

Tidewater Community Writing Center

Tia Tucker & Brooke Coleman

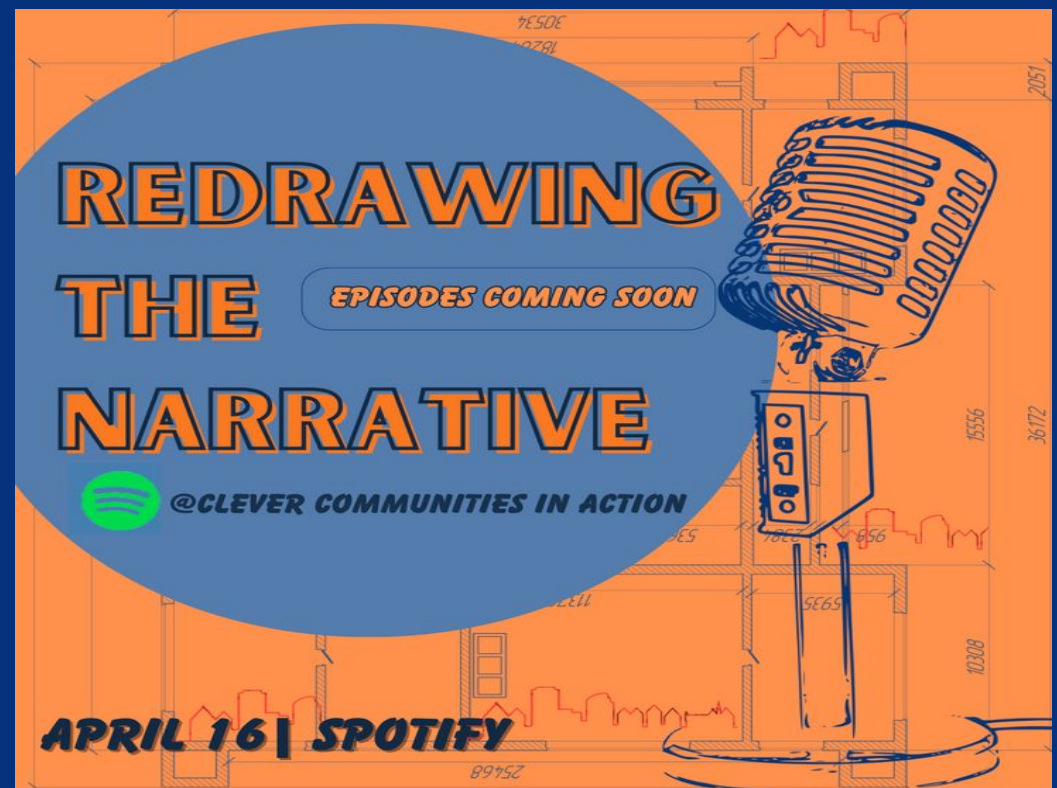
International Writing Center Association Conference

- Attended the IWCA International Conference in Baltimore
- Presented on burnout and compassion fatigue in community spaces, specifically community writing centers
- Utilized an emerging research method called Photovoice, a way to promote social change through photography



LAAW Scholars Podcast

- Edited the LAAW Scholars Podcast
- Made the music for the episodes and the intro
- Currently making posts to promote the premiere



From Silence to Significance:

REDEFINING CNU THROUGH SHOE LANE COUNTERSTORIES

INTRODUCTION

From Silence to Significance is a project that focuses on paying tribute to the community displaced by the establishment of Christopher Newport University. Inspired by Brandi Kellam's documentary, *Uprooted: What a Black Community Lost When a Virginia University Grew* (ProPublica, 2020), we hope to build a collaborative relationship between CNU and the community by collecting personal stories from the community, developing a digital archive for said stories, establishing a permanent exhibit on campus, and implementing a Commitment Statement.



BACKGROUND

Prior to 1960, Johnson Terrace was a neighborhood for and founded by Black families. It once stood on the land now recognized as Christopher Newport University. In 1959, the city began seizing Black-owned properties through eminent domain to establish the university, an initiative that continued through Paul Trible's tenure as president. Displaced residents were paid 20% less for their property than market-value. Now, only five families from Johnson Terrace remain (ProPublica, 2020).

THEORY

- Use credible resources for insights into effective interviewing with local storytellers and community-based participatory research (Friedman, 2020).
- Apply Ella Baker's catalytic leadership principles for community engagement.
- Embrace counterstorytelling following Martinez's (2020) guidance.
- Implement Ritchie's interview strategies for empathy.
- Ensure ethical practices through CITI training.

METHOD

- Compile contacts and establish connections with community storytellers and stakeholders.
- Collaboratively develop interview questions.
- Co-author the interview protocol with Shoe Lane residents and descendants to ensure participant agency.
- Work with community members to gather materials for the digital and/or physical archive exhibit and foster open communication about the possibility of a CNU Shoe Lane Commitment Statement.



Photographed by Christopher Tyree/VCU at WHRO for the "Uprooted" series featured in ProPublica's article, "Task Force to Consider 'Restorative Justice' for Black Families Uprooted by Virginia University's Expansion", written by Brandi Kellman. This image encapsulates the story behind Christopher Newport University's Black community uprooted. Source: [propublica.org]

COMMITMENT STATEMENT

Ultimately, we hope that this project culminates in a CNU Shoe Lane Commitment Statement that acknowledges the historical injustice experienced by Shoe Lane residents and pledges tangible support to the affected community. This will go beyond a traditional acknowledgement statement by providing concrete and actionable steps to commit time, attention, and resources to Shoe Lane residents and descendants, as well as the broader Newport News Community.

PROJECT GOALS

- Develop a digital archive to house personal stories from those impacted by CNU's establishment that will be accessed through QR codes placed on campus.
- Establish a permanent exhibit on campus that will pay tribute to Johnson Terrace.
- Implement a Commitment Statement to acknowledge the harm caused by CNU and provide concrete and sustainable actions being taken to address the harm.

PROJECT SIGNIFICANCE

Christopher Newport University is often seen as a bubble that shelters its predominantly white, detached populations from the rest of Newport News' diversity. We cannot erase our troubling history, but we certainly can't ignore it. The best thing we can do is break the cycle of oppression, and move forward in a collaborative stance to address past wrongdoings. This institution has the resources, knowledge, and power to forge a meaningful relationship with the wider community. There is so much to learn from the rich culture around us, and a project like this could open the doors for a deep, trusting, reciprocal relationship. This gives us the chance to create new traditions of unity, reciprocity, goodwill, and shared history with the community we are a part of, rather than sustaining divisions through omissions.

REFERENCES

- ProPublica. (2020, December 9). *Uprooted: What a Black Community Lost When a Virginia University Grew* [Video]. Youtube. <https://youtu.be/o80ENCqNFAc?si=FuVY2HMqNGoVopFL>.
- Martinez, A. (2014). A Plea for Critical Race Theory Counterstory: Stock Story versus Counterstory Dialogues Concerning Alejandra's "Fit" in the Academy. *Composition Studies*, 42(2), 33-55. https://compositionstudiesjournal.files.wordpress.com/2020/05/compositionstudies_42n2.pdf
- Parker, P. S. (2020). *Ella Baker's Catalytic Leadership*. University of California Press.

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