

STAFF, STYLE GUIDES, SUPPORT, AND NO MORE
READING GROUPS: SURVEYING CURRENT
REPARATIVE WORK

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RESEARCH QUESTION:

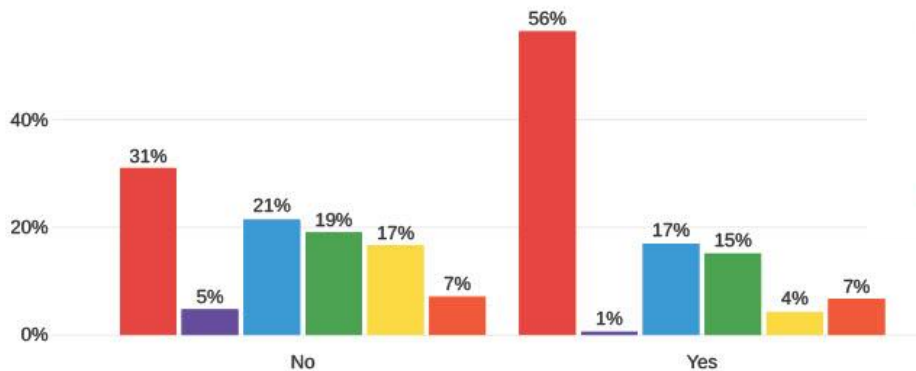
“The purpose of this exploratory study is to determine the **perceived and experienced barriers** that archivists are encountering when conducting or thinking about adopting reparative archival practices. We are also seeking to understand **why and why not archivists are undertaking reparative initiatives in archives and special collections repositories.**”

METHODOLOGY

- Anonymous survey conducted January–February 2023
 - Quantitative and qualitative questions
 - Approved by multiple university IRBs
- Two track survey logic for the question:
 - **Are you currently undertaking reparative archival work?**
- 375 responses
 - 207 were complete responses
 - 165 yes currently undertaking reparative archival work
 - 42 no not currently undertaking reparative archival work
 - 168 incomplete responses were removed

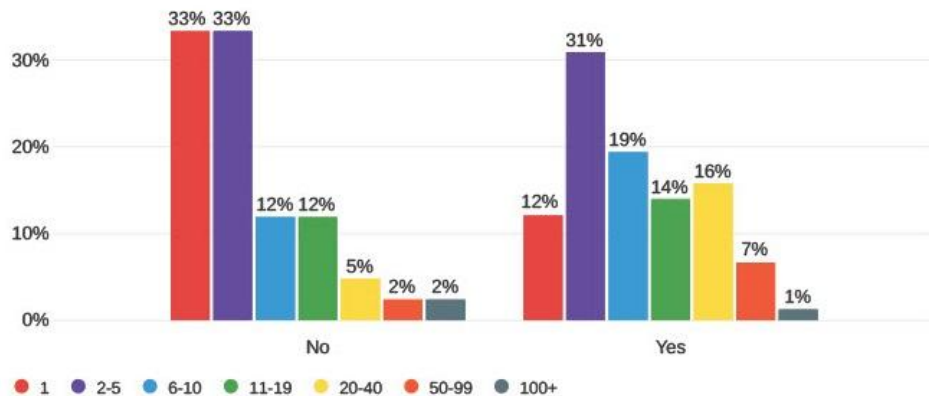
FINDINGS: DEMOGRAPHICS

Q2 - What type of repository do you work in? - Selected Choice



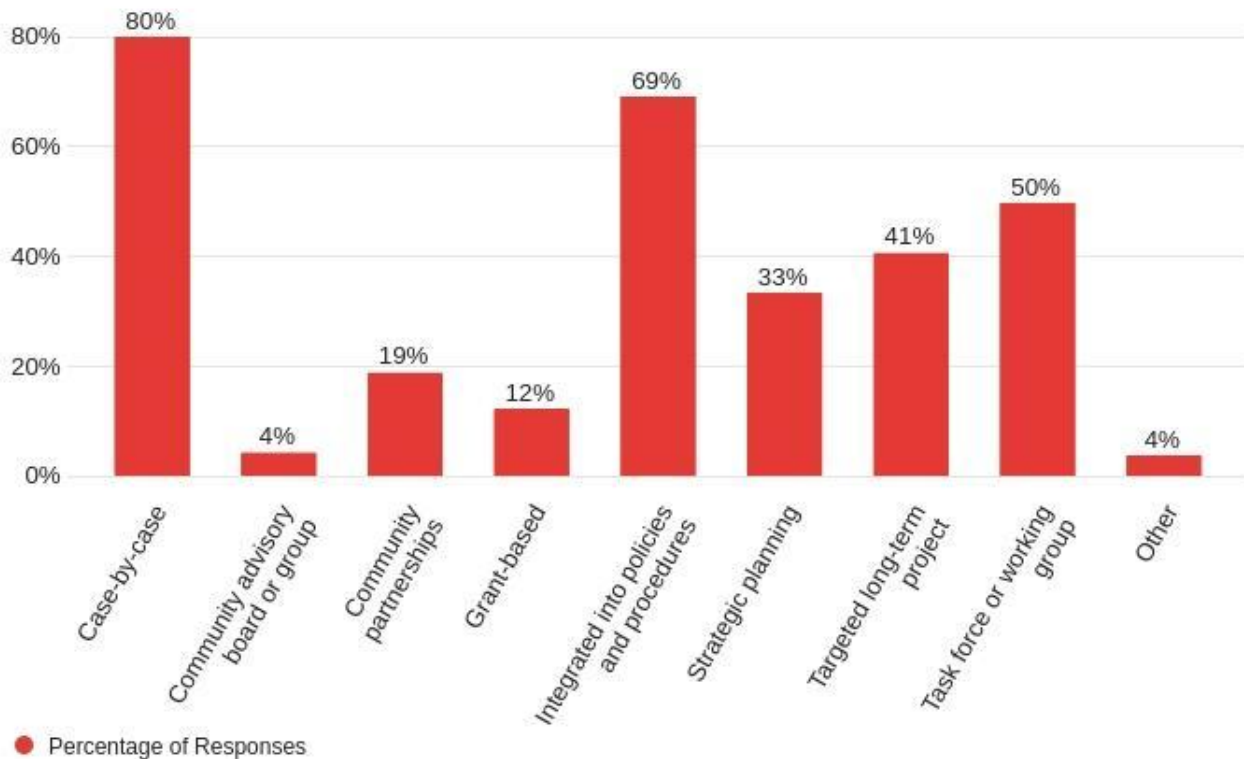
- Academic institution (e.g. public, private, or for-profit university)
- For-profit organization (e.g. corporate or business archives)
- Government agency (e.g. city, state, federal, or tribal organization)
- Non-profit organization (e.g. community-based archives)
- Religious organization
- Other

Q4 - How many employees work at your repository (archives or special collections unit only)?



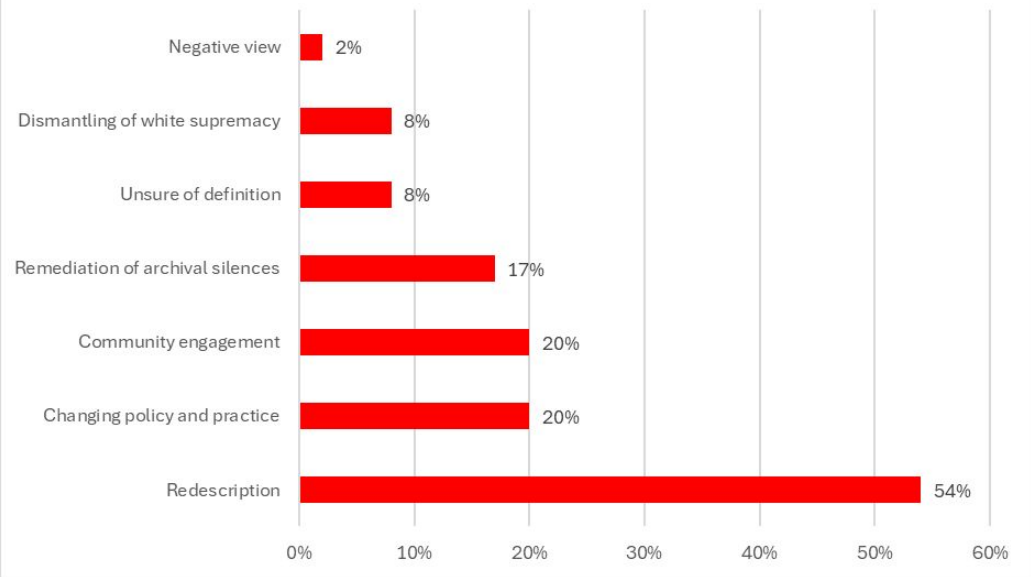
FINDINGS: WHAT WORK IS/IS NOT BEING DONE

Q17 - How are you undertaking reparative work? [Select all that apply] - Selected Choice



FINDINGS: WHAT ARCHIVISTS THINK REPARATIVE WORK IS?

Q32 - Share your definition of archival work



Reparative archival work is...

“...changing outdated language.”

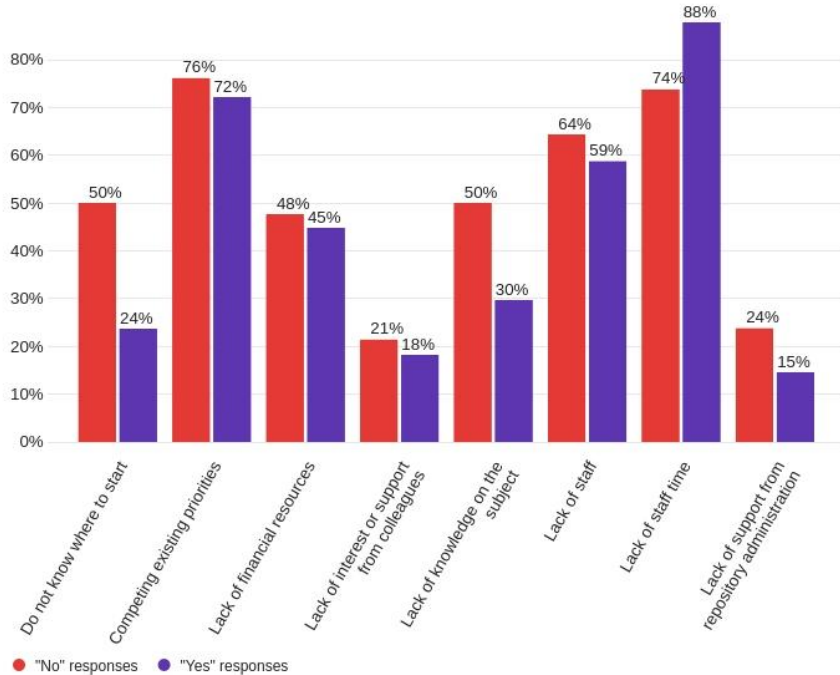
“...redescribing, repatriating, and otherwise restoring voice/agency to groups that have been silenced by biased or bigoted archival/historiographical practices.”

“...rethink[ing] collecting and access practices that center source communities and individuals.”

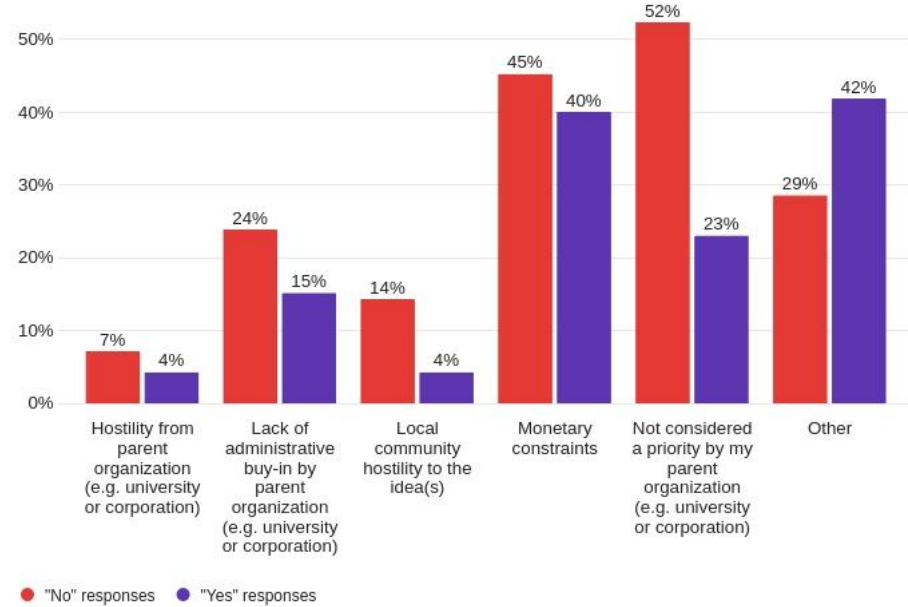
“...[a] transient political trend.”

FINDINGS: MAJOR BARRIERS TO REPARATIVE WORK

Q19/Q36: What types of barriers to reparative and/or inclusive work [are you/do you believe that you will encounter] within your repository?

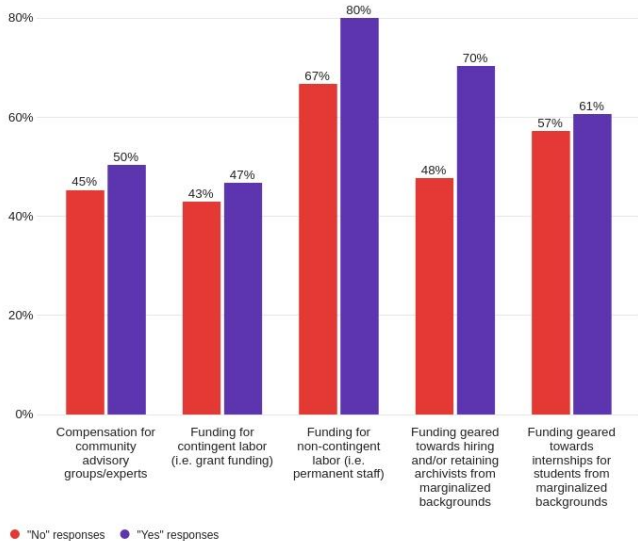


Q20/Q37 - What types of barriers to reparative and/or inclusive work [are you encountering/do you believe that you will encounter] external to your repository?

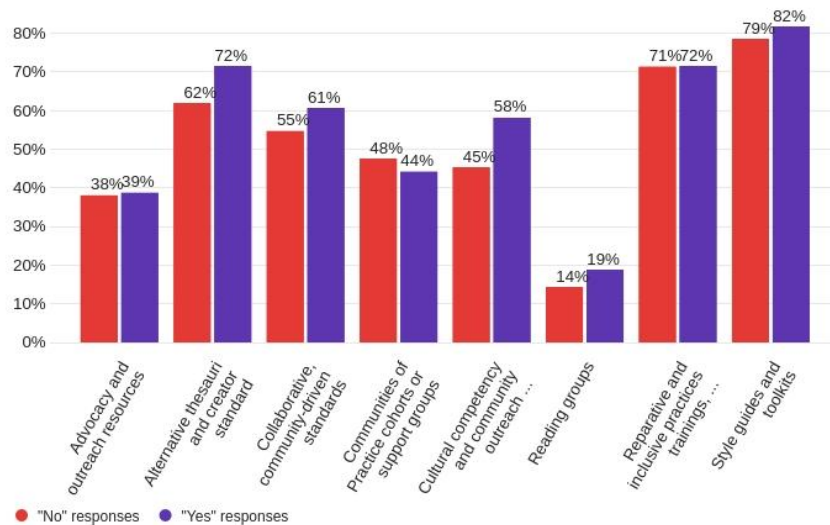


FINDINGS: NEEDS AND RESOURCES

Q26/Q43 - What fiscal resources would help you adopt reparative practices, initiatives, policies, or projects?

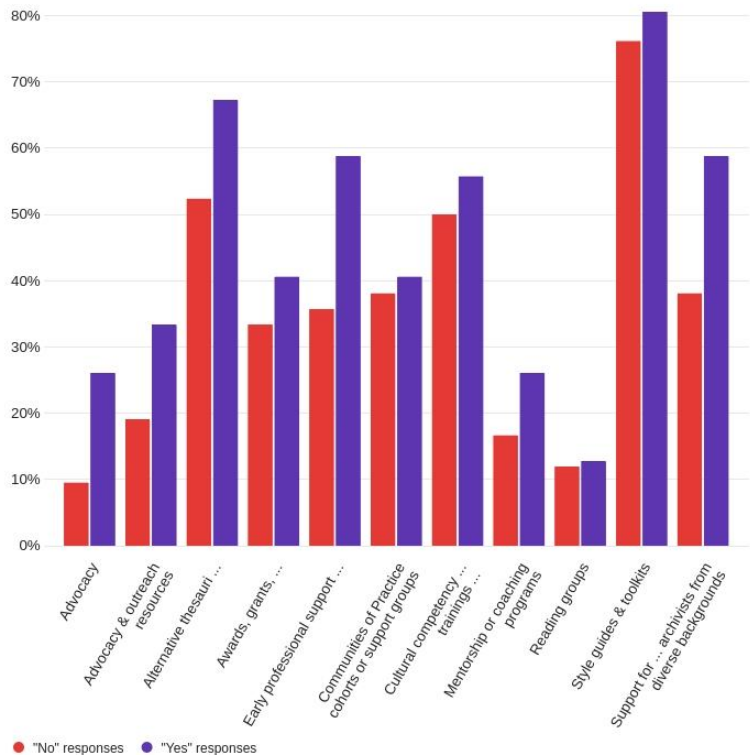


Q27/Q44 - What types of non-fiscal resources would help you adopt reparative practices, initiatives, policies, or projects?



FINDINGS: NEEDS AND RESOURCES

Q28/Q45 - What types of assistance are you looking for from your professional organizations?
(Such as ALA, SAA, SLA, etc.)



Top Needs

- Non-contingent staffing
- Guidelines & training: alternative thesauri, cultural competency training, style guides, toolkits, collaborative community-driven standards
- Funding to support training, recruiting, and retaining archivists from diverse backgrounds

TAKEAWAYS

- Reparative work IS redescription [at least right now...]
- Biggest constraint: STAFF & TIME
 - Side finding: The archival profession is facing a capacities cliff
- A lot of energy around reparative practice, but archivists are unsure where or how to start.
 - Desire for clear guidance.
- Survey data captured a moment in time.
 - After surge of interest & activity following 2020
 - Before the widespread attacks on DEIA initiatives in Spring 2023