
The History of the Black Press Archives



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This oral presentation explores the development, significance, and influence of one of the most comprehensive collections of African American newspapers in the world. Established in 1973, the Black Press Archives (BPA) at Howard University is a pivotal repository that preserves the rich legacy of Black newspapers and periodicals from the 19th century to the present. The study delves into the founding vision and the efforts of key figures like Carlton B. Goodlet and William O. Walker who were instrumental in curating and expanding the archives. Through meticulous archival research and interviews, my work uncovers the challenges and triumphs faced in the collection's growth, including funding issues and the preservation of fragile materials. Moreover, the presentation examines the BPA's role in supporting academic research and its influence on the broader narrative of American journalism. It highlights how the archives serve as a critical resource for scholars, students, and journalists, providing invaluable insights into the socio-political struggles and achievements of the African American community. Ultimately, this presentation underscores the BPA's importance in ensuring that the voices and stories of Black America are preserved and accessible, contributing significantly to our understanding of American history and media.

Biography:

Brandon Nightingale is a historian and the Black Press Archives digitization project manager at the Moorland Spingarn Research Center at Howard University. He plays a crucial role in preserving and making accessible the rich history of the Black press. His work involves digitizing and organizing historical materials related to Black newspapers and publications, ensuring their longevity and availability for future generations. He holds an MLIS from Florida State University and a Master of Arts in Public History from the University of Central Florida