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Association for Library Collections & Technical Services
a Division of the American Library Association

When Crisis Comes: Rapidly Acquiring, Describing, and Preserving Community-Created Digital Collections

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June 25, 2018

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New Orleans
ALA ANNUAL
CONFERENCE & EXHIBITION
JUNE 21–26, 2018
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When Crisis Comes

Rapidly acquiring, describing, and preserving community-created digital collections

Jeremy Boggs, Ivey Glendon, Kara McClurken
University of Virginia Library
ALA Annual | June 25, 2018

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Overview

- Identifying emergencies
- Major events at the University of Virginia
- Organizational expertise required for a rapid response team
- Let’s talk: national toolkit for emergency digital collecting

Content Note

- Please note that the events at the University of Virginia involve the following concepts:
    - Sexual violence
    - White supremacy
    - White nationalism
    - Antisemitism
    - Neo-Nazism
    - Neo-Confederatism

When crisis comes

- Crisis is:
  - Unexpected
  - Indifferent to standard business hours

- Crisis can be:
  - Natural emergencies
  - Human-made emergencies
  - A fog: where does it begin and end?

Events at the University of Virginia

2012	• Removal and reinstatement of University President Teresa A. Sullivan
2014	• *Rolling Stone* publishes “A Rape on Campus”
2017	• Far-right rally to protest Confederate statue removal

2012: a presidential crisis

- Resignation and reinstatement of UVA President Teresa A. Sullivan
- Library's response:
  - Collecting focus on tweets and other digital media
- Obstacles to Library's response:
  - Staffing
  - Timing
  - Privacy and account issues associated with social media collecting

U. of Virginia Board Votes to Reinstate Sullivan

Justin Ide for The Chronicle

President Teresa Sullivan and Rector Helen Dragas enter the rotunda for Tuesday's meeting.

2014: *Rolling Stone*

- Publication and eventual retraction of “A Rape on Campus”
- Library response
  - Collection of physical artifacts
  - Support for faculty research projects
  - Start to think about metadata and controlled vocabularies
- Obstacles to Library’s response
  - Rights encumbered content
  - Quality of scans

The New York Times

Rolling Stone Article on Rape at University of Virginia Failed All Basics, Report Says

The police in Charlottesville, Va., said last month they had found “no substantive basis” to support the article’s depiction of sexual assault at a fraternity at the University of Virginia above.

Ryan Stone for The New York Times

2017: August 11-12 rally

- “Unite the Right” rally to oppose Confederate monument removal
- Multiple events
  - Nazi and white supremacist rally on University Grounds
  - Protests and counterprotests in City of Charlottesville
  - Vehicular homicide
  - Fatal helicopter crash
- Library response
  - Different approaches than last two events
  - We’re starting to get it right

Photo by Gary Powell

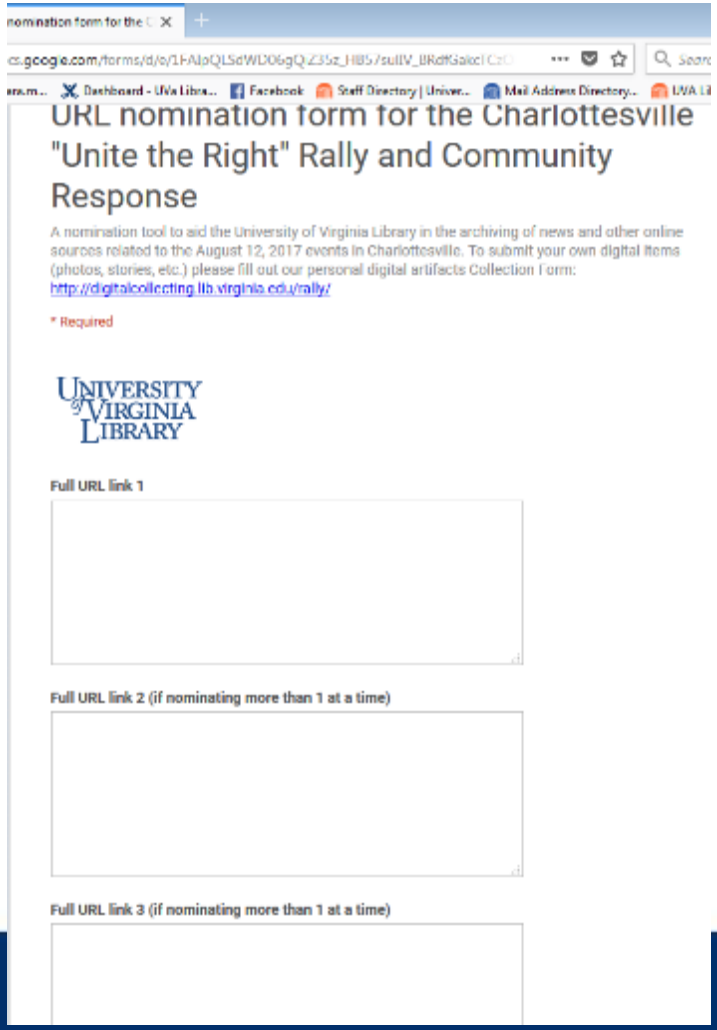
A New Framework:
Digital Collecting Emergency Response Group

- Cross-departmental expertise
- Clearly defined functions
- Proactive rather than reactive response

Memorabilia left by Lee Statue.
Photo by Molly Schwartzburg.

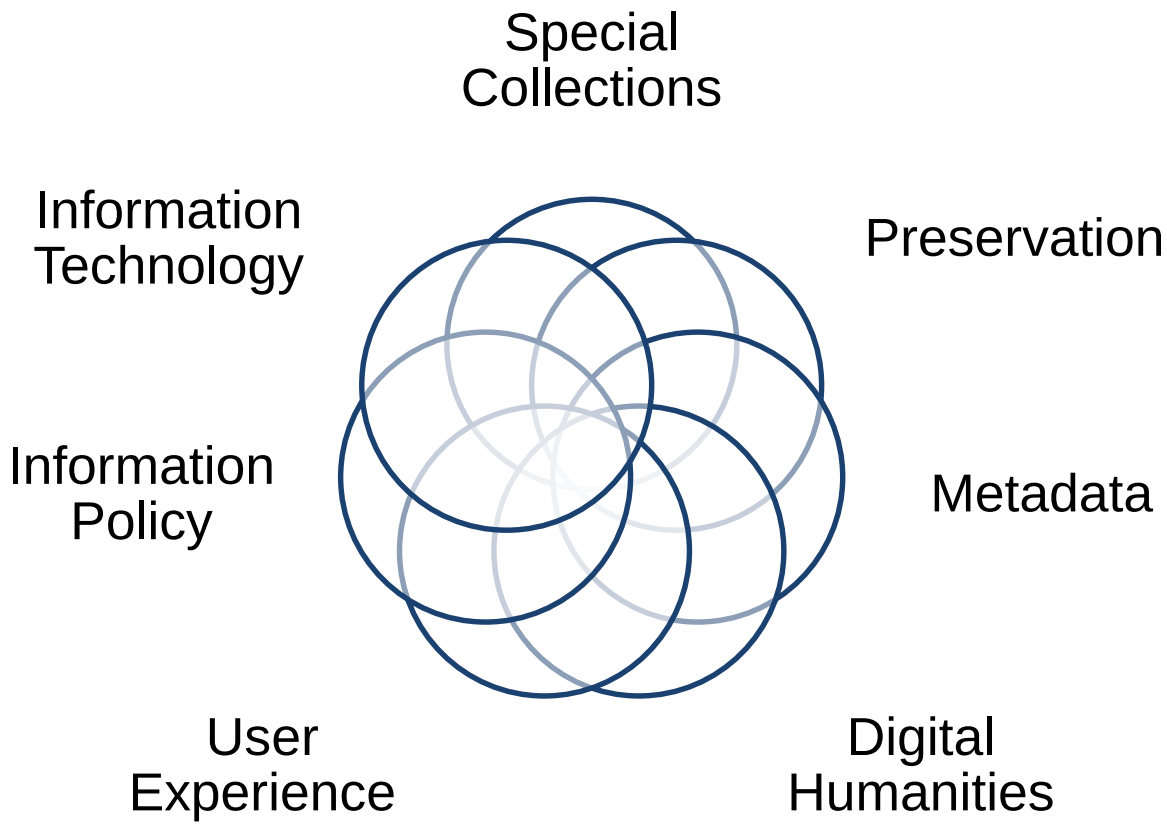
August 11-12, 2017

- August 11-12: Started capturing tweets
- August 13: URL nomination form:
- August 14th: expand URL nomination form (Target launch date: August 17th)
- Actual launch: September 6th



University of Virginia Library

Organizational expertise



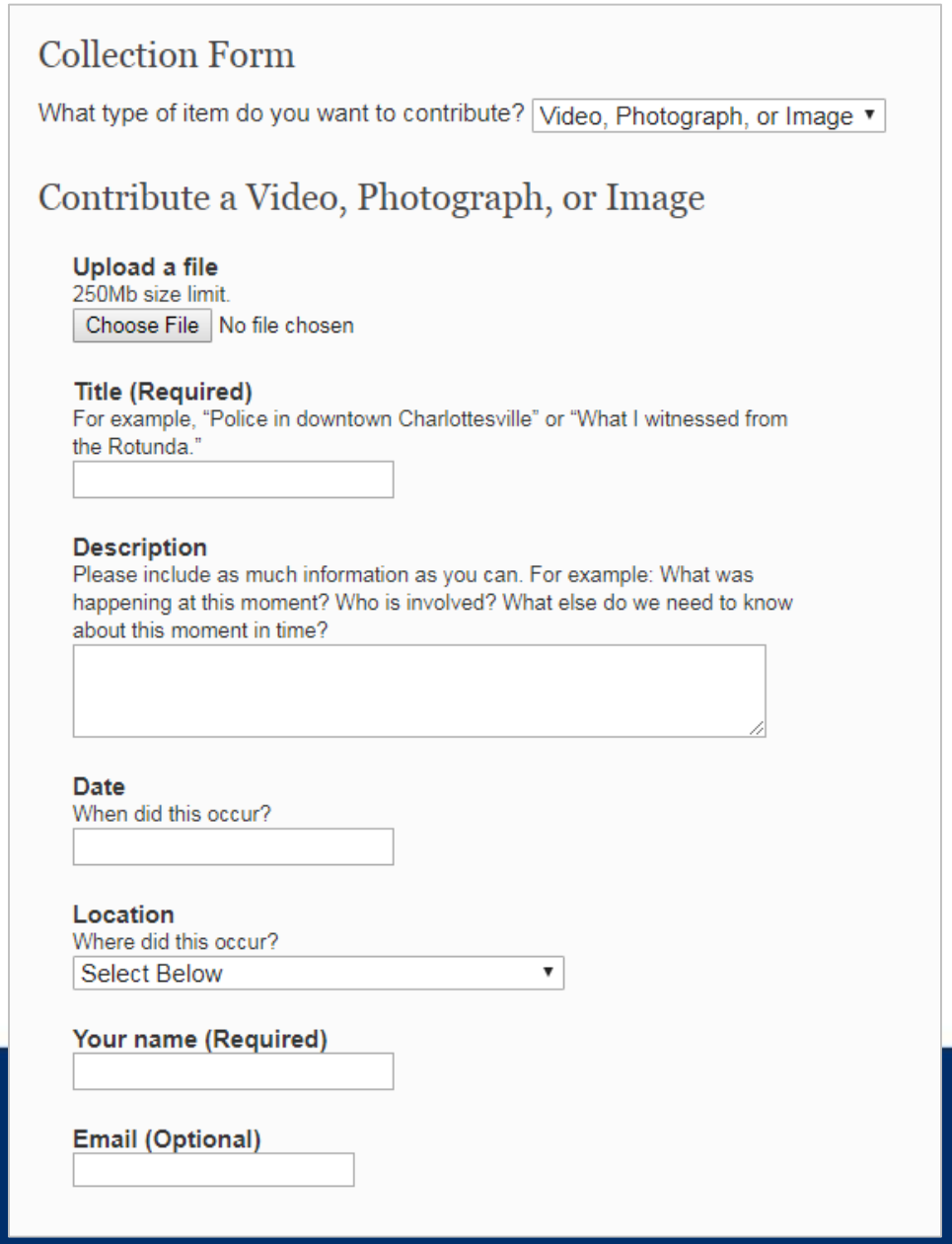
Special Collections

- Curators:
  - Define scope of collection(s)
  - URL submission
- Archivists:
  - Ensure proper documentation
  - Create records
- Public Services:
  - Assist in collection intake
  - Provide input related to access needs/concerns

Photo by Gracie Hall

Metadata

- User-contributed metadata
- Structured approach
- Lightweight description



Collection Form

What type of item do you want to contribute? Video, Photograph, or Image

Contribute a Video, Photograph, or Image

Upload a file
250Mb size limit.
Choose File No file chosen

Title (Required)
For example, "Police in downtown Charlottesville" or "What I witnessed from the Rotunda."

Description
Please include as much information as you can. For example: What was happening at this moment? Who is involved? What else do we need to know about this moment in time?

Date
When did this occur?

Location
Where did this occur?
Select Below

Your name (Required)

Email (Optional)

Digital Humanities

- Omeka
- Templates and plug-ins
- Security and server needs

Librarians found these signs hanging on their front doors the morning of August 10th. Photo by Krista Farrell

User Experience

- Review language
- Look at layout
- Accessibility review

Photo by Ted Glass

Information Technology

- Security (virus scans, etc.)
- Set up server/storage space

Photo by Gracie Hall

Information Policy

- Write terms of use to allow broadest possible access/preservation
- Ensure institution not indemnified
- Consider implications related to use of documents in future lawsuits, etc.

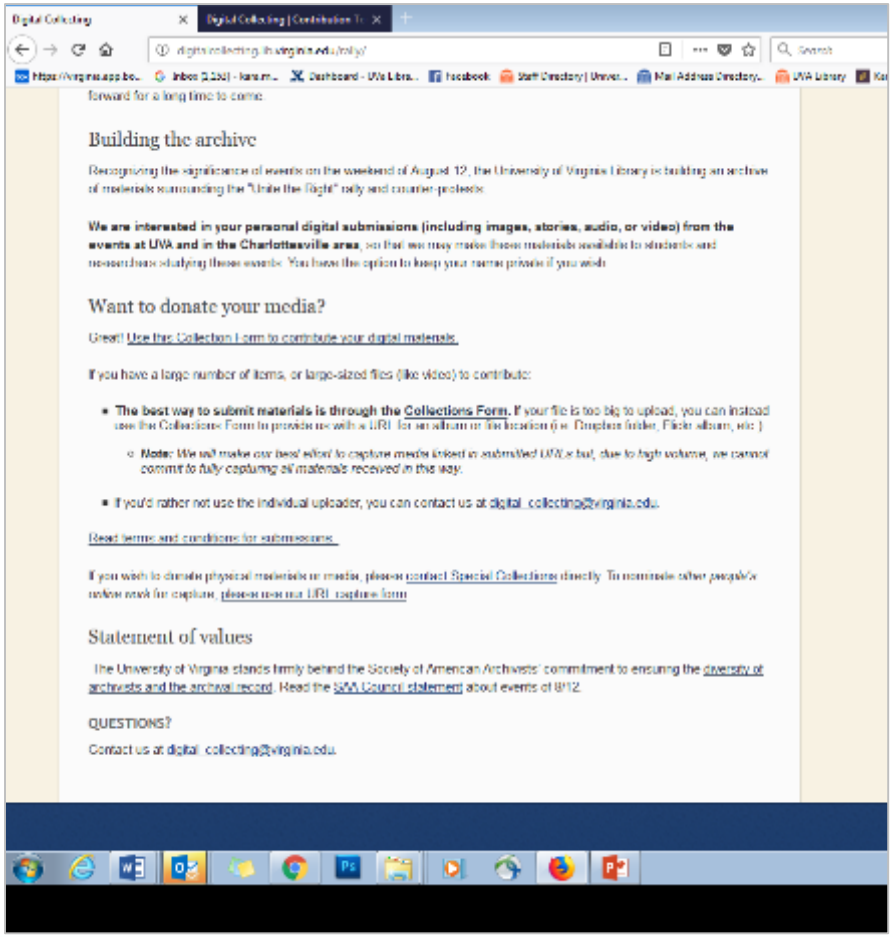
Knitted kudzu leaves that were placed over Lee statue in front of Albemarle Circuit Court the day of Chris Cantwell's hearing for activities related to August 11-12—part of guerilla art installation.

Preservation

Photo by Divya Darling

- Serve as Incident Commander
- Identify tools and workflows for capture and ingest
- Implement stabilization/long-term preservation
- Write documentation for internal and external users

Bumps in the Road



- What to name
- Ethics of collecting
- Security concerns/server capacity
- Privacy
- Formatting of publicly accessible site

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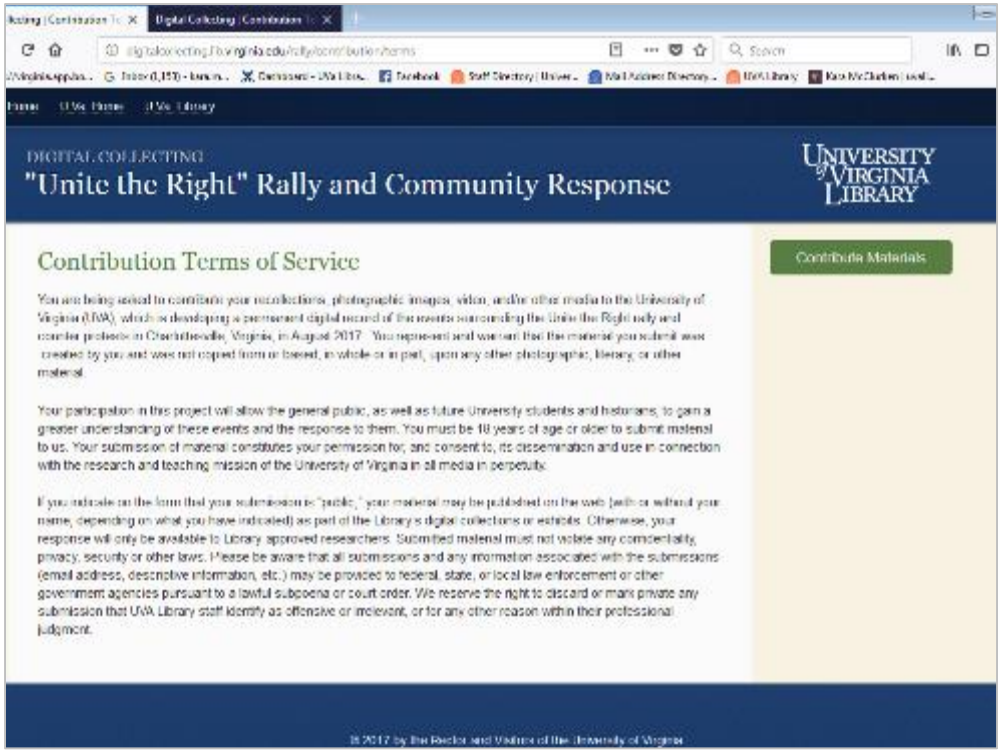
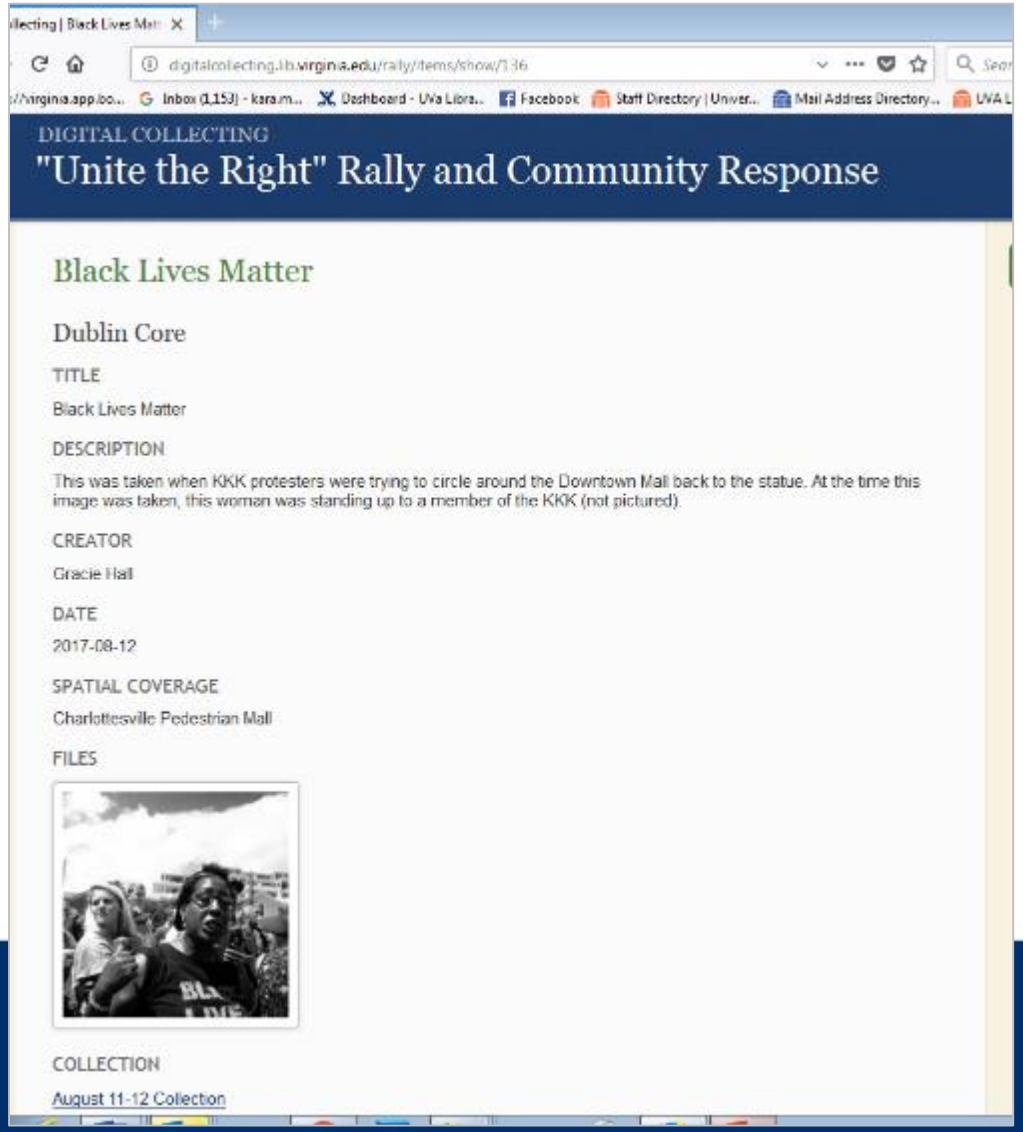
Successes

- Metadata
  - Allows users to title and describe
- Terms of Service
  - Grant UVA rights to preserve and provide access for research and teaching



Work in Progress



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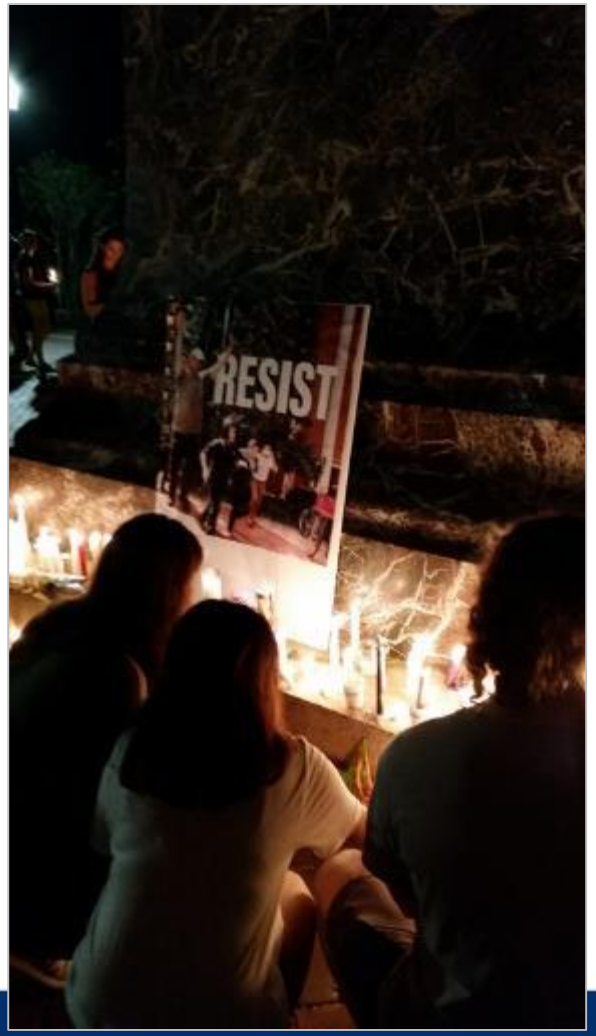
Next steps:
Digital Collecting Emergency Response Group

- Analogous to emergency protocols for physical collections
  - Proactive response
  - Gather experts for various tasks
  - Training and Tools ready in advance→national toolkit
  - Create local/regional teams to be called in as backup/consultants
  - Lyrasis Catalyst grant: Create dockerized Omeka instance with templates for less technically savvy users to implement

Next steps:
National emergency digital collecting toolkit
Audience participation piece

- What's your story? What tools or experiences did you wish you had?
- What might a digital collecting toolkit look like for you?
- How might we piggy back on existing relationships to develop local/regional networks



Jefferson statue, Take back the lawn event, August 16, 2017. Photo by Kara McClurken

Contact us

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Anonymous submission

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