One Size Does not Fit All

Designing customized access points for engagement

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I am a Black woman and work with the archive of a Black playwright who wrote on the Black experience in America. Our outreach for this collection must be unique, specific, and respectful as the collection is held at a large Predominately White Institution and we are reaching out to people of color in the broader community. I will specifically address biases in UX design as well as power structures in libraries/archives.
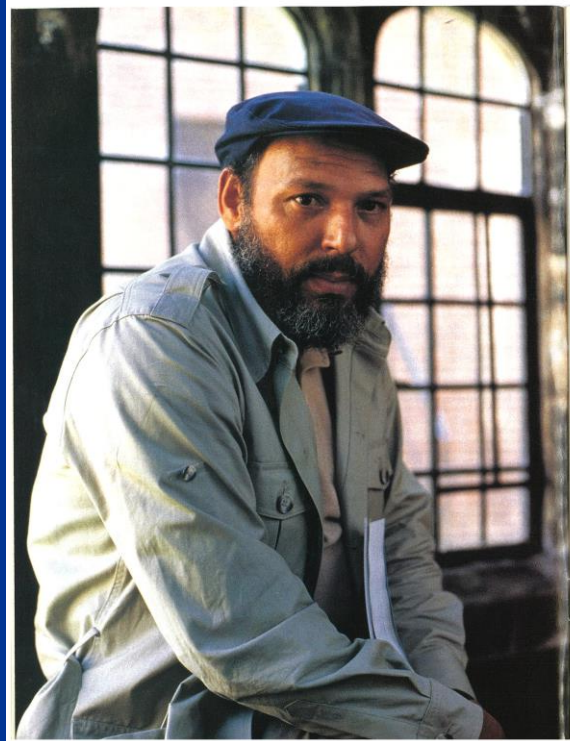
Quotes on Wilson's Legacy

Denzel Washington:

"August Wilson is one of the greatest playwrights in the history of American history or world history. It is a privilege, an honor, a responsibility, a duty, and a joy to bring his brilliance to the screen."
• 48th NAACP Image Awards, February 11, 2017

Neil Simon:

"I have long said that you are the best living American playwright and you probably still will be when the word 'living' no longer applies."
• Draft letter from Simon to Wilson, circa 1997. From the Neil Simon Collection
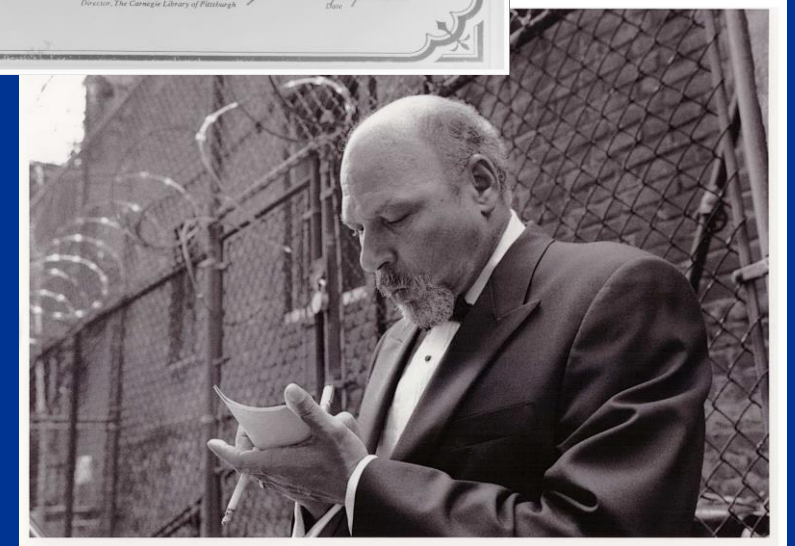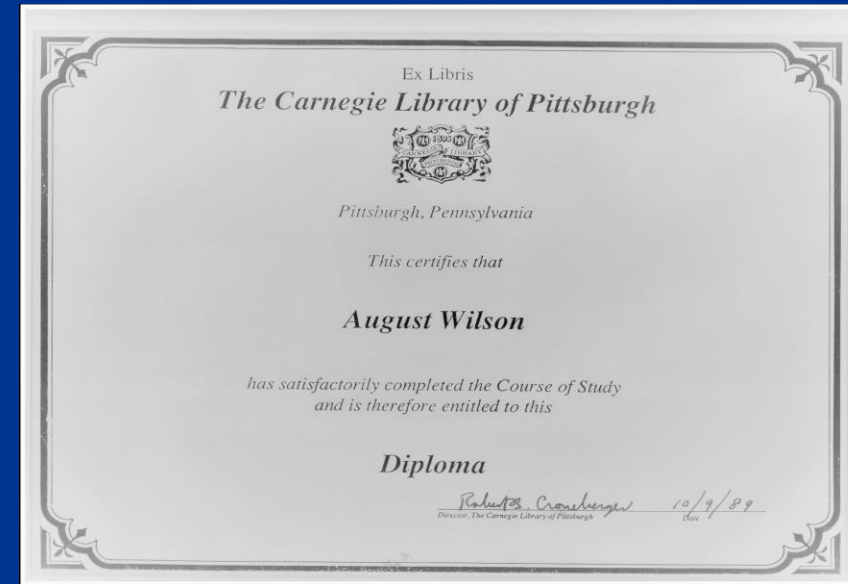
Viola Davis:

"What August did so beautifully is, he honored the average man, who happened to be a man of color."
• 23rd Annual Screen Actors Guild Awards, January 29, 2017

University of Pittsburgh

ULS University of Pittsburgh University Library System
RESOURCES | TECHNOLOGY | EXPERTISE

Wilson Biography

- April 27, 1945 – Frederick August Kittel born in Pittsburgh's Hill District
- 1960 – Kittel stops attending school, self-educates in Carnegie Libraries
- 1965 – Changes name to August Wilson
- 1966-1968 – Joins poetry collective and creates a theatre company
- 1978 – Relocates to Minnesota
- 1982 – *Jitney* premiere in Pgh, *Ma Rainey* at Playwrights Conference, meets Lloyd Richards
- 1990 – relocates to Seattle
- 1994 – Marries Constanza Romero
- April 22, 2005 – *Radio Golf*, final ACC play premieres at Yale Rep Theatre
- Oct 2, 2005 – Wilson dies at 60
- Oct 17, 2005 – Virginia Theatre renamed the August Wilson Theater

Ex Libris
The Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania

This certifies that

August Wilson

has satisfactorily completed the Course of Study
and is therefore entitled to this

Diploma

American Century Cycle

"My plays are ultimately about love, honor, duty, betrayal."

- 10 play cycle, each play set in a decade of the 20th century
- Nearly all set in Pittsburgh's Hill District
- Themes include urban renewal and gentrification, character's disconnection from their ancestors/culture post the Great Migration, institutional racism, etc.
- Netflix film adaptations
- The August Wilson New Voices Monologue Competition
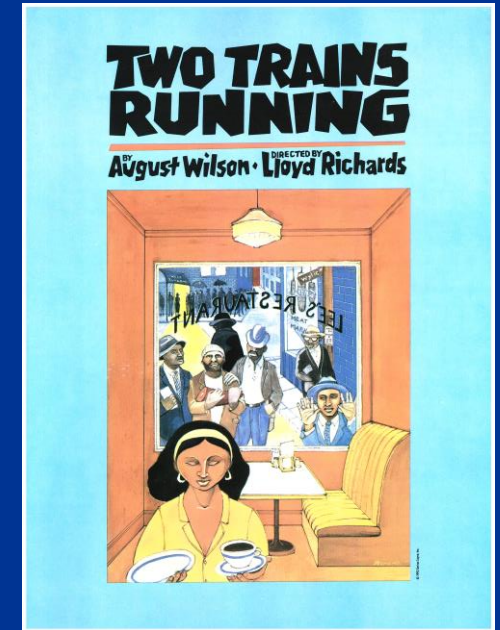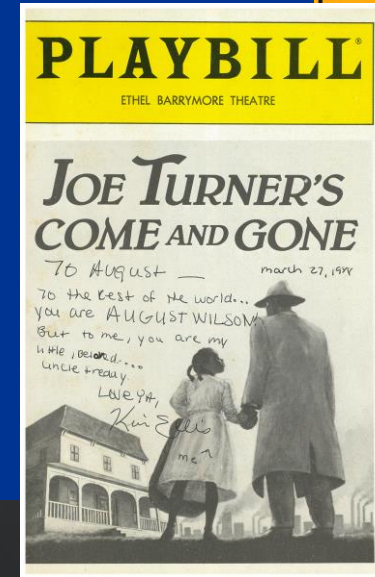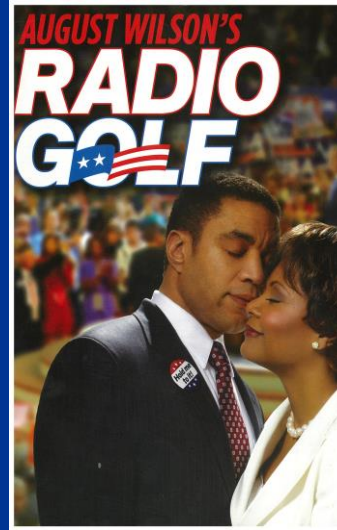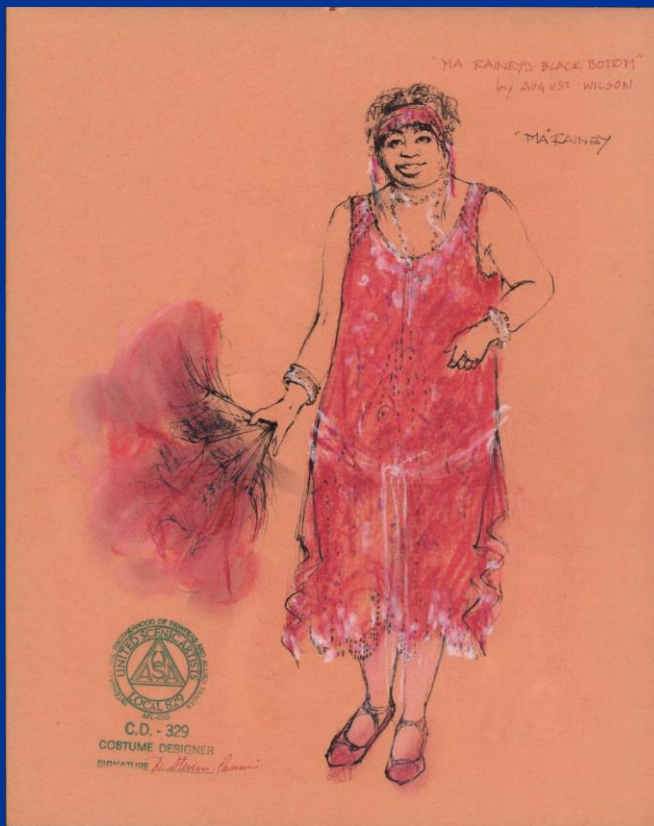
What's in the August Wilson Archive?

American Century Cycle Materials

- Drafts and scripts
- Rehearsal reports
- Stage manager reports
- Publications
- Props
- Set and Costume Designs

What's in the August Wilson Archive?

Notebooks

- Archive contains 652 legal pads and 44 spiral notebooks

- Dates range from 1968-2005

- Notebook contents are non-linear and tend to have a "stream of consciousness" character.

- Contents include (but are not limited to) poetry, drafts of outgoing correspondence, short stories, script fragments, doodles, and notes about specific play productions.

- Notebooks pose a preservation challenge.
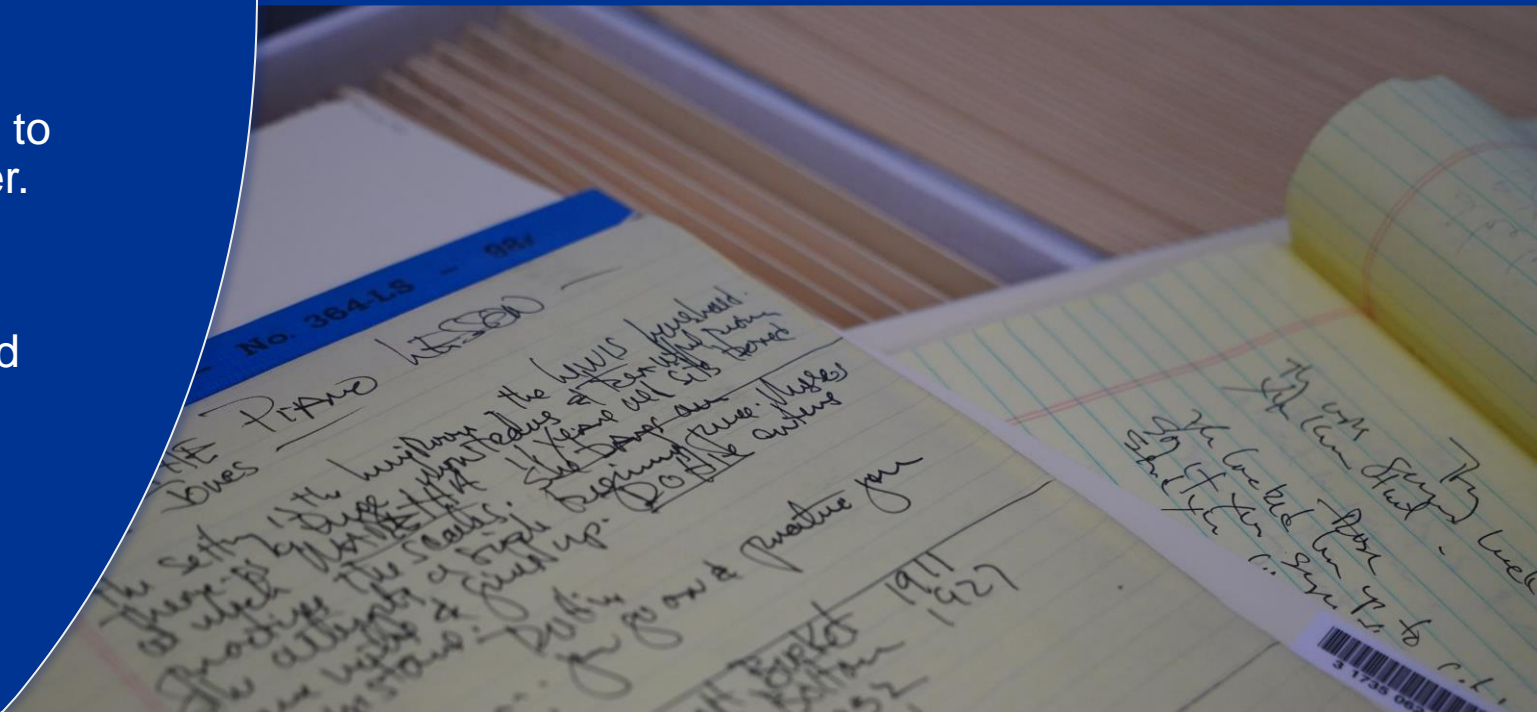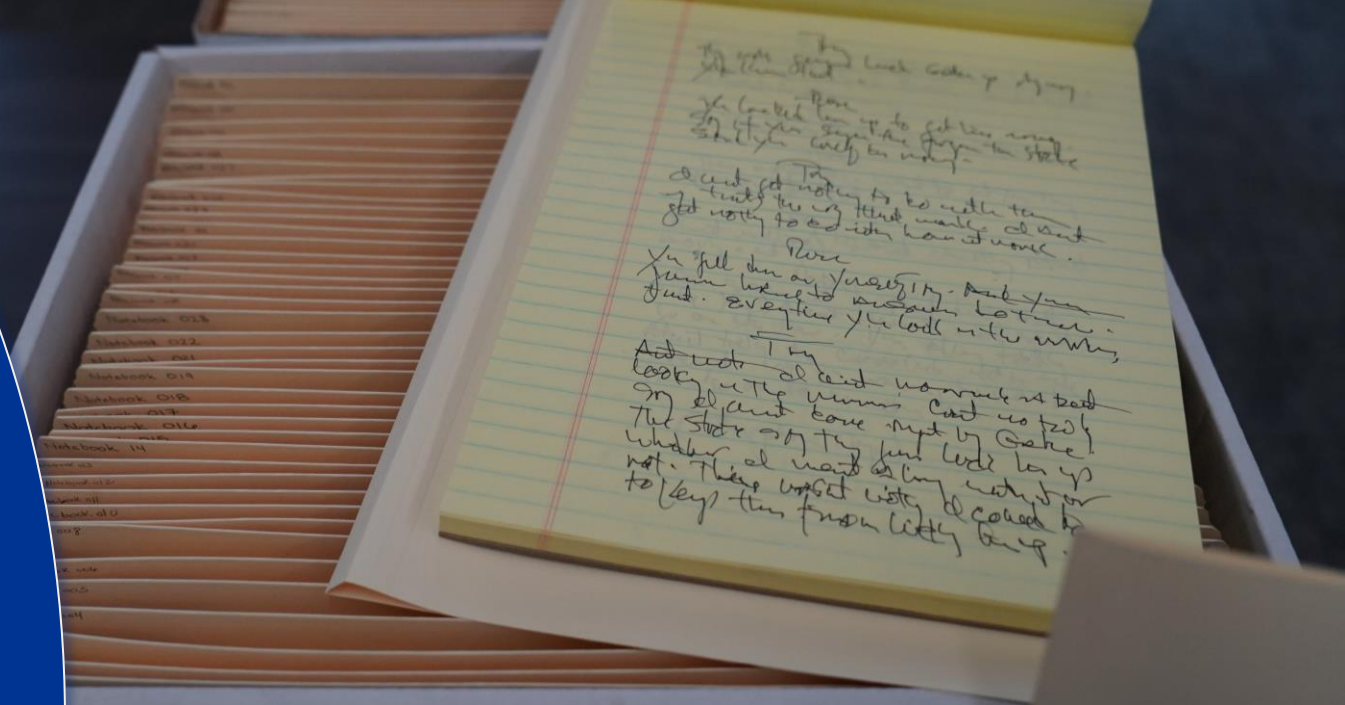
What's in the August Wilson Archive?

Writings on found objects

- Napkins
- Menus and placemats
- Newspapers
- Scrap paper
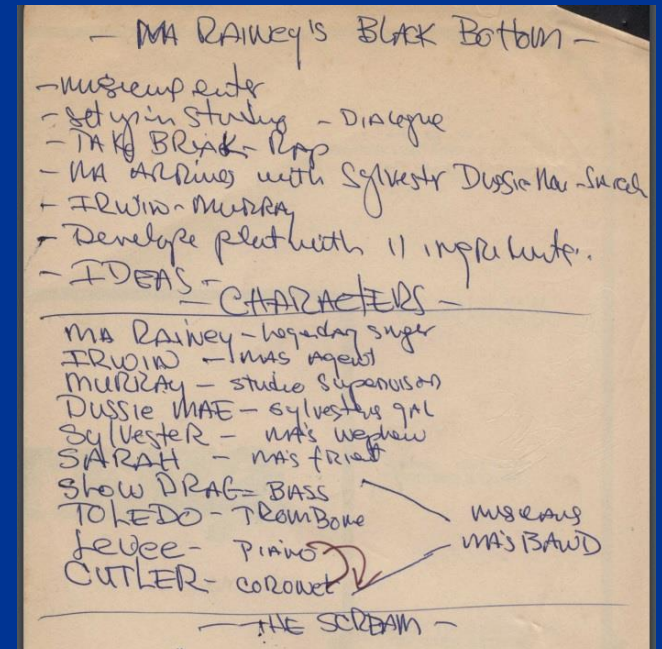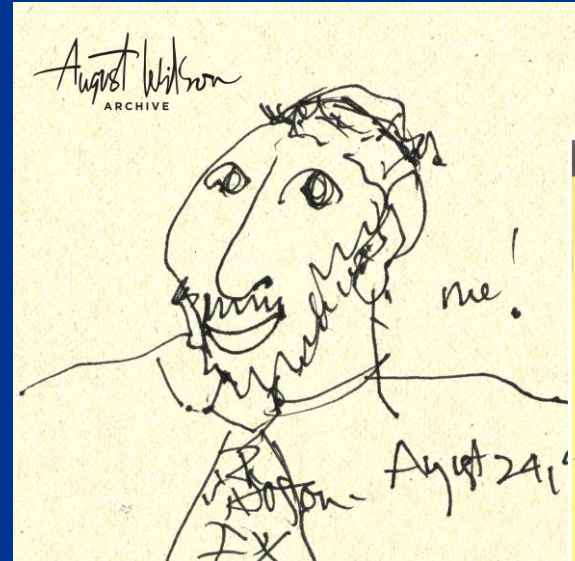
What's in the August Wilson Archive?

- The August Wilson Archive contains Wilson's extensive collection of books, music, and audio-visual media.

- Inventories of these personal collections will be available online and if needed, researchers may request to consult the physical copies

Our Vision for Outreach and Engagement

Sharing	Sharing the African American experience throughout the 20th and 21st centuries
Initiating	Initiating discussions of race, African American history, the Great Migration, Civil Rights, social justice, and much more
Inspiring	Inspiring new creative endeavors by students, teachers, researchers, and community members through their interaction and immersion into the collection
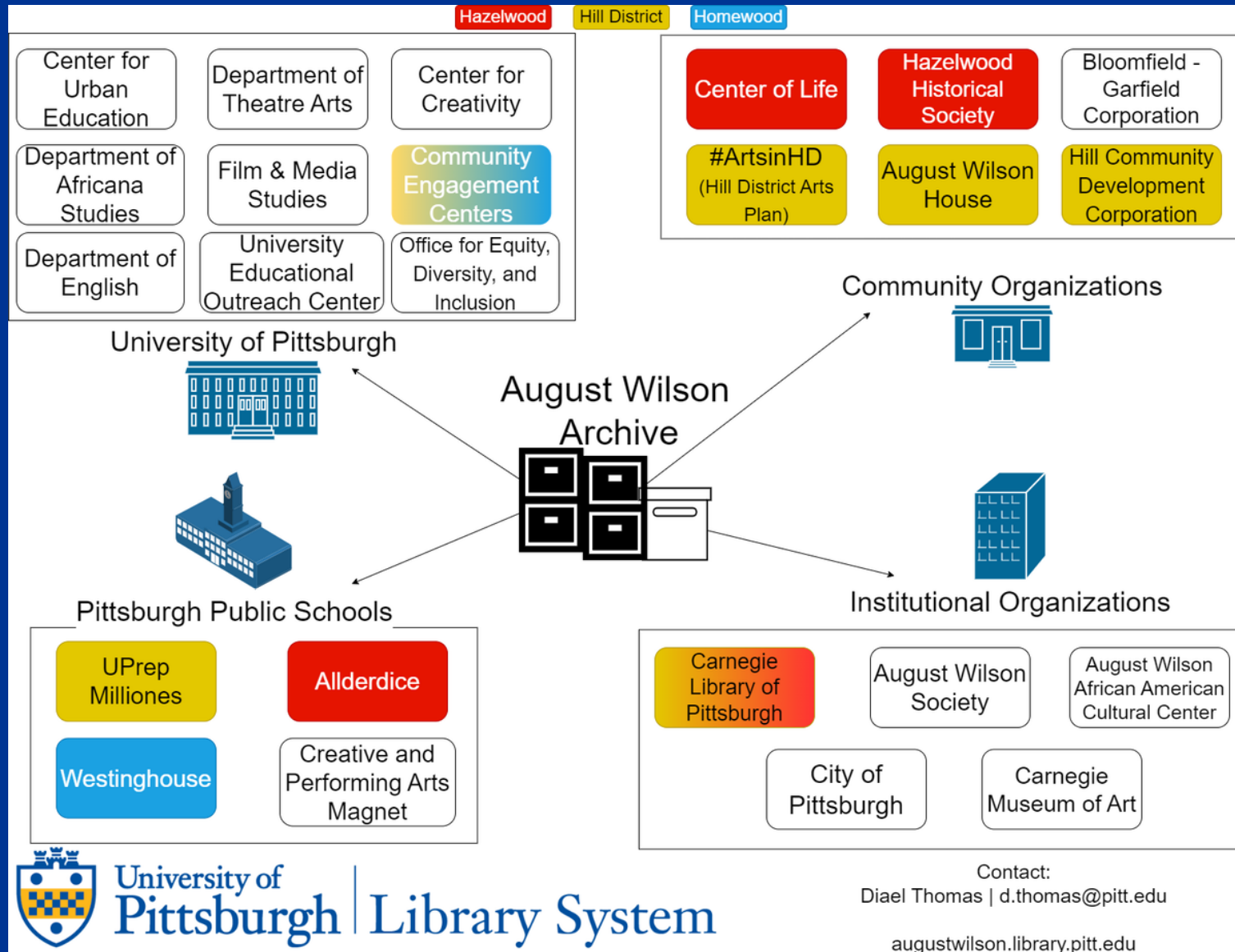
Our Focus Areas

K-12 Students, primarily in PPS

Educators
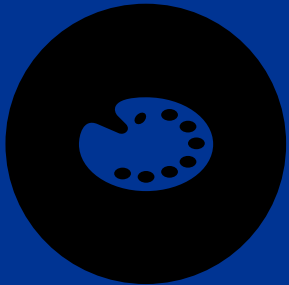
Artists
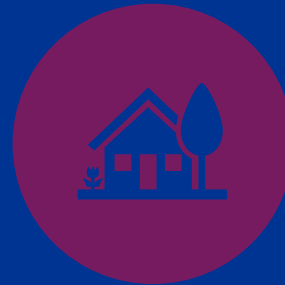
Broader community, especially in the Hill District and Hazelwood

Creating Access Points

- Educators – Sample Lesson Plan
- Students – Exhibit Examples, Seed Project Ideas
- Artists – how can we connect their work to themes in Wilson?
- Community organizations – strength-based approach
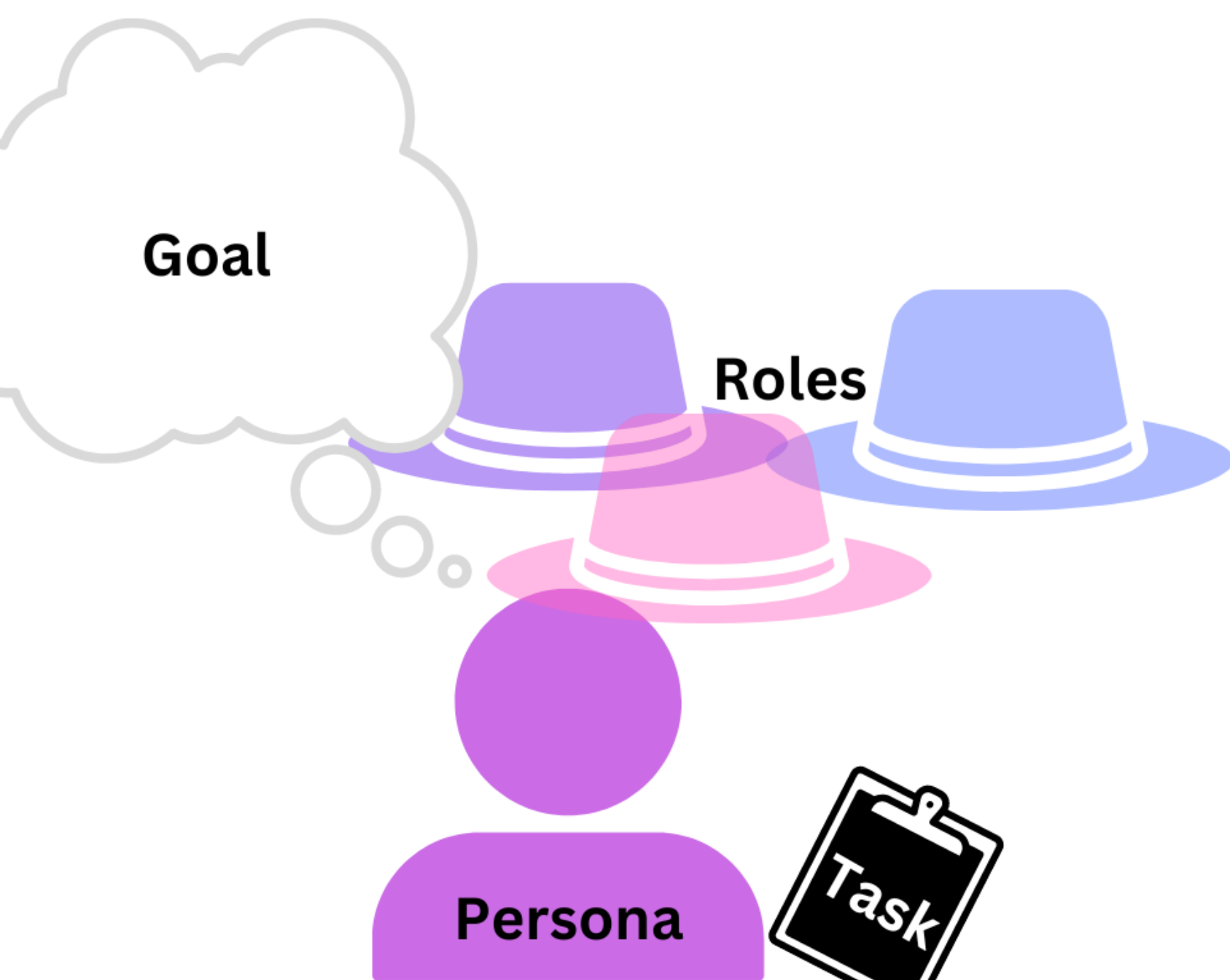
- Persona – description of the typical user
- Goal – what the user is working toward
- Task – piece of work
- Role - the hats they wear

Holtzblatt, Karen, et al. *Rapid Contextual Design : A How-To Guide to Key Techniques for User-Centered Design*, Elsevier Science & Technology, 2004. *ProQuest Ebook Central*.

Wilson User Personas

1. I am a Pittsburgh resident interested in visiting the archive because of the local importance. I have not conducted academic research before.

   a. I am a Pittsburgh resident interested in events pertaining to the archive.

2. I am a Wilson scholar interested in highlights from the collection. I am comfortable navigating a finding aid.

3. I am a Pittsburgh educator interested in resources for teaching and how to engage my classes.

4. I am a high-school student interested in the student research opportunity. I do not know what an archive is. I have little familiarity with Wilson.

5. I am a theatre professional interested in what the archive contains.

6. I was searching Wilson for other purposes and am interested in learning about the archive and what Pitt is doing.

Website Mapping

Resident | Scholar | **Educator** | **Student** | Gen interest

Landing Page: About

Explore: understanding the collection, using the collection, viewing the collection

Opportunities: work with us

Events: participate

News

Contact Info

Informational Video

Award Applications

Upcoming Events

News articles

Finding Aid Information

Field Trips

Past Events

How to Visit Us

Video Content

How people are using the collection

Exhibits

Biases in User Personas

Intersectionality and beyond
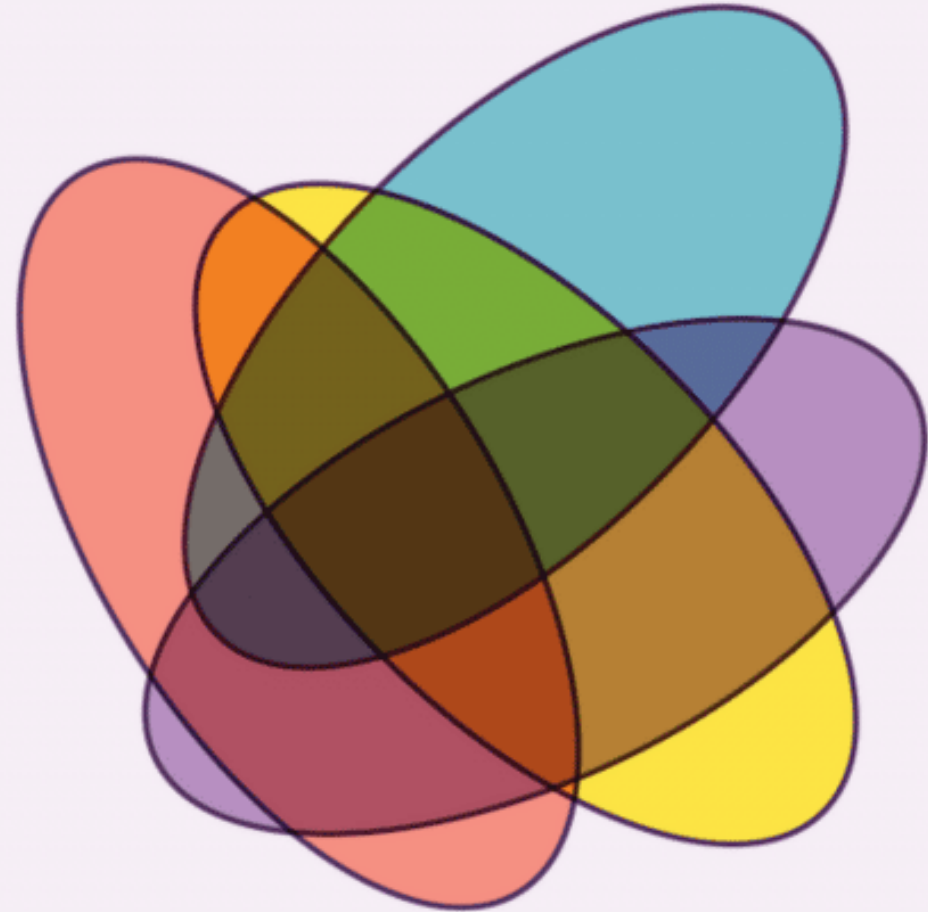
The Collection in Numbers

Number of Drafts and Scripts

Number of productions per play
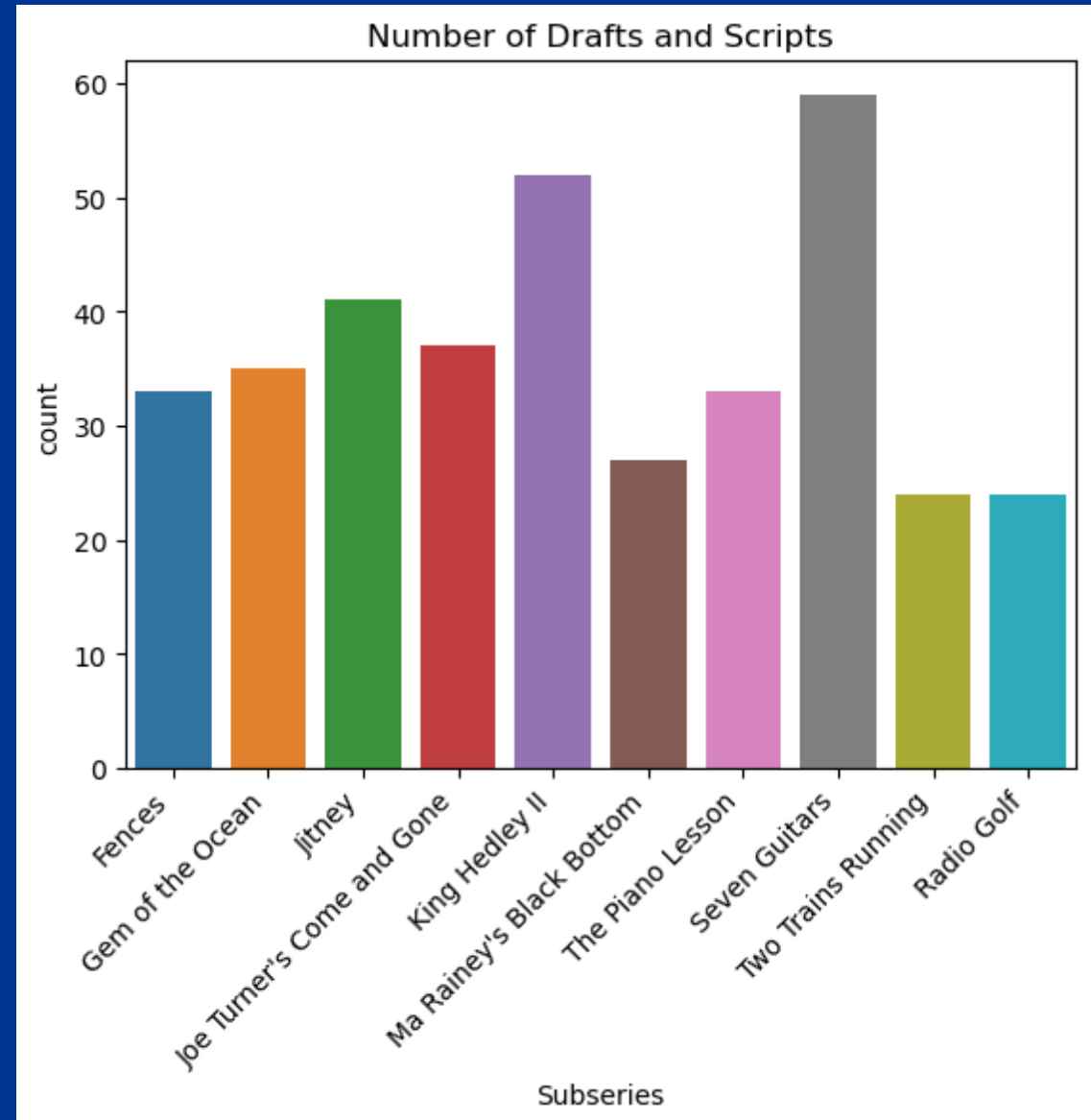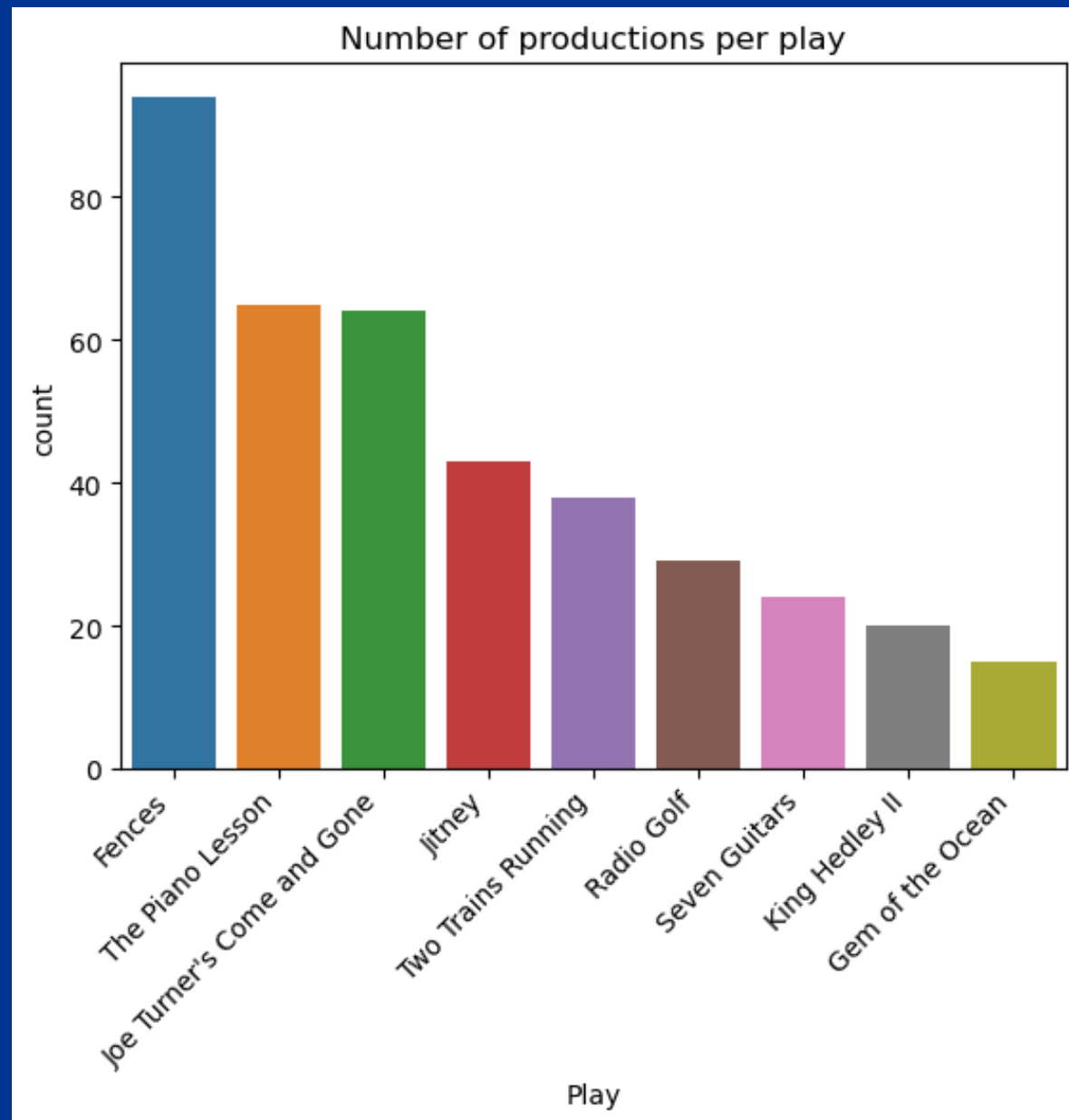
Top 10 Theatres by number of productions
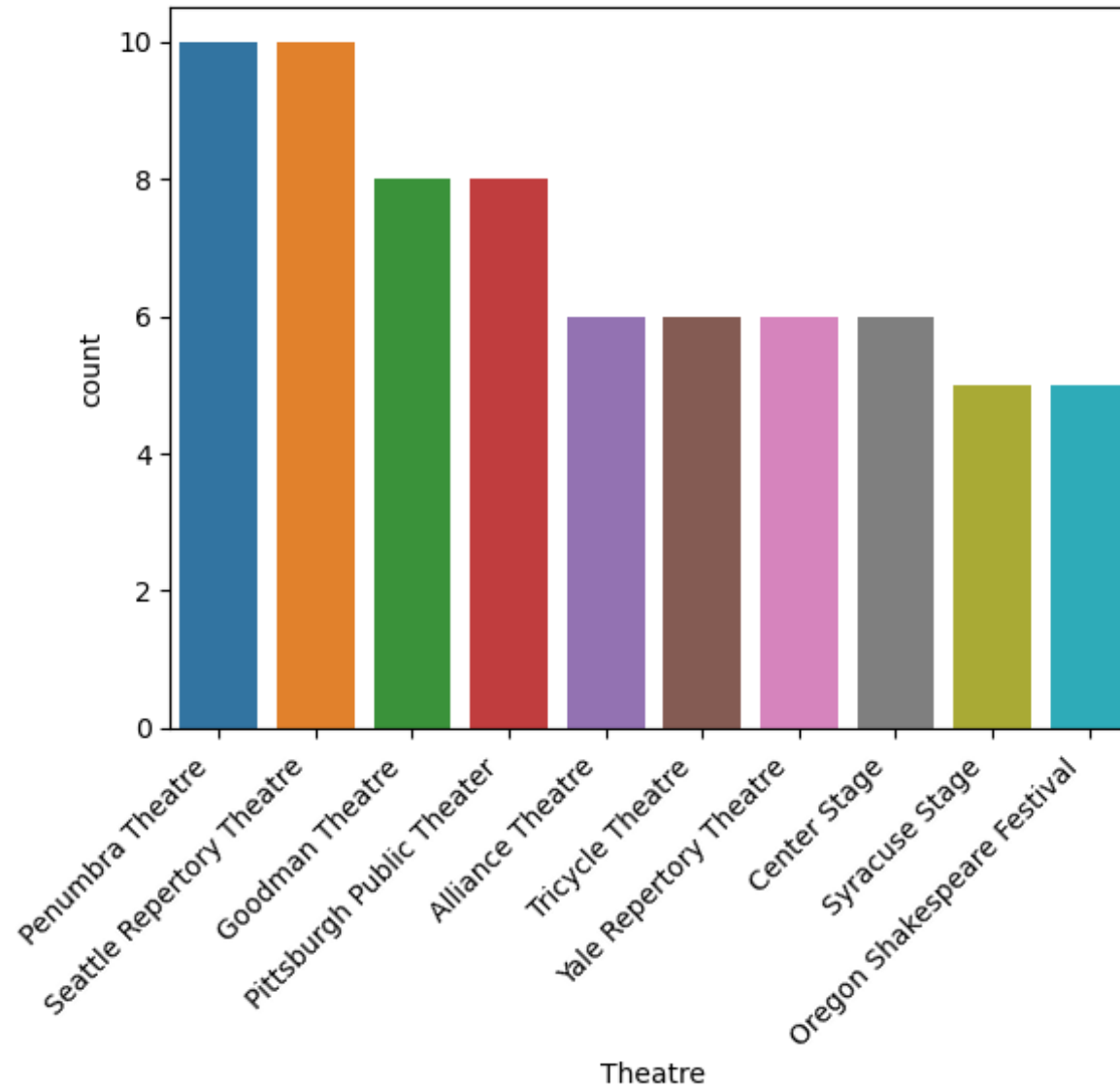
Number of Files per Production for Gem of the Ocean
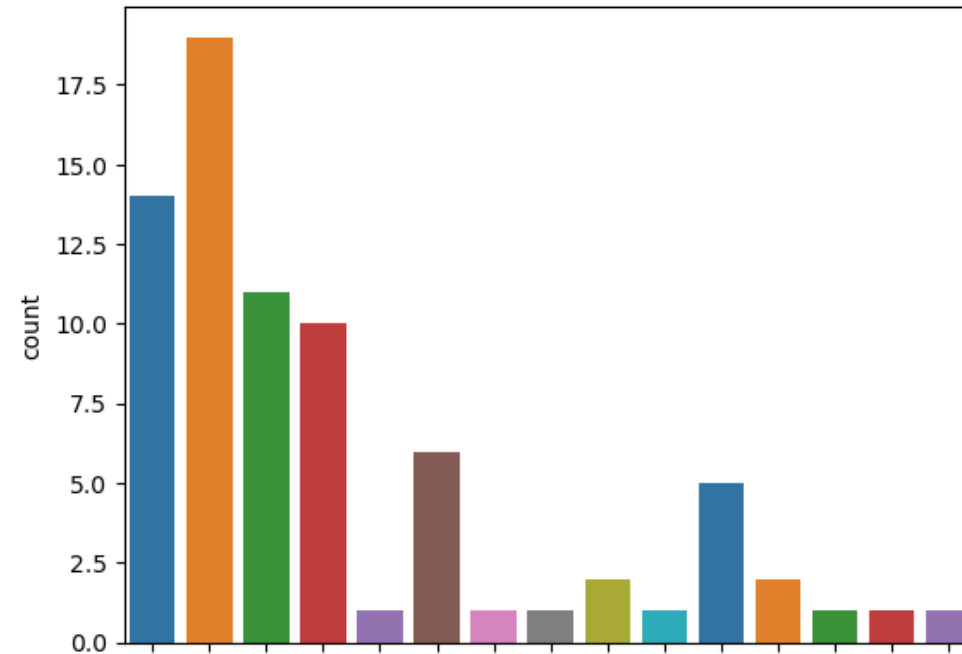
Ways to approach the collection

- thematically through a specific play or group of plays
- thematically through Wilson's interests
    - diversity in theatre - see Brustein debate
- Wilson as a businessman
    - financial correspondence
- Wilson as an artist
    - other writings
    - artwork created by Wilson
- Wilson as a black man
- The Hill District as a place and location
- Black culture as art
- Black artists in the broader theatre world
- Dialogue as rhythm and poetry
- Playbills as visual objects

Inspiration from Museum Education and TPS

University of Pittsburgh | Library System

August Wilson's *Gem of the Ocean*

Length of session: 120 minutes

Number of students:

Level: secondary

Reading
Before the workshop, students will be asked to complete a tutorial about…?

- Using the archives?
- Finding aids?
- Something specific about how archives work?

Learning Objectives:

1. Relate Aunt Ester to ideas of cultural memory
2. Contrast the meaning of freedom in the play with official/normative histories of enslavement [Approaches to teaching…]
3. Design your vision of the City of Bones

In-Class Materials

1. Production Photographs; Series 1, Subseries 2, Section 2-2-2, Photographs
2. Prop research for bill of sale; Series 1, Subseries 2, Section 2-2-1, Prop concept art and paper boat, undated
3. Folded bill of sale; Series 1, Subseries 2, Section 2-2-1, Prop concept art and paper boat, undated
4. 3 drafts
    a. Series 1, Subseries 2, Section 2.1, Script (undated)
    b. Series 1, Subseries 2, Section 2.1, Script, November 21, 2002
    c. Series 1, Subseries 2, Section 2.1, Promptbook, March 25, 2003
5. Rehearsal reports; Series 1, Subseries 2, Section 2-2-1 Goodman Theatre, Rehearsal reports, 2003
6. Research for title of the play; Series 1, Subseries 2, Section 2.4, Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean

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Grade level: 6-8

EN ESPAÑOL

Through this activity you will explore how to express emotions and experience in abstract art. **Abstraction** is using colors, lines, and shapes to make something FEEL the way you want it to, it does not need to look like something realistic!

Materials: Paper, watercolors or oil pastels or colored pencils

Directions:

1. Number 1-4 on a small section of paper and brainstorm and think of four of your happiest or favorite memories. Next to those memories, write colors and emotions that you associate with the memory.

2. Once you have brainstormed ideas, begin painting or drawing an abstraction of your first memory using the colors and emotions you listed.

3. After 5 minutes, rotate your paper and move on to painting or drawing memory number 2. Repeat for memory 3 and 4. By the end they should have an abstract piece viewable at every orientation. If desired, add 5 minutes for the girls to go around and share one or all of the memories and how they depicted them in their artwork.
Thoughts: It can be helpful to have an example or 2 to show the girls how they can combine all 4 memories on to one page without mixing the water colors too much to the point of being muddy.
Variations: Can be done with acrylic or tempera paint or really any medium. Watercolors work well because of their transparency and the overlapping of the memory representations.

Digital Manuscript Exploration
50 minutes

10-20 students

Level: advanced secondary or undergraduate

This lesson is intended to be used in a remote teaching setting when access to original materials is not possible.

Objectives

- Learn to access digitized manuscripts in Digital Scriptorium. [GPSL¹ 2A-C]
- Become acquainted with the materials and processes used in manuscript production during the Middle Ages in various contexts. [GPSL 4C, 4E]
- Recognize key features and terminology applicable to medieval manuscripts. [GPSL 4E]

Reading / Assigned Resources
Students should review the following video playlist before class (about 20 minutes total):

Making Manuscripts Playlist (YouTube)

If needed, to reduce time, these videos are the most important:

- Making Manuscripts (Getty Museum)
- The Structure of a Medieval Manuscript (Getty Museum)

In-Class Resources
The following items on Digital Scriptorium will be used for this session:

Group 1: Bible, 1200-1299: http://ds.lib.berkeley.edu/RARERESBS70.B51300_45

Group 2: Bible, 1440-1460: http://ds.lib.berkeley.edu/RARERESBS1254.L3M61450_45

Group 3: Raymond of Peñafort, Summa de poenitentiae, 1400-1499: http://ds.lib.berkeley.edu/RARERESBX1757.R391200_45
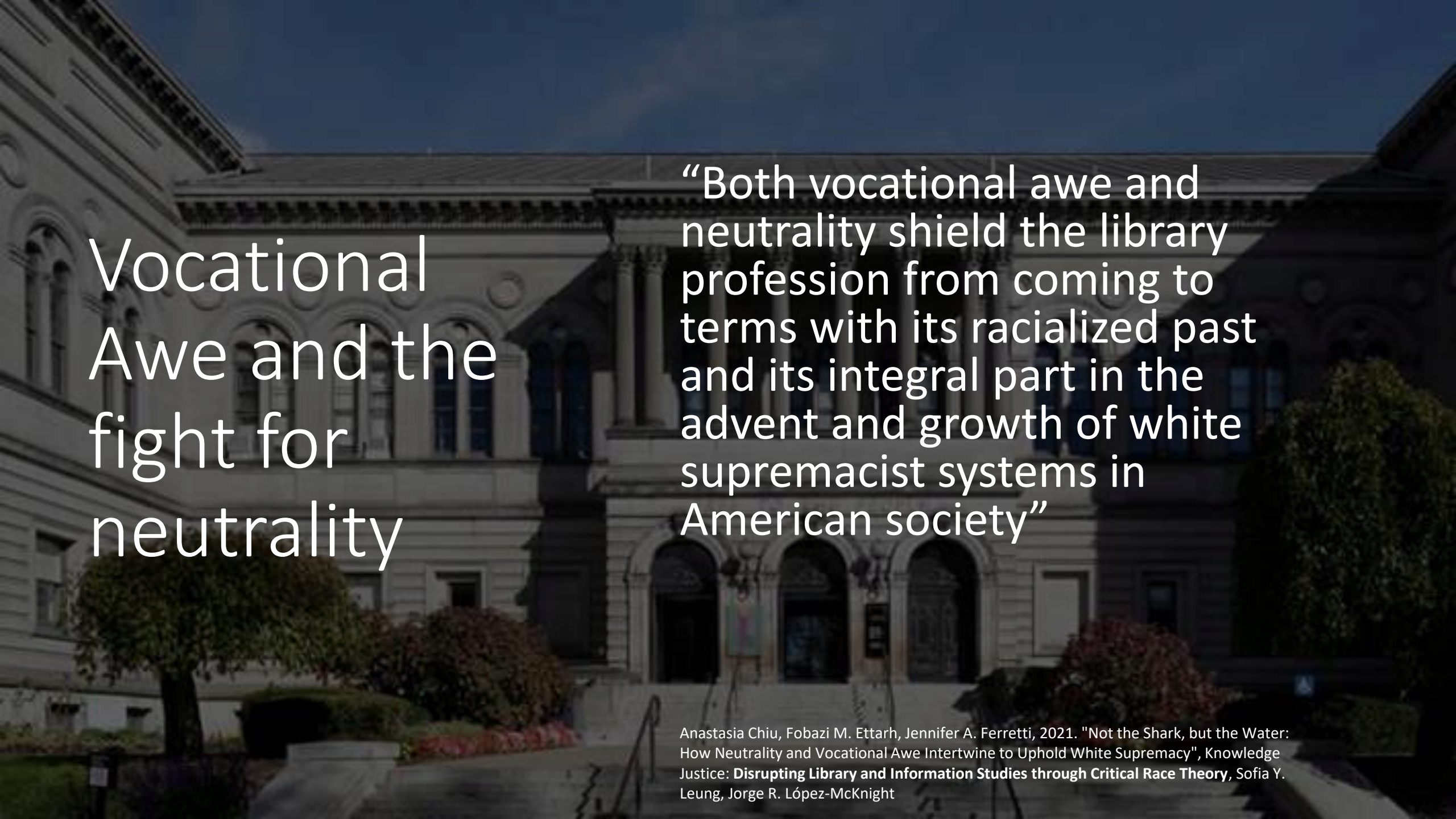
Group 4: Missal, 1375-1399: http://ds.lib.berkeley.edu/RARERESBX2015.9T7_45

Group 5: Priscian, Institutiones grammaticae, 1150-1175: http://ds.lib.berkeley.edu/RARERESPA6624.A41150_45

Group 6: Antiphonal, 1390-140: http://ds.lib.berkeley.edu/RARERESUNCATALOGUEDfolder10_45

Learning Activity: Abstract Memories. Georgia O'Keefe Museum.

Hansen, Kelli. Digital Manuscript Exploration Plan. TPS Teaching Tools Library

Vocational Awe and the fight for neutrality

"Both vocational awe and neutrality shield the library profession from coming to terms with its racialized past and its integral part in the advent and growth of white supremacist systems in American society"

Anastasia Chiu, Fobazi M. Ettarh, Jennifer A. Ferretti, 2021. "Not the Shark, but the Water: How Neutrality and Vocational Awe Intertwine to Uphold White Supremacy", Knowledge Justice: **Disrupting Library and Information Studies through Critical Race Theory**, Sofia Y. Leung, Jorge R. López-McKnight

Library Model

Museum Model

What is this?!

Archival anxiety

Figure 5: Photo of the Rare Collections Reading Room.

- "intimidation students feel using archives, due to
  - Rules are different than circulating collections
  - "archival collections cannot be browsed"
  - The organization of collections differs significantly between libraries and archives.
  - Many students are unfamiliar with using archival finding aids.

Morris, S., et al. (2014). "Archival Literacy for History Students: Identifying Faculty Expectations of Archival Research Skills." The American archivist 77(2): 394-424.

#Overheard in the library

- "At some point we had begun to converse with each other, and I could see in her face, 'This is a library!'"
- Do I have to wear gloves?
- What do I say when I get a new box?

Feminist Ethics of Care

- *Third affective responsibility*: the relationship between archivist and 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. We can no longer operate as if archival users are all detached neutral subjects without a stake in the records they are using: finding out your father was killed at a certain place in a certain way, or that your ancestral land is legally claimed by someone else, or that you are, in fact, adopted – these are affective experiences. We cannot ethically continue to conceive of our primary users as academic scholars; survivors of human rights abuse and victims' families use records, artists use records, community members use records.

Caswell, M., & Cifor, M. (2016). From Human Rights to Feminist Ethics: Radical Empathy in the Archives. *Archivaria, 81*, 23-43. Retrieved from https://archivaria.ca/index.php/archivaria/article/view/13557

Lost in the Finding Aid

- "Over and throughout time, it can be seen that finding aids have accomplished specific communicative functions, have been imbued with certain practices and values, and have been intended for certain contexts and audiences."

- Finding aids present but one viewpoint of a collection

- "Arrangement and description - essential processes by which archivist gains intellectual and physical control over body of records"

Trace, C.B., Dillon, A. The evolution of the finding aid in the United States: from physical to digital document genre. *Arch Sci* **12**, 501–519 (2012). https://doi-org.pitt.idm.oclc.org/10.1007/s10502-012-9190-5

#Overheard in the Library

- Can we see the items on exhibit?
- I want to see the exhibit
- I want to stop by and see what you have
- I need to get a feel of the space
- Where is the archive?

3 Pillars of Archival Literacy

1. Domain knowledge

2. Artifactual literacy

3. Archival intelligence
    - "a researcher's knowledge of archival principles, practices, and institutions, such as the reasons underlying archival rules and procedures, how to develop search strategies to explore research questions, and an understanding of the relationship between primary sources and their surrogates"

Yakel, E. and D. A. Torres (2003). "AI: Archival Intelligence and User Expertise." The American archivist **66**(1): 51-78.

SAA Guidelines for Primary Literacy

There are practical considerations particular to using primary sources that users should be aware of. Practical skills necessary for primary source research include finding, accessing, gathering, and handling primary sources in a variety of formats and locations. In order to reach their goals, **users should understand what is and is not accessible in specific institutions or databases, and must be aware of procedures and terminology specific to primary source research that may vary from institution to institution**. They will need to be aware of how these sources are described in familiar search tools, and may need to engage with additional tools developed in a repository to provide access to primary sources. They will need strategies for capturing and managing research data, including transcription, photography, and downloads.

Constructionist Approach for Student Engagement

What real world product have they created and how does the audience engage with it?
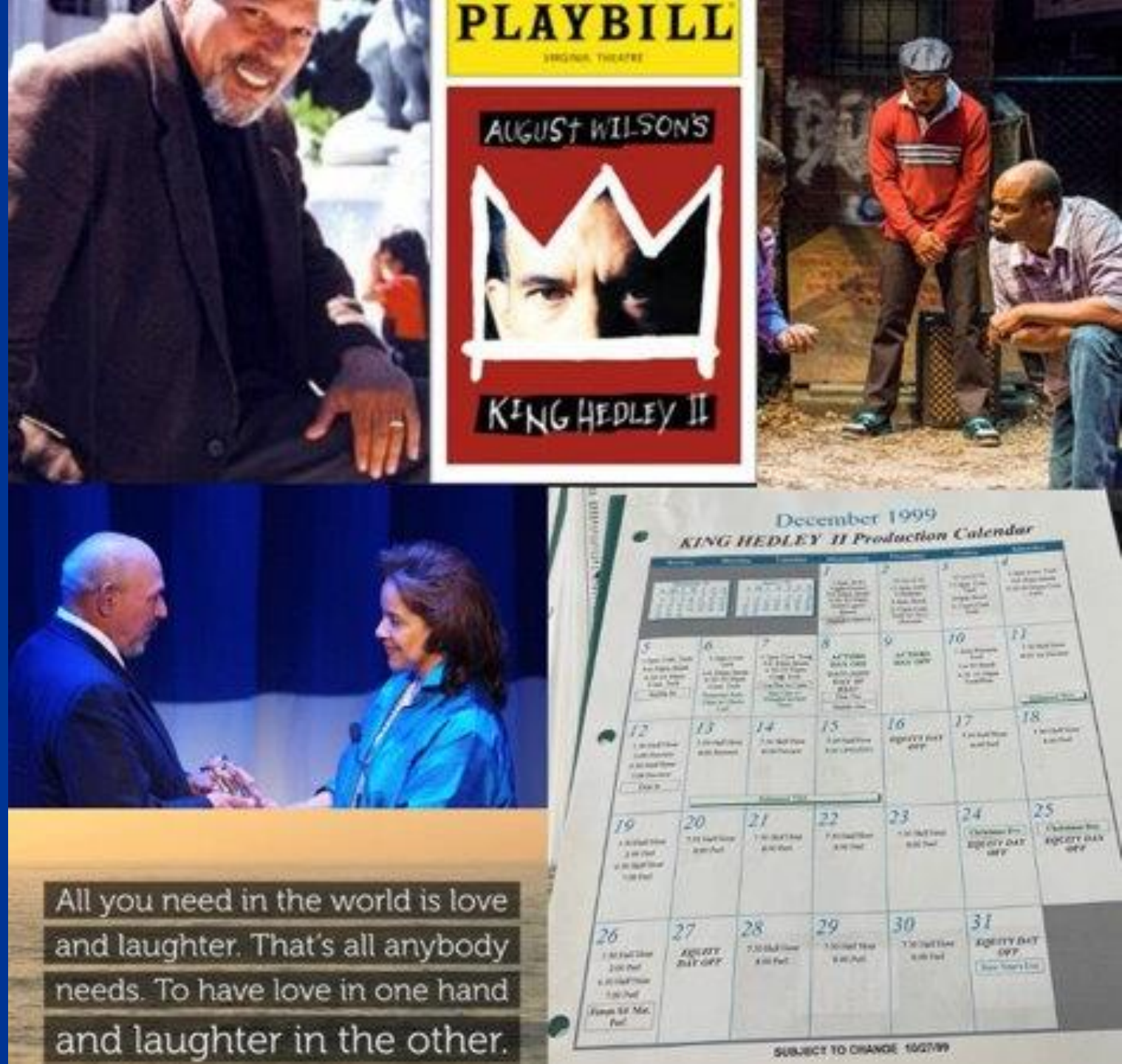
Model of the Information Search Process

	Initiation	Selection	Exploration	Formulation	Collection	Presentation	Assessment
Feelings (Affective)	Uncertainty	Optimism	Confusion Frustration Doubt	Clarity	Sense of direction / Confidence	Satisfaction or Disappointment	Sense of accomplish-ment
Thoughts (Cognitive)	vague ⟶			focused ⟶	increased	interest	Increased self-awareness
Actions (Physical)	seeking	relevant Exploring	information ⟶	seeking	pertinent Documenting	information	

Kuhlthau, C.C. (1991), Inside the search process: Information seeking from the user's perspective. J. Am. Soc. Inf. Sci., 42: 361-371. https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1097-4571(199106)42:5<361::AID-ASI6>3.0.CO;2-#

Timeline

Who is August Wilson?

History of the Hill District

What's in the August Wilson Archive?

Selecting a theme or play

Orientation

How did the play change across drafts?

How did the characters develop?

Archival Research

Selecting exhibit items

Writing zine text

Project Development and Design

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