The District Six Museum: Collecting Apartheid Narratives through Memory
Tasha Sandoval, Class of 2013

Tasha Sandoval utilized her Nyhus Large Grant to travel to Cape Town, South Africa, where she conducted research at the District Six Museum. The District Six Museum is a non-profit community museum that tells the individual and communal narratives of the once-vibrant community of District Six, the sixth municipality to be created in Cape Town. Because of its excellent location near the city center, the ocean, and Table Mountain, the apartheid government declared District Six a “whites-only” area under the Group Areas Act of 1950. The community’s racially and religiously diverse people were forcibly removed from their homes and repositioned to outlying townships. With the end of apartheid and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the ex-residents of District Six were granted the right to land restitution. In 1994, the District Six Foundation and Trust, which was created to facilitate the restitution process for ex-residents, grew to become what is today the District Six Museum. The museum aims to preserve the memory of District Six’s ex-residents and that of the place itself, as it relates to South African history and social justice. Using the museum’s primary material, oral history interviews, Tasha collected the narratives of life in the District Six as expressed through written and digital archival material, exhibitions, and the museum’s public programs. She also conducted her own oral history interview and staff interviews.

Faculty Mentor: Professor David Gordon
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