Two-Spirit Archives and Social Memory:
Community, Indigeneity and Queerness in the Archives

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Abstract

Two-Spirit people have often been the subjects and victims of archives and archival power. However, efforts toward decolonization and changing ideas in archives have the potential to disrupt this narrative. In this thesis I look at the ways institutional or mainstream archives can work with community groups – specifically Two-Spirit communities – to create effective and lasting partnerships to preserve social memory in a western archival format. I begin by sharing the words of several Two-Spirit people who have spoken about what that identity means to them as a way to emphasize what non-Two-Spirit archivists do not know and cannot know about what being Two-Spirit means. This necessary knowledge also serves as the basis to discuss some of the other implications for archiving Two-Spirit records. I then profile four Queer archives, ONE, ArQuives, Lesbian Herstory Archive and rukus! to provide context for how these archives come together, what their relationships with institutions are like and what some of the causes for collecting are. Last, I discuss practical ways for mainstream or institutional archives to build effective partnerships with Two-Spirit communities using the Two-Spirit Archives at the University of Winnipeg Archives as a case study. I use Michelle Caswell's survivor-centred approach as a way to offer suggestions for archives wanting to build these kinds of relationships and evaluate the success of the Two-Spirit Archives at the University of Winnipeg.

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Introduction

In archival studies, provenance and context are two vital concepts. Knowing where something came from, what led it to its present place, and how it came to be are all necessary to gain an understanding of what a record is and what its value is. It is in light of these principles that I begin this essay with myself, where I come from, and how I came to where I am now.

I am a Queer, white settler archivist born on and raised in Treaty 3 territory on the lands of the First Nations of the Anishnawbe people of Lac Seul First Nation. I am now living, working and studying on Treaty 1 territory, the lands of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota and Dene Peoples, and on the homeland of the Métis Nation.

Growing up in a small northern town I internalized a lot of racism that I am continuing to work on undoing in myself. At the same time, I had the great fortune to learn from a number of Indigenous elders, teachers, and other educators as a child who helped me become the person I am today. I am grateful for their lessons even if it took me longer to learn some of them than I'd like. I'm glad I've started to learn more over time and can put those lessons about listening, caring and understanding to use.

I also internalized a lot of homophobia and transphobia as a child which had its own journey to overcome as I learned to see myself in something I was taught to fear. I cannot claim any special understanding on behalf of Queer people by virtue of being one. I am still learning about myself. However, I take that process of learning with me. As I write this, I will be an academic student for a little longer. After that, I want to keep being a student, to learn from those around me that have wisdom to share, to reflect on myself and the way I see the world. It is with that mindset that I approach this project.

In one of the first weeks of archival studies coursework, Greg Bak assigned Helen Samuels' "Who Controls the Past" as one of our readings for the topic of appraisal.[1] I did not sleep well that night nor the next few as I began to think through the implications. As a student of Queer history, women's history and social history I was used to the archives being a place where there was not much information I could find on my topics. I was used to having to read

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[1] Helen Samuels, "Who Controls the Past?," *American Archivist* 49, no. 2 (1986): 109–24.

through the lines. I had not until that point really internalized the fact that someone's decisions, an archivist's appraisal decisions, led to that state of affairs. I did not fully realize until then that I would one day be making decisions on appraisal. I would be helping to decide what history could be created in the future. I worried: would I make the right decisions, or would my biases lead me to dismiss important information just because I could not see its value? This was a lot of responsibility for me to try to take on less than a month into the program, but the idea stuck with me. I still do not think that I will always make the right decision. I still feel like the job of appraisal is a wonderful, terrible responsibility and privilege.

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At the heart of this thesis is the idea of respect. From the way I tried to approach this topic to the way the core of my findings was acting with respect, the idea of respect was a constant companion. Approaching relationships with communities respectfully is the only real way to approach this topic. When there is a lack of respect, a relationship cannot form, and we continue to perpetuate the harms of the past rather than working toward reconciliation. In some ways this answer seems too obvious – of course we cannot move forward, cannot form meaningful partnerships without entering into it with respect for those we are working with. Sometimes, however, the obvious needs to be stated before a nuanced discussion can happen. People need more than good intentions to navigate the generations of disrespect. How does one act respectfully? What are concrete actions a person or an institution can take to show respect?

While respect is at the heart of this thesis, it is underpinned with power and the ways that respect, relationship building, and partnerships between community groups and institutional archives can disrupt and challenge systems of power. Two-Spirit people have often been subjects and victims of systems of power. Archives helped to perpetuate the Two-Spirit person as subject rather than speaker or actor. By creating partnerships between community groups and institutional archives, the balance of power shifts. The way things have 'always been done' shifts to accommodate the needs of the community group. Systems of control and ownership change to respect and acknowledge the way archives have caused harm. The resources of institutions are spent to safeguard and promote Two-Spirit voices, stories, and knowledge.

In this thesis, I look to engage with the literature on Indigenous, Queer, and community archives to connect these concepts to Two-Spirit archives. By building upon the knowledge each

of these fields bring about working with communities, I hope to provide a foundation for archivists to build off of in developing partnerships. I look to the fields of community and Queer archives to build a framework that archivists can use when working with Two-Spirit people and records.

Decolonization efforts have become more prevalent in archival work in the past years as archivists try to undo or mitigate the damage done to Indigenous communities. In this thesis, I hope to provide information about community groups, reasons for collection, Two-Spirit identities, as well as practical suggestions that would allow archivists to develop strategies that work in their specific situations. So much of what the Queer, community and Two-Spirit literature show is the necessity for individual approaches to each situation. Archivists cannot make do with a one-size fits all approach to working with this community, so in this thesis I hope to offer information and suggestions that can be used to tailor approaches for individual situations.

Chapter one will look at Two-Spirit identity by first examining the words of Two-Spirit people about their identity and history. The understandings gained from their voices will lead into a discussion of some of the implications for archivists working with Two-Spirit records, particularly how an outsider understanding of what Two-Spirit means can affect how they approach these communities and their records. I will discuss how preservation of memory through archives and other recordkeeping systems, such as oral traditions, have a great impact on Two-Spirit people and the ways they see, or do not see, themselves in society.

Chapter two will trace the early history of Queer archives through to the present. It will start in the early twentieth century discussing the shift from institutions like the Institute for Sexual Science in Berlin to case records and archival dismissal of Queer records. It will also discuss some of the reasons why archives have been and still are reluctant to develop Queer collections. Chapter two will then profile four modern Queer archives: the ONE National Archive in Los Angeles, the ArQuives in Toronto, the Lesbian Herstory Archives in Brooklyn, and the rukus! Archives in London, England. I will cover the founding and motivations for the collection of these archives, as well as pertinent facts about their existence which demonstrate what Queer archives are and can be. I draw from community archive literature to understand the motivations behind Queer archives and look to the ways they are fostering change.

Chapter three will take the conclusions from chapters one and two about what both Two-Spirit identity and Queer Archives can tell us about how institutions can work with the records of Two-Spirit people and communities. This chapter will begin with a discussion of the difference between 'community' and 'institutional' archives,-and how they can be defined in relationship to the other. I will then use Michelle Caswell's survivor-centred approach,[2] augmented by Indigenous archival understanding, to propose ways for institutional archives to engage with Two-Spirit records and communities respectfully and productively. I will be using the Two-Spirit Archives at the University of Winnipeg as a case study to discuss the ways their actions fit into Caswell's approach and where improvements can be made.

Terminology Note – The Use of Queer

While researchers in this field have chosen to use various initialisms in order to accurately depict the existing characteristics of 2SLGBTQ+ (to choose one briefly) archives,[3] I have chosen to use *Queer* when talking generally about archives that collect this material. I choose to use Queer despite the fact that many of the archives I examine are focused specifically on the collection of a certain group's materials (primarily cis gay men, or in the case of the Lesbian Herstory Archives, cis lesbians). When I am referring to a specific archive, collection, or person, I will be more accurate in my terminology, but when speaking in general, I cannot think of a more accurate word. When I use the word Queer, I use it in the most inclusive possible sense and in a way that explicitly includes Trans* and Two-Spirit identities.[4] I feel that if I choose to use an initialism that more accurately reflects the predominant sexual and gender orientation present in the majority collections, I perpetuate the problem, claiming that others do not belong here despite existing (even in incredibly small quantities) in the collection.

Similarly, choosing an initialism would place me in the position of exclusion rather than inclusion. LGBT? LGBTQ*? LGBTTQIA? 2SLGBTQ+? These are all initialisms that I have

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[2] Michelle Caswell, "Toward a Survivor-Centered Approach to Records Documenting Human Rights Abuse: Lessons from Community Archives," *Archival Science* 14, no. 3–4 (2014): 307–22.
[3] For examples of this discussion and the problems with the word queer see Rebecka Taves Sheffield, *Documenting Rebellions: A Study of Four Lesbian and Gay Archives in Queer Times* (Sacramento: Litwin Books, LLC, 2019), http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/umanitoba/detail.action?docID=6241475; Elspeth H. Brown, "Archival Activism, Symbolic Annihilation, and the LGBTQ2+ Community Archive," *Archivaria*, May 10, 2020, 6–33.
[4] Laing in particular highlights the way the use of queer often acts to subsume trans identities Marie Laing, *Urban Indigenous Youth Reframing Two-Spirit* (New York: Routledge, 2021), 8, https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003094296.

seen over the years, the ‘right’ one changing every few years. I choose Queer because it does not privilege whichever identities get a letter, diminishing the presence of whoever gets covered in the plus sign or asterisk (if such a symbol is even present). Unlike each of these initialisms, only one identity – those who exclusively identify as Queer – is privileged rather than four to eight. I choose Queer because it allows for past identities, and leaves room for future identities. It leaves room for all of the people that do not fit neatly into a box or who do not want a box assigned to them.

Chapter One: Two-Spirit and the Archives

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is not to provide a comprehensive description of what Two-Spirit is as that is not the place of a settler academic. Instead, this chapter is here to speak to other outsider or settler archivists that have Two-Spirit materials in their collection or wish to acquire these materials. This chapter passes along some understandings of Two-Spirit people that have been shared with the wider world and uses those understandings to provide some insights for archiving and working with this community group respectfully and productively. This chapter is by no means meant to be an end to learning about Two-Spirit groups, but rather a beginning or a foundation for an archivist to build on by reaching out to community groups with more knowledge and understanding.

Two-Spirit defining Two-Spirit

The term Two-Spirit is a relatively new term to describe people who have always existed in various Indigenous cultures on Turtle Island. It was proposed as a community term by Elder Myra Laramee in 1990 at the third annual international LGBT Native American gathering that took place just outside of Beausejour, Manitoba.[1] However, it was likely used in the late 1980s on a more individual basis, and one Two-Spirit Elder gives the term an even longer history.[2] Albert McLeod, a Two-Spirit activist and a director of Two-Spirited People of Manitoba, points to other acts of resistance occurring that year, the Oka resistance and resistance to the Meech Lake Accord, to show this was an unsurprising time for Two-Spirit to come into use as a community term.[3]

This chapter does not seek to provide a definitive or singular definition of Two-Spirit identity or history. It is not my place as a non-Indigenous, non-Two-Spirit person to do so, and it would be unwise and harmful to make assumptions about Two-Spirit people, history, and identity. As Marie Laing, a Queer Mohawk academic, articulates so clearly, “if you are not a

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[1] Two-Spirited People of Manitoba Inc, “We Belong,” Two-Spirited People of Manitoba Inc., https://twospiritmanitoba.ca/we-belong.
[2] Rishona J. Slutchuk, “The Perspective of Two-Spirit Aboriginal People” (master’s thesis, University of Manitoba, 2002), 40, http://mspace.lib.umanitoba.ca/xmlui/handle/1993/7817.
[3] National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, “NCTR Dialogues -Two-Spirit Reconciliation,” YouTube video, June 23, 2020, 11:35-12:34. https://youtu.be/plZZahy-37k.

trans, two-spirit, or Queer Indigenous person, you do not actually need to know what two-spirit means—you just need to know that you do not know … and the appropriate thing to do is to defer to their work (not anthropological texts) when the question 'what is two-spirit?' arises."[4] My purpose in this chapter is to highlight how much is impossible to know without talking to the specific community or person that is being discussed or recorded.

Common western understandings of what Two-Spirit is can be boiled down to an LGBTQ Indigenous person or an Indigenous person who has both male and female spirits within them. While these are aspects of Two-Spirit, they become overly simplified when seen as the only aspects of Two-Spirit. Because Two-Spirit people come from different cultures with their own unique communities, and relationships to different lands, traditions and spirituality, Two-Spirit becomes a very individual term, with each person constructing what they think Two-Spirit means and in what ways they are Two-Spirit.

Many Two-Spirit people have spoken on what Two-Spirit means for them when speaking to researchers, as researchers themselves, and as part of their activism. The next section will share some of these aspects of Two-Spirit identity as a way to emphasize the individuality and variety of meanings present in the term. It will also serve as a reminder of everything that cannot be known by outsiders.

One facet of Two-Spirit identity that is often discussed is its holistic nature. Alex Wilson, an Opaskwayak Cree Nation Two-Spirit academic, explained that "When we say that we are Two-Spirit we are acknowledging that we are spiritually meaningful people. Two-Spirit identity may encompass all aspects of who we are including our culture, sexuality, gender, spirituality, community and relationship to the land."[5] Spirituality is an important aspect of Two-Spirit identity in part because of the legacy of the religious institutions that ran the residential schools and day schools. McLeod comments on the irony of the name Two-Spirit when "we were not seen as spiritual people we were seen as corrupt, we were seen as a work of the devil for many decades."[6]

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[4] Laing, *Urban Indigenous Youth Reframing Two-Spirit*, 58.
[5] Alex Wilson, "N'tacimowin Inna Nah': Our Coming In Stories," *Canadian Women's Studies* 26, no. 3/4 (2008): 193.
[6] National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, "NCTR Dialogues -Two-Spirit Reconciliation," 13:58-14:18.

For some, Two-Spirt is one of many terms that is used to describe their identity. Wesley Thomas, a Navajo Nation *nádleeh* academic explained the way he shifts his identity depending on the context he finds himself in.

> My life involves gender changes. For example, I consider myself, and am considered by traditional Navajo people within the Navajo Nation, as a *nádleeh*, especially when I am dancing in the Night Way Chant during the winter seasons. I maintain this specific gender identity and status throughout the ceremonial period. At the conclusion of the ceremony, and when I return to Seattle, that identity is replaced with an urban "gay" identity. I readjust myself to my surrounding environments and continue on with my life as a *person*. Now and then, when I am on other (non-Navajo) reservations, I identify, and more importantly am identified as, a two-spirit person.[7]

Thomas is engaging in the process of code switching, choosing the language that would be best understood by the community he is within. When he is within the Navajo nation, he is able to use the term in his own language and the people around him will understand what is associated with that identity. In contrast, when he is with non-Indigenous Queer people, the use of the term gay might signal the deliberate choice to use a term that, while not totally accurate, provides information about his identity that those he is speaking with can understand. Tony Nobis, in writing for *The Sacred Fire,* a newsletter put out by 2-Spirit People of the First Nations, emphasizes that those at the international gathering in 1990 "*settled* on 'two spirit.' The choice is not to be 'two spirit,' but to allow others to refer to you with that term."[8] The utility of Two-Spirit as a term is that it is an umbrella term that holds other layers of meaning.[9]

In addition to Alex Wilson's definition, Slutchuck in 2002 and Laing in 2021 both used in-depth interviews with Two-Spirit people to allow them to express "how they identify as two-spirited"[10] and what they "have to say about two-spirit as a term."[11] These two pieces of academic writing are interesting in their differences in subjects. The lived experiences and the

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[7] Wesley Thomas and Sue-Ellen Jacobs, "'…And We Are Still Here': From Berdache to Two-Spirit People," *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* 23, no. 2 (January 1, 1999): 103, https://doi.org/10.17953/aicr.23.2.k5255571240t5650.
[8] Tony Nobis, "Origin of the Term 'Two-Spirit,'" *The Sacred Fire*, Winter 2012, 4.
[9] Driskill further examines the question of when and why people use Two-Spirit, queer, or another term through interviews Qwo-Li Driskill, *Asegi Stories: Cherokee Queer and Two-Spirit Memory* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2016), 155–57.
[10] Slutchuk, "The Perspective of Two-Spirit Aboriginal People," 5.
[11] Laing, *Urban Indigenous Youth Reframing Two-Spirit*, 2.

ages of the participants make them see Two-Spirit identify very differently in some ways, but also very similarly in others.

As Two-Spirit as a term has become more well known and widespread in its use, its role as an umbrella (or a container as Laing would argue)[12] term seems to offer an additional utility when used with non-Indigenous people. It allows Two-Spirit people to use a term that is not a western gender or sexual identity term without having to provide all the details about their identity. Vanessa Tait from O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation when interviewed at the 2018 Two-Spirit Gathering, said, “I don't really say "I'm lesbian" I just say "Two-Spirited" and "I'm me" and "this is who I am". When people have a conversation with me, that's when I'll get more comfortable in saying […] I'm sexually attracted to women.”[13] Two-Spirit allows a person to declare that their Indigeneity is part of their identity without providing more details than they may feel comfortable with or feel that the other person is entitled to. The unique combination of broadness and individuality of meaning allows users one small way to sidestep some of the scrutiny thrust upon them by western society, allowing them to keep control over the specifics of their identity while still conveying that they are Indigenous and not cis or heterosexual.

One important aspect of the work that Laing has done is that the participants of her interviews are young. They have grown up in a world with the term Two-Spirit in addition to other descriptors of gender and sexuality, whereas many others who have talked about what Two-Spirit means to them had another identity before finding and embracing the Two-Spirit label and identity. This can serve to remind outsider archivists that Two-Spirit is a term and identity that is varied and fluctuates by place and time. The understandings of Two-Spirit presented here are neither universal nor eternal. It is a living definition that can change with generations.

Indigiqueer, a portmanteau of the words Indigenous and Queer, is a term that has significant overlap with the concept of Two-Spirit. The origin of the term appears to be the Indigenous and Two-Spirit program at Vancouver Queer Film Festival put together by TJ

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[12] Laing, *Urban Indigenous Youth Reframing Two-Spirit*, chap. 4.
[13] Interview with Vanessa Tait, 2018, CA UWA 18.029_12TA, Two-Spirited People of Manitoba Inc. fonds, University of Winnipeg Archives and Special Collections, Winnipeg, Manitoba. 6:08-6:33, https://interviews.oralhistorycentre.ca/tspm/18-29_12TA.xml.

Cuthand, originally spelled Indigequeer.[14] Cuthand is a Plains Cree and Scots member of Little Pine First Nation who makes "short experimental narrative videos and films about sexuality, madness, Queer identity and love, and Indigeneity."[15] Cuthand explains:

> I think I used it because some LGBTQ Indigenous people don't feel as comfortable with the two-spirit title because it implies some dual gender stuff, which some people just don't feel describes their identity. I know a lot of people don't ID with the Queer label either. But I liked the idea of Indigequeer. Because Queer is kind of a confrontational label, it's one of those old reclamations that makes people uncomfortable. Indigenous isn't a really confrontational label (although everything else about it is because we are all still all over the globe resisting) so putting the two together makes this word I really liked.[16]

The term likely moved into the mainstream with Joshua Whitehead's book of poems *Full-metal Indigiqueer.* Whitehead uses both Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer to describe his sexual identity, explaining "One to pay homage to where I come from, from Winnipeg, being kind of the birthplace of two-spirit in 1990. But I also think of Indigiqueer as the forward moving momentum for two-spiritness."[17] Jordan Remington a Seattle drag queen member of the Quileute Tribe also spoke to the term Indigiqueer. They feel that

> Literally mashing up the words together, is a way of… recognizing that they're not gonna be able to understand my experience from just a queer lens and you're not gonna be able to understand my experience from just an Indigenous lens. The lenses need to overlap to understand my life perspectives and I'd say my art, too.[18]

Indigiqueer seems to fill much of the same space as Two-Spirit with the way it emphasizes the role being Indigenous plays in their gender and sexual identity. It seems to be a term that can address some – particularly younger Queer or Trans Indigenous – people's discomfort with the definition of Two-Spirit as having both male and female spirits. The reasons

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[14] TJ Cuthand, "Indigequeer/Indigiqueer," *TJ Cuthand: Filmmaker, Performance Artist, Writer* (blog), May 12, 2017, https://www.thirzacuthand.com/2017/05/12/indigequeerindigiqueer/.
[15] TJ Cuthand, "Biography," *TJ Cuthand: Filmmaker, Performance Artist, Writer* (blog), https://www.thirzacuthand.com/2017/05/12/indigequeerindigiqueer/.
[16] Cuthand, "Indigequeer/Indigiqueer."
[17] CBC Radio, "Poet Joshua Whitehead redefines two-spirit identity in Full-Metal Indigiqueer," *CBC,* December 15, 2017, https://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/from-dystopian-futures-to-secret-pasts-check-out-these-indigenous-storytellers-over-the-holidays-1.4443312/poet-joshua-whitehead-redefines-two-spirit-identity-in-full-metal-indigiqueer-1.4447321.
[18] Natasha Brennan, "Reclaiming Space: Two Spirit and Indigiqueer Tribal Citizens are Reminding their Communities they are both LGBTQ and Traditional," *Indian Country Today,* August 20, 2021, https://indiancountrytoday.com/news/reclaiming-space

for this discomfort is varied; whether it is due to how that definition goes against their people's religious beliefs,[19] or the view that this definition is a product of the gender binary enforced by colonialism.[20]

Finding History

This section does not aim to tell the history of Two-Spirit people and those who may identify themselves as Two-Spirit. That is beyond the scope of this thesis and a history that is not mine to tell. This section is primarily for improving outsider understandings by highlighting certain aspects of the history of Two-Spirit people that are important for people who will be dealing with the materials, records and knowledge of Two-Spirit people. It can serve as a starting point or foundation for forming a relationship that will allow for accurate and respectful description.

Much of the literature about Two-Spirit people is written by anthropologists, health professionals, and social workers, with very few of those academics being Two-Spirit or even Indigenous.[21] When I first started my research for this project, one of the big challenges was to push past this. One of Marie Laing's interviewees, Dana, expressed her frustrations about trying to learn more about those who might identify today as Queer, Trans or Two-Spirit and only finding anthropological work, saying "everyone, ever, in a library that wants to look up this stuff finds Will Roscoe and it just makes me want to die."[22] In order to avoid falling more into this same trap, I have prioritized using the words and shared knowledge of Two-Spirit academics and activists.

The existence of people who might identify today as Two-Spirit and those that currently identify as Two-Spirit people would find kinship with is not in doubt. But like many aspects of pre-contact life and culture, the sharing of knowledge about the particular roles, traditions, and words from various communities has been disrupted by colonization. Some aspects of these traditions, teachings, and identities survived the efforts of colonization and assimilation, but we

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[19] Laing, *Urban Indigenous Youth Reframing Two-Spirit*, 96.
[20] Laing, *Urban Indigenous Youth Reframing Two-Spirit*, 94, 97, 111, 114.
[21] Laing, *Urban Indigenous Youth Reframing Two-Spirit*, 18–22 provides an overview of much of the literature surrounding Two-Spirit in recent decades.
[22] Laing, *Urban Indigenous Youth Reframing Two-Spirit*, 17.

cannot know how much of these traditions were lost to genocide and assimilationist policies.[23] For many years, the academic literature focused on anthropological work that drew upon records of western colonizers trying to interpret views of gender and sexuality different than their own by placing them within a framework that made more sense to them.[24]

As in Queer history more generally, the HIV/AIDS epidemic had a large impact on Indigenous communities in general and Two-Spirit communities in particular. In a search for academic literature on Two-Spirit people, HIV/AIDS medical and public heath studies make up a large portion of the results.[25] Additionally, HIV/AIDS activism was a large portion of the work done by Two-Spirit organizations. In the records of organizations such as 2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations, many records and newsletters have significant content related to HIV/AIDS activism.[26] There was very much a political and activist agenda associated with being Two-Spirit. So much so that many younger Two-Spirit people still see that as a part of their identity.[27]

Symbolic Annihilation and Representational Belonging

Symbolic annihilation, a term first developed to refer to an absence in media representation, was taken up by feminist scholars to discuss how mainstream media's depiction of women affected how they were seen and treated in real life.[28] As a concept it discusses the result of groups being absent, misrepresented, or marginalized.[29] Caswell et al. explain that "to be symbolically annihilated is to be an eternal outsider whose very existence is presumed an impossibility."[30] It is important to note that symbolic annihilation is not merely an absence of

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[23] For examples, see Alexandria Wilson, "N'tacimowin Inna Nah': Coming in to Two-Spirit Identities" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 2007); Kai Pyle, "Folks Like Us: Anishinaabe Two-Spirit Kinship and Memory Across Time and Space" (Dissertation, University of Minnesota, 2021), http://conservancy.umn.edu/handle/11299/224565; Sue-Ellen Jacobs, Wesley Thomas, and Sabine Lang, *Two Spirit People: Native American Gender Identity, Sexuality, and Spirituality*, 1997.

[24] For the main anthropological texts see Will Roscoe, *The Zuni Man-Woman* (Albuquerque, N.M: University of New Mexico Press, 1996); Jacobs, Thomas, and Lang, *Two Spirit People*; Sabine Lang, *Men as Women, Women as Men: Changing Gender in Native American Cultures* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998), https://doi.org/10.7560/747005.

[25] Morgensen provides an overview of some of the literature by Indigenous people on HIV/AIDS Scott Lauria. Morgensen, *Spaces between Us: Queer Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Decolonization* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011), chap. 6.

[26] 2 Spirited People of The 1st Nations, "2 Spirits Reports," https://www.2spirits.com/.

[27] Laing, *Urban Indigenous Youth Reframing Two-Spirit*, 82–86.

[28] Caswell et al., "'To Suddenly Discover Yourself Existing,'" 58.

[29] Michelle Caswell, "Seeing Yourself in History: Community Archives and the Fight Against Symbolic Annihilation," *The Public Historian* 36, no. 4 (2014): 27, https://doi.org/10.1525/tph.2014.36.4.26.26.

[30] Caswell et al., "'To Suddenly Discover Yourself Existing,'" 58.

representation, but an absence of a nuanced, varied, and complete representation of the group. While there are records of Two-Spirit people, the majority of those records available are anthropological or medical. These records do not create a holistic or accurate representation, and symbolic annihilation takes place.

The antithesis of symbolic annihilation is representational belonging, which Caswell et al. describe in the archival context as "the ways in which community archives give those left out of mainstream repositories the power and authority to establish and enact their presence in archives in complex, meaningful, and substantive ways."[31] The existence of records created by Two-Spirit people about themselves contribute to a representational belonging. Creating and growing archives that promote Two-Spirit voices is an important way to encourage the diversity of records that help create representational belonging. In addition to showing that they exist in complex and meaningful ways, Caswell et al. indicate that representational belonging also creates "empirical evidence for a community to asset its existence in the past."[32] The desire for knowledge of their communities, their histories, and themselves was clear in Laing's interviewees demonstrating a clear need for representational belonging.[33]

Implications for Archiving

One very common desire expressed by Two-Spirit people is the desire to understand the history, traditions, roles, and ceremonies of those that came before them, blaming the effects of colonialism for the loss of this knowledge and fracturing of traditions.[34] While some have focused on finding what they can about the existing traditions of their communities, others have focused on creating and recreating traditions for Two-Spirit as an identity. This is especially true if their community did not have traditions for people like them, if those traditions did not survive, or if those traditions and roles do not match how they see their own identity and role within their community.

Because of the way that Two-Spirit can encompass more than gender or sexuality, it is important to also consider other aspects of the person's life, including what their Two-Spirit

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[31] Caswell et al., "'To Suddenly Discover Yourself Existing,'"74.
[32] Caswell et al., "'To Suddenly Discover Yourself Existing,'" 76.
[33] Laing, "Urban Indigenous Youth Reframing Two-Spirit," 119.
[34] Driskill, *Asegi Stories*, 7–10; Wilson, "N'tacimowin Inna Nah': Coming in to Two-Spirit Identities," Foreword; Pyle, "Folks Like Us," 3–4; Laing, *Urban Indigenous Youth Reframing Two-Spirit*.

community looked like and other traditions of knowledge transmission. This is why it is useful for archivists to involve the record creator – if they were created by a Two-Spirit person – or their community, when possible, in order to gather appropriate context to fully describe the records.

Another consideration is the oral tradition of Indigenous groups. Winona Wheeler writes of the importance of oral traditions for Cree communities. In her discussion, Wheeler highlights aspects of the form of the stories shared, and the ways that they are more than just the literal, verbal, text. The stories provide context and provenance with storytellers "strategically build side stories into their oral texts, which serve to establish the original source(s), the teller's relationship to the incident and persons involved, how the teller came to acquire it, and the relevant time referents."[35] She also notes the importance of body language's role in adding meaning to the storytelling.[36] Despite the importance of these oral traditions and their complex forms, the impact of colonialism threatens to disrupt the transmission of knowledge in this form. Wheeler notes the fears of many elders that there would not be anyone to share the stories with, and so they ended up recording the stories, songs, and teachings to ensure that future generations would have access to their histories.[37] While recordings of stories and teachings are one way to protect this knowledge, it disrupts the living line of the story. Additionally, due to storage space considerations in the digital environment, video recordings are not always viable, and audio only recordings are preferred. This loses an aspect of the record. Ideally, the archive would continue to remain with storytellers with their own ways of keeping and sharing knowledge. Archivists of Two-Spirit materials, including recorded oral histories, should remember that these records are often needed or desired because colonialism disrupting the existing, living archives.

Intersectionality and Interconnectedness

Intersectionality is a term developed by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989 to discuss Black women's experiences, specifically how they are "sometimes excluded from feminist theory and antiracist policy discourse" because the dominant narratives in these fields do not see the

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[35] Winona Wheeler, "Cree Intellectual Traditions in History," in *The West and Beyond : New Perspectives on an Imagined Region*, ed. Alvin Finkel, Sarah Carter, and Peter Fortna (Edmonton: AU Press, 2010), 66.
[36] Wheeler, "Cree Intellectual Traditions in History," 63.
[37] Wheeler, "Cree Intellectual Traditions in History," 60.

intersection of race and gender.[38] While specifically developed to talk about Black women, intersectionality as a concept is useful for looking at other communities that are multiply marginalized. In this case, Two-Spirit people are marginalized due to their ethnicity and their gender and/or sexual orientation. However, there are Indigenous ways of knowing that mean intersectionality might not be the best way to address this concept in terms of Indigenous people.

Participants at a dialogue on Intersectionality and Indigeneity on Coast Salish Territories expressed various views on intersectionality, some seeing it as "a new word for what we've always known" and others wary of its western academic origins.[39] One participant saw the term intersectionality too "harmonious or passive" and instead "described this cross-cultural experience as 'a collision' … to capture the violent reality of colonial power relations."[40] This view on intersectionality looks at the way Indigenous people and ways of being intersect or come into conflict with western ways of being and how Indigenous people currently exist at that conflict point. For Two-Spirit people, this can be an intersection or conflict of how they experience their gender and/or sexuality alongside the influences of homophobia, transphobia, and western cultures and categories of being LGBTQ+. In contrast to the idea of intersectionality explored during these dialogues, the concept of the "interconnectedness of all things" was an important idea raised in the dialogues.[41] In one of the breakout groups focused on Two-Spirit issues, the participants found the idea of intersectionality cannot be effective unless it can account for people whose identities are mutable. Hunt reports that "Two-spirit peoples' lives contest quantification or categorizations based on identity categories or power dynamics, as they do not adhere to fixed expressions of identity."[42] This resisting of categorization that is necessary for intersection highlights the importance of adding the idea of interconnectedness to understandings of Two-Spirit people. As one participant explained, "gender and sexuality are always interrelated in a range of expressions that are not limited to binary models, as individuals

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[38] Kimberle Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory, and Antiracist Politics," in *Feminist Legal Theory* (Routledge, 1991), 140.
[39] Sarah Hunt, "Summary of Themes on Intersectionality and Indigeneity."
Institute for Intersectionality Research & Policy, April 26 2012, 2-3, https://www.ualberta.ca/intersections-gender/media-library/intersectionality-readings/sarah-hunt-2012-dialogue_on_intersectionality_and_indige.pdf
[40] Hunt, "Summary of Themes on Intersectionality and Indigeneity," 4.
[41] Hunt, "Summary of Themes on Intersectionality and Indigeneity," 4.
[42] Hunt, "Summary of Themes on Intersectionality and Indigeneity," 8.

can position themselves within a scale of interrelated, yet undefined, gendered and sexual identities."[43]

One important point raised in the Two-Spirit breakout session was the way that intersectionality as a social justice approach focuses on marginalization rather than the strengths and individual privileges people within a marginalized group might have. The participants raised the question: "Are two-spirits understood as only marginalized or are they also understood as leaders, role-models and gifted with Indigenous teachings?"[44] While archivists need to take care when working with Two-Spirit people to remember the historic and ongoing harms done to Two-Spirit people, they also need to be careful not to only see them as victims. Positioning all Two-Spirit people as always victims can be problematic and reinforce negative power dynamics, rather than working to shift the power to be more equal.

Intersectionality is a useful tool for archivists as it gives us broad categories to work with, such as Queer and Indigenous. When possible, it is important to go deeper and think about the interconnectedness of aspects of a person. In describing what Two-Spirit is to them many of the people previously cited emphasized how Two-Spirit was more than just a gender or sexual identity, but instead was intertwined with many other parts of their lives. Even if an archivist is unable to explore in depth all these various aspects, an awareness that there is more going on beneath the surface can be a helpful way to mindfully archive Two-Spirit records.

When working with Two-Spirit records and communities it is important to remember that exclusively following Queer or Indigenous methodologies and best practices might neglect other aspects of their identity. One example of where there might be conflict is surrounding naming. For example, in their work on lesbian oral histories, El Chenier notes that we need to consider that it may not always be safe or wanted for a person to be identified as such in a way that the public can easily access and find.[45] This is further complicated with older records, created before the internet; would the interviewee consent to having the interview available online?[46] The same can be applied to photographic and written records. Further, it is important to consider those

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[43] Hunt, "Summary of Themes on Intersectionality and Indigeneity," 8.
[44] Hunt, "Summary of Themes on Intersectionality and Indigeneity," 8.
[45] E. Chenier, "Privacy Anxieties Ethics versus Activism in Archiving Lesbian Oral History Online," *Radical History Review*, no. 122 (2015): 134, https://doi.org/10.1215/01636545-2849576.
[46] Chenier, "Privacy Anxieties Ethics versus Activism in Archiving Lesbian Oral History Online," 133.

mentioned not as the main subject of the record, who may not be fully out, even if the main subject of the record is and wants their records to be as widely available as possible.[47] For Queer records, the safety and right to privacy of those mentioned is something that archivists need to consider. This might mean not having the names of people easily accessible, such as in digital environments. However, for Indigenous communities on Turtle Island, naming and having those names available is very important. Institutions have historically denied Indigenous peoples their names in the record, instead being referred to ethnographically.[48] This has led to initiatives like Project Naming "where the names of previously anonymous sitters in the photographs, as well as other information, are made available to the public."[49] For a community that has so often been denied their names in archival records, it is important to ensure that those names are available and present. These conflicting needs mean that archivists of Two-Spirit records need to be carefully considered with benefits and risks weighed out with what information is made easily available online, and what information is better kept offline or behind restricted access. These kinds of decisions should be made with the assistance of the community where possible.

Conclusion

With the evolving and individual understandings of what Two-Spirit is and the emergence of new terms like Indigqueer, archivists need to be even more aware of the role spirituality, community, culture, relationship to the land, activism, and other factors play in someone's Two-Spirit identity. The way a Two-Spirit person defines themselves and how these aspects interconnect should affect how archivists interact with the records.

One of the key takeaways from this examination of Two-Spirit history and identity is the importance of engaging with the specific community Two-Spirit records come from. There is a lot of context and specific meaning that is lost when Two-Spirit people are not involved in the process of archiving Two-Spirit records. Even when a Two-Spirit person is involved, it is still important to be aware of the individual nature of Two-Spirit identity and how one Two-Spirit

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[47] Chenier, Privacy "Anxieties Ethics versus Activism in Archiving Lesbian Oral History Online," 133.
[48] Beth Greenhorn, "Project Naming / Un Visage, Un Nom," *International Preservation News*, no. 61 (December 2013): 20.
[49] Greenhorn, "Project Naming / Un Visage, Un Nom," 20.

person cannot speak for the whole community. This can be particularly important for urban Two-Spirit people if they do not have strong connections to their home communities.[50]

[50] I will be further discussing this point in chapter 3.

Chapter Two: Queer Archives

Introduction

> So, for me personally, the value of the archive is profound. And I think that that may be true for a lot of people who suddenly are able to discover themselves, existing, being documented.[1]

In this chapter, I will discuss the emergence of Queer community archives beginning in the 20th century and continue to look at the landscape of Queer archives in the 21st century. I will be looking at the histories and contexts of several Queer archives to understand the situations and motivations that resulted in the creation of these collections and how the changes in society and those curating the collection affect the way the collection is and is not part of the broader community it serves to represent.

This chapter begins with the Institute for Sexual Science in Berlin, and Queer records that exist outside of Queer archives to show the foundations that Queer archives in the latter part of the twentieth century built. I will provide brief summaries of the ONE archive in Los Angeles, California and the ArQuives in Toronto, Ontario both because of their size and their age. These two archives are some of the largest Queer archives in the world, and some of the oldest still existing archives. They offer insight into how and why these collections develop and what their lifecycle looks like. I will explore what this might mean for newer Queer archives. For similar reasons, I will be offering a profile of the Lesbian Herstory Archive in Brooklyn, New York. It is also an archive with a long history and offers an interesting point of comparison and contrast to ONE and the ArQuives. To supplement and contrast these large, well-known and old Queer archives, I will profile the rukus! Archive in London, England. These archives were chosen because they offer some aspect of collecting, management, content, or history that augments the overall understanding of what Queer archives are or can be. Finally, this chapter will bring together the histories of the profiled archives with archival theory to understand the reasons for collection and the purposes that these archives serve for their communities.

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[1] Michelle Caswell, Marika Cifor, and Mario H. Ramirez, "'To Suddenly Discover Yourself Existing': Uncovering the Impact of Community Archives," *The American Archivist* 79, no. 1 (2016): Interviewee 9 in, https://doi.org/10.17723/0360-9081.79.1.56.

Early History

The history of Queer archives is relatively short, with most of these archives emerging after 1970. Aimee Brown points to the Institute for Sexual Science in Berlin (1919-1933) and the Dutch Scientific Humanitarian Committee's library in The Hague (1912) as the earliest known Queer archives. Unfortunately, both were destroyed by the Nazis.[2] The loss of these archives was significant and exacerbated the silence in the archive record.

The Institute for Sexual Science in Berlin was established by Magnus Hirschfeld to be a space for "research, teaching, healing, and refuge" meant to "free the individual from physical ailments, psychological afflictions, and social deprivation."[3] This mission was partially seen in the Institute's "political campaigning for the decriminalisation of homosexuality" which helped to create a progressive (for its time) space for the Queer scene in Berlin.[4] The Institute for Sexual Science holds an interesting place in the history of Queer archives for several reasons. In truth, its existence as one of the earliest examples of a Queer archive in the western world is perhaps the least interesting aspect of the Institute. More interestingly is, perhaps, the way it straddled several lines, existing in several spaces simultaneously. Bauer comments on how the Institute blurred the public/private space with Hirschfeld and a number of other employees of the institute living at the institute.[5] Additionally, the intersection of Queer folk as subjects of study and of a collection founded by a gay man creates an interesting dichotomy. As the twentieth century progressed, court records and medical case reports became the most visible expression of Queer people in the mainstream archival record.[6] However while many of those records were created by people outside of the Queer communities, the Institute for Sexual Science is an example

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[2] Aimee Brown, "How Queer 'Pack Rats' and Activist Archivists Saved Our History: An Overview of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) Archives, 1970-2008," in *Serving LGBTIQ Library and Archives Users: Essays on Outreach, Service, Collections and Access*, ed. Ellen Greenblatt (Jefferson, NC.: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2011),

[3] Magnus-Hirschfeld Society, "Founders of the Institute," Institute for Sexual Science (1919-1933) Online-Exhibition, accessed October 29, 2021, https://www.magnus-hirschfeld.de/institute-for-sexual-science-1919-1933/personnel/founders-of-the-institute/.

[4] Heike Bauer, "Burning Sexual Subjects: Books, Homophobia and the Nazi Destruction of the Institute of Sexual Science in Berlin," in *Book Destruction from the Medieval to the Contemporary*, ed. G. Partington and A. Smyth (London: Palgrave Macmillan UK, 2014), 17, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/umanitoba/detail.action?docID=1779919.

[5] Bauer, "Burning Sexual Subjects," 19.

[6] Steven Maynard, "'The Burning, Wilful Evidence': Lesbian/Gay History and Archival Research," *Archivaria* 33, no. Winter (1991): 199.

where the medical case reports were constructed by a gay man, if not necessarily by someone within the same community as the subjects of the Institute's research.

In the period of time between what could be called the first gay rights movement and the resurgence of gay rights activism in the latter half of the century, finding records of gay, lesbian, trans, or other people who did not fall into preconceived gender and sexual norms becomes more difficult. Records by and about Queer people have spent much of their history in traditional and institutional archives where:

> the staff was either unaware of it, didn't value it in terms of documenting LGBTQ culture or actively tried to hide it. LGBTQ material in mainstream repositories was often hidden by inaccurate subject headings or 'coded' language such as using the words friend, roommate or travel companion.[7]

Indeed, many of these records were even destroyed either by the creator themselves or relatives in order to protect reputations or prevent discrimination.[8] The result of this silencing of Queer record creators was that court records and medical case reports became the most visible expression of Queer people in the mainstream archival record.[9]

In the absence of records created by the Queer community, many historians have taken to reading 'against the grain' many other records. This is a common tactic used by historians of marginalized people because while mainstream archives did not offer much in the way of Queer records, they did have legal and medical records.[10] However, like with all archival records, it is necessary to remember the context they were created in. These records were "authored by people who judge, police, condemn, and punish nonnormative sexuality and gender"[11] and it is necessary to keep that in mind when trying to use these records as a Queer archive. Indeed, Maynard offers a caution against taking the evidence provided in these records at face value. He notes that not all of the men recorded in the early twentieth century Ontario medical and legal records he looked at may have considered themselves homosexual and that their experiences

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[7] Brown, "How Queer 'Pack Rats' and Activist Archivists Saved Our History," 122–23.
[8] Brown, "How Queer 'Pack Rats' and Activist Archivists Saved Our History," 122–23.
[9] Maynard, "'The Burning, Wilful Evidence,'" 199.
[10] John D. Wrathall, "Provenance as Text: Reading the Silences around Sexuality in Manuscript Collections," *Journal of American History* 79, no. 1 (1992): 170.
[11] Anjali Arondekar et al., "Queering Archives: A Roundtable Discussion," *Radical History Review* 2015, no. 122 (May 2015): 214, https://doi.org/10.1215/01636545-2849630.

may be wildly different from what doctors recorded.[12] Maynard does not reject the use of these 'against the grain' readings of case reports or other records that can be used to gain an understanding of Queer life in the past, but reminds that records and archives are not neutral. He does point to the opportunities, particularly in case files, to see the subject's words, preserved as part of the case record, when otherwise they may have been lost to history.[13] While these archival traces are important to understanding Queer history where no others exist, it also highlights the need for Queer archives that showcase the voices of Queer people in ways that are not criminalized or pathologized.

The contrast between the records of the Institute for Sexual Science and the case reports discussed by Maynard shows the importance of understanding who is creating the records and for what purpose. On the surface, some of the records from the Institute for Sexual Science may have looked similar in many respects to the police and medical case reports as both came from contexts of power since the creators were not the subjects of the records. However, the purpose and ideologies behind the creation have created differences.

Barriers for Collection

Currently, there is a failure of mainstream archives to serve the communities that want to access this material. This is because many collections of Queer materials are started by members of their communities, and in the beginning often narrowly reflect the identities of those that start the collection. Such collections grow as more people of varied identities join the organization and contribute to growing the collection.[14] In the second half of the twentieth century, as the gay rights movement started making gains and homosexuality began to be decriminalized, the archival landscape of Queer records also began to change. Collections of records began making their way from individual personal collections, stashed away in closets, to publicly available community archives. However, there is still a lack of materials in mainstream archives. Gough

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[12] Steven Maynard, "On the Case of the Case: The Emergence of the Homosexual as a Case History in Early-Twentieth-Century Ontario," in *On the Case: Explorations in Social History*, ed. Franca Iacovetta and Wendy Mitchinson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 80.
[13] Maynard, "On the Case of the Case," 79–80.
[14] The ArQuives offers a good example of this especially by looking at the history of their name changes and the way it worked to start making their collection more inclusive. I discuss this further below.

and Greenblatt identify several obstacles or errors in thinking that act as barriers that exclude Queer materials from library collections. These factors can also apply to archives.

One of the biggest obstacles they identify is librarians claiming that their "library doesn't cater to specialized needs" or that Queer or Trans people do not use their library.[15] These two ideas are reflective of the ways Queer people are designated as 'other' and pushed to the margins of society rather than being seen as fully part of it. While archives often have a more specific collection mandate, within which individual records of Queer people or organizations may not fit, it is irresponsible to paint all such records as 'specialized needs.' Likewise, it is folly to make the assumption that Queer people are not users of an archive and to use that as an excuse not to collect material for or about Queer people. Gough and Greenblatt indicate that most users do not disclose their sexual or gender identity in the course of accessing services and it is not possible to identify all Queer or Trans people just by looking at them.[16] They further emphasize that Queer people are not the only ones to access materials on Queer topics, and denying the inclusion of this material on that basis is erroneous and does a disservice to all users of the collection.[17]

Another barrier they identify is that many librarians do not feel qualified to make the correct decisions about Queer materials.[18] This barrier is understandable in many ways. Librarians and archivists without the relevant education or training on subjects that have a history of being mistreated and misrepresented may certainly be cautious about making these collecting decisions. This is especially true if they are unable to consult with someone who is an expert in this field. However, inaction due to caring about a community or desire to 'do it right' can have the same impact as malicious inaction. While there are many more resources available to librarians wishing to add Queer texts to their collections than there are for archivists,[19] support and information still exist for archivists to make decisions on accession and description. Even without special resources available, Gough and Greenblatt emphasize the fact that librarians often add material to collections in which they do not have specific experience or expertise. It is

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[15] Cal Gough and Ellen Greenblatt, "Barriers to Selecting Materials about Sexual and Gender Diversity," in *Serving LGBTIQ Library and Archives Users: Essays on Outreach, Service, Collections and Access*, ed. Ellen Greenblatt (Jefferson, NC.: McFarland & Company, Inc., 2011), 165–66.
[16] Gough and Greenblatt, "Barriers to Selecting Materials about Sexual and Gender Diversity," 166.
[17] Gough and Greenblatt, "Barriers to Selecting Materials about Sexual and Gender Diversity," 167.
[18] Gough and Greenblatt, "Barriers to Selecting Materials about Sexual and Gender Diversity," 167–68.
[19] Gough and Greenblatt, "Barriers to Selecting Materials about Sexual and Gender Diversity," 167.

not an excuse to exclude these materials simply because no one else, "regardless of their presumed sexual orientation has volunteered to take on selection responsibilities in this area."[20] One of the best ways to learn is by doing, and while sometimes doing something without full knowledge or experience results in mistakes, that is still a chance to learn and do better next time.

Collections of Note

ONE, Los Angles, California

The ONE Archive grew out of the records of ONE Inc., which started publishing ONE magazine (1953-1967), providing educational outreach and acting to, according to their manifesto, "aid in the social integration and rehabilitation of the sexual variant."[21] Starting as a library housing records of the magazine and other Queer materials, the ONE Archive grew slowly over the decades. Among the reasons for its slow growth were conflicts among members in the early years. Sheffield points to the "heist" of some of ONE Inc.'s records and office supplies in 1965 by some members who were against the increasing focus on education, to the detriment of the magazine, as one major conflict. Another point contributing to ONE's slow growth was that the organization alienated Jim Kepner, who was amassing a large Queer archive outside of ONE, effectively competing with ONE for collections. In 1995, Kepner donated these archival records to ONE's collection when the International Gay and Lesbian Archive merged with ONE to alleviate some of the financial difficulties both were facing.[22] While Kepner had a long history of involvement with ONE as a member and as a writer for the magazine, he was also a "packrat," collecting a wide variety of materials; he did not just collect books, meeting minutes, educational brochures, and newsletters, but also correspondence, audio files, posters, and other ephemera such as buttons.[23] Prior to 1995, Kepner twice tried to donate some or all of his collections to ONE. In the late 1950s, when ONE was starting to build its library and Kepner

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[20] Gough and Greenblatt, "Barriers to Selecting Materials about Sexual and Gender Diversity," 168.
[21] Diana K Wakimoto, Christine Bruce, and Helen Partridge, "Archivist as Activist: Lessons from Three Queer Community Archives in California," *Archival Science* 13, no. 4 (2013): 300, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10502-013-9201-1; ONE Inc., "Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws, 1953," quoted in Aaron H Devor and Nicholas Matte, "ONE Inc. and Reed Erickson: The Uneasy Collaboration of Gay and Trans Activism, 1964-2003," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 10, no. 2 (2004): 179–209.
[22] Sheffield, *Documenting Rebellions*, 59; Wakimoto, Bruce, and Partridge, "Archivist as Activist: Lessons from Three Queer Community Archives in California," 301.
[23] Sheffield, *Documenting Rebellions*, 60.

was still early in his collecting (and already running out of room), Kepner donated 400 books to ONE, which "sold some of them off as irrelevant."[24] A later attempt in 1977, this time to donate his whole collection to ONE, also failed.[25] The interpersonal challenges in community organizations are part of the history and serve to shape the ways the archive grows.

The Erickson Educational Foundation and The International Gay and Lesbian Archives (IGLA) played some of the largest roles in developing ONE; Sheffield suggests that the IGLA provided the bulk of the materials that would become the ONE Archive.[26] While ONE mainly focused on the experiences and records of gay men, the Erickson Educational Foundation focused on "gender variant (particularly transsexual) people." This shows a division that would continue in gay and lesbian organizations and archives.[27]

Eventually, though, the ONE Archive decided to "to secure its future and its ability to provide access to the archives for its community members" by donating itself to the University of South California in October 2010, despite its long history as an independent archive.[28] It is possible that the lack of surviving original members, and its initial aim of respectability and education[29] made the decision to donate itself to a larger educational institution easier, as it is in line with its overall trajectory and philosophy.

The history of the ONE Archive is complex and filled with conflicting views of what the organization should be, depending on the focus and interests of the people involved in it. This variety of views can sometimes be helpful for building a robust organization, able to address many aspects of its users' views. It can also cause conflict if these different views cannot be reconciled. The donation to the University of South California created stability by giving a group outside of the communities involved in the archive a large role in maintaining and growing the collection. ONE's donation also removed the time, space, and financial burdens from the

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[24] Jim Kepner, "Accidental Institution: How and Why a Gay and Lesbian Archives?" in *Daring to Find Our Names: The Search for Lesbigay Library History*, ed. James Vinson Carmichael, Jr. (Santa Barbara: Greenwood Publishing, 1998) quoted in Sheffield, 58.
[25] Sheffield, 61.
[26] Devor and Matte, "ONE Inc. and Reed Erickson," 183; Sheffield, *Documenting Rebellions*, 52.
[27] Devor and Matte, "ONE Inc. and Reed Erickson," 183.
[28] Wakimoto, Bruce, and Partridge, "Archivist as Activist: Lessons from Three Queer Community Archives in California," 302.
[29] ONE Inc., "Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws, 1953," quoted in Devor and Matte, "ONE Inc. and Reed Erickson."

communities that had supported it. Stability and financial support are strong reasons to donate an archive to an institution, but the separation from the community and giving up control of the collection is a concern to some community groups.

ArQuives, Toronto, Ontario

The ArQuives had its start as the Canadian Gay Liberation Movement Archives and grew out of the records of *The Body Politic*, a magazine focused on the gay liberation movement, first published in 1971 and continuing to 1987.[30] While it later decided to take an approach that was not explicitly political in order to be more inclusive, the very act of creating and maintaining Queer archives is a form of activism, ensuring that the community is not hidden – making the argument that their history matters.

In the early years of the ArQuives, there were a number of people who in turn took up the mantle of collecting and guiding the archive's direction. Jearld Moldenhauer, "a book dealer, photographer, naturalist, journalist, community documentarian, and perpetual contrarian" was at the heart of the formation of what would become the ArQuives.[31] Over the years of his work with *The Body Politic*, he accumulated a large number of materials beyond the working records of the magazine including "letters, newsletters, handbills, pin buttons, and other ephemera picked up by collective members or received from readers" as well as books similarly acquired. In collaboration with Ron Dayman, who also worked with *The Body Politic*, they realized that there was value beyond utility for these materials. Dayman would take up a process of actively collecting and organizing the materials, forming them into the Canadian Gay Liberation Movement Archive in 1973 and taking off from there.[32] By 1975, both Moldenhauer and Dayman took a step back from managing the records and Edward Jackson began the process of formalizing the archives by creating a collective around the archives, writing a mission statement, and separating it from *The Body Politic*.[33]

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[30] Marcel Barriault, "Archiving the Queer and Queering the Archives: A Case Study of the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives," in *Community Archives: The Shaping of Memory*, ed. Jeannette A. Bastian and Ben Alexander (London: Facet Publishing, 2009), 99; Sheffield, *Documenting Rebellions*, 29.
[31] Sheffield, *Documenting Rebellions*, 25.
[32] Barriault, "Archiving the Queer and Queering the Archives: A Case Study of the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives," 100.
[33] Sheffield, *Documenting Rebellions*, 39; Barriault, "Archiving the Queer and Queering the Archives: A Case Study of the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives," 100.

Quite early on in their existence, the ArQuives faced the decision of whether or not to allow the Archives of Ontario "to acquire some of the holdings" in 1975. They decided to keep the archives in the hands of the Queer community where the community would be able to guide its own collection. As is common not only with Queer archives, but with many other community archives, there was a lack of trust that the institution would take care of the collection.[34] The systematic exclusion of Queer records and history at the Archives of Ontario did not inspire confidence that this institution would be able to continue moving the archives in a direction that respected the communities involved and would allow the ArQuives to continue to collect non-traditional archival records.[35] James Fraser, an early member of the collective, explained that

> Because the Archives receives almost all of its material from a still active movement, it is essential for several reasons that the Archives remain in the hands of the gay people. The relatively young age of the movement gives the Archives a unique opportunity of being able to preserve a very complete picture of gay activities.[36]

This decision to stay independent allowed the archive to continue adding ephemera such as "matchbook covers, pin buttons, [and] t-shirts" at a time when many institutional archives would question their value.

One notable aspect of the ArQuives is its history of name changes. The first change from the Canadian Gay Liberation Movement Archives to the Canadian Gay Archives reflected a desire to broaden its mandate and attract more outside attention. Jackson, the person behind the name change wanted to attract donors who he felt might be made "uneasy by the radical politics of the movement."[37] The next name change would come in 1993, becoming the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives in order to be more inclusive,[38] and acknowledge the lesbian material and members of the archive's community.[39] The decision was also spurred by the closure and donation of the Canadian Women's Movement Archive in 1992. Previously, the Canadian Gay

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[34] Andrew Mary Stevens, and Elizabeth Shepherd. "Whose Memories, Whose Archives? Independent Community Archives, Autonomy and the Mainstream." *Archival Science* 9 (2009): 80, doi:10.1007/s10502-009-9105-2.
[35] Barriault, "Archiving the Queer," 101.
[36] James A Fraser, "Canadian Gay Archives," *Archivaria*, January 1977, 159.
[37] Sheffield, *Documenting Rebellions*, 38.
[38] Barriault, "Archiving the Queer and Queering the Archives: A Case Study of the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives," 104.
[39] Rebecka Taves Sheffield, "The Emergence, Development and Survival of Four Lesbian and Gay Archives" (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 2015), 76.

Archives had occasionally directed lesbian donors to the Canadian Women's Movement Archive instead.[40] The ArQuives would take on its current name in 2018 in an effort, like with the change in 1993, to be more inclusive. As they stated in a news release about the change: "we really needed to change our name if we were going to adequately reflect underserved and underrepresented communities in Canada: most notably trans, queer, bisexual, and 2-spirited folks."[41] These name changes show an awareness of how the archive needed to change with the times in order to continue to remain independent and continue to serve a population that is constantly being defined and redefined. Sheffield spends a good portion of her chapter on the ArQuives discussing the financial pressures of keeping the archives running, while also discussing the struggles with inclusivity over its history. Sheffield suggests that the name changes are just one reflection of how they have attempted to deal with those issues.[42]

The ArQuives is an interesting case of a community archive that has in some ways grown to be an institution within Queer communities, representing the existing systems of power and the stability that often comes with this power. The ArQuives efforts to bring in records of underrepresented communities can be compared to the ways mainstream institutions will work with community groups to add their collections.

Lesbian Herstory Archives, Brooklyn, New York

Like the ArQuives, the founders of the Lesbian Herstory Archives (LHA) came out of the gay liberation movement. Founded in 1973 by Joan Nestle, and the women of the Gay Academic Union Women's Caucus, the LHA holds the distinction of being one of the first and most prominent lesbian centric archives in the world.[43] Nestle and the other founders of the LHA's experiences in the gay liberation movement highlighted the need for a lesbian archive in order to push back against the male dominance they saw as prevalent in the community.[44] Indeed, the first issue of the Lesbian Herstory Archives newsletter stated that the archive "exists to gather

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[40] Sheffield, *Documenting Rebellions,* 76.
[41] The ArQuives Team, "This Spring the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives Is Embracing Change and a New Name," The ArQuives, March 18, 2019, https://arquives.ca/latest-news/this-spring-the-canadian-lesbian-and-gay-archives-is-embracing-change-and-a-new-name.
[42] Sheffield, *Documenting Rebellions*, Introduction, Chapter 5, Conclusion.
[43] Shawn(ta) Smith-Cruz et al., "Getting from Then to Now: Sustaining the Lesbian Herstory Archives as a Lesbian Organization," *Journal of Lesbian Studies* 20, no. 2 (April 2, 2016): 217, https://doi.org/10.1080/10894160.2015.1083827.
[44] "History," *The Lesbian Herstory Archives*, archived June 23, 2019 http://www.lesbianherstoryarchives.org/history.html.

and preserve records of lesbian lives and activities so that future generations will have ready access to materials relevant to their lives."[45]

While the LHA's start out of Nestle's apartment is hardly unique, with many Queer archives having their start in people's homes,[46] its commitment to staying in a home was enshrined into their guiding principles, stating that "The Archives will always have a caretaker living in it so that it will always be someone's home rather than an institution."[47] The LHA remained in that apartment in New York until 1992, and in the nearly two decades it was there it was a home – both long term and short term – for many women.[48] Nestle speaks to the apartment building itself as a place where the social norms of the 70s were already being broken, explaining that: "three sex workers lived on the same floor of the LHA… interracial couples abounded in the building, [it was] a safe place for the different, and no one questioned the steady stream of gender-questioning people through the doors of 215."[49] Rising prices in Manhattan, Nestle's landlord's desire to turn the property into a condominium, and the changing landscape in the city led to the coordinators starting to plan to purchase a space for their archive. It would all be funded by donations and what members of their community could afford to share with the archive.[50] The space that the archive decided to move into was also important. The house that the LHA managed to purchase at the end of 1991 was located in the Park Slope neighbourhood in Brooklyn, which at the time was gaining a reputation as a lesbian neighbourhood, several volunteers at the archive were already living in that area.[51] Two decades after the move, the LHA still remains in that house.

Joan Nestle points to the various unique aspects of the LHA:

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[45] The Lesbian Herstory Archive newsletter no. 1, 1975, as quoted in Joan Nestle, "The Will to Remember: The Lesbian Herstory Archives of New York," *Journal of Homosexuality* 34, no. 3–4 (1998): 227, doi:10.1300/J082v34n03.
[46] For a more detailed discussion on the theory of queer archives in homes see Marika Cifor, "Aligning Bodies: Collecting, Arranging, and Describing Hatred for a Critical Queer Archives," *Library Trends* 64, no. 4 (2016): 756–75; Danielle Cooper, "House Proud: An Ethnography of the BC Gay and Lesbian Archives," *Archival Science* 16 (2016): 261–88, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10502-015-9250-8.
[47] "History," *The Lesbian Herstory Archives*, archived June 23, 2019 http://www.lesbianherstoryarchives.org/history.html.
[48] Sheffield, *Documenting Rebellions*, 113.
[49] Joan Nestle, "Who were we to do such a thing? Grassroots Necessities, Grassroots Dreaming: The LHA in Its Early Years," *Radical History Review*, 122, (2015): 237.
[50] Sheffield, *Documenting Rebellions*, 127, 129.
[51] Sheffield, *Documenting Rebellions*, 129–30.

> its grassroots base; its refusal of governmental funds; its demystifying of the archives profession; its determination to keep lesbian as the all-inclusive noun; the collective ownership of its building, which functions as a community cultural center, funded through small donations from many; its collective structure where consensus still rules— thus the building, the means of organization, its lesbian centeredness, makes the LHA its own kind of artifact.[52]

Despite the financial struggles of the archive due to its refusal to use grant money from the government, which many community archives use to survive.[53] In addition to the long, stable history of a location for the archives, the LHA's volunteers and coordinators also remained stable, with many of the current coordinators working there for decades alongside newer archivists, librarians, and activists.[54] The continuance of place, volunteers, and community has helped the archive remain stable and independent, continuing with its identity as a radical, political, lesbian archive.

rukus!, London, England

The fourth archive I profile differs in a number of ways from the first three. It does not have a long history and is located in England rather than the United States or Canada. It is also an intersectional archive. The rukus! archive was created by Ajamu X and Topher Cambell in 2005. Like the ArQuives and ONE, rukus! grew out of another organization, this one devoted to "presenting the best in work by Black lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) artists."[55] The collection began with Ajamu and Campbells' own personal collections of materials. The kind of ephemera that they collected could often be dismissed as "*just* a flyer," but they saw it as "heritage in relation to [their] sexual identity."[56] Unlike other organizations who saw the need to collect this material, they did not keep it in one of their houses or create a formal archive with their own building. Instead, they donated it to the London Metropolitan Archives.[57] "It goes back to respect," Ajamu said about the reason why they were donated to the London Metropolitan Archives.[58] They did not have the knowledge to maintain the records with the care and respect

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[52] Nestle, "Who were we to do such a thing?" 236.
[53] Joan Nestle, "The Will to Remember: The Lesbian Herstory Archives of New York," *Journal of Homosexuality* 34, no. 3–4 (1998): 232, https://doi.org/10.1300/J082v34n03.
[54] Lesbian Herstory Archives, "Who We Are," accessed July 11, 2021, https://lesbianherstoryarchives.org/about/who-we-are/.
[55] Ajamu X, Topher Campbell, and Mary Stevens, "Love and Lubrication in the Archives, or Rukus!: A Black Queer Archive for the United Kingdom," *Archivaria* 68 (2009): 273.
[56] X, Campbell, and Stevens, "Love and Lubrication in the Archives," 285.
[57] X, Campbell, and Stevens, "Love and Lubrication in the Archives," 291.
[58] X, Campbell, and Stevens, "Love and Lubrication in the Archives," 291.

they deserved, so they decided to place it with an organization that did have those skills and an understanding of the community.[59]

For Ajamu and Campbell, it was necessary to find an institution that would fit with what they wanted to accomplish and the needs of the collection. They needed to find an institution that had experience with managing both Black archives and gay archives (if not specifically a Black gay archive yet) in order to ensure the whole identity of the archive was represented and taken care of.[60] One of the important aspects was that it would still be their archive – that ownership of the archive would remain with rukus!. Flinn, Steven, and Shepherd note that the London Metropolitan Archives has done a good deal of work in building strong connections with various marginalized communities that wish to deposit their records in their archives. Richard Wiltshire, the senior archivist at the London Metropolitan Archives, explained that:

> we were delighted to accept a loan arrangement where they own it. […] Saying that we don't actually own it is a really, really important thing because suddenly it gives them almost like… it makes the community feel like, 'yeah, we can actually release this, but it's actually still ours.'[61]

This custody arrangement allows Ajamu and Campbell to focus on their area of expertise while allowing archival professionals to care for the materials. It is an agreement built out of respect for the materials and the people involved.

For the Lesbian Herstory Archive it was important to distance themselves from formal archival institutions, and the ArQuives did not trust that an institutional archive like the Archives of Ontario would take proper care of the community records. For the rukus! archive, however, being held within an institution was important to add legitimacy to materials that many of the contributors did not see as valuable. The rukus! archive is in many ways a model for new partnerships between community archives and the institutions that they partner with. Unlike ONE, it is not an outright donation, which takes the collection out of the community, but benefits

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[59] X, Campbell, and Stevens, "Love and Lubrication in the Archives," 291.
[60] X, Campbell, and Stevens, "Love and Lubrication in the Archives," 291.
[61] Interview with Richard Wiltshire, London Metropolitan Archives, 18 April 2008 qtd. in Mary Stevens, Andrew Flinn, and Elizabeth Shepherd, "New Frameworks for Community Engagement in the Archive Sector: From Handing over to Handing On," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 16, no. 1–2 (January 2010): 64, https://doi.org/10.1080/13527250903441770.

from many of the positives of institutions, like stability and financial support, while keeping the advantages of community control and involvement.

Impetus to collect

Community

The Archives Taskforce of the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council reported the increase of community archives "in part stemmed from a desire by individuals and groups to record and share culturally diverse experiences and stories. This grassroots movement is an expression of the often strongly felt need to celebrate, record, and rebuild the sense of community in our lives today."[62] The community surrounding an archive can take on many forms. Cvetkovich notes how valuable it is to have a space within the community that not only can be a place for research, but can also be used as a space for social activities, activist organizing, and simply sharing existence and the emotions evoked by the records. Having a space not controlled by the dominant cultures is seen as incredibly valuable.[63]

Social Memory

Community building is an important impetus and result of developing community archives but not the only one. For many communities, the need to preserve the history of the community was just as strong a motivation in the creation of these community archives and became an ongoing goal. Indeed, Flinn, Stevens, and Shepherd note that for communities of racial minorities, the decision to create the archive was, invariably, "a reaction to the lack of representation and visibility of the community concerned within the dominant culture and formal heritage organisations."[64] Many marginalized groups are cut off from their history through some kind of "dramatic and perhaps traumatic change, [such as] industrial decline and the end of traditional occupations … or the experience of migration and diasporic living, or other cultural,

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[62] Archives Task Force, *Listening to the Past, Speaking to the Future Report of the Archives Task Force* (London: Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, 2004), 43.
[63] Ann Cvetkovich, *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003).
[64] Andrew Flinn, Mary Stevens, and Elizabeth Shepherd, "Whose Memories, Whose Archives? Independent Community Archives, Autonomy and the Mainstream," *Archival Science* 9 (2009): 78, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10502-009-9105-2.

demographic and generational shifts within an area."[65] Community archives and the histories created from those can help these people reconnect to this lost, and often hidden, history

Identity

The creation and establishment of a community history also enables the users in the archives to create an identity that may have been lacking previously. Aaron H. Devor and Lara Wilson explain that "knowing one's history is essential to having a clearly formed identity."[66] However, as Barriault points out, "unlike many people who identify primarily with a given community (ethnic, multicultural or religious), members of the Queer community do not generally inherit from their parents a sense of Queer identity or history. Often this education must come from outside the family unit."[67] The Queer community is not the only group that can be cut off from their identity, and the archives can help reconnect them to it.

Caswell, Cifor, and Ramirez use the term "representational belonging" to talk about the way marginalized peoples can use community archives to "establish, enact, and reflect on their presence in ways that are complex, meaningful, substantive, and positive to them in a variety of symbolic contexts."[68] However, as Kaplan argues, we need to be careful about asserting a single identity for a community through the archives by keeping in mind that the records we collect can become a part of the symbolic representation of that identity.[69] Awareness of how identity is constructed, and the effects that collection decisions can have on the future construction of the community is valuable knowledge for community archivists to have.

HIV/AIDS and Queer Archives

In addition to the impetuses to collect outlined above, for archives in the latter part of the twentieth century the HIV/AIDS crisis had perhaps the largest and longest lasting impact on creating and sustaining Queer archives. As Sheffield states so directly at the start of her section

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[65] Andrew Flinn, "Community Histories, Community Archives: Some Opportunities and Challenges," *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 28, no. 2 (2007): 159, https://doi.org/10.1080/00379810701611936.
[66] Aaron H. Devor and Lara Wilson, "Putting Trans* History on the Shelves: The Transgender Archives at the University of Victoria, Canada," in *Out of the Closet, Into the Archives: Researching Sexual Histories*, ed. Jaime Cantrell and Amy L. Stone (Albany: SUNY Press, 2015), 255.
[67] Barriault, "Archiving the Queer and Queering the Archives: A Case Study of the Canadian Lesbian and Gay Archives," 104.
[68] Caswell, Cifor, and Ramirez, "'To Suddenly Discover Yourself Existing': Uncovering the Impact of Community Archives," 57.
[69] Elisabeth Kaplan, "We Are What We Collect, We Collect What We Are: Archives and the Construction of Identity," *American Archivist* 63, no. 1 (2000): 150–51, https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1014714108.

on Death and AIDS in the Archives, "Death has always benefitted archives."[70] At first, this may seem like an obvious, if morbid, way of stating the fact that many of the collections in archives are donated after the death of their owners. Some may even consider archives to be a way to give those dead a voice and influence. However, for Queer communities death meant much more than records. It was an impetus for action, a call to collection and also a way to keep the lights on and the archive functioning.

For the Queer community, the HIV/AIDS crisis was a traumatic experience. Large portions of the Queer community were dying, leaving the survivors traumatized and reeling from the loss of people and their history. David Mixner, an activist, explained that:

> I've saved my huge collection because I saw so many of the papers of my nearly 300 friends who died from AIDS being destroyed by their families after their deaths. I saw our community's history vanishing right in front of me, and I was devastated that so many of their stories were being lost. Most of their papers were burned by their families in shame.[71]

Not only were they losing so many members of their community and its living memory, they were also losing their records to family members who did not want those records to be saved. Campbell adds a reminder that:

> People have died, or been killed, or been forgotten or ignored. Some very fascinating, interesting people in a culture which, … has denied their existence. It can be very painful to go on about that. So there is going to be some kind of mourning, or trauma, or pain involved in the public examination of all this. … And I think the archive goes some way to publicly acknowledging the pain and helping people come to terms with it.[72]

For Campbell, archives are a way for the community to try to process the pain and trauma caused by the deaths of so many people. In ensuring that their memory lives on through the archives and legitimizing the lives and deaths of their friends so that they are not forgotten, it allows the people to grieve and remember, processing this trauma and reforming the community. These

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[70] Sheffield, *Documenting Rebellions*, 156.
[71] Brown, "How Queer 'Pack Rats' and Activist Archivists Saved Our History," 127.
[72] X, Campbell, and Stevens, "Love and Lubrication," 183–84.

"archives help communities not only to remember and document their past but also to understand the present day and its connections to that past."[73]

The desire to preserve social memory within the community following the rash of deaths due to the AIDS epidemic was a strong impetus to collect for many of the burgeoning archives at the tail end of the 20th century. For many of the more established archives, deaths due to the AIDS epidemic also drastically increased their holdings; the ArQuives reported a 56% increase in holdings in 1993 with the board attributing most of those donations to AIDS in some form.[74] However, for many of these established archives, those same deaths sustained the archives. Sheffield points to the death of James Fraser, one of the founders of the archives, who died of AIDS complications in 1985, bequeathing "what little money he had to the archives" as one important death for the archive as well as bequests from activists and gay men in the community.[75] These gifts both large and small were vital to keeping the ArQuives operational through the late eighties and early nineties. Allen Miller explained: "At several points, we were really strapped financially and then people died and left us a fair amount of money, and that would sustain us for a year, and then someone else would die and we would get some more money."[76] The introduction and availability of effective retroviral treatment for HIV/AIDS in the late nineties was a relief for those within the gay community and those who cared for and about them, but it also meant financial hardship for the archives like the ArQuives since "As the number of deaths declined, so did the donations to the archives."[77]

Making Space

Just as the existence of Queer archives carves out space from the mainstream archival depositories and recordkeeping culture, Queer archives need to continue to make space within themselves for other Queer folks. I began this chapter with a quote talking about how, with community archives, there are "a lot of people who suddenly are able to discover themselves,

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[73] Flinn, "Community Histories, Community Archives: Some Opportunities and Challenges," 2007, 159.
[74] Minutes of the CGA board of directors. Harold Averill, We've Moved Again! [Feb. 10, 1993], Organizational records, 100.7, The ArQuives, Toronto, Ontario. qtd in Sheffield, *Documenting Rebellions*, 159.
[75] Sheffield, 158.
[76] Sheffield, 159.
[77] Sheffield, 159.

existing."[78] This was a quote that always resonated with me, from the first reading of Caswell, Cifor, and Ramirez's article. Even so, I do not think that I would be able to find myself in most Queer archives because, while I am white, middle class, university educated, there nonetheless would be a scarce handful of records I could see myself in. The problem is worse for those Black, Indigenous, people of colour (BIPOC), working class, poor, disabled Queer folk.

Diversity is one important aspect of the mandates for many Queer archives,[79] however, this does not always translate into a diverse archive. There are acknowledgements that the Queer community is diverse and multifaceted,[80] but their archives do not always do a good job of representing the full diversity of the Queer community. In Chenier's survey of lesbian oral histories, she notes that records of and about gay men make up the bulk of the records in Queer archives. This was partly because many of the early organizations and archives had men in leadership positions. This was also the case for the organizations that put together the Manitoba Gay and Lesbian Archives at the University of Manitoba Archives, leading to the majority of the records in the collection being focused on gay men.[81] Chenier states that "only by making lesbian material a priority, and by having lesbians on staff to build relationships with members of the lesbian community, does a meaningful repository of women's material emerge."[82] This leads to archives such as the Lesbian Herstory Archives and the Transgender Archive at the University of Victoria. Just as gay people created archives of their own in order to fill the absence of gay people and history within the traditional, institutional archives, lesbians, Trans people and others have had to start their own archives to fill the gaps within gay archives. This also extends to other Queer identities such as non-binary, Two-Spirit, asexual, aromantic, and other identities that do not neatly fit into modern, western categories.

Race is one of the major areas where Queer archives need to do better. In the introduction to her book, Sheffield provides the anecdote of a cue card posted at a display of photographs:

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[78] Interviewee 9 in Caswell, Cifor, and Ramirez, "'To Suddenly Discover Yourself Existing': Uncovering the Impact of Community Archives," 70.
[79] See for examples "Our Policies," The ArQuives, https://arquives.ca/about/policies; "About the Lesbian Herstory Archives," Lesbian Herstory Archives, https://lesbianherstoryarchives.org/about/.
[80] Barriault, "Archiving the Queer," 99.
[81] Manitoba Gay and Lesbian Archives. Mss 42, PC 292, TC 156. University of Manitoba Archives and Special collections. University of Manitoba. Winnipeg MB. https://nanna.lib.umanitoba.ca/manitoba-gay-and-lesbian-archives
[82] E. Chenier, "Hidden from Historians: Preserving Lesbian Oral History in Canada." *Archivaria* 68 (2009): 252.

"Apparently all the Black people were out picking cotton while you were taking photographs," and the subsequent defensive responses to the incident.[83] For Winnipeg in particular, the issue is the lack of Indigenous representation. Like with the male bias in the Manitoba Gay and Lesbian Archive, there is a white bias with little Indigenous representation. Queer and Two-Spirit Indigenous people are just as absent in the record here as the Black representation is in Toronto.[84] The whiteness of the records is an issue that archives that want to be diverse need to address. It is not something that is easy to correct and, in many cases, may not be possible. There are reasons that communities have formed their own archives or have been lost to archives altogether, despite the intentions of community or mainstream archives to be more diverse and welcoming, and to house material from a broader spectrum of the community. Chapter three will further discuss what archives can do to have a more intersectional and welcoming approach to multiple and diverse communities.

Conclusion

The archives discussed in this chapter and the ideas surrounding their existence and creation often straddle lines. Public and private, insider and outsider, remembering and forgetting, past and future. Many of the archives discussed had their start in homes, a private space that the public was invited into or perhaps in the case of the current iteration of the Lesbian Herstory Archive, a public place that has a private home space inside it. One of the main impetuses to collect is community, and within that idea of community there is the idea of who is inside the community and who is outside the community. These often are not static lines, instead shifting and redrawing themselves as the community changes or decides they want to change the definition of their community.[85]

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[83] Sheffield, *Documenting Rebellions*, 4.
[84] Manitoba Gay and Lesbian Archives. Mss 42, PC 292, TC 156. University of Manitoba Archives and Special collections. University of Manitoba. Winnipeg MB. https://nanna.lib.umanitoba.ca/manitoba-gay-and-lesbian-archives
[85] This idea is explored further in Gracen Brilmyer et al., "Reciprocal Archival Imaginaries: The Shifting Boundaries of 'Community' in Community Archives," *Archivaria* 88 (Fall 2019): 6–48.

Chapter Three: Building Partnerships

Introduction

This chapter looks at the ways in which institutional archives can work with community archives, records of communities, and communities themselves in a respectful and productive manner. I focus on how these relationships can be built with intersectionality in mind and build upon the previous discussions of what Queer archives are and how they develop, and Two-Spirit identity. This chapter begins with a discussion of what community versus institution archives are, before discussing the Two-Spirit Archives at the University of Winnipeg. Then, using Indigenous and community archival theories, provide guidance on what archives can do to build and maintain these relationships. I will also address the complicated issue of which communities these records belong to and therefore who to consult.

Community vs Institutional Archives

In this chapter I explore the relationships between institutions and communities. In order to understand and build on this relationship, the partners need to be defined. Community, in terms of community archives, can be particularly challenging to define and is always open to interpretation.

Defining Community Archives

Community archives are challenging to define under a simple set of criteria. Part of the issue of definition comes from the fact that each of the words it is made up of also has a complex and debated meaning.[1] With the increasing number of community archives[2] and the growing interest in them by archivists and other heritage professionals, understanding what people think community archives are and what they look like in reality is important. Community archives offer an increased sense of community, a connection to the community's history, as well as help shape the identity of the community.

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[1] Sarah Ramsden, "Defining 'Community' in Models of Community Archives: Navigating the Politics of Representation as Archival Professionals," 2016 This thesis offers a nuanced discussion of what community means in an archival context.

[2] Anne Gilliland and Andrew Flinn, "Community Archives: What Are We Really Talking About?," in *CIRN Prato Community Informatics Conference 2013*, 2013, 1–23, https://doi.org/978-0-9874652-1-4 Gilliland and Flinn point to the mid-1990s to early 2000s as the point where community archives really started taking off in the UK.

The Community Archives and Heritage Group, a group in the United Kingdom and Ireland, takes a very open view as to what makes a community archive, generally accepting that if a project says it is a community archive then it is. However, they do offer two broad categories of what is considered a community archive. The first is that "The subject-matter of the collection is a community of people. The classic example is a group of people who live in the same location, but there are 'communities of interest' as well, such as people who worked in a certain profession."[3] This is a broad definition that can include collections that are merely about a certain group of people with no involvement from the community the records describe. Particularly in the Canadian system of total archives, there are many collections where the subject matter is a community of people that at first glance, one would likely consider an institution archive such as church archives.

The Community Archives and Heritage Group's second category is that "The process of creating the collection has involved the community. Typically, this means that volunteers have played a key role, sometimes alongside professional archivists."[4] This second category is similarly broad and highlights one of the key issues of defining a community archive – what is meant by community. Under both of these definitions, many university, municipal, church, and national archives (archives that could also be categorized as institutional archives) might qualify depending on their collecting policies or staffing situation. Despite this, the Community Archives and Heritage Group seems to be suggesting that community archives are collections about a community that that same community is involved in overseeing.

In response to this definition on the Community Archives and Heritage Group's page defining community archives, there were several responses discussing community archives. One response by Max Boucher takes a more radical and specific view of what community archives are. He writes in part that:

> A community archive is an archive managed by a community organisation, that is, an organisation which is not-for-profit and non-governmental. Community organisations are expected to be independent of government and to challenge

[3] Jack Latimer, "What Is a Community Archive?," Community Archives and Heritage Group, 2016, http://www.communityarchives.org.uk/content/about/what-is-a-community-archive.
[4] Latimer "What Is a Community Archive.

> government. Community archives will differ from those sponsored by the state, which clearly will be promoting their own interests.[5]

Boucher's definition of community archives requires it to be managed by a community organization, explicitly excluding for-profit and governmental organizations from having community archives. Additionally, he emphasizes separation from such organizations and sees activism as one of the functions of a community archive. Even with such a definition, it is still not necessarily clear what constitutes a community archive. Do community groups that promote their own interests, do not challenge the state, and receive funding from the government count as institutional archives? Do large non-profit organizations that challenge state institutions in some ways count as community archives? These questions help to open up questions of where lines are drawn in terms of what is a community archive based on its activities, not just the content or the makeup of the group.

Andrew Flinn, Mary Stevens, and Elizabeth Shepard offer their own definition of what a community archive is. Flinn has written extensively on the subject of community archives and this definition reflects this long experience with community archives. They define community archives as:

> collections of material gathered primarily by members of a given community and over whose use community members exercise some level of control. This allows both for collections that are sustained entirely independent of mainstream heritage institutions and those that receive support in some form from such organisations. Indeed, we argue that the defining characteristic of community archives is the active participation of a community in documenting and making accessible the history of their particular group and/or locality *on their own terms*.[6]

The key to this definition is emphasized: "on their own terms." It highlights that what makes a community archive is that the community is not just involved in the process of archival work, but has some degree of power in the arrangement. This definition openly acknowledges that there may or may not be a relationship between the community and a mainstream heritage organization, and does not define a community archive by the absence of that relationship. While

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[5] Max Boucher, Comment on "What Is a Community Archive?," Community Archives and Heritage Group, October 18, 2006, http://www.communityarchives.org.uk/content/about/what-is-a-community-archive.
[6] Flinn, Stevens, and Shepherd, "Whose Memories, Whose Archives? Independent Community Archives, Autonomy and the Mainstream," 73.

a rather specific definition, it also offers a good deal of flexibility for organizations that have varying levels of control over their records, highlighting the idea that the community is actively involved in the archival work. This definition does leave open space for groups that some may see as institutional archives, such as church archives and other larger organizations, to be considered community archives, but this does not lessen the utility of this definition. It acknowledges what might be viewed as a community archive in one person or group's eyes may seem to be an institution from a different perspective.

Institutional Archives

Like community archives, the definition of institutional archives may seem clear and obvious at first glance, but likewise it does not have a singular definition. When thinking of institutional archives, the tautological definition is that they are archives of institutions. However simplistic, that definition still gives one a place to start when trying to define what we mean when we think of institutional archives. A starting point would be to look at who the archive is primarily designed to serve as outlined in its mandate: the broader public, the organization itself, or a specific community. Additionally, it is important to look at what the archive actually does rather than what it expresses in its mandate. In this way, archives can become nested and complicate the dichotomy. The Two-Spirit Archives is a good example of this nesting. The Archive, housed in an institutional archive at the University of Winnipeg, includes records collected by Albert McLeod, records of Two-Spirited People of Manitoba Inc., and an oral history project, which constitute an archive of a Two-Spirit community.[7]

Canada's system of total archives, codified in the 1970s, further complicates this definition, as the records within an archive are not just those created by the organization, but can include records for individuals as well so long as it falls within the collection mandate.[8] While total archives are seen as a "harbinger of more inclusive, integrated approaches to theory and practice" in archives, in practice it has served to perpetuate the colonial project.[9] This system of

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[7] "Albert McLeod Fonds," University of Winnipeg Archives, June 2018, https://main.lib.umanitoba.ca/albert-mcleod-fonds; "Two-Spirited People of Manitoba Inc. Fonds," University of Winnipeg Archives, February 25, 2020, https://main.lib.umanitoba.ca/two-spirited-people-of-manitoba-inc-fonds.

[8] For more information on total archives and their history in Canada see Laura Millar, "Discharging Our Debt: The Evolution of the Total Archive Concept in English Canada," *Archivaria* 46 (1998): 103–46; Terry Cook, "Total Archives," in *Encyclopedia of Archival Science*, ed. Luciana Duranti and Patricia C. Franks (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2015), 397–99.

[9] Cook, "Total Archives," 397.

total archives allows the archives to be seen as more diverse and inclusive than they are, obscuring the colonial roots of the concept.[10] Cook, however, sees a turn to a community paradigm of archiving as a way to create "a more holistic and vibrant 'total archive'" by including communities in the work of archiving by stepping back from ideas of control over the records.[11]

Complicating the Dichotomy

While there is no one agreed-upon definition of community archives or institutional archives, these definitions can form the basis for conversations surrounding how to engage with archives of, by, or for a community. These definitions create markers by which to compare and contrast different archives. Archives, going by these definitions, can exist along a spectrum from completely community based and fully independent of other institutional bodies, to an archive based in a mainstream heritage institution that has strong participation from the community, to mainstream, governmental, and organizational archives.

Jarrett Drake questions and challenges this division between community and other archives. He explains that "Prefixing 'community' or 'community-based' to archives implies that an archive could indeed exist otherwise; that perhaps there are archives independent of communities or not based in them." [12] Indeed, Flinn defines a community as a "group who define themselves on the basis of locality, culture, faith, background, or other shared identity or interest."[13] This means that nearly all archives could be considered community archives and in fact, it is important to see them that way. Drake's point that all archives are created and maintained by a community of some variety is important, as when these institutional archives are not considered archives of and by a community, they are positioned as the default and neutral. This viewpoint further others smaller or marginalized groups.

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[10] J. J. Ghaddar, "Total Archives for Land, Law and Sovereignty in Settler Canada," *Archival Science* 21, no. 1 (March 1, 2021): 76–77, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10502-020-09353-w.
[11] Terry Cook, "Evidence, Memory, Identity, and Community: Four Shifting Archival Paradigms," *Archival Science* 13, no. 2–3 (2013): 113, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10502-012-9180-7.
[12] Jarrett M. Drake, "Seismic Shifts: On Archival Fact and Fictions," *Sustainable Futures* (blog), August 20, 2018, https://medium.com/community-archives/seismic-shifts-on-archival-fact-and-fictions-6db4d5c655ae.
[13] Andrew Flinn, "Community Histories, Community Archives: Some Opportunities and Challenges," *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 28, no. 2 (2007): 153, https://doi.org/10.1080/00379810701611936.

When looking at the types of archives typically considered institutional archives, for example, government, university, corporate, and church archives, one of the unifying aspects of these archives is that they are supported financially or socially by the existing systems of power. If we approach the difference between institutional and community archives in terms of power the definition becomes both easier and more complex, but also more useful. For example, taking the case of the ArQuives, it can be considered both an institutional archive as well as a community archive. In terms of the wider population of Canada, it is not in a position of power and represents a minority of the population. However, within the Queer community, it is very much an institution of power that primarily represents those in power within the community (in this case, cis, gay, white, men) over other Queer folks. For those who belong to the community represented by the archive, it can be seen as a community archive. For those outside of the community that see themselves as having more power than the community group, such as a straight cis man, it can be seen as a community archive. However, for those outside of the community but in a position of less power, such as a Trans or Two-Spirit BIPOC person, it might be seen as an institutional archive.[14]

Benefits of Keeping Records within the Community

One of the main reasons for keeping archives of a community within a community is due to distrust of the 'mainstream' by those communities. Often community groups that desire to keep their records within their community have had negative interactions with institutions of power.[15] The creation and maintaining of the archive within the community allows the recordkeepers to focus on their priorities as they consider what holds archival value, including records that an archival institution may not think important enough for preservation. [16] An example of this is sexually explicit material which, on first look, "does not seem to serve any other purpose than to titillate and arouse its intended audience. But upon closer examination, it reveals an unexpected wealth of information that is all too often overlooked"[17] Barriault's article goes in-depth on the value of this material to the historical record and the reluctance of

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[14] Brown, "Archival Activism, Symbolic Annihilation, and the LGBTQ2+ Community Archive," 9.
[15] Cook, "Evidence, Memory, Identity, and Community: Four Shifting Archival Paradigms," 114.
[16] Stevens, Flinn, and Shepherd, "New Frameworks for Community Engagement in the Archive Sector: From Handing over to Handing On," 60.
[17] Marcel Barriault, "Hard to Dismiss: The Archival Value of Gay Male Erotica and Pornography," *Archivaria* 68, no. Fall (2009): 222.

mainstream institutions to include gay erotic material. One important point Barriault also raises is that for many years, even if an archive did have erotic holdings, access to them was strongly limited.[18]

Additionally, these community archives also create a space not devoted to the mainstream that also serves as a place for socializing and activism[19] and can create a more welcoming and friendlier environment. Danielle Cooper observes, from her time working in the BC Gay and Lesbian Archives, that "the environment does not feel hermetically sealed off like other institutional archives because when researchers work at Ron's home it is at his dining room table, and Ron's cat Buster is often sleeping nearby on the living room couch."[20] The control of the space, records, and environment are all important benefits of keeping records within a community.

The Two-Spirit Archives at the University of Winnipeg

Brief History of the Archives

> There was an intention to erase any history of Indigenous people in Canada through colonization, the residential school era, and I think queer Indigenous people were definitely not seen as something that the colonial state wanted […] So I think it's doubly important to include our history — our story — as we move forward as a society.[21]

The Albert McLeod fonds was donated to the University of Winnipeg Archives in 2011 with subsequent donations made in 2013 and 2018.[22] It was this initial donation of materials that started the Two-Spirit Archives, which has grown to include the records from the C2C: Two Spirit & Queer People of Colour Call to Conversation with LGBT and Allies conference and Two-Spirited People of Manitoba Inc. fonds which includes an oral history collection in 2018. In 2019 the University of Winnipeg Archives became stewards of some of Connie Merasty's records and a series of posters made by the University of Manitoba's College of Nursing and Two-Spirited People of Manitoba Inc. donated by Elaine Mordoch.[23] The Albert McLeod fonds'

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[18] Barriault, "Hard to Dismiss," 227–28.
[19] Cvetkovich, *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures*.
[20] Cooper, "House Proud: An Ethnography of the BC Gay and Lesbian Archives," 273.
[21] Albert McLeod in Shane Gibson, "University of Winnipeg Two-Spirit Archives a First in Canada," *CBC*, May 27, 2019, https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/manitoba/two-spirit-archives-university-winnipeg-1.5150759.
[22] "Albert McLeod Fonds."
[23] Brett Lougheed, "Two-Spirit Resurgence: Overcoming Archival Erasure of Two-Spirit People in North America," (paper presented at ARCHIVES*RECORDS 2020, August 8, 2020)

records primarily cover the late 80s and 90s and show his involvement with various gay and then Two-Spirit Indigenous organizations including "newsletters, journals, magazines, reports, newspaper clippings, correspondence, poetry, photographs, posters, art, textiles, books, videocassettes, and other ephemera that document the Indigenous Two-Spirit Movement in Manitoba and throughout North America."[24] The Two-Spirited People of Manitoba Inc. fonds contains primarily organizational records of Two-Spirited People of Manitoba Inc. and "other material related to the organization's mandate, such as press releases, photographs, and documents related to other Two-Spirit or Indigenous organizations." It also includes the oral history project undertaken in summer of 2018.[25] While the Albert McLeod fonds and the C2C fonds were donated under the traditional archival donation model where copyright was transferred to the University of Winnipeg Archives, the Two-Spirited People of Manitoba Inc. fonds, and Mordoch and Two-Spirited People of Manitoba Inc. fonds[26] are retained by them and "Rights have been transferred to the University [of Winnipeg] for stewardship purposes."[27] The Connie Merasty fonds is also under an Indigenous Stewardship agreement, meaning she retains ownership of the records and can remove them from the University of Winnipeg Archives if she chooses to. There are arrangements in place in the agreement to assign an alternate steward "should Connie no longer be capable of making that decision herself."[28] Merasty wished to retain the physical copies of the photographs stewarded by the collection so digital scans were taken instead[29]

My Involvement

In the summer of 2018, I had the opportunity to complete an internship at the University of Winnipeg Archives with a focus on working with the Two-Spirit Archive. The first step Brett Lougheed, the University Archivist, and the archives took was probably the most important step – consultation. I was able to attend a meeting between Lougheed and several members of

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[24] Brett Lougheed, "Cool Things in the Collection: The Two-Spirited Collection," *Manitoba History* 80 (2016), http://www.mhs.mb.ca/docs/mb_history/80/twospirited.shtml.
[25] "Two-Spirited People of Manitoba Inc. Fonds."
[26] "Mordoch and Two-Spirited People of Manitoba Inc. fonds," University of Winnipeg Archives, February 13, 2020, https://main.lib.umanitoba.ca/mordoch-and-two-spirited-people-of-manitoba-inc-fonds
[27] "Two-Spirited People of Manitoba Inc. Fonds."
[28] Brett Lougheed, message to author, October 31, 2022.
[29] "Connie Merasty," University of Winnipeg Archives, July 31, 2020, https://main.lib.umanitoba.ca/connie-merasty-fonds; Brett Lougheed, message to author, October 31, 2022.

Winnipeg's Two-Spirit community. During this meeting, he asked them if they wanted the archive to take steps to develop the existing fonds, if they would be comfortable with more Two-Spirit material being held at the University of Winnipeg Archives and if so, how to go about it. It was important to get that information and to know what they wanted from the archive. From there the archive could move forward knowing that the community has a voice in what we did, and they wanted an oral history project. Another important aspect of this meeting is that it was not held in the archives. While it was still on university property, it was at a campus dining establishment and the conversation was held over food. Not having this initial meeting in the room of the University of Winnipeg Archives or even a formal meeting room at the University allowed us to approach the matter from a more human perspective.

One of my first tasks was to get a better idea of what the state of the field was, and what other institutional archives that held the records of a community were doing to be responsible caretakers of the Archive. This research led me in many different directions: from the work in community archives Andrew Flinn is undertaking in the United Kingdom, to the field of museum studies and what successful community consultation looks like to research, to best practices with Indigenous records.

The oral history project undertaken in partnership between the Oral History Centre at the University of Winnipeg and the University of Winnipeg Archives was one of the main projects that began in the summer of 2018. The Oral History Centre provided training in how to do oral histories for several members of the Two-Spirit community, primarily for oral histories at the annual International Two-Spirit Gathering which would take place outside of Beausejour later that summer.[30] In addition to creating the oral histories, the oral history training was also a way to give back to the Two-Spirit community, providing them some of the tools to manage and create their own history in a western academic fashion to supplement their existing oral history traditions.

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[30] University of Winnipeg Archives and Special Collections, "Two-Spirited People of Manitoba Oral Histories," https://archives.uwinnipeg.ca/our-collections/two-spirited-people-of-manitoba-oral-histories.html.

Relationship Building Between Institutions and Communities

Despite the benefits of keeping an archive within a community, it is not always possible, or desirable, as seen in the archives' profiles in chapter two, to keep the archive within the community, and so those managing the collection decide to partner with an institution or donate their records to one. Respectability, legitimacy, better and more stable funding, the presence of specialized staff to care for the records as well as more resources to devote to description, preservation, and outreach are some reasons why archives may partner with or donate records to archival institutions.[31] Caswell, in her paper on working with records of human rights abuse, identifies five key principles from "community archives discourses: participation, shared stewardship, multiplicity, archival activism, and reflexivity."[32] When working with groups that have been and are still being mistreated by society, like Two-Spirit people, using these principles from community archiving can be helpful, giving institutional archives partnering with communities a frame of reference. Within these principles, there are some things individual archivists can do, but there are also many things that require shifts in the culture of an archives or further shifts in western archival culture to make possible.

Participation

Participation is one of the most important aspects of archives working with communities. This means involving the community in various aspects of archival functions. Alexandra Krensky's examination of how communities responded to various outreach strategies by archives found that interacting with the community was one of the most effective ways of building meaningful relationships. Krensky indicates that when archives held events that welcomed in members of the community,[33] these types of events explicitly told the community that *they* were welcome in the archive (not just their records), and allowed the members of the community to see the archivists caring for the collection as well as how their records were being treated. Similarly, Krensky found it to be effective relationship building when archivists attended events by the donor communities, as the events let the archivists learn more about the communities they

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[31] Susan Bednarczyk, "Strategic Plan: Needs Assessment The National Museum of LGBT History & Culture," (Velvet Foundation, 2010), 11.
[32] Caswell, "Toward a Survivor-Centered Approach to Records Documenting Human Rights Abuse: Lessons from Community Archives," 308.
[33] Alexandra J. Krensky, "Beyond the Acquisition: Building Meaningful Partnerships between Academic Archives and Under-Documented Donor Communities" (master's thesis, Chapel Hill, NC, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2011), 37, https://cdr.lib.unc.edu/record/uuid:16230985-3fc2-4ed1-8a83-27712050b88a.

were working with on the community's own terms.[34] While the events Krensky spoke of were formal conferences, the idea of archivists making the effort to reach out and go into invited spaces shows a willingness and care for the community beyond the records they can donate. This is a place where there needs to be systemic changes in archival culture. There may be plenty of individual archivists who wish to engage with the communities they work with in this way, but unless they are able to enact changes within their archives it becomes more difficult to participate with these communities.

Beyond this engagement with the communities, participation involves actively involving the community with archival functions, and appropriately compensating them for the labour they are providing.[35] Caswell advocates for a shift in perspective when working with communities from "all-knowing authority to expert among experts." This means working respectfully with the communities they are engaging with and by acknowledging their expertise on the subject matter. The community call of "nothing about us, without us," can be brought into archives by getting the community involved in various fashions such as "leadership roles, ongoing dialogs, representation on governing and advisory boards, involvement in appraisal, description, and access policies,"[36] Stevens, Flinn, and Shepherd make the point that community involvement in appraisal and description, in particular, can be helpful to the archives by allowing them access to information to create better collections. Involving the community can benefit all sides of the partnership.

Educating community members is also a strategy that Krensky's study found was successful. She found that the more potential donors knew about how archives work, and what steps are taken to preserve the records, the stronger the relationship between donor and archive.[37] However, to take this idea of education one step further, Stevens, Flinn, and Shepherd suggest providing advice to community groups. They argue that "one of the most useful services publicly-funded archives can offer community-based organisations is training in archive skills

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[34] Krensky, 38–39.
[35] Stevens, Flinn and Shepherd note that heritage organizations often fail to appropriately compensate community consultants as they would other consultants Stevens, Flinn, and Shepherd, "New Frameworks for Community Engagement in the Archive Sector: From Handing over to Handing On," 69–70.
[36] Michelle Caswell, "Toward a Survivor-Centered Approach to Records Documenting Human Rights Abuse: Lessons from Community Archives," *Archival Science* 14, no. 3–4 (2014): 311, 315.
[37] Krensky, "Beyond the Acquisition," 39.

and advice on matters such as preservation, digitisation, documentation, copyright and utilising collections to raise revenue"[38] This can be one of the ways that archives can give back and engage with the community, showing that they value it for more than just their records. This can help build trust and strong, long-lasting relationships. The Protocols for Native American Archival Material (PNAAM) recommends supporting Indigenous students and professionals in heritage fields. Lotsee Patterson, a contributor to PNAAM, recognizes that "it is much easier to teach someone library and archival skills than to try to teach them a culture"[39] However PNAAM also clearly states the importance of heritage professionals learning from Indigenous communities.[40] It is important for there to be a reciprocal relationship.

Participation and building relations is also a part of the decolonization process, according to Albert McLeod, and that work toward decolonization is particularly important for an archive like the Two-Spirit Archives at the University of Winnipeg. He explains that:

> Today, in terms of decolonizing, we have to step outside of our comfort zone, outside of our boxes and go into the community and engage that way. And so it's a learning process that is not going to be immediate, so we have to be patient and be clear about our intentions and that you know it's over time that we create this relationship and in many cases it's not a one-off, it's the beginning of a journey of learning and of sharing.[41]

McLeod highlights the time and effort that relationship building takes and the fact that it is not always going to be easy. In his view of relationship building, particularly relationship building that is also working toward decolonization, it is not enough just to show up to one event, or to engage just once. Relationship building is a process that requires patience. When working with a community group, especially one that is discriminated against and may have negative associations with archival institutions, trust will not be quickly or easily won. Archivists need to have that patience to keep engaging, to keep being clear and honest about their intentions, and to create that relationship step by step.

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[38] Stevens, Flinn, and Shepherd, "New Frameworks for Community Engagement in the Archive Sector: From Handing over to Handing On," 67.
[39] First Archivists Circle., "Protocols for Native American Archival Materials," 2007, 19, http://www2.nau.edu/libnap-p/protocols.html.
[40] First Archivists Circle., "Protocols for Native American Archival Materials," 19.
[41] Creative Manitoba, "Creative Manitoba Coaches: Albert McLeod, Indigenous Protocols in Art," YouTube video April 20, 2021, 3:06-3:33. https://youtu.be/N2CGHXU0FWI.

There are several ways that the University of Winnipeg is building relationships through participation. One important way the Two-Spirit community was enabled to participate was the creation of an advisory group for the Two-Spirit Archives consisting of members of the Two-Spirit community, a curator from the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, and the University of Winnipeg Archivist. This group "provides leadership and guidance in all aspects of the stewardship of the Archives and ensures that Two-Spirit people are central to preserving their history."[42] The presence of an advisory council is an important step to ensuring that there is an ongoing relationship between the archive and the Two-Spirit community. This sets up a place where the kind of reciprocal sharing of information as recommended in PNAAM can take place.

In addition, the University of Winnipeg Archives has made efforts to invite the community into the archive. During Pride Week in 2019, the Two-Spirit Archives held its official launch where the attendees were able to hear from Albert McLeod, Connie Merasty, and Brett Lougheed about the Archive as well as look at some of the records.[43] Additionally in January 2020, the archives hosted a group of students, again showcasing the Two-Spirit Archives and leading off with a talk by Albert McLeod.[44] Chris Eastman, a Queer Indigenous attendee, described the experience as "humbling" and emphasized the importance of the digitization work to make the material more accessible, pointing out that "location, availability and anonymity" were all barriers to access.[45] Archives can also benefit from holding such events when they gain attention from news media. In the 2019 event, the spread of information through the news resulted in people contacting the archive about potentially donating their material.[46] Making the collection accessible by inviting the community in and making effort to put portions of the collection online for increased accessibility show that the University of Winnipeg Archives wants the collection to be used by more than academic researchers.

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[42] Brett Lougheed, "Two-Spirit Archives: Resisting Erasure through 'Representational Belonging'" (paper presented at Indexing Resistance Symposium, Toronto, Ontario, June 24, 2022).
[43] Lougheed, "Two-Spirit Resurgence,"
[44] Museum Queeries, "Two-Spirit Archives: Conversation with Albert McLeod," January 28, 2020, http://museumqueeries.org/snapthoughts/two-spirit-archives-conversation-with-albert-mcleod/.
[45] Museum Queeries, "Two-Spirit Archives: Conversation with Albert McLeod,"
[46] Lougheed, "Two-Spirit Resurgence: Overcoming Archival Erasure of Two-Spirit People in North America,"

Stewardship, Ownership, Control and Custody

Discussions around who owns or possesses a body of records are important to consider when a community group enters into a partnership with an institutional archive, and can be approached from several directions. In the dominant western archival tradition "physical custody of records is transferred from an individual, organization, or agency, to a repository, which assumes both ownership and responsibility for the records' ongoing maintenance and use."[47] Jeannette Bastian provides an excellent overview of the western history of custody as an archival principle and its connection to questions of access.[48] This section will look at guidance on questions of ownership, stewardship, and custody from the perspective of Indigenous archival theory, The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), and from the field of community archives.

The importance of control over records is often seen in the need to use the records of archives for land use claims. An example of the impact on physical control of records can be seen in the example of the Vancouver Island Treaties. Frogner discusses how "settler authorities wilfully hid, sequestered, or strategically referenced archival evidence supporting Indigenous title."[49] The records in archives are not neutral, but even were they to be, archives and archivists are not. Due to the ways archives both control and produce knowledge, the government owning, controlling, and possessing the records allowed them the power to continue the status quo, making it even more difficult for Indigenous people to use the same records to assert their rights. The story of the Vancouver Island Treaties is one example of the importance of ensuring that Indigenous peoples have control and custody over their records as a path to justice in the present and in the future.

Indigenous Documentation

OCAP® (Ownership, Control, Access and Possession) is described as "a set of principles that reflect First Nation commitments to use and share information in a way that brings benefit to

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[47] Caswell, "Toward a Survivor-Centered Approach to Records Documenting Human Rights Abuse: Lessons from Community Archives," 311.
[48] Jeannette A. Bastian, "Taking Custody, Giving Access: A Postcustodial Role for a New Century," *Archivaria* 53, no. 1 (2004): 76–93.
[49] Raymond Frogner, "'Hang onto These Words': Indigenous Title and the Social Meanings of Archival Custody," in *Archives, Recordkeeping, and Social Justice*, ed. David A. Wallace et al. (New York: Routledge, 2020), 90, http://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/edit/10.4324/9781315567846/archives-recordkeeping-social-justice-david-wallace-wendy-duff-ren%C3%A9e-saucier-andrew-flinn.

the community while minimizing harm. It is also an expression of First Nation jurisdiction over information about the First Nation."[50] The ideas that knowledge and information should be for the community's benefit, and that Indigenous people should have jurisdiction over their own information, are incredibly important. This is particularly important for a community that has had control over their knowledge taken away by colonial powers, or who has had records made about them rather than by them or with them.

The PNAAM is a set of guidelines that outlines "best professional practices for culturally responsive care and use of American Indian archival material held by non-tribal organizations."[51] PNAAM was created by a group of nineteen heritage professionals, including archivists, representing fifteen Indigenous communities primarily from the United States with the goal to "inspire and foster mutual respect and reciprocity" [52] Importantly, it offers guidance not only on how collecting institutions should act toward Indigenous communities and their records, but it also provides advice to those Indigenous communities on how to interact with collecting institutes. Not only does this support their stated goal of mutual respect and reciprocity, but it is also important to give these communities tools to work with collecting institutions, so they can express the importance of adopting policies that protect and respect the records of and by their community. The first guideline is "Building Relationships of Mutual Respect," but relationship building, and respect are at the core of many of the others.[53] The relationships created by following this first guideline make the other guidelines easier to follow. PNAAM offers guidance for culturally sensitive material, including restricting access to certain materials and seeking guidance from the represented community on what should be restricted. Additionally, they acknowledge that collecting institutions should make accommodations for ritual or ceremony for the items.[54] Even when a collecting institute possesses or owns the material, PNAAM acknowledges the need for Indigenous communities to have some control over the records. Intellectual property issues are also addressed, reminding collecting institutions that "discussing property in Native American communities can be antagonistic from the perspective of

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[50] First Nations Information Governance Centre, *Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP): The Path to First Nations Information Governance*, 2014, 5.
[51] First Archivists Circle, "Protocols for Native American Archival Materials," 2.
[52] First Archivists Circle, "Protocols for Native American Archival Materials," 2-4.
[53] First Archivists Circle, "Protocols for Native American Archival Materials," 5-7.
[54] First Archivists Circle, "Protocols for Native American Archival Materials," 11.

community members" and that cultural material can be "in archives illegally or unethically."[55] PNAAM also discusses the repatriation of records and knowledge, either giving the records back to the community or having the collecting institution "retain them in a trust or under a co-custody agreement."[56] One of the main strengths of PNAAM as guidance for archives or other heritage institutions is that it offers many different suggestions of ways to work with Native American groups depending on the individual situations they are in.

The "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander protocols for libraries, archives and information services" put out by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library Information and Resource Network (ATSILIRN) is a document from Australia that serves as guidance for institutions holding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander materials.[57] The document primarily offers institutions advice on how to improve relationships with their Indigenous communities and how to make their spaces more welcoming to Indigenous guests and employees. One of the important points ATSILIRN makes is with regard to repatriation. Like PNAAM, ATSILIRN encourages archives and libraries to work with communities that request their materials be repatriated. Importantly, it also advises that these institutions should help "communities in planning, providing and maintaining knowledge centres for repatriated records."[58] This suggests that institutions have a responsibility to the records and the community they are repatriating them to beyond simply handing them over.

Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Calls to Action are designed to "redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Canadian reconciliation" and archives play a role in that process of reconciliation.[59] The TRC's Calls to Action speak specifically to archives in calls 69, 70, 77, and 78. In these calls to action, TRC urges the Library and Archives Canada and The Canadian Association of Archivists to implement the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) and the *United Nations*

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[55] First Archivists Circle, "Protocols for Native American Archival Materials," 15.
[56] First Archivists Circle, "Protocols for Native American Archival Materials," 17.
[57] Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library, Information and Resource Network Inc. (ATSILIRN), "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protocols for Libraries, Archives and Information Services," 2012, www.aiatsis.gov.au/atsilirn/protocols.php.
[58] ATSILIRN, 11.4.
[59] Truth and Reconciliation Commission, "Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Calls to Action," 2015, 1, https://ehprnh2mwo3.exactdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf.

Joinet-Orentlicher Principles (UNJOP) as part of the process of reconciliation.[60] Calls 77 and 78 specifically call for the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) "to identify and collect copies of all records relevant to the history and legacy of the residential school system."[61]

Articles 13 and 31 of UNDRIP are of particular importance to archivists as they involve Indigenous people's rights to their culture, history, and language. Article 13 states:

> Indigenous peoples have the right to revitalize, use, develop and transmit to future generations their histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literature. [62]

Building on this idea of Indigenous right to their "histories, languages, oral traditions, philosophies, writing systems and literature," article 31 states:

> Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge and traditional cultural expressions, as well as the manifestations of their sciences, technologies and cultures, including human and genetic resources, seeds, medicines, knowledge of the properties of fauna and flora, oral traditions, literatures, designs, sports and traditional games and visual and performing arts. They also have the right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions.[63]

UNDRIP is a particularly important document to consider for archivists as it was created through the hard work done by Indigenous activists to both draft the declaration and fight to have it accepted internationally. Frogner looks at some of the ways that UNDRIP can be used to further the aims of reconciliation through various archival functions. Starting with redescription, Frogner gives the example of Ida Halpern's recordings of predominantly *Kwakwaka'wakw* songs and the efforts made to update the descriptions in order to reflect the elders who shared the songs. This includes giving the songs *Kwakwaka'wakw* names rather than the English ones given by Halpern.[64]

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[60] Truth and Reconciliation Commission, calls 69-70.
[61] Truth and Reconciliation Commission, calls 77-78.
[62] United Nations Declaration, "United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples," *United Nations General Assembly*, no. Resolution 61/295 (2008): article 13, https://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf.
[63] United Nations Declaration, article 31.
[64] Raymond O. Frogner, "The Train from Dunvegan: Implementing the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) in Public Archives in Canada," *Archival Science* 22, no. 2 (2022): 224–26, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10502-021-09373-0.

As such, involving Indigenous people in current collections is an important way to help address this call to action. Frogner discusses ways of adjusting description and organization in order to reflect Indigenous knowledge, language, and the relationship between records.[65] Frogner additionally suggests "engag[ing] with communities to participate in the meaning and understanding of records, their unique privacy and access protocols applied by communities."[66] This would allow Indigenous groups to have more control over the access to the records which would allow for protecting their cultural heritage and traditional knowledge.[67]

While UNJOP does not speak specifically to Stewardship, Ownership, Control or Custody, it does speak to access, specifically access for the victims of human rights violations. Principle 15 includes the statement that "access to archives shall be facilitated in order to enable victims and their relatives to claim their rights."[68] While many of the previous documents I have looked at focus on records by Indigenous people, UNJOP, applied to the Canadian context, particularly the context of the TRC, focuses on records centred around a given community that document harm done against them. UNJOP emphasizes the importance of not only ensuring that victims and their relatives are able to access these records, but also that efforts should be made to prevent the "removal, destruction, concealment or falsification of archives."[69] It is important for Indigenous people to be able to use the archives to redress the harms done to them, their families, and their ancestors. The example of the Vancouver Island Treaties mentioned previously shows the importance of preserving records of the wrongs of history, properly documenting them, and guaranteeing that those affected by the records are ensured access to them.

Community Archives

Michelle Caswell dives into this topic as well, looking at the records of human rights violations and the rights of the survivors with regard to those records. Caswell argues:

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[65] Frogner, 227.
[66] Frogner, 227.
[67] Programs like Mukurtu, a system designed to allow some of these controls to be part of the system allowing for Traditional Knowledge labels and cultural protocols that can be used to define access. Mukurtu, "About," https://mukurtu.org/about/
[68] United Nations, Economic and Social Council. *Updated Set of Principles for the Protection and Promotion of Human Rights Through Action to Combat Impunity*, February 8, 2005, 11. https://undocs.org/E/CN.4/2005/102/Add.1.
[69] United Nations, Economic and Social Council, 11.

> that survivors should maintain control over the decision-making processes related to records documenting their abuse, regardless of the nature of the institution— intergovernmental, governmental, or nongovernmental—that maintains custody over such records.[70]

Her survivor-centered approach, like OCAP® and UNJOP, is about ensuring that those that are most affected by the records have the control over them – that being the subject of the abuse documented gives them the right over those records. Given the mistreatment that Queer, Two-Spirit, Indigenous people faced by institutions of power and the fact that many of those records are documented in archival institutions, a survivor or community-centered approach is reasonable to consider. Having a stake in the information in the records is also important to create an ongoing relationship. Joel Wurl, looking at ethnicity as a category of archives, emphasised that a shift to stewardship:

> is characterized by partnership and continuity of association between repository and originator. In a stewardship approach, archival material is viewed less as property and more as cultural asset, jointly held and invested in by the archive and the community of origin. Material may be gifted to a repository but with the expectation that in many respects, the relationship between donor and archive is just beginning[71]

Wurl emphasizes the partnership aspect of stewardship agreements. It is a living agreement that will grow and change with the people involved. Archives and archivists interested in working with communities for a stewardship agreement should be aware that the work is not done once the agreement is signed. This is where the advice given on building and maintaining those partnerships is key.

One of the major shifts that need to come with moving toward a stewardship model in archives is deciding to prioritize the needs and desires of that community over stakeholders in the institutions.[72] Archival institutions are often beholden to larger bodies of stakeholders, such as the institution they are a part of or the government bodies they are a part of. It is not easy for individual archivists or an individual archive within a larger network to make these kinds of large changes right away, but archives need to consider how much they can promise

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[70] Caswell, "Toward a Survivor-Centered Approach to Records Documenting Human Rights Abuse: Lessons from Community Archives," 308.
[71] Joel Wurl, "Ethnicity as Provenance: In Search of Values and Principles for Documenting the Immigrant Experience," *Archival Issues* 29, no. 1 (2005): 72.
[72] Caswell, "Toward a Survivor-Centered Approach," 316.

communities and what activism for them might look like in championing stewardship and custodial arrangements with community records.

The stewardship agreement in place for several collections in the Two-Spirit Archives means "ownership of the materials is retained by the original Indigenous steward." It also accounts for "the designation of an alternate steward should the original donor no longer be able to speak for the records."[73] The provision for designating an alternate steward is a particularly important aspect to the stewardship agreement, as it means that the University of Winnipeg Archives will continue to consult on the management of the records in their care, beyond the ability of the original donor to speak for them, rather than fully take control. Additionally, in the case of the Connie Merasty fonds, physical possession of the original photographs was maintained by Merasty, while the archive was able to have digital copies of the photographs to add to the collection. The work the University of Winnipeg Archives has done to ensure that the Indigenous owners or stewards of the donated material maintain control over the records is an important aspect of building a strong relationship between the archive and Two-Spirit communities.

Multiplicity

Multiplicity in Caswell's framework means having a variety of both perspectives and types of records.[74] In archives that have predominately housed records about a community or from only one perspective, offering a variety of other perspectives is important to create a well-rounded collection. Additionally, the variety of perspectives is vitally important even with records by the community, as there are often many different experiences and sub-communities that should be represented. In community archive projects, it is "not about replacing one metanarrative with another but smashing the notion that any community's past can be told with a singular story."[75] For example, class, ability, and location can be important dimensions of this when looking at Two-Spirit collections. Are all of the records in the collection depicting middle-class, abled, urban folks or does it represent a wider section of the community?

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[73] Lougheed, "Two-Spirit Resurgence."
[74] Caswell, "Toward a Survivor-Centered Approach," 313.
[75] Caswell, "Toward a Survivor-Centered Approach," 313.

Multiplicity of format is also important. This means collecting more than just textual records, or even a certain kind of textual record such as the official minutes and organizational data of community groups. As noted in chapters one and two, ephemera and oral traditions are important types of records to be included in Queer, Two-Spirit, and Indigenous collections.

The Two-Spirit Archives at the University of Winnipeg is, overall, a small collection but it includes a multiplicity of formats. While the collection contains plenty of what can be considered traditional archival records – for example the paper, textual and photographic records in the Albert McLeod fonds – the content of these records vary from the records of gatherings and other events to poetry. The collection also includes some ephemera including t-shirts, a piece of embroidery, a painting, ribbons, a painted rock,[76] a button, and an eagle feather.[77] The inclusion of oral histories is an important addition to the variety of records that are held in the Archive. At the moment, the archive does not represent a multiplicity of perspectives, though the variety has continued to grow since its beginnings and it still a relatively new archive. As the Two-Spirit Archives gains more attention and trust from various Two-Spirit communities, it is expected that the multiplicity of records will grow.

Archival Activism

Archives are not neutral despite early conceptions of the archivists as neutral custodians of the record.[78] In the west, "colonial recordkeeping was an indispensable instrument for these processes, pioneering new exploitative forms of management control for profitmaking while absenting the voices and lived experiences of the subjugated."[79] Activism in the archives can take on many forms: archiving the records of activism, being a resource for activists, or using their collections to promote social justice initiatives and advocating for change in the systems of archival recordkeeping. Krystal Payne discusses the concept of archival harm reduction in her

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[76] "Albert McLeod fonds."
[77] "Two-Spirited People of Manitoba Inc. fonds."
[78] Gilliland offers a detailed overview of some of the current debates surrounding archival neutrality and social justice Anne Gilliland, "Neutrality, Social Justice and the Obligations of Archival Education and Educators in the Twenty-First Century," *Archival Science* 11, no. 3 (November 1, 2011): 196–99, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10502-011-9147-0.
[79] David A. Wallace, "Defining the Relationship between Archives and Social Justice," in *Archives, Recordkeeping, and Social Justice*, ed. David A. Wallace et al. (New York: Routledge, 2020), 22–51, http://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/edit/10.4324/9781315567846/archives-recordkeeping-social-justice-david-wallace-wendy-duff-ren%C3%A9e-saucier-andrew-flinn.

thesis as a way to augment large structural decolonial efforts by addressing immediate harms.[80] This kind of harm reduction by settler archivists and archives should not be ignored while attempting to address broader social and structural changes

Archivists can act to promote social justice in several ways. On a small scale, an archivist writing description for materials of or about a community can do their research. By looking up information written by that community about themselves, they can learn in order to create a more comprehensive and accurate description that can highlight the community perspective, particularly for records about a community from positions of outsider power. This might look like adding a note in the description or finding aid that the records use a certain term that is not used or accepted within the community, and instead provide the term they do use.

On a broader scale, this activism might mean repatriating archival records or materials to the communities that they are from if that is something they desire. This is a much more challenging action for an archive to take without the support of its institution. As such, any meaningful large-scale acts of activism within the archives requires those larger systemic changes. Archivists can educate themselves on the benefits for the institution to work with communities in the long term, even if that might mean a short-term loss of records, or more work creating more complicated custody or stewardship agreements. For example, when working with an institution reluctant to engage in decolonization to their detriment, archivists can use existing archival functions to help make their arguments. When looking at materials, archivists can see if the materials still meet their collection mandate, or if there might be another institution that would be a better fit.[81] For example, an archive might hold records of Indigenous people's mistreatment by colonial institutions. A reappraisal might find that these records might not fit the existing collection mandate, and the archive might offer them to an archive that specializes in those kinds of records. The institution would now have more space and resources to invest in

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[80] Krystal Payne, "Archival Harm Reduction: Utilizing Public Health Harm Reduction Concepts for Reconciliatory Power Shifts in Archives" (master's thesis, Winnipeg, University of Manitoba/University of Winnipeg, 2021), 9, https://mspace.lib.umanitoba.ca/xmlui/handle/1993/35762.

[81] Taylor R. Genovese, "Decolonizing Archival Methodology: Combating Hegemony and Moving towards a Collaborative Archival Environment," *AlterNative: An International Journal of Indigenous Peoples* 12, no. 1 (March 1, 2016): 38–39, https://doi.org/10.20507/AlterNative.2016.12.1.3; Randall C. Jimerson, "Deciding What to Save," *OCLC Systems & Services: International Digital Library Perspectives* 19, no. 4 (January 1, 2003): 139, https://doi.org/10.1108/10650750310508108.

materials more integral to their collection mandate. When working with Indigenous materials, Frogner's suggestions on implementing UNDRIP principles are also good places for the activist archivist to start and develop active support for Indigenous rights over their knowledge and records.[82]

Whether on a small or large scale, archivists and archives working with Two-Spirit collections should start their activism with awareness and from there can figure out what they can do best to help care for these collections, whether that consists of making more accurate descriptions, reaching out to begin partnerships, creating stewardship agreements, or even giving or returning ownership of the records to that community.

One important project for archival activism Lougheed was involved in was adapting the Library of Congress Subject Headings used in MAIN – the Manitoba Archival Information Network – which is a central repository for descriptions of archival material in the province. The past subject headings used outdated and inaccurate terms such as "Indian," so part of the project undertaken by this working group was to consult with other subject heading projects and Indigenous groups in Manitoba to identify places to implement changes and what those changes should be.[83] This project not only updates the language used in the subject headings to be more accurate and appropriate, it also makes it easier for people to find records by and about specific Indigenous peoples by adjusting the structure. Additionally, this project can be used as an example to other archives or libraries who want to make searching their collections easier.[84] The stewardship agreements discussed previously are another good example of the work Lougheed and the University of Winnipeg Archives to support Indigenous rights over their own stories.

The promotion of the Two-Spirit Archives by the University of Winnipeg Archives is another aspect of archival activism. Lougheed has stated the importance of "amplify[ing] the voices of Two-Spirit people by making these records widely available online when appropriate"[85] While this is obviously of benefit to the University of Winnipeg Archives to have

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[82] Frogner, "The Train from Dunvegan," 227–34.
[83] Christine Bone & Brett Lougheed, "Library of Congress Subject Headings Related to Indigenous Peoples: Changing LCSH for Use in a Canadian Archival Context," *Cataloging & Classification Quarterly*, 56 no. 1, (2018): 85-86, https://doi.org/10.1080/01639374.2017.1382641.
[84] Bone & Lougheed, "Library of Congress Subject Headings Related to Indigenous Peoples," 88, 93-94.
[85] Lougheed, "Two-Spirit Resurgence."

one of their collections be well known and well used, the benefit to Two-Spirit people of having information created by them reach a wider audience, particularly in a space where most of the records are about them from a colonial lens, is also clear. Lougheed sees the development of the Two-Spirit Archive, done with the idea of reconciliation in mind, as a way to "assist and contribute to the resurgence of this community and the re-assumption of their rightful place of inclusion, equality, respect, and reverence in Canadian society."[86]

Reflexivity

Reflecting on one's work and practice is an important part of growing and developing one's skills. However, when working with community collections reflexivity is particularly important. Caswell includes "the positionality of the practitioner, his or her shifting relationship to the community where memory work is located, and the everchanging political, social, and professional context of archival labor" as part of being a reflexive archivist and reflexive archive.[87] This means archivists thinking about what they are doing in the course of their work, why and how the systems of power they are a part of impact their work for better, worse, or even neutrally.

Elspeth Brown discusses the role of reflexivity in archives by looking at the ArQuives efforts to become more inclusive. She explains that "Today, the ArQuives sees itself as an explicitly anti-racist, trans-positive, and -inclusive archive, even though fulfilling this promise is always a work in progress."[88] Becoming inclusive is always going to be a process that has no end, as there will always be people that are less represented. Part of the humility necessary to make partnerships with communities work is to know that the process will always be ongoing and will never be enough. Knowing that goal posts will keep on moving can feel discouraging if providing inclusive and proper representation is seen as a goal that can be obtained rather than a process. There are many ways that archivists can work to further those goals, but a new one will always appear. As such, it can be helpful to think beyond the concept of an 'end goal' and focus on the process to shift the focus to better engaging with communities.

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[86] Lougheed, "Two-Spirit Resurgence."
[87] Caswell, "Toward a Survivor-Centered Approach to Records Documenting Human Rights Abuse: Lessons from Community Archives," 314.
[88] Brown, "Archival Activism, Symbolic Annihilation, and the LGBTQ2+ Community Archive," 26.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to judge reflexivity in a person or archive as it is an internal act of self awareness. One visible example of reflexivity with regards to the care of the Two-Spirit Archives is seen in Lougheed's papers. In his presented papers, Lougheed begins by positioning himself and the institution of western archives, acknowledging the power in those positions. Lougheed in particular reflects on the way appraisal decisions made to support systems of power have relegated Two-Spirit and other Indigenous people to primarily be subjects of records.[89] He also talks about his responsibility, as a member of communities that have and continue to perpetuate harm to Two-Spirit and Indigenous groups, to redress some of the harms. He sees the work of developing the Two-Spirit Archives and promoting Two-Spirit voices as part of what he can do.[90] It is important here that reflexivity is tied to action. Without action – when action can be taken – reflexivity does not support the development of relationships between archives and communities.

Whose Community?

One additional aspect that is important to consider is the question of who to consult and what an individual's community is when building partnerships. Ideally, the acquisition or stewardship process would involve the creator or creators of the records in order to provide context for the records that involve a person's specific understanding of themselves. However, this is certainly not always possible. In that case, archivists should pay attention to the connection between the record creator and those who are assisting in providing context. This is a particularly poignant consideration when working with urban Two-Spirit people who may not have a strong connection to their home communities, and instead be building new urban communities and traditions.

Sarah Story examines this issue when discussing the creation of a letter of understanding to be used with Indigenous records donated to archives at the University of Manitoba. During the process, the question of "what happens when the rights of individual urban Indigenous organizations conflict with the rights of the wider Indigenous community" was raised.[91] What

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[89] Lougheed, "Two-Spirit Archives: Resisting Erasure through 'Representational Belonging'"
[90] Lougheed, "Two-Spirit Archives: Resisting Erasure through 'Representational Belonging'"
[91] Sarah Story, "Offering Our Gifts, Partnering for Change: Decolonizing Experimentation in Winnipeg-Based Settler Archives" (master's thesis, Winnipeg, MB, University of Manitoba/University of Winnipeg, 2017), 167, https://mspace.lib.umanitoba.ca/xmlui/handle/1993/32497.

should and should not be shared (or to what degree it should be shared) is something that needs to be carefully considered. Who should be consulted for these urban communities was a big question that needed to be addressed. Story points to the fact that much of the existing guidance says to consult the nation in question, or to work with tribal leaders, but that guidance may not always be applicable as it requires there to be "distinct cultural communities with their own defined leadership structures with a leadership that exists with authority to act on behalf of a group or collective."[92] It is not a situation that has one solution that archivists can simply follow, instead requiring a close understanding of the communities involved, and a willingness to do the hard work necessary to do right by the community.

Conclusion

Partnerships between institutions and community archives can be as complex as defining them, but an important part of building these partnerships is acknowledging the power dynamics in place between community and institution. This chapter served to look at some of the ways that institutions can look at what is being done in Indigenous, Queer, and community archives and try to create more productive and respectful partnerships.

Archives need to think of ways that they can give back to the communities they are partnering with and take on a more active, activist role. Archives that want to do more than just house the records of Two-Spirit people need to engage with them in a way that can often feel uncomfortable or unfamiliar. In the current archival landscape, it is necessary to justify decisions to engage in activism and to create more equitable agreements with groups as beneficial to the archives, but even taking small steps to show respect to the communities they are working with is a step in the right direction and helps build a culture where further steps can be taken.

Concepts of stewardship, ownership, control, and custody are perhaps the most important – but also the most challenging -- for individual archives and archivists to engage with, despite the collection of literature supporting leaving ownership and control in the hands of Indigenous people. This is where the true work of decolonization in archives needs to take place. Archives need to take steps to give control back to the Indigenous populations they are working with to

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[92] Story, "Offering Our Gifts, Partnering for Change," 170–71.

create a stronger and more respectful relationship with them and to begin to redress the harms of the past.

The work done by the University of Winnipeg Archives shows some ways that archives can effectively engage with principles of participation; stewardship, ownership, control, and custody; multiplicity; archival activism and reflexivity. The Two-Spirit Archives is still relatively young and there is room for it to grow and continue to build relationships. At the moment it shows a solid foundation to build upon, with its advisory group as one of the most important steps taken by the University of Winnipeg Archives. The advisory group puts some members of the community in direct contact with the University of Winnipeg Archives and is likely to be the driving force behind further changes and engagement with the larger Two-Spirit community. It will be interesting to see the way the Two-Spirit Archives will continue to grow and if it will influence the University of Winnipeg Archives as a whole.

Conclusion

The preservation of Two-Spirit social memory in records by mainstream archival institutions is not a simple task, nor one that should be undertaken without serious consideration of the implications of doing so, and the time and effort it will take to do it right. The harms that archival institutions have helped to perpetuate throughout the centuries are not possible to erase, but partnerships for the preservation and promotion of Two-Spirit archives are one way to work toward reconciliation. The actions on the part of archives can be simplified to acting with respect toward the Two-Spirit community and being willing to secede or share power over the records. Following through on these ideas is not always easy, nor is it clear the best ways to do so. There is not one right way to create these partnerships, as each community group will have their own concerns, goals, and experiences with archival institutions or the institutions they are housed within.

In chapter one, I looked at what some members of the community have said about themselves, their identity, and how being Two-Spirit intersects with many other aspects of their identities. It is important to listen to how Two-Spirit people see themselves and for outsider archivists to understand that for many people, being Two-Spirit is very individual, with each person constructing the specifics of their identity in conversation with their home communities, their land, and their beliefs. From this understanding, it is important for archivists to listen and learn about the communities of people, and indeed the individual person whose records they are keeping.

In chapter two, the histories of Queer archives showed the strengths and challenges of building communities and keeping the records of them. Knowing what brings communities together to combat the absence of themselves in the records helps to show what institutions need to offer communities when trying to build partnerships. I also highlighted some of the barriers that institutions can see in trying to collect that material. The ideas of community, social memory, and identity construction are important concepts to remember when working with Two-Spirit materials as these are some of the main factors that lead people to collect and to value those collections. This history of Queer archives also shows how important it is to keep the multi-faceted nature of communities in mind. It is not enough just to highlight the voices of one aspect of a community, but it is necessary to look to members of the community that are

marginalized in other ways as well. For example, with Queer records, recognizing non-white members of the community and prioritizing their inclusion in the collection is important.

In chapter three, the power relationships between community and institutional archives was placed into conversation with Two-Spirit archives. This chapter looked at existing literature in Indigenous and community archival theory to propose ways in which institutions can work with Two-Spirit records and communities in order to foster good partnerships, using the Two-Spirit Archives at the University of Winnipeg as a case study. In this chapter I emphasized the need for active engagement with the community, and to strive for justice. While there are many things that need to be done on an institutional and societal level, I also offered some smaller suggestions that individual archives and archivists can use to help move their institutions toward more equal arrangements with Two-Spirit communities.

Going into this research, I did not feel like I was the right person to speak on how best to build these partnerships to care for Two-Spirit records, but I kept being reminded that it was work that needed to be done. I hope that this work will make it easier for the right people to continue to build new and better practices for effective engagement and to do this kind of archival work. But if not, I hope this will make it easier for the next 'not the right person.' Creating research – or community partnerships – is an ongoing process where learning as much as possible and entering in with an open mind and good faith are vital to success. Sometimes just trying one's best is not good enough, but those moments are tools to continue to learn and grow. My findings did not lead to simple, one size fits all approaches and strategies, so mistakes and failures will be part of the process. I came to the conclusion that it was better to try my best to do right by Two-Spirit communities with this research than to not try, and that decision is supported by the conclusions of this thesis. Nothing will change for the better if people are too afraid of making a mistake, or of not being the right person to do the work.

The next steps are to put these ideas into action and see what needs to be done in order to build relationships between Two-Spirit and other marginalized groups. Much of the work in this thesis is speculative, looking at what has been done and what Indigenous leaders, activist archivists, and communities have called for, and trying to see ways to bring these ideas into reality. At the moment there are large systemic barriers existing in the western archival traditions that prevent full decolonization of records, however the next steps are to find ways to move more

in that direction. Stewardship agreements and actively involving the community are good first steps, but as we as an archival community start to take those steps the landscape will begin to change.

More research and study will need to be done as these kinds of agreements and partnerships continue to develop. What do they look like ten, twenty years after they begin? Are they still in place? Has the partnership gotten stronger or weaker? Does the archive still hold those records? As the efforts toward decolonization continue through several avenues, archivists will need to consider how to adapt their existing strategies, to learn and develop new ways of working with and thinking about their collections. As was seen when looking at the Queer archives in chapter two, the needs of the community can change as their situations change, and as the community itself changes.

As we move forward in this research, we need to remain open to new knowledges and ways of seeing our collections and the ways that they have developed. Respect for the communities that we work with, and an understanding that they are experts in their own existence are vitally important. Creating partnerships where each side has something valuable to offer the other is needed to create partnerships that last.

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