Decolonizing Provenance: An Examination of Types of Provenance and their Role

in Archiving Indigenous Records in Canada

by

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<u>Abstract</u>

The theory of provenance is the foundation for arranging and describing records in archives. In the digital age, provenance has become even more integral and new concepts that create more complex understandings of provenance have been developed. Alongside the development of new concepts and re-evaluation of traditional theories, some new challenges and opportunities have arisen. Types of provenance have been introduced into archival theory in recent years, helping to clarify what provenance is and encompass the greatest amount of contextual knowledge possible. The theory of provenance affects many areas of archiving including but not limited to Indigenous archival practices, archival standards, and descriptive systems. The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation archives hold a multitude of records that demonstrate some of these developments in provenance. This thesis examines the varying types of provenance and how they are applied to the Canadian archiving context through archival standards such as Rules for Archival Description, Records in Contexts-Conceptual Model, and the International Council of Archives suite of standards. I will explore the intersection of archival provenance and Indigenous memory keeping, as well as the application of provenancial theory to new technologies such as linked data and multi-relational descriptive systems.

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Finally, my profuse thanks to my family for the love and support that you have provided me throughout both of my degrees; without you I would not be here today. To my parents and brothers, thank you for putting up with me all of these years and supporting my ambitions.

<u>Dedication</u>

To my dear Grandmother, Ethelwyn Cowan, I love you. Your ferocity and strength are my inspiration.

To my parents, Janalee and Scott Cowan, you are my encouragement and strength. Without your unwavering love support, I would not be who I am today. I love you, and I owe you everything.

Table of Contents

List of Abbreviations

AACR2	Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules
AFN	Assembly of First Nations
APPM	Archives, Personal Papers, and Manuscripts
CEP	Common Experience Payment
CUSTARD	Canadian US Taskforce on Archival Description
DACS	Describing Archival Description: A Content Standard
EGAD	Experts Group on Archival Description
IAP	Independent Assessment Program
ICA	International Council on Archives
IRSSA	Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement
ISAAR(CPF)	International Standard Archival Authority records for Corporate Bodies, Persons and Families
ISAD (G)	General International Standard Archival Description
ISBD(G)	General International Standard Bibliographic Description
ISDF	International Standard for Describing Functions
ISDIAH	International Standard for Describing Institutions with Archival Holdings
LAC	Library and Archives Canada
MAD	Manual for Archival Description
MAIN	Manitoba Archival Information Network
MARC-AMC	Machine Readable Catalogue Archives and Manuscripts Control
NCTR	National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation
PHAID	Preserving the History of Aboriginal Institutional Development
RAD	Rules for Archival Description
RCAP	Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples
RDF	Resource Description Framework
RiC-CM	Records in Contexts-Conceptual Model
RiC-O	Records in Contexts-Ontology
SAA	Society of American Archivists
SAIN	Saskatchewan Archival Information Network
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
URI	Uniform Resource Identifier

Introduction

As a Canadian with a widely varying heritage, I am proud to embrace the many facets of the myriad of cultures from which my ancestors came. The topic of provenance is of particular interest to me because of my interest in my heritage and culture. I have Irish danced, cooked Yorkshire pudding, listened to bagpipes, and heard stories of my relatives' journeys from other countries. Missing from my mixed bag of culture is the Metis part of my history. I grew up knowing that I had Cree ancestry, but my Grandfather, through whom I can claim Metis heritage, never once spoke to me directly about it. As an adult, I have learned that some of his daily practices were innately Metis, and I have often wondered what it might have been like if he had not been embarrassed by his heritage. Research and writing for my thesis is just a piece of what will be a lifelong process to understand what it means to me to be Metis in Canada.

Canadians have been viewing history through colonial lenses for far too long. The history of the Indian residential school system should no longer be a one-sided narrative; the Indigenous voice should be made audible. The colonial narrative of residential schools has obscured the Indigenous narrative, and is indicative of how most of Canadian history has been learned and understood. As a physical place for history to take form, archives have an influential role in forming historical narratives. Archivists make choices from appraisal to description and preservation that affect the record. It was once thought that archivists should try to remain neutral and objective, because records are considered raw data evidence. However, there has been a shift in recent years led by people like Terry Cook, Tom Nesmith, and Chris Hurley, who want archivists to understand that all aspects of their work affect the records. The acceptance of the archivist's influence over

records is part of the greater acceptance of advocating for clearer description of the

provenance of records. Understanding provenance is important because it forms the

context of the creation of a record, and if context is misunderstood, obscured, or

misrepresented, the understanding of the record itself will be limited, or worse, distorted.

Provenance is the contextual knowledge that accompanies a record. Provenance is

inclusive of social contexts, technical, interpretive, and physical contexts just to name a

few. Provenance is complex and fluid, and plays an important role in understanding

records.[1]

If provenance can be made clearer, then records of an Indigenous nature or

pertaining to Indigenous experiences can be better understood.[2] In this way, archives can

contribute to the process of reconciliation and decolonization in Canada. The National

Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) is the archive for the Truth and

Reconciliation Commission (TRC), and has accumulated a massive body of records

pertaining to residential schools. The mandate of the NCTR is to collect records of

residential schools in order to provide an Indigenous narrative to counter the colonial

narrative. It is part of a national movement to work towards reconciliation of Indigenous

and non-Indigenous people in Canada. The NCTR is an archive that houses records of an

Indigenous nature that exemplify the complex nature of provenance. Residential school

records are multifaceted and complex, physically housed in many different places across

Canada, created by various organizations and institutions that operated or worked with

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[1] These definitions are mine, informed by the research for this thesis.

[2] For the purpose of this thesis I loosely define 'Indigenous records' and 'records of an Indigenous nature' to mean any records related to, about or created by Indigenous people or which contain Indigenous knowledge. 'Indigenous Archives' is a similarly broad definition that the archive is maintained by Indigenous people or the archive holds records pertaining to Indigenous people and knowledge.

residential schools. In many cases this means that the records of the NCTR come from a colonial perspective, and the agency of the Indigenous person involved is rarely apparent. These records were brought together through the collecting work of the TRC and are digitized copies of the original records.[3] The relationships between the records is complicated and very often obscured because the complexity of record relationships cannot be understood within the confines of the fonds system, the predominant form of archival representation in Canada, which only allows limited context to be relayed.

Canada's *Rules for Archival Description* (RAD) have been updated in an attempt to accommodate multiple provenance types, but the rules are still limited. In order to better accommodate multiple provenances and relationships of records*, Records in Context: A Conceptual Model* (RiC-CM) was drafted by the Experts Group on Archival Description (EGAD) of the International Council of Archives (ICA). RiC-CM better accommodates multiple provenances and potential multi-relational archival systems. It represents records as having multiple contexts, relationships, configurations and connections.

In providing insight into this complex issue, chapter one provides a backdrop for the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation by giving a history of residential schools in Canada. This brief history leads into a history of the TRC as the foundation for the creation of the NCTR. Chapter two provides background information about traditional archival theory and a context for understanding the principle of provenance, the foundation on which most archival theory is based. Chapter two also explores the impact

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[3] The TRC also created an archive of student experience by collecting survivor testimony through recordings. The focus of this thesis, however, is the challenging provenance of the records that the TRC received from the federal government and churches.

that provenancial theory has had on archival standards in Canada, and how it will be an important part of decolonizing archives. It also explores the opportunities that technology can offer to Indigenous archiving practices. Chapter three discusses traditional archival ideas of memory keeping, followed by Indigenous concepts of memory keeping and ways of knowing. Finally, chapter three explores how recent developments in provenancial theory can aid archives in improving their representations of Indigenous records.

Chapter One: A Background for the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation

Introduction

The history of Canada has been told largely as the story of colonization, a story which began when settlers discovered a land they represented as void of habitation. Canada has often been described from a Eurocentric point of view, with stories of pioneers struggling to survive and create places for themselves in an uninhabited and savage landscape. However, Canada was not void of habitation. There was a rich and vast history of culture and tradition that existed amongst Indigenous peoples who lived here. In the same way that the telling of Canadian history has previously ignored these rich cultures and traditions, it has also neglected to remember the tragic results of Canadian colonization, such as the history of the Indian residential school system.[4]

Residential schools were run by churches in partnership with the Canadian government. Indigenous children were sent to learn European social practices and be assimilated into the settler population, with atrocious results. In recent years, Canadian history has become more inclusive, as historians such as J.R. Miller and John Milloy authored monographs that shed light on the history of residential schools. Indigenous authors such as Mary Jane McCallum, Crystal Fraser, and Zoe Todd are contributing significant and important social history analysis focusing on the experiences of Indigenous people in Canada, including the impact of colonialism and residential

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[4] James W. ST.G Walker, "The Indian in Canadian Historical Writing", *Historical Papers*, (1971): 21-51.

schools.[5] These new perspectives are important in the process of decolonization and reconciliation. In the same way that academic historians are participating in decolonization, archivists also must do their part to contribute Indigenous perspectives through archival practices. In addition to academic attention to this tragic history, survivors and families of survivors have come forward and demanded justice, apology, and remembrance.

The NCTR was created as part of the mandate of the Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement (IRSSA), which was signed in 2006. The IRSSA was the result of a long struggle for recognition and reparation for the centuries of cultural genocide and emotional and physical trauma inflicted upon Indigenous people in Canada. In 2014, the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation opened its doors to the public as the permanent archive for all records collected and created by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. The TRC was mandated to collect and receive records relating to the experience of the Indigenous residential schools, and reconciliation for the survivors and their families.[6] The NCTR archives are essential to the process of reconciliation and are part of the fulfillment of Schedule N of IRSSA.[7] The purpose of the NCTR makes it a unique archive; it holds complex records that exemplify complex types of provenance. The provenance of the records at the NCTR presents challenges for archivists when trying to apply archival theory and practice to the arrangement and description of those records. The uniqueness of the records, including the circumstances in which they were

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[5] Crystal Fraser and Zoe Todd. "Decolonial Sensibilities: Indigenous Research and Engaging with Archives in Contemporary Colonial Canada." *Internationale* (February 15, 2016); Mary Jane McCallum, *Indigenous Women, Work and History 1940-1980*, (2014).

[6] "Schedule N, Indian Residential Schools Settlement," Indian Residential Schools Settlement - Official Court Website, accessed August 2, 2017, http://www.residentialschoolsettlement.ca/english.html.

[7] "Schedule N, Indian Residential Schools Settlement."

originally created, how they were collected by the TRC, and their digital nature, offer

opportunities for archivists to think outside the box and reimagine archival practices and

theory.

This chapter provides a brief history of the residential schools and an overview of

the legal proceedings that led to the creation of the TRC, and subsequently the NCTR. An

examination of the TRC and its various processes will provide a sense of what types of

records were handled and created, and will suggest that the NCTR is a natural extension

of the TRC. This chapter will explore the creation of the NCTR and the records which it

has been charged with preserving. The types of records and the challenges and

opportunities that they present to the theory and practice of provenance will also be

introduced.

History of the Indian Residential Schools System

Residential schools have left a deep and lasting scar on the landscape of Canadian

history. The schools were the source of the loss of language, culture, spirituality and in

many cases, life, for Indigenous people in Canada.[8] The residential schools were

officially created in 1883 by the Indian Affairs minister at the time, John A. Macdonald.[9]

Prior to 1883 and as early as the 1620s there had been schools run by churches and

missionaries that took in Indigenous children with the intention to convert them to

Christianity and indoctrinate them into European culture.[10] The goal of the residential

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[8] Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *They Came for the Children* (Winnipeg: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2012), 1.

[9] Ibid., 5.

[10] J.R. Miller, *Shingwauk's Visions: A History of Native Residential Schools* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 39.

schools was to assimilate the Indigenous people into Canadian society by beginning with the children.[11] It was assumed that Indigenous people were ignorant, unenlightened, lazy, and savage.[12] There existed a presumption that the white western European way of life, which placed Christianity at its centre, was the correct and only way for people to be considered civilized. There was no room for the possibility that another culture could be equal, and yet operate entirely differently from western European practices. Indigenous people were depicted as helpless, introducing a rhetoric that described Indigenous people as childlike and in need of care and control. Settler society saw assimilating children as the best way to wipe out this culture. Therefore, under the guise of morality, the assimilation process began by targeting children; they were taken into schools and expected to learn the western European way of life.[13] The schools were often situated away from reserves, which was deliberate in order to prevent Indigenous children from being affected or influenced by their families. To colonial authorities, educating children was seen to be the best possible way forward, while their parents were perceived as "not just irredeemable; they were also a [considered] hindrance to the civilizing process".[14]

Residential schools were about controlling and regulating Indigenous people, consistent with other policies of the Department of Indian Affairs. The 1868 *Act providing for the organisation of the Department of the Secretary of State of Canada, and for the management of Indian and Ordnance Lands* states that "The Secretary of State shall be the Superintendent General of Indian affairs, and shall as such have the control

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[11] John S. Milloy, *A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System, 1879-1986* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1999), 23.
[12] Milloy, *A National Crime,* 25.
[13] Milloy, *A National Crime*, 23.
[14] Ibid., 26.

and management of the lands and property of the Indians in Canada".[15] The new control

that the 1868 statute demonstrated stemmed from the new powers that the Canadian

government could wield with the advent of the 1867 BNA Act. The government

employed the Roman Catholics, Anglicans, Presbyterians, and United Church

denominations to run the schools. Education had been promised in many treaties;

unfortunately, the expectations for education were very different between settler

governments and Indigenous treaty makers. Indigenous people saw western European

education as a source of the settler's power and wanted to be able to access it.[16]

Contrastingly, the Canadian government sought to use education to re-socialize and

assimilate Indigenous people. Instead of providing a proper education and teaching

Indigenous children the European ideas and practices in collaboration with Indigenous

methods and ways of knowing, it became a place to suppress Indigenous ways of

knowing and enforce western European ways of knowing. The schools, it must be noted,

were never meant to provide formal education—they were meant to teach certain

practical skills that would enable Indigenous children to enter settler society at the

bottom. The intentions behind the schools were not honourable, even if they were earnest.

Residential schools are the source of many problems that persist among

Indigenous people in Canada today. In order to suppress Indigenous culture and

indoctrinate the children, they were removed from their homes, forbidden to speak their

own languages and mistreated at the schools. The most common trauma students

experienced was that of neglect. The TRC's *They Came for the Children* notes that, at

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[15] *They Came for the Children*, 2. And *An Act providing for the organisation of the Department of the Secretary of State of Canada, and for the management of Indian and Ordnance Lands.* 1868, Government of Canada Indian Affairs.
[16] Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision,* 6.

first, children who returned home traumatized could be treated by the community and given the help and support they needed. However, as time progressed, those who knew Indigenous traditions and cultures passed away and trauma went untreated. Generations then grew up with parents who were also traumatized and were unable to care for their children or provide the necessary support, thus perpetuating the cycle of trauma. Survivors today face "joblessness, poverty, family violence, drug and alcohol abuse, family breakdown, sexual abuse, prostitution, homelessness, high rates of imprisonment, and early death" because of the cycle of trauma stemming from experiences at the residential schools.[17]

The children faced mistreatment in the schools. Children were fed very poorly and lived in austere and squalid conditions. These conditions were noted by non-Indigenous people such as nurses, and witnesses and visitors to the schools wrote letters of complaint about the children's poor treatment.[18] Often the complaints were ignored and treated as libel. The system was under-regulated and underfunded.[19] Abuse was not limited to neglect or emotional mistreatment of the children; in many cases, physical and sexual abuse occurred as well. Often, these abuses were ignored or dismissed, leaving the children to deal with the consequences on their own.[20] Not all of the children left the schools with traumatic experiences. Some survivors felt that they had received an education and care at residential schools that enabled them to be successful. In some

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[17] Milloy, *A National Crime*, 110.
[18] Ibid., 10.
[19] Ibid.
[20] *They Came for the Children*, 42.

cases, students formed attachments to teachers and received warm and caring attention.

Those experiences, however, are in the minority.[21]

It was not until the late 1940s that the criticisms and concerns of the Indigenous

community regarding the residential schools were taken seriously. The residential school

system was scrutinized and began to be closed down by the government and churches.[22]

It took decades to close the schools because of the problems that the system had created

for Indigenous people.[23] By 1969 the official relationship between churches and the

federal government had been dissolved. The dissolution of the official relationship

between the Government of Canada and the involved churches left a financial burden and

numerous decrepit schools in the hands of the churches.[24] In 1996, the last of the schools

was officially closed.

Prior to the closure of the schools, former students began to speak out about their

experiences and sought compensation and apology from those they felt had perpetrated

the trauma.[25] There was some effort to help survivors recover from trauma. Apologies

were offered by some churches, and some services were created to address the needs of

survivors.[26]

In an attempt to respond to the concerns of the First Nations people of Canada and

build a better relationship, Prime Minister Brian Mulroney established the Royal

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[21] Ibid., 42.
[22] Miller, *Shingwauk's Visions,* 377.
[23] Milloy, *A National Crime*, 214.
[24] Ibid., 299.
[25] Ibid., 299.
[26] Ibid., 31.

Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) in 1990.[27] The final report of RCAP,

released in 1996, painted a grim view of the residential school system.[28] RCAP found that

in residential schools "neglect was routinely ignored, and without remedial action, it

became a thoughtless habit".[29] RCAP was important because it was the first step towards

acknowledgement of the harms that residential schools had caused Indigenous peoples

and communities. RCAP was part of a long and arduous road to reconciliation that

includes decades of gaps between responses and action from the government.

It was not until the early 2000s, after hundreds of lawsuits pertaining to the

residential schools had come forward, that the government took notice.[30] The government

was forced to respond to lawsuits that had now become a class action suit. IRSSA,

negotiated in 2005, was the result of these legal actions, and it provided various means of

redress.[31] In 2008, as a result of IRSSA, Prime Minister Stephen Harper made an official

apology for the residential schools. In the apology, Harper acknowledged the human

rights violations that occurred at the schools. The official apology began a new phase of

the reconciliation process.

IRSSA provided direct financial compensation to residential school survivors.

The common experience payment (CEP) was given to every individual who attended

residential school if they could prove their attendance. An Independent Assessment

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[27] Miller, J.R., *Residential Schools and Reconciliation: Canada Confronts its History, (2017): 41.*
[28] Ibid., 301.
[29] "Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples - Library and Archives Canada," accessed May 5, 2018, https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/Aboriginal-heritage/royal-commission-Aboriginal-peoples/Pages/introduction.aspx.
[30]*Royal Commission on Aboriginal People*, 32.
[31] Ronald Niezen, *Truth and Indignation: Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Indian Residential Schools* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), 2.

Process (IAP) was introduced to review, on a case-by-case basis, abuse claims that warranted compensation beyond the common experience payment.[32] Additionally, IRSSA mandated the creation of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to investigate and document the effects of the residential school system. It became apparent to a wider audience that a serious violation of human rights had occurred, and that accountability and responsibility should be taken by the perpetrators, consisting of the Canadian government and certain churches.[33]

A History of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

IRSSA mandated that "…an historic Truth and Reconciliation Commission will be established to contribute to truth, healing and reconciliation."[34] The TRC was established to bring closure for survivors, create awareness about this forgotten and ignored part of Canadian history, and so prevent it from occurring again. After IRSSA was signed in 2006 and took effect in 2007, the TRC of Canada began its work.[35] Its mandate, which can be found in Schedule N of the IRSSA, states that the purpose of the TRC is to:

(a) Acknowledge Residential School experiences, impacts and consequences;

(b) Provide a holistic, culturally appropriate and safe setting for former students, their families and communities as they come forward to the Commission;

(c) Witness, support, promote and facilitate truth and reconciliation events at both the national and community levels;

(d) Promote awareness and public education of Canadians about the residential schools system and its impacts;

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[32] Niezen, *Truth and Indignation*, 43.
[33] Ibid., 2.
[34] Schedule N, IRSSA, Principles.
[35] Niezen, *Truth and Indignation*, 43.

(e) Identify sources and create as complete an historical record as possible of the residential schools system and legacy. The record shall be preserved and made accessible to the public for future study and use;

(f) Produce and submit to the Parties of the Agreement a report including recommendations to the Government of Canada concerning the residential schools system and experience including: the history, purpose, operation and supervision of the residential schools system, the effect and consequences of residential schools (including systemic harms, intergenerational consequences and the impact on human dignity) and the ongoing legacy of the residential schools;

(g) Support commemoration of former Indian Residential School students and their families in accordance with the Commemoration Policy Directive (Schedule "X" of the Agreement).

The TRC hosted local and national public events where statements were gathered and survivors were able to share their experiences with the public. Public awareness was an important part of the reconciliation process, considering that a significant portion of Canadians were unaware of the true history of the residential schools. TRC events included statement gathering, sharing circles, speeches, opening and closing ceremonies and both Christian and Indigenous religious ceremonies.[36] The events also offered opportunities for survivors and their families to regain their personal history through stories and photographs which they might never have had access to otherwise.[37] On the TRC website, recorded versions of the events, resources for education, and resources for survivors were made available; these resources were subsequently made available through the NCTR website.

There are several ways in which the TRC in Canada differs from other TRCs around the world, including its singular focus on children.[38] The TRC focussed on children because they were the targets of the residential schools. As a victim-centred

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[36]Niezen, *Truth and Indignation*, 62.
[37] Ibid., 135.
[38] Ibid., 5.

TRC, its focus was on healing and in particular on mental health issues and historically related trauma.[39] Healing involves a certain amount of privacy, which means that confidentiality was integral to the TRC. The private aspect of the TRC created practical difficulties at the TRC's national events, where the intention was to raise awareness among the Canadian public about this history. It was a balancing act for those working with the TRC to bring awareness to the issue while being sensitive to the privacy of survivors. The archive of the TRC faces the same difficulty of balancing a desire to provide access and transparency while also showing sensitivity to the confidential nature of information in many of the records about the survivors.[40]

Another part of the healing process is to hold the perpetrators accountable—and in the case of the TRC, the Government of Canada and the churches would be held accountable. The outcomes of the TRC mandated by IRSSA include acknowledgement from the government and churches of the trauma that they inflicted upon the victims of the residential schools.[41] The TRC was intended to provide healing in a holistic way for survivors and their families.[42] As the TRC did not have the legal authority to mete out justice, accountability could only be in the form of historical record keeping. Church archives and government archives were required to provide to the TRC digital copies of the records in their archives that pertain to residential schools. The aim was to gather records from the across the country to create a complete record. Promotion of awareness

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[39] Ibid.

[40] The NCTR must carefully review each and every record when a request for access comes through, this means hours of work for the staff of the archive who work tirelessly to ensure that records are available and properly secure as well as accessible.

[41] Goal A, TRC Mandate, Schedule N, ISSRA.

[42] Goal B, TRC Mandate Schedule N, ISSRA.

of the history and the records, as well as awareness of the legacy and impact that the residential schools on Indigenous people, were significant features of the TRC. Under IRSSA, survivors of residential schools were to be remembered, recognized and provided with support through TRC activities and events, and through CEP and IAP payments.[43]

The second distinct feature of the TRC in Canada is that it was instigated by a litigation process.[44] The third distinct feature is that the names of perpetrators were left out of the official proceedings.[45] In many cases, names of perpetrators were directly avoided. The TRC tried to make the perpetrators as invisible and anonymous as possible, unless they had already been convicted in a court of law. In testimonies, names were left out, and, if names were used accidentally, access to those records was restricted. This focus on survivors rather than perpetrators was intended to bring closure to survivors, create awareness about this part of Canadian history and prevent it from occurring again.

The fourth and final distinctive feature of the Canadian TRC is the role it played as an information gatherer. Tangible evidence of a person's history is considered important and often seen as providing validity to historical analysis. The TRC was mandated to gather and safeguard that tangible history. At national events, photographs were made available for survivors to view. Photographs are physical documentation of a person's life, and for survivors to have access to photographs is an important step in the truth-telling process. Documentation provided the ability to regain a sense of identity that had been lost to survivors and their families because of the residential schools.[46]

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[43] Goal G, TRC Mandate Schedule N, ISSRA.
[44] Niezen, *Truth and Indignation*, 3.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Niezen, *Truth and Indignation*, 138.

Documentation was a mandated role of the Canadian TRC, which prioritized gathering information over justice.[47]

Evidence and Traditional Voice

The study of history has been evidence-based especially since the 19th century when Leopold von Ranke is credited with studying history as an objective, "truth" seeking endeavour.[48] Postmodern historical practices do not accept the idea that study of history is objective, but archives are still viewed as storehouses of evidence that tells "truth".[49] Evidence is still an important part of historical analysis, but the definition of evidence must be re-examined. What is the truth? As any new historian can tell you, truth can be subjective. There is plenty of "evidence" for settler history, found in archives across Canada, which often excludes the history of Indigenous peoples; particularly absent is any historical evidence from Indigenous peoples' perspectives.

The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR), the official archives of the TRC and inheritor of the TRC's mandate for truth telling and promoting reconciliation, is part of the movement to decolonize the archives and to pilot the inclusivity of Indigenous voices. Where is the Indigenous voice? Alice Te Punga Somerville suggests that it is there, if you look carefully, and that we should assume the existence of Indigeneity in archives rather than searching for what may be lost.[50] The TRC was meant to right this wrong and help revise Canadian history to tell an inclusive

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[47] Ibid., 3.

[48] John H. Arnold, *History: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 36.

[49] Arnold, *History: A Very Short Introduction,* 56.

[50] Alice Te Punga Somerville, "I Do Still Have a Letter: Our Sea of Archives," in *Sources and Methods in Indigenous Studies*, ed. Chris Andersen and O'Brien, Jean M. (New York: Routledge, 2017), http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=1441232.

history rather than a Eurocentric colonial history. The TRC's focus on information gathering and archiving is mandated in goal E of Schedule N of IRSSA, which states the TRC must: "Identify sources and create as complete an historical record as possible of the residential school system and legacy. The record shall be preserved and made accessible to the public for future study and use".[51] Goal E is intended to address the previously neglected history of the residential schools in the larger Canadian narrative. Recognizing and including Indigenous voices in Canadian history is part of the greater project of creating space for reconciliation.

A History of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR)

The NCTR was created according to IRSSA Schedule N 3.d, which required the TRC "to establish a research centre and ensure the preservation of its archives." It is a natural manifestation of the gathered information of the TRC as well as a place to continue ongoing work started by the TRC, such as education and outreach. Most of the records of the TRC are housed at NCTR with the exception of some operational and business records, which will be housed at the Library and Archives Canada Regional office in Winnipeg. Records incorporated into the NCTR's archives include those created by the TRC, such as recorded ceremonies, and survivor statements, and historical records collected from the government and the churches that are specifically related to residential schools administration and experiences.

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[51]Goal E, TRC Mandate, Schedule N, ISSRA.

Records such as the survivor statements that were gathered at national events are central to these archives. These records are so important because they are representations of Indigenous experiences from Indigenous people. Church archives and other institutional records and historical documents include key information such as attendance lists and correspondence regarding students. The TRC was mandated to collect information, sensitive and otherwise. IRSSA Section 2C states that the TRC "shall not possess subpoena powers, and do not have powers to compel attendance or participation in any of its activities or events. Participation in all Commission events and activities is entirely voluntary".[52] Many church archives were willing to hand over their records. However, the government and some church entities sought loopholes in an attempt to avoid giving certain records and information to the TRC.[53] The government refused to release certain records from Library and Archives Canada (LAC) and the RCMP that were not deemed 'relevant' by the government.[54] The TRC used legal action to force the hand of the government and get access to those records held at LAC, which were indeed relevant.[55] In 2013 the Ontario Supreme court ruled that the government was required to comply with the TRC's request for those files.[56] The creation of a complete historical record is important for the NCTR to advance truth and reconciliation. These records provide evidence of human rights abuses, support survivors' efforts to regain their

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[52] *Section 2C,* TRC Mandate, Schedule N, ISSRA.
[53] Niezen, *Truth and Indignation*, 131.
[54] Ibid.; Office of the Auditor General of Canada Government of Canada, "Chapter 6—Creating a Historical Record of Indian Residential Schools," April 30, 2013, http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca/internet/English/parl_oag_201304_06_e_38191.html.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid.

identity and allow for the correction of Canadian history to make it inclusive of Indigenous experiences.

Prior to the creation of the NCTR, bids were made by various institutions to determine where the NCTR would be physically located. The University of Manitoba was the successful bidder, and the NCTR is now housed its campus. The university's bid emphasized pre-existing relationships with Indigenous communities and organizations at the University of Manitoba. The bid mentions the Aboriginal Student Centre on campus and the resources and research pertaining to inclusivity of Aboriginal and Indigenous cultures, communities and people on campus. The committee noted the university's work to encouragement and support of Indigenous students, emphasizing that the university would collaborate, create relationships and communicate with Indigenous organizations, groups, and individuals in the creation and maintenance of the NCTR.

Alongside these pre-existing relationships, the University of Manitoba bid also articulated a desire to create and advance relationships on a national and international level and to partner with other organizations, universities and groups from across the country. To foster a national connection with Indigenous people across Canada, the University of Manitoba suggested that satellite locations for digital access to the records could be created in tandem with the main physical location. The bid suggested that the University of Manitoba was a natural fit because of the available support on campus, noting that one million Canadian dollars could be allocated to maintain the NCTR on an annual basis and that employment would be created.

The bid emphasized connections between professional and academic archival activities and the archival resources that the University of Manitoba could provide. The

Archival Studies stream within the Joint Master's Program at the University of Manitoba/University of Winnipeg has long been encouraging research on Aboriginal and Indigenous archiving and on innovative uses of digital technologies in archiving. This research complements the activities of the NCTR.[57]

The bid committee promised a safe, secure and respectful environment at the NCTR for Indigenous records. They noted that Aboriginal ways of knowing would be considered when applying best archival practices in the establishment of the NCTR. The bid committee envisioned the NCTR to be inclusive of Aboriginal culture and tradition and a safe place for survivors and their families. They saw the NCTR as a participatory archive[58] that would include collaboration and discussion with Aboriginal communities, even for those records, from the government and churches, which have not traditionally been considered to have been created by Indigenous peoples. The bid committee offered the University of Manitoba an opportunity to be at the forefront of Indigenous archiving practices and encouraging Indigenous archives. The bid suggests that in addition to the records of and collected by the TRC, the university wished to encourage the activities of the NCTR to go beyond its position as an archive for residential school history to also become a centre for Indigenous archiving on a national scale. The University of Manitoba would provide possibilities for outreach, education and support events that facilitate truth and reconciliation as well as awareness of the residential schools, and the records at the NCTR. The intent went beyond the need to protect and preserve the records of the TRC,

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[57] University of Manitoba. Proposal: National Research Centre on Indian Residential Schools. Submitted to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission By the University of Manitoba, 2012, Accessed, February 16, 2015.
[58] Michelle Rydz, "Participatory Archiving: Exploring a Collaborative Approach to Aboriginal Societal Provenance" (master's thesis, University of Manitoba/University of Winnipeg, 2010), https://mspace.lib.umanitoba.ca/handle/1993/4247.

residential schools and other Indigenous records for future generations. The intention was to create a fuller, more inclusive and more complete history of Canada by safeguarding and promoting Indigenous archives and the archives of the TRC.

The University of Manitoba bid for the NCTR included provisions which were directly borrowed from Schedule N of the IRSSA. They provided an environment in which Indigenous traditions and cultures would be respected and encouraged.[59] The bid pledged to allow access for survivors and their families to their own history, something survivors and families did not previously have easy access to. In tandem with Goal D of schedule N, the bid committee indicated a desire to share the history of the residential schools with future generations of Canadians in order to inform them of Canada's history more thoroughly and to change perspectives.[60] The intentions of the NCTR and the bid committee included aiding deeper research into the experiences of the residential schools as well as better public awareness of the schools' experience and access to the records to "help foster reconciliation and healing" and most importantly, to ensure that "the history and legacy of the Residential School system is never forgotten"[61] The University of Manitoba bid was successful and the NCTR is now implementing many of the aforementioned commitments that the bid committee had made.

In the transfer of records from the TRC to the University of Manitoba and therefore to the NCTR, a Trust Deed was created by the TRC and the university.[62] This legal document describes the role the University of Manitoba and the NCTR have in the

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[59] University of Manitoba. *Proposal: National Research Centre on Indian Residential Schools*.
[60] Goal D, "Schedule N, Indian Residential Schools Settlement."
[61] National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, Mandate. http://umanitoba.ca/centres/nctr/mandate.html
[62] "Centre for Truth and Reconciliation Trust Deed" (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2006), http://umanitoba.ca/admin/Indigenous_connect/media/IND-00-013-NRCAS-TrustDeed.pdf.

care and safekeeping of the records of the TRC. The trust deed outlines which of the

mandates from Schedule N of the IRSSA that NCTR must adhere to, as well as the legal

responsibilities of the university regarding the records of the TRC. The first section of the

Trust Deed outlines the nature of the relationship between the TRC and the University of

Manitoba and some of the basic transfers of power in regard to the legal obligations that

Schedule N of IRSSA mandated. The section most relevant to this thesis makes provision

for an archive to be created in order to "ensure the preservation of its archives".[63] The

Trust Deed also outlines how the NCTR will be governed including how the Governing

Circle works and where the NCTR will seek guidance for the continuing work of the

NCTR and its archives.[64] Jesse Boiteau, now a digital archivist at NCTR, suggests in his

master's thesis that "By balancing standard Western archival practices with references to the

Governing Circle and Indigenous protocols, the University of Manitoba is moving beyond a

more traditional and non-transparent practice of stewarding archival records."[65]

In addition to the Trust Deed, the Administrative Agreement, signed at the same

time as the Trust Deed, is a legal document that details promises made by the University

of Manitoba in the Trust Deed. Boiteau again addresses the Administrative Agreement

well when he states, "Although it is not a legally binding document regarding the

intentions outlined in the University of Manitoba's proposal to host the NCTR, it does

illustrate the University of Manitoba's commitment to upholding its intentions to the

TRC, its partners, and Survivors and their families."[66] The Trust Deed and the

[63] "Centre for Truth and Reconciliation Trust
Deed."http://umanitoba.ca/admin/indigenous_connect/media/IND-00-013-NRCAS-TrustDeed.pdf.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Jesse Boiteau, "The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and Archival Decolonization",
(master's thesis, University of Manitoba/University of Winnipeg, Archival Studies, 2016), 29.
[66]Boiteau, "The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and Archival Decolonization", 29.

Administrative Agreement are integral parts of the creation of the NCTR and its continued existence once the TRC issued its final report and closed its doors. These legal documents are integral to the operation of the NCTR.

Policies for privacy and access also are integral to the operation of the NCTR, considering the types of records that are housed there. Survivor statements, personal histories, stories told during opening and closing ceremonies of TRC events, and government and health records will make up a very significant portion of the records in the archives. These records are personal in nature, and it is necessary to ensure privacy. Records that give names will have to be redacted in accordance with IRSSA and the NCTR mandate. There are records in NCTR collections from the RCMP, Health Canada, Privy Council Office, Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, Agriculture, and National Film Board of Canada.[67] Church records are from all four denominations that worked with the government to run the residential schools: Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, and Presbyterian.[68] Also included in the archives are records from the TRC's legal proceedings and its work with the government and churches to secure residential school records.

The Records Challenges

The NCTR houses and handles a variety of records, the vast majority of which are digital. They have historical records created by the government and churches that pertain to the residential schools, in digital copies. They have survivor statements in electronic

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[67] "NCTR Home Page," accessed July 28, 2017, http://nctr.ca/map.php.
[68] Ibid.; The Methodist and Presbyterian churches were part of the amalgamation of churches into the United Church of Canada in 1925.

format, along with digital videos of ceremonies and sharing circles from national events,

which will become part of the oral history of residential schools. In addition to the

records created and collected by the TRC, there are records of the TRC and its

administrative processes, including promotional materials such as videos, photographs,

multimedia, textual, and social media records. The records are all different and must each

be arranged and described appropriately. Because there is such a wide range of records,

they represent some challenges to archivists at the NCTR archives.

Records created through the administration of the CEP and the IAP would ideally

also be housed at the NCTR. The CEP records were intended for the NCTR, but have not

been acquired. However, the fate of IAP records has been in question: whether or not

they should be permanently saved or destroyed. A decision was made in early 2017 by

the Supreme Court of Canada requiring IAP records be destroyed after 15 years, unless

individual IAP claimants provide direction otherwise.[69] The University of Manitoba

hosted NCTR website states:,

> The IAP records are an essential history, even if they are not publicly accessible.
> The IAP records are the best source of evidence of the abuses that took place in
> the Residential Schools. Preserving those records will make it impossible for
> future generations to deny or minimize what happened to students in Canada's
> Residential Schools.[70]

The statement indicates that the NCTR considers the records of the IAP to be important

and that they should be kept. These records, despite the importance placed on them by the

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[69] Lev Marder Published on: October 30, 2017 | Last Updated: October 30, and 2017 7:30 Am Edt,
"Marder: Allowing the Destruction of Residential School Records – How the Supreme Court Missed a
Chance to Help in Reconciliation," *Ottawa Citizen* (blog), October 30, 2017,
http://ottawacitizen.com/opinion/columnists/marder-destroying-residential-school-records-how-the-
supreme-court-missed-a-chance-to-help-in-reconciliation.
[70] University of Manitoba, NCTR, http://umanitoba.ca/centres/nctr/iap_records.html

NCTR, were set to be destroyed within 15 years unless otherwise indicated by a survivor

who wished to preserve indefinitely their particular records at the NCTR. The destruction

of the records is not, however, in keeping with the IRSSA and it has been argued by the

NCTR and the Canadian government that these records should be kept.[71] There are

Indigenous groups on both sides of the argument. The official stance of the Assembly of

First Nations (AFN) is to leave the choice in each individual's hand: "The AFN

recognizes that people have different views on this matter. The AFN takes the position

that personal stories and experiences belong to the individual, and they have the right to

decide what happens to their testimony."[72]

There are some significant ways in which records at the NCTR challenge archival

practices and theory. One of those challenges is that the majority of the records are digital

in format; archival theory has not advanced at the same pace as technology. Records such

as multimedia presentations and social media presence are new formats, and ways of

arranging and describing them have not yet been formulated or clarified. These records

will need to be stored, arranged and described in new ways, because they do not fit the

traditional mould.

The largely digital records of the TRC mean that access must be handled

differently; for example, records can be circulated over networks, including the Internet,

and requests for records can be made via email. Digitization also means that records can

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[71] Tanya Talaga, "Supreme Court to decide who owns the 38,000 stories of residential school survivors", *Toronto Star*, May 24, 2017, https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2017/05/24/supreme-court-to-decide-who-owns-the-38000-stories-of-residential-school-survivors.html
[72] Talaga, "Supreme Court to decide",https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2017/05/24/supreme-court-to-decide-who-owns-the-38000-stories-of-residential-school-survivors.html Ibid

be redacted and viewed in electronic formats. Handling a majority of digital records is new to many Canadian archives, and the world is watching to see how the NCTR will preserve, manage and provide access to the digital records in its custody,[73] and how it will address newer concepts of provenance including societal provenance, simultaneous multiple provenance, multiple provenance, and parallel provenance.

Included among the records at the NCTR are oral testimonies created by TRC staff while recording events of truth and reconciliation. The testimonies and survivor statements are all in digital formats. They will are stored on safe and secure hardware where confidentiality will be one of the priorities, as is mandated by the NCTR. TRC events and ceremonies also were recorded and will need to be made available and accessible to all people — most particularly Canadians and survivors. The NCTR is currently following through on the mandate to provide access by making much of their video content available on their website.[74] These records pose difficulties for describing provenance according to the traditional mono-hierarchical model of provenance described in the Canadian Rules for Archival Description.

As an added layer of complexity, the societal provenance of these records is considered particularly important. Indigenous tradition, knowledge, and ways of knowing are an integral component of the NCTR as evidenced by the mandates of all involved parties. They have been considered at every level, because it is important that the archive not banally conform to traditional Eurocentric and colonial ways of archiving. Guidance from survivors and Indigenous communities is necessary. The culture of Indigenous

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[73]Niezen, *Truth and Indignation,* 88.
[74] "NCTR Home Page."

people was effectively stolen from them in process of attempting to assimilate them. Residential schools robbed children of knowing their traditions, practices, and language.[75] It is important to incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing into archives and to be sensitive and respectful of Indigenous traditions while still adhering to archival theory and best archival practice. In post-custodial archival theory, description depends upon contextual knowledge of the creator in order to understand the provenance and to implement an appropriate form of arrangement. The concept of societal provenance adds to the contextual knowledge of the records and allows social context to inform the description of records.[76] Allowing social context to inform the arrangement, description and management of records in the NCTR is important because it allows traditional Indigenous knowledge, and understanding to be a part of the description process. It also enables Indigenous people, as the subject of the records, to be visible within their descriptions. Societal provenance is a relatively new and important concept within the archival community. The idea of taking into consideration the community and the society around a record when arranging and describing comes from Tom Nesmith's "The Concept of Societal Provenance and Records of Nineteenth-Century Aboriginal-European relations in Western Canada: Implications for Archival Theory and Practice." In his article, Nesmith states that "provenance is not a single person or institution but rather (as in the series system) a 'product of a variety of factors' a record is more complex than just its physical existence, it has a history."[77] Societal provenance is

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[75] *They Came for the Children*, 22.

[76] Tom Nesmith, "The Concept of Societal Provenance and Records of Nineteenth-Century Aboriginal–European Relations in Western Canada: Implications for Archival Theory and Practice," *Archival Science* 6, no. 3–4 (December 1, 2006): 351–60, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10502-007-9043-9, 352.

[77] Tom Nesmith, "The Concept of Societal Provenance and Records of Nineteenth-Century Aboriginal–European Relations in Western Canada: Implications for Archival Theory and Practice," *Archival Science* 6, no. 3–4 (December 1, 2006): 351–60, https://doi.org/10.1007/s10502-007-9043-9, 352.

integral to the arrangement and description process at the NCTR in order to properly

provide the necessary provenance for residential school records and give future

generations a complete historical record. Similarly, many of the records housed at the

NCTR have multiple provenances that present challenges to the archivist when arranging

and describing in both a physical and intellectual space. Traditional archival theory does

not take into consideration the possibility that a record may have more than one

provenance. Increasingly this part of the archival theory is being challenged by academic

archivists. The archivists at the NCTR deal with these challenges head-on when arranging

and describing its records.

Conclusion

In the era of decolonization, archivists understand their role is not passive,

impartial, objective or neutral. Rather it is understood that archivists are mediators of the

knowledge in archives at every stage of the archival process, although this does not give

them license to influence the process in any way they choose. Attempting to influence the

records as little as possible, archivists nonetheless recognize that their influence is

inevitable since, by simply choosing what to exhibit, acquire, destroy, which records to

promote, and which records a user may have access to, archivists become mediators and

influence the understanding of the records in their care. Moreover, in the case of the

NCTR, the records are complex and varied, and they have intricate interrelationships with

each other that are a challenge to describe and arrange. Digitized and born-digital records

comprise a huge portion of the NCTR holdings and need to be treated differently from

analogue records. They also fall under complicated restrictions and privacy. These

challenges mean that archivists must make informed decisions about records, as they

choose how to approach these problems.

Chapter Two: Types of Archival Provenance and the implications for
Archival Standards and Technology
Introduction

Archival practice hinges on contextual knowledge; without it, archival records are

like boats untethered from their moorings, floating aimlessly in a vast ocean. Archival

scholar Geoffrey Yeo says it simply: "knowledge of context is crucial, yet context is

limitless."[1] There is so much potential intellectual knowledge available about one record,

and if archivists cannot capture the required descriptive data about a record, that

knowledge is lost. Description is crucial in the day-to-day practice of an archive, and the

way in which archivists understand the operation of description relies on systems that

identify the necessary information to be captured, and systems that hold the captured

information. Systems such as the Canadian *Rules for Archival Description* and the

International Council of Archivists' suite of descriptive standards offer tangible

instructions or standards for archiving records. These archival standards are based in

deeply rooted traditions of archival theory such as the principle of provenance. Records

are usually organized into the groupings in which they were created, those aggregates can

be called collections, but most often are referred to as a fonds. The principle of

provenance has changed in the two centuries since its widespread adoption.

The purpose of chapter two is to explore the history of provenance and how

archivists at present understand it. The changing concept of the principle of provenance is

significant in the creation of new standards and in conceptualizing a more complete and

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[1] Geoffrey Yeo, "Debates about Description," in *Currents of Archival Thinking*, ed. Terry Eastwood and
Heather MacNeil (Santa Barbara: Libraries Unlimited, 2010), 98.

whole contextualization of archival theory and practice to apply to Indigenous records. New ideas of provenance may have an effect on archival standards and on their applications within digital environments.

Traditional Archival Theory

Archival description depends upon a set of concepts, theories and assumptions that archivists build upon in order to describe the intricate interrelationships among records and between records and people (including creators, users and archivists). Archival descriptions relate functions, processes and activities of records creators to records. In order to properly describe and arrange records within descriptive standards such as *Rules for Archival Description* (RAD), the *General International Standard Archival Description* (ISAD (G)), and *Records in Context-Conceptual Model* (RiC-CM) basic archival concepts, theories, and assumptions must be understood.

Contemporary archivists consider the principle of provenance to be the foundation upon which archivists do their work. During the 1980s, archivists began to change their methods of operating. They moved away from the fonds d'archives and back "to the purity of provenance" which depends upon the principles of respect des fonds and original order as foundations. The principle of respect des fonds hinges on the records from one particular creator being kept together rather than separated into subject categories or placed chronologically, intermingled with those of other persons or institutions. Respect des fonds is a French concept that formed the core practice of archivists and the external representation of an aggregation of records. The principle of original order is the internal representation of an aggregate of records. The principle of original order ensures that the internal physical arrangement of an aggregation of records

is maintained.[2] Leading French archival thinker Michael Duchein adds a caveat that

original order should be maintained wherever possible. Duchein outlines conditions to

look for when determining whether a fonds' internal order should be maintained or

rearranged, such as whether or not the fonds has a coherent arrangement.[3] The purpose of

the principles of respect des fonds and original order is to ensure that records created

together are kept together. They are kept together to protect evidential value of this

relationship. By applying the principles of respect des fonds and original order, archivists

maintain the provenance or the contextual knowledge about a record.

Early archival theory hinged on the concept of the archival fonds or the fonds

d'archives. The archival fonds is the oldest of the basic principles that most contemporary

archivists concur is the bedrock of archival principles, and is attributed to Natalis de

Wailly in 1841 in France.[4]The archival fonds was once recognized internationally as the

foundation on which all archival theory was built. The archival fonds encompasses the

principles of provenance, original order, and respect des fonds. The archival fonds (as it

is referred to in Canada) is an internationally understood concept wherein the fonds is an

aggregation of records from a particular person, family or institution.[5] The archival fonds

adheres to the idea that a group of records should be kept together and not separated into

subjective or artificial categories as early archivists had tended to do. These early

archivists arranged records artificially by organizing records chronologically or by

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[2] Cook, "The Concept of the Archival Fonds in the Post-Custodial Era: Theory, Problems and Solutions," *Archivaria* 35, (January 1, 1992), https://archivaria.ca/index.php/archivaria/article/view/11882, 25.
[3] Michel Duchein, "Theoretical Principles and Practical Problems of Respect Des Fonds in Archival Science," *Archivaria* 16, (1983):79. See the article for specific conditions in which original order of a fonds can be disregarded.
[4] Duchein, "Theoretical Principles and Practical Problems", 66.
[5] Ibid.

subject, to facilitate researcher access. The archival fonds is still the foundation on which most Canadian archival practice is based. The use of the archival fonds is most obvious within RAD.

In recent years these basic concepts in archival theory have been re-examined by working archivists and by archival academics like Elizabeth Yakel and Terry Cook.[6] Typically, archivists have assumed that the physical arrangement of a fonds would provide some indication of its provenance. However, Cook noted that, particularly in the digital world, the arrangement of records has no singular original order and that a single representation of original order misrepresents the multifaceted and fluid nature of provenance.[7] In the modern era, or what Cook refers to as the "post-custodial era," he suggests that archival theory should "…embrace instead the implications of the 'post-custodial era,' with its conceptual paradigm of logical or virtual realities."[8] When speaking about analogue records and mono-hierarchical frameworks, arrangement and description were understood to be indisputably tied together; Cook stated that we understand the fonds to be "…both creation (provenance) and arrangement (original order), as an embodiment likewise of both a logical and a physical reality."[9] It is assumed that the original order of records is a natural and organic process, unlike the order of collections which are considered to have been accumulated inorganically.[10] Duchein referred to the principle of provenance as "unquestionable," to underline how foundational he believes it to be.[11] Cook acknowledged and agreed with Duchein that the

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[6] Cook, "The Concept of the Archival Fonds", 22.
[7] Ibid., 26.
[8] Cook, "The Concept of the Archival Fonds," 26.
[9] Ibid., 27.
[10] Cook, "The Concept of the Archival Fonds," 27.
[11] Duchein, "Theoretical Principles and Practical Problems of Respect des Fonds," 66.

principle of provenance is foundational. However, Cook criticized the representation of

provenance in the archival fonds, and explained why he believed it to be problematic. He

said, "yet despite this murky and doubtful evolution, Canadian archivists are now told

that the fonds d'archives (or 'archival fonds') has been designated "'*the* theoretical

foundation on which to build their descriptive systems…'"[12] Cook was concerned that

what the archival community understood as foundational and defining of archives was

actually vague and nebulous. Duchein similarly stated that the archival fonds needs to be

clarified, but insisted that it remains foundational. Cook argued that since Canadian

archivists have not agreed on or clarified the definitions of the theory, it is therefore

ambiguous and problematic, leaving too much room for interpretation.[13] Cook asserted

that there needs to be a re-examination and clarification of provenance before the

community can apply it appropriately. Cook found the archival fonds most problematic in

the assumption that records and their creators have a one-to-one relationship, where there

is one record and/or fonds, and one creator.[14] It has been frequently demonstrated by

Cook, as well as Peter Scott and Chris Hurley, that records most often do not have only

one creator, or only one provenance but multiple creators.

While the concept of the archival fonds is the basis of archival descriptive

standards, a refocussing of archival principles and theories has begun to take shape. As

early as the 1980s, the archival community had moved toward the concept that "Respect

des fonds was the fundamental principle of archival management and must be the first

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[12] Association of Canadian Archivists, Seventeenth Annual Conference Programme, "Dismantling the Tower of Babel: Developing a Common Language Through Descriptive Standards" (Montreal, 1992), 16.
[13] Ibid.
[14] Ibid., 27.

level of archival identification."[15] This practice established provenance as the fundamental archival principle. At that time it was understood to be synonymous with the archival fonds. Also during the 1980s, archivists began to rethink other aspects of archival theory, thereby paving the way for questioning the archival fonds. The archival community moved away from the fonds d'archives and back "to the purity of *respect des fonds,*" as Laura Millar frames it.[16] Brien Brothman critiques the idea of original order and compares it to the idea of writing objective and neutral history. Brothman states that "[a]rchival science exhibits a similar desire to extract some kind of objective unadulterated record of the past. Such propensities raise questions about original order (and respect des fonds)."[17] Brothman follows up by expressing that a significant difficulty with original order is the practical application of it, as it restricts the ease with which access can be created. Similarly, in quoting Brothmen, Elizabeth Yakel clarifies that "…such arrangement is a representation of an intended and well-tended order that probably never existed in the originating context." This particular critique is underlined by the suggestion that archival representation is artificial and created by archivists, that no single order exists, but rather multiple orders can exist.[18]

Laura Millar's 2013 article on Peter Scott and the Australian 'Series' system outlines that the interpretation of provenance in these traditional standards was and is a

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[15] Laura Millar, "'An Unnecessary Complication': International Perspectives on Peter Scott's Series System," *Comma*, 1, no. 13 (2013): 132.

[16] Millar, "'An Unnecessary Complication': International Perspectives on Peter Scott's Series System", 132.

[17] Brien Brothman, "Orders of Value: Probing the Theoretical Terms of Archival Practice," *Archivaria* 32, (1991), 83.

[18] Elizabeth Yakel, "Archival Representation," *Archival Science; Dordrecht*, 2003, 2.

custodial approach, one that is static and unmoving.[19] This custodial approach was

distinct from the ideas of Peter Scott at the National Archives of Australia, where he had

been developing the series system of engagement and disposition long before Duchein's

1986 article. Scott's system offered an alternative to custodial archiving. Millar writes

that "Scott believed that, by focusing on the full history of series, archivists or each

particular record keeping system, would be able to represent the dynamic nature of

records and identify not just the last creator in line but all the agencies responsible for the

records over time."[20] The ability to describe records and creators separately was Scott's

most significant change to the fonds-based descriptive practices pursued in other archival

standards of the day. A recognition of more than one creator, and the possibility that true

provenance of records continue to be fluid or multifaceted, as its varied creators are

clarified through research, allowed archivists to think differently. However, it was not

until the early 2000s that the series system made the jump across the ocean to North

America.[21] Millar describes it as "a quiet acknowledgment of the fluid nature of records

and record-keeping." In response, changes were made to allow for that sense of fluidity in

Canada's RAD as well as in the ICA suite of descriptive standards. Terry Cook, Tom

Nesmith, and Hugh Taylor, among others, helped usher in the concept of fluidity in

archives in Canada, while writers such as Chris Hurley in Australia and Geoffrey Yeo in

the United Kingdom also base their work on the concept of a fluid nature of records

internationally. Explorations of the series system, evolving descriptive practices, and

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[19] Millar, "'An Unnecessary Complication': International Perspectives on Peter Scott's Series System",
133.
[20] Ibid., 129.
[21] Ibid., 133.

corresponding descriptive standards have caused archivists to reconsider the principle of provenance in all of its complexities.

Provenance Types and their Intricacies

A significant first step after receiving records at an archive is the task of arranging and describing the records. The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation holds a myriad of record types.[22] Over the last century, records creation has grown rapidly. The amount of information in the digital age continues to grow. This large quantity of records makes records management and archiving an extraordinarily demanding task. It takes effort, time, infrastructure, and sufficient, stable funding to maintain the vast amounts of records; few archives are sufficiently supported or funded, a sad reality which results in a backlog in archives. Quantity aside, electronic records present other challenges to archivists and records managers because of their digital nature. Knowledge of software and hardware are required in order to properly manage, preserve, and store electronic records. Electronic records involve technical considerations of accessibility, and the ability to maintain metadata and descriptions with the records in a digital environment is crucial. In order to maintain control over the records, a system that enables ease of access and allows archivists to preserve and capture accompanying metadata in descriptions is imperative. The challenges that large quantities of electronic records introduce to archives make the existing concerns of archival theory increasingly apparent. The challenges described and the solutions offered open up opportunities for discussion and

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[22] See Chapter one for types of records found at the NCTR

healthy evolution in the theory and practice of archives. One instance where challenges

and opportunities have arisen is in provenancial theory.

The principle of provenance is integral to basic archival theory. Provenance

encompasses all of the history and context of a record. A lack of appropriate context may

cause a record to lose its meaning. It may no longer be considered archival because we

lack an understanding of the connections, functions, and roles of the record prior to being

in an archive. Duchein suggests that a record should be understood by the function it

performed or was part of. In order to understand what function a record performed, we

must understand the context of its creation. This contextual information is essential to

understanding the provenance of a record or an aggregation of records. The function of a

record, Duchein suggests, indicates the relevance of the records.[23] Therefore, by

understanding function, context is established; without context, the purpose of retaining a

record in an archive is greatly diminished. Provenance is central to the evidential value

that records hold for history. Terry Cook wrote that "behind the record always lies the

need to record, to bear evidence, to hold and be held accountable, to create and maintain

memory."[24]

There are several types of provenance that have been identified, including parallel

provenance, multiple provenance, and simultaneous multiple provenance. Each type

plays a role in providing contextual knowledge to records. Parallel provenance occurs

when two records have the same provenance. The concept of parallel provenance

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[23] Duchein, "Theoretical Principles and Practical Problems of Respect des Fonds," 67.
[24] Terry Cook. "Electronic Records, Paper Minds: The Revolution in Information Management and Archives in the Post-Custodial and Post-Modernist Era." *Archives and Social Studies: A Journal of Interdisciplinary Research*, 1, (2007): 403.

suggests that there is a problem: the ambience of a record is obscured.[25] In the early

nineties, Chris Hurley began developing the concept of ambience, which is the idea that

the provenance of a record itself has context. Hurley defined ambience as the context of

the provenance of a record.[26] The concept of ambience was intended to support the

provenance of a record with metadata that might explain further the context of the record,

and by extension, the records themselves.[27] For example, the literal creator or subscriber

of the record may be considered its provenance, but the agency or agencies to which the

creator reports also influence indirectly the creation of the record. They form the ambient

provenance of the record. Including ambience in description practices would enable a

greater depth of contextual knowledge. Applying ambience to records that are currently

identified as having parallel provenance would help clarify contextual knowledge that is

obscured in a mono-provenancial system and applying it to future records would prevent

parallel provenance from occurring in the first place.[28] Providing ambience would add

more context to a record, which would help broaden the uses of archives as well as the

archivist's understanding of the record.

    Hurley introduced the concept of simultaneous multiple provenance in the early

1990s as well, and later introduced parallel provenance. Both ideas build on the work of

Peter Scott, whose idea of multiple provenance. Scott's work moved away from a focus

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[25] Chris Hurley, "In Pursuit of Provenance: When Societal Met Parallel with a View to Relationships" (Adelaide Symposium, Adelaide, 2013), http://www.descriptionguy.com/images/WEBSITE/What-is-PP.pdf, 9.

[26] Chris Hurley, "Ambient Functions: Abandoned Children to Zoos," *Archivaria* 40, (1995), 21.

[27] Ibid., 22.

[28] Chris Hurley, "Parallel Provenance (If These Are Your Records, Where Are Your Stories?)," 2005, http://www.descriptionguy.com/images/WEBSITE/parallel-provenance.pdf, 37.

on one creator and a single provenance and towards developing a concept that fostered understanding of the complex and intricate relationships of records and creators.

Multiple provenance occurs when a single record has more than one provenance attached to it.[29] Records of the NCTR may have originally been literally created by a teacher, for example; however, the government may have been involved in the creation of the rules, formations, aims and template for the document and the church running the school would be involved in the dissemination of that document. There are multiple creators involved and multiple provenance from the churches, the schools, the teachers, and the Indigenous students themselves as well. Scott's idea of multiple provenance is limited to separate time periods, which Hurley calls serial multiple provenance. In Scott's theory, multiple provenance occurs successively: records are created by one creator after another on separate occasions, resulting in a records series comprised of records by multiple creators. Hurley develops Scott's concept further with simultaneous multiple provenance. Simultaneous multiple provenance introduces the possibilities for multiple provenance to occur at the same time, unlike Scott's serial multiple provenance, which allows for multiple provenance to exist successively but not simultaneously.[30] Simultaneous multiple provenance allows record keepers to account for collaborative and joint practices that result in records being created. Together, Scott's and Hurley's concepts of multiple provenance allows the possibility of multiple creators, inheritors, and receivers to be included in the provenance of a record or an aggregation of records.

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[29] Hurley, "Parallel Provenance", 25.
[30] Hurley, "In Pursuit of Provenance", 1.

Serial and simultaneous multiple provenance describe records of a common ambience. Hurley defines parallel provenance as "…simultaneous generation of the record when the agents of creation cannot be (or have not been) brought together within a common contextual framework."[31] In other words, the actions or influence of certain groups in society may prompt the creation of a record, and even document these actions, but these actors were not the literal subscriber of it. They are instead a "parallel provenance". Parallel provenance is understood to apply to records whose creation reflects simultaneous multiple provenance in which the various creators appear to have more than one ambience. Hurley concludes that, when parallel provenance is not explained, it is an indication either that improper description has occurred or that the actual parties to the creation of a record have not been conceived as participating in it.. As a result, the provenance of a record has been obscured.

At about the same time Hurley was developing his thoughts on ambiance, simultaneous multiple provenance, and parallel provenance, Tom Nesmith was also rethinking provenance and what it should encompass. Unlike Hurley and Scott, though, Nesmith approached provenance through a broader societal and human aspect. He posited that the people who create, handle, use, store, and preserve records are all important components of the provenance of a record. Nesmith's concept of societal provenance was articulated in his 2006 article, "The Concept of Societal Provenance and Records of Nineteenth-Century Aboriginal-European relations in Western Canada: Implications for

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[31] Hurley, "In Pursuit of Provenance", 9.

Archival Theory and Practice". It develops the idea that provenance should extend to include the influence that societal conditions have on the creation and history of a record.

Society has a deep influence on records from their creation to the point when they are archived and beyond. Every society has a different paradigm from which its members view and then use or handle a record. Creators employ their cultural understandings when they create a record and subsequent users of the records also bring their own cultural understandings, and both affect how a record is interpreted, understood and viewed. In the same vein, archivists and historians both have an effect on the understanding of a record. Societal provenance is necessary to understand the provenance of a record and more fully provide context. Nesmith states, "making, using and archiving records reflect and shape societal processes. Archivists need to employ and share more their understanding of these processes in their work."[32] Including societal context within descriptions would help to avoid loss of important contextual information. As Nesmith notes, the need for knowledge of societal and cultural contexts is especially relevant when working with Indigenous archives and records. It is particularly crucial for Indian Residential School records, which are also illuminated by Hurley's concept of parallel provenance as multiple cultural contexts are involved, in their creation and, frequently, western frameworks are acknowledged while Indigenous frameworks are excluded. The acknowledgement of Indigenous contexts in which records were created or interpreted is imperative in order that the full provenance of these records remains unobscured.

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[32] Nesmith, "The Concept of Societal Provenance," 359.

Archives and Standards

Archival standards are a method by which archival theory is applied to records in practical and tangible ways. The standardization of records description is a key component in the creation of descriptive databases and systems. Archival standards and rules have typically been grounded in the principle of provenance and respect des fonds. In recent years, the standards have altered minutely to accommodate the changes in archival theory that are occurring, and the introduction of new technology that changes the way descriptive systems can operate.

Standards are a useful way in which archival descriptions can be collectively understood. Richard Dancy suggests that standardization "provides a common language that transcends institutional practice."[33] The ability to interpret archival description across institutions is important, as practices of archiving can vary significantly. Though some theorists, including Chris Hurley and Geoffrey Yeo, question whether a set of standards limits the way in which description can be creatively accessed, standards are generally regarded as necessary to create a common community of practice, and to better serve the users of archives, who often must work with records from multiple institutions.[34] There are a number of standards used by the archival community today including the *Rules for Archival Description* (RAD) in Canada; the *Manual for Archival Description* (MAD) in the United Kingdom; *Describing Archives: A Content Standard* (DACS) in the United States; and the ICA suite of standards, which are internationally recognized. In Canada, RAD and the ICA suite are most commonly used.

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[33]Richard Dancy, "RAD Past, Present, and Future," *Archivaria* 74, (2012): 8.
[34] Chris Hurley, "Parallel Provenance", 37 and Geoffrey Yeo, "Debates about Description", 98.

In 1983, the Society of American Archivists (SAA) endorsed *Machine Readable Catalogue Archives and Manuscripts Control* (MARC AMC) and *Archives, Personal Papers, and Manuscripts* (APPM) as a complementary pair, while in 1985 the *British Manual for Archival Description* was published in the United Kingdom.[35] In 1989, APPM and MAD were revised, prior to the creation of RAD. RAD was created in the early 1990s as a collective project of the Canadian archival community.[36] At the time of its creation, the standard was considered progressive, causing a ripple effect in the wider international community, with ICA following closely behind with the first of their standards. General International Standard Archival Description (ISAD (G)). RAD was created in the tradition of bibliographic/library standards, particularly based on the *Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules* (AACR2) and *International Standard Bibliographic Description* (ISBD (G)) which had been created in the early seventies. Richard Dancy notes that "There [was] no richer archival descriptive standard" prior to RAD. RAD follows the tradition of bibliographic and library cataloguing closely, but there are a few places when it deviates. RAD description is divided into several different areas; it is in the Archival description area and the Notes area where provenance and respect des fonds come into effect, which is troubling for current descriptive practices.

RAD was more all-encompassing that either the US or UK standards, and was able to build upon these earlier ones.[37] By using pre-existing standards and building on bibliographic standards, RAD allowed archivists to work within existing databases and systems like MARC.[38] In 2001 about a decade after the creation of RAD a group of

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[35] Dancy, "RAD Past, Present, and Future,"10; Ibid, 12.
[36] Ibid., 8.
[37] Ibid., 12.
[38] Ibid., 14.

Canadian and American archivists banded together in the Canada-US Task Force on

Archival Description or CUSTARD. CUSTARD attempted to create a new and improved

standard that could be used across North America and would replace both APPM and

RAD. However, in the end two separate documents were created, DACS and RAD2,

because of disagreements within CUSTARD.[39] RAD2 was meant to be a replacement for

the original RAD, but when it was circulated to Canadian archivists in 2004, very little

feedback was received in the eight months of circulation. The lack of feedback was

perceived as a lack of interest (because RAD was working fine as it was) and a lack of

agreement. RAD2, therefore, was never implemented.[40] In 2008 a revision of RAD

occurred and some elements of RAD2 were incorporated, but the 2008 revision of RAD

still leaned heavily on the original bibliographic format of AACR2 and ISBD (G).

Richard Dancy, in his critique of RAD, lists a number of problems that RAD faces and

argues that it is time to begin afresh, and that the 2008 revision of RAD should not be a

starting point. Rather he suggests that RAD2 should be the starting point.[41] The inability

to properly demonstrate provenance is one of the significant things that RAD does not

currently address. RAD is focused on descriptive work archival fonds and its supposedly

one creator. Which means that in a revision of RAD or creation of a new standard, the

ability to recognize and describe relationships between records that have multiple and

simultaneous multiple provenance as well as ambient to parallel and societal provenance

must be taken into consideration. The RAD definition of provenance limits "…the

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[39] Dancy, "RAD Past, Present, and Future", 20.
[40] Ibid., 22.
[41] Ibid., 23.

records created, accumulated, and/or maintained and used by an individual or corporate body."[42] This definition limits the various aspects of provenance to be described.

International Standard of Archival Description (General)

In 1993 the International Council of Archives released the General International Standard Archival Description (ISAD (G)). ISAD (G) was created with the benefit of the previous standards by the ICA Ad Hoc Commission on Descriptive Standards. The committee, amongst other ICA members, included two Canadians who had been involved in the creation of RAD, Hugo Stibbe and Kent Haworth. ISAD (G) was the first standard among a suite of standards that was released by the ICA. Later, in 1996, the International Standard Archival Authority records for Corporate Bodies, Persons and Families (ISAAR (CPF)) was released. In 2007 the International Standard for Describing Functions (ISDF) was released, and in 2008 the International Standard for Describing Institutions with Archival Holdings (ISDIAH) was released. Together ISAD (G), ISAAR (CPF), ISDF, and ISDIAH make up the ICA suite of descriptive standards. These systems are meant to complement each other.

The ICA suite of descriptive standards was created to be implemented in tandem with local and national standards that already existed. The ICA suite, unlike RAD, MAD, or DACS, ISAD(G), finally took the Australian Series system into consideration by separating the description of records and recordkeeping systems (accomplished through ISAD(G) and the description of records creators (through ISAAR(CPF)) .[43] The

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[42] "Rules for Archival Description" (Bureau of Canadian Archivists), accessed May 4, 2018, http://archivescanada.ca/uploads/files/Publications/RADComplete_July2008.pdf, xxiii.
[43] Dancy, "RAD Past, Present, and Future,"16.

separation of the description of the creator and record opens up possibilities for better description of records that have multiple or simultaneous multiple provenance because joining them simply reinforces the connections. Richard Dancy depicts ISAD (G) as the first of a wave of second-generation archival standards.[44]

ISAD (G) and RAD provide much of the same information but structure it differently. While RAD borrows its organization and structure from AACR2 and ISBD (G), ISAD (G) develops specific categories and sections for archival description. ISAD (G) signalled the intention to align archival standards with archival principles.[45] RAD, unlike ISAD (G), has a number of underutilized sections such as Edition Area and Publisher's Series Area, while relegating key aspects of archival description to the undifferentiated Notes Area.[46] Where RAD is large, all-encompassing, and includes detailed instructions in each area, ISAD (G) leaves detailed areas open for discussion so that national practices can work within the international standard.[47] The Canadians involved in the creation of ISAD (G), Stibbe and Haworth, hoped that RAD would fit perfectly into ISAD (G) and would continue to fit neatly under ISAD (G) in future revisions. Dancy suggests, however, that this was not as easy as they had imagined and that the failing of RAD2 proved that "…Stibbe's assessment was overly optimistic."[48]

The ICA introduced ISAAR (CPF) in 1996. It "… recognize[d] that information about creators is logically separate from information about records, and opened the way

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[44] Dancy, 16.
[45] Yeo, "Debates about Description", 96.
[46] Dancy, "RAD Past, Present, and Future,"17.
[47] Ibid., 18.
[48] Ibid.

to establishing collaborative databases of creator descriptions."[49] The ICA added two more descriptive standards that allowed it to follow archival principles and practices, which RAD was not entirely prepared to handle in the same way. ISDF was added in 2007, which aids the capture of context by describing functions, which Jean Dryden eloquently explains is necessary: "[G]iven the importance of function within archival and records management practice, it seemed important to develop a standard that would enable consistent description of functions within archival descriptive systems."[50] In addition to ISDF, ISDIAH was also added to the ICA suite of descriptive standards in 2008. ISDIAH is meant to capture the relationships between records, creators, archivists, and archives. Jean Dryden questions the necessity for a separate set of standards for this and suggests that it could be included elsewhere.[51] The multiple sets of standards creates confusion between rules and Dryden notes that ISDIAH itself recognizes the need for harmonization of the standards of the ICA suite. This is where *Records in Context: A Conceptual Model* for Archival Description enters, as a harmonized and improved version of the ICA suite of descriptive standards.

In 2016, a draft of *Records in Context: A Conceptual Model* for Archival Description Consultation (RiC-CM) was released. The ICA's Expert Group on Archival Description (EGAD) published the draft of RiC-CM for the ICA, which is intended to replace the existing ICA suite of standards. The ICA suite of standards includes, as described above, the General International Standard Archival Description (ISAD-G), International Standard Archival Authority Records for Corporate Bodies, Persons, and

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[49] Yeo, "Debates About Description", 97.
[50] Jean Dryden, "Two New ICA Descriptive Standards: ISDF and ISDIAH," *Journal of Archival Organization* 7, no. 3 (September 3, 2009), 130.
[51] Dryden, "Two New ICA Descriptive Standards: ISDF and ISDIAH", 131.

Families (ISAAR (CPF)), International Standard for Describing Institutions with

Archival Holdings (ISDIAH), and International Standard for Describing Functions

(ISDF). RiC-CM is intended to amalgamate and thereby replace the existing ICA

standards, and at the same time it will bring the standards in line with current archival

theory.

RiC-CM, though still in draft, will modernize descriptive standards for the

international archival community and allow descriptive practices to be inclusive of

advances and changes that have unfolded in the archival world. RiC-CM was created to

be all-inclusive rather than the multiple standards developed independently like the

current ICA standards. RiC-CM is the start of a new generation of archival standards that

take into account some of the ideas from Cook, Hurley, Nesmith and others who assert

that theory of provenance is much broader and more complex than previous standards

have allowed. RiC-CM is intended to create better data sharing and access between

multiple types of institutions and web applications in order to break down barriers of

access between cultures.[52] In addition to the conceptual model, an ontology will be

created. RiC-O is be intended to break down barriers of language between professions.

This will help data to be shared across institutions, particularly within electronic formats.

While technological advancements and software are also needed to create this

type of data exchange and sharing, a careful understanding and use of archival theory

should also be maintained. Terry Cook believed that a shared understanding of definitions

and clarity of archival terms and principles was integral to the creation of quality archival

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[52] Dunia Llanes-Padrón and Juan-Antonio Pastor-Sánchez, "Records in Contexts: The Road of Archives to Semantic Interoperability," *Program* 51, no. 4 (October 10, 2017): 387–405, .

standards.[53] Concerned about the lack of clarity in definitions and principles prior to RiC-CM, Cook believed that the nebulous character of archival definitions, and therefore standards, were troublesome and suggested that principles and concepts should be defined before a useful set of standards and practice can be created. Attempts have been made over the last ten to twenty years to clarify some of these nebulous concepts and principles. There is a need for better sharing of information, particularly in an electronic environment and in those cases shared understanding of practices for description is necessary so that consistent and responsible description occurs. Standards promote integration through frameworks like the Saskatchewan Archival Information Network (SAIN), Manitoba Archival Information Network (MAIN), and Archives Canada, and encourage the ease of movement of description into new technology solutions as they arise.[54] The hope is that RiC-CM will allow technological advances in semantic interoperability to occur, as digital interfacing and data sharing will be of utmost importance for the future of archiving. In a world that is increasingly digital, the need for a conceptual model that allows archives to interact with more than just professional archives is imperative.[55] The move towards electronic records and discussions of databases and linked data systems hinges on prioritizing intellectual arrangement over physical in the archival world.[56] In an electronic format, the physical arrangement is no

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[53] Cook, "The Concept of the Archival Fonds", 24.

[54] "Welcome to SAIN Collections - SAIN Collections," accessed May 5, 2018, http://sain.scaa.sk.ca/collections/;"Welcome to MAIN: Your Source for Manitoba's Documentary Heritage! - MAIN – Manitoba Archival Information Network," accessed May 5, 2018, https://main.lib.umanitoba.ca/; "Home," accessed May 5, 2018, http://www.archivescanada.ca/.

[55] Expert Group on Archival Description, "Records in Contexts: A Conceptual Model for Archival Description Consultation Draft" (International Council on Archives, 2016), http://www.ica.org/en/egad-ric-conceptual-model-ric-cm-01pdf, 2.

[56] Expert Group on Archival Description, "Records in Contexts: A Conceptual Model for Archival Description Consultation Draft", 5.

longer of utmost importance, and aggregations of records can be reorganized in a myriad

of ways. The ability to organize records in this way allows users of archives, including

archivists, to envision the records in unique ways and have better understandings of them.

RiC-CM facilitates the separation of arrangement from description, allowing each to be

more autonomous. Although this idea that has been discussed and researched many times,

it has not been fully realizable in other standards such as the Canadian Rules for Archival

Description (RAD). It is therefore important that RiC-CM considers intellectual

arrangement above physical arrangement.

In addition to prioritizing intellectual arrangement, RiC-CM is founded in archival

principles, and at its heart is the principle of provenance.[57] Including provenance as the

central foundation on which an archival standard is built is significant because of the

importance of contextual knowledge for maintaining a record or an aggregation of

records. By founding RiC-CM in provenance, EGAD has prioritized context as an

essential part of archival description.[58] As has been discussed previously in this chapter,

context varies and the archival community requires the ability to describe that context in

increasingly complex and in-depth ways. Hurley is committed to clarifying definitions

and creating better standardized description practices to allow the fullest capture of the

description of records and their context. Hurley's introduction of the concept of ambience

is integral to how he imagines description practices can be clarified.

Defining the ambience is the solution to the problem that parallel provenance

indicates. Parallel provenance is particularly relevant in the case of residential schools.

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[57] Ibid., 3.
[58] Ibid., 6.

Parallel provenance occurs when a record seemingly has two provenances that do not

appear to intersect. For residential school records, there can be the colonizing provenance

and the Indigenous provenance. Hurley writes that parallel provenance occurs when a

"…point of reference, from outside the description, which enables it to be located within

a framework (ambience)…" is missing.[59] That problem for the records of the residential

schools is a lack of a point of reference or ambience for settlers and Indigenous people in

Canada. The process of reconciliation in Canada is working towards finding that point of

reference or rather, ambience. In reality, however, it may be many years before common

ground and therefore an ambience for archival records can be discerned. Senator Murray

Sinclair has stated that "[r]esidential schools were with us for 130 years, until 1996.

Seven generations of children went to residential schools. It's going to take generations to

fix things."[60] Recognizing that parallel provenance exists in the records regarding

residential schools means archivists can acknowledge a problem exists and can actively

seek a solution.

In the wake of archivists like Hurley writing about broader context, or Nesmith

writing about societal provenance and more contextual knowledge, RiC-CM begins to

consider that the origins of records are more complex than simply attributing one creator

to one set of records.[61] There are multiple factors at play at all times, including social

contexts, multiple creators, various incarnations of a department, and the archivists' or

custodians' own impacts on records, post donation. RiC-CM, unlike its predecessors,

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[59] Ibid., 38.
[60] Dan Rubenstein, "From Truth and Reconciliation: Murray Sinclair at Carleton", *Carleton Stories,* Wednesday October 5, 2016, accessed May 28, 2018, https://carleton.ca/our-stories/story/truth-and-reconciliation-commission/
[61] Expert Group on Archival Description, "Records in Contexts: A Conceptual Model for Archival Description Consultation Draft", 6.

takes into account the societal provenance of records. It may allow for description of societal provenance and may provide opportunity for archival description to be inclusive of cultures beyond western and colonial cultures. The consideration of RiC-CM and RiC-O will hopefully also lend itself to use by other professions, in addition to the archival community, as a way to describe managed information. In particular, the hope is that Information and Records Managers will benefit and be able to better communicate and work in tandem with archivists to create a cohesive process of information capture in description over the records' life cycle, rather than attempting to piece descriptions together once records have reached the archives at the end of their life.[62] Working with records managers over the life cycle of a record allows description to occur actively rather than retrospectively.[63] EGAD concludes: "RiC-CM is intended to enable a fuller, if forever incomplete, description of the contexts in which records emerge and exist, so as to enable multiple perspectives and multiple avenues of access."[64]

The Digital World, Linked Data, and Archives

Digital content and electronic environments are the future of archives. There have been advances in technology that could open up possibilities to archives. Consideration of types of provenance and practices open up opportunities to re-envision the way that description occurs and the way in which digital databases operate. Database operations have changed and continue to change as the hierarchical way of arranging a database

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[62] Ibid., 2.
[63] Ibid., 5.
[64] Expert Group on Archival Description, "Records in Contexts: A Conceptual Model for Archival Description Consultation Draft", 9.

physically is no longer required. In fact, a hierarchical framework hinders understanding

of the complex nature of the relationships between records and records creation and

collection.[65] The solution in the late 20th century was the creation of authority records,

separating creators and collectors from the records themselves. Max Evans discusses

authority control in a 1986 article, asserts that "…archivists, when applying the principle

of provenance, have often failed to distinguish between . . . information about

organizations and . . . data about the records themselves."[66] Evans sees the authority

record as a way to separate information relating to a record from the information of the

record itself.[67] Scott's concept of multiple provenance opened up the ability to separate

this information within archival theory and practice.

Identifying various types of provenance was challenging to traditional archival

practices and theories, particularly since these types of provenance affect arrangement

and description processes. One significant change that complex provenance and

electronic records have introduced is that arrangement and description are no longer

inseparable. In fact, arrangement can be unlinked from description and be a more

intellectual concept, and is no longer based on physical location.

Prior to the late 20th century, archival theory was mono-hierachical and did not

include the possibility of more than one creator or provenance.[68] The idea of ambience is

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[65] Chris Hurley, "ICA Experts Group on Archival Description: Records in Contexts Draft Standard Released for Public Comment," Google Groups, *Archives and Records Australia*, November 9, 2016, https://groups.google.com/forum/#!search/expert$20group$20on$20archival$20desciption/archives-and-records-australia/3z_O3PDkHpE/93f-bucBBAAJ.

[66] Max J. Evans, "Authority Control: An Alternative to the Record Group Concept," *The American Archivist* 49, no. 3 (1986): 251.

[67]Ibid., 256.

[68] Hurley, "Parallel Provenance." Hurley refers to archival structures that focus on only one creator and provenance mono-hierarchical; archival systems often are still mono-hierarchical because it is only recently

particularly implementable in a digital environment that requires careful consideration of the metadata that accompanies a digital object. If we consider simultaneous multiple provenance, parallel provenance, and multiple provenance, then archival systems and databases can be created that are not mono-hierarchical but more of a web of linkages.

Linked Data

In 2006 Tim Berners-Lee introduced the concept of Linked Data. The concept reimagines how the web operates. Linked data takes raw data from several sources and brings it together into a relational system in which the data can be understood in whatever order is necessary. Linked data is structured into what are called triples, and included in a package of triples are the subject, the predicate, and the object.[69] The triple provides the object as well as the necessary context of the records. Being able to link data to other raw data provides more context about the objects through expression of the relationships that data shares.

Relationships among records are important, and in the past have not always been clear. If multiple archives can share information and raw description data, then relationships of records could be expressed in tangible and visual ways, not to mention that there are innumerable ways in which expression of record relationships could be represented. The linking of data occurs with a Resource Description Framework (RDF) that links URIs of multiple objects (or in the case of archives, records) to each other

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that practical concepts for use of the simultaneous multiple provenance have been developed. See Victoria Lemieux and RiC-CM.

[69]Jinfang Niu explains well what the subject, predicate, and object are in the fourth footnote of her article, Jinfang Niu, "Linked Data for Archives," *Archivaria* 82, (2016): 84.

within the RDF. A query language, which is a set vocabulary, is then applied to the RDF

in order for interoperability to occur. RDF triples are then converted into a machine

readable format like XML, Turtle, or N3 so that information can be exchanged on the

web.[70] What is missing from the creation of these complex and technical systems for data

sharing is the ability of the average person to interface easily with the searches. The

query languages themselves have specific ways in which queries can be created, and it is

important than that proper interfaces be created to maximize the use of the query

languages and RDF. The budding potential is that, with a bit of creativity and the right

user interfaces and tools, anything is possible. The data can be arranged and rearranged in

whatever manner the creator of the interface chooses. These possibilities will be

particularly pertinent in cultural settings, as different cultural groups will be able to

control raw data in ways that they feel is appropriate.

This potential is particularly relevant as Canadians pursue reconciliation with

Indigenous populations. Indigenous communities would have the ability to use archival

data and arrange and display it in ways that they choose without having to own or hold

the records in separate repositories. Linked data for the archival community may mean

that, if archives can share the raw data of description, interfaces may be created to

harness that data and display it in new, unique ways. Linked data has the ability to aid

description of provenance by accompanying each record into a system with the proper

metadata so that archival principles can be preserved. Using the sharing of triples

maintains the subject, object and predicate, in doing so metadata is maintained. If

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[70] Niu, "Linked Data for Archives", 84.

archival institutions are able to share raw description data, relationships between records of multiple institutions can be more clearly represented.

Linked data potentially creates several advantages for archives. One is the ability to share and access data across institutions, allowing archives, libraries, museums, and records management as well as other information managing entities to share data with some ease and common understandings. This ability would allow description of records to begin before they reach an archive, which offers a potential for greater capture of a richer provenance of a record.

Databases and Representational Systems

In addition to the opportunities that the semantic web offers for archival description, digital technologies already allow archival databases to be created differently. By acknowledging that archival description need not hinge on physical arrangement but intellectual, and that databases can be multi-hierarchical rather than mono-hierarchical, archivists can reimagine the operation of databases.

Hurley, Nesmith, and Cook have all re-examined the way in which provenance knowledge or context of records creation can affect the practice of records description. Hurley, in particular, stressed that the existence of records is fluid and that provenance accumulates at each point of use or interaction. Greg Bak explores the idea of fluidity of records in his article, "Continuous Classification: Capturing Dynamic Relationships among Information Resources".[71] Bak suggests that recordkeeping is itself a form of

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[71] Greg Bak, "Continuous Classification: Capturing Dynamic Relationships among Information Resources", *Archival Science* (2012): 287-318.

records creation and that records, once acquired by a records management system (whether analogue or electronic), continue to change and form over time and use. He posits that records are classified many times over, not just once, as some would argue. Additionally, Bak points out that Electronic Records Management Systems (ERMS) are environments in which recognition of these changes can occur and be captured, by capturing the appropriate metadata. He refers to this system as continuous record formation and continuous classification. Item level search and description is much more useful to the user and eliminates the tendency to duplicate documents in the way that single choice classification forces people to do. Continuous classification of records allows provenance of the archivist's role to be unobscured. Item level search and description is a more accessible way for researchers to search for what they want. The concept of easier search and more specific answers runs parallel to the idea of more specific search via linked data and RDF.

As the use of linked data and the semantic web gain traction in the world of the internet, there have been advancements in thinking about descriptive frameworks for archives. In addition to Bak's work, Victoria Lemieux's work explores how ontologies and graph technologies could be better applied as a descriptive method instead of the current practices of hierarchical trees and taxonomies. Lemieux offered a practical re-envisioning of a digital descriptive framework.

Lemieux considers what it means to challenge the current frameworks for arrangement and description, and critiques in particular the lack of discussion of digital and electronic frameworks. Lemieux cited many authors who also suggest that archivists have radically changed the way that records are understood and what it means to arrange

and describe records. She presents a conceptual model using ontology theory to create better relationships between records, their creators, and society, and more flexibility and movement for new relationships and understanding to emerge.[72] Lemieux's ideas synchronize well with the idea of linked data. More ontologies would allow raw descriptive data to be more easily used by an RDF and semantic web interface. In addition to allowing archives to more aptly represent the relationships of records, the semantic web also allows the provenance of records within their own databases to be clear.

RiC-CM, hopefully, will usher archives into a new world that offers greater opportunity to properly express description of provenance of records within databases. RiC-CM is positioned to allow archival databases to encompass the changes that have occurred in understandings of key archival principles over the last decade, most significantly regarding the principle of provenance. The principles of respect des fonds, original order, and provenance play important roles in the practical description of records and the creation of databases and search frameworks. A number of archivists over the last fifty years have worked hard to understand and clarify what the key principles are, and provenance has been acknowledged as one of them. As Terry Cook pointed out, there was very little agreement among archivists about what provenance was and that needed to be remedied. Chris Hurley has helped to clarify what role provenance plays in the descriptive processes of archives and has tried, successfully, to build upon the progressive ideas of Peter Scott. Hurley has presented a much more complex, fluid, and

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[72] Victoria L. Lemieux, "Toward a 'Third Order' Archival Interface: Research Notes on Some Theoretical and Practical Implications of Visual Explorations in the Canadian Context of Financial Electronic Records," *Archivaria* 78, (2014): 88.

all-encompassing vision of provenance to the archival community. Nesmith has offered up his own take on the complexities of provenance, highlighting the role that culture and society play in the creation and use of archives. Within the context of a more complex and encompassing view of provenance, thanks to Nesmith and Hurley among others, description becomes more than a mono-hierarchical practice; it must consider multiple provenance for single records and allow multiple relationships among records to be represented and understood. It must aim for a full understanding of the history of the records in question. RAD, and ISAD (G) may have been the gold standard for description frameworks at the end of the last century but they do not fully allow description of multi-hierarchical and multi provenancial records to thrive.

Archives should be able to take advantage of technological advances to re-imagine arrangement and description. RiC-CM and RiC-O are promising signs that this may happen but, so far, we have not seen archives making extensive use of linked data; without such experimentation it is difficult to see where the possibilities will lead. The possibilities for access and representation of fonds and collections seem endless with properly administered linked data systems and ontologically based databases in archives. In light of RiC-CM, others must take note and also move forward.

Conclusion

Changes in the conceptualization of the principle of provenance affect, for the better, the way that records are contextualized. The several types of provenance identified in chapter two allow valuable context to be captured in new ways. Recognition of the importance of

adding complexity to provenance and clarifying the agreed-upon understanding of what provenance is allows archives to better preserve history. Expanding the complexity of provenance has meant that representational systems for archival descriptions have also had to change. Lemieux's "Third Order" representations of records aggregations demonstrates how multi-relational records representations might express simultaneous multiple provenance, multiple provenance, parallel provenance. The mono-hierarchical databases that are the modus operandi of current practice obscures relationships between records and subsequently the provenance of those records. New standards and technology that operate with Hurley's and Nesmith's concepts of provenance in mind allow for a greater understanding of records. Greater understanding of provenance facilitates better context realization of records like those of the residential schools.

Chapter Three: Archival Practices and Indigenous Ways of Knowing

Introduction

Memory is a powerful tool, deeply connected to history. Memory is the way in which past experience informs future experiences. Memory is the context within which people understand their daily life, personal in nature. Groups of people form collective memories that become the basis of mutual understanding and cultural identity. Historians did not begin to consider collective memory as a lens with which to view history until the early twentieth century when war and other atrocities caused people to grapple with understanding their identities and worldview in light of difficult circumstances. It was not until Maurice Halbwachs introduced the idea of collective memory that its agency became part of more general discourse. In the latter half of the twentieth century, social history also began to emerge around the events of the Second World War and the Holocaust. With the emergence of social history, the significance of collective memory in the study of history also emerged. Jeannette Bastian notes that "[t]he collective memory of a group of people whether a family, a community, or a nation at a particular moment in time is generally manifested through such forms of commemoration as monuments, parades, websites, books, exhibits, storytelling, or traditional gatherings like Thanksgiving."[1]

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[1] Jeannette A. Bastian, "Flowers for Homestead: A Case Study in Archives and Collective Memory," *The American Archivist* 72, no. 1 (2009): 116.

Memory Keeping

In archives the archivist is a formative figure in the preservation of history or the narratives that are remembered. Archivists have traditionally been viewed as objective gatekeepers; however, over the last thirty years writers like Cook, Nesmith, and Hurley have highlighted the necessity of recognizing the position that archivists hold. The objective archivist is a western concept, and has caused non-western European cultural records to be misunderstood, underrepresented and misrepresented in archives. It has also caused non-European and Indigenous researchers to be deterred and turned off by archives. In 2013 Cook examined the role of objectivity and the recognition of agency of the archivist in keeping history. Cook suggested that archivists should follow the example of similar academic fields and embrace the discussion of the archivists' role in the formation of history.[2]

Hugh Taylor conjures an image of a stereotypical archive, "… built in the Gothic manner suggestive of the inns of court and the glories of Tudor England, but this popular symbol of heritage belied a stern interior which may have often daunted the enthusiastic amateur lacking in scholarly attainments. Documents remained remote from the people and the dusty old archivist continued to be the stereotype."[3] Taylor's description indicates the autocratic and imperious roots that archives derive from and the accompanying lack of understanding for non-European cultures. The imperious nature of a custodial archive is static, limited, and unchanging. This image is unlike the reality of memory itself,

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[2]Terry Cook, "Evidence, Memory, Identity, and Community", 97.
[3] Hugh A. Taylor, "The Collective Memory: Archives and Libraries as Heritage," *Archivaria* 15 (January 1, 1982): 120.

unlike the nature of non-western cultural ways of memory keeping, and arguably unlike the nature of archival records as well.

The tradition of the archivist as an objective keeper of history hinges on the idea that archives collect "evidence", with evidence defined by the European concept of paper documents and written words. However, in the post-custodial world an archive that defines what evidence looks like is limiting. Cook suggests "[t]his evidence-memory dichotomy—a kind of fractured schizophrenia— precludes a holistic identity within the archival profession and therefore inhibits presenting a coherent and convincing message to our many actual and potential publics, or even to our sponsors. It blinds us equally to possible synergies between these apparent dichotomies and across their paradigms."[4]

Embracing change within archival identities allows archivists to engage with new ideas and technologies, and to engage with those who may want to use the archive for unimagined possibilities.[5] In western European culture, memory has come to be considered an unstable form of evidence: "…to the roots of individual's memories, on which social memory depends and of which most historical sources are composed. We know very little about it except that it is usually bad. There has been an enormous amount of work in recent years by psychologists, which combines to undermine our faith in memory even further. In the work of a psychologist such as Alan Baddeley, it resembles a trick mechanism for evading awkward facts, as much as a trap for capturing them."[6] In other words, humans tend to remember history as we want to remember it. This

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[4] Cook, "Evidence, Memory, Identity, and Community", 100.
[5] Ibid., 112.
[6] Felipe Fernandez-Armesto, "Epilogue: What Is History Now?," in *What Is History Now?*, ed. David Cannadine (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002), 156.

"convenient oblivion"[7] complicates the attempt to objectively capture static ideas of the

past that the western European academic culture glorifies.

Brien Brothman suggests that memory is understood to exist separately from time,

but understanding memory like that can be problematic, "[t]he potentially controversial

claim here is that memory does not preserve a separate past. Rather, memory colonizes–

that is, continually construes–the past as an integral component of a perpetual present."[8]

Cook wrote, "[t]he border between impartial archives, on the one hand, and researcher or

societal interpretation of the archive, on the other, may well be a good deal more porous

and interactive than often supposed." As many postmodern archival thinkers have

effectively illustrated, archival records are not static, but fluid; therefore, archives

themselves are also fluid and changing.[9] While the image and depiction of archivists in

Canadian culture is changing for the positive, archival practice must also change.[10]

What has previously been ignored is the possibility that memory performs a

different function, and is kept by different means, within different cultures. The image of

an archive as an autocratic, static, white, and European institution disinherits a multitude

of other cultures and possible ways in which memories are kept or history is remembered.

Raymond Frogner demonstrates well in his article the necessity of context and

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[7] Felipe Fernandez-Armesto, "Epilogue: What Is History Now?," in *What Is History Now?*",156.

[8] Brien Brothman, "The Past That Archives Keep: Memory, History, and the Preservation of Archival Records," *Archivaria* 51, (2001): 63.

[9] Nesmith, "The Concept of Societal Provenance and Records of Nineteenth-Century Aboriginal–European Relations in Western Canada." And Brothman, "The Past That Archives Keep." And Sue McKemmish and Michael Piggott, "Toward the Archival Multiverse: Challenging the Binary Opposition of the Personal and Corporate Archive in Modern Archival Theory and Practice," *Archivaria* 76, (2013): 111–14.

[10] Chantel Fehr, "Novel Ideas: Archives in English-Canadian Literary Life and Fiction, 1960-2017," (master's thesis, University of Manitoba/ University of Winnipeg, Archival Studies), September 12, 2017, http://mspace.lib.umanitoba.ca/xmlui/handle/1993/32571.

provenance: "[d]uring the course of Canadian Aboriginal/European encounter, the

dominant paradigm of historical narrative was textual documentation: orderly

provenance, a prescribed relationship to source material, linear narrative, and textual

materiality."[11] Frogner's divergent analysis of the history of the North Saanich Treaty

gives a counter perspective to the colonial perspective by demonstrating that Indigenous

memory keeping of the treaty is more reliable and authentic than the western

documentary evidence.

Indigenous ways of knowledge keeping must be recognized as equally valid. At

the international level, recognition of the need to protect traditional knowledge is

identified by the United Nations. *The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of*

Indigenous People (UNDRIP) states in article 31:

> 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. 12 2. In conjunction with indigenous peoples, States shall take effective measures to recognize and protect the exercise of these rights.[12]

In Canada the TRC echoes article 31 in its *Calls to Action* and directs the Canadian

archival community to refer to UNDRIP when doing reconciliation work in archives. Call

to Action number seventy specifically identifies the valuable role that archives play in

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[11] Raymond Frogner, "'Innocent Legal Fictions': Archival Convention and the North Saanich Treaty of 1852," *Archivaria* 70, (2010): 53.
[12] United Nations, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,* 2011.

maintaining, controlling, protecting and developing traditional knowledge and culture.

Call 70 states:

> We call upon the federal government to provide funding to the Canadian Association of Archivists to undertake, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, a national review of archival policies and best practices to:
>
> i. Determine the level of compliance with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the United Nations Joinet-Orentlicher Principles, as related to Aboriginal peoples' inalienable right to know the truth about what happened and why, with regard to human rights violations committed against them in the residential schools.
>
> ii. Produce a report with recommendations for full implementation of these international mechanisms as a reconciliation framework for Canadian archives.[13]

Call 70 encourages Canadian archivist to recognize their important role in reconciliation work. In the spirit of reconciliation in Canada, then, it is time for archives to consider other ways of knowing as legitimate means of maintaining social memory and keeping history.

Collective Knowledge and Indigenous ways of Knowing

The way that collective knowledge is kept differs between cultures. In some cultures, memory keeping is deeply connected to spiritual life and tied to personal identity. In Cree culture, for example, memory is embedded in narrative storytelling. This storytelling is not merely entertainment, but a way of passing on cultural identity and spiritual teachings. Elders play an integral part in the keeping of knowledge and story-telling. Winona Wheeler indicates the importance of an Elder saying, "The most learned of teachers among us is kisêyiniw, 'an Elder'." Wheeler continues to describe in detail

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[13] Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Calls to Action,* (2015): 8.

what it means to be an Elder and the role they play in Indigenous Culture, particularly for the Cree:

> That's what kiséyiniw means—to encircle oneself around or over one's young. That's what a true Elder does, they encircle themselves around, or hover around, their children or grandchildren." The words kiséyiniw and kiséwew are closely related to kisêwatisiwin, which means "kindness, compassion, empathy.[14]

Songs and prayers are tools used by Cree as well as other First Nations in Canada for memory keeping.[15] These tools, are unfamiliar to Eurocentric academic culture, that continues to favour written language and so-called hard evidence to legitimize knowledge. Oral history is gradually being recognized as a legitimate source of knowledge; this change is an important one, since oral tradition is a key part of maintaining collective knowledge for many people.[16]

Brothman suggests that ways of remembering formulate what memory and our past is, should allow more ways of remembering to exist. He writes, "[n]ew opportunities and rewards for archivists may well lie in the manifold areas of cognitive science and cognitive technology as well as in beginning to understand the cognitive aspects of making, keeping, and using records."[17] Neil McLeod writes that Cree oral stories were used "…as a way of bridging the eternity of the past and the forever of the future with the infinity of the moment."[18] Oral history told through narrative memory is how the Cree maintain their collective identity and culture.

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[14] Winona Wheeler, "Cree Intellectual Traditions in History" Finkel, Alvin, Carter, Sarah, and Fortna, Peter, eds. *The West and Beyond: New Perspectives on an Imagined Region*, (2010): 48.
[15] Neil McLeod, *Cree Narrative Memory: From Treaties to Contemporary Times*. (Saskatoon: Purich Publishing Limited, 2007, 9. (2007): 9.
[16] McLeod, *Cree Narrative Memory* 10.
[17] Brothman, "The Past That Archives Keep", 79.
[18] McLeod, *Cree Narrative Memory*, 54.

Being able to adequately describe Indigenous knowledge in archives requires careful description that is not limited to the Eurocentric way in which archives have typically operated. Nesmith's concept of societal provenance plays a significant role in an archives' ability to properly describe Indigenous records. Consideration of cultural context and understanding of the culture provides unique context in which the records themselves are understood. McLeod demonstrates the need for cultural context in describing throughout his book the way in which he understands Treaty Six through the Cree tradition of narrative stories that have been passed down to him. "In Cree tradition, collective narrative memory is what puts our singular lives into a larger context."[19]

Similarly, Aimee Craft demonstrates in her book the necessity of context through an examination of Anishinabe traditions around Treaty One.[20] In a 1986 article Jean Friesen argues that although Indigenous people were recognized as part of the treaty making process, very little agency was attributed to them: "[f]or most of these twentieth century interpreters, the treaties are viewed not as a 'sacred commitment' but as tragic examples of 'misunderstanding' or of the ignorance of Indian leaders."[21] Friesen's article clarifies that although Indigenous people were in a dire situation, they still had political autonomy and strategies with which they approached the treaty process.[22] Building on Friesen's perspective, Craft demonstrates that the Anishinabe people had agency in the signing of Treaty One. Arguing that the Anishinabe had a long tradition of creating

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[19] Ibid., 11.
[20] Aimee Craft, *Breathing Life Into The Stone For Treaty: An Anishinabe Understanding of Treaty One* (Saskatoon: Purich Publishing Ltd., 2013).
[21] Jean Friesen, "Magnificent Gifts: The Treaties of Canada with the Indians of the Northwest 1869-1876," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, no. 1 (1986): 42.
[22] Friesen, "Magnificent Gifts: The Treaties of Canada", 43.

treaties, and that prior to the numbered treaties there were existing practices for interactions with settlers, Craft writes: "[o]ver the course of two centuries, a culture of trade treaties, based in part on Anishinabe laws, developed into a template for interaction with Europeans."[23] Craft explains that the Anishinabe did not believe that the land itself could be given or owned; rather, it was the resources on the land that were valuable: "It is possible then to conceive that Treaty One was understood by the Anishinabe not as a surrender of land, but as an agreement to share the land and its resources in the following way: plots of agriculture land for the White Settlers and continued use of the land for harvesting by the Anishinabe." [24]

Many of the archival records descriptions that constitute evidence of relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada do not include such voices of Indigenous peoples; indeed they are often entirely ignored. Records are described almost entirely from the perspective of non-Indigenous settlers. In this way Indigenous people are devalued and subjugated. The colonization of the First Nations people centres on the privilege given to European ways of knowing and knowledge keeping. Referring to the North Saanich Treaty, Frogner underlines this focus on European traditions: "… a diplomatic study reveals important details about the creation of this unusual document, but it is silent on the native role in the making of the record."[25] This silence on the native role is common in the Indigenous treaties. Treaty six states:

> It is further agreed between Her Majesty and Her said Indians, that such sections of the reserves above indicated as may at any time be required for public works or buildings, of what nature soever, may be appropriated for that purpose by Her

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[23] Craft, *Breathing Life Into The Stone For Treaty: An Anishinabe Understanding of Treaty One* 28.
[24] Ibid., 61.
[25] Frogner, "'Innocent Legal Fictions'", 59.

Majesty's Government of the Dominion of Canada, due compensation being made for the value of any improvements thereon.[26]

This section of the treaty gives control of land use to the Crown, leaving Indigenous people of the Treaty six territory at the mercy of the Crown. The later signing of the treaty also indicates a lack of respect for Indigenous traditions, as the Cree were "given" English names in order to conform to English ideas. Often Indigenous people did not have the ability to sign their names in English or an alternative form of written language, therefore Xs were used to represent the Indigenous signatory. The Xs that are used to sign the treaty were meant to give First Nations people a way to sign their consent. However, the validity of the Xs are questioned because the stories passed down through generations of First Nations people tell of scenarios in which writing implements were touched by an Indigenous person while a non-Indigenous person made an X on their behalf.[27] Similarly Frogner calls into question the Xs signed on the North Saanich treaty which "were 'signed' by the 118 Aboriginal participants with a suspiciously uniform 'X'; absent is any form of qualification of signature (unlike the qualifications for the witnessing signatures of Douglas's clerks)."[28] The Xs were in a sense a false impression of acquiescence, but are accepted as the way in which the treaty is given validity. The case of Xs signed in lieu of a signature, is just one example of how Indigenous cultures were subjugated and considered "less than". It is part of the colonial narrative overwriting the Indigenous narrative. As McLeod observes, "[a] dominated group loses some of its narratives, while a dominant group attempts to oppose its own."[29] Another obvious example it that of the

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[26] Treaty Six, http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100028710/1100100028783. Accessed March 23, 2018

[27] McLeod, *Cree Narrative Memory*, 37.

[28] Frogner, "'Innocent Legal Fictions'", 66.

[29] McLeod, *Cree Narrative Memory*, 54.

residential school system which sought to overwrite Indigenous narratives by physically and mentally stripping culture away from Indigenous children.

Language, culture, tradition, and religion were intentionally taken from First Nations people to promote assimilation and enact cultural genocide. What is absent in non-Indigenous contexts is that Indigenous people still worked within the confines of suppression. McLeod suggests that those who kept their language and continued to share traditional stories were subverting the work of assimilation and resisting the poor treatment they received from the British and Canadian government.[30] In the area of what is now Saskatchewan, the Cree were one of the groups that signed Treaty Six and agreed to settle on reserves and give up their nomadic lifestyle. This was not an easy act for the Cree, who have deep ties and spiritual connections to the land. The land figures significantly in Cree narrative memory. It connects them physically with their way of life and part of their spatial identity. When "removed from the land and therefore their connection to the land and therefore their spiritual ties" the loss of their land resulted in spiritual exile.[31] The deep spiritual land connections of Indigenous cultures is misunderstood in colonial and non-Indigenous viewpoints.

This lack of understanding by non-Indigenous people is just one way of demonstrating the need for Indigenous people to be involved in describing and therefore archiving Indigenous records. For McLeod, the loss of their land demonstrates just how desperate the Cree had become. Those who signed the treaty believed that it was the best way to survive. What is also missed is the agency (or provenance) of Indigenous people

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[30] McLeod, *Cree Narrative Memory*, 55.
[31] Ibid., 58.

of Canada within the treaty process. The context in which Cree people viewed the treaties was and is through strong kinship relations and family connections, in which Cree and other First Nations situate themselves and from which they derive their identity. The Queen was seen as a caring, grandmother figure offering to care for the First Nations in their time of need, "…as the Great Spirit had supplied the Indians with plenty of buffalo for food until the Whiteman came, and as that means of support was about to fail them, the Government ought to take the place of the Great Spirit, and provide the Indians with the means of living in some other way"[32]

Similarly, the Anishinabe, during Treaty One negotiations, were assured that Lieutenant-Governor Archibald couched the negotiations in language indicating that Indigenous people were children and the Queen would act as a mother and take care of them: "she thinks this would be the best thing for her Red Children to do, that it would make them safer from famine and sickness, and make their homes more comfortable."[33] For the Anishinabe, the invocation of the Queen as mother brought a much deeper context to the treaty negotiations. For the Anishinabe, viewing the Queen as the "great mother" obligated the Queen and Crown to treat the Anishinabe with love, kindness, and respect. There is a context of unconditional love attached to the Great Mother that was then attributed to the Queen.[34] Within this context of unconditional love, the Crown is negotiators failed to hold up their end of the treaty. The colonial narrative misunderstood the agreements and relationships that they were building.

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[32] McLeod, *Cree Narrative Memory*, 25.
[33] Craft, *Breathing Life Into The Stone For Treaty*, 51.
[34] Ibid., 88-89.

On the prairies, the events of the North-West resistance in 1885 featured Mistahi-maskwa (Big Bear), viewed as a rebel by the Canadian government and a divisive figure even amongst the Cree, because he recognized the heinous nature of Treaty One and fought to rectify it.[35] The death of Mistahi-Maskwa in 1888 is considered to be the end of strong Cree leadership and resistance to assimilation. The Cree have a word for this period of history, *ê-mâyahkamikahk,* which means *where it when wrong*. The Cree continue to use their language as resistance stories continue to be told and names given to events and places often indicate the cultural memory of those places. In the same way that the name for the period of resistance is called *where it went wrong*, the words for reserve in Cree are *askîhkân,* meaning *fake land*, and *iskanikan* meaning *leftovers*.[36] The Cree words give a deeper meaning with more context to the word reserve than just the English word. In the Anishinabe language, the word for reserve is *ishkonigan* which translates as leftovers and denotes that there was dismay with the results of the negotiations.[37] However, Aimee Craft quotes Elder Harry Bone, who then explains that *ishkonigan* is derived from *gigii-mii-ishkonaamin* which means *we left this land aside for ourselves.*

These words, along with the meaning and history that they bring to current discussion, are an example of why societal provenance is integral and cultural context is absolutely imperative. The English words reserve or resistance do not carry the same weight as the Cree or Anishnabe words. Without this language, a non-Indigenous person could not possibly know the true context or indeed the gravity of an Indigenous record or

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[35] McLeod, *Cree Narrative Memory*, 52.
[36] McLeod, *Cree Narrative Memory*, 57.
[37] Craft, *Breathing Life Into The Stone For Treaty,* 63.

records that contain Indigenous knowledge. Therefore, Indigenous people and voices

must be a part of the appraisal and descriptive process of an archive that handles

Indigenous records.[38] Canadian history has viewed treaties from within European

tradition, which is why the First Nations who were involved in the creation of the treaties

are viewed as having been managed or duped in some way.[39] Friesen writes, "[e]motion,

political ideology, and Christianity have combined to make our collective sense of these

treaties more of a lamentation than a systematic historical and intellectual appreciation."[40]

Friesen suggests that if we can understand the context within which the treaties were

negotiated from both Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives, we can better

understand the treaties themselves. The same is true of other archival records that

document settler-Indigenous interactions, including those of the residential school

system. In archives, respect and authority must be applied to all records, and description

must be as detailed as necessary in order to include the necessary context and ambience

of a record, especially when records have parallel provenance. Identifying records, such

as the treaties, that have parallel and societal provenance is crucial for understanding

where reconciliation needs to happen.

Written records have been trusted by settler Canadians over oral histories and

other forms of social memory. The tendency to trust written language arises from the

European culture of written language, and from traditions of legal proceedings dependent

on written documents. In "Innocent Legal Fictions", Raymond Frogner examines the

validity of the written versus the symbolic and oral legalities of the North Saanich Treaty.

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[38] Frogner, "'Innocent Legal Fictions'", 54.
[39] Friesen, "Magnificent Gifts: The Treaties of Canada", 42.
[40] Friesen, "Magnificent Gifts: The Treaties of Canada", 42.

Frogner suggested archives need to consider that written records do not necessarily deserve the trust that is ascribed to them. First Nations' ways of knowing and other ways of knowledge keeping should also be considered as evidentiary and "true", and given the same level of respect as non-Indigenous practices. Oral histories should be treated with the same sense of truth and power. Frogner concludes: "The HBC documentary remembrance of the North Saanich Treaty is reliably preserved in a public archives; the WSÁNEĆ oral testimony is authenticated through generations of testimonial witness. Both offer different perspectives that demand acknowledgement."[41] Numerous people and oral narratives can attest to the truth of a history in a way that a document written by one person cannot because of the ability to create what Frogner calls "legal fictions". Written documents do not necessarily relay the truth of a matter.

It should not be assumed that written documents are more objective than an oral history. There are many ways history can be remembered. In addition to oral tradition, context and knowledge can be delivered through symbolism, as Frogner demonstrates: "[t]he treaty was couched in languages of tradition and authority on both sides. In this view, Native peoples negotiated the treaties to obtain some leverage (i.e., power) to resist the intrusion of cultural pluralism."[42] Frogner points out that European cultures had a time when written language was not given the power it now holds.[43]

Oral history and symbolism can provide context and understanding to a historical narrative in ways that written documents may not be able to. Archives should therefore

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[41] Frogner, "'Innocent Legal Fictions'", 82.
[42] Ibid., 80.
[43] Ibid., 85.

work to change their view of what is evidentiary value and preserve a more encompassing cultural narrative by including more Indigenous records, which are not necessarily written documents. Those records should also be given appropriate descriptions to document the context in which they have been preserved, and treated with ethical sensitivity. Archives have resisted to being inclusive of the ways of knowing of other cultures because of the Eurocentric traditions in which western archives were created, which harken back to old ideas of textual records as the bedrock of evidence for history. Frogner echoes the idea saying that "… important archival concepts have developed to resolve contested evidence of rights and authority; that 'the first archival definition of records … clearly referred to records as sources of proof of rights …'" and goes on to say that is possible for traditionally authentic records can be unreliable.[44] In order to present Indigenous archives appropriately, and in a decolonized form, Indigenous people must be a part of every aspect of archiving from appraisal to preservation.[45] Archivist Sarah Story writes in regards to Indigenous people in Winnipeg:

> There is a danger in claiming that the absence of Indigenous histories of Winnipeg is based upon the fact that their perspectives and stories are untold, hidden or overlooked in settler narratives of the city. As Jean O'Brien has pointed out, while Indigenous people have always used narratives to understand their worlds, 'Indigenous agency in producing historical narratives have been rarely accorded a place of legitimacy in the formal discipline of history.'[46]

This suggests that there is not a lack of Indigenous narratives, perspectives, or histories but rather a lack of acceptance of their validity within academic circles. The discussion of

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[44] Frogner, "Innocent Legal Fictions", 87.

[45] Sarah Story, "Offering our Gifts, Partnering for Change: Decolonizing Experimentation in Winnipeg-based Settler Archives" (Master's thesis, University of Manitoba/ University of Winnipeg, Archival Studies, 2017), 54.

[46] Ibid., 77.

how to be inclusive in the academic community is beginning to happen. Story says,

"There was also general agreement that while the study of settler colonialism enriches

discussions of history, race and political economy, it is vital that Indigenous perspectives,

such as those speaking to issues of decolonization and resurgence, be centralized in

authorship to reveal diverse Indigenous worldviews, perspectives and agency."[47] Oral

histories and Indigenous records have the potential to re-introduce perspectives currently

lacking in Canadian history, as Story's thesis demonstrates: "The oral histories recorded

by PHAID [Preserving the History of Aboriginal Institutional Development] can shift

thinking about Winnipeg as a settler-created space to one that has always been

Indigenous in spite of contemporary forced removals".[48]

Indigenous ways of knowledge keeping and knowing have not disappeared. There

were those such as Mistahi-Maskwa, who continued to resist assimilation by way of

continuing to speak their language and teaching their cultural traditions and telling oral

histories.[49] Through passive resistance Indigenous people fought colonization, and in this

way they do the work of decolonization. As Story shows, Indigenous-run and -supported

facilities, groups, projects and much more help to share, maintain, and build Indigenous

culture and so to overcome the toxic legacies of residential schooling and other aspects of

cultural genocide and Canadian colonialism. The work of the colonial settlers and Indian

residential schools needs to be reframed and undone.[50]

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[47] Ibid., 78.
[48] Ibid., 78.
[49] McLeod, *Cree Narrative Memory*, 52.
[50] Story, "Offering our Gifts, Partnering for Change", 83.

Indigenous records, researchers and archivists need to reconsider records and reinterpret them. Bastian writes, "[n]o collective memory is complete without a counter-memory."[51] The purpose of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) is to provide a counter memory to that of the existing colonial history of residential schools. It is mandated to collect and create records that Indigenous document Indigenous experiences at residential schools, or the after-effects of those experiences. The NCTR exists in a colonial setting, but is Indigenous led. The NCTR is an archive in the traditional sense and operates in traditional ways. However, it began within a movement in the Indigenous community and continues to be community oriented. It was created by a negotiated settlement agreement and is an offshoot of the work of the TRC. As an institution that operates as a traditional archive it could be argued that it is not decolonized enough; however, considering its mandate and origins it would be unjust to disregard the significant contribution the NCTR makes to the ongoing process of decolonization. It can be part of the beginning of a broader decolonization. An Indigenous archive such as the NCTR that is Indigenous-led must be based on trust and relationship-building in order to operate and rely on the community that it serves for input. The NCTR has its Governing Circle and Survivors circle, which consist of Indigenous members and people who have experienced the residential schools in some way. The intention of the majority-Indigenous Governing Circle is "to ensure Indigenous control over the materials held by the NCTR. It provides guidance on the centre's policies, priorities and activities, on ceremonies and protocols, on methods and sources

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[51] Bastian, "Flowers for Homestead", 126.

for expanding the centre's holdings and resources, and on prospective partners."[52] Jesse

Boiteau carefully sifts through the ways in which the NCTR is successfully allying itself

with the Indigenous community and also indicates ways in which the NCTR is falling

short.[53] Boiteau states: "[The NCTR] can strive to document the legacy of the RS

[residential school] system, and work to document acts of reconciliation that occur across

Canada to preserve the moments following the end of the TRC's mandate, but as long as

the centre is located on a university campus, run, governed, and influenced by the

political agendas and institutional confines of the UM, it will remain an institution of

memory in the Western sense."[54] The need for grass roots and Indigenous led archives is

apparent in Story's thesis, and Boiteau is echoing the need in his depiction of how the

NCTR falls short. As a step further toward allyship, the digital archivists at the NCTR

have been creatively exploring the limits of existing descriptive systems in order to

provide easier access to the records. They are linking Indigenous context with access

points to better represent the archival material to researchers. Relatable access points for

records at the NCTR are significant because the NCTR continuously strives "to make

records Survivor focused, rather than institution focused". [55] As demonstrated by the

work of the digital archivists at the NCTR, the NCTR is poised to be an example for

future practice of Indigenous archiving in Canada.

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[52] National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, "About | NCTR," accessed May 6, 2018,
https://nctr.ca/about-pages.php#governing.
[53] Boiteau, "The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and the Pursuit of Archival Decolonization",
31.
[54] Ibid., 33.
[55] Jarad Buckwold, e-mail message to author, May 15, 2018.

The Intersection of Archives and Indigenous Knowledge Keeping

Archival arrangement and description, as was shown in the previous chapters of this thesis, follows rules and standards that reflect foundational archival theory. These descriptive standards have not previously been inclusive of non-European cultures. Archival standards at present are unable to flexibly and appropriately include unique descriptions that can contextualize Indigenous records. The work of Nesmith and others like Hurley suggests that understanding the intricacies of provenance is an integral part of properly describing records. They have begun to bridge the gap between archives and proper description of cultural records by expanding the complexities of provenance.

The concept of societal provenance offers a way in which to bridge the gap between inherently colonial archiving practices and Indigenous records. Nesmith writes, "[s]ocietal provenance is not just another layer of provenance information to add to other ones such as the title of the creator(s), functions, and organizational links and structures. The societal dimension infuses all the others."[56] Building on the idea that societal provenance "infuses" or informs every aspect of a record, and is a part of what Hurley has called ambience, archivist Michelle Rydz articulates the idea of participatory archiving. Rydz writes, "[i]n order for Aboriginal knowledge and memory systems to be included in mainstream archives, the archival profession must embrace and put into practice a definition of provenance that is inherently societal. Concurrently, societal provenance cannot be fully realized without the input of the society that it serves to represent."[57] The input of society is the participation of society in the creation of

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[56] Nesmith, "The Concept of Societal Provenance", 9.
[57] Michelle Rydz, "Participatory Archiving", 7.

descriptions in archives. Participatory archiving has been viewed as a tool with which to create richer context for records, Rydz suggests, however, that it should be a concept by which archives approach archiving as a whole.[58]

In Canada, participatory archiving should be a foundation on which Indigenous archiving is built. Indigenous research methodology is strongly rooted in relationships, kinship, and knowledge sharing traditions. Therefore, Indigenous peoples must participate when records are being archived. Sarah Story's thesis outlines the need for Indigenous participation in the creation of archives, and the need for Indigenous archivists as a way to reclaim First Nations history and decolonize history and archives. Linda Tuhiwai Smith writes, "[s]ocial research at community level is often referred to as community action research or emancipatory research."[59] Emancipatory work indicates that the goal of this research is to identify Indigenous truths, separate from anyone else's truth. In the case of First Nations people in Canada, emancipatory work is part of the decolonization process. When practising participatory archiving, respect and trust must be earned by the researcher: "[c]onsent indicates trust and the assumption is that the trust will not only be reciprocated but negotiated a dynamic relationship rather than static decision."[60] In building trust, relationships that are mutually beneficial are also built. As demonstrated in Neal McLeod's and Aimee Craft's books, for the Cree and Anishinabe, relationships and kinship are a cornerstone of life. In that context it is easy to understand that researchers must work with, not just consult the Indigenous communities they are engaging. For archives that means working with Indigenous communities to offer our

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[58] Ibid., 49.
[59] Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (London: Zed Books Ltd., 1999), 127.
[60] Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples, 136.*

skills and become allies. As an example archivists can be inclusive of Indigenous languages by translating to and from English whenever possible.

Jarrett Drake is a proponent of allyship archiving and writes on his blog about how he believes traditional archives can participate: "[f]irst, they must confront their complicity in upholding patriarchy, white supremacy, and other structural inequalities. Second, they must build trust with the people, communities, and organizations around whose lives the movement is centered, a trust they should pursue not under the guise of collection development but under the practice of allyship."[61] Drake writes within the context of racism and black culture in the United States, but his ideas also apply to Canada in the context of First Nations and reconciliation archiving. Drake refers to the Anti-Oppression Network when defining what allyship means to him: "an active, consistent, and arduous practice of unlearning and re-evaluating, in which a person of privilege seeks to operate in solidarity with a marginalized group of people … allyship is not an identity [but] a lifelong process of building relationships based on trust … allyship is not self-defined [but] must be recognized by the people we seek to ally ourselves with."[62] Archivists must earn the trust of the people whose records they are archiving so that invaluable archival records are neither misunderstood nor their understanding obscured. Hurley writes, "[a]rchivists make delicate analyses of structure and context - that is what they do."[63] With the important task of providing context and structure

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[61] Jarrett M. Drake, "Expanding #ArchivesForBlackLives to Traditional Archival Repositories," *Medium* (blog), June 27, 2016, https://medium.com/on-archivy/expanding-archivesforblacklives-to-traditional-archival-repositories-b88641e2daf6.

[62] "Allyship," *THE ANTI-OPPRESSION NETWORK* (blog), December 10, 2011, https://theantioppressionnetwork.com/allyship/.

[63] Hurley, "Parallel Provenance", 38.

Canadian archivists must take notes from Drake and apply them to Indigenous record keeping in Canada.

Hurley's concept of parallel provenance addresses records with distinct ambiences. Recognizing the separate ambiences of records in the context of the residential schools means allowing both Indigenous and the colonial contexts of the residential school records to be clear. Understanding only the colonial context of a record from the residential schools, which is what has traditionally been done by Canadian archives, obscures the Indigenous ambience of those records. Care should be taken to avoid contextualizing Indigenous records as part of the colonial conversation. Indigenous context, at this point, should be separate from western, European or colonial understandings. Viewing records through only the one paradigm creates misunderstandings. In other words Indigenous context must not be conflated with efforts of non-Indigenous understanding of Indigenous context. For archivists, seeking an ambience in which colonial and Indigenous context can be clarified, defined, and even co-exist would be a resolution to the parallel provenance of residential school records. The convergence of colonial and Indigenous perspectives would ultimately be reconciliation.

Suggested Approaches to Indigenous Archiving

Moving forward, archives that hold records of Indigenous provenance must be treated differently. Archivists must learn to shed the old ways of practising archives. In the words of Jarrett Drake, archivists must "…must confront their complicity in

upholding patriarchy, white supremacy, and other structural inequalities."[64] Smith, Drake, and Story all demonstrate the importance of creating relationships and building trust with people and communities. Trust building includes reaching out to community members and engaging in conversation with Elders in particular. In addition to building trust, archivists must also find ways in which to better describe cultural records and provide access. Fortunately in the 21st century there are tools available to archivists that can catalyze those changes.

The first tool is fuller, more complete descriptions that more accurately depict provenance and therefore provide fuller context. As argued throughout this thesis, archival theory, and provenance in particular, has been evolving in recent years. Prominent figures such as Scott, Cook, Nesmith and Hurley have clarified what provenance is and what role it plays in the practice of archiving. This began with Scott's creation of the series system, which recognizes that many records have more than one provenance, and continued with Hurley's expansion of Scott's concept of serial multiple provenance into simultaneous multiple provenance. Allowing for multiple and simultaneous multiple provenance allows the full provenance of a record to be better understood, though perhaps still not perfectly understood. In addition to multiple and simultaneous multiple provenance, understanding parallel provenance is also necessary. Recognizing parallel provenance means that problems exist and a solution can be sought. The next step is to consider societal provenance, which expands the provenance of a record to include the context of the society and culture in which a record was created. The impact of including societal provenance, multiple provenance, and parallel provenance in

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[64] Drake, "Expanding #ArchivesForBlackLives to Traditional Archival Repositories."

archival description would allow historians and researchers to be presented with a more accurate representation of the context or provenance of the records when researching and using records.

The second tool following the shift in archival theory and academic writing is the further evolution of archival standards. Updated standards that are being created now build upon clarified foundational theories, particularly with the theory of provenance. There have been numerous standards and iterations of standards, but in Canada, RAD was the "gold standard" and remains highly regarded. The ICA followed the Canadian example and used RAD as a starting point for creation of an international suite of standards beginning with ISAD(G). In 2016 ICA EGAD released a draft of RiC-CM which, it is hoped, will replace the current ICA suite of standards. Concurrently a group of Canadian archivists was brought together in 2015 to discuss the future RAD, recognizing that there is a need for updates to keep up with international standards.[65] Changes to archival standards are required, as the current standards are unable to address the full implications and opportunities of digital technologies. While revisions to ISAD(G) accommodate the Australian series system, and even RAD has changed its introduction to declare an openness to implementation of the series system, these standards remain best-suited to the kinds of mono-provenancial description for which they were written. Multiple, simultaneous multiple, and societal provenance remain obscured by the current descriptive standards. Hopefully, new standards will be able to help the archival community in Canada and internationally move forward into an era

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[65] For information on the Roundtable discussion about the "future of RAD" see Lisa Glandt and Richard Dancy, "Roundtable on the 'Future of RAD (Rules of Archival Description),'" October 23, 2015, https://doi.org/10.14288/1.0348266.

when archives and archivists can demonstrate the consequential role they play in shaping knowledge of history. Better standards means a more complete expression of context for records and therefore a more complete and truthful representation of records, which could in turn be foundational to the kinds of history that promotes reconciliation through decolonization of Canadian society.

The third tool is digital technology. New technology is available to archives and archivists that offers ways of accessing and providing more complete archival descriptions. Network technologies, such as the Internet, already allow archives to offer access to people on a larger scale as well as more easily. Database technologies already have allowed description to be uncoupled from arrangement. Arrangement and description were inseparable in archival theory when dealing with physical, analogue records. Digital technologies allow archivists to arrange archival descriptions in whatever way the archivist or researcher can envision, limited only by the ability to program software and the costs of storage space. Linked data and the semantic web may offer new ways in which users may be able to arrange and rearrange archival information to meet each individual's or community's needs. Access through the semantic web may allow people, such as Indigenous communities, to access and understand the records in ways archivists may not have been able to imagine. This would give some control back to Indigenous communities and allow archives to play their part in the process of reconciliation.

Linked data offers new ways in which the public could access raw archival data and search in individual and personalized ways. Linked data could offer Indigenous communities the ability to take raw archival description data and implement it in

culturally accessible ways. However, key barriers to this kind of use of linked data are the

development of suitable user interfaces, data visualizations and tools for interacting with

the data, as well as appropriate privacy policies. A considerable amount of knowledge of

computer programming would be needed to create the user interfaces, which could be an

obstacle for Indigenous communities. Another factor when considering linked data is the

access and privacy that comes with archival data, particularly with regard to individuals

and Indigenous records, given the sensitive nature of records. For the example of the

NCTR, sensitivity to an individual's privacy is a concern and therefore raw data could not

be generally made available at all times for anybody's use.[66] So although linked data has

potential, there are also many challenges and potential failings with it in the context of

decolonization and archival Indigenous records.

When approaching description and arrangement of Indigenous records, archivists

must re-evaluate what an archival document is and endeavour to envisage how best to

capture its complete history. Jeannette Bastian writes, "[a]s archivists think creatively

about how their practice can inform the bringing of cultural traces into the archives, so

archival principles and practices themselves are also influenced by considering these

different social manifestations."[67] Bastian outlines how archivists can begin to think

differently about what is archival and, more appropriately, capture the records of social

history and memory. The article suggests multiple ways in which Carnival is used as a

memory tool for people to retain the history of St. Thomas in the Virgin Islands. Bastian

suggests that traditional definitions of documents and provenance can be utilized within a

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[66] Ry Moran, "Indigenous people should decide on matters of access to archival information." *International Journal of Circumpolar Health* 75, (June, 2016), https://doi/full/10.3402/ijch.v75.32593.
[67] Jeannette A. Bastian, "'Play Mas': Carnival in the Archives and the Archives in Carnival: Records and Community Identity in the US Virgin Islands," *Archival Science* 9, nos. 1–2 (June 1, 2009):114.

new framework and can be expanded to include non-traditional ways of archiving. As with Drake, when he calls for archives to shed the ingrained colonial paradigms, Bastian's concept of Carnival as a point "of cultural production and as a social map" challenges the colonial concept of archives. [68] It must be understood, however, that Bastian is still working within the traditional archival framework and makes a point to clarify that traditional archival practices have limitations when dealing with culturally unique records. However, she also insists traditional archival frameworks can still be useful:

> [r]ecognizing these limitations, however, should not inhibit action. The very activity of documenting, of 'capturing' an event, implies choice and selection in addition to the removal from the actual event itself and the consequent loss of Taylor's 'ephemeral repertoire of embodied practice/knowledge'. This is inherent in the very nature of records and archives, whether within an institution or in a more dynamic space. While the archival record can never be the whole record, it can at least provide a sense of the whole. [69]

Where Indigenous records are concerned, we should consider Bastian's suggestions and think more broadly about what an archival document is. Bastian is suggesting essentially what Drake conceded, that as archivists we can use traditional archival practices such as oral histories, description, arrangement, and database arrangements in new and different ways in order to participate in allyship. As an example of allyship Raymond Frogner employs the archival concept of diplomatics to reinterpret the North Saanich Treaty from a different perspective in conjunction with oral histories of the WSÁNEĆ people. [70]

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[68] Bastian, "'Play Mas': Carnival in the Archives", 121.
[69] Ibid., 123.
[70] Frogner, "Innocent Legal Fictions", 79.

At the intersection of technology and allyship another concept is an archival system that allows users to arrange the archival descriptions in whatever order or aggregate that may suit the users' needs. Victoria Lemieux's "'Third Order' Archival Interface" is an example of an archival system that acknowledges the fluidity of records and their provenance and reconceptualises the archival dataset in a way that is not beholden to physical arrangement. A number of archival theorists support the concept that in a digital environment, one definitive arrangement and description is no longer the only option.[71] Elizabeth Yakel writes, "Archivists should begin to think less in terms of a single, definitive, static arrangement and description process, but rather in terms of continuous, relative, fluid arrangements and descriptions…"[72] Lemieux's system is a new representation of a new type of interface. Users and archivists alike are familiar with the old representation of a file classification system that is mono-hierarchical. However, considering Hurley's concept of provenance that is ever evolving and complex, a representational system for archives that allows for multi-relational connections that change over time is better suited than the old hierarchical systems. Instead of conceptualizing a database as mono-hierarchical, where relationship of records can only be understood one-to-one, a representational system that conceptualizes multi-relational connections between records is required. In Lemieux's model of archival representation, ideally users would be able to arrange and re-arrange the archival data in ways that suit their individual needs. Links between records can be visualized and understood, providing better context.

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[71] Cook, "The Concept of the Archival Fonds", 29. and Geoffrey Yeo, "Bringing Things Together: Aggregate Records in a Digital Age," *Archivaria* 74, no. 0 (2012): 43–91.
[72] Yakel, "Archival Representation", 4.

Lemieux's focus on ontologies to configure archival information complements RiC-CM well, aligning the draft ICA standard with Lemieux's forward thinking "Third Order" interface.[73] It could allow Hurley's concepts of simultaneous multiple provenance and parallel provenance as well as Nesmith's societal provenance to be put into practice. An ability to access multiple layers of description in a multi-relational interface would allow a more accurate representation of provenance. Multiple paradigms and contexts for records could be accessible simultaneously. This representation of provenance would better represent the contexts of records for archivists and archival users. For Indigenous users, this could mean that archival records could be located and then arranged in whatever configuration they may need, in ways previously not imagined by archivists. It also could mean that non-Indigenous researchers could be presented with a whole and complete view of the many historical contexts of records, if descriptions are done well, and if descriptive standards are brought into line with the best thinking about provenance today. All contexts of a record could be represented, which would allow Indigenous contexts to be understood as well as colonial.

Conclusion

There are many ways of knowing and of keeping knowledge. Among settler Canadians the paradigm through which archival theory and practice has been viewed is the western-European and colonial paradigm. Archives have traditionally favoured written documents as evidence and archives have validated themselves with reference to evidence-based historical analysis. However, given that not all cultures accept written

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[73] Victoria L. Lemieux, "Toward a 'Third Order' Archival Interface: Research Notes on Some Theoretical and Practical Implications of Visual Explorations in the Canadian Context of Financial Electronic Records," *Archivaria* 78, (2014): 89.

documents as historical evidence makes traditional western-European archival practices problematic when dealing with Indigenous archival records. Although Indigenous cultures do some times recognize written documents as legitimate, often Indigenous ways of knowing and memory keeping do not involve written documents.

In Indigenous cultures, oral histories and narrative story telling are integral to identity formation and collective memory keeping. Elders and community leaders must be deferred to; community standards around intellectual property and privacy must be respected and permission to use Indigenous knowledge must be explicitly sought and secured. Archivists continue to explore ways in which archives can best describe and capture histories of Indigenous people. In the United States, Jarrett Drake explores the idea of allyship and what that may look like for archives. In Canada, allyship can be offering knowledge and support to Indigenous communities and groups who wish to archive their knowledge. Archives can also take notes from thinkers like Bastian who offers unique ways of viewing cultural memory keeping and work within the current parameters of archival practice. In her example of Carnival as a memory keeping tool for the people of St. Thomas, she suggests that Carnival itself is an encapsulation of collective memory.

This chapter offered three different ways in which archives can begin to engage with decolonization. Better description practices can offer more context and therefore a more thorough understanding of archival records. By thinking about provenance in a more complex way descriptions can be more complete. In addition to creating more complete descriptions, archival standards have been changing in ways that allow them to

be more encompassing rather than limiting in the practice of archiving records of non-western cultures. And finally, advancements in technology have the potential to offer ways of arrangement and description that could make archival records more accessible. Technology also has the ability to allow contextual descriptions and context to be clearer. Multi-relational systems that allow simultaneous multiple, multiple, parallel, and societal provenance to be visible could allow researchers to better understand the multiple contexts of the records, as well as offer different ways of searching and viewing archival records. Although we must always be cautious and mindful that every technology has its own limitations, linked data has the potential to offer Indigenous users new and unique ways of representing raw archival data.

By altering the very content that is viewed as archival, different ways of knowing and capturing history could occur. By describing the provenance of an Indigenous record in the best way possible archivists can do the job that they intend to do, which is preserve history and support memory. Guided by Indigenous people, by being allies, not simply doing the archival work in the traditional ways, archives can contribute to the work of decolonization.

An ideal scenario would be to have an Indigenous archive led by members of the community, in collaboration with settler archivists or where the archivists themselves are Indigenous. The archive would employ a descriptive framework that expresses and makes visible the multiple and simultaneous multiple provenances, the parallel provenance, and the societal provenance of each record. The technical framework would be based on work like Lemieux's that is webbed and interconnected rather than linear and hierarchical. A

framework that allows the relationships of records and creators to be visible particularly to archivists so that it could be translated into a user friendly interface for researchers to access. Ideally an interface that operated based on linked data would be able to work closely with a database like that of Lemieux's and present records in manageable and uninhibited ways. Presentation of records to researchers in the necessary language, or grouped together with similar records would be ideal. This would require that archivists work with Indigenous Elders and Stakeholders to reformulate pre-existing search methods. This would allow freedom to have discussions about how the records of that archive can best be presented.

Even in this ideal scenario, however, we run up against limitations, not the least of which is the technology itself. Privacy and access to sensitive records must be considered and respect must be shown to the community for access of that knowledge. It also presents problems in the form of time and expertise from archivists and information technology professionals to maintain and build such a complex digital representation. Present trials of linked data, for example, have not attempted to do this kind of complex and difficult work. Ideally, however, the ability to present both Indigenous and Settler worldviews to researchers is the goal, since both represent important aspects of provenance and the history of the records of colonialism.

Archivists have the responsibility to represent and display all the information about the records we possibly can, to avoid obscuring the range of provenances of a record or set of records. Archives such as the NCTR are working still within the frameworks of colonial institutions and governments, making it challenging for them to

develop entirely new and decolonizing ways of archiving. It is possible to use existing database software like AtoM to present information that would not typically appear in archival description. Offering search mechanisms that allow a greater range of search options like searching by name or by place also is possible. Working within the existing structures to offer better access and respectful treatment of records within description is the best way to tangibly move forward as we grapple with reconciliation in Canada.

The archival community must be aware of changes in archival theory and practice as well as new technologies in order to advance archival decolonization, and to advance reconciliation. Most importantly, settler archivists and archival institutions must look to Indigenous knowledge keepers and communities to show us how best to represent Indigenous knowledge and agency. Engagement with Elders, communities and researchers, is required within the TRC's Calls to Action, UNDRIP and other Indigenous protocols.

<u>Conclusion</u>

Provenance is an integral principle in archival theory that affects practice in significant ways. In the last thirty years, there has been a considerable amount of change in how provenance is understood and what it entails. Authors such as Hurley and Nesmith have contributed dramatic changes to archivists' understanding of provenance and what it encompasses. Hurley's theoretical explorations of what types of provenance exist and how the different types affect records allow much more of the context of a record to be clarified. Hurley tries to expose the relationships that records have with each other, and

with a range of agents including inscribers of records, subjects of records, record keepers and record users, by defining simultaneous multiple, multiple, and parallel provenance, building on Peter Scott's concept of serial multiple provenance. Nesmith's argument that society is another significant factor in provenance places provenance within social and cultural contexts. The movement towards change in how provenance is understood has a healthy impact on complex records such as the Indigenous archives of Canada's Indian residential school system. Contexts that may have been viewed through the lenses of colonialism or traditional European archival theory and practices might have obscured the provenance of cultural records if the societal provenance is not considered. Understanding the various provenances of records of colonial experiences such as the residential schools allows many different perspectives and contexts to exist for one record.

Through description, archivists can provide the necessary provenance to contextualize records. Updated standards like RiC-CM can contribute to better description, as can multi-relational archival representational systems that provide for multiple and clear relationships between records like Victoria Lemieux's "Third Order" systems. Indigenous records could thrive in archival descriptions with these archival tools, if records exist within traditional archives. Good description practices and representational systems can be tools of allyship. These tools of allyship can help researchers understand Indigenous perspectives alongside settler perspectives in order to have a fuller understanding of Indigenous experiences. By being allies and instituting changes in archival practice, archivists can participate in reconciliation and decolonization.

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