's Ready to Surf the Next Wave? A Study of Perceived Challenges to Implementing New and Revised Standards for Archival Description," *The American Archivist* 77, no. 1 (2014): 97.

was created and edited for the UC Riverside Special Collections and University Archives by Eric Milenkiewicz in 2015, and is still linked on the website for the Society of American Archivists.[180] While ArchivesSpace seems to be the next iteration of archival collection management software after Archivists' Toolkit and Archon stopped user support in September 2013, the transition has been slow and some institutions have only just begun the transfer process in migrating their collections, and others perhaps have not even reached this point yet.[181]

Even though Duff and Harris have argued for more "liberatory descriptive standard[s]" that allow for "more permeable" boundaries and "seek to affirm a process of open-ended making and re-making", the administrative processes and practices of the archives continue to remain hidden behind a wall, seemingly immovable and insular in their construction.[182] It also prompts questions such as who is really benefiting by applying current descriptive standards and using software like ArchivesSpace and Archivists' Toolkit to describe these collections, and what conforming to such standards accomplishes, if anything, for populations concerned with preserving marginalized and largely absent historical records. Perhaps different communities need to access and make available different kinds of information than the standards dictate; perhaps users in those communities need to be able to dictate how much or how little information they want to disclose about a collection. However, finding aids in their current forms are often

[180] Eric Milenkiewicz, "Procedures for Creating/Publishing EAD/MARC Records using the Archivists' Toolkit," *Society of American Archivists* (2015), accessed 10 Oct. 2018, http://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/ucr_guidelines_at-ead.pdf.

[181] "History," *ArchivesSpace*, accessed 10 Oct. 2018, http://archivesspace.org/about/history.

[182] Wendy M. Duff and Verne Harris, "Stories and Names: Archival Description as Narrating Records and Constructing Meanings," *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 284.

not flexible to these diverse needs, and the resources required to subsidize software subscription fees, pay for trained archival staff, and keep abreast of the many changing standards and rules may be prohibitive to smaller organizations. The overarching trend is that these standards and software were developed specifically by and for special collections and archives at academic institutions, because they are the ones that can afford to do so.

Two recommendations can be made. The first is to revisit the finding aid itself. The second is to encourage individuals working with collections and creating descriptions to consult or point users to resources such as keywords texts for Asian American Studies to ensure up-to-date, culturally informed descriptive practices that reflect a critical awareness of the "politics and impact of language."[183] Reflexivity in approaching descriptions in archival collections and acknowledging the limits to current archival representations and descriptions of Chinese in America can create room for more voices to enter the archives and strive for genuine representation.

[183] Melissa Stoner, Lillian Castillo-Speed, and Sine Hwang Jensen, "Metadata Justice: Representing Diversity and Inclusion in Our Collections." *The Third National Joint Conference of Librarians of Color*, 28 Sept. 2018, Albuquerque Convention Center, Albuquerque, NM. Roundtable Presentation.

Case Study No. 2: "The Leland Stanford Papers, 1841-1897" (Stanford University)

Table 10: Stanford University, "The Leland Stanford Papers, 1841-1897"[184]

Facet	Description / Information
① collection title	"The Leland Stanford Papers"
① abstract	not specified
① scope and contents	39-word description of materials (correspondence, business papers, speeches, journals, newsclippings) and topics covered in the collection (construction of the Central Pacific Railroad, political career, business/financial interests, and the construction and founding of Stanford University)
① historical / biographical note	124-word biographical note on Leland Stanford's life (birthplace origins, career, formation of the Big Four with Charles Crocker, Mark Hopkins, and Collis P. Huntington, Central Pacific Railroad construction, founding of Leland Stanford Jr. University, and death)
① subject headings / indexing terms	• Central Pacific Railroad Company • Cesnola, Luigi Parma di, 1832-1904. • Coolidge, Charles Allerton, 1858-1936. • Goodrich Quarries.. • Gordan, George. • Harrison, Benjamin, 1833-1901 • Hopkins, Mark. • Huntington, Collis Potter, 1821-1900. • Jordan, David Starr, 1851-1931 • Muybridge, Eadweard, 1830-1904 • Nash, Herbert C. • Olmsted, Frederick Law, 1822-1903 • Sawyer, Lorenzo. • Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge. • Sloss, Leon. • Southern Pacific Company • Stanford, Josiah Winslow, 1864-1937. • Stanford, Leland, 1824-1893. • Vrooman, Henry. • Walker, Francis Amasa,, 1840-1897. • Warm Springs Ranch (Calif.). • White, Andrew Dickson,, 1832-1918. • Capitalists and financiers. • Railroads--Management. • Universities and colleges--Administration. • Universities and colleges--Finance. Vina Ranch (Calif.)
① language(s) of the material	English

[184] "Guide to the Leland Stanford Papers," SC0033A, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Green Library, Stanford University, accessed July 11, 2018, https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/tf6c600570/.

① levels of arrangement	The collection is arranged into nine series: • Series 1. Biographical • Series 2. Correspondence • Series 3. Business and legal papers • Series 4. Political papers • Series 5. Speeches and interviews • Series 6. University matters • Series 7. Autograph books • Series 8. Memorabilia 1853-1899 Series 9. Oversize materials
① levels of description	multi-level description: collection-, series-, folder-, and item-level
① size / extent of collection	5 Linear Feet
① box / inventory list	yes
② processor(s) of collection	not specified
② arranger(s) of collection	not specified
② individual responsible for machine-readable finding aid	Daniel Hartwig
② creator(s)	Stanford, Leland, 1824-1893
② immediate source(s) of acquisition	Department of Special Collections and University Archives Green Library 557 Escondido Mall Stanford, CA 94305-6064 Email: specialcollections@stanford.edu Phone: (650) 725-1022 URL: http://library.stanford.edu/spc
② preferred citation	Stanford University Libraries – Department of Special Collections and University Archives
② repository information	Materials are open for research and in the public domain. No restrictions on use.
② contributing institution(s)	(listed as custodial history) Gifts of Jane Lathrop Stanford, Thomas Welton Stanford, David Starr Jordan, Helen Stanford Canfield, David H. Canfield, and others; also includes purchases.
② conditions governing use / access	[Identification of item] Leland Stanford Papers (SC0033A). Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, Calif.
③ dates (inclusive)	1841-1849
③ date(s) of collection creation	not specified
③ date of acquisition	not specified
③ date of finding aid creation	1997
③ date of processing	not specified
③ copyright date / attribution	2015 / The Board of Trustees of the Leland Stanford Junior University. All rights reserved.
③ archival descriptive standard(s) used	not specified
③ type(s) of software / application used to generate finding aid	Stanford EAD Best Practice Guidelines, Version 1.0

Facet Group 1: Language and Terminologies

During the institutional overview, I observed over 2,000 collections containing the phrase "Leland Stanford" appear in the OAC search results. Seeing as Leland Stanford and the Big Four were such a large part of and visible influence in California history and American railroad industry, it was not surprising to see Stanford's legacy so well-preserved and well-documented within archival collections in the OAC. The Stanford University Archives' Mission statement identifies the university archives as "the collective memory of the university", defining its scope as to "collect, preserve, and make available to researchers the historically and legally valuable records of the University and of Stanford community members" as well as to "collect…all materials relating to the University's founders, Leland and Jane Lathrop Stanford, and to those Stanford and Lathrop family members who were associated with them in business ventures or in the creation of Stanford University."[185]

The Stanford name looms large, having been institutionalized, commemorated and passed down throughout history for more than a century. In the "Leland Stanford Papers," this is clearly visible, well-preserved, and tinged with prestige. However, in contrast, records of Chinese in America, particularly those who worked to build the railroad, were poorly documented and geographically scattered, leaving researchers interested in their stories with little to go upon except documents and scholarship written largely from an English-speaking and Westernized perspective. While "the labor of…Chinese workers…was key to creating the immense wealth that Leland Stanford used to found Stanford University and was pivotal in the development of

[185] "Mission," *Stanford Libraries Special Collections and University Archives*, accessed 2 Oct. 2018, https://library.stanford.edu/spc/university-archives/about-archives/mission.

the United States, particularly the West," only in recent decades have such contributions slowly become recognized and studied in more detail.[186] The finding aid to the "Leland Stanford Papers" was selected for analysis to see what kinds of archival representations and descriptions of Chinese in America could be found and to unearth the narratives that emerged from an archival studies perspective.

Functionally speaking, the finding aid for the "Leland Stanford Papers" does a thorough job in describing the collection at the item-level and linking to portions of the collection that have been digitized and made available online in the Stanford Digital Repository. The series arrangement, organizational structure, and precise file naming conventions for each item assisted me in efficiently locating the digital surrogates and matching them to their descriptions. Exploring the Stanford Digital Repository revealed that only four of the total nine series in the collection have been digitized thus far. These are: Series 6. University Matters (1891); Series 3. Business and Legal Papers (1854); Series 1. Biographical (1850); and Series 2. Correspondence (1840).[187]

Using the find function in the finding aid's PDF file, however, yielded only two items that made mention of "Chinese" in the subsequent box / inventory list descriptions. One was an outgoing correspondence from Leland Stanford in 1868 to Mark Hopkins (one of the 'Big Four') regarding incidents of Chinese laborers leaving to work for the Central Pacific Railroad

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[186] Gordon H. Chang and Shelley Fisher Fishkin, "Fragments of the Past: Archaeology, History, and the Chinese American Railroad Workers of North America (过去的碎片：考古，历史与北美地区的铁路工人)," in Special Issue of *Historical Archaeology* 49, no. 1 (2015): 1.

[187] "Leland Stanford Papers," *SearchWorks Catalog, Stanford Library Services*, accessed 2 Oct. 2018, https://searchworks.stanford.edu/catalog?f%5Bcollection%5D%5B%5D=zx692xz8270.

Company's main rival, the Union Pacific Railroad Company.[188] The other was an incoming correspondence in 1885 from Wesley C. Sawyer, a professor at the University of the Pacific, writing about a conspiracy to "exterminate Chinese in California" along with a request for "a position with the university" which had just been established—and as its "Librarian" no less.[189]

Reading the digitized letters in conjunction with the item descriptions in the finding aid, I observed references Stanford made in the letter to Mark Hopkins to the Chinese in America—"those Dutch Flat Chinamen"—and the considerable concern Wesley Sawyer expressed for Stanford's own personal safety amidst the "extermination" conspiracy targeting Chinese.[190] In both examples, the expressed interests centered respectively around potential lost profits to the Central Pacific Railroad Company and the threat to Stanford's own life. This created the impression that Chinese as a whole were considered secondary, disposable even. "Chinaman," defined as "a person (esp. a man) of Chinese birth or origin," is now marked as a "derogatory and offensive" term in the Oxford English Dictionary.[191] The finding aid refers to these "Chinamen" in the item description as "Chinese laboreres"—whether the additional 'e' is a misspelling or direct transcription is unclear. Studying the descriptive information provided in

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[188] "Union Pacific getting Chinese laboreres 1868 Oct 21," Leland Stanford Papers (SC0033A). Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, Calif., https://stacks.stanford.edu/file/druid:bd058nn0446/sc0033a_s2_b1_f12.pdf

[189] "1885, Dec. 22: heard of conspiracy to exterminate Chinese in California; would like a position with the university," Leland Stanford Papers (SC0033A). Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Stanford University Libraries, Stanford, Calif.

[190] *Ibid*.

[191] "Chinaman, n.". OED Online. July 2018. Oxford University Press. http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/31742?rskey=RNrn9q&result=2&isAdvanced=false (accessed October 18, 2018).

the scope and contents notes, biographical note, indexing terms (specified here as "access terms"), and the box / inventory list, I discerned that not only were Chinese largely absent and missing from the narratives presented in this finding aid, it is a contemporary example of how power dynamics and exclusionary sentiments from the 19th century can be reproduced and reenacted through archival representations and descriptions. While the finding aid did achieve its basic purpose in communicating the collection's contents as they appeared and providing item-level descriptions with functioning links to digitized materials, its very 'exactness' propagates a normalizing view of Chinese as a negligible and easily overlooked, rather than integral, part of American mainstream historical narratives.

Describing historical records in detail at the item-level is indeed an important endeavor, especially when resources allow for a repository to do so, and to accomplish this even for a portion of the collection is no small feat in terms of metadata creation and the additional time invested. It may be rightly suggested that the word-for-word replication of contents was utilized in past contexts specifically to demonstrate 'neutrality' in archival practices and perhaps not an intentionally inappropriate interpretation on the part of processing archivists. Even so, such attitudes spark important conversations surrounding the potential for archival descriptions themselves to reflect the biases and assumptions of their creator(s) rather than playing a neutral role. Though brief, the biographical note paints an image of an enterprising young "storekeeper" who worked hard to become a "successful Sacramento businessman," became the governor of California "at the age of 37," built the Central Pacific Railroad with the Big Four, and along with his wife Jane, founded the Leland Stanford Junior University "in memory of their son," later

passing away in his second term as "United States Senator."[192] A total of 27 access terms have been provided, none of which include or make mention of Chinese. (See Table 9.) Instead, names of prominent people and places, such as Eadweard Muybridge, Mark Hopkins, Southern Pacific Company, Goodrich Quarries, Lorenzo Sawyer, Collis Potter Huntington, etc. populate the list.[193] Following this alphabetized list are subjects ranging from "Capitalists and financiers" to "Universities and colleges—Administration" and "Railroads—Management."[194] Navigating the finding aid, trying to locate even the smallest trace of Chinese people, and poring through the digitized materials, however, was a different story. Realizing that there was almost nothing of significance related to the Chinese in America was disheartening.

Anne Gilliland and Marika Cifor emphasize the importance of understanding the psychological dimensions of interacting with archives and ask readers: "What are the affects for individuals, communities and nations of the absence or irrecoverability of records?"[195] In the process of perusing this and other finding aids like it, I often came away from the experiences alternating at times between hope, frustration, dejection, and disbelief. It was disconcerting to see that in the personal papers of a historical figure whose wealth and reputation was built upon

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[192] "Guide to the Leland Stanford Papers," SC0033A, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Green Library, Stanford University, accessed July 11, 2018, https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/tf6c600570/.

[193] *Ibid.*

[194] "Guide to the Leland Stanford Papers," SC0033A, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Green Library, Stanford University, accessed July 11, 2018, https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/tf6c600570/.

[195] Cifor, Marika, and Anne J. Gilliland. "Affect and the Archive, Archives and Their Affects: An Introduction to the Special Issue." *Archival Science* 16, no. 1 (March 1, 2016): 2. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10502-015-9263-3.

the contributions of Chinese in America, the overwhelming implication would be that Chinese were not worthy of remembering, that they did not merit even the smallest of acknowledgments, not even after the fact in the description of the finding aid. If creating a faithful replication or mirror of historical documents is all that an archival finding aid aspires to, then its basic purpose is indeed accomplished. But at what cost? What are the consequences of reading narratives that re-marginalize these communities and replicate the very power structures that led to this marginalization? What seems benign and innocuous at first glance can be damaging and harmful in the long term in its potential to shape mainstream historical narratives about specific individuals and groups. There is a noticeable lack of acknowledgment towards the racial realities and experiences of Chinese in America in the archival description. I submit this encounter as a manifestation of institutional bias which may function to "exclude, negate, or nullify the psychological thoughts, feelings or experiential reality of a person of color."[196] For historical records on Chinese in America, it seems that the absences weigh far heavier than what is already there.

Some might argue that for a collection within the university archives, whose purpose and scope focuses on preservation of one individual's legacy and accomplishments, such commentary would have no place, because the mission was not to represent the voices and memories of Chinese in America. To which the response might be: Why not start now? And indeed, scholars in history and archaeology have already started the painstaking process of addressing and putting together what they know in order to fill in these absences and omissions,

[196] Derald Wing Sue, Jennifer Bucceri, Annie I. Lin, Kevin L. Nadal, and Gina C. Torino, "Microaggressions and the Asian American Experience," in *Asian American Journal of Psychology* S, no. 1 (2009): 90.

such as the Chinese Railroad Workers in North America Project (which has been given multi-year funding by Stanford University itself).[197] As Duff and Harris note:

> Personal histories, institutional cultures, gender dynamics, class relations, and many other dimensions of meaning-construction are always already at play in processes of records description. Every [archival] representation, every model of description, is biased because it reflects a particular world-view and is constructed to meet specific purposes.[198]

Archival representations grounded in assumptions of neutrality serve to amplify the power and authority of the historical materials within, while obscuring the very human dimensions of their shaping and creation. Would admitting to existing biases diminish this power and authority in some way? In my view, introducing multiple narratives are necessary to forming multidimensional views of history rather than disproportionately privileging the perspectives of a few to the exclusion of many. This stance aligns with Verne Harris's commentary in a 2017 keynote speech to the Australian Society of Archivists National Conference regarding the 'archival profession' as a whole: "They are too conservative, if not reactionary. They are profoundly resistant to transformation of a society still structured by centuries of colonialism and apartheid. They collaborate both passively and actively in the replication of oppressive relations of power."[199]

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[197] "Support," *Chinese American Railroad Workers in North America Project at Stanford University*, accessed 4 Jun. 2018. http://web.stanford.edu/group/chineserailroad/cgi-bin/wordpress/support-the-project/.

[198] Wendy Duff and Verne Harris, "Stories and Names: Archival Description as Narrating Records and Constructing Meanings," *Archival Science* 2 (2002): 275.

[199] Verne Harris, "Opening Keynote, Australian Society of Archivists National Conference, Melbourne, 26 September 2017," *Archives and Manuscripts* 46, no. 2 (2018): 193.

Recent "criticisms of the singular, unchanging perspective of the finding aid, and its status as an impartial, truthful representation of a collection" draw upon threads of "postmodern thought" that seek to "challenge…archivists, as individuals and social actors unable to separate their own viewpoints and decisions from their contexts, to consider and acknowledge [their] mediating role in shaping the historical record."[200] This rings particularly true for this collection, where not only is a single perspective presented, but the archival description and representation also dutifully work to strengthen it, as they have been designed to do, rather than challenge or supplement it with alternative narratives.

Important endeavors such as the Chinese American Railroad Workers in North America Project are certainly creating valuable lines of interdisciplinary communication and collaboration from outside the archives, but from the archival studies side, the need to spark similar conversations among archivists about addressing this critical absence and examining the historical reasons behind it is equally as important—not to collect materials for the sake of collecting, but to first understand that the archival representations and descriptions they create are themselves a form of interpretation, and thus have great power. The hope is that emerging voices and renewed calls from critical studies perspectives can make an impact in rethinking and reshaping how archival description and representation for these communities are carried out in practice.

One such recommendation is that archival professionals be open to offering their "finding aids, guides, and catalog records" up for continuous feedback and assessment from their users

[200] Michelle Light and Tom Hyry, "Colophons and Annotations: New Directions for the Finding Aid," in *The American Archivist* 65 (2002): 217.

(such as in the reading room).[201] Some archivists may be resistant to the idea and they may not always like what they hear, but having this mechanism in place means they have the chance to learn something new about their users, the materials, and/or their own institution(s). Navigating this place of necessary *dis*comfort may be where real growth and productive change happens. The work of re-centering the focus upon understanding the experiences of the Chinese in America does not just fall upon the users and researchers—it begins with the archivists and information professionals, who have more power than they may realize in shaping, interpreting, and representing the materials that pass through their hands.

Facet Group 2: Institutions & Individuals

The finding aid for the "Leland Stanford Papers" is attributed to Daniel Hartwig, whose institutional profile identifies him as University Archivist in the Special Collections Department of Stanford University Libraries.[202] The responsibilities of this particular role are listed as follows on the Stanford website:

- Formulate, direct, and administer collection development policy and program for archival and manuscript collections pertaining to Stanford University;
- Manage institutional information for President's Office, Provost's Office, Board of Trustees, Office of Development, Planning Office, and Stanford Alumni Association;
- Administer all public service related to access and interpretation of the holdings of University Archives, including instruction, reference, web presence, exhibits, reproduction policies, and publications;
- Identify and cultivate donors;

[201] Annie Tang, Dorothy Judith Berry, Kelly Bolding, and Rachel E. Winston, "Towards Culturally Competent (Re)Description of Marginalized Histories," *Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting: ARCHIVES * RECORDS 2018*, 16 Aug. 2018, Marriott Warden Park, Washington, D.C., Education Session.

[202] "Daniel Hartwig," *Stanford Profiles*, accessed 10 Oct. 2018, https://profiles.stanford.edu/daniel-hartwig.

- Formulate, direct, and administer policy and program related to administrative records management, records transfer, and information retrieval; establish and administer policies on restrictions and access to records;
- Develop and maintain programs of digitization of appropriate holdings of the University Archives;
- Develop and maintain relationships with key University and University-related committees;
- Supervise two FTE University Archives staff and two FTE Stanford Historical Society staff; and
- Serve as department's security officer.[203]

This is not an insignificant repertoire by any means and demonstrates the wide range of functions and expectations associated with the position of university archivist. It also places a pronounced emphasis upon the vested interests of Stanford University as well as the Stanford Historical Society, whose mission is to "foster and support the documentation, study, publication, dissemination, and preservation of the history of Stanford University."[204]

The finding aid does not indicate whether other staff or interns may have also been responsible for processing, arranging, and describing the collection, as well as any individuals who later worked on digitizing portions of this collection. And, as with the finding aid for the "Chinese in California Collection" at UC Riverside, the administrative contexts of representation and disclosure of positionality in the "Guide to the Leland Stanford Papers" remain largely absent. In a 2013 interview with The Stanford Daily with Daniel Hartwig, University Archivist, the question was asked: "How do you determine what is worthy of being archived?" to which

[203] "Daniel Hartwig: Bio," *Stanford Profiles*, accessed 10 Oct. 2018, https://profiles.stanford.edu/daniel-hartwig?tab=bio.

[204] "Overview," *Stanford Historical Society*, accessed 10 Oct. 2018, https://historicalsociety.stanford.edu/about/overview.

Hartwig responded, "Does it speak to Stanford's history? If so, then yes."[205] The Chinese in America certainly constitute an important part of Stanford's history, but whether and how "worthy" such materials are "being archived" has longstanding roots in whose records were considered more valuable, and until recent decades, they have existed largely on the edges of institutional memory and historical scholarship.

It is also important to note that even before the contents of the "Leland Stanford Papers" entered the university archives as a collection, they were passed through and curated by the hands of Stanford's immediate family members and individuals within his personal circle. The immediate source of acquisition, described as "Custodial History" in the finding aid, states that the collection was the "Gift of Jane Lathrop Stanford, Thomas Welton Stanford, David Starr Jordan, Helen Stanford Canfield, David H. Canfield, and others…[and] also includes purchases."[206] All of this attests to the power of Stanford's lasting legacy, both as represented in the papers he left behind as well as in the archival representations and descriptions which continue to celebrate his memory. Additional considerations such as legal implications of gifts and donor relations have also likely played a role in controlling the conditions governing how this collection is presented in the public sphere and how Stanford's legacy continues to be carefully curated and maintained. One can only imagine if the same could be said for the records and legacies of the Chinese people in Stanford's life.

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[205] Alexa Liautaud, "Q+A: Daniel Hartwig, University archivist," *The Stanford Daily*, accessed 10 Oct. 2018, https://www.stanforddaily.com/2013/05/08/q-a-daniel-hartwig-university-archivist/.

[206] "Guide to the Leland Stanford Papers," SC0033A, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Green Library, Stanford University, accessed July 11, 2018, https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/tf6c600570/.

Facet Group 3: Changing Archival Descriptive Standards and Technology

The date specified for the finding aid is listed as 1997, with no indications of whether the finding aid was revised, updated, or when new materials were added to the collection or digitized since that time. No archival descriptive standards or software are specified, but a note on the finding aid's frontpage states that "the encoded finding aid is compliant with Stanford EAD Best Practice Guidelines, Version 1.0."[207] No corresponding online document could be located for consultation, as it is likely to have been replaced or updated since then. Considering the general timeline of development and implementation of descriptive standards, it seems that *Archives, Personal Papers, and Manuscripts* (APPM), which was first published in 1983, would be an educated first guess as to which standard was likely used.[208] There is no indication of whether Archivists' Toolkit or Archon software was used, or if the finding aid was updated according to *Describing Archives: a Content Standard, Second Edition* (DACS).

Running up against these barriers to information surrounding the finding aid's creation and revision dates generates a continued sense of impenetrability for outside users, removing focus upon the executive decisions and processes that shaped it. Updating the finding aid using current descriptive standards such as Describing Archives: a Content Standard, Second Edition (DACS) and providing added-value elements could at least enable archivists to include elements of "added value" that could potentially enrich the archival descriptions. DACS 8.1 currently has

[207] "Guide to the Leland Stanford Papers," SC0033A, Department of Special Collections and University Archives, Green Library, Stanford University, accessed July 11, 2018, https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/tf6c600570/.

[208] "Archives, Personal Papers, and Manuscripts (APPM), *Society of American Archivists*, accessed 28 Sept. 2018, https://www2.archivists.org/node/10163.

provisions that allow archivists to "document the creation and revision of archival descriptive records" as well as include citations to other sources used to create the description.[209] However, these are only categorized as "added value," which means they are not required elements and would still ultimately be left up to the archivist to decide whether to include them or not. Disclosing revision dates as well as when new materials are added and/or digitized can help to increase transparency into the decision-making processes of archival representation.

In the face of all these developments in standards and technology, the main issues lie in that none of the administrative decisions are made apparent in the finished finding aid. As Terry Cook writes:

> Researchers only see a predefined and monolithic universe – predefined especially by the archivist. What they see is what they get. They do not see what archivists saw before the appraisal decisions were made to give researchers what they get, and they do not understand the underlying assumptions of how archivists have described what they are now seeing in descriptive tools that present the results of that appraisal and subsequent arrangements.[210]

This brings the discussion to the dilemma which has both plagued and motivated me at every stage: that is, how can archivists describe what is *not* in the collection? If certain historical records were never acquired, misrepresented, or thrown out in the first place, how can archivists even begin to describe or represent this phenomenon in its collections with accuracy and cultural awareness? To my knowledge, archival descriptive standards

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[209] "Description Control," Describing Archives: a Content Standard, Second Edition (DACS), *Society of American Archivists*, accessed 10 Oct. 2018, https://www2.archivists.org/standards/DACS/part_I/chapter_8/1_description_control.

[210] Terry Cook, "Fashionable Nonsense or Professional Rebirth: Postmodernism and the Practice of Archives," in *Archivaria* 51 (2001): 35.

do not make express provisions for anticipating records that are *not* present or are missing. What can be done?

Cook again provides some recommendations from a postmodern perspective, which could be potentially useful in the case of archival records of Chinese in America. He advocates for archivists working with "government and institutional records… [to] consider placing 'negative' entries in fonds and series descriptions, showing to researchers thereby all the series, in all media, from allocations, that the archives did not acquire from a particular records creator, alongside the ones it did acquire."[211] For historical records from Chinese in America, this may look slightly different; however, the 'negative' entry approach could be utilized in descriptions to indicate that there *is* a recognized gap in the historical records already acquired, and to show that the "Leland Stanford Papers," although highly representative in terms of Stanford' own life, is in many ways still an 'incomplete' representation of what is actually known or still being discovered about Chinese American history. To recognize this gap, even in the smallest of ways as an entry, can help to give presence to those absences. Doing so also shows users the limitations of consulting historical materials that have been created from the perspective of one individual, and invites people to develop a more nuanced understanding of the intimate connections between Stanford and the Chinese in America.

[211] Terry Cook, "Fashionable Nonsense or Professional Rebirth: Postmodernism and the Practice of Archives," in *Archivaria* 51 (2001): 34.

Case Study No. 3: "Chase and Evans Collection, 1865-1869"
(Chinese Historical Society of Southern California)

Table 11: Chinese Historical Society of Southern California, "Chace and Evans Collection, 1865-1869"[212]

Facet	Description / Information
① collection title	Chace and Evans Collection
① abstract	67-word description including collection highlights, summary, and topics covered.
① scope and contents	66-word description of materials (pieces of clothing, shoes, opium/tobacco paraphernalia, munitions, gaming tokens, tablewares, medicinal/alcohol bottles, and digging tools) and topics covered in the collection (everyday lives of 19th-century Chinese railroad workers; their diet, leisure activities, and cultural practices; and the types of Chinese immigrant labor)
① historical / biographical note	136-word description of William Evans' educational background, field(s) of study, occupation(s), research areas, career, retirement, and death.
① subject headings / indexing terms	• Chinese American • Chinese Americans -- California -- History • Chinese Americans -- Nevada -- History • Chinese Americans -- 19th Century -- History • Railroad workers 19th century -- Railroad workers
① language(s) of the material	• English
① levels of arrangement	not specified / minimally processed
① levels of description	single-level: collection-level only, no inventory or box list provided.
① size / extent of collection	15.94 linear feet (15 boxes)
① box / inventory list	no
② processor(s) of collection	CHSSC staff / minimally processed
② arranger(s) of collection	CHSSC staff / minimally processed
② individual responsible for machine-readable finding aid	CHSSC staff
② creator(s)	Evans, William S. Jr.
② immediate source(s) of acquisition	The collection was acquired through Paul G. Chace in late 2009 after the death of William "Bill" S. Evans, Jr.; Evans was Chace's longtime colleague.
② preferred citation	Chace and Evans collection. Chinese Historical Society of Southern California.
② repository information	Chinese Historical Society of Southern California Los Angeles, California 90012
② contributing institution(s)	not specified
② conditions governing use / access	copyright unknown / collection is open for qualified researchers
③ dates (inclusive)	1865-1869
③ date(s) of collection creation	2009-2010

[212] "Collection Guide to Chace and Evans Collection," 2017 M.S., Chinese Historical Society of Southern California, accessed July 11, 2018, https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8s46z54/.

③ date of acquisition	2009
③ date of finding aid creation	2017
③ date of processing	not specified / minimally processed
③ copyright date / attribution	not specified
③ archival descriptive standard(s) used	Describing Archives: a Content Standard (DACS)
③ type(s) of software / application used to generate finding aid	RECORDEXPRESS (OAC free software)

Facet Group 1: Language and Terminologies

Until projects such as the Chinese Railroad Workers in North America Project were launched and scholars began to actively take Chinese American history as a subject of study, it is difficult to say with any certainty the extent to which academic institutions collected historical materials pertaining to the Chinese in America. Some materials may have found their way into historical collections at public libraries, others in museums, and still more in the hands of archaeologists who have excavated Chinese artifacts for their own research. Many times, the materials users may be looking for may exist unprocessed in the backlogs of some institutions or in items that are collected by individuals and kept in personal attics or other kinds of storage facilities.

Such a state-of-affairs constitute one of the primary reasons that community-based archives and non-profit cultural heritage organizations such as the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California (CHSSC) have emerged and made it their mission to collect and preserve such materials. The decision to locate themselves externally to special collections and archives in academic institutions can be construed as a method of asserting the right for communities to have their own spaces for collecting such historically valuable materials and voicing stories that might otherwise become lost, buried, or worse, weeded for disposal and/or devalued by larger mainstream institutions. Since its founding in 1975 by Paul Louie, William Mason, Paul De Falla

and other community members, CHSSC has been working to collect and preserve materials that would have been otherwise neglected by mainstream institutions.[213] However, these efforts have also come face-to-face with challenges including limited space and staff that can support archival projects, which require distributing calls for applications, reviewing candidates, and supervising volunteers and interns for specific archival projects.

In the Fall of 2016, I began work as a volunteer at the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California (CHSSC) Archives. Due to this capacity within the organization, I have admittedly been able to include more contextual information for this case than for the other two selected finding aids, which were created by special collections and university archives in academic institutions with which I was not as familiar. This finding aid was included as the last case study in order to explore how individuals at a community-based archives approach the work of collecting, preserving, and describing the historical records of Chinese in America, especially as these actions intersect with their specific organizational missions and collecting policies.

As the chosen title implies, the materials primarily comprise research and artifacts from the collections of Paul G. Chace and William S. Evans, Jr., whose works have spanned the fields of anthropology, cultural resource management (CRM), history, ethnology, archaeology, geography, and museum curation.[214] Unlike more generic titles such as "The Chinese in California," this collection was named specifically after Chace and Evans—in part to indicate the sources of acquisition, and as a way for the CHSSC to recognize the contributions the two

[213] "About – Chinese Historical Society of Southern California." Accessed October 19, 2018. https://chssc.org/about/.

[214] "Collection Guide to Chace and Evans Collection," 2017 M.S., Chinese Historical Society of Southern California, accessed July 11, 2018, https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8s46z54/.

researchers have made to augmenting current understandings about Chinese American history. However, even as an institution seeks to honor the memory of those who have championed studies of early Chinese in America, there is also an implication of ownership embedded in the fundamental practice of naming. While this is something that may not change in the near future, I emphasize that the act of choosing collection titles is significant, in that titles also constitute a form of representation for users and communities of color. There is a big difference between seeing Chinese names reflected in titles (as well as descriptions) when browsing through a catalog or list of collections, in contrast to seeing the names of Americans who have written or collected materials on Chinese in America. It is a difficult feeling to describe; yet this vision of representation is perhaps easier imagined, since these hopes do not always play out in the messiness of everyday reality.

The levels of arrangement and description are as of yet unknown, due to the collection's unprocessed status. While an approximate extent of collection is provided (15 boxes or 15.94 linear feet), a box and inventory list was not yet available online for cross-referencing with the historical / biographical notes or scope and content note. From personal experience working in the CHSSC archives, I understand that there are brief paper inventory lists inserted inside some of the boxes, but these remain as of yet uncatalogued, not entered into a computer database or uploaded to the OAC. Lastly, the subject headings and indexing terms listed in the finding aid are as follows: "Chinese American; Chinese Americans -- California -- History; Chinese Americans -- Nevada -- History; Chinese Americans -- 19th Century -- History; Railroad

workers 19th century - Railroad workers."[215] While minimal, these headings serve to increase the collection's findability within the OAC database. I would like to note that here, *Chinese in America* are referred to as *Chinese American*, and while the differences and reasons behind using these two phrases has been expounded upon in the findings and analysis in the previous two case studies, it bears emphasizing that terminologies also take on different kinds of significance depending on the communities and individuals using them. Why does this difference matter? As Molly Higgins indicated in her analysis of the subject heading "Asian Americans" as self-identified, a similar reasoning applies here, in that "Chinese American" also functions as a label for self-identification, as determined upon by members of the community organization.[216] Even then, such terminologies may not be agreed upon by all members, but they serve as a starting point for considering how archival descriptions (and the stories they tell) differ in context of the individuals composing it.

In the scope and contents note, I took particular note concerning the appearance of terms like "opium," "gaming tokens" and "alcohol" which not only describe some of the daily activities Chinese workers might have engaged in during the time, but are also disturbingly reminiscent of the stereotypical caricatures in newspapers and political brochures which assigned Chinese men dangerous or threatening qualities. Gambling, drug use, and alcoholism are all negative qualities that were typically associated with these men and with Chinatowns during the 19th century. Why these negative associations continue to haunt is perhaps also the byproduct of

[215] "Collection Guide to Chace and Evans Collection," 2017 M.S., Chinese Historical Society of Southern California, accessed July 11, 2018, https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8s46z54/.

[216] Molly Higgins, "Totally Invisible: Asian American Representation in the Dewey Decimal Classification, 1876-1996," *BePress* (1998): 1-14, https://works.bepress.com/molly_higgins/21/

my own experiences growing up as a Chinese American, in seeing mainstream representations of Chinese people in Western media and witnessing some of the continued inaccurate and misguided assumptions being disseminated about Chinese culture and history. Similarly, when examining descriptions of Chinese in America and coming across such terminologies in a finding aid, there is the sense that these words have become such a normal, everyday part of the way Chinese people have been described, that any feelings of *dis*-ease must then be abnormal.

Prolonged exposure and desensitization to these representations, regardless of the original intentions, have made it much easier to distrust these feelings as a sign of oversensitivity and to stay silent rather than call them out when they are expressed through direct or indirect ways. I felt that it was imperative at the very least to break this silence and bring these complicated emotions out into the open, so others can understand how the language commonly used to describe a group of individuals can play an innocuous, yet harmful role in their persistent reuse. Responding to what he identifies as a "resistance to the 'political' and critical within archives" and continued assertions as to the "neutrality" and "objectivity…of archival space," Mario H. Ramirez presents a critique of conservative strains and existing practices within archives which "reinforce social and political inequalities."[217] Continuing, he states: "A state of being generally invisible to those who inhabit it, whiteness as the 'neutral' ground upon which racial difference and exclusion are determined benefits from this unquestioned status as the ultimate point of reference for normativity."[218]

[217] Mario H. Ramirez, "Being Assumed Not to Be: A Critique of Whiteness as an Archival Imperative," in *The American Archivist* 78, no. 2 (2015): 339.

[218] *Ibid,* 343.

As white American men, then, Chace and Evans did benefit from this privileged status, their names and legacies preserved within the collection title and creator attributions (as with the case of the "Leland Stanford Papers" at Stanford University), while in the archival profession, "notions of *neutrality*, *meritocracy*, *objectivity*, and *color-blindness*" continue to proliferate and "serve to further undermine the subjectivity of people of color."[219] For me, the prospect of seeing Chinese names reflected in a collection title engenders feelings of hope and a greater sense of representation and recognition, even as descriptive standards dictate including only creator(s)' or collector(s)' names, as determined by the collections' donors and/or the institutional staff acquiring these collections. How can archival representations and descriptions do justice to recovering the memories of Chinese in America, in the face of the structural inequities, personal racism, and exclusions that over the years have contributed to and exacerbated the current situation? There are no definite answers to be found as of yet, only more questions.

Facet Group 2: Institutions and Individuals

Over the course of one year, I participated in the CHSSC archives committee with leaders, long-time members, and volunteers at the CHSSC, where discussions were initiated on joining the Online Archive of California (OAC) as a contributing member. The motivations driving these discussions centered on increasing the historical society's online presence and promoting greater visibility of its archival collections to more users through a membership with the OAC. During the time when I was most active on the archives committee, the members consisted of Eugene Moy (former President of the CHSSC and member-at-large), Linda Bentz

[219] Mario H. Ramirez, "Being Assumed Not to Be: A Critique of Whiteness as an Archival Imperative," in *The American Archivist* 78, no. 2 (2015): 341.

(current Vice President of the CHSSC), Gilbert Hom (CHSSC member and one of the key founders of the CHSSC Archives), Judy Chou (former CHSSC volunteer), and Kelly Fong (CHSSC member and Asian American Studies faculty). At the time, the educational background and skills of archives committee members generally tended more towards archaeology, anthropology, history, and urban planning, with the exception of Judy and myself, both of whom had studied or were recent graduates of MLIS programs specializing in archival studies. My role mainly centered around helping to recruit and manage volunteers for CHSSC's projects and events, participating in regular archives committee planning meetings, drafting action plans based on identified priorities, creating documentation, and assisting with various archival tasks as needed.

The collection contains research materials and archaeological artifacts on 19th century Chinese railroad workers, collected by Paul C. Chace, a "historian and ethnologist… specializ[ing] in cultural resource management [CRM]" and a former CHSSC member and William S. Evans, Jr., a "trained archaeologist, anthropologist, and geographer" whose work centered upon "Western prehistory and Chinese American cultural heritage."[220] This connection to archaeology and anthropology research made for an unexpected, but intriguing link to how professionals in these varying fields have faced similar issues with how records left behind by early Chinese in America have been historically treated. In the case of archaeological studies, the issue was not necessarily the *lack* of artifacts or data to analyze, but had more to do with the way in which archaeologists and anthropologists have traditionally approached their study of Chinese

[220] "Collection Guide to Chace and Evans Collection," 2017 M.S., Chinese Historical Society of Southern California, accessed July 11, 2018, https://oac.cdlib.org/findaid/ark:/13030/c8s46z54/.

artifacts. When it comes to urban Chinese sites, it has been said that "archaeologists" have the tendency to "overexcavate and underreport."[221] In other words, even having a "mass of data" and rich stores of artifacts to study does not mean researchers can automatically understand, interpret, and treat these findings in the most culturally sensitive or appropriate ways. In 2015, Mary and Adrian Praetzellis made the following remarks concerning the archaeological profession:

> We—the authors—feel the responsibility to offer the following stern critique in the hopes of provoking thoughtful change. Blinded by a wealth of exotic artifacts and hampered by the competitive commercial environment of development-driven archaeology, we archaeologists have created an unsatisfactory template for Chinese archaeology: [we] repeat established research questions, add historical context, illustrate nifty artifacts, slap on tried and now-trite conclusions. The abundance of data has somehow weakened the motivation for deeper understanding. Contextual analyses focused on time and place with a racist backdrop abound. Missing are the people, their culture, their family histories, their voices, and the voices of their descendants. The authors know this is true, for we do the same thing. In summary, the field has reached a research plateau.[222]

The perceived value of the "find" has obscured the potential for archaeologists to construct a meaningful or comprehensive understanding of circumstances surrounding the Chinese in America and their individual lived experiences. In the case of the "Chace and Evans Collection," the perspectives and analyses are, to a large extent, reflective of those researchers' particular worldviews and how they described the daily lives of Chinese railroad workers. The finding aid includes ample coverage of the career and

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[221] Mary Praetzellis and Adrian Praetzellis, "Commentary on the Archaeology of Chinese Railroad Workers in North America: Where Do We Go from Here? 北美地区中国铁路人的考古学研究：我们该由此走向何方？" in *Historical Archaeology* 49, no. 1 (2015): 164.

[222] *Ibid.*

accomplishments of Paul Chace and William "Bill" Evans, providing detail and context concerning the creation of some of the collection's materials. And although there are listed many physical artifacts that were recovered from excavation sites ("pieces of clothing, shoes, opium/tobacco paraphernalia, munitions, gaming tokens, tablewares, medicinal/alcohol bottles, and digging tools"), what is curiously missing are any writings, documents or records that the Chinese workers may have left behind; whether they were created or kept in the first place remains unknown. The same dilemma arises – how can users find and recover voices of Chinese in America in a collection, when time and again, they only come across narratives as told from the perspectives of non-Chinese?

As in the case of UC Riverside's "Chinese in California Collection," the roles of the individuals working with the "Chace and Evans Collection" extend only as far as describing what *is* there. What is *not* there can only be conjectured and guessed at. Perhaps those who create archival descriptions for such collections can consider the possibilities that emerge by explicitly acknowledging what is not there. Although this point has been emphasized time and again throughout, doing so can be a substantial first step towards making space and creating bridges that prompt users to consider what else might be missing or can be found from other sources. The idea is for those working with archival collections at the source to take the initiative: to invite users not only to contribute their own valuable sources and knowledge, but also to explore in multiple places, to make those missing connections, and thus collaborate in reconfiguring mainstream understandings of Chinese American history in the 19th century. Lastly, encouraging CHSSC staff, members-at-large, and the wider communities to participate

even more actively in the creation of archival descriptions for finding aids can enrich and introduce multiple perspectives into the finding aids. For example, in the Collection Guide for the "Chace and Evans Collection," supplementing the biographical note on the creators with a historical note contributed by CHSSC members can allow for greater dimension of representation, and help move away from the traditional Westernized perspective towards increased representation that highlights the Chinese in America.

Facet Group 3: Changing Archival Descriptive Standards and Technologies

Archival descriptive standards and technologies as used in mainstream academic institutions are not always the most appropriate for use in a community-based archives. In addition, they may not provide the most effective solutions or functionalities needed by smaller repositories, since the development of these standards have likely reflected and been shaped by the needs of special collections and archives of mainstream academic institutions. In this particular case, Describing Archives, a Content Standard, Second Edition (DACS) was suggested by Judy Chou as the standard of choice. Recommendations were also eventually made for creating minimally descriptive collection-level finding aids for every one of the CHSSC's current archival collections using the free archival data management software, RECORDEXPRESS. The OAC offers RECORDEXPRESS to smaller institutions as an affordable alternative to other more expensive archival collection management software. While I had some initial reservations towards applying minimal processing and descriptive practices to CHSSC's archival collections, the archives committee moved forward as a whole to approve this suggestion, partly in the interest of time and expediency, but also due to pressing concerns regarding access. One of the key reasons behind this decision was that a majority of CHSSC's

archival collections were still unprocessed or only processed to a minimum level, meaning that without personal connections or knowledge of CHSSC, users would likely not be able to find materials that might be of potential value in existing databases (i.e., OAC) and larger academic institutions.

These minimally described finding aids would serve as temporary 'placeholders' to enhance the collections' visibility for users until fuller descriptions could be added. The overarching justification was that having something online to represent the collection's presence was better than having nothing at all, even if that online document is not as complete as it could be. Meanwhile, the CHSSC would consider various options, such as whether to implement an archival management software (such as Archivist's Toolkit or ArchivesSpace) or even apply for grant funding to hire a full-time archivist who could work with CHSSC staff to expand the archival descriptions for each collection. The goal would be to eventually replace the minimal finding aids on OAC with finding aids that offer more rich descriptions. CHSSC later deemed ArchivesSpace (at $300 per year including technical support) to be too cost-prohibitive for the organization to use as a sustainable long-term option, not to mention the additional specialized training needed in order to be able to navigate the ArchivesSpace interface and create detailed finding aids for their collections.

In the months that followed, CHSSC continued to host minimal finding aids on its OAC contributor's page, while the archives committee published new developments and solicited community member input on materials from its collections via the "Archives Spotlight" in the monthly newsletter, News 'N Notes. It was interesting to note that since these finding aids were uploaded onto the OAC, multiple requests came in from external users who had identified the

CHSSC Archives through the OAC portal. Visitors to the CHSSC Archives included an undergraduate student from California State University, Los Angeles (CSULA) who wanted to access the CHSSC's Chinese American World War II Veterans collection for a class project requiring archival research, and a graduate student researcher who flew from San Jose to Los Angeles to access the CHSSC's archival collections as part of his research with Stanford history professor Dr. Gordon Chang on the Chinese Railroad Workers in North America Project. Both visits were facilitated by CHSSC archives committee members, and I rearranged my own schedule so that I could be present at both times. A simple documentation spreadsheet for user inquiries was also created at my suggestion, so as to maintain a record of user visits and track usage of archival materials as potential supplements to future funding and grant proposals.

However, because RECORDEXPRESS only allows inclusion of basic elements such as abstract, historical / biographical note, and information about the repository, creators, and conditions governing access / use, description is currently created only at the highest levels (collection, series, and box-level). While item-level description in a perfect world might be the most ideal situation to provide richer metadata for the record, with even more limited resources than special collections and university archives at academic institutions, it was recommended that CHSSC prioritize overall expediency over individual detail. There is also currently no way to include box / inventory lists directly inside the finding aid with RECORDEXPRESS, unless they are manually attached and uploaded as a supplemental PDF file. The next steps perhaps would be to construct a basic inventory of the collection contents from existing materials in a word processing software, and then convert the document into a PDF format that could then be appended to the CHSSC's OAC page.

Despite these initial uncertainties regarding the effectiveness (and appropriateness) of using minimally described online finding aids in a community-based archives, it appears that this effort has led to some meaningful outcomes. However, much work still remains to be done regarding the CHSSC's archival collections. In August of 2018, after applying for and receiving a grant from the Friends of Chinatown Library, the CHSSC distributed a call to hire a part-time archivist, for the purpose of arranging, describing, and creating an online finding aid for the Duty and Honor Collection (which includes interviews of Chinese American World War II veterans. In addition, in August of 2018, a call for applications was released by the UCLA Department of Information Studies announcing receipt of a Mellon Foundation Grant to fund 8 paid internships for Masters and PhD candidates to work at community archives in and around the Southern California area. The CHSSC was one of the proposed hosting sites, as CHSSC has collaborated with UCLA in the past for initiatives involving the Asian American Studies Center and CHSSC Archives, such as the Southern California Oral History Project (SCOHP) and the World War II Chinese American Veterans Collection.

These are all promising directions, but more can still be done. From this analysis and discussion of the "Collection Guide to the Chace and Evans Collection", I have discovered some interesting and also unexpected findings, focusing on examining archival representation and descriptions of Chinese in America within the context of one community-based archives in Southern California. As with the other two case studies, I endeavored to illuminate what seemed to work and what still needs improvement, noting how the use of critical race theory as a lens seeks not to target or criticize in an indiscriminate fashion, but to encourage critical and productive engagements with the ways in which archival representation and descriptions can

influence the narratives that emerge through choices in language, terminology, roles of individuals and institutions, and changing archival descriptive standards and technologies

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations

In this study, I explored the following research questions: What kinds of archival representations of the Chinese in America before and during the Chinese Exclusion can be found in archives? How are these archival representations expressed in archival descriptions, such as finding aids, collection guides, inventories, and other relevant documents describing the materials, and how are these shaped by institutional descriptive practices/standards and the individuals responsible for processing and/or describing such materials? How can a critical race theory approach be used as a lens to interrogate these archival representations and descriptions, especially within the larger contexts of the institution/ns and societal norms that produced them?

The archival representations in the three selected finding aids and collections varied across the board. In addition, due to the smaller sample size, the findings may not be generalizable to the wider population of other similar repositories due to different, changing institutional practices, standards, and technology. However, based on the findings and discussion in the previous chapter, three major themes emerged, which broadly address the abovementioned research questions: 1) transparency and allocation of resources; 2) not all things to all people; and 3) need for collaboration. These are further elucidated in the conclusion and following recommendations.

Transparency can suffer for a multitude of reasons, including institutional priorities, sensitivities and political climate, structural restrictions (ArchivesSpace versus OAC

RECORDEXPRESS), and time interests, to name just a few. Lack of transparency about administrative decisions and descriptive choices can have a harmful impact on the communities represented within archival collections in subtle, deep and often invisible ways. I observed a need for institutions to utilize terminologies in a way that reflects an understanding of their complex development and usage throughout history. Moreover, institutions can understand that by recognizing the foundational contributions of Chinese in America to institutional memory, such an act builds, not erodes, trust in the work of archivists and archives. How can other disciplines such as archaeology and anthropology also do their part to not privilege the perceived value of historical materials/"data" over the lived experiences of the individuals they originate from? Developing cultural sensitivity and cultural competency skills can be a means to guide archival professionals in how to handle materials from marginalized communities with care. Unsettling notions of stability and neutrality in archives also means disclosing positionality and including acknowledgment of what archivists and users still do not know and do not understand enough about early Chinese in America.

When multiple people collaborate on processing, arranging, and describing a collection, it is recommended to mark more clearly the authorship and attributions to specific sections, such as in the case of the UC Riverside "Chinese in California Collection." Citing sources used for archival descriptions, including primary sources inside the collection itself, can be used to validate individuals' intellectual and physical labor upon an archival project, since much of this labor can be invisible or unrecognized by the users they work with. It also helps to claim the finding aid as intellectual property and encourage greater accountability and due diligence in performing research on Chinese in America (1860-1943). Opening the descriptive fields in a

finding aid that is still in-progress or already completed for user feedback and suggestions reflects the willingness to learn and perceive from the points-of-view of community members. Lastly, while administrative history, such as the dates of finding aid revisions, digitization, and documentation of multiple versions may exist internally in an institution, making these aspects visible to the end users can provide a broader picture of how long each project took to complete, and also reveal reasons behind making certain decisions that would be unapparent on the surface.

For collections where preserving institutional memory is the objective, acknowledging the historical ties of the institution with Chinese in America can be a positive contribution to that institutional memory. If Chinese in America can be considered as those who had a stake and a part in the founding and history of the university, as is the case with Stanford University, then they also merit inclusion in the archival finding aid to the "Leland Stanford Papers," as well as within historical narratives hosted on the Stanford University website.[223] By replicating the power dynamics of more than a century ago, a finding aid also exerts control over who tells "the story" and how it gets told. How can archival representations and descriptions be remediated? Can they be remediated, and who contributes to this remediation? These are all potential questions for future studies and research.

In their article on radical empathy in the archives which draws upon a feminist ethics approach, Michelle Caswell and Marika Cifor propose implementing "an ethics of care [that] would transform the reading room space from a cold, elitist, institutional environment to an

[223] Stanford, ©Copyright Stanford University, and California 94305. "A History of Stanford." Stanford University. Accessed October 20, 2018. https://www.stanford.edu/about/history/; "Introduction: Stanford University Facts." Accessed October 20, 2018. http://facts.stanford.edu/.

affective, user-oriented, community-centred service space."[224] In addition, Caswell and Cifor emphasize as part of the four proposed affective responsibilities, the importance of the relationship between the archivist and the user:

> Practising radical empathy with users means acknowledging the deep emotional ties users have to records, the affective impact of finding – or not finding – records that are personally meaningful, and the personal consequences that archival interaction can have on users.[225]

By understanding and acknowledging the detrimental affective impact that the absence of historical records on Chinese in America can have on users, archivists can more fully embrace, rather than eschew, the accountability that comes with handling these sensitive records. To demonstrate this care is to show users at the "micro and macro, personal and institutional" levels that subjects who have for so long been marginalized can retake center-stage and retell the narrative from their own perspectives.[226]

Moreover, how can users trust in archives if archivists are complicit in the exclusion and erasure of Chinese in America? People have already turned to other places such as archaeology and anthropology for answers. Yet these have also been inadequate in many ways. Reporting on the possible developments of the Trump administration, the Financial Times has released an article stating that "Stephen Miller, a White House aide who has been pivotal in developing the administration's hardline immigration policies, pushed the president and other officials to make it impossible for Chinese citizens to

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[224] Caswell, Michelle, and Marika Cifor. "From Human Rights to Feminist Ethics: Radical Empathy in the Archives." *Archivaria* 82, no. 0 (May 6, 2016): 23–43.

[225] *Ibid*.

[226] *Ibid*.

study in the U.S."[227] Yet the worst of these concerns, expressed by American universities with high Chinese international student enrollment, did not merely focus on the fact that this decision would repeat the follies of the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, but also worried that international students as their "bottom line" would disappear from many of these universities' budgets. Treating international students as a "bottom line" first of all points to the questionable foundation of the ethics that these universities subscribe to, but secondly, also denies their multi-dimensional experiences as humans and as individuals. International students pay two- to three-times higher tuition than in-state and resident students, and yet it has not been made clear how much or whether any of the tuition they pay actually goes back to funding services and resources for international students.

Re-introducing federally sanctioned exclusionary policies not only destroys the trust that users can place in their own country's government—it also means that there might be increased challenges for 'radical empathy' to be taken up in archival professions, as openly racist, discriminatory policies and fear-driven rhetoric re-establish themselves as the normative standard for 'dealing' with 'perpetual foreigners' and those who, despite being American citizens, will once again be wrongly classified 'strangers from a different shore.' The Committee of 100 has released a statement condemning this possible move and citing anti-Asian and anti-Chinese legislation of the past:

> To target a whole group of people as being subject to greater suspicion, based purely on race and national origin, and in advance of any facts or evidence, goes

[227] Stuart Anderson. "What Will Trump Do Next With Chinese Student Visas?" Forbes. Accessed October 20, 2018. https://www.forbes.com/sites/stuartanderson/2018/10/18/what-will-trump-do-next-with-chinese-student-visas/.

> against the fundamental American ideals of the presumption of innocence, due process and equal protection for all. It also fans the flames of hysteria.[228]

Hysteria, race, and suspicion – these have been the buzzwords when it comes to describing many Chinese and Chinese Americans working in mathematics and the sciences as potential spies, untrustworthy, and double agents, based largely upon unfounded allegations and personal prejudices.

This brings the discussion to another important question: Why do community-based archives exist? An answer might resemble: because people need a place they can turn to and that will ensure records on Chinese in America can be preserved in a meaningful and conscientious manner. This critical race theory approach intersects with what Michelle Caswell calls "symbolic annihilation," which was "first borrowed…from media studies to denote how members of marginalized communities feel regarding the absence or misrepresentation of their communities in archival collection policies, in descriptive tools and/or in collections themselves."[229] Yet these results are not always as simple or ideal when carried out. Whereas it has been possible to provide slightly more transparency surrounding the case of the Chinese Historical Society of Southern California (CHSSC) archives, the same could not be said for UC Riverside's or Stanford

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[228] "Committee of 100 Denounces Broad Brush Stereotyping and Targeting of Chinese Students and Academics | Committee 100." Accessed October 20, 2018. http://www.committee100.org/press_release/committee-of-100-denounces-broad-brush-stereotyping-and-targeting-of-chinese-students-and-academics/.

[229] Michelle Caswell, Alda Allina Migoni, Noah Geraci, and Marika Cifor, "'To Be Able to Imagine Otherwise': Community Archives and the Importance of Representation: Archives and Records: Vol 38, No 1." Accessed October 20, 2018. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/23257962.2016.1260445.

University's finding aids because of the greater roadblocks to accessing and understanding administrative restrictions within the university setting.

Currently, there is also an uneven distribution of resources that has potentially damaging effects upon how communities construct and gain access to narratives at the fundamental mainstream level. The unevenness both within and across institutions points to greater need for resources the combination of resources via positive and productive collaborations. Building trust and relationships with users are key, but more importantly, there must be a commitment not to violate that trust in the future. As more materials are discovered and users learn more about where materials on early Chinese in America are housed, archives may not be the chosen place to go. With hostile rhetoric coming from the United States White House, there is no guarantee anymore than users will entrust archives with such materials. As the archival profession continues to develop, whose voices are excluded?

The archives are not all things to all people. There are realistic limits to how much one repository or one collection can cover. However, if archives are to maintain their relevancy, they must consider how they can work in appropriate ways that honor materials from communities that have been largely excluded. Efforts should begin from within, and archivists cannot rely upon just efforts outside of archives to do this work. Similarly, this exploratory study, having been conducted within an interpretivist paradigm, does not intend to be all things to all people. The findings and discussions of this study revealed that identifying specific instances of institutionalized racism and biases are, more often than not, moving targets when analyzed within the contexts of changing archival descriptive practices, standards, and technologies. As language and terminologies change over time, there may also be a shift in the way individuals

identify themselves. This is why parts of the analysis may resonate deeply with some individuals and fall flat for others. The study calls for people from multiple backgrounds, disciplines, and professions, especially archivists, to allow for the presence of dissonance in their accepted worldviews and daily perspectives.

While subject headings may be more of a focus for librarians than for archivists in their respective practices, they are still important in many ways to how users might use certain search terms to locate archival collections in online library catalogs. In order to ensure that subject headings and indexing terms can be more relevant, respectful, and reflexive to users' needs, opportunities should be created to facilitate cross-disciplinary conversations between bibliographers, catalogers, archivists, historians and activists, to enact the "metadata justice" that UC Berkeley Ethnic Studies Librarian Sine-Hwang Jensen referred to in a recent conference roundtable as a way to enrich existing metadata records.[230] There have been debates as to if outdated and offensive terminologies need to be documented and preserved, allowing for adding of local and alternative subject headings devised by staff and users alike. Another train of thought maintains that offensive terminologies need to be eliminated and not used at all in the language. Yet a third, more complicated way, would be to allow for descriptions from respective individuals and groups to exist alongside each other. Being able to document and observe revisions and changes to the finding aid can potentially inform users of how and why

[230] Melissa Stoner, Lillian Castillo-Speed, and Sine Hwang Jensen, "Metadata Justice: Representing Diversity and Inclusion in Our Collections." *The Third National Joint Conference of Librarians of Color*, 28 Sept. 2018, Albuquerque Convention Center, Albuquerque, NM. Roundtable Presentation.

terminologies shift so quickly at times, as well as form a wider view of terminologies as they fluctuate with political climate and policies of federal administration.

Finally, I have drawn much inspiration from the following quotes, which are: "We don't do this work in a vacuum" and "Nothing about us without us."[231] These were shared at two different occasions at conference panel presentations which focused on culturally competent archival (re)description and metadata justice, respectively. [232] What roles do archivists and information professionals play in representing diversity and inclusiveness in the collections they work with? How do the archival representations and descriptions they create influence the shaping of historical narratives? The research was limited by scope and the number of finding aids that could be selected for analysis. Definitive or conclusive answers were not an objective of this exploratory study, but rather a signpost from which to ask further questions that could be addressed in future research. This could mean looking at a range of different institutions, such as museums and public libraries, using modified questions, selection criteria, facets, and factors. Interviews or focus groups, met with approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), could be incorporated as an additional method whereby I could draw results from different methods to collect data upon the same subject.

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[231] James I. Charleton, "Nothing About Us Without Us: Disability Oppression and Empowerment." in *Berkeley: University of California Press* (1998): 1-117. http://ark.cdlib.org/ark:/13030/ft309nb1hb/

[232] Annie Tang, Dorothy Judith Berry, Kelly Bolding, and Rachel E. Winston, "Towards Culturally Competent (Re)Description of Marginalized Histories," *Society of American Archivists Annual Meeting: ARCHIVES * RECORDS 2018*, 16 Aug. 2018, Marriott Warden Park, Washington, D.C., Education Session.

The imperative is greater than ever, to have "honest dialogues about how we as a profession and individuals perpetuate inequality."[233] Daniel G. Solórzano and Tara J. Yasso offer the following definition of *counterstories*, which could inform potential solutions or directions for development in finding aids:

> We define the counter-story as a method of telling the stories of those people whose experiences are not often told (i.e., those on the margins of society). The counter-story is also a tool for exposing, analyzing, and challenging the majoritarian stories of racial privilege. Counter-stories can shatter complacency, challenge the dominant discourse on race, and further the struggle for racial reform. Yet, counter-stories need not be created only as a direct response to majoritarian stories.… Indeed, within the histories and lives of people of color, there are numerous unheard counter-stories. Storytelling and counter-storytelling these experiences can help strengthen traditions of social, political, and cultural survival and resistance.[234]

Moreover, Solórzano and Yasso emphasize that because such 'dominant' or "'majoritarian' stories generate from a legacy of racial privilege, they are stories in which racial privilege seems 'natural.'"[235] In archival practice, racial privilege can also express itself, both consciously and unconsciously, via standards and traditional practices imposed upon the processing, arrangement, and description of archival collections. Racial microaggressions are usually discussed within the context of everyday, interpersonal and environmental interactions. However, an interesting future research focus could be to examine how racial microaggressions can be interpreted within encounters between people and information resources, such as through encounters with outdated,

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[233] Mario H. Ramirez, "Being Assumed Not to Be: A Critique of Whiteness as an Archival Imperative," in *The American Archivist* 78, no. 2 (2015): 352.

[234] Solórzano, Daniel G. and Tara J. Yasso, "Critical Race Methodology: Counter-Storytelling as an Analytical Framework for Education Research," in *Qualitative Inquiry* 8, no. 1 (2002): 32.

[235] *Ibid*, 28.

racially offensive descriptive language in documents and other materials within archival collections. Do the archivists provide any context to recognize the language as offensive, and clarify or explain its presence? What are the affective and psychological impacts upon people of color when they come across such materials in the archives, especially if they are not appropriately contextualized? These are all questions that are beyond the scope of the current research, but pose an interesting and challenging topic to tackle in the future.

It is my hope that this exploratory study—which aimed to examine archival representations and descriptions for collections on the early Chinese in America using a critical race theory approach—can prompt further and more comprehensive studies on this significant, yet under-researched area from an archival studies perspective. By taking these difficult but crucial first steps, archival studies scholars and professionals can play active roles in engaging with and contributing to the continually evolving interdisciplinary conversations in the contemporary age.

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