Defining 'Community' in Models of Community Archives:

Navigating the Politics of Representation as Archival Professionals

by

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Abstract

Community archives have developed in response to gaps in the documentary record and the real and perceived limitations of state-funded archives. These communities, whether defined by location, shared identity, or common interests, recognize the vital role of records in building collective memory and the importance of having access to their history. Informed by postmodern and postcolonial intellectual concerns, archivists have explored such themes and taken a greater interest in community archives as models of archiving that offer new opportunities and tools for capturing diversity and multiple perspectives on the past.

This thesis traces the history of archival thought in relation to community by examining the dichotomy between community and mainstream archives. It explores the breakdown of the dichotomy, as exemplified in recent models of independent community archives and participatory archives. Case studies of the Boissevain Community Archives and Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre test the hypothesis that archivists stand to benefit from a historical perspective on community archives, one that takes into account the ongoing production of community and the role of archives, archivists, and community members in that production. Throughout, this thesis reaffirms the value of historical analysis in archival studies, arguing that it enriches understandings of the provenance of records created, maintained, and preserved by community.

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I am grateful to my advisor Dr. Greg Bak for superbly guiding me through this process. I would like to particularly thank him for nurturing the seeds of an idea, taking the time to share his insights, critiques, and enthusiasm, and urging me to continue when I felt stuck. He was an endless source of knowledge, inspiration, encouragement, and patience. My thanks to Dr. Tom Nesmith as well whose articles, lectures, and remarks have affected me. His vision of archivists as intellectual, creative, and reflective individuals inspired me to pursue archives as a profession and enroll in the Archival Studies M.A. Programme at the University of Manitoba. It was one the best decisions I have made in my life.

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List of Copyrighted Material and Permissions Obtained

Permission obtained from Krista McCracken, researcher/curator, Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre for:

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List of Common Abbreviations

AHF   Aboriginal Healing Foundation

AMA   Association for Manitoba Archives

BCA   Boissevain Community Archives

BMLA   Boissevain-Morton Library & Archives

BMRL   Boissevain & Morton Regional Library

CSAA   Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association

IRSSA   Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement

LAC   Library and Archives Canada

LIP   Local Initiatives Program

NCTR   National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation

NEA   National Ethnic Archives

RCAP   Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples

SRSC   Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre

TRC   Truth and Reconciliation Commission

UMASC   University of Manitoba Archives and Special Collections

Introduction

The initial spark of inspiration for this thesis came from an observation related to the differential treatment of the term "community" in graduate programs. Seminar discussions in the archival studies program spoke about community in a positive light. Talk of working with community to address gaps in the documentary record or make decisions about archives elicited excitement. It supported the idea that being an archivist was, in fact, a noble occupation; that the profession had ended its alliance with elite interests and was moving toward engagement with community. Discussions of community in my previous days as a graduate student in history took on a different tone. Noting the strong links between identity politics and community, the term was said to support the creation of homogenous groups that excluded insofar as they included people. These critiques were especially pointed when discussing multiculturalism. Inspired by the work of Franca Iacovetta, Himani Bannerji, and Neil Bissoondath, multiculturalism was understood as a policy aimed at managing increasingly pluralistic states by celebrating their differences.[1] In practice, multiculturalism often reduced complex cultures to stereotypes that made them non-threatening to the liberal democratic state. Skepticism and unease about the leveraging of community set in as a result and led me to consider how archivists have thought about community in the past. As well, I was hopeful that critical insights gleaned from the study of history could enrich the evolving discussion of community archives, and at the very least underscore the need for archivists to pause and reflect upon their use of the term 'community.'

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[1] See Franca Iacovetta, *Gatekeepers: Reshaping Immigrant Lives in Cold War Canada* (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2006), 51, 60-61, 293-294; Himani Bannerji, *The Dark Side of the Nation: Essays on Multiculturalism, Nationalism and Gender* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press Inc., 2000), 5-11; Neil Bissoondath, *Selling Illusions: The Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada* (Toronto: Penguin, 1994), 89-90, 192, 212-215. See also Miranda Joseph, *Against the Romance of Community* (Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press, 2002), viii, 1-29. Joseph explores the packaging of 'community' as a product of modernity and capitalism.

This thesis does not aim to define either community or community archives. Similarly, it does not offer a step-by-step approach to community archiving. I am interested in taking the tools of the archivist, those developed as a means of recording contextual information, and applying them to the study of community archives. More specifically, I want to enhance understandings of community archives by calling attention to their uniqueness and exploring a series of questions that illuminates the context of creation for records held by community archives. In short, the primary goal of this thesis is to explore what the "history of the record" might look like when applied to the study of community archives.[2] As the author of this concept, Tom Nesmith described an "agenda" for the archival profession based on an "expanded degree of historical information about records creation, its surrounding personal and organizational cultures, types of records, record-keeping systems, and custodial and archival histories."[3] This agenda holds true today and can help inform discussions of community archives. Historical information about community, its leaders and members, internal dynamics, narratives, and patterns of communication is needed to understand better the records created, gathered, and preserved in the context of community. This thesis, therefore, is not an attempt to codify the literature or practice of community archives, nor does it attempt to identify in a methodical fashion the qualities of community archives as others have successfully done.[4] It aims to demonstrate the value of the "history of

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[2] Tom Nesmith, "Archives From the Bottom Up: Social History and Archival Scholarship," *Archivaria* 14, (Summer 1982), 8, 10-11, 24-25. See also Nesmith, "What Is an Archival Education?" *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 28, no. 1 (April 2007), 4-6; Terry Cook, "Paper Trails: A Study in Northern Records and Northern Administration, 1898-1958," in *Canadian Archival Studies and the Rediscovery of Provenance*, ed. Tom Nesmith (Metuchen, New Jersey and London: Scarecrow Press, 1993), 270-271.

[3] Nesmith, "What's History Got to Do With It?: Reconsidering the Place of Historical Knowledge in Archival Work," *Archivaria* 57 (Spring 2004), 27.

[4] Andrew Flinn, "Whose Memories, Whose Archives? Independent Community Archives, Autonomy and the Mainstream," *Archival Science* 9, no. 1 (2009), 73-75. See also Flinn and Anne Gilliland, "Community Archives: What are We Really Talking About?" (keynote, CIRN Prato Community Informatics Conference,

the record" approach as applied to community archives, arguing that analysis rather than codification opens the conversation to new discoveries.

One of the underlying premises here is that records are evolving texts which, according to Nesmith, "help create reality, rather than just document it."[5] That means archives do not merely reflect community; they constitute community, helping to define its histories, membership, and boundaries. These and other ideas developed in this thesis reflect the postmodern agenda in archives that seeks to challenge positivist assumptions that render the archive as neutral rather than political, the archivist as a passive transmitter rather than a producer of knowledge, and the record as an accurate representation of reality.[6] According to this work, the task of the archivist is to make explicit the politics behind representations and reveal the "constructedness" of archives to destabilize the narratives and "truths" that make the exercise of power by one group over another seem natural and inevitable.[7] This thesis also applies postcolonial thought to yield critical insights, acknowledging that the co-opting of difference has historically occurred in response to the challenges of governing an increasingly pluralistic society and that the archives have become a site for these politics. Archivists point to community archives as solutions to the lack of diversity in archives, but whose agenda are they serving when they engage with community? Are archivists empowering communities and aiding a postcolonial agenda or are efforts directed at

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Monash Centre, Prato, Italy, 2013), 8-11, accessed May 11, 2016,
http://www.ccnr.infotech.monash.edu.au/assets/docs/prato2013_ papers/gilliland_flinn_keynote.pdf.

[5] Tom Nesmith, "Still Fuzzy, But More Accurate: Some Thoughts of the 'Ghosts' of Archival Theory," *Archivaria* 47 (Spring 1999), 144.

[6] Joan M. Schwartz and Terry Cook, "Archives, Records, and Power: The Making of Modern Memory," *Archival Science* 2, no. 1-2 (2002), 2-3, 8-9, 18; Cook and Schwartz, "Archives, Records, and Power: From (Postmodern) Theory to (Archival) Performance," *Archival Science* 2, no. 3-4 (2002), 182-183; Nesmith, "Some Thoughts on the 'Ghosts' of Archival Theory," 143-144, 148-149.

[7] Schwartz and Cook, "The Making of Modern Memory," 3-6, 9; Cook and Schwatz, "From (Postmodern) Theory to (Archival) Performance," 176; Ciaran B. Trace, "What is Recorded is Never Simply 'What Happened': Record Keeping in Modern Organizational Culture," *Archival Science* 2, no. 1-2 (2002), 137-159.

community archives merely instances of cultural appropriation? In Canada, the lingering presence of settler politics emerges as a powerful dynamic that shapes community archives, a dynamic explored throughout this thesis.

My observations with regards to community archives unfold within a four-chapter structure. The first chapter reviews the literature on community archives, beginning with an overview of the history of archival thought in relation to community. In the absence of a clear definition of community archives, it examines the dichotomy between community archives and mainstream archives, looking at the exclusions that defined traditional archival practice. This chapter traces some of the early examples of community archives while acknowledging that communities develop various kinds of recordkeeping and archival traditions seldom acknowledged by the archival profession. It traces the rise of community archives that grew outside the archival profession in the sixties and seventies and then turns to the breakdown of the dichotomy, which was supported by the emergence of a diversity agenda in the archival profession and aided by digital technology. From there, the first chapter explores models of community archives that have more recently emerged in the literature on this subject, analyzing how "community" is portrayed in each model. The second and third chapters focus on two case studies, the Boissevain Community Archives (BCA), and Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre (SRSC). While the former is a community seemingly defined by location, the latter consists of members who are geographically dispersed but brought together by issues related to residential schools and their legacies. The case studies test the hypothesis that archivists stand to benefit from knowledge concerning the ongoing production of community and community archives. The final chapter reflects on the case studies, exploring some of the complexities of community

and reviewing key insights on the role of politics in matters of community archiving. It acknowledges that in addition to politics, the role of affect must be considered. The study of affect and emotions in the context of community archives is particularly useful owing to attachments that form between people and feelings that records evoke. The last part of the chapter looks at the current relationship between community archives and the archival profession, asking what challenges and opportunities exist for archivists.

The core of this thesis is the case studies of the BCA and SRSC. By involving different types of community, the two archives show the variety of institutions known as community archives. Drawing on archival sources and interviews, I demonstrate the value of a research-based approach. Research trips to the BCA in Boissevain, Manitoba, and the SRSC in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, were made to collect information on the origins, developments, and structures of the archives. Special attention was paid to records that described the role of the archives within the community. As well, previous work showed the importance of conducting interviews to collect stories and details that document their record of service. I conducted a total of three interviews with individuals associated with the case studies. The second chapter on the BCA relies heavily on interviews in acknowledgment of the rich stories communicated orally. The interview material also includes candid revelations about the role of politics in the BCA, shedding light on subjects ranging from settler politics to social justice initiatives. Questions about what defines the community, changes wrought by the advent of digital technologies, and challenges affecting the sustainability of the archives were also asked in the interviews. Researching in the archives and talking with the interview participants were the highlights of this project for me, and I am thankful for the experience.

Chapter One: Archival Thought in Relation to Community

Not only does defining community archives require an understanding of "community" and "archives" as separate concepts, but the term has been applied to a number of real and imagined constructions.[1] It can refer to institutions as in the case of the Lesbian Herstory Archives and community-based collections like the Canadian Women's Movement Archives at the University of Ottawa Archives and Special Collections. The term can also refer to relationships between archives and communities. An example of this would be Library and Archives Canada's Project Naming. The community is not composed of records creators in this instance. Its members did not donate their records. The relationship exists because of meaningful collaboration between the community as users and stakeholders and the archives. Terry Cook refers to community archiving as the fourth and latest archival paradigm to have emerged in the past 150 years distinguishable by the shared stewardship of archival records and the principles, relationships, and technologies that make this possible.[2] Community, Cook argues, is the "key concept" that defines contemporary archival thought and practice, but is the profession aware of the history of archival thought in relation to community and community archives?[3] This chapter aims to trace that history by looking at the history of the archival profession and considering the development of community archives within that history. From there, it explores models of community archives presented by Andrew Flinn, Katie Shilton and Ramesh Srinivasan, and Elizabeth Yakel that capture present-day challenges and opportunities.

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[1] Benedict Anderson famously argues that, "all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined." He adds, "Communities are to be distinguished, not by their falsity/genuineness, but by the style in which they are imagined." Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 1983), 15.

[2] Terry Cook, "Evidence, Memory, Identity, and Community: Four Shifting Archival Paradigms," *Archival Science* 13, no. 2-3 (2013), 95, 113-116.

[3] Ibid., 116.

Community archives are often defined in contrast to "mainstream" archives so much so that a dichotomy between mainstream archives and community or "grass-roots" archives has developed. This dichotomy dates to the era of new social movements that saw large-scale social protest and the organization of people with similar interests and goals; those who were often accorded an outsider status because of their sexual, gendered, ethnic or social identities and the "othering" of their differences. Intellectually, the contrast is useful. It brings to mind a range of oppositions, such as personal and impersonal, elite and ordinary, local and central and so on. The contrast is also meaningful as it intimates the exclusion felt and experienced by the people behind community archives. The divisions between mainstream and community archives are, however, both real and imagined, true and false. Understanding them better means examining their historical roots, which begin with the establishment of "mainstream" archives or rather archival institutions and the professionalization of archives.

Written work on the origins of the western tradition of archives emphasizes the relationship between archives and power, focusing on the governments and ruling elites who created, kept and managed records and archives in support of their interests. From tax collection to knowledge production through instruments like the census, the tasks records allowed the state to perform were essential to its ability to govern. As technologies of rule, especially in colonial contexts, records extended the power and control of the state and increased its capacity to respond to problems that threatened the authority of colonial rule.[4] Records constructed narratives and arguments that sanctioned the intrusive and often violent

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[4] Ann Laura Stoler, "Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance," *Archival Science* 2, no. 1-2 (2002), 97. See also Schwartz and Cook, "The Making of Modern Memory," 6-9.

presence of the state and rendered its politics moral and justifiable.[5] Placing records created by state processes in the archives did more than preserve them as evidence of the past; it acted as another technology of rule. Archives protected the state's version of events, allowing it to become the "official" account that could be recast as needed. As well, archives served a symbolic function, impressing on people the idea of the state's inevitable rise and permanence. They were made to work for the people who created them and in doing so they worked against a broad range of groups and classes of people.

Richard Cox likens these "old-school archives" to "fortresses or palaces, places where the archives were safe, locked away and reflecting the power holders in any particular society."[6] By the time of the French Revolution, however, the "fortress" was starting to crack. The societal transformations of the day helped to build archives anew, challenging its old associations with the *ancien regime* and reconfiguring archives as places that citizens could access.[7] Archives emerged as public institutions of the nation state with a "statist" as opposed to "societal" focus - meaning, in the words of Terry Cook, that archives were established "by the state, to serve the state, as part of the state's hierarchical structure and organizational culture."[8] The archival profession developing at this time was rooted in this statist perspective. The Dutch manual and writings of Sir Hilary Jenkinson, which affirmed the core tenets of original order and provenance, instructed archivists to care for records on behalf of their creators who were often government bodies or officials. Aside from records

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[5] For an example of records being used by colonial states as technologies of rule, see Ann Laura Stoler's work on commissions in Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2009), 28-31; Stoler, "Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance," 103-107.

[6] Richard J. Cox, "Conclusion: The Archivist and Community," in *Community Archives: The Shaping of Memory*, ed. Jeannette A. Bastian and Ben Alexander (London: Facet Publishing, 2009), 260.

[7] Cook, "Evidence, Memory, Identity and Community," 106. See also, Judith M. Panitch, "Liberty, Equality, Posterity?: Some Archival Lessons from the Case of the French Revolution," *The American Archivist* 59 (Winter 1996), 35-40.

[8] Terry Cook, "What Is Past Is Prologue: A History of Archival Ideas since 1898, and the Future Paradigm Shift," *Archivaria* 43 (Spring 1997), 44.

creators, archives at this time were also allied with historians. The emergence of the historical profession and its adoption of empirical methodologies drove historians to the archives. Similar to the biologist's need for fieldwork, historians needed archival research on which to base their claims. Many have noted the problems with conceiving of archives as sites of objective truth, pointing to the inherent subjectivity of archival work.[9] Canadian archival history contains examples of acquiring material based on personal and historical interests. Laura Millar cites Thomas Beamish Akins, Commissioner of Records in Nova Scotia, and Douglas Brymner of the Dominion Archives, both professional archivists, as privileging the colonial history documented in British and French records over government records created in the latter half of the nineteenth-century.[10] Moreover, in his work on the origins of the Archives of Ontario, Donald Macleod notes "serious gaps" in government records because of the preponderance of local history.[11] The branding of archives as a public institution and historical source expanded the social purpose of archives and its responsibilities while making it susceptible to the "changing winds" of the historical profession.[12]

It is interesting that, while this generation of archivists is often criticized for focusing on politics, both Terry Cook and Donald Macleod chide early professional archivists like Brymner, Arthur Doughty, and Alexander Fraser for focusing on other sources to the detriment of government records. The Canadian tradition of "total archives" helps to account

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[9] Schwartz and Cook, "The Making of Modern Memory," 2-3, 8-9, 18; Cook and Schwartz, "From (Postmodern) Theory to (Archival) Performance," 182-183; Nesmith, "Still Fuzzy, But More Accurate," 143-144, 148-149; Ciaran B. Trace, "What is Recorded is Never Simply 'What Happened': Record-Keeping in Modern Organizational Culture," *Archival Science* 2, no.1-2 (2002), 138-141, 158-159.

[10] Laura Millar, "Discharging Our Debt: The Evolution of the Total Archives Concept in English Canada," *Archivaria* 46, no. 1 (Fall 1998), 108.

[11] Donald Macleod, "'Quaint Specimens of the Early Days': Priorities in Collecting the Ontario Archival Record, 1872-1935," *Archivaria* 22 (Summer 1986), 39.

[12] Gerald F. Ham, "The Archival Edge," *The American Archivist* 38, no. 1 (1975), 8.

for this anomaly. Influential on the Canadian archival landscape since its early days, this tradition holds that public archives have a responsibility to acquire and preserve both public and private records. It is clear that archivists, in their attempts to seek out and consolidate records within a single location, recognized the ability of records, as evidence of a collective past, to support the growth of identity. These actions helped historians, like Harold Innis, Donald Creighton, Frank Underhill and A. S. Morton, to write about Canadian subjects using the "new" research-based methods.[13] While the development of the National Archives promoted the growth of national history, the total archives approach truncated the development of other archives. Kent M. Haworth refers to the "centralizing tendencies of Canada's larger archives" and points to cases like the City of Ottawa, which, in the "shadow" of the National Archives, was slow to develop a municipal or local archives.[14] Haworth argues that these centralizing tendencies also apply to the "literature concerning the history of archives development in Canada."[15]

What is most often seen in the archival studies literature is a history of the archival profession and theoretical concepts and practices belonging to the western tradition of archives. Looking for examples of the earliest community archives within this literature is problematic to say the least. Social groups and cultures across the world have developed their own systems of archiving, but the term "archives" has not always been consistently applied. Moreover, the term has not, historically speaking, been an inclusive term. The precursors of community archives, local archives, and community-level collecting, occupied separate spaces, some of which have become known in recent years. Writing about the early years of

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[13] Donald A. Wright, *The Professionalization of History in English Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 52.

[14] Kent M. Haworth, "Local Archives: Responsibilities and Challenges for Archives," *Archivaria* 3 (Winter 1976-77), 30, 32.

[15] Ibid., 29-31.

community archives in the United Kingdom, David Mander acknowledges the "long history" of local-level collecting in England and cites activities dating back to the late nineteenth-century that saw collections form around historical societies and "formal" institutions like records offices.[16] He makes clear that ad hoc and community-driven efforts coalesced around local services and organizations, arguing that the creation of public libraries "provided stimulus for the preservation of local records, including what came to be defined as ephemera (posters, theatre programmes, sale catalogues) and photographs."[17] The library system has proven to be important to the development of community archives because of the infrastructure it provided. The "Kallista Perintoa" or precious legacy that historian and archivist Edward Laine describes in his work on Finnish-Canadian archives begins with the records carried by immigrants in their "sturdy suitcases and steamer trunks."[18] This early tradition was followed by the creation of "organic archives" collected and cared for by organizations and then research archives that actively acquired material. Driving Laine's work was the demonstrated ignorance of the "Canadian archival establishment," the members of which Laine said, "tend to assume that none of the ethno-cultural communities had ever developed any sort of independent archival tradition of their own."[19] This statement appears to be a reaction against mainstream repositories acquiring ethnic archives for political reasons despite having little knowledge of their histories.

In looking for early examples of community archives, the most common ones are those rooted in antiquarian and historical societies. These were based on regional boundaries

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[16] David Mander, "Special, Local and About Us: The Development of Community Archives in Britain," in *Community Archives: The Shaping of Memory*, 29.

[17] Ibid., 30.

[18] Edward W. Laine, "'Kallista Perintoa - Precious Legacy!' Finnish-Canadian Archives, 1882-1985," *Archivaria* 22 (Summer 1986), 86.

[19] Ibid., 77.

and identities, but also formed around causes like the labour movement. Russell G. Hann and Gregory S. Kealey provide examples of labour activists in North America donating their collections to archives around the turn of the century and note the practice of keeping "labour history from within the movement and outside the universities."[20] Polly J. Thistlethwaite dates the "first gay archive," the Institute for Sexual Science in Berlin, Germany, to 1918.[21] Founded by Magnus Hirschfeld, an internationally recognized sexologist, the Institute opened on the heels of the German Revolution and in the early days of sexual rights activism. John Lauritsen and David Thorstad describe it as "a repository for all kinds of biological, anthropological, statistical, and ethnographical data and documentation relating to sexology.... the first of its kind anywhere in the world."[22] Unfortunately, the Nazis included the Institute in their sweep of books and material thought to be "un-German" and the treasures of the Institute, much of its library, research, and archives, were publicly burned.

For the most part, the earliest archives described in the archival studies literature were not people- or community-centered places. Cox observes the "desire to keep the community out, or, at least, at arm's length."[23] Similarly, Hugh Taylor notes that until the "acceptance of archives as heritage," in the postwar period, "archives remained firmly in the hands of antiquarians, academics and scholarly administrators."[24] However, there are also developments that signal the eventual rise of community archives and the archival profession's acceptance and embrace of it. Meaningful connections forged at this time

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[20] Russell G. Hann and Gregory S. Kealey, "Documenting Working Class History: North American Traditions and New Approaches," *Archivaria* 4 (Summer 1977), 94-95.
[21] Polly J. Thistlewaite, "Building 'A Home of Our Own': The Construction of the Lesbian Herstory Archives," in *Daring to Find Our Names: The Search for Lesigay Library History,* ed. James V. Carmichael, Jr. (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1998), 159.
[22] John Lauritsen and David Thorstad, *The Early Homosexual Rights Movement, 1864-1935* (New York: Times Change Press, 1974), 28. Lauritsen and Thorstad state the Insitute opened in July 1919.
[23] Cox, "The Archivist and Community," 260.
[24] Hugh Taylor, "The Collective Memory: Archives and Libraries as Heritage," *Archivaria* 15 (Winter 1982-83), 120-121.

include the rebranding of archives as public institutions, which would come to mean that archives should better reflect the public they document and the public interest. The connections between archives, history, and national identity meant people recognized the role of archives in the creation of shared histories. Lastly, in the context of Canada, the total archives tradition as a strong, central force created an imbalance that would frame the debate about the benefits and limitations of centralization for years to come.

Community archives as separate institutions outside the mainstream, the ones that people most readily associate as community archives, have their origins in another time period. The historian Karen Dubinsky captures many of the essential qualities of these archives in an article on the Canadian Women's Movement Archives in Toronto. First of all, Dubinsky notes its function as a "resource centre of feminism," one with the elements of museums, libraries and archives.[25] She defines the focus of the archives as grassroots, "the kind that don't get a lot of mainstream press and even less historical or archival attention."[26] To Dubinsky, the archives has value because it preserves feminism outside of the mainstream and captures the often transitory existence of collectivities. Dubinsky contrasts this "grassroots, community-held archives" when she speaks of the "user-friendly archival system" without security, and "mainstream" archives where the "lab coated archivist disappears into the bowels of the building."[27] She points to the role of the group as opposed to the individual in making decisions about organizing collections and the expanded accessibility that "traditional libraries or archives couldn't dream of."[28] Throughout the article, the archives appears as a place where people can form intense personal attachments

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[25] Karen Dubinsky, "Looking Forward, Reaching Backward: The Canadian Women's Movement Archives," *Fireweed: A Feminist Quarterly* 29 (1989), 118.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid., 118-119.
[28] Ibid., 119.

and have transformative experiences as part of their intellectual nourishment and self-discovery. Even though Dubinsky points to lack of funding and dependency on volunteers, she does not call on archivists to intervene. Instead, she invites people to "think of it," hinting at a possible donation or visit.[29]

In 1992, three years after the publication of Dubinsky's article, the University of Ottawa Archives and Special Collections acquired the Canadian Women's Movement Archives. With this new beginning came the end of another era that started in the sixties and seventies. Geoff Eley writes that the "radical politics of the sixties were inseparable from the historiographical story," arguing that the "breakthrough to social history was unimaginable without the sense of political possibility beckoning during the later 1960s, the excitement of a new political world beginning to open up."[30] Both social history and the wider context of the sixties, its "radical politics" and "sense of political possibility," encouraged the creation of community archives as institutions. Speaking first to the context of the sixties, while there is no limit to what can be said about this era of rapid social transformation, it is necessary to condense a few points. The sixties saw people across the world organizing en masse into a variety of social movements. And while the process of political participation and organization produced shared identities and communities that formed around various causes (civil rights, feminism, environmental and anti-war protest to name a few), there was a common thread in that they defined themselves against the established order. Social unrest and the spirit of political protest occurred at every level of society. In the academy, Marxism applied to the study of history and society defined the world in terms of class struggle. Outside the academy, it became more acceptable to question authority and voice opposition.

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[29] Ibid., 120.

[30] Geoff Eley, *A Crooked Line: From Cultural History to the History of Society* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2005), 59.

Radical politics fused with popular art forms led to a plethora of movements, cultures and subcultures. The spirit of distrust was elevated by the imperial hangover the world was waking up to. At the global level, the end of colonial rule and the nationalist movements were marked by violence that pointed to the horrors of colonialism and contributed to the feeling change was upon the world. Increased migration and the creation of more multicultural states changed the social fabric of nation-states and how they were governed.

Historians were among the first to sound the alarm about the shortcomings of archives in the context of the sixties and its aftermath. Howard Zinn's portrait of archivists in "Secrecy, Archives and the Public Interest" described an archival professional unaware of the "subtle ways" he "tends to perpetuate the political and economic status quo by simply going about his ordinary business."[31] He warned that professionalism was a "powerful form of social control" and challenged archivists to act as citizens rather than agents of the established order.[32] As an advocate for the "new" social history and its bottom-up approach, Zinn wanted archives to reflect the diversity of human experience and the lives of ordinary people. The goal was to turn the record away from the rich and powerful and shine the light on subjects previously unknown to history - the peasant farmer, artisan, and midwife to name a few. Making them known meant more than documenting their exclusion from power, it also meant acknowledging the agency they exerted in their everyday lives and through social movements. Around the same time, the historian Veronica Strong-Boag noted the failure of

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[31] Howard Zinn, "Secrecy, Archives, and the Public Interest," *The Midwestern Archivist* 2, no. 2 (1977), 20. Zinn uses masculine pronouns when referring to historians and archivist in this piece. Others who point to Zinn's critiques of the archival profession are Ham, "The Archival Edge," 5; Dominique Daniel, "Documenting the Immigrant and Ethnic Experience in American Archives," *The American Archivist* 73 (Spring/Summer 2010), 82-83, 90; Rabia Gibbs, "The Heart of the Matter: The Developmental History of African American Archives," *The American Archivist* 75 (Spring/Summer 2012), 196.
[32] Zinn, 15-16. See also 14 and 20.

"major repositories" to support the writing of women's history.[33] She argued the practice of keeping the papers of prominent women was no longer sufficient as it would "never provide an adequate basis of generalization on women as a whole."[34] Strong-Boag recommended that archives reassess their holdings, identify records with value to women's history, and expand collections through new acquisitions. On the subject of previous work in the field, she reported that it was "performed by near amateurs in archival matters" and that "studies are frequently supported, not by major repositories with their relatively substantial budgets, but by institutions and groups with feminist personnel and slender resources."[35] Strong-Boag puts these "near amateurs" into context by referencing the "long tradition of self-help" in feminist communities.[36] The somewhat dismissive tone and implied preference for repositories like the National Archives of Canada was part of a deliberate message to archivists to do more in the way of preserving women's history.

The shift in archival thought towards greater representation is not a simple story of being pushed to this end by social historians. Gerald Ham's "The Archival Edge" cites Howard Zinn, but the most scathing critique of archives comes from the historian and archivist Gould P. Colman, who claimed that the "politicization" of the archival profession risked "skewing the study of culture by the studied preservation of unrepresentative indicators of that culture."[37] Archivists were attuned to new ideas such as the bottom-up approach, but unlike historians they had to consider their shaping of the archives that would be left not solely for this new generation of historians, but for future users as well. From

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[33] Veronica Strong-Boag, "Raising Clio's Consciousness: Women's History and Archives in Canada," *Archivaria* 6 (Summer 1978), 71, 74.
[34] Ibid., 72.
[35] Ibid., 74.
[36] Ibid.
[37] Gould P. Colman as cited by Ham, "The Archival Edge," 6.

Ham's perspective, one of the major changes was the "more active and perhaps creative role" archivists were taking.[38] He briefly mentions the "instant archives" (or the collections that form around social movements) that society was at risk of losing and efforts to preserve records of the "major 1960's movements on the left--civil rights, student activism, and the anti-Vietnam War protest."[39] According to Ham, the forces driving this change included the "institutionalization of society" which seems to refer to increased use of institutions and other formal structures to advance individual and group interests.[40] Another agent of change was the expansion of government and its role in the lives of citizens.

Several new methods of creating a more representative record of society came from within the archival profession. One of these was the use of archival networks to coordinate acquisitions, an idea that later evolved into documentation strategy that saw participants, archives, records creators, and administrators share responsibility for collecting records on "an ongoing issue, activity, or geographic area."[41] In Canada, special programs were formed with the guidance and oversight of the provincial and national government. The National Archives started an ethnic archives program in 1972 that aimed to: 1) promote archival awareness through community outreach; and 2) collect material of national importance on ethno-cultural communities.[42] The National Ethnic Archives (NEA) as it was called gathered evidence of those who were not French or British, the "other" groups that immigrated to Canada but whom the National Archives failed to document for the most part.[43] Walter Neutel, who wrote about the NEA in 1978 as its head, identified the term "ethnic archives" as

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[38] Ham, "The Archival Edge," 8.
[39] Ibid., 10.
[40] Ibid., 8-10.
[41] Helen Willa Samuels, "Who Controls the Past," *The American Archivist* 49, no. 2 (Spring 1986), 115.
[42] Walter Neutel, "Geschichte Wie Es Eigentlich Gewesen or the Necessity of Having Ethnic Archives Programmes," *Archivaria* 7 (Winter 1978), 107.
[43] Ibid.

"something of a misnomer" but added, "few other terms have the merit of being so descriptive and brief."[44] He acknowledged the "rivalries and disagreements" within communities, which he identified as one of the reasons people donate their records to the National Archives.[45] According to Laine, ethnic archives programs were reputedly "crassly politically-motivated and self serving" but effective in the sense that they "alerted" communities to the value of their records.[46]

Communities were more likely to establish archives when their relationship to archives and society at large was non-existent or troubled. Gay and lesbian people, for many years, were rendered invisible - left off the historical record because their sexuality was taboo, which meant the remaining traces of gay and lesbian people were concealed in euphemisms and coded language.[47] With their actions criminalized, they also became the targets of violence. The Nazis destroyed the Institute for Sexual Science and its archives, but the rise of the gay and lesbian liberation movement saw the creation of many archives. Steven Maynard argues that the founding of the Canadian Gay Archives in 1973 "in many ways marked the beginning of a self-conscious gay history movement in Canada."[48] The people behind these archives were not professional archivists, but organizers and activists entrusted with the records of other community members and dead or nearly dead organizations. As with other community archives, the preservation of their history was the ultimate goal with other archival functions like appraisal of secondary importance. Copies and ephemera seldom considered archival were saved, even cherished. The Manitoba Gay

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[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid.
[46] Laine, "Finnish-Canadian Archives," 79.
[47] Steven Maynard, "'The Burning, Wilful Evidence': Lesbian/Gay History and Archival Research," *Archivaria* 33 (Winter 1991-2), 197-198.
[48] Ibid., 196.

and Lesbian Archives (MGLA), which reported that posters were among the first evidence of the local gay liberation movement, made the case for the archival value of posters in a funding application saying:

> As documents, posters are treated less seriously than other textual records, but, in situations such as this, their communicative impact, and therefore their historical significance, is far greater than other documents of organizational activity. In addition to creating, motivating and expressing the self-definition of an emerging minority group, they capture the interactive debate between majority and minority. Although often considered disposable by their creators once their function has been fulfilled, the Archive has accumulated a substantial collection, representing the whole period and every aspect of the gay/lesbian community and all of its debate over AIDS, and some poster-form opposition.[49]

The MGLA aimed to make its records available in part to facilitate public education. Other places, such as the Lesbian Herstory Archives, were more insular, concerned with its members and not the general public.

At one time decidedly outside the mainstream, gay and lesbian people and communities won hard-fought battles for equal rights and social acceptance. With this change in status came the question of where their archives belonged. Those who wanted to maintain the separate, community-based archives rather than deposit them in university archives or otherwise had principled arguments. Citing Audre Lorde, Thistlethwaite explained that "the master's tools will never dismantle the master's house," and said that weary of the political uses of similar collections, the Lesbian Herstory Archives continued to function within the community.[50] In contrast, others pointed to the better access, security, and resources that mainstream archives could provide as well as the symbolic victory of

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[49] University of Manitoba Archives and Special Collections (UMASC), Manitoba Gay and Lesbian Archives, A.08-67 MSS 42, Box 101, Folder 9, Funding application for poster exhibit, 08/01/1993. See also Marcel Barriault, "Hard to Dismiss: The Archival Value of Gay Male Erotica and Pornography," *Archivaria* 68 (Fall 2009), 222-223.

[50] Audre Lorde as cited by Thistlethwaite, "Building 'A Home of Our Own,' " 156.

occupying space that previously excluded them.[51] Of the Canadian Gay Archives in Toronto, James A. Fraser in 1978 wrote, the archives "expects to take its proper place in the archives community" and that it "sees itself as a public institution dedicated to the preservation of a part of Canada's history."[52] Most people seemed to agree that keeping records in the hands of community members was important because of the sense of identity and pride that came with building an archives.[53]

Hugh Taylor writes, "Our records are more than a source for research, a means of ensuring accountability or as evidence in contradistinction to information without context. They are an extension of ourselves."[54] Community archives come in a variety of shapes and sizes. Connecting them, however, are powerful, often personal meanings preserved in the records they keep. Taylor says these attachments reflect a larger historical process that linked archives to the heritage movement. According to Taylor, the Second World War, which brought with it a "heightened awareness of documentary media," was a significant part of that historical process.[55] Increased awareness of archives and their social value was reflected in the remarkable expansion of the National Archives that saw its budget of $2 million in 1968 increase to $15 million over ten years.[56] Reviewing this period of Canadian archival growth, Michael Swift notes that each of the provinces had archives by 1968.[57] The development of municipal archives lagged behind, but centennial projects and the money

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[51] Phil Parkinson and Chris Parkin, "Safe Harbour: The Origin and Growth of the Lesbian and Gay Archives of New Zealand," in *Saving Our Names*, 183; Thistlethwaite, "Building 'A Home of Our Own,' " 155.

[52] James A. Fraser, "Canadian Gay Archives," *Archivaria* 5 (Winter 1977-78), 159.

[53] Brenda J. Marston, "Archivists, Activists, and Scholars: Creating a Queer History," in *Saving Our Names*, 141.

[54] Hugh Taylor, "'Heritage' Revisited: Documents as Artifacts in the Context of Museums and Material Culture," *Archivaria* 40 (Fall 1995), 10.

[55] Taylor, "The Collective Memory," 121.

[56] Michael D. Swift, "The Canadian Archival Scene in the 1970s: Current Developments and Trends," *Archivaria* 15 (Winter 1982-83), 47.

[57] Ibid., 52.

available at this time contributed to the growth of local history projects and regional archives. Released in 1976, the Symons Report called for a "national and regional plan to coordinate archival activity, to serve as a framework for archival diffusion and to promote collections development in a *rational manner* throughout the country."[58] The increased responsibility and social purpose created new challenges for the emerging Canadian archival community and placed stress on the total archives tradition.

With more people, groups, and institutions on the Canadian archival landscape came questions about what the relationship between archives should be and who should collect what. In this context, Taylor advised the archival community to "remain professionally vigilant about standards in all archives, but recognize that less important material may be set at risk so that the public can enjoy the greater gain of the authentic experience of documents in the very small repositories."[59] He warned against "skimming off" records from municipalities, advising archives to accept them on "deposit only."[60] Haworth, a strong advocate for local archives, argued these archives could serve a leadership role within communities by helping to promote archival awareness.[61] He also called on the Association of Canadian Archivists to support "regional associations," referring to its recent resolution on developing a "local archives service,"[62] but noted problematic attitudes towards archives persisted:

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[58] Haworth, "Local Archives," 35. Emphasis in the original.
[59] Taylor, "The Collective Memory," 124.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Haworth, "Local Archives," 33.
[62] The resolution reads, "Resolved that: the executive of ACA, at the next annual meeting, present recommendations for a rational program of local archives service: a program including guidelines defining minimum standards under which a local service should operate and prototype legislation that may be presented to governments for their consideration, keeping in mind the need for continued safeguards of the autonomy of established local archives." *Archives Bulletin* as cited by Haworth, "Local Archives," 34.

> Whenever archivists come together to deliberate the acquisition of records and private papers, lip service is paid in a patronizing manner to the principle that records of a particularly local significance should remain in that place. At the same time, notice is taken perpetually of the absence of adequate facilities and lack of trained staff at the local level. In some instances, this note seems to be more of an excuse for spiriting away local records and private archives rather than a sincere justification for not leaving them in the community.[63]

In addition to pointing out the gap between principle and practice, Haworth's remarks are interesting because they suggest archivists were reluctant to break with the past and used their professional status and resources to validate their actions.

The dichotomy between community archives and mainstream archives starts to break down in the nineties. This breakdown was largely a combination of technological innovation and the will of archivists and community members to work together to create more representative and inclusive archives. Digital technology provided the tools to build the network that the archival community had talked about, helping to ensure the sharing of spaces and resources. As well, it allowed the custodial role of archives to be challenged, opening the door to new configurations. What resulted was an increase in archival activity and practices followed by a period of reflection, diagnosis, and recommendations.

Andrew Flinn began articulating his ideas about community archives publicly in 2007 when he published a lengthy article on the subject. His thinking and leadership have been essential in University College London (UCL) research projects that investigate questions around community archives.[64] Flinn responds to Richard Cox's concern that "identity" and "self-esteem," as the driving forces behind community archives, may result in closed communities and fuel tension between social groups.[65] Flinn argues a critical understanding

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[63] Haworth, "Local Archives," 32-33.
[64] Andrew Flinn, "The Impact of Independent and Community Archives on Professional Archival Thinking and Practice," in *The Future of Archives and Recordkeeping,* ed. J. Hill (London: Facet Publishing, 2010), 154-155.
[65] Cox, "The Archivist and Community," 259.

of identity politics is valuable, but that UCL research discovered minimal evidence among community archives of "narrow or reified approaches" to archival work.[66] Recognizing the problematic use of the word "community" by policymakers who have used it as a substitute for "minority," Flinn suggests that "independent archives" or "independent community archives" are more suitable.[67] As well, Flinn notes the term "archives" is potentially misleading since independent and community archives often straddle the boundaries between museums, libraries, and archives.[68] In his view, community archives are defined by the "very act of collecting," an idea that privileges intent over the form, structure, and content of records in a collection.[69]

Other key concepts in the independent community archives model include the interrelated ideas of autonomy, independence, and grassroots organization. According to Flinn, community archives are best understood as bodies that form around their own unique goals or community aims rather than the agenda set by heritage institutions or other government bodies.[70] Community archives are grassroots in the sense that they are inspired by events or ideas within the community, and autonomous or independent if the community continues to exercise control over the collection. The principle of independence extends to community ownership of the collection and supports the right of community members to control how their archives are represented and who can access them. Few archives operate in isolation of a nation's memory institutions or without some form of government aid, however. The emphasis on independence, while helping to distinguish community archives from other heritage bodies, may, in fact, exclude a number of archives despite Flinn's

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[66] Flinn, "The Impact of Independent and Community Archives," 155.
[67] Ibid., 147.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid., 149.
[70] Ibid., 150.

attempts to create an inclusive definition. Also, it makes one wonder how an archive might lose its independence; what kind of comprises would be acceptable, and who makes this determination?

Both Flinn and Jeannette Bastian recognize the benefits of partnerships between communities and mainstream archives. Their work is partly devoted to showing that an archival consciousness can exist outside mainstream archives, but also explores avenues for collaboration. According to Bastian, the archival mission as guided by the principles of provenance, custody, and access is complementary to the objectives of community archives that may require assistance "retrieving their pasts" and "affirming the rights of the community."[71] Similarly, Flinn views the implications of community archives not as a departure from the archival mission, but as confirmation of the ongoing movement towards more inclusive practices in the profession.[72] He notes that willingness of community archives to compromise their independence may depend on their political mission and relationship to the state, but if increased visibility is a significant goal within the community or the lack of resources a persistent problem, then partnerships with mainstream archives are more likely to form.[73] In a partnership, Flinn suggests archives adopt post-custodial models and act as stewards of the record.[74] He does not rule out the eventual donation of the collection to the archives but argues that a relationship of trust must be established through a working relationship before this transfer. This model of community archives would, therefore, stress

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[71] Jeannette A. Bastian, *Owning Memory: How a Caribbean Community Lost its Archives and Found its History* (Westport, Connecticut: Libraries Unlimited, 2003), 87.
[72] Flinn, "The Impact of Independent and Community Archives," 164-166; Flinn, "Community Histories, Community Archives: Some Opportunities and Challenges," *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 28, no. 2 (2007), 168-169.
[73] Flinn and Mary Stevens, "'It is noh mistri, wi mekin histri.' Telling our own Story: Independent and Community Archives in the UK, Challenging and Subverting the Mainstream," in *Community Archives*, 16.
[74] Flinn, "Community Histories, Community Archives," 168-169; Flinn, "Archival Activism: Independent and Community-led Archives, Radical Public History and the Heritage Professions," *InterActions: UCLA Journal of Education and Information Studies* 7, no. 2 (2011), 13-15.

that existing outreach activities be strengthened and that future acquisitions be negotiated on equal terms. An open dialogue between community and mainstream archives built on mutual respect is essential in this model that views ongoing communication as a learning opportunity for both parties.

One of the recipients of the Archives Landmark Award in 2008 in London, the rukus! archive, exemplifies the model of community archives outlined by Flinn. An archive dedicated to documenting the experiences of the Black lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities in the United Kingdom, rukus! is considered "an act of collective rebellion" by founders Ajamu X and Topher Campbell.[75] Both artists and activists within the Black LGBT community, the founders view rukus! as a means to explore and create identity through the embrace and ultimate subversion of the categories 'Black' and 'Queer.' The collection of club posters, pornography, badges, and other ephemera was a gradual process that started with an exhibition held in the aftermath of immense loss.[76] AIDS-related deaths created a heightened historical consciousness that helped to inspire the 2005 launch of rukus! Reflecting on the loss of life in the nineties, Campbell connects this pain with the memory of slavery saying, "This pain, the pain of lived experience is not recognized, and there's a need to hold it, and store it, and keep it as precious."[77] The rukus! archive project represents the need to connect with multiple histories to address trauma, but also to have "fun" with records.[78] While they enjoyed the creative aspects of this project, the founders eventually

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[75] Mary Stevens, in interview, Ajamu X, Topher Campbell, and Mary Stevens, "Love and Lubrication in the Archives, or rukus!: A Black Queer Archive for the United Kingdom," *Archivaria* 68 (Fall 2009), 272. The mission of the rukus! archive is "to collect, preserve, exhibit, and otherwise make available for the first time to the public historical, cultural, and artistic materials related to the Black lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities in the United Kingdom through a variety of activities and events (exhibitions, film-screenings, oral history work, presentations, etc." Ibid., 271.

[76] Ajamu X, "Love and Lubrication in the Archives," 278-279.

[77] Campbell, "Love and Lubrication in the Archives," 283.

[78] Ibid., 289.

donated the archive to the London Metropolitan Archives (LMA). This arrangement freed them from the professional standards that guide archival work; as Ajamu explains, "it means I can approach archiving without being restricted to a professional frame of reference: 'this should be done like this,' and so on."[79] As well, associating rukus! with an established archival institution was a step towards legitimizing the archive. The grassroots inspiration for the archive, its political message, and its complex understanding of identity construction and community speak to Flinn's model of community archives.

Associated with Design and Media/Information Studies at the University of California, Los Angeles, Katie Shilton and Ramesh Srinivasan present another model aimed at incorporating community knowledge into traditional archival practice. They outline a methodology based on the use of participatory processes to inform the archival functions of appraisal, arrangement, and description.[80] This model proposes modifying rather than discarding longstanding traditions in archives and, therefore, acts as a confirmation of existing practice in some ways. Like Flinn and Bastian, they identify the failure of archives to capture inclusive histories and the re-creation of silences within mainstream culture as their key concerns. In contrast to the range of communities and social movements discussed by Flinn, Shilton and Srinivasan focus on Indigenous and ethnic communities, reflecting on the challenge of capturing today's complex multicultural societies.[81] They are similarly concerned with improving the representativeness of archives and moving away from the pattern of creating knowledge about the 'other,' but their work speaks to re-orientating user

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[79] Ajamu X, "Love and Lubrication in the Archives," 291.
[80] Katie Shilton and Ramesh Srinivasan, "Counterpoint: Participatory Appraisal and Arrangement for Multicultural Archival Collections," *Archivaria* 63 (Spring 2007), 90-91.
[81] Ibid., 89, 92-93.

communities.[82] The participatory archiving model, in further contrast to the independent community archive, is concerned with reconciling "creator communities and archivists" and seems to assume this relationship already exists.[83] Rather than suggesting archivists form partnerships with communities *after* the creation of an archive, Shilton and Srinivasan suggest the role of archivists is to facilitate and empower communities *throughout* the archival process. Issues of independence, custody, and access are overlooked as a result of the authors' interest in exploring ways of harnessing community knowledge to develop collections presumably already in the care of an archive.

Shilton and Srinivasan argue that appraisal must reflect the community's understanding of what is valuable. They recommend organizing focus groups so that archivists can better understand the stories behind records.[84] The knowledge of context obtained through consultation assists in the appraisal of records and reconfirms existing practice that tries to view records in the context of their creation and understand them in relation to one another. The application of provenance and original order as they relate to arrangement and description can similarly be extended to include participatory processes. Guiding the re-orientation of this function is respect for records creators, which, according to Shilton and Srinivasan, means respect for the intentions of the author(s) and the structures of knowledge or frames of reference that are part of communities.[85] An understanding of cultural ontologies is further emphasized by the authors who present this as the basis for grouping, linking, and representing records. It is their hope that advances in information

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[82] Isto Huvila, "Participatory Archive: Towards Decentralised Curation, Radical User Orientation, and Broader Contextualisation of Records Management," *Archival Science* 8, no. 1 (2008), 16-17, 26. See also Robin Boast, Michael Bravo, and Ramesh Srinivasan, "Return to Babel: Emergent Diversity, Digital Resources, and Local Knowledge," *Information Society* 23, no. 5 (October 2007), 398.

[83] Shilton and Srinivasan, "Participatory Appraisal and Arrangement," 92.

[84] Ibid., 99.

[85] Ibid., 91, 93-98.

technology will convey these ontologies.[86] While acknowledging that consensus among the community may be difficult to reach, Shilton and Srinivasan are nevertheless hopeful that their work will provide direction for archivists who wish to create a truly representative archive.[87] Even though the authors do not mention social media, the interaction they describe sounds as if these technologies are used in the model. Commenting on participatory archiving models such as those developed by Shilton and Srinivasan, Isto Huvila observes, "the participatory approach could be denoted 'archive 2.0.'"[88] Like other archives that have embraced social media, the objective is to engage users in the co-creation of the archive so as to employ their knowledge and ultimately facilitate greater use and better representation. One may argue, however, that the process of engaging the community is flawed as it manufactures an archival consciousness for the community rather than recognizing unique archival traditions that may already be in practice. As well, it assumes the presence of a well-defined community and does not acknowledge the archivist's role in shaping the community by initiating and controlling the consultation process.

The principle of community participation that underlies Shilton and Srinivasan's participatory archiving model is also present in Yakel's work on archival description and sharing archival authority. Her work with the University of Michigan School of Information and FANG[89] Research Group, on such projects as the Polar Bear Expedition Digital Collections, focuses on user interaction rather than building community archives.[90] Borrowing from Bastian, Yakel and Deborah A. Torres reposition one of the most frequent

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[86] Ibid., 96.
[87] Ibid., 100.
[88] Huvila, "Participatory Archive," 24.
[89] FANG stands for Finding Aids Next Generation Research Group.
[90] See Magia Ghetu Krause and Elizabeth Yakel, "Interaction in Virtual Archives: The Polar Bear Expedition Digital Collections Next Generation Finding Aid," *The American Archivist* 70, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2007), 282-287.

users of archives, genealogists, as a "community of records."[91] This phrase refers to the community as a body that creates records and serves as a memory frame. In a community of records, recordkeeping traditions form over time and patterns of information start to develop as records are exchanged. Thus, this phrase denotes the formation of community around the creating and sharing of records along with the emergence of structures and conventions of representation. Their research on genealogy has led Yakel and Torres to observe that, as genealogists engage in the research process and consult with other genealogists, they are constructing a community of records.[92] The goal for archival institutions, as suggested by Yakel and Torres, is to serve and build communities around records through interactive processes. In this way, the archivist can collaborate with the community to capture and continually reinterpret the records and memory frames originating from community dynamics. Yakel and Torres build on Bastian's concept of a 'community of records,' adding that in their multiple interactions with records, archives, other genealogists, and family members, the genealogical community creates "linked communities of records."[93] The community archive for the genealogist may be the total of these linked communities. In the view of Yakel and Torres, who base their understanding of community on participation, users are community members in the sense they choose to participate in linked communities of records.[94] Archivists participate by building a space for these interactions and may be part of the community as well.[95] In contrast to Shilton and Srinivasan, whose model of participatory

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[91] Elizabeth Yakel and Deborah A. Torres, "Genealogists as a 'Community of Records,' " *The American Archivist* 70, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2007), 97; Bastian, *Owning Memory,* 3-4.

[92] Yakel and Torres, "Genealogists as a 'Community of Records,' " 111.

[93] Ibid.

[94] Ibid.

[95] Elizabeth Yakel, "Who Represents the Past? Archives, Records, and the Social Web," in *Controlling the Past: Documenting Society and Institutions: Essays in Honor of Helen Willa Samuels*, ed. Terry Cook (Chicago: Society of American Archivists, 2011), 274-275.

archiving makes stark divisions between the archivist and the community, this alternative model acknowledges a more expansive role for archivists.

It is necessary for Shilton and Srinivasan to keep these divisions while bringing about a re-orientation of traditional archival functions, but if one assumes the community is already present, then archivists can look for ways of strengthening this presence. The goals of archivists and users as members of communities of records are similar and only distinguished by their roles within the community. By providing a space for community interaction, archivists become architects of community. What is problematic about Yakel's notion of community, however, is that it does not address the issue of self-identification outlined by Flinn. By participating in the construction of community are users and archivists identifying themselves with a group? The question is one of intent and whether or not participation denotes a willingness to become a member of the community. Yakel's thoughts about community are part of work that seeks to bring about a shift in the archival profession "from a model of mediation and controlled descriptions to one of collaboration and shared authority."[96] This goal is fundamentally linked to the emergence of social media and community formation in the context of online archives. A participatory archive that uses social media repositions users as communities with the purpose of connecting them with their history and identity.[97] The themes of collaboration and integration of the community in the processes of representation emerge from this model of participatory archives leading to questions of how archivists should share authority with multiple people.[98] Yakel's solutions to these problems require moving the archive to a social space such as an online environment

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[96] Ibid., 259.
[97] Ibid., 258; Huvila, "Participatory Archive," 24.
[98] Yakel, "Who Represents the Past?" 258.

that incorporates social media.[99] As Yakel observes, commenting, annotations, and social tagging allow communities to add value to records and make changes to descriptions in the case of annotations. More than providing additional context to the existing archive, however, these features may result in the identification of other collections and begin the process of making links and building communities.

The focus on building communities is of particular importance when dealing with marginalized communities that have either acted as records creators or served as the subject of archives and records. Cited by Yakel in her work on the social spaces of virtual archives, Library and Archives Canada's Project Naming began as a collaborative project between the Nunavut Sivuniksavut training program and Library and Archives Canada (LAC).[100] The project sought to identify the Inuit in photographic collections at LAC and connect Nunavut youth with Elders so as to assist the community in the understanding of its history. Recently, LAC expanded the project's scope to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit content in its holdings.[101] Another one of the project's stated goals was to "bridge the cultural differences and geographical distances between Nunavut and the more southern parts of Canada."[102] This latter goal makes Project Naming sound more like a nation-building project than a community exercise, a goal that may be unavoidable when dealing with a national institution like LAC. In any case, the "bridge" between cultures and localities while echoing the problematic language of policymakers as identified by Flinn, also represents the interaction

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[99] Ibid., 264-267.

[100] Library and Archives Canada (LAC), "Project Naming," last modified January 29, 2009, accessed August 15, 2016, http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/inuit/index-e.html. See also Beth Greenhorn, "Project Naming: Always On Our Minds," in *Museums and the Web 2005: Proceedings*, ed. J. Trant and D. Bearman (Toronto: Archives & Museum Informatics, March 31, 2005), accessed May 21, 2016, http://www.museumsandtheweb.com/mw2005/ papers/greenhorn/greenhorn.html.

[101] LAC, "Project Naming," last modified August 21, 2015, accessed August, 23, 2016, http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/aboriginal-heritage/project-naming/Pages/introduction.aspx.

[102] LAC, "Project Naming," last modified January 29, 2009, accessed August 15, 2016, http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/inuit/index-e.html.

that occurs as a result of the social space created by the LAC. It is a social space in the sense that it allows viewers to fill out a form that provides additional descriptive information such as the names of subjects in photographs. LAC staff reviews these forms and modifies descriptions on a case-by-case basis. This form of interaction between archivists and community seems far from Yakel's call for a "radical trust" of user communities, especially since the review and decision-making process occurs within the institution.[103] However, Project Naming has been successful in linking communities with records, opening the archive to new users, and enriching the description of thousands of photographs.

A key principle of the participatory archiving models developed by Shilton, Srinivasan, and Yakel is that archivists engage others in archival work rather than seek to identify existing grassroots archival activity.[104] Whereas both models show "decentralized curation" and "radical user orientation," as Huvila observes, Shilton and Srinivasan are concerned with developing community ontologies to guide arrangement and description while Yakel seems content to work within "an archive as an evolving corpus of process-found information with self-emerging ontologies."[105] Rather than assigning the archivist to the role of manager that is arguably the dominant theme in Shilton and Srinivasan's model, Yakel sees the archivist as a participant in the community, or someone who co-creates the archive alongside user communities. Seeing archivists as collaborators who perform core archival functions with the goal of use in mind is arguably more appealing than the archivist/manager who must get out of the way so the community can perform archival tasks. As managers and technicians, archivists provide the resources, space, and infrastructure for

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[103] Yakel, "Who Represents the Past?" 265.
[104] Huvila argues that the "baseline" for models of participatory archives "is in engaging users, as opposed to archivists, in archival tasks." Huvila, "Participatory Archive," 26.
[105] Ibid., 26-27.

communities, but are not part of the communities themselves. One may ask if by trying to empower communities the knowledge of the archivist is being overlooked. The preservation function is notably absent from their model, an omission that seems potentially hazardous to the overall fate of archives. One might also wonder what kind of metadata is being produced by these community ontologies and whether or not communities are considering issues like interoperability.

The professional standards and codes of the archivist are additionally useful because they encourage transparency in archives, another subject overlooked by Shilton and Srinivasan. Could another role of archivists within the community be to document the community's appraisal decisions? The issue of transparency, however, might be more relevant to Yakel's model of participatory archives. Many archives are encouraging participation without adopting Yakel's views on open access and radical trust. These archives structure and censor the contributions of users. LAC's Project Naming is far from incorporating the themes of "connection, collaboration, community" that have developed around social media.[106] While digitized records connect collections with communities, LAC is not heeding Yakel's challenge to build communities around archives.[107] Furthermore, the use of forms rather than comments, tagging, and annotations suggest a reluctance to share authority with user communities and denote heavily mediated services. Yakel suggests that archivists should move from mediating records to participating with communities in the construction of meaning. The path she identifies involves ways of highlighting the presence of archivists while integrating them within the community itself. Reflecting on the "all-too-omnipresent" archivist in the Polar Bear Expedition Digital Collections, she says:

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[106] Yakel, "Who Represents the Past?" 258.
[107] Ibid., 274.

> 'The Archivist' was an authority above all others, rather than a participant with equal standing. In future designs, I would position the archivist differently, although he would still be there, but in a more participatory role and thus less likely to become the addressee for most comments. Encouraging collaboration while not having the archivist totally blend into the woodwork, as she does in a traditional finding aid, is hard to balance exactly right quite yet.[108]

Intended to address the place of the archivist in online archives, it is worth noting how these observations speak to previous debates about the "invisible archivist."[109] Mediation may be on its way out, but the archivist will continue to create knowledge about records and should not be pushed out of sight.

Flinn might view the participatory archiving models of Shilton, Srinivasan, and Yakel as ultimately a top-down approach. In both these models, the archivist either initiates the process by approaching the community or encourages certain types of user behaviours through the selection of technologies. The independent community archives identified by Flinn must be the result of grassroots activities, which is why he so often connects these archives with social movements. For Flinn, the archivist is an equal partner with the activist archivist who, as a representative of the mainstream archives, can offer resources and professional knowledge. Although Flinn eschews notions of 'professional' and 'amateur' archivists, ultimately professional archivists must act for their governing body and, depending on its mandate, may have a responsibility to the public as well as the communities they work with on a regular basis.[110] The weakness of Flinn's model, however, is that the user is a murky figure whose presence is only implied. He speaks of communities as primarily records creators and donors and identifies the goal of community work as enriching

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[108] Ibid., 273.

[109] Terry Cook, "The Archive(s) is a Foreign Country: Historians, Archivists, and the Changing Archival Landscape," *Canadian Historical Review* 90, no. 3 (September 2009), 505-506.

[110] Flinn, "The Impact of Independent and Community Archives," 147.

the record so that archives become "more representative of the diversity of society."[111] He similarly warns that the failure to act will "impoverish" the record.[112] According to Flinn then, the archivist serves the greater good of society and acts for the benefit of future generations. These views are more in line with archival thought around the concept of total archives than the ideas of Shilton, Srinivasan, and Yakel, which reflect the belief that the primary purpose of archives is to make its contents available for use and embody the spirit of "radical user orientation" described by Huvila.[113]

This chapter reviewed the history of archival thought in relation to community rather than solely focusing on the recent literature on community archives. The reason for this approach was twofold. Firstly, the aim was to explore the historical context that influenced how archivists have viewed community over the years. The profession's recent interest in community archives has been a response to a myriad of complex intellectual, social, and cultural changes. If the decision of archivists to embrace community is not put into context, then we risk producing a self-congratulatory narrative that does little in the way of analysis. Secondly, in the absence of a precise definition of community archives, this chapter focused on the dichotomy that has developed between community and mainstream archives. Community archives are often defined in opposition to government-sponsored archives, and the first part of this chapter traced the historical roots of this opposition, outlining the elite interests that archives have served over the centuries. The rise of the social movements in the sixties saw the creation of community archives as separate institutions, and much like the

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[111] Flinn, "Migrations, Disputed Heritages and Multicultured Identities: Archives in Post-colonial Societies," *Archives and Manuscripts* 36, no. 2 (2008), 77.

[112] Flinn, "Other Ways of Thinking, Other Ways of Being. Documenting the Margins and the Transitory: What to Preserve, How to Collect," in *What are Archives? Cultural and Theoretical Perspectives, A Reader*, ed. Louise Craven (Aldershot, England and Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate, 2008), 111.

[113] Huvila, "Participatory Archive," 32-33.

historical professional, the archival profession took notice. In Canada, the National Archives started programs aimed at diversifying the historical record so as to reflect society better. This change in direction was reflected in the growth of the National Archives. Within communities, there was intense debate over whether or not to donate records to a mainstream archives like a government or university archives. However, technological innovations supported the emergence of post-custodial models that contributed to the breakdown of the dichotomy. From there, this chapter explored models of community archives, all of which are part of an emerging body of work on this topic. No single or cohesive definition of community emerged from the analysis of these models. In each case, the notion of community varied and was part of a solution to present-day challenges facing the profession. How archivists define and position community then is inseparable from the questions they are asking.

Chapter Two: A Case Study of the Boissevain Community Archives

This chapter examines the origins of the Boissevain Community Archives and its current operations as a community resource. In addition to focusing on the connection to the heritage movement and its record of service, attention will be paid to the shaping of the BCA as a result of its participation in the larger archival community. The goal is to revisit the word 'community' not to expose it as a fabrication but to reflect on its production over time. In this pursuit, I have found it useful to draw from work that critically examines the heritage movement and the postmodern-inspired archival studies literature that challenges one to make explicit the politics behind representations in an effort to question widely accepted narratives. This critical framework is not being used for the purpose of exposing the 'seedy underside' of a prairie town but to acknowledge the reality that at the local or community level, individuals and groups have different (sometimes conflicting) interests; and even when they are in unison, some voices are louder than others. So what gets captured in the community archives? If communities, like other structured groups, are political, archivists need to know how to read, "the unavoidable and indelible imprint of power on any archive."[1] This chapter also explores questions about the politics that have affected this community archives. In particular, it examines the BCA's role in local history projects and social justice initiatives, including the preservation of Indigenous history and recent claims issues. It draws from both archival research and interviews as source material to explore these topics and support the argument that community archives are best understood through a research-based approach, one that focuses on choices around the BCA and the context of those choices.

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[1] Verne Harris, "Archons, Aliens and Angels: Power and Politics in the Archives," in *The Future of Archives and Recordkeeping,* ed. J. Hill (London: Facet Publishing, 2010), 103.

The creation of the Boissevain Community Archives can be dated to 1976 when it was formally established as part of the Boissevain & Morton Regional Library (BMRL), later renamed the Boissevain-Morton Library & Archives (BMLA).[2] Its origins reach further back, however, to the history of human occupation of the land. Located on Treaty 2 territory, Boissevain sits on a glacial deposit that made it an ideal camping spot for First Nations people and then a trading community in the days of the fur trade that included the Dakota, Métis, and Scots-Irish traders.[3] After the arrival of white settlers, it came to prosper as a regional centre in a new agricultural economy because of its position on the Canadian Pacific Railway.[4] As if to signal the shift, in 1886 the CPR renamed Cherry Creek Boissevain after the Dutch financier, Adolphe Boissevain.[5] One may look to local history books on Boissevain for these and other details. As in other prairie towns, committees were formed to record, preserve, and celebrate the past through the production of local history books.[6] The 'raw materials' gathered in the course of researching these books served as a basis for the

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[2] The mandate of the BCA is to house material deposited by municipalities, churches, organizations, families and individuals of Boissevain, Morton, and the Turtle Mountain area. The collection is estimated at 73 metres. The BCA is subject to the authority of the Library's Board of Trustees. For an account of the state of municipal recordkeeping in Boissevain, see Andrea Martin, "Information Oversight: Archives and Recordkeeping Practices in Manitoba Municipalities," (Masters thesis, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba, 2014), 38-39.

[3] James A.M. Ritchie, interviewed by Sarah Ramsden, October 31, 2015.

[4] Boissevain became a village in 1899 and a town in 1906. It is located on Highway 10, thirty kilometres north of the border with North Dakota. In 2006, it had a population of 1,497 people. In 2014, the town of Boissevain and Rural Municipality of Morton amalgamated to form the Municipality of Boissevain-Morton. See Boissevain-Morton, "Boissevain, Manitoba, Canada," accessed February 29, 2016, http://www.boissevain.ca.

[5] In 1886, Adolphe Boissevain provided the CPR with the capital for a rail extension. See Boissevain History Committee, *Beckoning Hills Revisited: Ours is a Goodly Heritage, Morton-Boissevain, 1881-1981* (Boissevain, Manitoba: Boissevain History Committee, 1981), 7.

[6] Other local history books include *Beckoning Hills: Pioneer Settlement, Turtle Mountain, Souris Basin Areas* (Boissevain, Manitoba: Boissevain Special Committee on the 75th Jubilee, 1956), and *Beckoning Hills: Dawn of the New Millennium: Boissevain-Morton, 1981-2006* (Boissevain, Manitoba: Beckoning Hills History Book Committee, 2006). For more on the connections between local history projects and centennial celebrations, see Hugh Taylor, "'Heritage' Revisited: Documents as Artifacts in the Context of Museums and Material Culture," *Archivaria* 40 (Fall 1995), 14; Jean Friesen, "Introduction: Heritage Futures," *Prairie Forum* 15, no. 2 (1995), 195; Peter Moran, "FOCUS: Simcoe County Archives," *Archivaria* 3 (Winter, 1976-77), 108; Sally Cunningham, "Preface," in *Proceedings of the Local Histories Workshops,* ed. Sally Cunningham, transcribed and typed by Colleen Senenko and Sharon Campbell (Brandon: Rural Community Resource Centre, 1978), 3.

archives. Grant money increasingly available during the era of centennial celebrations was similarly important. A \$12,000 grant from the federally funded Local Initiatives Program (LIP) provided the initial cash flow for the archives.[7] However, while the majority of rural communities in Manitoba produced a local history book for commemorative purposes, most of them did not establish formal archives, especially as early as the 1970s. The fact that Boissevain was one of the first rural archives in Manitoba suggests a unique set of circumstances was present.

The early formation of the BCA can be linked to the community's history of responsible custodians like Bill Moncur and Bernice Pettypiece. Identified as a farmer, local historian, and archaeologist, Moncur amassed a private collection of First Nations artifacts now located in the Moncur Gallery. Far from being a detached observer or a 'white man' with a fetish for projectile points, Moncur is described as a "trusted friend" of the Dakota; a man who was honoured with the title of "Pipe Carrier" that according to his obituary "gave him the right and the responsibility to possess and maintain Native ceremonial artifacts and stories."[8] His contemporary, Bernice Pettypiece of Ninga, was a former music teacher who became the town's first librarian when the Boissevain & Morton Regional Library (BMRL) was established in 1959. Over her seventeen years as librarian, Pettypiece devoted her energies to making the Library a community and cultural centre and formed relationships of trust with many residents, some of who deposited their records with Pettypiece for "safekeeping."[9] The establishment of the BCA coincided with Pettypiece's retirement and

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[7] Boissevain Community Archives (BCA), Boissevain & Morton Regional Library (BMRL) fonds, MG10/C1, Box 4, File 7, Anna Grace Diehl, "1976-1977 Local Initiatives Program Application Form," September 8, 1976. In the end, the BCA received \$12,685, see BCA, BMRL fonds, MG10/C1, Box 1, Vol. 1, Board Meeting Minutes, October 17, 1976.
[8] BCA, William Moncur fonds, MG14/C164, Box 2, File 1, William (Bill) Moncur obituary, 2001.
[9] Diehl, "Local Initiatives Program Application Form."

was born out of her desire, as well as the support of others, to find a lasting home for these records.

The LIP funding application shows the term 'Community Archives' was used during the initial phase of the great "archival project." It is likely the term 'community' was used because it could refer to both 'town' and 'country' people; those in the town of Boissevain and others, like the farmers, who lived in the surrounding area. A location-based community such as Boissevain seems easy to define, as opposed to an ethnic community with its porous boundaries and internal factions, but according to Emma Waterton and Laurajane Smith, 'community' "should not be pinned to geography alone, as it is a frame of reference or orientation that coalesces around shared interests, common causes or collective experiences."[10] More than a legal description and a set of coordinates that remain more or less the same, a community is boundless; it fluctuates over time and can be either shared or contested. Documenting the community in historical and archival projects is therefore a creative act of self-definition. Getting the 'facts' right, ensuring accuracy, and engaging in appropriate methods of collection are part of the process, all of which may determine the project's wider acceptance in the community.

The LIP grant money paid for a temporary staff of five women who worked with Pettypiece to preserve "heritage" and make it "accessible" to the public.[11] These women included Anna Grace Diehl, the first archivist, and Phyllis Hallett, whose tenure as the second archivist lasted twenty years.[12] Both served as Head Librarian at one time or another. According to the grant application, the staff was hired to execute three tasks: 1) gather,

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[10] Emma Waterton and Laurajane Smith, "The Recognition and Misrecognition of Community Heritage," *International Journal of Heritage Studies* 16, no. 1-2 (2010), 9.
[11] Diehl, "Local Initiatives Program Application Form."
[12] C.W. (Bill) Ransom, ed., *Beckoning Hills: Dawn of the New Millennium, 1981-2006* (Boissevain, Manitoba: Beckoning Hills History Book Committee, 2006), 91.

catalogue, and file records of the town and municipality's past; 2) assemble a bibliography of the library's Canadian history collection; 3) develop a vertical file series and index with information on Manitoba and "its relationship to the larger National and World community."[13] The funding application also identifies the benefits of community archives for students, historians, writers and senior citizens who might derive comfort in knowing their contributions and lives have been preserved. On paper, the community archives is presented as a place with local and national purpose, a place that promised to "add to our sense of community and Canadian identity" and "preserve something of the past and present for posterity."[14] The desire of the founders to cultivate a "Canadian identity" and develop its resources with regard to provincial and national history suggest they realized the importance of providing context to local events and wanted the BCA to function as a research centre. It could also be read as a strategic effort to obtain federal funding.

The next steps in the "archival project" were to set up the systems and procedures to archive the existing collection and acquire additional material. Records show that visits were made to the Archives of Manitoba to devise a system of arrangement with the help of Provincial Archivist John Bovey.[15] The Library Board of Trustees also financed trips to workshops in Winnipeg and Brandon so the staff could be taught how to store and catalogue materials.[16] One of these events was the Local Histories Workshop at Brandon University held on November 26, 1977.[17] A transcript of this event shows the attempt of local historians, academics, and archivists to define local history and its value. John Archer, for example,

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[13] Diehl, "Local Initiatives Program Application Form."

[14] Ibid.

[15] BCA, BMRL fonds, MG10/C1, Box 2, *18th Annual Report* (1976-1977), 5.

[16] BCA, BMRL fonds, MG10/C1, Box 4, File 7, Paul Rayner, "Area's History is Preserved in Archives," *Brandon Sun,* November 5, 1996, and Phyllis Hallett, "Boissevain Community Archives," March 4, 1998.

[17] BCA, BMRL fonds, MG10/C1, Box 2, *19th Annual Report* (1977-1978), 3. Pettypiece, Hallet, and Diehl were recorded as attending this event.

claimed that local history "brings us nearer to the common or the ordinary person - nearer by far than any other source of historical study."[18] And although Gerald Friesen identifies the "Municipal Archives" in Boissevain as a place for the preservation and storing of records, his speech and others suggest the most suitable location for archival material was the "Provincial Archives," or perhaps in the newly created "Rural Archives in Brandon," with copies being deposited in "Local Archives."[19] This workshop was more intent on providing research and writing tips than in giving practical advice on establishing a community archives. James Ritchie, historical researcher and former archivist at the BCA, recalls being told that its founders were initially discouraged by the Provincial Archives, saying they were "simply told you can't do it."[20] The belief that small towns like Boissevain could not establish an archives speaks to the "elitism" in the Canadian archival profession referenced by Edward Laine.[21] Even with the advent of social history, historical and archival professionals continued to support the centralization of archival records and preferred the care of archivists to those outside the profession.

Despite this lack of support, the library staff embraced the challenge to "...get out into the local communities, encourage people to gather and assemble, to compile and comment on the local scene. Make the local communities your source of material and make the Archives their source of inspiration and direction."[22] In Boissevain, where local history activity was connected with the establishment of a community archives, the library staff engaged the public with the goal of educating it about archives. One document that appears to address the community states, "Whatever you have, however small and insignificant … do not hesitate to

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[18] John Archer in *Proceedings of the Local Histories Workshops*, 110.
[19] Gerald Friesen in *Proceedings of the Local Histories Workshops*, 53-54. See also John Archer, 105-106.
[20] Ritchie, interview, October 31, 2015.
[21] Laine, "Finnish-Canadian Archives," 75.
[22] Archer, *Proceedings of the Local Histories Workshops,* 114-115.

bring it along to the archives, where the staff will be delighted to assess its possible contribution to the community collection."[23] To direct and aid their search, materials with archival value were defined as organizational and business records and materials documenting personal and family history in addition to maps and photographs.[24] Possibly seeking to address any potential mistrust of the new institution, the organizers presented themselves as professionals who would "respect the privacy of individuals" and seal sensitive materials at the request of the donor.[25] Founders chose to learn and apply the rules of the profession, rather than develop their own. Their goals were to keep and preserve records of local significance and show that rural archives could be more than second-rate institutions.

The collection was initially kept in two steel cabinets in the library's basement, but in 1984 the archives moved upstairs.[26] Campaigns to educate the community and collect records continued, resulting in the further expansion of the archives and its activities. As archivist, Phyllis Hallett chose to display selected items in public spaces and invited speakers from organizations like the Association of Manitoba Archivists to visit.[27] Newspaper clippings from *The Recorder* document events, such as the "Identification Party" hosted by the BCA and the Beckoning Hills Museum in which residents were invited to solve "mysteries" in photographs.[28] Community members also contributed knowledge through informal exchanges with staff members. Ritchie, for example, recalls being able to "announce a

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[23] BCA, BMRL fonds, MG10/C1, Box 4, File 7, "Boissevain Archives," no date, 3. Document likely written by Anna Grace Diehl.
[24] The document on file even lists the record types. Ibid., 2-3.
[25] Ibid., 2.
[26] BCA, BMRL fonds, MG10/C1, Box 4, File 7, "Boissevain Community Archives," newspaper clipping, no date, and "Archives Celebrate 10th Anniversary," *The Recorder* [Boissevain], November 18, 1987.
[27] BCA, BMRL fonds, MG10/C1, Box 4, File 7, Rayner, "Area's History is Preserved in Archives."
[28] BCA, BMRL fonds, MG10/C1, Box 4, File 7, "Mysteries at Archives," newspaper clipping, March 13, 1991.

problem from the front desk" and receive an answer later that week.[29] Notices were placed in *The Recorder* to collect records on the Great Northern Railway and the use of this line by rumrunners.[30] This topic was documented in the BCA's interview project that collected oral histories from persons of interest, namely pioneers and business people.[31] To aid researchers and other patrons, the oral history collection and other archival holdings were "integrated" with the library catalogue system that was automated in the early nineties.[32] Some of these records have been digitized and transcribed. Additional oral histories were collected in 2001 by the BCA and Moncur Gallery to "repair the historical information deficit with respect to Métis and Native occupation of Turtle Mountain during the 19th and 20th Centuries."[33] Users can discover these and other records by visiting the BMLA's web site and searching the online catalogue. Powered by the library software Evergreen, the catalogue includes a drop-down menu that allows users to search the "Boissevain-Morton Library" or "Community Archives."[34] Together, the library and archives became the community and cultural centre imagined by its founders, sharing both space and resources. This pairing has supported the creation and preservation of community memory, not solely through the care of records, but by providing a space for community members to meet, communicate, and engage with local history.

Over the years, the BCA has undertaken and participated in a range of local history projects. Many of these projects have been celebratory in nature, as in the case of the

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[29] Ritchie, interview, October 31, 2015.

[30] BCA, BMRL fonds, MG10/C1, Box 4, File 7, "Mementos wanted of the Great Northern Railway," *The Recorder* [Boissevain], June 9, 1982.

[31] BCA, BMRL fonds, MG10/C1, Box 4, File 7, "Library Corner," *The Recorder* [Boissevain], June 21, 1995.

[32] Ibid. Details about the automation of the catalogue taken from Ransom, ed., *Beckoning Hills* (2006), 91.

[33] See catalogue record of the Turtle Mountain Oral History fonds (BCA, MG8/B4), Boissevain-Morton Library & Archives, accessed February 15, 2016, http://bmlibrary.ca. To catalogue their archival holdings, staff members map elements of Rules for Archival Description (RAD) to MARC records.

[34] Boissevain-Morton Library & Archives, "Boissevain-Morton Library & Archives," accessed February 15, 2016, http://bmlibrary.ca.

cookbook *Heritage Stew: A Celebration of our Community's Culinary Past, Traditions, Experiments and Compromises Which Have Made Us What We Are.*[35] As the title suggests, the cookbook brings together recipes and stories that spotlight the diversity of the Boissevain area and its layers of history. Along with jams and jellies, there are recipes for Zwieback, a Mennonite bun, Flemish Beef Stew, Imitation Haggis, Bannock, and Moo Goo Gai Pan submitted by Choy's Restaurant.[36] Although *Heritage Stew* resembles the trite symbols of multiculturalism, like the Canadian mosaic, the combination of written submissions, interviews, and archival records adds further meaning to the title; it is as a whole, a collaborative work that acknowledges a diversity of experience while celebrating personal memories and shared histories. However, in the past, the archives has not confined itself to "feel good" projects or turned away from darker events in its history. One traumatic event in Boissevain history, for example, took place in 1974, when a father killed his daughter and then himself in a murder-suicide. The will to forget this event is perhaps best represented by the omission of the father's name on the tombstone he shared with his daughter. As former archivist Ritchie says, "nobody wanted to remember the father so he's not even mentioned on the tombstone because everybody was mad at him for having killed himself and his daughter."[37] He explains that a "horrific event" such as this was important for him, the community archivist, to document because he was responsible for the municipal grave records. Ritchie also recognized that this event disrupted the "social fabric of the community" and "the ability of the community to process it as well."[38] Over twenty-five

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[35] James A.M. Ritchie, ed. *Heritage Stew: A Celebration of Our Community's Culinary Past, Traditions, Experiments and Compromises Which Have Made Us What We Are* (Boissevain & Morton Regional Library and Community Archives, 1999).
[36] Ibid., i-iii and 66.
[37] Ritchie, interview, October 31, 2015.
[38] Ibid.

years later, in 2001, he chose to document this event by speaking to people and gathering related materials such as school photos and cemetery and death records. These records are now in the archives and part of community memory because Ritchie believed there was "a need to get the accurate information, not let it die just because there's a bit of confusion or some difficult feeling."[39] His sense of professional duty was perhaps intensified for having known the victim in high school.

Of its many heritage and memory projects, Boissevain is best known for its outdoor gallery of murals. A local attraction that rivals the town's giant turtle 'Tommy' in grandeur (Figure I), the murals depict the history of the community with scenes of outdoor hockey games, prairie landscapes, and interiors of old businesses. The mural *General Store* interprets an archival photograph in the BCA and pays "tribute to all general stores which were the centre of each rural and urban community" (Figures II and III).[40] The outdoor gallery along with other local heritage organizations like the Irvin Goodon International Wildlife Museum and Moncur Gallery support a historical consciousness that, in addition to drawing from archival sources to create messages, generates further uses of the archives. Clare Littlejohn, staff member at the library and archives, observes that "history and respect for history is not new in Boissevain," pointing to the generations that grew up seeing their history on the landscape that included murals and heritage buildings the community has preserved.[41] She refers to the "established philosophy" the community has "to remember our history, and to celebrate, and keep it."[42] Boissevain is known as a beautiful community that is steeped in history. Local businesses continue to express interest in displaying its history. As well,

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[39] Ibid. These records compose the Wanda Jablonski fonds (BCA, MG14/C417).
[40] Plaque, *General Store*, Brian Romagnoli [artist] (Boissevain, Manitoba).
[41] Clare Littlejohn, interviewed by Sarah Ramsden, October 30, 2015.
[42] Ibid.

community innovation and services have remained strong despite its proximity to the City of

Brandon, Manitoba, and the competition this brings.

Figure I: Tommy Turtle, June 2013. Tommy has been a fixture of
the town since 1974. He is modeled after the western painted turtle
and stands 28 feet tall. Photo by Sarah Ramsden.

Figure II (above): *General Store* by Brian Romagnoli, 1998. One of the many murals in Boissevain's outdoor gallery. Photo by Sarah Ramsden.

Figure III (above): Inside view of "Welch's Mens Wear" in early 1900s. Alex Welch Store (PG4/D3). Courtesy Boissevain-Morton Library & Arhives.

The public displays of heritage and their seemingly truthful messages about the inherent hardiness of the pioneer or the wholesome simplicity of the past should be contrasted against the documentation of Indigenous histories, specifically the Dakota.[43] Perusing the online catalogue, researchers can find a number of record groups, such as the Turtle Mountain Dakota fonds and the Hadamanie fonds, which reveal (in part) the complex story of local Dakota bands. Denied Canadian Aboriginal status and labeled American refugees, the Dakota did not sign treaties with the Government of Canada. Their reserves were created using a formula (80 acres / family) that gave them less land than other First Nations groups and although the government refused to recognize them as Canadian Aboriginal people, it still applied provisions of the Indian Act to restrict their activities on reserves and control their movement.[44] The documentation of Dakota history in the BCA seems to indicate an interest in social justice and attempts by the Boissevain community to extend its history beyond the arrival of white settlers. At least one of the descriptive records reveals the Morton-Boissevain Planning District directed the BCA to conduct research on aspects of Dakota history.[45] Other projects were commissioned by Dakota bands or were joint efforts of the BCA and the Moncur Gallery. Ritchie, as a researcher for the Dakota, wrote books and reports on topics like the Council Stones, an intertribal trading and diplomatic bloc, and the Dakota reserve on Turtle Mountain, which was unjustly dissolved in 1909.[46] In the process of researching these topics, Ritchie assembled original records and

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[43] The area has also been home to Chippewa and Métis peoples.

[44] Sarah Carter, "Agriculture and Agitation on the Oak River Dakota Reserve, 1875-1895," *Manitoba History* 6 (Fall 1983), 3. See also Peter Douglas Elias, *The Dakota of the Canadian Northwest: Lessons for Survival* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1988), 39-53, 187-189; Elias, "The First American Refugees," *Ontario Indian* 5, no. 4 (1982), 20-21, 56-57.

[45] See catalogue record of the Hadamanie fonds (BCA, MG1/A9), Boissevain-Morton Library & Archives, accessed February 15, 2016, http://bmlibrary.ca.

[46] James A.M. Ritchie, *The Council Stones: Turtle Mountain Tales* (Boissevain, Manitoba: Moncur Gallery of Native History, 2001); Ritchie with Chief Frank Brown, Tribal Chairman David Brien, and Daniel Goodon,

materials copied from other repositories, like Library and Archives Canada; many of these records are available to the public at the BCA. This research was used in legal proceedings to support the claim of three Dakota bands in Manitoba for Aboriginal rights and title.

The Dakota did not go through with their claim, but the background reports compiled by Ritchie in the course of the claims process helped to bring about self-government for Sioux Valley.[47] For Ritchie, this turn of events is an important success for the BCA, one that speaks to the value of community archives: "...in one sense the fact that Sioux Valley got self-government I think is incredible. Another community was able to get a change in their municipal government status that recognized rights that had been denied to them for a hundred and fifty years because this community kept records. That's pretty darn special."[48] The Sioux Valley Dakota National Governance Act came into effect on March 4, 2014. Ritchie points to the alliance of archivists and local community members that helped to bring about this victory. He credits the contributions of an archivist at Library and Archives Canada who astutely introduced him to an obscure body of records that proved to be a rich source of evidence.[49] Known as the records of Colonial Office 5 and described to Ritchie as a "catch bin" for various materials, they included records of events that pre-dated the Indian Affairs jurisdiction on the prairies but had an important bearing on the Dakota claim. Ritchie recalls that one of the most important discoveries, the fact that the Superintendent of Indian

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"The Cultural Transmission of the Spirit of Turtle Mountain: A Centre for Peace and Trade for 10,000 Years," part of conference package at Finding the Spirit of Place, ICOMOS 16th General Assembly and 2008 Scientific Symposium, accessed May 30, 2016, http://www.icomos.org/quebec2008/cd/toindex/77_pdf/77-eYq1-123.pdf; Ritchie, *The Dakota-Ojibway War 1640-1870* (forthcoming). Ritchie has acted as an author, contributor, and collaborator on unpublished works, and has spoken on topics related to historical buildings, land issues, and oral history. His partners have included the Canupawakpa Dakota, Sioux Valley Dakota, and Clare Littlejohn.

[47] Background reports were formerly available online at http://dakotaoyate.com/ (web site under construction).
[48] Ritchie, interview, October 31, 2015.
[49] Ibid.

Affairs for Manitoba and the Northwest Territories was convicted of fraud, was uncovered in

Boissevain:

> That information [the fraud conviction] had been buried but it so happened that a descendant of the investigator had been a minister in Boissevain. And so his widow remembered that they had a family history of the inspector. That was Harriet McColl. So Harriet McColl telling me a family history and then lending me a family history book, which happened to have been written by a member of the family who had been a Winnipeg librarian so she had a proper bibliography. So when I got this family history book and here's this incredible story about an inspector conducting a fraud investigation in 1878 ... here was this family history, here was the bibliography including National Archives of Canada fonds citations so that allowed me to go to National Archives of Canada and get the file, which everybody had forgotten about.[50]

Ritchie explains the potentially far-reaching repercussions of this discovery, citing the

"Supreme Court ruling that Aboriginal Affairs must be above reproach" and the fact that the

Superintendent, J.A.N. Provencher, acted as Secretary on several of the numbered treaties.[51]

"So, we have at least four of our first numbered treaties are going to be affected because the

guy who wrote down the records was subsequently convicted by the Government of Canada

of fraud."[52] The mechanisms for accessing this evidence were the family history available to

Ritchie because of his role within the community and the research aids available through

Library and Archives Canada.

When Ritchie took the job as archivist in Boissevain after working as a reporter for

many years, there were questions of whether a claim from Canupawakpa Dakota (Oak Lake

Reserve) would affect the Rural Municipality of Morton.[53] Ritchie says that under the

leadership of the Deputy Mayor Les Diehl a task force was formed to investigate and provide

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[50] Ibid.
[51] Ibid. Ritchie is presumably referring to *R. v. Sparrow* (1990) that found the Government of Canada had a fiduciary responsibility to Aboriginal people. See Peter W. Hogg, *Constitutional Law of Canada*, 2009 Student Edition (Toronto: Carswell, 2009), 661.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid.

recommendations on "reconciliation with the Aboriginal community."[54] Ritchie was part of the task force that recommended tourism as a co-venture, which came into being but then abruptly ended a few years later after the death of Les Diehl. As Ritchie explains, "the new council quashed it and everything we were doing that was good now suddenly became bad."[55] Ritchie says he was fired from his position as archivist because leadership was threatened by his research on Aboriginal issues.[56] He attributes their actions to the fear that land from the R.M. of Morton would be transferred to the Dakota in a claims settlement. Firing Ritchie, however, did not stop the work he was doing; in fact, it won him favour with members of the Aboriginal community and allowed him to devote more time to this work. As he explains, "instead of two percent of my time, which is what I spent as town archivist on Native issues I then spent one-hundred percent of my time for the next ten years on Native issues."[57]

One of the ways the municipality has turned away from this history is through narrowly applied definitions that have "restricted the archives to nothing more than strictly the municipality of Morton."[58] As a reporter, archivist, researcher and volunteer, Ritchie has amassed a personal archive that documents his work in relation to Thompson, Dakota history, and bodies like the International Peace Garden. Much of this archive, however, is not in the BCA because some of these topics are understood as falling outside of the institution's mandate. Ritchie refers to the practice of restricting a collections mandate to municipal boundaries as "ahistorical" saying, "history does not conveniently line up with municipality borders and for a municipality that's just gone through a mandated centralization, a

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[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.
[56] Ibid.
[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid.

reorganization, it is insane to argue that somehow this is an immutable change when you've just been forced to do it."[59] The BCA has used municipal boundaries to define the community it documents, but these boundaries are not "immutable" or timeless and to apply them is a choice, one that defines who is and is not part of the community. Among the records in Ritchie's personal archive are files on the Sourisford linear mounds.[60] Located near Melita, Manitoba, a massacre took place on this site somewhere between 1810 and 1830. It involved three groups whose bodies were "dumped in one mass grave."[61] A hundred years later those bodies were exhumed, and according to research by Parks Canada, remains from thirty-two of these bodies ended up at the Royal Ontario Museum. Talks of repatriating the bodies were ultimately unsuccessful; all the people involved in the discussions are gone, but the files remain. Ritchie recalls that the archaeologist at Parks Canada reached out to him to ensure the record of these events remained intact: "...before he left his job he said, 'you better take copies of these reports because I don't know where they're going to stay otherwise.'"[62] Donating these files to the BCA is not possible at this moment because the area in question is outside the municipal boundaries, and the absence of archives in Melita and Canupawakpa has forced Ritchie to hold onto these files.[63]

In his days as archivist and with the support of Deputy Mayor Les Diehl, Ritchie served as an intermediary between his contacts with the Dakota and other communities,

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[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Ibid.
[63] Ibid. With monies allocated to commemorating the War of 1812, Heritage Canada provided financial support for a trail ride on the Manitoba-North Dakota border. Ritchie assisted by providing background on the massacre that convincingly showed a connection between the trail ride and the War of 1812. James A.M. Ritchie, "Report on Linear Mounds National Historic Site: War of 1812 Commemoration and Burial Repatriation," (Draft), given to Ramsden in March 2013. For more information, see Bill Redekop, "Retracing historic Mandan Trail, Natives from Canada, U.S. to join Unity Ride," *Winnipeg Free Press,* posted April 23, 2012, accessed May 30, 2016, http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/local/retracing-historic-mandan-trail-148478475.html.

sharing in authorized ways the knowledge he was given. Some of this knowledge was used to enhance the description of a photograph of Maggie Sitting Eagle (Figure IV). Part of Library and Archives Canada's collection, the small amount of descriptive information for this image included the unhelpful and offensive inscription of "A Sioux squaw."[64] After several email exchanges between Ritchie and LAC staff, however, the description was modified; the title now reads, "Studio portrait of Dakota (Sioux) woman [possibly the wife of Sitting Eagle, last Dakota Peace Chief of Turtle Mountain]."[65] Additional information is given below and the BMRL is mentioned. Ritchie has also used historical knowledge to cast a different light on narratives that celebrate the contributions of elite members of the community. For instance, on the subject of selecting the present site of the International Peace Garden, others have credited members of gardening associations and former proprietor of *The Recorder* Bill Udall.[66] According to Ritchie, however, Udall learned of the site's significance from his father-in-law John Brondgeest.[67] A resident of the area during its days as a trading post, Brondgeest knew this site in the Turtle Mountains had long served as an important meeting place for Aboriginal people. To Ritchie, this transmission of knowledge from one generation to the next represents a "continuity" that ensured the International Peace Garden was built in the "right place."[68] Unfortunately, this knowledge is not widespread; as Ritchie notes, "we remember that officially in the white history as a bunch of gardeners who decided where it would be. And that diminishes the importance of the International Peace Garden."[69] Narratives that privilege the history of settlers reflect a longstanding bias that continues to

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[64] LAC, Patent and Copyright Office (Canada), PA-029555. MIKAN no: 3258922.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Boissevain History Committee, *Beckoning Hills Revisited* (1981), 81. This source says his role in the site selection of the International Peace Garden was "undoubtedly Mr. Udall's greatest accomplishment."
[67] Ritchie, interview, October 31, 2015.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.

shape community memory. In Boissevain, Ritchie demonstrated the capacity of historical knowledge to challenge such narratives, but these actions led to his dismissal. It is difficult to determine whether Ritchie lacked support because his views were out-out-step with the rest of the community or simply at odds with the political leadership of recent years. He no longer maintains a regular presence at the BMLA, but he left his mark on the archives by leaving behind some of the files he created and processed.
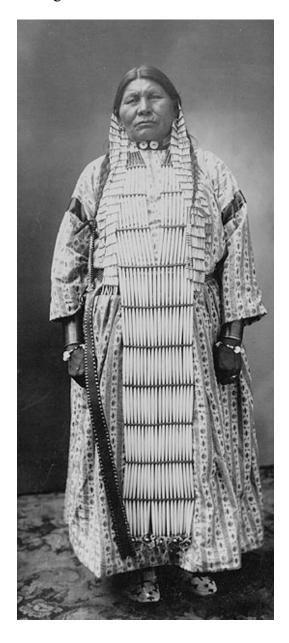

Figure IV: Studio portrait of Dakota (Sioux) woman [possibly the wife of Sitting Eagle, last Dakota Peace Chief of Turtle Mountain], 1909. Library and Archives Canada, Patent and Copyright Office (Canada), PA-029555.

Politics are not the only force operating on community archives. Resources, specifically the lack thereof, can place a significant amount of stress on community archives and limit the scope of their activities. Cristine Paschild argues for a better understanding of "material needs" and "sustainable practice" in community archives.[70] She says the archival profession has been preoccupied with an intellectual discourse on identity that falls short of addressing the "realities and needs of the actual organizations themselves."[71] In Boissevain, the amount of available resources determines the scope of the archives and its activities. Being part of the library means the archives is one of several priorities in a sector where resources are already scarce. Currently, the library head and one other staff member share the role of archivist and work a combined seven hours in the archives per week. The BCA does, however, have a stable source of funding, which many other community archives lack. This funding made it possible for the BMLA to relocate from a building with structural damages and limited space to a larger facility. The budget for archives is modest; staffing expenses were estimated at $3600 and $400 was allocated for archival supplies in 2011.[72] Clare Littlejohn says that, "We are a library first," adding that when people visit, the "first response is from library desk."[73] Littlejohn acknowledges the lack of staff time to devote to archival work and wishes she had an "army of volunteers" to help with projects like indexing the local newspaper.[74] Helping with the workload are partnerships with other heritage institutions. Artifacts related to pioneer history are housed in the Beckoning Hills Museum, and the Moncur Gallery collects artifacts that document the area's Indigenous history.

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[70] Cristine Paschild, "Community Archives and the Limitations of Identity: Considering Discursive Impact on Material Needs," *The American Archivist* 75 (Spring/Summer 2012), 125.

[71] Ibid., 127.

[72] BCA, "Archives Budget," given to Ramsden in December 2011.

[73] Littlejohn, interview, October 30, 2015.

[74] Ibid.

Commenting on this division of responsibility, Littlejohn stresses the need to "work together" to accomplish the goal of preserving local heritage.[75]

The BCA has also benefited from its relationship with the Association for Manitoba Archives (AMA), which has provided a range of opportunities. The AMA was formed in 1992 when the Association of Manitoba Archivists merged with the Manitoba Council of Archives.[76] It offers a range of services to institutional members like the BCA, including education and training courses and advisory services. One of the most important features of the AMA, however, is the network that connects archives with each other. In 2006, the AMA saw the creation of a special interest group for rural and northern archives. Recognizing their common interests and need for additional supports, these archives exchange ideas and collaborate on projects. In 2010, they participated in the AMA Images exhibit that featured selected photographs from rural and northern archives. Curated by photographer Lorne Coulson, the exhibit explored the theme of recreation and traveled across the province. The BCA contributed a photograph of boating at Lake Max (Image V). Dated 1914, the photograph depicts a group excursion on the lake, referencing leisure and the beauty of the natural environment.

Be it through resources, volunteers, or partnerships, the community continues to support the BCA because its members believe that records of local interest should be kept in their communities of origin. In the past, the BMRL Board of Trustees spoke of centralization as a threat that "has a tendency to lower the quality of life in a rural area. Communities begin to deteriorate when vital services are removed."[77] In the context of Boissevain, keeping

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[75] Ibid.

[76] Association for Manitoba Archives, "History of the Association for Manitoba Archives (AMA)," accessed February 29, 2016, http://mbarchives.ca/history.

[77] BCA, BMRL fonds, MG10/C1, Box 1, File 2, "A brief to the Library Survey of the Province of Manitoba by

records within the community has meant local knowledge can be harnessed to solve problems. Preserving the record, however, does not necessarily mean that the knowledge contained therein will survive. Records are retrieved and understood within a larger context that includes an oral record and human relationships, which help to give records value and meaning. Community archives are as much about services as they are about preserving records. In the early days, they were sustained by the belief that people should not have to travel outside their communities for services. This meant having a microfilm reader for issues of the *The Recorder* and other microfilm reels ordered through interlibrary loans. It also meant hosting workshops in records management and keeping staff employed to work on heritage buildings nominations, genealogical requests, and title searches. With the rise of the Internet and scanning technologies, these are not necessarily local services anymore. Staff members could conceivably assist someone from anywhere in the world, and yet services remain concentrated in the local area suggesting the continued importance of locality.[78]

Even when using municipal boundaries as a guideline, community is difficult to define. Boundaries are not static, and do not address what happens when someone moves outside of those boundaries or if the community archives should include all those who have lived on the land, a history that goes as far back as 15,000 years.[79] Since Boissevain is on Treaty 2 territory, one can easily argue that Treaty 2 signatories form an important part of the community. However, this would exclude the Dakota - a wrongful exclusion to be sure since they are invested in the land. In the context of southwest Manitoba, the local history must not start with the pioneers or the date of a town's incorporation. This point might be missed if we

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the Boissevain and Morton Regional Library Board," [198-].
[78] Greg Bak and Amanda Hill, "Deseronto Dreams: Archives, Social Networking Services, and Place," *Archivaria* 79 (Spring 2015), 3.
[79] Ritchie, interview, October 31, 2015.

only look at the community's definitions of itself, especially since settler interests are protected by the erasure of Indigenous history or even its misrepresentation. Community members keep records alive, but they can also reinforce old prejudices. Dialogue and engagement can lead to discovery and the subsequent changing of the record resulting in an 'evolving record' akin to the ever-changing community it documents. Community archives can alternatively work like other institutions to prevent change or project an idealistic notion of community, one that is nostalgic rather than forward thinking.

It is problematic to see the BCA as a reflection of the community. The archives has been primarily shaped by a small group of people, namely the archivists and other staff members. In the early days, its founders exercised a great deal of authority. They chose to model the archives along professional lines because they wanted the project to have legitimacy. The success of the archives partly depended on support from community members in the form of donations and patronage. However, the resources sustaining the archives came from the municipality. As part of the library, the BCA is funded and staffed by the municipality. It has, therefore, reflected the politics of municipal leaders who embraced reconciliation with local Indigenous people and then dismissed the community archivist for taking it too far. The foray into social justice initiatives left an imprint on the BCA. Files on the Dakota, historical injustices, and land claims are held at the archives. Their presence, however, is more indicative of the efforts of Ritchie working under the direction of the former Deputy Mayor and Dakota bands. Through the eyes of many, Ritchie's accomplishments may seem like a success story, but they have not been celebrated in Boissevain. The present distance between him and the BCA speaks to the diversity of beliefs, values, and opinions that exist within a community. The archives is not merely a reflection of

the community, but a site for synthesis, contrast, and recording of multiple views.

This chapter applied a research-based approach and provided contextual information on a range of topics. It primarily focused on the origins and development of the archives as an institution and the individual contributions of staff members over time. Details about the content of the BCA's holdings were shared along with information about its various uses, services, and resources. This chapter did not, however, describe the ongoing creation and organization of information about archival records or examine what this intellectual work says about how people thought about community. These and other questions will be addressed in the next chapter on the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre, which focuses on a community of shared interests and experiences rooted in a social justice agenda.

Figure V: Lake Max, near Boissevain, 1914. Photographer: Osborne Photo. Sports and Recreation fonds, Camping (PG-8/E10). Courtesy Boissevain-Morton Library & Archives.

Figure VI (above): Boissevain grain elevators, June 2013. Photo by Sarah Ramsden.
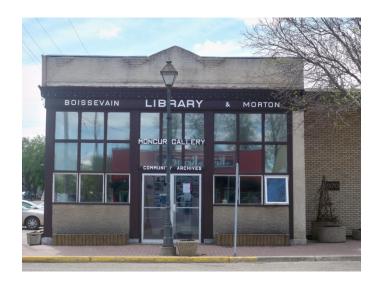
Figure VII (above): Boissevain & Morton Regional Library, Community Archives, and the Moncur Gallery, June 2013. Photo by Sarah Ramsden.

Figure VIII (left): Boissevain-Morton Library and Archives, April 2016. Photo by Sarah Ramsden.

Chapter Three: A Case Study of the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre

This chapter examines a different case study, the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre at Algoma University in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, but has a similar structure to the last chapter. It starts by looking at the origins of the SRSC, positioning the story within the context of the ill-fated Keewatinung Anishinabe Institute, an Indigenous educational and cultural centre that once operated alongside Algoma University College. The chapter also looks at the precursor to the SRSC, the Shingwauk Project. As a cross-cultural initiative aimed at spreading awareness of residential schools and their legacies, the Shingwauk Project and its partners saw the creation, gathering, and dissemination of information and records about residential schools as an essential part of their mission. Drawing from the records of the Shingwauk Project, this chapter traces the genesis of the archives, exploring how its relationship to community changed over time. I argue that much of this change is linked to the identification of residential schools as an issue of national significance in Canada. The last part of this chapter draws parallels to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) at the University of Manitoba. Throughout this chapter, I revisit the question of what gets captured in the community archives, but with a greater focus on the intellectual work of those performing archival tasks and the emerging role of digital technology. Although a vastly different type of community archives from the BCA, this case study similarly demonstrates the value of contextual information derived from the history of the record approach.

Algoma University is presently located on the site of Shingwauk Hall, which operated as a residential school from 1873 to 1970 (Figures IX and X). Inheritors of the land but not the legacy, the university has distanced itself from the colonialist ideas behind residential

Figure IX (above): Algoma University, March 2014. Photo by Sarah Ramsden

Figure X (above): Sign outside Algoma University, March 2014. Photo by Sarah Ramsden.

schools through sustained engagement in cross-cultural initiatives like the Shingwauk Project. However, Algoma University (formerly Algoma University College) has not always demonstrated a respect for Indigenous people, culture, and history. In fact, the college's role in the demise of the Keewatinung Anishinabe Institute during its early years suggests a lack of concern. Established in 1965 as an affiliate of Laurentian University, the college operated out of prefabricated buildings in a parking lot before relocating to Shingwauk Hall. Other parties had been interested in acquiring the site, including a group of local First Nations people from Garden River and Rankin First Nations reserves with ties to the Shingwauk and Wawanosh schools.[1] After the Government of Canada sold the land to the Anglican Church in accordance with an earlier agreement, the church leased it to the college. The lease agreement, however, stated that the college had a duty to work with Indigenous people saying, "In recognition of the traditional concern which the Anglican Church has had for the Indian people, the Lessee will attempt to develop in co-operation with responsible Indian people, programs designed to develop Indian lore and culture."[2] For a few years, the College and newly created Keewatinung Anishnabe Institute worked together; although joined by a liaison committee, the two were formally independent, and adopted the Thunderbird as their symbol.[3] Reputedly, the institute was Ontario's first cultural centre for Indigenous people with "pioneering" cross-cultural programs and a special focus on Indigenous culture,

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[1] Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre (SRSC), Shingwauk Project collection, Administration series, Box 1, File 26, Residential Schools Centre, "A Permanent Home for the Legacies of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation: Preliminary Proposal to the Aboriginal Foundation," August 2010, 6. See also, SRSC, Shingwauk Project collection, Document series, Box 5, File 13, "Indians rally to seek centre," *The Globe and Mail,* October 12, 1970, 4.

[2] SRSC, CSAA fonds, Box 4, File 34, Lease agreement cited in "Keewatinung Institute Report: Algoma University College," 1973, 2. Document likely written by Professor Francis R. Guth. On the first page, this document cites a letter by Jean Chrétien, then Minister of Indians Affairs and Northern Development, dated November 25, 1970, which says: "I am most anxious to ensure, in the disposal of this property, a future use is found which would permit the facilities to be accessible to the Indian people to some extent. Ideally, it would continue to be used for an education-orientated purpose and it was with this in mind that I was prepared to favourably consider the transfer of the facilities to the Algoma Synod."

[3] Residential School Centre, "A Permanent Home for the Legacies of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation," 6.

traditions, and contemporary issues.[4] One source, however, suggests the institute did not have the support of local bands, raising questions about who was behind the institute and whether they were the same people who lobbied for an Indigenous centre years earlier.[5]

The institute was short lived. In 1975, the Anglican Church evicted the institute, selling the land to the college shortly thereafter.[6] The eviction did not come as a surprise to some. Various sources refer to a "faction" within the college that wanted to "get the Indians out."[7] The *Sault Star* reported tales of harassment, revealing that the institute's water and heat had been repeatedly tampered with and accusations of property destruction.[8] As well, there were reports that the premises had "badly deteriorated" since the institute's occupancy and rumours of a cockroach infestation.[9] These reports were refuted by a surprise inspection that stated the institute was "in an excellent state of cleanliness and repair."[10] The inspector, likely one of the College's professors, also said he "found the Institute is doing many wonderful, internationally recognized things. It seems the only place it is not recognized and appreciated is here in its home town."[11] An investigation followed on the heels of these events, and then a Provincial Royal Commission of Inquiry found the college was unethical in its conduct.[12] There was a period of trusteeship afterwards, and it looked at one time that the college would

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[4] SRSC, Shingwauk Reunion 1981 fonds, Box 2, File 1, Carolyn Harrington and Donald Jackson, "Education, Sault Ste. Marie, and Algoma University College," December 1980, 11.

[5] SRSC, Shingwauk Project collection, Document series, Box 5, File 24, "Background/Context for the attached documents," no date.

[6] Residential School Centre, "A Permanent Home for the Legacies of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation," 6. This document reports that, "In a secret deal the Anglican Church transferred title of Shingwauk Hall and 34 acres of the site to University for $600,000."

[7] "Keewatinung Institute Report: Algoma University College," 2.

[8] SRSC, CSAA fonds, Box 4, File 34, Jackie Hoffman, "Keewatinung (2) - 'Their failure isn't important,' " *Sault Star,* February 20, 1975, 19.

[9] "Keewatinung Institute Report: Algoma University College," 1.

[10] Ibid., 3.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Residential School Centre, "A Permanent Home for the Legacies of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation," 6.

have to leave the site.[13] In the end, the college stayed. It presently acknowledges the complicated history of the site and its responsibilities to Indigenous people, in particular the students, families, and communities affected by residential schools and their legacies.

Accounts of the institute and its demise appear across various records, documented in letters, minutes, agreements, newspaper articles, and transcriptions of interviews.[14] Copies of these records are in the archives. It is important that all of this documentation survives. If one looks only at the published material, the narrative consists of the College's story from a small, fledgling academic institution to a leader in cross-cultural education. Minutes tend to be polite and record motions, but omit much of the contextual information that influenced decision makers. Transcriptions of interviews, on the other hand, can be intensely personal, and include "unofficial" accounts that allow one to explore how events were experienced and perceived. Together, these traces portray an institution in crisis. Cross-cultural initiatives were not the products of the College's goodwill, but a necessary part of its reinvention. In addition to providing context to the Shingwauk Project, these background details help to introduce themes that will be re-visited throughout this chapter, including the troubled relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada and the role of archives in truth and reconciliation. As well, the story of the Institute's demise underscores the need to adopt a critical approach when examining the actions of non-Indigenous institutions like Algoma University and their desire for cross-cultural bridges.

The College's responsibilities to Indigenous people were clear, but it still took leadership to start moving in the right direction. One individual in particular is often credited

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[13] Ibid.

[14] SRSC, Shingwauk Project collection, Document series, Box 5, File 3, Shingwauk Project, *Shingwauk Hall: A History* ([Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario]: [publisher not identified], [1980?]), 38-41; David A. Nock, "Past Uses and Present Controversy over the Shingwauk Hall," course paper in draft form, February/March 1971.

with founding the Shingwauk Project, Professor Donald Jackson. Jackson came to teach in the Political Science, Law, and Justice program at Algoma College. Following his arrival, he became curious about the building and started asking questions about its history. According to Krista McCracken, researcher/curator at the SRSC, "no one really had a good answer…. no one came out and said it was a residential school."[15] She says that "it wasn't until he became connected with the local First Nations communities that he learned about the history of the site and about the building and about it being the former Shingwauk Residential School, and once he learned this information he really wanted to just make people aware about the building and about it being the former Shingwauk Residential School."[16] Considering the school had been closed for no more than ten years, this gap in memory is alarming and may speak to a collective will to forget. The lack of awareness certainly motivated a core group of people that included Jackson, Dr. Lloyd Bannerman of the Philosophy Department, Ron Boissoneau, Chief of Garden River, and Dr. Dan Pine Sr., an Elder and former student of Shingwauk. The web site of the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre also acknowledges as collaborators "students and friends" with a similar sense of moral and ethical responsibility.[17]

The initial activity of the Shingwauk Project was to publish a book aimed at "public enlightenment" and "awareness" and organize a reunion of former students and staff members.[18] These early days were marked by ambitious outreach activities. The book, *Shingwauk Hall: A History,* was sent to local, provincial, and national politicians, including

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[15] Krista McCracken, interviewed by Sarah Ramsden, October 16, 2015.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association (CSAA), "The Shingwauk Project," accessed August 23, 2016, http://www.shingwauk.org/srsc/node/7.
[18] SRSC, Shingwauk Reunion 1981 fonds, Box 1, File 7, Shingwauk Project, *Shingwauk Hall: A History* (Draft), [1980?], no page number.

the prime minister.[19] Many of the letters of receipt sent back give the impression of having been filtered through the legal services department. One minister said, "Thank you for sending me a copy of the Shingwauk booklet. It was most attractive - I particularly admire the cover illustration."[20] It seems to have made traction at the local level with some of the recipients writing to express their appreciation for the book and complimenting or congratulating the authors on their work.[21] The book speaks critically of the assimilation that occurred at the school, referencing rules against the students using their native languages and "ingraining of Christian doctrines."[22] It also acknowledges the hardships for students who experienced "isolation," "loneliness," and "bitterness."[23] The book draws heavily from interviews with former students as source material, suggesting its authors were unable to locate recorded information on the school. It is unlikely that school records would have reflected the experiences of former students who shared in these interviews details about having their heads shaved, the lack of food and hunger amongst students, attempts to run away, and instances of physical abuse.[24] Had the authors not conducted or relied on interviews, they may never have known about these abuses and the next phase of the Shingwauk Project may never have started.

The Shingwauk Project has organized multiple reunions for former students and staff members, the first of which was in 1981. The YouTube video "Commemoration for 1981 Shingwauk Hall" provides a thirteen-minute glimpse of highlights from this three-day event, showing people gathering, looking through photographs, an arts and crafts table, etc.

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[19] SRSC, Shingwauk Reunion 1981 fonds, Box 1, File 11, Various letters, 1980.
[20] SRSC, Shingwauk Reunion 1981 fonds, Box 1, File 11, Letter to Donald Jackson, December 2, 1980.
[21] SRSC, Shingwauk Reunion 1981 fonds, Box 1, File 11, Letters to Donald Jackson, December 9, 1980 and November 28, 1980.
[22] Shingwauk Project, *Shingwauk Hall: A History,* 16; see also, 15, 22, and 24.
[23] Ibid., 22.
[24] Ibid., 28-29.

Included on the schedule of events are ceremonies (closing, opening, and tree planting), a social and local entertainment on the first night, followed by a banquet and dance on the second night, and a scheduled time for taking a group picture.[25] The video contains messages later spread by the TRC. It talks about the need to "structure back our culture and traditions."[26] The speaker, likely Dan Pine Sr., emphasizes the importance of gathering in the aftermath of great loss and the work that must be done "to come back, to be an Indian."[27] The textual records of the 1981 reunion show that records, their absence, existence, use and management were an integral part of the mission to heal and rediscover. The project documents (the letters of request, progress reports, and printed remarks) acknowledge the need for records: "Many stories and opinions would be lost if not recorded; more research into the documents and writings about Shingwauk could uncover information not previously noted."[28] Papers called out to records holders saying, "If anyone has photos to lend we would like to copy them, not only for the display but also to make them available to other students."[29] A plan for documentation of the reunion is outlined in one letter that states, "for both its participants, other people and our posterity, we hope to tape interviews and discussions, some of the proceedings, take photos of any old pictures ... and, if we can, put some of these materials together ... to be distributed to the participants and others."[30] These early discussions about records are particularly interesting because they show the preservation and sharing of records were not merely afterthoughts.

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[25] SRSC, Shingwauk 1981 Reunion fonds, Box 2, File 10, Shingwauk Project, "Shingwauk Reunion '81 - Schedule of Events," 1981.

[26] CSAA, "Commemoration for 1981 Shingwauk Hall Reunion," YouTube video, 3:05, filmed 1981, posted February 13, 2012, accessed March 30, 2016, https://youtu.be/iATc4OUDLGs.

[27] Ibid., 9:33.

[28] SRSC, Shingwauk Reunion 1981 fonds, Box 1, File 13, Opening remarks.

[29] SRSC, Shingwauk Reunion 1981 fonds, Box 1, File 6, Information sheet.

[30] SRSC, Shingwauk Reunion 1981 fonds, Box 1, File 8, Letter from Shingwauk Project to Oxfam, March 10, 1981.

Records continued to be a central concern at the next reunion, which in the pursuit of more knowledge of the residential schools experience saw the creation of additional methods of documentation. Two rooms were reserved at the 1991 reunion for "DO-IT-YOURSELF INTERVIEWS" that invited people to use audio-equipment with the brief instruction to record yourself alone or with others and "document what you wish."[31] Opening remarks brought attention to "survey sheets" on the subject of "Indian Residential school impact" - confidentiality and the choice to participate or not was stated along with the purpose and value of the survey, which was "to help the people in our communities."[32] Around this time, there was an idea to develop a "regional archives" with an Indigenous focus and building on the "nucleus of material ... from the Keewatinung Institute and the Shingwauk Project."[33] The process of finding, contacting, and bringing together former students served to create a network of information sharing and laid the foundations for the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association (CSAA). That is not to say that the Shingwauk Project gave birth to the CSAA. It is more accurate to say they had similar origins that go as far back as 1871 when Chief Augustine Shingwauk talked of a "teaching wigwam" that would help his people adapt to the changing realities of Canadian society. Much of the activities of the Shingwauk Project and the CSAA have been aimed at coming to a full realization of Chief Shingwauk's vision.

Attempts to create and gather records at reunions developed in response to the lack of available records and growing need for information. When organizing the first reunion, coordinators tried obtaining the names of former students and staff members from the Government of Canada. A progress report briefly mentions their failed attempts to locate

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[31] SRSC, Shingwauk Reunion 1991 fonds, Box 2, File 26, Shingwauk Project, "Shingwauk Reunion '91 - Schedule of Events," 1991.
[32] SRSC, Shingwauk Reunion 1991 fonds, Box 1, File 27, Opening remarks.
[33] SRSC, Shingwauk Reunion 1991 fonds, Box 1, File 5, Algoma University College, "Policy on First Nations/Canadian Cross-Cultural Development," January 25, 1990, 9.

school records through Ottawa, and, in later years, Jackson recalled being informed that "all of the records were turned over to them [Ottawa] by all the churches that ran the residential schools, but that the records had not yet been catalogued and that they were sitting in a warehouse."[34] As a result, organizers spent much of their time engaged in "detective work" as they attempted to piece together as many names as possible.[35] They looked at yearbooks for high schools in the local area, searching for photographs and names of Indigenous students who might have formerly attended Shingwauk.[36] Organizers also wrote to anyone with knowledge of the whereabouts of former students and staff members, advertised the reunion through circulations, and appealed for coverage in a number of periodicals and media spots.[37] The names they gathered in the course of these activities were assembled into a directory that initially appeared as a card index, but would later become an electronic database. The directory became a resource for organizers and a means of connecting people. A local chief referred to the directory as an "item of great importance" that "has assisted many of us in rekindling lost childhood friendships and providing some of us with a sense of closure."[38] Organizers found that in addition to connection, former students were seeking records of themselves, hoping to find photographs and personal details about their own lives and histories.[39] Identifying former students and staff members, gathering their names, and engaging with them in questions about records were among the first steps in the creation of a

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[34] SRSC, CSAA fonds, Box 5, File 3, Minutes of Shingwauk Alumni Committee Meeting (Copy), December 5, 1998, 5. See also SRSC, Shingwauk Reunion 1981 fonds, Box 1, File 10, Progress Report, from March 20 to April 2, 1981.

[35] SRSC, Shingwauk Reunion 1981 fonds, Box 1, File 6, Information sheet. One of the organizers would later say in an interview that the hardest part of organizing the reunion was the absence of records. See SRSC, Shingwauk Reunion 1981 fonds, Box 2, File 5, Transcription of interview.

[36] Ibid.

[37] SRSC, Shingwauk Reunion 1981 fonds, Box 1, Files 9 and 10; Progress Report, from February 11 to February 24, 1981. See also Progress Report, from February 25 to March 19, 1981.

[38] SRSC, CSAA fonds, Box 1, File 16, Letter of support for the Shingwauk Alumni Project, February 22, 2000.

[39] See, for example, SRSC, Shingwauk Reunion 1981 fonds, Box 2, File 3, Letter dated January 13, 1982.

new community that would be served by this growing body of records.

The initial activities of the Shingwauk Project were aimed at awareness of the legacy of residential schools, and specifically the history of Shingwauk Hall. Reunions brought together former students and staff members, and through the process of gathering, the need for information, records, and archives was further identified. Other needs recognized along the way included those of the residential school survivors. Organizers of the 1981 reunion acknowledged that "the Indian residential schools left a bad taste in the mouths of the Natives that attended them. However, the fact remains that these children spent a good deal of their time in that environment and attachments do form. This is what we are emphasizing for this Reunion."[40] Survivors were excited to come together, and this gathering was supported by records. Formalizing the bonds between survivors was the creation of the CSAA, which coincided with the 1996 reunion.[41] Around this time, various individuals began assessing the research value of the archives, saying, for example, that the photographs comprised a visual history of people and settler relations in northern Ontario.[42] Early studies on residential school history and impacts drew inspiration from the Shingwauk Project. In fact, J.R. Miller's *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools* (1996) opens with a scene of the 1991 reunion. Chief Shingwauk is also mentioned in the introduction, and the corruption of his vision becomes a powerful symbol in the book for the broken trust between Indigenous

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[40] SRSC, Shingwauk Reunion 1981 fonds, Box 1, File 9, Letter from Shingwauk Project to National Association of Friendship Centres, Ottawa, March 26, 1981.

[41] SRSC, CSAA fonds, Box 3, File 2, CSAA terms of reference (Draft), 2003. In this document, the CSAA defines membership as "open to all former students, their families, community members, former staff and their families and others identified as 'Friends of Shingwauk.' As well, all Aboriginal graduates of Algoma University College are welcomed as members." Another document defines membership as "all the former students who attended Shingwauk School and their descendants," SRSC, CSAA fonds, Box 2, File 10, "Structure of The Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association," [ca. 1991-2000].

[42] SRSC, Shingwauk Project collection, Administration series, Box 1, File 20, Jane E. Karhi, *Shingwauk Project Cataloguing Classification of Photographs, Artifacts, and Documents*, September 1, 1993, 2.

and non-Indigenous people in Canada.[43] The Shingwauk Project also supported thesis work, notably Donald Wilshere's thesis that analyzed the student experience at Shingwauk.[44] In this work, Wilshere credits Jackson "curator of the Shingwauk Project" for helping him to identify "excellent sources" that he could interview for this project.[45] Wilshere deposited the interviews he conducted in the Shingwauk Project archives thereby contributing to the growth of the collection.[46] While service to the emerging community of survivors was an essential part of the Shingwauk Project archives, various people acknowledged the research value of this material for scholarly work.

By the early 1990s, the Shingwauk Project archives consisted of a substantial amount of records on Shingwauk Hall and its former students and staff members, including photographs, artifacts, interviews, and documents. The Shingwauk Project appears to have established a filing system for keeping this collection along with their administrative records in order. File codes were developed, and notations on one of these lists show signs of appraisal. File O - Committee Meeting Minutes (Progress Reports), for example, was "not important," whereas File X - Cemetery Lists was marked as "important!!!"[47] In later years, the Shingwauk Project received a grant to establish further control over its collection and re-house items according to archival preservation standards. The manual *Shingwauk Project Classification of Photographs, Artifacts, and Documentation* (1993) shows the categories

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[43] J.R. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 6. See also SRSC, Shingwauk Reunion 1991 fonds, Box 1, File 27, Interview with J.R. Miller.
[44] Donald John Wilshere, "The Experiences of Seven Alumni who Attended Shingwauk Residential School as Children, 1929-1964" (Masters thesis, Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, Ontario, 1999). See also Sharon Wall, "'To Train a Wild Bird': Hegemony, Moral Regulation and the Project of Native Industrial Education at the Shingwauk and Wawanosh Residential Schools, 1873-1893," (Masters thesis, Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, 1994), 11, 177-178. Wall's use of primary sources includes the Indian Affairs Files (RG10) at LAC and material at the Archives of Ontario.
[45] Wilshere, 8.
[46] SRSC, Donald Wilshere fonds.
[47] SRSC, Shingwauk Reunion 1981 fonds, Box 1, File 26, Report (Draft), [1990?].

used to classify photographs were based on a periodization, which starts with Indigenous people in the days prior to the school being built.[48] From there, the categories align with various school principals. The period after the school's closure is broken down into categories for the Keewatinung Institute, cross-cultural initiatives, and reunions. The miscellaneous categories that appear at the end include "Other Indian Residential Schools," suggesting the topic's peripheral importance at this time. A key message in the manual is to collect items and record the "unique stories behind them."[49] The author recognizes the importance of authoritative sources, recommending that Jackson "sit down" with the materials and "contribute his wealth of knowledge of the entire collection to others by writing the information down on the cataloguing cards."[50] However, she also says that "[a]nyone with any information," specifically former students and staff members, "should be encouraged to provide their knowledge onto the cataloguing card."[51] Such attempts to manage the collection indicate the Shingwauk Project valued contextual information about its holdings and sought to establish physical and intellectual control over the materials.

The leadership of individuals like Jackson was instrumental to the development of the Shingwauk Project, but their actions took place at a time when cross-cultural initiatives were being encouraged at Algoma University College. The idea of having a "Native Archives" with material from the Shingwauk Project was part of a general discussion about cross-cultural education, as one document suggests. Written by a member of the Academic Planning Committee, "Proposals to introduce a more formal cross-cultural element to A.U.C." (1986) recommends introducing new courses and better supports for Indigenous

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[48] Karhi, *Shingwauk Project Cataloguing Classification of Photographs, Artifacts, and Documents,* 7-12.
[49] Ibid., 2.
[50] Ibid., 14.
[51] Ibid.

students.[52] The document acknowledges the "real need in Ontario" for a "specialized Native Archives," imagining it as a resource for professors, students, and researchers from outside the area.[53] Interestingly, the document says that "both native and non-native" students would play a role in the archives, and while recognizing the need for a "knowledgeable person in charge," it adds that the archives should have a "group-project atmosphere" and should involve "several people, not just one specialist."[54] According to this vision, the archives would have a "permanent home" with environmental controls and would be part of the campus, not "isolated physically."[55] The "Native Archives" did not develop, but eventually the collection started by the Shingwauk Project and housed in Jackson's office for years became the Residential School Research, Archive, and Visitors' Centre (renamed the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre). Early discussions of the Shingwauk Project archives as a site for visitors seeking access to records date as far back as 1998. Noting that survivors and their families were visiting the campus to access the collection, organizers spoke of having a "Heritage Centre where people can go to look at the old photographs, have a cup of coffee and sit and talk."[56] This vision was realized in 2005 when the Dedicated Space Agreement between the College and Shingwauk Project secured a classroom in the East Wing of Shingwauk Hall.[57] The SRSC has cultivated a casual atmosphere in this space (Figures XI and XII). Visitors are free to drop by and browse through printed copies of photo albums, engage with the staff, and chat amongst themselves.

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[52] SRSC, Shingwauk Reunion 1981 fonds, Box 2, File 4, C. Ross, "Proposals to introduce a more formal cross-cultural element to A.U.C.," October 14, 1986, 2-4.
[53] Ibid., 4.
[54] Ibid., 4-5.
[55] Ibid., 5.
[56] SRSC, CSAA fonds, Box 5, File 3, Donald Jackson, Minutes of Communications Committee Meeting, September 26, 1998.
[57] SRSC, Shingwauk Project collection, Charter series, Box 1, File 110, Dedicated Space Agreement between Algoma University College and Shingwauk Project, May 1, 2005.

Figure XI (above): Hallway approaching Shingwauk
Residential Schools Centre, March 2014. Photo by Sarah
Ramsden.

Image XII (above): Interior view of Shingwauk Residential
Schools Centre, March 2014. Photo by Sarah Ramsden.

The beginning of the SRSC marked a period of expansion for the Shingwauk Project that saw growth in several areas.[58] This growth is linked to the identification of residential schools as an issue of national significance. The work of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) and the TRC has been largely successful in revealing the history and social impact of residential schools. While RCAP helped to put residential schools on the map, spreading awareness among non-Indigenous people, the TRC launched a comprehensive investigation into the matter. Several examples demonstrate the connections between these milestones and the SRSC. Firstly, the Aboriginal Healing Foundation (AHF) supported initiatives of the Shingwauk Project through financial assistance.[59] The AHF was part of the federal government's action plan that followed RCAP and the release of its final report in 1996. Much like the Shingwauk Project, the AHF saw residential schools as tools of assimilation that damaged individuals, families, and communities in severe and long-lasting ways.[60] Secondly, the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA) had a direct impact on services. After the IRSSA was reached in 2006, survivors began contacting the SRSC to find evidence that they had attended one of the residential schools identified in the agreement.[61] This evidence was used to help survivors receive financial compensation for their time at residential schools. The IRSSA mandated the creation of both the TRC and NCTR. However, prior to the IRSSA, the CSAA spoke of establishing a "national archival centre for all residential school historical documents."[62] In addition to having "all pertinent information" for schools in Canada, the vision for the centre included resources for "language

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[58] Residential School Centre, "A Permanent Home for the Legacies of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation," 8.
[59] Krista McCracken, "Community Archival Practice: Indigenous Grassroots Collaboration at the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre," *The American Archivist* 78, No. 1 (Spring/Summer 2015), 185.
[60] AHF, *1999 Annual Report*, 7-9, accessed March 30, 2016, http://www.ahf.ca/downloads/annual-report-99.pdf.
[61] McCracken, interview, October 16, 2015.
[62] SRSC, CSAA fonds, Box 2, File 38, "Post-Residential School Experience: Reclaiming our Language and Culture," 2003, 2.

and culture reclamation."[63] With these words, the CSAA prefigured the work of the TRC and NCTR. Upon reflection, these words remind one that survivors developed the idea of healing through archives, which has inspired a range of projects that includes but is not limited to the work of the TRC and NCTR.

Initially, the Shingwauk Project involved Algoma University and those with a connection to the Shingwauk and Wawanosh Indian Residential Schools. By 2006, however, the Shingwauk Project had expanded its scope to residential schools across Canada. To staff members at the SRSC, this has meant assisting survivors regardless of where they went to school. Of primary importance to this expansion has been the use of information technology. An early discussion of starting a web site shows that organizers wanted to improve communication by using the World Wide Web: "You know, it's just my mind is just going miles an hour here, because I'm thinking about um, where we need to develop a web site, because where there are lot's [sic] of people in the different provinces across Canada that came to Shingwauk and that's a way of them really finding out what's happening on an on-going basis."[64] At the end of this discussion, the group opted for starting a newsletter instead of a web site. The Shingwauk Project likely established an online presence somewhere between 1999 and 2001. Screen captures from the Internet Archive show that early versions of the web site shared information and records collected by the Shingwauk Project over the years.[65] Comments left in the "Guest Book" portion of the web site indicate that visitors were especially drawn to the photographs that were posted.[66] Organizers acknowledged that the

[63] Ibid.
[64] SRSC, CSAA fonds, Box 5, File 3, Minutes of Communications Committee Meeting, September 26, 1998.
[65] Shingwauk Project, "The Shingwauk Project," various dates between 2001 and 2012, [http://www.shingwauk.auc.ca/], Internet Archive Wayback Machine, accessed March 7, 2016, https://web.archive.org/web/20120322193327*/http:// www.shingwauk.auc.ca/.
[66] Shingwauk Project, "The Shingwauk Project Guest Book," February 4, 2003, [http://www.shingwauk.auc.ca/GuestBook/GuestBook_1.html], Internet Archive Wayback Machine, accessed

web site was not the only means to share information and records. In 2002, they talked of storing information on compact discs that could be "shipped to isolated centres (such as Reserves) for information sharing."[67] Various kinds of technology were desirable to organizers because they had the ability to expand the reach of the Shingwauk Project and help connect a geographically disperse community of survivors.[68]

Despite the initial enthusiasm for information technologies, the Shingwauk Project was unable to keep pace with IT developments. In 2009, the consulting firm MicroWorks reported that the Shingwauk Project had "fallen behind" in its "use of current information technologies."[69] The firm also stated that improvements to the web site were needed to help with navigation, organization, and an updated look and feel.[70] Chief among these recommendations was that the Shingwauk Project expand its networking activities and "prioritize integration" with the campus library.[71] Developments in these areas were seen as vital to the growth and long-term sustainability of the Shingwauk Project. Organizers appear to have responded to these challenges. Partnerships with the Indian Residential Schools Resolution Centre, Heritage Canada, and McMaster University Library were formed.[72] Working with the IT department and campus library at Algoma University, the SRSC developed a new web site that now uses Drupal as a content management system and

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March 7, 2016, https://web.archive.org/web/20030204121528/http://www.shingwauk.auc.ca/GuestBook/GuestBook_1.html.

[67] SRSC, CSAA fonds, Box 5, File 10, "Conference Proceedings at the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Council 'Charting Our Way' - Minutes of Workplan Meeting," January 25-27, 2002, 2.

[68] Students who attended Shingwauk Hall came from places as distant as Fort George in Quebec and northern Michigan. See the Shingwauk Project, *Shingwauk Hall: A History,* 28.

[69] SRSC, Shingwauk Project fonds, Administration series, Box 1, File 26, "Shingwauk Project Assessment Report," presented to the Aboriginal Healing Foundation by MicroWorks, February 2009, 28.

[70] Ibid., 32.

[71] Ibid., 28.

[72] McMaster University, "Library supports the Shingwauk Project Indian Residential Schools Digitization Effort at Algoma University," posted March 31, 2010, accessed March 30, 2016, http://library.mcmaster.ca/news/6232.

PostgreSQL as its database software.[73] All of these activities have resulted in the cataloguing of the collection, digitization of photographic material and some textual records, and the expansion of searchable holdings. As an additional site of access, the online collections have supported the growth of the user community. The *Sault Star* published an article on July 19, 2012, announcing that the online archive of the SRSC was "helping residential school survivors and their families reconnect with a troubling past that has often been out of reach."[74] The author mentions the weekly emails and phone calls from survivors who located their student records on the web site.

The strategic use of technology to improve access and manage collections is now an identifiable feature of community archives, especially those that use digital surrogates as a means of repatriating records or adding new layers of context.[75] The digitization of records of the Anglican Diocese of Algoma makes possible the re-telling of one chapter of residential school history while other materials such as the Assembly of First Nations collection and Aboriginal Healing Foundation fonds document the positive work being done to promote healing. The existence of these records and their accessibility bring to mind the words of Jeannette Bastian who argues, "Without recourse to records, the community can neither counter other interpretations nor consolidate its own; without ownership of its history, it continues to be history's victim."[76] In recent years, another identifiable feature of community archives has been the use of social media as a tool for building community. The SRSC is no

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[73] Both Drupal and PostgreSQL are examples of open-source software. In contrast, the NCTR uses MINISIS, proprietary software inherited from the TRC.

[74] Michael Purvis, "Database helps residential school survivors uncover a previously hidden past," *Sault Star,* posted July 19, 2012, accessed March 15, 2016, http://www.saultstar.com/2012/07/19/database-helps-residential-school-survivors-uncover-a-previously-hidden-past.

[75] Frank Upward, Sue McKemmish, and Barbara Reed, "Archivists and Changing Social and Information Spaces: A Continuum Approach to Recordkeeping and Archiving in Online Cultures," *Archivaria* 72 (Fall 2011), 206, 231.

[76] Bastian, *Owning Memory*, 48.

exception. Interestingly, the web site reports that "Mating Chief Shingwauk's idea of the perfect school with social media technology seemed like a natural step."[77] The SRSC's use of social media is limited to comments the user can add after creating an account. These contributions are periodically monitored by the SRSC, which asks that users report abuses.[78] Magia Ghetu Krause and Elizabeth Yakel argue that user comments help to create a sense of community by recording the presence of others and encouraging participation and interaction among users.[79] However, in the context of the SRSC and its web site, traces of an online community are virtually non-existent. There is little evidence that people are leaving comments, and the web site has no features that would help users find each other. The SRSC has embraced the idea of social media as a tool for building community, but the organization has not yet committed itself to their development.

While social media is not among its highest priorities, the SRSC is proud to say that it puts survivors first. One way the organization has achieved this is through governance. Presently, the SRSC is jointly governed by Algoma University and the CSAA. McCracken writes that a heritage committee with members from Algoma University and the CSAA advises on policy, outreach, and best practices.[80] As well, two of the three staff members are Indigenous persons "with connections to the residential school legacy and First Nation communities."[81] The SRSC has also demonstrated its commitment to survivors, responding to their needs through meaningful actions. Speaking to the level of service at the SRSC,

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[77] Engracia De Jesus Matias Archives and Special Collections, "Why a new website?" posted on January 25, 2011, accessed August 23, 2016, http://archives.algomau.ca/main/node/20913.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Krause and Yakel, "The Polar Bear Expedition Digital Collections Next Generation Finding Aid," 308.
[80] McCracken, "Indigenous Grassroots Collaboration at the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre," 185. See also 184.
[81] Ibid., 185.

McCracken relays a story about a past visit from Jonathan Dewar.[82] Now the current Director of the SRSC, at the time of his visit, Dewar was working for the AHF. He had traveled to the SRSC for a meeting that ventured off course. A survivor dropped by during the meeting and, as McCracken describes, "basically the meeting stopped… everybody who worked for the archive got up and started talking to the survivor and helping them find photos, and just listening to them, and they became the centre of attention."[83] The survivor was seen as a welcome presence rather than an interruption, and the simple act of allowing the survivor to become the "centre of attention" made a lasting impression on those who attended the meeting that day.

Another way the SRSC has put survivors first is by incorporating their knowledge, as shown in the Remember the Children: National Residential School Photo Identification Project. What started in 2005 as a pilot project focused on the Spanish Residential School resulted in the creation of albums for each residential school in Ontario.[84] The project involved visiting the communities of former students and having community members browse through the albums and identify people whenever possible. The goal of this project went beyond identifying names of people in photographs. It also aimed to "connect survivors with photographs of themselves."[85] The representation of this knowledge is determined by the systems of recording. In this regard, the SRSC has fallen short as its web site and online collections are mostly products of Algoma University's IT environment.[86] The SRSC did not select Drupal as a content management system. It was already in use by the library. This

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[82] McCracken, interview, October 16, 2015.

[83] Ibid.

[84] Ibid. See also McCracken, "Indigenous Grassroots Collaboration at the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre," 186-189.

[85] McCracken, "Indigenous Grassroots Collaboration at the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre," 186.

[86] See the Plateau Peoples Portal as an example of an online archive informed by Indigenous knowledge systems and cultural practices. Kimberly Christen, "Opening Archives: Respectful Repatriation," *The American Archivist* 74, no. 1 (Spring/Summer 2011), 193.

partnership has been beneficial in the sense it makes the collection, both descriptions of records and digitized holdings, accessible online. Professional standards are observed, but the design and approach does not seem to reflect what the project has been about. Despite having the functionality, the web site lacks the participatory elements that have defined the Shingwauk Project.

The TRC has concluded its activities and the NCTR has been established at the University of Manitoba. In this new landscape, the SRSC aims to provide leadership on matters of cross-cultural building and reconciliation. It should come as no surprise that the NCTR has partnered with the SRSC as talks of such a partnership go back to the days of the TRC.[87] In 2009, Justice Murray Sinclair, Chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, visited Sault Ste. Marie and acknowledged the Shingwauk Project as "one of the more important projects" and "a possible model to be used for other schools and regions."[88] McCracken says the SRSC will continue to "collect material related to residential schools all across Canada."[89] Having a good reputation among survivors will certainly aid in this endeavor. As McCracken explains, "we're well known in the survivor community as an organization that is more than willing to help survivors and their families locate information about their personal histories, about their time in residential schools, and really as an organization that will work with them in somewhat of an untraditional archival role."[90] Moreover, the SRSC will continue to benefit from attention paid to reconciliation, which is essentially about building relationships and something the Shingwauk Project has successfully done for over thirty-five years.

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[87] University of Manitoba, NCTR, "Our Partners," accessed May 7, 2016, http://umanitoba.ca/centres/nctr/partners.html.
[88] Michael Purvis, "Getting the whole story of Shingwauk school," *Sault Star,* August 26, 2009, 2.
[89] McCracken, interview, October 16, 2015.
[90] Ibid.

As in the case of the Boissevain Community Archives, community has proven to be a slippery concept. While the SRSC has been described as a "grass-roots" community, the institutional context is nevertheless an important part of its history.[91] Implicated in the demise of the Keewatinung Institute, Algoma University College learned it could not turn away from its responsibilities to Indigenous people, at least not if the college wanted to remain at Shingwauk Hall. By supporting the Shingwauk Project, SRSC, and other initiatives, the college helped to reinvent itself as a cross-cultural institution. Individuals like Jackson played key leadership roles, but unlike the Keewatinung Institute, the Shingwauk Project succeeded because there was broad support. The publication of *Shingwauk Hall: A History* was a necessary first step for the Shingwauk Project, one that helped it to identify gaps in memory and records. Building community, however, started at the reunions where people gathered, re-connected, and shared memories and records. From compiling names of former students and staff members into a directory to establishing a narrative through the classification of records, those involved in the Shingwauk Project helped to shape the community, which was geographically dispersed but bound together by their connection to Shingwauk Hall. As the legacies of residential schools were identified, the community was defined as survivors and intergenerational survivors from across Canada; the place of former staff members within this new context was uncertain. At this time, the Shingwauk Project entered a new phase in its development that saw the establishment of the SRSC as a dedicated space for visitors and additional projects with a broader scope. Ultimately, the expansion of the community was supported by the rise of the World Wide Web. Organizers and staff members connected with people across North America through the Shingwauk Project web site and email communications. As tools for building community, these

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[91] McCracken, "Indigenous Grassroots Collaboration at the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre," 182.

technologies supported the creation of a loose network of people whose lives had been touched by the legacies of residential schools. Another way to frame the community would be to look at the range of people who have been inspired by the memory of Chief Shingwauk and the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association. As a guiding principle, their message that healing begins with (re)learning who they are as Indigenous people is increasingly relevant, especially as the issue of reconciliation becomes more political.

Figure XIII: Poster, 1981. Shingwauk
Reunion 1981 fonds (Box 1, File 6).
Permission for use obtained from SRSC,
May 27, 2016.

Chapter Four: Reflecting on Community Archives

Archivists know that records do not speak for themselves. Much of their meaning is derived from contextual information, such as the identity of their creator(s) and place in relation to other records. Archivists do not dispute the value of contextual information, although they may not always agree on what type of information is within scope and the means of recording that information. It stands to reason that archivists should not be satisfied when archives are described as 'community-based.' This term in itself does not capture the contextual information that archivists value. It is true that as a term "community-based archives" has come to signal something meaningful. For many, it speaks to origins and the fact that many of these archives are the products of grassroots activities; their creation was not mandated from somewhere on high as in the case of government-sponsored archives. However, the term can also be misleading. It can imply consensus or uniformity where none exists. Moreover, it can mask the differences and more often the conflicts within a community. Describing an archives as 'community-based' does not sufficiently account for its context. Chapters 2 and 3, the case studies on the BCA and SRSC, showed that archives are not merely a reflection of their communities. As well, the case studies emphasized the ongoing construction of community and archives. This final chapter explores themes related to these key observations. It starts by reviewing the complexities within 'community' and then turns to the topics of politics and affect, arguing that important contextual information can be derived from a better understanding of these topics. Looking at the case studies, this chapter also ponders the current relationship between community archives and the archival profession, asking what challenges and opportunities exist for archivists. Throughout, this

chapter endeavours to show the usefulness of a critical, research-based approach to the study of community archives.

The case studies examined two different types of communities. Whereas the BCA offered an example of a community archives seemingly defined by location, the SRSC exemplified a community archives defined by common interests and experience. The BCA was a product of heritage activities that sought to preserve local history. In contrast, the beginnings of the SRSC were rooted in social justice efforts. Through a closer look at their origins, a more complicated picture emerges. The boundaries of the Municipality of Boissevain-Morton are not static and have changed as recently as 2014. As well, its mandate to collect materials in the "Turtle Mountain area" can be broadly interpreted. The Turtle Mountain area has a rich Indigenous history and yet there has been reluctance to include this history. It is not location that defines the community around the BCA, but a shared culture and history that is rooted in place. The community around the Shingwauk Project began as a well-defined group that includes former students and staff members. Its coordinators worked to re-unite people and from this work came the creation of the Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association. Over time, and with a growing awareness of the issues around residential schools and their legacies, the community has become a loose organization of survivors and intergenerational survivors. The SRSC is not merely interested in the history of the Shingwauk and Wawanosh schools, but with residential schools, healing, and educational opportunities across the country.[1] The distinction between community archives rooted in heritage and local history as opposed to those rooted in social movements and activism also

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[1] For the current mandate of the SRSC, see McCracken, "Indigenous Grassroots Collaboration at the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre," 185.

breaks down upon closer examination.[2] The BCA, for instance, undertook local history projects that had a social justice component to them. Moreover, the Shingwauk Project began in much the same way as the BCA, with the creation of a local history book. Heritage-based organizations can be concerned about social justice and vice versa; the two are not mutually exclusive.

The complexities behind community archives become clear when adopting a historical approach. A history of community archives recognizes the role individuals play as leaders, but resists portraying individuals as protagonists. The actions of individuals, after all, take place within a larger context. In Boissevain, Bill Moncur and Bernice Pettypiece served as custodians of local history and laid the groundwork for the BCA. Over time, the community archivists, including Anna Grace Diehl and James Ritchie, did much to shape the archives. Building on Moncur's work, Ritchie explored avenues for reconciliation with Indigenous people and undertook claims research; both men relied on members of the Dakota Nations of Manitoba. Moreover, Dakota leaders were often the ones reaching out to Moncur and Ritchie, hiring Ritchie as a heritage researcher on multiple occasions. In the case of the SRSC, Professor Donald Jackson emerges as a leading figure. He was the one who started asking questions about the history of the building. The contributions of one man are not enough to account for the success of the Shingwauk Project, however. Algoma University has supported the initiative largely because it helped the College to meet its moral obligation to Indigenous people and re-establish itself as an institution committed to cross-cultural learning. Furthermore, the Shingwauk Project owed its success to Indigenous leaders like Dan Pine Sr. and all those who attended the first reunion in 1981. The success of the event speaks to the organizational skills of the coordinators who diligently collected the names of

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[2] Andrew Flinn makes this distinction; see Flinn, "Community Histories, Community Archives," 150-151.

former students and staff members. The desire to reconnect with others encouraged many of these people to attend the reunion and, in subsequent years, the need for healing was identified. In these instances, it is clear that individuals can only succeed insofar as there is broad support for their efforts.

The role of memory frameworks in the context of community archives also emerged as a theme in the case studies. Whether through the social space of the archives or at community events, sharing individual memories gave rise to community memory (also referred to as social and collective memory).[3] The deliberateness behind the act of creating an archives can reveal much about the frameworks that underpin community memory. By seeking records on particular topics like railways and pioneers, the founders of the BCA revealed what they thought to be historically significant to the community. In this way, founders told community members what topics had historical value and created a framework for their memories. One could argue that Ritchie encountered resistance to his work because he challenged this framework. Community members showed interest in local Aboriginal history, but preferred a non-threatening version of this history consistent with their own experiences. In a different context, those behind the Shingwauk Project were able to challenge ideas behind residential schools. They became architects of a new framework for community memory in the process. The Shingwauk Project started by publishing a book on the history of Shingwauk Indian Residential School that questioned the civilizing mission of church and state. Events such as reunions provided space for people to talk about their memories. Records in a variety of forms were created and shared at these events, and the Shingwauk Project later classified these records according to a periodization of the school's

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[3] Aleida Assmann, *Shadows of Trauma: Memory and the Politics of Postwar Identity,* translated by Sarah Clift (New York: Fordham University Press, 2016), 11-18. See also Eric Ketelaar, "Sharing: Collected Memories in Communities of Records," *Archives and Manuscripts* 33, no. 1 (May 2005), 45-50.

history. Inspired by Maurice Halbwach's work on social memory, Aleida Assmann writes, "Whenever there is a collective incentive to homogenize that puts a normative grid on top of heterogeneous individual memories, the influence of social or political frameworks of memory is at work."[4] Narratives are frameworks of memory, and individuals align their experiences with narratives. At their best, narratives can help people to make sense of their experiences. However, there is always the risk that the uniqueness of people's experiences are subsumed into narratives and historical subjectivities lost in consequence.

An interesting question to ask is how the Shingwauk Project and SRSC have reflected the emerging narrative of residential schools history. Writing on another historical trauma, Assmann writes, "When did the Holocaust become the Holocaust?"[5] She observes that "Neither the perpetrators nor the victims had any idea that they were involved in or gripped by the 'Holocaust.'"[6] One could similarly ask when did residential schools become a historical trauma and Canada's national shame? Or when did survivors become survivors? Another term that appears across the CSSA records is "Residential School Syndrome." One document defines it saying, "The residential school syndrome has been used to describe the effects residential schools have had on many Native Families, sometimes two or three generations. Alcoholism and drug abuse is a primary symtom [sic], which leads to violence, child abuse, marital problems, neglect of love ones and ultimately in many cases suicide and taking another life."[7] The author does not identify the origins of the term or who was using it. A second document says that during the Healing Circle held at the 1991 reunion, it was discovered that "many of the former Alumni were suffering from the effects of the

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[4] Assmann, *Shadows of Trauma: Memory and the Politics of Postwar Identity*, 131.
[5] Ibid., 128.
[6] Ibid.
[7] CSAA, Box 2, File 32, Shingwauk Project, "Residential School Syndrome," 1992 or 1993.

Residential School lifestyle," and it states the intent to "begin networking with other organizations dealing with Residential School Syndrome."[8] Was it through the process of sharing memories that led to the creation of the term, or did the term inspire the memories? That is not to say the memories are false, but only to query the subject of memory creation so as to point out the social and historical dimensions of this process. The historical dimensions are evident when looking at memory creation over time. In this sense, the SRSC has value as a "Pre-Apology" Residential School archive that documents how remembering of residential schools has changed.[9] Prime Minister Stephen Harper's statement of apology to former students in 2008 signaled a nationwide shift in thinking about residential schools, but what narrative trends and conventions were popular before this event, and what can the SRSC archive reveal about the remembering of residential schools as a historical process?

The SRSC and to a lesser extent the BCA remind us that there is never one community around community archives and that people do not belong to a single community. Knowledge about the various communities that have a stake in the archives can reveal much about a community archives. The SRSC, for instance, includes the CSAA, Algoma University, survivors and intergenerational survivors across Canada, and a growing number of academics. The SRSC aims to put survivors first, ensuring that the archives serves as a centre for healing and benefits their lives, families, and communities. As well, the university has shaped the SRSC. The university pays for permanent staff members and provides space, both physical and online, that allows the SRSC to operate. The

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[8] SRSC, CSAA fonds, Box 13, File 19, Report, from Shingwauk Project to Shingwauk Alumni, re: Residential School Syndrome, May 6, 1993.

[9] There is a Post-Apology Residential School Database, which is part of the Digital Archives and Marginalized Communities Project at the University of Manitoba. See Danielle Allard and Shawna Ferris, "Antiviolence and Marginalized Communities: Knowledge Creation, Community Mobilization, and Social Justice through a Participatory Archiving Approach," *Library Trends* 64, no. 2 (Fall 2015): 360-362, 375.

professionalization of the SRSC made it a part of the archival community, and the online collections have opened the holdings to a range of people with varying degrees of interest.[10] The BCA has as its core the current population of Boissevain, but it could include those with a strong or passing connection to the place, such as someone who was raised there but moved away later or someone who recalls traveling to the Boissevain Turtle Derby Festival. It is also important to remember that one voice in the community cannot speak for all its members. There is great variety within a community. Furthermore, people can simultaneously belong to more than one community. Not everyone within the same community will have the same identity, values, or experiences. This may be especially true in a community defined by location. The American historian Thomas Bender reminds us that community is "defined better as an experience than as a place," since it implies closeness and has an "experiential dimension that is crucial to its definition."[11] The population of Boissevain may in fact compose a community, but this community must not be assumed. According to Bender, the key element of community is not place or even consensus, but relationships. In other words, neighbours are members of the same community because they interact with each other, not because they live in close proximity.[12] People in Boissevain may identify more closely with other communities that are not defined or restricted by space. Similarly, members of the CSAA may identify more closely with their communities of origin, which are not the same for each member because children were taken from multiple places.

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[10] McCracken, "Indigenous Grassroots Collaboration at the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre," 185; Bak and Hill, "Archives, Social Networking Services, and Place," 17, 20-24.

[11] Thomas Bender, *Community and Social Change in America* (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1978), 6.

[12] Ibid., 149.

Adopting a critical approach and exploring the politics around community archives is valuable because it helps to move from a celebratory narrative to a discussion of power and privilege. In Boissevain, politics were most pronounced when the municipal council dismissed James Ritchie. The municipal council formerly concerned with reconciliation with Indigenous people was replaced by one that viewed this work as threatening. However, politics appear in more subtle ways as well. Without sufficient context, an outsider may not recognize these subtleties, but archivists should endeavor to try. As Terry Cook and Joan Schwartz argue, "Power recognized becomes power that can be questioned, made accountable, and opened to transparent dialogue and enriched understanding."[13] This means being able to recognize settler politics woven in the historical narrative in tales like the founding of the International Peace Gardens. In addition to the erasure of Aboriginal history and the privileging of historical actors who are white, there is also the misrepresentation of history. The pamphlet of the Turtle Mountain-Souris Plains Heritage Association reads, "Celebrating diversity by preserving the past and nurturing the future."[14] It gives the appearance of unity listing supporters on the back, including local municipalities, the Turtle Mountain Métis Local, and the Canupawakpa Dakota Nation. The cover photo appears to reflect this diversity, but is in fact a compilation of three photos made to look as one. Fused together are photos of a Dakota group at camp, Métis scouts, and officers of the Boundary Commission.[15] In the absence of the right kind of diversity, the Heritage Association manufactured what they wanted to find.

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[13] Schwartz and Cook, "The Making of Modern Memory," 2.

[14] Turtle Mountain-Souris Plains Heritage Association, *Celebrating Diversity by Preserving the Past and Nurturing the Future* (Pamphlet), July 2007.

[15] All three photos taken from Archives of Manitoba, Boundary Commission Collection (1872-1874) - includes Halfbreed Scouts (no. 97), Sioux Indian Camp-Turtle Mountain (no. 116), and Officers (no. 96). Special thanks to James Ritchie.

In Sault Ste. Marie, political maneuvering led to the demise of the Keewatinung Institute because a faction within Algoma University College wanted to secure the land for the college. These actions also speak of blatant racism, indicative of an unwillingness to co-exist alongside Indigenous people. Accusing the Institute of property damage was especially underhanded and racially charged. One could also argue that politics have worked in favour of the SRSC. It was in the interest of the university to support the Shingwauk Project. As well, the politicization of the residential schools issue within Canada through RCAP and the TRC contributed to the growth of the SRSC. During the TRC's mandate, it received two awards. The SRSC was given the Archives Association of Ontario 2013 Institutional Award and the same year received the Sault Ste. Marie Innovation Project of the Year Award.[16] However, there is a danger that the issue has become too politicized. One criticism of the truth and reconciliation model is that it removes the focus on Indigenous-led processes of rebuilding and frames a discussion that centres on making peace with the settler population.[17] The importance of the settler, or colonizer, is secured in these narratives. And because it seems to be the natural inclination of settler states to cast themselves as the lead in every story, archivists engaged in residential schools history have a responsibility to counteract this trend. Community archives preserve, record, and create knowledge of those who lobby for change rather than those of the administrator who approves or denies requests. Archivists

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[16] Jessica Ferlaino, "Cultural Innovation through Education: The Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre," *Business in Focus,* posted December 2013, accessed July 26, 2014, http://www.businessinfocusmagazine.com/e_mag/BIFNADec2013/ index.html#?page=110.

[17] Jeff Corntassel, Chaw-win-is, and T'lakwadzi, "Indigenous Storytelling, Truth-Telling, and Community Approaches to Reconciliation," *English Studies in Canada* 35, no. 1 (March 2009), 139-141. See also Roland Chrisjohn and Tanya Wasacase, "Half-truths and whole lies: rhetoric in the 'Apology' and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission," in *Response, Responsibility and Renewal: Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Journey*, ed. Gregory Younging, Jonathan Dewar, and Mike DeGagné (Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2009), 221-222. Chrisjohn and Wasacase assert that reconciliation obscures the truth that Canada has always worked towards the eradication of Aboriginal peoples in an effort to take and continue to occupy their land. They argue the term "reconciliation" is inappropriate because it suggests a prior relationship that was beneficial to both parties.

must be aware of the self-affirming and empowering messages in community archives, which record actions of those who appear as numbers on pages in government records because the form does not allow for their humanity to show through.

At a partnership dinner in 2003, a representative of the CSAA said, "We are the ones with the first hand knowledge of what was taken away and the methods that were used. And we know what has to be put back and how. It was the survivors of the Indian Residential Schools (IRS) who lit the first fires that spread across Canada and resulted in an awakening about the schools and public disclosures about what occurred in them."[18] Apologies made by the churches, governments, and organizations either active or complicit in the operation of residential schools and the work of the TRC were not spontaneous acts of benevolence. Indigenous people brought these events about by drawing attention to the abuses that occurred at residential schools. As others have pointed out, there are politics to framing residential schools as a reconciliation issue. Brian Egan says, "the notion of reconciliation is both politically potent and multivalent. For a settler society confronted with certain unpleasant truths about its colonial past, it offers a path to a form of redemption, through a 'coming to terms with the past,' and a means of reformulating attachment to a renewed national (or provincial) identity."[19] Egan's observations are part of a larger discussion about the politics of recognition, a term used by political philosopher Charles Taylor to describe the practice of acknowledging the diversity of groups within a multicultural state.[20] However,

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[18] SRSC, CSAA fonds, Box 6, File 6, "The Children of Shingwauk Alumni Association, Partnership and Healing on the Shingwauk Site," September 12, 2003.

[19] Brian Egan, "Recognition Politics and Reconciliation Fantasies: Liberal Multiculturalism and the 'Indian Land Question," in *Home and Native Land: Unsettling Multiculturalism in Canada*, ed. May Chazan, Lisa Helps, Anna Stanley, and Sonali Thakkar (Toronto: Between the Lines, 2011)*,* 272-273.

[20] Ibid., 251. See also Glenn S. Coulthard, "Subjects of Empire: Indigenous Peoples and the 'Politics of Recognition' in Canada," in *Home and Native Land*, 71, 77-108; Charles Taylor, *Multiculturalism and "The Politics of Recognition": An Essay by Charles Taylor with commentary by Amy Gutmann, editor...* [et al.], (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1992), 63-73.

Egan argues that reconciliation is another attempt by the state to solve yet again the "Indian problem" and that recognition does not go far enough.[21] Reconciliation means finding a place for Indigenous people within Canadian society but says little about the nation-to-nation relationship supported by treaties. Moreover, the politics of recognition is a model in which the state confers the "other" with some form of recognition. The model therefore maintains the authority of the state without challenging the imbalance of power that has historically defined relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in Canada.[22] Glen S. Coulthard suggests the most powerful form of decolonization or escape from subjugation would not be a state process, but rather a grassroots process wherein the colonized "other" takes what is owed him or her.[23] Politics of recognition also applies to Canadian policies like multiculturalism.[24] Critics contend that celebrating difference is about managing difference, a preventative measure against radical change.

According to calls for archivists to look at the role of power in shaping archives, the task of the (postmodern) archivist is to make explicit the politics behind representations and reveal the "constructedness" and subjective nature of archives.[25] This critical approach has been applied successfully to government recordkeeping and archives. Ciaran B. Trace, for example, relies on case studies of police records and audits to challenge positivist ideas of records, such as the assumption that the record is an accurate and unbiased representation of events.[26] In her notable article "We Are What We Collect, We Collect What We Are: Archives and the Construction of Identity," Elisabeth Kaplan extends this critical approach to

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[21] Egan, "Recognition Politics and Reconciliation Fantasies," 245-246.
[22] Ibid. See also Coulthard, "Subjects of Empire," 72-74, 92.
[23] Ibid., 93, 101-105.
[24] May Chazan et al., "Introduction: Labours, Lands, Bodies," in *Home and Native Land*, 17, 25.
[25] Schwartz and Cook, "The Making of Modern Memory," 2-3, 8-9, 18; Cook and Schwartz, "From (Postmodern) Theory to (Archival) Performance," 182-183; Nesmith, "Still Fuzzy, But More Accurate," 143-144, 148-149. Trace, "Record Keeping in Modern Organizational Culture," 137-159.
[26] Trace, "Record Keeping in Modern Organizational Culture," 142-150.

the American Jewish Historical Society. She documents efforts to create a unified identity for Jewish Americans through the founding of a historical society and reflects on the role of archivists as "major players in the business of identity construction and identity politics."[27] Kaplan cautions against the "reification of ethnic identity," saying it "constructs communities and then draws hard, arbitrary lines between them, creating differences and making them fixed, constricting the freedom of the individual to define or understand him or herself in multiple ways."[28] Verne Harris similarly reminds us that issues of power and politics are not confined to government-sponsored archives. In fact, Harris argues that archives cannot escape the imprint of power and politics, which can be seen in everything from government correspondence to family scrapbooks.[29] Both instances require decisions and exertion of influence. Harris suggests that archivists not turn away from politics, but reach for a "just politics" based on opening archives.[30] With this message, he echoes the words of Howard Zinn who claimed the "supposed neutrality" of the archivists was "fake," arguing that "the rebellion of the archivists against his normal role is not as so many scholars fear, the politicization of a neutral craft, but the humanizing of an inevitably political craft."[31]

Another type of politics relevant to this discussion is a politics of friendship. Leela Gandhi uses this concept as one of the theoretical underpinnings of her book on anti-colonial thought. Inspired by the political writings of Aristotle, Jacques Derrida, and E.M. Forster, Ghandi says a politics of friendships help to frame the "friendships and collaborations" that

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[27] Elisabeth Kaplan, "We Are What We Collect, We Collect What We Are: Archives and the Construction of Identity," *The American Archivist* 63 (Spring/Summer 2000), 147.
[28] Ibid., 151.
[29] Harris, "Power and Politics in the Archives," 112-116.
[30] Ibid., 118-119.
[31] Zinn, "Secrecy, Archives, and the Public Interest," 20.

occur across cultural lines.[32] It is about people behaving contrary to how we might expect them to behave because of the strength of their attachments. "Friendship," Aristotle writes, "seems to be the bond that holds communities together, and lawgivers seem to attach more importance to it than justice."[33] Gandhi captures the subversive element to a politics of friendship, citing E.M. Forster who brazenly said, "if I had to choose between betraying my country and betraying my friend I hope I should have the guts to betray my country."[34]Although the politics of friendship may very well be a metaphor for the cultural 'other' as Ghandi explains, the concept can be usefully applied to community archives. I prefer to think of it more concretely. In the case studies, friendships across cultural lines were key to the development of archives. The Dakota entrusted their friend Bill Moncur with much of their history, some of which is recorded in the BCA in oral history interviews. Dakota leaders like Sitting Eagle (also known as Charlie Chaske) shared their history in artifacts they gave to Moncur for safekeeping.[35] Moreover, Jackson learned about the history of the site of Algoma University College by developing relationships with local First Nations communities.

Terry Cook writes, "Behind the record always lies the need to record, to bear evidence, to hold and be held accountable, to create and maintain memory."[36] If we asked in the context of community archives what the need to record is, one might say the preservation of the history of the community. And yet the case studies uncovered so much more than that. Often the need to record is emotional in nature, only to be explained by the human

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[32] Leela Gandhi, *Affective Communities: Anticolonial Thought, Fin-De-Siècle Radicalism, and the Politics of Friendship* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2006), 9-10, 26-33.
[33] Aristotle cited by Gandhi, 28.
[34] E.M. Forster cited by Gandhi, 30.
[35] Ritchie, *The Council Stones*, Chapter 6, 37-41.
[36] Terry Cook, "Electronic Records, Paper Minds: The Revolution in Information Management and Archives in the Post-Custodial and Post-Modernist Era," *Archives and Manuscripts* 22, no. 2 (November 1994), 302.

connections in place. We saw simple examples of this. James Ritchie was moved to document the town's murder/suicide because of a personal connection with the victim whom he once knew. The desire for former students to attend the reunion was not because they felt they had been well treated, but because they had a desire to reconnect with people. The Shingwauk Project taped into a psychological need for both reconnection and healing. At first, former students were said to be suffering from "Residential School Syndrome" and later it was referred to as a historical trauma. Like records, behind community archives is the need to record. Asking what these needs are and viewing needs as human rather than organizational will enrich discussions of community archives.

Thomas Bender says that within a community, "Relationships are close, often intimate, and usually face to face. Individuals are bound together by affective or emotional ties rather than by a perception of individual self-interest."[37] To Bender, communities are bound together by "affective or emotional ties" but has the archival literature on community archiving sufficiently explored this? Work that discusses trauma explores the emotional dimension of archives to some extent. Ann Cvetkovich says trauma is difficult to talk about, arguing that it "puts pressure on conventional forms of documentation, representation, and commemoration, giving rise to new genres of expression, such as testimony, and new forms of monuments, rituals, and performances that can call into being collective witnesses and publics."[38] The case studies demonstrate the effects of trauma, in particular how it acts as a barrier to memory. There is the gravestone in Boissevain that does not mention the father who killed himself and his daughter, as the community did not want to remember him. In the

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[37] Bender, *Community and Social Change in America*, 7.
[38] Ann Cvetkovich, *An Archives of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2003), 7. See also Marika Cifor, "Affecting Relations: Introducing Affect Theory to Archival Discourse," *Archival Science* 16 (2016), 13-18.

context of residential schools, an absence of records and memory about Shingwauk Hall proved troublesome. Through healing circles and interviews conducted by the Shingwauk Project, historical trauma was identified. In later years, trauma acted as a bond and helped to define the community. The term 'survivors' implies the experience of trauma after all. The TRC similarly defined the community it served in terms of who was "affected," in one instance expressing the Commission's goal in "providing every former residential student--any every person whose life was *affected* by the residential school system--with the opportunity to create a record of that experience."[39]

Affect has become an emerging field of study within academia, influencing historical inquiry among other disciplines.[40] Insights historians have made through the study of affect have particular relevance for archival thought, especially as it relates to community. Barbara H. Rosenwein, for instance, outlines the idea of "emotional communities" as a historical approach to emotions that "focuses on more than power and politics, and recognizes the complexity of emotional life."[41] Rosenwein explains that emotional communities are wide ranging, prevalent in the personal and public realms, and further argues that individuals move within different kinds of emotional communities. The same person may be affectionate at home but impersonal in the workplace. Emotions like behaviours are learned and part of socialization; however, they also have histories. According to Rosenwein, a history of emotions seeks to "uncover systems of feelings" and explores what communities "define and assess as valuable or harmful to them; the evaluations they make about others' emotions; the

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[39] Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Interim Report* (Winnipeg, Manitoba: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2012), 12, accessed May 20, 2016, http://www.myrobust.com/websites/trcinstitution/File/Interim%2520report%2520English%2520 electronic.pdf. Emphasis added.
[40] See Melissa Gregg and Gregory J. Seigworth, "An Inventory of Shimmers," in *The Affect Theory Reader*, ed. Gregg and Seigworth (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2010), 1-25.
[41] Barbara H. Rosenwein, "Review Essay: Worrying about Emotions in History," *The American Historical Review* 107, no. 3 (2002), 842.

nature of the affective bonds between people that they recognize; and the mode emotional expression that they expect, encourage, tolerate, and deplore."[42] In this context as in others, the term 'community' is used because of its elasticity. Community is not the subject of analysis but the mode of analysis, helping to frame a discussion about historical change. What implications do such insights have for archival studies? How might a focus on affect enrich discussions about the history of the record? A history of the record that takes affect into account might view records as products of emotional communities. It might look at how the form of a record curtails or directs a specific kind of emotional response, and take into account the emotional communities that shaped not only the responses, but also the form itself. Taking affect into account would also require looking at the archival profession as an evolving emotional community. This means exploring how schools of thought within archival studies have engendered emotions or a lack of emotions and acknowledging the impact on decisions. At the very least, it would enrich an ongoing discussion about the archivist's role in the continuous shaping of the record.

The first chapter offered a narrative of community archives. It explored how the archival tradition was exclusionary. Then, it looked at the context for the rise of community archives, and the binary that developed between "community" archives and "traditional" archives. Lastly, it looked at how largely through advances in technologies, many of these binaries started to break down. In many ways, the case studies mirrored this narrative. In Boissevain, starting an archives was a natural extension of local history projects that were popular at this time. The founders encountered resistance from members of the archival profession in Winnipeg, but nevertheless proceeded with their plans for the archives. Eventually, the BCA joined the Association for Manitoba Archives and became part of the

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[42] Ibid.

archival community. This shift is indicative of a larger trend in Canada and elsewhere that has seen greater collaboration among archival institutions.[43] Digital technologies have assisted collaboration. Open-source applications, for example, the Mennonite Archival Image Database (MAID) and Manitoba Archival Information Network (MAIN), have served as multi-repository databases.[44] In the case of the Shingwauk Project, organizers were confronted with the absence and inaccessibility of records when they wanted to create a history of the school. The initial documentation and healing projects occurred outside of the archival profession, and organizers documented the shortcomings of "mainstream" archives like Library and Archives Canada.[45] The SRSC is now part of a professional network and has adopted professional standards, which has expanded their user base and opened the archives to diverse Indigenous and non-Indigenous groups, including academics. Moreover, their web site may serve as the basis for an online community to form around the archives. Changes in thinking about the place of the Shingwauk Project and other community-based archives within the archival profession, specifically the increased desire for collaboration, connect to how archivists have thought about context. Keeping records in their communities of origin, in addition to being resource efficient, has meant preserving links between records and their contexts, which include the community and its memory and curatorial traditions.

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[43] Laura Millar, "The Evolution of the Total Archives Concept in English Canada," 122–125. See also Lois K. Yorke, "Nine Hundred Points of Light: The Canadian Community of Archives," 1-12, accessed May 20, 2016, http://archivists.ca/sites/default/files/Attachments/Advocacy_attachments/loisyorke.paper_.pdf.

[44] Association for Manitoba Archives, "Manitoba Archival Information Network," accessed August 23, 2016, https://main.lib.umanitoba.ca; Mennonite Historical Society of Canada, "Mennonite Archival Image Database," accessed May 20, 2016, https://archives. mhsc.ca.

[45] See Edward G. Sadowski, *Preliminary Report on the Investigating into Missing School Files for the Shingwauk Indian Residential School* (Sault Ste. Marie: the Shingwauk Project, Algoma University College, 2006), 3-12, accessed May 20, 2016, http://archives.algomau.ca/main/sites/default/files/2010-046_003_048.pdf.

The case studies further help to problematize binaries like "professionals" and "amateurs" also framed as "outsiders" and "insiders."[46] Over the years, staff members at both the BCA and SRSC learned and applied the standards of the archival profession. Archival training is encouraged if not mandatory for those who work in the archives. Whereas the archivist in Boissevain is (generally speaking) part of the community, SRSC staff members may be reluctant to identify themselves as part of the community unless they are a survivor or intergenerational survivor. This reluctance may be a sign of their unwillingness to appropriate an Indigenous culture that is not their own, or it could mean residential schools as a historical trauma has not affected them as they are not survivors or intergenerational survivors. One may challenge the binary of insider and outsiders as well, pointing to relationships between community members and archival professionals. If communities are defined by experiences and emotions, it stands to reason that people can move in and out of these communities. However, when archivists have no prior relationship with the community and choose to approach the community anyway, the descriptor "outsider" seems apt. Through sustained engagement, archivists may move beyond their "outsider" status. Elizabeth Yakel, for instance, proposes a model of participatory archives in which archivists "as holders of the records or providers of the service" are "nominally members."[47] In this model, engagement between archivists and users occurs within the context of virtual archives. More important than the setting, however, is the underlying principle of "shared

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[46] Paschild, "Community Archives and the Limitations of Identity," 141; Flinn, "The Impact of Independent and Community Archives on Professional Archival Thinking and Practice," 163; Flinn and Gilliland, "Community Archives: What are We Really Talking About?" 12.
[47] Yakel, "Who Represents the Past?" 275.

authority" for archival records that also contributes to the breakdown of divisions that have come to define the profession.[48]

One of the questions that arises around working with communities is around archival ethics. The case studies prove that communities are not homogenous entities. Assuming that membership can be easily determined, community members have different backgrounds, values, and individual identities. Cox warns that, "Acquiring the records of one group might offend other groups. Providing identity, meaning and authority to one group must challenge or undermine the same qualities of another group."[49] Critical treatment of these issues poses challenges as well, as archivists may not want to risk offending community partners. Aversion to risk may help to explain why archivists writing about community archives often default to celebratory narratives. Some communities will be more open than others and have different attitudes toward revealing histories, actions, and opinions that may be negatively construed. Likewise, some archivists will be more trustworthy. In this sense, the quality of attachments formed between community members and archivists should be explored. We can also talk about methods and whether these relationships are ethical and sustainable. Making sure that relationships benefit both parties and does not harm participants are common principles across ethical codes, but can all ethical codes be satisfied? Schwartz and Cook wrote: "Postmodernism requires a new openness, a new visibility, a willingness to question and be questioned, a commitment to self-reflection and accountability."[50] Archivists have built a professional identity around concepts of transparency and accountability, which are rooted in their roles in government and closely linked with principles of democracy. Do these same principles apply to community archives? Gilliland and Flinn state that "*Certainly,*

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[48] Ibid., 267-271.
[49] Cox, "The Archivist and Community," 257.
[50] Schwartz and Cook, "From (Postmodern) Theory to (Archival) Performance," 182.

community archives are more likely explicitly to foreground issues of power and politics in their archival endeavors than are mainstream archives."[51] What evidence is there for this? The Shingwauk Project and Algoma University have acknowledged the politics around the Keewatinung Institute, but their tellings do not refer to the manner in which the Indigenous-led centre was pushed off the land. Self-narratives tend to frame events in the best possible light. Archivists must navigate various ethical and moral codes to determine their roles and responsibilities via the community.

Archivists engaged in community work must also have an understanding of the extent to which contextual knowledge goes unrecorded. This is not unique to community archives. Much of the knowledge one learns in the workplace is transferred orally or communicated through social cues. And while oral history has become the means for filling in real and perceived gaps in the documentary record, an equally important action is to sustain the community in which forms of unrecorded communication evolve. In this way traditions of curation are passed from one generation to the next. There will no doubt be information loss; records and archives will change. Community involvement is essential to ensure these losses and changes are managed and negotiated in appropriate ways. Remarking on W. Ralph Eubanks' analysis of the Mississippi State Sovereignty Commission, Cox says, "we learn that there were many sources needed to tell the complete story, with archives only being *one* part of understanding how his 'parents ended up in the Sovereignty Commission files.'"[52] In addition to archival sources, the case studies draw from interviews conducted with James Ritchie, Clare Littlejohn, and Krista McCracken, people associated with either the BCA or SRSC. Interviews were not done in response to gaps in records, but in recognition of the

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[51] Flinn and Gilliland, "Community Archives: What are We Really Talking About?" 1. Emphasis added.
[52] Cox, "The Archivist and Community," 260. Emphasis in the original.

different kinds of information that oral forms of communication offer. As well, the interviews acknowledge those who guided me in my research and helped to shape my own thinking about community. They also serve to represent the human entanglements that archivists who work with community can expect.

One advantage to working with communities is the enrichment of the archival record. The case studies showed the value of local knowledge. Ritchie relayed information he had learned about Maggie Sittie Eagle to improve the description of a photo at Library and Archives Canada. Descriptions of photos at the SRSC were enriched through a similar but more formal process. The Remember the Children photo identification project involved reaching out to various communities and gathering names of people. Collaborations of this kind are becoming increasingly common and bring to mind Project Naming, as previously mentioned, as well as lesser-known projects such as the Hudson's Bay Company Archives' Names and Knowledge Initiative.[53] Both of these projects seek to decolonize the archives by rescuing the "archival captive" from anonymity and connecting communities with records of meaningful significance.[54] Initiatives like the McMaster Postcard Project are similar, but are more strictly speaking crowdsourcing projects directed at anyone with a computer.[55] In addition to helping to enrich archival descriptions, identification projects allow for connections, which can occur on an individual or group basis and involve memory and relationships. With the advent of social media, there is greater potential for online communities to form around identification projects. And while many of these projects will

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[53] Hudson's Bay Company Archives, "The Names and Knowledge Initiative," accessed August 23, 2016, http://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/hbca/names_knowlege/index.html.

[54] Ham, "The Archival Edge," 5–13.

[55] McMaster University Library, "McMaster Postcard Project," accessed May 20, 2016, https://postcards.mcmaster.ca.

not be aimed at the noble goal of decolonizing the archives, all of them have the potential to build communities, make and strengthen relationships, stir memories, and affect us.

There are also opportunities to fill gaps in the documentary records and empower communities in the process. Attempts to gather records of Indigenous history and explore reconciliation in Boissevain led to the identification of white biases within the historical narrative. This work took on a social justice element to it as well, as Ritchie was hired by Dakota bands to conduct research in support of claims for Aboriginal title and land. At the SRSC, the piecing together of records, information, and community helped others to understand not only the history of Shingwauk Hall but residential schools as a tool of colonialism. These actions contributed to healing in the aftermath of residential schools, and in many cases, led to financial compensation. The SRSC also showed that the most empowering messages are not those of victimhood; they are those of survival, and those of coming together to reconnect and heal. For many, reconnecting, healing, and reconciliation refers to what must happen in their own families and communities; it cannot be solely focused on Canada. The TRC's final report acknowledges the importance of establishing respectful relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in Canada in order to create a shift in society. However, the report also recognizes that "For many Survivors and their families, this commitment is foremost about healing themselves, their communities, and their nations in ways that revitalize individuals as well as Indigenous cultures, languages, spirituality, laws, and governance systems."[56] In the context of reconciliation and other steps towards decolonization, archivists should re-evaluate and reflect on what it means to empower communities. As well, there should be the acknowledgement that communities

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[56] Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, *Final Report, Vol. 6 - Canada's Residential Schools: Reconciliation* (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2015), 17, accessed May 20, 2016, http://www.myrobust.com/websites/trcinstitution/File/Reports/Volume_6_Reconciliation_English_Web.pdf.

possess knowledge and power that is their own and that the most radical course of action may be to step aside and let communities speak for themselves.

Opportunities to enrich the archival record, fill gaps in the documentary record, and empower communities can be extended through the use of digital technology. Advances in digital technology have supported the growth of post-custodial models in which archives collect digital surrogates rather than physical records.[57] Along with testimonies and other audio-visual recordings, the TRC collected digital surrogates of records from churches, governments, and individuals. The NCTR has brought this material together and presently uses MINISIS software to manage the collection.[58] In this case, digital technology allows for storytelling and the re-contextualization of records that acquire new meanings throughout this process. Post-custodial models also allow for individuals and communities to share records while retaining the originals. Over the years, the Shingwauk Project and the SRSC collected digital surrogates of records belonging to Survivors and former staff members. They sent invitations to people to share their records, stating that copies rather than originals were wanted. Early versions of the Shingwauk Project web site show that many of the photographs were posted in a gallery, and the adoption of Drupal in recent years saw more records available online. Digital technology has undoubtedly improved access to records. One cause for concern, however, is that not everyone has equal access to the Internet. Those living on reserves and in northern parts of Canada struggle to connect to the Internet, which limits their ability to participate and reinforces their isolation from the rest of the country. At the SRSC, visitors prefer to browse the photo collection by looking at paper copies of albums

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[57] See Jeannette A. Bastian, "Taking Custody, Giving Access: A Postcustodial Role for a New Century," *Archivaria* 53 (Spring 2002), 87-92.
[58] University of Manitoba, "National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation," accessed May 20, 2016, http://umanitoba.ca/nctr/.

rather than the electronic versions. In Boissevain, staff members send digital copies of records through email. The Internet as a social space creates the potential for online community, and yet that has not developed in either of these archives. While the BCA has a web site that lacks interactive features, the absence of online community may have something to do with the platform of their web site, which unlike the archives, has been top-down in construction. Even if people do not post comments, however, web sites act as an invitation to make contact with the archives via telephone, email or onsite visits.

Analytical tools developed by historians continue to be helpful in the context of community archives. The archival profession and others should view communities as changing entities; the archives reflect and contribute to that change. People are brought together into communities based on their experiences. However, it is not a conflict-free zone. Multiple interests are present in community, and they may co-exist or clash in subtle or overt ways. Community dynamics cannot solely be explained by reflecting on politics and self-interest; affect and emotional communities must be considered as well.[59] Recognizing all this, there are certain challenges that occur. What happens when archivists get drawn into community politics? With proper guidance and contextual information, there are opportunities as well. By engaging with communities, archivists may reach a better understanding of the records of community and their place in the archival landscape. The picture of community that emerges from this study is complex, one that cannot be captured in broad strokes. By valuing complexity and attention to detail in analysis, archivists can move away from celebratory narratives that can be overly simplistic and exclusionary; these kinds of narratives do little in the way of analysis. The case studies also show the vast differences

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[59] Jan Plamper, "The History of Emotions: An Interview with William Reddy, Barbara Rosenwein, and Peter Stearns," *History and Theory* 49 (May 2010), 238.

between community archives that call for a nuanced approach. In short, archivists must ensure that their treatment of community archives is historically informed and sensitive to politics, affect, and lines of inquiry that help to define community.

Conclusion

Various communities in Canada and elsewhere have established their own archives in response to gaps in the documentary record and the real and perceived limitations of state-funded archives. These communities, whether defined by location, shared identity, or common interests, recognize the centrality of records to the building of collective memory and the importance of having access to their history. Informed by postmodern and postcolonial intellectual concerns, archivists have explored such themes and taken a greater interest in community archives as models of archiving that offer new opportunities and tools for capturing diversity and multiple perspectives on the past.

This thesis began by exploring the history of archival thought in relation to community along with recent models of community archives, namely independent community archives and participatory archiving models based on engagement and collaboration with community members. Case studies on the Boissevain Community Archives and the Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre provided examples of community archives, highlighting the unique circumstances that gave rise to the archives and their continued development. Observations extracted from the case studies about community and the role of politics and affect were explored in the final chapter, which also reviewed the place of community archives within the archival profession. The goal of this thesis was to take the concept of "history of the record" and apply it to community archives in order to demonstrate that community and the archives of community are products of historical processes. This thesis therefore aimed to reaffirm the value of historical analysis in archival studies, arguing that it enriches our understanding of the provenance of records created, maintained, and preserved by community. A history of

community archives acknowledges as others have noted that records have multiple provenances; that they experience ongoing changes, which occur throughout the lifecycle of records and should be understood within their larger societal context.[1] In addition to reaffirming these key observations, a history of community archives identifies topics in need of further inquiry. This thesis, for instance, demonstrated the need for a better understanding of the term 'community' and the influence of politics and affect on community memory. Archivists have made little use of affect theory in particular; this thesis aimed to point out the relevance of affect theory to archival thought, especially in regards to community archives that can be defined by emotional experiences such as trauma and bound together by affective ties.

Inspired in part by the lack of critical interrogation of community in archival studies, this thesis aimed to bring further nuance to a concept used unreflectively by archivists. Divisions and politics within communities and their imprint on archives have been overlooked because community archives are presented as solutions to making the archival record more inclusive. The lack of critical interrogation of community reflects the fact that models of community archives often rely on the willingness of community leaders and members to work in cooperation with archivists. Archivists tasked with the challenge of building and sustaining communities risk losing their position and trustworthiness by sharing and spreading insider knowledge in unauthorized ways. For these reasons, the community as an ongoing production and community archives as a site of contestation are seldom acknowledged by archivists. The paradigm of community

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[1] Nesmith, "Reconsidering the Place of Historical Knowledge in Archival Work," 11-12, 25, 27. See also Cook, "Historians, Archivists, and the Changing Archival Landscape," 533-534.

archiving identified by Terry Cook therefore brings new challenges.[2] Chief among them are the human entanglements that archivists who engage with community should expect. It should also be noted that meaningful engagement requires commitment, not only in terms of time and energy, but also to being open to new ideas and relinquishing some of the control that archivists have guarded for so long. Another key observation in this thesis relates to the archival profession, which is itself a community that has changed in response to social, cultural, political, and economic realities.

Similar to identity, community will always be an abstract concept open to interpretation, and people will continue to debate its uses, parameters, and meanings. Within archival studies, there has been frank recognition of the ambiguity that surrounds community archives. Writing about the National Ethnic Archives Programme at the then Public Archives of Canada, Walter Nuetel confessed that "ethnic archives" was "something of a misnomer" that meant anyone who was not British, French, or Indigenous.[3] As well, Edward Laine and Elisabeth Kaplan demonstrated the complex interplay between archives and Finnish and Jewish communities, which as they very clearly stated are not homogenous groups.[4] Responding to growth in archival activity among individuals and communities in the last decade, others have tried to identify the characteristics of community archives. Andrew Flinn, for instance, coined the term "independent community archives" to distinguish between archives rooted in state-sponsored heritage programs and those created by grassroots political activity.[5] While he

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[2] Cook, "Evidence, Memory, Identity, and Community," 95, 113-116.
[3] Neutel, "Geschichte Wie Es Eigentlich Gewesen or the Necessity of Having Ethnic Archives Programmes," 104.
[4] Laine, "Finnish-Canadian Archives," 75-76. Kaplan, "We Are What We Collect, We Collect What We Are," 128-129.
[5] Flinn, "Community Histories, Community Archives," 150-151.

acknowledged the need for broad definitions, Flinn outlined the characteristics of community archives, pointing to such features as grassroots origins, community control, and active use of archival material.[6] Rather than focusing on definitions and characteristics of community archives, this thesis examines historical change with regard to community and argues that archives, archivists, and community members contribute to this process. Even though community as a descriptor, idea, and category is often fraught and problematic, the goal is not to do away with the term altogether, but to pause, reflect, and consider its usage. This kind of reflection and critical engagement is supported by historical knowledge, which reminds us that ideas of community are not fixed or set; they are historically contingent.

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[6] Flinn, "The Impact of Independent and Community Archives on Professional Archival Thinking and Practice," 147-149, 164. See also Flinn, "Whose Memories, Whose Archives?" 73-75; Flinn and Gilliland, "Community Archives: What are We Really Talking About?" 8-11.

Sample Introductory Letter

Dear _____:

As a student currently enrolled in the Archival Studies MA Program in the Department of History, University of Manitoba, I would like to invite you to participate in my thesis project, "Defining 'Community' in Models of Community Archives: Navigating the Politics of Representation as Archival Professionals." This project explores various models of community archives with the aim of revealing the explicit and implicit definitions of community. It reviews the literature on community archives, offers two cases, and attempts to bring further nuance to the understanding of 'community' through the use of critical theory.

The _____ has been selected as one of two case studies that will comprise the second chapter of my thesis. Because of your affiliation and knowledge of this archives, you are being invited to complete an interview that may last anywhere from 15 minutes to 1 hour, depending on your preference. You can expect to be asked a series of questions related to the record of service provided by the _____, significant background details or changes within your community, and/or the challenges affecting the future of the _____.

Your participation is entirely voluntary and you may refuse to answer any questions, stop the interview at any time, and/or withdraw from the research without negative consequences. If you are interested in participating, please contact me by phone, email, or mail to make arrangements. I will send you a consent form and, depending on availability and preferences, we can arrange to complete the interview by phone or in person. Audio recordings of these interviews will be made.

Please take the time to read through the consent form carefully. After the interview, you will be asked whether the researcher can use your name in the finished work and given options with regards to how the content of the interview may be used. Because your name is already associated with _____, anonymity is not possible. When the project is complete, a digital version of my thesis will be made publicly available through the University of Manitoba's institutional repository MSpace.

This project is being supervised by Professor Greg Bak. He can be contacted at ███████ ██ or ███████████████.

Sincerely,

Sarah Ramsden

Sample Consent Form

Defining 'Community' in Models of Community Archives:
Navigating the Politics of Representation as Archival Professionals

Sarah Ramsden, Principal Investigator   Dr. Greg Bak, Research Supervisor

This consent form, a copy of which will be left with you for your records and reference, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more detail about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

My thesis explores various conceptual models of community archives with the aim of revealing the explicit and implicit definitions of community. It reviews this subject in the archival studies literature, offers two case studies that problematize existing models of community archives, and brings further nuance to the understanding of 'community' through the use of critical theory.

The second chapter consists of two case studies that will test the hypothesis that archivists stand to benefit from knowledge concerning the ongoing production of community and the politics of representation. It is desirable to invite a representative of each case study and/or a relevant contact within the community to participate in the research process by completing an interview. If participants agree to an interview, they will be asked a series of questions related to the record of service provided by the organization in question, significant background details or changes within the community they serve, and/or the challenges affecting the future of the organization.

Participants are asked to complete one interview that may last anywhere from 15 minutes to 1 hour, depending on the preferences of the participant. A participant may use this opportunity to use his or her expertise to inform the researcher and comment on this research project. There are minimal risks involved. Participants should be aware that their contributions may be scrutinized by other community members or the public. A participant can withdraw from the research, without negative consequences, by contacting the principal investigator or research supervisor. The withdrawal of data is no longer possible after the final draft of this thesis is complete.

Interviews will be digitally recorded using a program installed on the researcher's personal laptop. Confidentiality will be maintained throughout the project's duration. Participants will decide 1) whether they would prefer their contributions to be attributed by name and date or without this information and 2) whether the researcher, in addition to paraphrasing, can use direct quotes or not. Because the names of participants are publicly attached to the case studies, in professional and personal contexts, they can be easily identified. Therefore, anonymity is not possible in this study. As part of the process of ongoing consent, participants will be given the opportunity to read relevant sections of

drafts in which their individual contributions are cited. A participant may choose to withdraw any specific statements they do not want made public.

The results of the interviews will not be shared with anyone other than the research supervisor. Interview recordings and any related notes will be stored on my personal laptop, which is password protected. These materials and any back-up files kept in secure locations will be destroyed within two years of this project's completion (approximately October 2017). Research results will be disseminated through the publication of my thesis and any related publications. Participants will be notified when a digital copy of my thesis becomes available through the University of Manitoba's institutional repository MSpace. Participants may request a copy of interview notes and recordings.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the researchers, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time, and /or refrain from answering any questions you prefer to omit, without prejudice or consequence. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation.

The University of Manitoba may look at your research records to see that the research is being done in a safe and proper way.

This research has been approved by the Joint Faculty Research and Ethics Board. If you have any concerns or complaints about this project you may contact any of the above-named persons or the Human Ethics Coordinator (HEC) at 474-7122. A copy of this consent form has been given to you to keep for your records and reference.

Participant's Signature _____ Date _____

Researcher's Signature _____ Date _____

Following the interview, please check one of the following options to indicate how the researcher may attribute your contributions:

1. By name and date of interview

   _____

2. Without name and date of interview (reminder: anonymity is not possible in this study)

   _____

Do you give permission for the researcher, in addition to paraphrasing the contents of an interview, to quote you directly? Y/N _____

Questionnaire

1.   Can you state your name and occupation?

2.   Please clarify your affiliation to the [name of archives or organization].

3.   Have you used the collections in your own work? What projects in particular?

4.   In your opinion, what are the strengths of the collections?

5.   What can you tell me about the creation of the [name of archives or organization] and its early years?

6.   How would you describe the role of the archives in your community? How does it create or sustain a sense of community?

7.   What services does the archives currently provide to community members and other users? Has this changed over time?

8.   Can you share at least one story that speaks to the record of service provided by the [name of archives or organization]?

9.   Do you consider yourself a part of the community you serve?

10.   In your opinion, are the archives representative of the community? Explain why or why not.

11.   How would you define the community served by the archives?

12.   How has this community changed over the years? Does the archives reflect these changes?

13.   What does an outsider need to know about the community in order to understand the archives? How might an outsider come to know this information?

14.   Are there members of the community that use the archives more frequently than others?

15.   Does the [name of archives or organization] archive digital records? Do you see this as an important part of the archival program?

16.   How has [name of archives or organization] made use of digital technologies?

17.   What are the current or potential effects of digitization projects and increased access to records to the community? Are there any benefits?

18.   Who funds the [name of archives or organization]?

19.   Who is involved in the decision-making process? Are there any other people who influence decisions either formally or informally?

20.   What are the most pressing challenges facing [name of archives or organization]? What does the future look like?

21.   Would you like to add to your previous responses or share anything else?

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