INFO 580: Research Project
Annotated Bibliography of Information Resources on Migrant Community Archives

By

Dr Ashwinee Pendharkar

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Abstract

As information service professionals, librarians need to keep abreast of the current research interests and trends. On one hand, the recent refugee crisis has brought the spotlight on migrants and migration. On the other hand, increased migration has led to ethnically diverse and multicultural societies problematising the monochromatic ideas of nation and culture in the process.

The two together have the potential of revolutionising the information service profession, in New Zealand and across the world, in two distinct ways – 1) the need to cater to the demands of a heightened research interest in migration, migrants as well as in the related issues of host society-diaspora relationship, and expressions of this relationship in literature, institutional and societal practices, 2) the need to serve information needs of a user populace that reflects the ethnic and cultural diversity of the present day nations and institutions.

This is already evident in the demands on archival services, as various migrant communities, as minority communities, seek to find out and assert their role and their place in the host nation’s and society’s history/story. At the same time, in the field of archival studies, there is an enhanced awareness of: 1) the potential role of traditional archival practices in silencing certain voices and in marginalising minorities, and 2) the need to rethink traditional archival theories and practices. As a result, community archives movement and migrant community archives are focus of increased cross-disciplinary academic attention and interest, and a cutting edge area of research.

The proposed annotated bibliography will offer an online advisory tool for reference librarians, from New Zealand and in other places, helping them support research on the topic. The bibliography will be created using Zotero referencing software and made available as an online Zotero library. It will provide brief descriptions of information sources that deal with various aspects of the topic and encourage a nuanced and informed engagement with it from a New Zealand as well as global perspective.
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PART 1
Background

As a practice, community archives have existed here in New Zealand and internationally for a long time. The term community archives can have different meanings internationally and is used to signify a range of activities going under many different names such as community archive, independent archive, autonomous archive, ethnic archive, oral history archive, local history project. (Flinn, 2011. pp. 6-7) The forms that community archives take depend upon the interpretation and the scope accorded to the concept of community.

According to Benedict Anderson (1991), a nation is a community. However, as is evident from the research by Welland (2015) and Newman (2011), in the archival world, community is often understood as a minor subset of the nation and community archives are thought of on local rather than national scale. When stressing the importance of documenting local history and its significance to national heritage, Richard Cox (1996) is thinking of locality or “local neighborhood, town, or city, much like the family or the ethnic group to which one belongs” (Metcalf & Downey, as cited in Cox, 1996, p. 7) as a mainstay of community formation. More recently, Flinn has pointed out that

“in Canada and New Zealand, [community archive] is generally taken to mean a local archive which may be run by volunteers but may also be considered part of the public archival provision. Elsewhere the usage is closer to the UK approach, encompassing everything from local history archives to archival and historymaking activities reflecting a shared identification such as ethnicity or faith.” (pp. 6-7)

Community archives movement

Anderson argues (1991, pg. 7) that all communities are, potentially, imagined communities because the majority of their members do not know each other but are still bound together by shared affinities. From Anderson to Flinn, the scope of community changes drastically and yet what remains constant is the basic premise of community as a collective bound together by shared affinities such as locality or ethnicity or faith. Shared affinities, thus, create communities but what often remains unacknowledged is that they also create minorities by laying ground for exclusion from or isolation within a community for those who do not share the same affinities as or have affinities that are different from those of the majority.

According to the Merriam-Webster online dictionary, collective means shared or assumed by all members of a group and marked by similarity among or with the members of a group, minority is a part of a population differing from others in some characteristics and often subjected to differential treatment, and norm is an authoritative standard and a principle of right action binding upon the members of a group and serving to guide, control, or regulate proper and acceptable behaviour. (Merriam Webster Dictionary, 2016) By definition, thus, collectives imply similarities and shared norms whereas norms imply choices, practices and values prevalent in, accepted, preferred and imposed by the majority in a given group or community. Any differences from these create minorities within the majority collective or community and result in a differential treatment to the minorities.

Community archives movement in the US and the UK has evolved as a response to this marginalisation and archival scholars are increasingly focusing more on the social relevance of the community archives movement, its impact on the archival practice, and the desired response to it from the archival profession.

Considering the traditionally primary focus of archives on the official records and the place of archives within the state apparatus as keepers of nation’s history and memory, the marginalisation of the minority communities is often reflected within the archival practices. Archives aim at preserving
records of long term value and are increasingly using digitization and other new technologies to preserve and facilitate access to archived material. In determining the long term value, archivists appraise and select material for preservation on the basis of prevailing professional, organizational and national norms or their own interpretation of potential future value, excluding what does not fit. The underlying issues of subjectivity, interpretation, imposition of hegemonic norms, power of the state apparatus, and the power to shape future perceptions and collective memory are the focus of current archival debates and discussions.

**Minority community archives**

The need for acceptance by the majority and for a place in the collective memory is shared by all the communities that experience or have experienced marginalization and 'othering' through hegemonic norms, and through colonial, neo-colonial, cultural, racial, social and/or patriarchal domination. In response, these communities create their own archives to record, preserve and pass on their stories, histories and memories. Though certainly not the only one, migration is arguably the most obvious and significant means by which minority communities come into existence. Ethnic identity is central to migrant community archives. They trace the history of the community within the host society and the history of the relationship between the two.

These community archives are of interest to the members of these communities but, increasingly, also to the archival scholars and practitioners for their potential to resist the imposed marginalisation, assert identity, claim a place as well as to question, challenge and change the current archival practices, and for the rich research possibilities they offer thereby.

**Audience**

On one hand, the recent refugee crisis has brought the spotlight on migrants and migration. On the other hand, increased migration has led to ethnically diverse and multicultural societies problematising the monochromatic ideas of nation and culture in the process. The two together have the potential of revolutionising the information service profession, in New Zealand and across the world, in two distinct ways – 1) the need to cater to the demands of a heightened research interest in migration, migrants as well as in the related issues of host society-diaspora relationship, and expressions of this relationship in literature, institutional and societal practices, 2) the need to serve information needs of a user populace that reflects the ethnic and cultural diversity of the present day nations and institutions.

This is already evident in the demands on archival services, as various migrant communities, as minority communities, seek to find out their place and assert their role in the host nation’s and society’s history/story. At the same time, in the discipline of archival studies, there is an enhanced awareness of: 1) the potential role of traditional archival practices in silencing certain voices and in marginalising minorities, and 2) the need to rethink traditional archival theories and practices. As a result, migrant communities’ archives are a focus of increased cross-disciplinary academic attention and interest, and a cutting edge area of research.

The intended audience of this bibliography is, thus, both, the academic librarians and researchers on community archives, minority archives and migrant community archives. The bibliography will also be useful for the faculty of information studies programmes in developing and teaching courses in archival programmes, in selecting reading materials for introductory and advanced critical archival practice courses and courses specifically on community archives.
Gap

Reference service is a core service for academic libraries given that they are associated with and serve research institutions such as universities. Academic librarians need to keep abreast of the current research interests and trends, and need to respond to the related information needs of, both, students and faculty. Annotated bibliographies are great tools for librarians and researchers to develop comprehensive knowledge of resources dealing with a particular area of research.

At present, the growing interest in migration and migrant community archives notwithstanding, there is no such tool available on the topic for academic librarians in New Zealand and elsewhere. Basic search on google and using Te Waharoa reveals Community archives as a topic of current interest and research within the disciplines of Information service, cultural studies, social studies and health and medicine. However, understandably, the term means different things in these different disciplines. When the list of search results is vetted for relevance to research in archives the list of resources is not unimpressive but there are no annotated bibliographies compiling the resources as a tool for information service professionals to support academic research on the topic, especially if the focus is archival practices, critical theoretical arguments on the role of community archives, impact of traditional practices and more interdisciplinary research connecting archival studies to current, relevant theoretical developments in postcolonial studies, gender studies, diaspora studies or translation studies.

This project will begin to address this gap with the hope that the area receives academic and professional attention leading to more research and bibliographical work.

Scope

This project aims to develop comprehensive understanding of community archives as a topic by tracing the evolution of the concept from the margins of the archival studies as a perceived sub-discipline of the mainstream archival practice to the centre of the archival studies as an area of high socio-cultural and critical relevance to the professionals and academics alike.

The objective is to provide information about

- community archives and debates in the archival studies,
- critical theories and archival studies,
- studies of the purpose and impact of migrant/ minority archives and their outreach activities,

and eventually to grow to include

- information sources (such as films, fiction) that form part of these archives as expressions of minority experiences and contributions to the mainstream society.

As a result, this bibliography includes resources on community archives as well as work by leading scholars from other disciplines (such as Derrida and Gayatri Spivak) that has influenced critical archival thinking and discourse on social relevance of archives and shaped the community archives movement. It also includes a list of migrant community archives that have generated significant scholarly interest, research and publications such as SAADA, Making Britain but also of archives of some minority communities that are 1) resisting marginalisation based on other prevalent norms such as Queer Archives, or Disability Archives, or 2) playing or have played a crucial role in resisting marginalisation or silencing through the state approved institutionalised archival practices such as the Nelson Mandela Archive, Museum of Memory and Human Rights, Chile. This will draw attention to primary sources within the discipline and to the potential for interdisciplinary and/or comparative research focusing on these.
Structure

This bibliography is primarily a tool for academic reference librarians to support academic research in the discipline. Keeping in mind that these professionals serve the information needs of academics at various levels of academic and research trajectory, the search and the sources will begin by dealing with fundamental concepts in the discipline and will gradually lead to sources that demonstrate their critical application in highly innovative research in the discipline.

The resources will be presented under six headings

1. Community archives
2. Community archives movement
3. Migrant community archives
4. Influences from archival/heritage discipline
5. Influences from other disciplines
6. Expressions of migrant experience

Under each heading, resources will appear in chronological order to offer a timeline on the evolution of the concept of community archives and migrant community archives. Each resource will be assigned tags to indicate its relevance to specific aspects of community archives as a research topic.

At the end of the bibliography will be an index of key words and relevant entries/resources with the aim to facilitate navigation within the bibliography.

Presentation Style

This bibliography is developed using the Zotero referencing software in APA referencing style to keep to the academic conventions of Information studies. The sources are arranged chronologically as the intention is to trace the evolution of the concept and the movement of community archives generally and migrant community archives specifically. For each source, the description includes the disciplines such as title, author, publication date and location, annotation/summary and tags/key words. The annotation/summary outlines the subject matter and the key idea of the source. The tags/key words are added to help search and access.

Distribution

This annotated bibliography is an online advisory tool for reference librarians, from New Zealand and in other places. It is created using Zotero referencing software and is to be made available as an online Zotero library.

As Zotero is an online, open access reference management system and also allows formation of groups and storage of files, the bibliography will be a freely available, highly useful and sharable tool. It will also offer an opportunity for ongoing collaborative work and continuous development through user input. Zotero’s record of continuous development and support without losing data, and compatibility with various search engines and databases makes it an ideal choice to create this bibliography. Additional advantage will be the opportunity to encourage academics to use automated referencing systems such as Zotero thereby making referencing easier and to offer instruction and support in using automated referencing systems as part of information literacy training, thereby reducing the stress and difficulty that usually lead to poor referencing.

The current bibliography is prepared using the personal account of the bibliographer (Ashwinee Pendharkar) as it forms part of her coursework and research project for a Master of Information Studies at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. On completion of the degree, the
A bibliographer will make it available as an independent and open access library and advisory tool for the intended audience by circulating the information in New Zealand through MIS email group and the LIANZA website.

An article in academic journal relevant to archival and academic library studies will be more effective in making a wider and more international audience aware of the existence of this bibliography thereby increasing its utility and potential to serve socially relevant research and work on the topic of migrant and minority community archives.

More importantly, to achieve what Professor Gillian Oliver aptly describes as ‘community centred distribution’, the bibliographer will explore other avenues such as emails and tweets to her network of scholars formed during her practicum with South Asian American Digital Archives (SAADA) at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) from January 2016 to March 2016. The archival programme at UCLA plays a significant role in socially relevant critical archival scholarship, pedagogy and practice through the work of Professor Gilliland. Assistant Professor Caswell is SAADA’s co-founder and a leading scholar in the discipline of community archives and archival activism. SAADA itself is a migrant community archive and has many leading scholars on its board, besides Assistant Professor Caswell, dedicated to the migrant community archives movement. Through this network, the bibliography will reach migrant and other minority community archives practitioners.
References


PART 2
Bibliography
I Community archives

This part of the bibliography deals with community archives as a concept and a practice in New Zealand and elsewhere. In this section, you will find resources that demonstrate the conceptualisation of community archives from local heritage institutions to archives of a specific community. It also includes resources that engage with practical aspects of community archives practice but not practical guides (such as tool kits) for community archives practitioners or institutions. The list is chronological and remains open to addition in both directions.

Community Archives promote understanding, tolerance and respect between generations and between diverse social, ethnic and cultural communities. By enabling communities to record and share their heritage, they foster active citizenship within a multicultural democracy.

1.001


This article talks about the establishment of Marlborough Historical Society archives in 1955 as an attempt to preserve local history or history of the province locally. A good example of the New Zealand concept of community archives as local history archives and the correlation between locality and community mentioned in the first part of this bibliography. It also shows how far back the tradition of community archives in New Zealand goes.

The journal Archifacts was established in 1974 and ARANZ has a digital archives of all the issues. These contain similar articles on other examples of local archives. This article is included in this bibliography as a representative example of the New Zealand concept of community archives as local archives.

Local archives, Local history society, locality, community

1.002


The published copy of this article is preceded by a note stating that “this paper was prepared in 1975 for the use of the Archives Committee of the New Zealand Library Association Unpublished until now, it was the earliest and remains the fullest statement of the case for regional archives.”

The paper defines local archives as local records of local interest and permanent administrative and historical value and discusses the administrative and cultural uses of these archives. It encompasses records of local authorities, district offices of government departments, businesses, churches and corporate bodies. As is evident from the paper, lack of funding, place, professional assistance and the need to validate their existence was then, as now, a bane of the community archives.

Local archives, Community archives in New Zealand, Regional archives

1.003


Arguably the first mention of the term community archives in the New Zealand context during this research. The article lists community archives as one of the regional archives and defines them as “examples of attempts at total archives springing from the grass roots” connected either with local museums, galleries or “arising individualistically out of sturdy sense of local identity”. The article iterates the need for professional archival help to raise these attempts over the level of amateur effort.

Local archives, Community archives, Identity, Locality

1.004


This book is a practical guide for American archivists on documenting and preserving local history.

This book emphasises the importance of preserving local heritage and its relevance to the national history of the US. Cox presents locality as the mainstay of identity and community formation. This concept of locality and consequently community as bound to a geographical place smaller than the nation seems common between the US and New Zealand.
The bibliography of this book includes reference to earlier resources such as ‘The rising place of local and state history in American historiography’ by G. C. Fite (1988) marking the steady rise in assertion of the significance of the community, the local and the state history in resistance to the homogenising influence of and hierarchical preference for the nation, the national and the global history.

Locality, Community, Identity, Local archives, Local history, Community archives in New Zealand

1.005


This article offers an overview of the Canadian approach to local heritage.

Canada has had a unique approach to archives called total archives. The author argues that the essence of “total archives” came from an acceptance of public responsibility for the preservation of a wide range of archival materials, in all media and from all sources, in order to preserve society’s documentary heritage.

This article traces the evolution of the Canadian archives over time, the difficulties inherent to the concept of the total archives and the debates in Canadian archival world regarding the need for local/regional repositories for preservation of local heritage. It also discusses the increasing need for and rise in community archives in view of the multiculturalisation of Canadian society. The author uses the term ‘mosaic society’ to distinguish Canadian society from the ‘melting pot society’ in the US and to indicate the Canadian preference for preservation of distinct cultural identities and individualities over homogenisation into a monochromatic Canadianness.

Total archives, Local archives, Multicultural society, Culture, Identity, Identity, Community archives

1.006


This article defines community archives as grassroots efforts run by volunteers. Millar suggests a collaborative approach between archival profession and community archives emphasising the need for archivists to be aware of their role in service of future generations.

Community archives, Professional archivists, Sustainability

1.007


This article is a case study of the heritage rights and interests of the Maori people as specific to New Zealand and as part of the “international drive for indigenous peoples to reclaim their cultural rights and identities”.

Wareham presents a very concise and compelling argument about the cultural and historical significance of archives for the Maori community in its need to access written information in order to settle historical grievances, and to revive and retain cultural identity. The archival needs and concerns of Indigenous communities as minorities within settler communities and as communities formed around shared ethnic and cultural affinities expressed here are similar, though not identical, to those of ethnic minorities and/or migrant communities.
The community archives movement and migrant community archives can share a solidarity and theoretical engagement with the indigenous rights movement over concerns such as 1) preservation of, access to and control over cultural and historical knowledge, 2) retention of cultural identity, and 3) the need to deliberate on the advantages of partnership and collaboration with the information sector, mainstream archival institutions and practitioners over archival independence.

Indigenous community, Indigenous community archives, Minority community archives

1.008


A survey by National Council of Archives, UK on the impact of community archives. This survey defines the UK concept of community archives and looks at various aspects of community archives to study the impact of community archives on the communities, the volunteers and the society at large. The survey stresses the need for further in depth studies on the impact of specific types of community archives such as ethnically based community archives, a category migrant community archives would fall under.

Community archives, Impact of community archives

1.009


Emphasising the heritage and cultural value of community archives, this thesis expresses concern about their longevity and investigates the factors necessary for their long term maintenance.

Newman proposes a methodological framework for assessing the likely sustainability of community archives based on the requirements for managing community/ local archives documented by US archivists. She stresses that managing organisational and governance factors enhances the sustainability of community archives.

This resource is of practical use to community archives practitioners and provides a very concise review of the literature on community archives that will be of interest to the researchers on the subject.

Community archives, Sustainability, Management of community archives

1.010


This thesis investigates the position of community archives from the perspective of the formal and accredited archives sector or archival community in the UK with the aim to speculate about the potential for collaboration between the two and about the evolving role and function of archives and archivists. Wales points out that traditional archival practices and discourse create barriers between professional archival community and the community archives. She emphasises the need for professional archival community to become more inclusive and supportive of community archives rather than using professional knowledge and authority against them.

Professional archival community, Community archives
Using a multiple case study of eight archives serving in Nova Scotia and a qualitative methodology of expert interviews and online questionnaire, this thesis examines the factors that influence the sustainability of these institutions. Froese-Stoddard argues that sustainability can be strengthened through the support of their socio-geographic, religious, or ethno-cultural communities, strong leadership able to make strategic alliances with neighboring community institutions, and continued professional relationships with regional archival councils and national associations.

This resource adds to Newman’s argument and presents a Canadian context of and perspective on community archives. The community archives here share affinity to the same locality but distinguished by their other affinities. It is also leads to more resources useful in examining the concept of community formation and reasons for minoritisation.

Community archives, Sustainability


This paper discusses some practical issues for digital archives and metadata in a networked information environment to keep our community memory for the future. As digitization is the key preservation method for formal and community archives, this article is of practical importance to both.

Drawing upon the experience of the effect of the Great East Japan Earthquake of 11 March 2011, Sugimoto emphasises on the need for a robust information environment for keeping digital archives safe for the future. He urges the need to establish proper preservation procedures for primary digital resources secondary resources, metadata and meta-metadata and recommends use of Linked Open Data technologies to enhance the usability of such digital resources in the archives.

Community archives, Digital technologies


This research paper presents a detailed overview of the concept, role, impact and development of community archives for a New Zealand audience. It is based on interviews of community archives practitioners and expert feedback on online surveys.

Welland draws on an extensive range of local and international resources to offer a comprehensive account of community archives as a key area of archival practice and research.

Community archives, Impact of community archives
This is an upcoming article about how cloud computing can help community archives with digital preservation.

**The abstract:** Small, local, independent, and oftentimes idiosyncratic, the many community archives across the globe are commonly considered the least prepared to undertake digital preservation activities. Taking up the concept of archives as a “place of preservation” and putting it in conversation with the distinct areas of scholarship on community archives and cloud computing, I argue that community archives are enabled by cloud-computing solutions to begin acquiring and preserving born-digital records. To do so means re-imagining the boundaries of where preservation takes place. I outline the concepts that define community archives in the Anglo-American context, discuss these ideas in relation to preservation and place, and connect them with a review of potential cloud-computing implementations and case examples for small archives. Embedded alongside records creators that represent a broad spectrum of organizations, people, and interests, community archives are ideally positioned to acquire the digital records of persons, businesses, and organizations that may escape large, institutionally based archives. The very distributed nature of community archives will enable them to contribute to a more networked approach to digital preservation, one that reflects the networked structure of cloud computing itself.

The term community archives here seems to indicate smaller collecting archives or local archives - archives of the community of a particular locality. However, cloud computing might be a solution for all community archives, fund strapped digitization projects and digital repositories. It would facilitate archiving of born digital records of value to the community, but more importantly, cloud computing would allow migrant community archives to transcend geographical boundaries to create global archives of an ethnic community.

Even more importantly, as the community cloud in the title suggests, cloud computing also has the potential to connect minority and community archives with formal archives in a network of archives or ‘Archival clouds’ thereby improving collaboration, sharing of resources and expertise as well as visibility of the community heritage/archives in formal institutions offering the communities an equal place in the national heritage and inclusion without assimilation.

Community archives and technology, Community archives and formal archives, Archival cloud
II Community archives movement

This part of the bibliography deals with the evolution of the community archives movement wherein community archives play an important role in documenting and preserving local and community history that is vital to the communities and to the nation but more importantly - they are vital instruments of representation for the marginalised and non-elite groups in society; they are a challenge to the traditional archival notions, practices and discourses, and vehicles of democratisation of the archival discipline. They are the harbingers of social change and voice of those silenced by the hegemonic, homogenising and normative histories.

Also included are resources that call professional practitioners to become part of this movement by extending collaboration, sharing knowledge and professional expertise.
2.001


According to Ham, in 1970, Howard Zinn told an SAA audience that the archival record in the United States is biased towards the rich and powerful elements in our society—government, business, and the military—while the poor and the impotent remain in archival obscurity. To correct this, the chief spokesman for history’s new Left urged archivists "to compile a whole new world of documentary material about the lives, desires and needs of ordinary people."

This would make Zinn’s the first call for the community archives movement even though Zinn is addressing the formal archival sector’s hierarchical preference for the national over the individual.

Marginalised communities, Formal archives

2.002


This article urges the need for the archival profession and the archivists to move away from their elitist bias towards the ‘centre’ of the society and to move towards the ‘edge’. Edge, both, in terms of the boundaries and limits of the profession and towards the peripheries and the margins of the society to bring the neglected areas of the society into archives so that the profession moves forward by becoming more representative of the wider society and leaves a more representative record of the human experience for the future.

It is the lack of representative and inclusive formal archives that the community archives movement rebels against.

Marginalised communities, Formal archives, Minorities

2.003


This article refers to Zinn’s call and recounts the first reaction of his professional audience. Quinn agrees with Zinn’s judgement and points out that like the collections even the profession was elitist and the blacks, minorities and women were absent from it. Quinn call’s for this situation to be remedied.

This is a different dimension to the problem of marginalisation of the minorities that community archives movement is a response to.

Formal archives, Minorities

2.004


This article considers the relationship between custody and access focusing on the vital role that access to historical records plays in the construction of community memory. Using the example of the United States Virgin Islands as a case in point, Bastian draws attention to the role archives play in a community’s history and how access to its own records is crucial to a community’s self-discovery and building of a collective cultural memory.
This article is useful in the tracing the connections between heritage and identity, between archives of a community and its collective memory. It also questions the traditional archival notion of provenance linked to the creating government body.

Archives, Memory, Identity, Community, Collective memory

2.005


This book narrates the story of the small Caribbean community of the United States Virgin Islands - former Danish West Indies islands - that lost its historical records after the sale of the islands to the US. Bastian traces the history of the community, of the transfer of the ownership of the islands between Denmark and the US, of the removal of the colonial archives to Denmark after the sale, and of the post-transfer records held in custody by the US.

Bastian uses the “dramatic effects of the loss of their archives on the efforts by Virgin Islanders to internalize and document their own cultural and colonial history” as a framework for examining the “broader issues of memory in the relationship between communities and their historical records.” These issues include archival ones (records creation, provenance, access and custody) and societal ones (writing of history, reconciliation of oral and written traditions, and consolidation of memories, power of the colonising country over the archives and through it the representation of the community, discovery and retention of cultural identity and shaping of the collective memory of the posterity).

This account adds another dimension to the migrant community archives movement - of forced migration in the form of slavery and the resulting diasporic community. This has relevance and links to the Black archives and rights movements. It also opens the path to building connections between archival and postcolonial theory as well as between the migrant/ minority/ indigenous community archives movement(s), between them and the postcolonial perspective.

Archives, Collective memory, Power, Postcolonial perspective

2.006


This article stresses the importance of government records to the identity, self-discovery, memory, history but also the sense of belonging to the aborigines in Australia and their need of access to these records. This is true of any indigenous and minority community and hence of relevance to the community and migrant community archives movement.

Community, Identity, Formal archives

2.007


This article is an excellent and comprehensively informative account of the community archives movement in the UK. Given the rising interest in the community archives movement, its usefulness is, evidently not limited to the UK audience.

The article examines “the community archive movement, exploring its roots, its variety and present developments”. Acknowledging the increasing interest in and number of initiatives of archiving
In a truly democratic manner, Flinn encourages critical engagement with rather than unconditional acceptance of the concept and the practice of the community archives movement, asking questions and acknowledging validity of dissenting voices.

2.008


This book chapter builds on Flinn’s 2007 article Community histories, community archives: Some opportunities and challenges. The article championed for community archives and for the democratisation of archives. This chapter moves on to examine what this democratisation might mean for professional practice in terms of collection, technical challenges and practical professional duties, the need to collaborate with technology experts and community organisations.

2.009


This article is addressed to professional archivists and urges them to extend co-operation and help to community archives.

2.010


This article examines “independent community archive activity in the UK, and in particular in London, and its implications for community interaction and identity within the multicultural context of contemporary British culture and society”. The article summarises the history and the evolution of the term community archives. It defines that “[a] community, in short, is any group of people who come together and present themselves as such, and a ‘community archive’ is the product of their attempts to document the history of their commonality.”

Through direct interaction with community archives practitioners, community members and users, these writers survey the interaction between community archives and mainstream archives, the reasons for or against collaboration, the perceptions about each other, the concerns over questions of ownership, custody and representation shared by indigenous, ethnic and other minority community archives.

This article connects the local to international by pointing out the wider implications and impacts of community archives movement as well as the potential of this movement to challenge and transform traditional archival practices and discourse and to initiate transformation of power relations through democratisation of heritage.
An excellent resource leading to other resources that explore the relationship between heritage and identity, the need for transformation of the heritage sector and discourse, the power of the archives to shape collective memory, the interconnections between memory and identity and other concerns important to community archives movement.

Community archives movement, Transformative power of community archives, Traditional archival discourse

2.011


This article explores the reasons that cause exclusion of private archives from the professional archival discourse. Fisher traces the origin of this schism to the distinction between governmental and non-governmental archives that divides the archival terrain from the times of Jenkinson and Schellenberg.

The term private archives alludes to non-governmental archives such as “the fonds of persons, families, non-profit organizations, for-profit businesses, and even less formal groups of people acting in concert, like a social movement or a one-time conference or special event.” Although Fisher does not allude even once to the term community archives, they are implied in the terms non-governmental, non-profit organisations and groups of people acting in concert.

Fisher points out that current archival theory and “[g]overnment archivists speak in terms of evidence, functions, structure, and accountability, while private archivists speak in terms of memory, heritage, research, and cultural value.” According to him, this duality of approach makes the current archival theory irrelevant to private archives but also perhaps holds the promise of development of a theory of private archives.

Archival theory, Community archives

2.012


This article explores the relationship between public archive services and independent community archives observing that the concept of community and the practice of community engagement are paid less attention to in the archival practice in contrast to the immense practical and professional interest in the relationship between heritage sites and their communities (whether source, user or practicing professional) in the other heritage sector.

The writers point out that the changes in the perception about the role of archives in society combined with increased demands for visibility from the historically marginalised communities have encouraged or forced mainstream organisations to adopt more flexible working practices regarding “custodial arrangements, collections policy, curation and dissemination, training and consultancy”. They appreciate that the practice has changed from demands for custody to sharing knowledge and expertise and warn of the challenges to dominant assumptions and practices that community archives pose.

Community archives, Professional archival practices, Professional archivists
2.013


This article explores developments in independent, non-professionalized archival and heritage activity to examine those projects and endeavors which are actively engaged in radical or counter-hegemonic public history-making activities. It also addresses the attitude of professional archivists and other heritage workers to these social movements.

Flinn calls these non-professional archival initiatives as “social movement archival activism, often allied to a progressive, democratizing, and antidiscrimination political agenda.” Acknowledging the challenges in collaboration between the professional and non-professional archival activity, Flinn urges the professional heritage practitioners to seek out such collaborations and to form equitable partnerships with these social movements to foster more democratized and diverse historical collections.

Community archives, Professional archival practices, Professional archivists

2.014


This article explores the concept of cultural archives and argues the potential of community based representations and expressions of a community’s experiences as records in such archives.

The concept of cultural archive here is close to the Canadian concept of total archives and relevant to community especially migrant community archives movement since retention of cultural identity and practices is important to the sense of being and belonging of a migrant community.

Community-based representations and expressions of a community’s experiences tell the story of the community in its own way and is crucial to its collective future memory and social history. Recognition of their social, cultural, heritage and archival value and offering access and visibility to them (inclusion without custody) in formal cultural and heritage repositories and archives is according that community a place in the national heritage.

Migrant community archives, Cultural archives, Culture, Identity, Collective memory

2.015


This paper examines experience in the UK of encouraging greater collaboration between university researchers and groups outside the academy around the practice of community heritage and archives within formally structured attempts at collaborative research and co-creation such as the Arts and Humanities Research Council’s (AHRC) Connected Communities programme Research for Community Heritage. The paper refers to the work of the UCL team Dig Where We Stand in order to assess the current state of practice in seeking to overcome the barriers to real and sustained collaboration between those in the academy and those located outside in the development of community heritage research.
Flinn and Sexton emphasise on the need for critical reflections by professional practitioners on their own actions and on the consequences of those actions beyond the collaborative projects so that long term, sustainable collaborative relationships with community heritage institutions and practitioners can be developed.

Although the paper addresses formal professional sector, it is equally important that community heritage/archives practice and practitioners reflect on the scope and impact of heritage projects, and develop sustainable lasting relationships with the professional sector.

Community-based heritage research, Collaborative practice, Participatory approaches

2.016


This paper is a keynote address to the CIRN 2013 conference. It reflects upon ‘community archiving’ and upon the diversity of terms, characteristics, settings and objectives that are associated with it. It also identifies the considerations that drive the community archives movement such as social justice, a focus on common identities and experiences, and a desire to document communities historically under-represented in mainstream archives.

Acknowledging that “community archives are more likely explicitly to foreground issues of power and politics in their archival endeavors than are mainstream archives”, Gilliland and Flinn address a series of questions "with the aim of providing a better understanding of the world of community archiving, the impact of technology on the practice and the relationship of community archives to other activities and disciplines, including community informatics.”

An important resource for a comprehensive understanding of community archiving as a wider discipline and newer developments within the discipline.

Community-based archives, Community informatics, Social movements

2.017


This article emphasises on the potential of the records to help communities construct their collective memories and as evidence and validation of their experiences and identities, and also the communities’ need for access to and control over their own records. The writers argue that methods allowing communities control over access, management and interpretation of their records of collective memory need to be an essential part of the (professional) archivist’s toolkit, if archives are to be truly democratised. They suggest that thinking in terms of ‘multiple control’ over records will facilitate interoperability, access and participation of the community.

This is of relevance to collaborative projects between formal and community archives and archivists. Also because formal records are important part of the community’s archives, history and evidence of social rights. Since majority of any community’s official records are within formal records repositories and archives access to and shared control over them is important to that community. Interoperability and participatory practices between formal and community archives would also make community archives more visible in the mainstream archives.

Community archives, Formal archives, Collaborative practice, Participatory approaches
2.018


This article proposes ‘survivor-centered approach’ as the theoretical framework for managing records documenting human rights abuse. The term survivor here goes beyond the ‘victim–perpetrator’ binary to indicate all those who have ‘survived’ human rights abuse and also includes relatives of those who did not survive. Caswell advocates application of the five community-centric values of “participation, shared stewardship, multiplicity, archival activism, and reflexivity” in documenting human rights abuse so that the archive remains relevant to the ‘surviving’ community and does not feed into the dominant narrative.

This article demonstrates that the community archives movement has a lot to offer to the archival world. It does not just borrow from scholarship in archival and other disciplines but also gives back. It does not just challenge but also brings change.

Community archives, Survivor-centered approach, Human rights abuse
III Migrant community archives

This section of the bibliography includes resources that focus specifically on migrant community archives, and resources that deal with archiving ethnicity, often the defining characteristic of migrant communities, whether in formal or community archives. It also includes resources within the archival discipline that engage specifically with migrant community archives movement or a larger theoretical or critical perspective related to migration, migrant or diaspora communities, relationship between them and the host society and its institutions.

Heritage lends immediate meaning and physical and spiritual nourishment to individual lives and communities at large. When an individual's or a community's heritage is denied adequate recognition within a particular milieu, or is overshadowed by dominant narratives or is simply ignored, the outcome can be debilitating, leading to disaffection and disillusionment, a sense of disenfranchisement and contributing to socio-economic decline.


And it is that history that I want to retrieve – the history that we made in this country, the history that Claudia Jones inspired. The history of us as black settlers, not coloured immigrants, the history that black workers contributed to the workingclass struggle, which has been ignored by white historians, the history of the struggles of black women to overcome the particular racisms visited upon them . . . the history of black youth rebellion . . . It is that history I want to talk about . . .

Sivanandan, 2004 (cited in Flinn, Andrew, and Mary Stevens. 2009. "'It Is Noh Mistri, Wi Mekin Histri.'"
3.001


This article traces the evolution of the North Otago Museum archive as a community archive. It is one more example of the ways in which the concept of community is closely linked with a geographical place. More interesting perhaps is the allusion to the archive’s role in preserving the Scottish history of Otago as that would technically make this archive a migrant community archive, one of the very few such in New Zealand.

Migrant community archives in New Zealand

3.002


This chapter proposes a unique take on migrant community or diaspora archives linking it to the positive role of internet. It observes the difficulty in understanding formation of social or collective memory and the links between memory and its social locations and functions.

Observing that Foucault destroyed the innocence of the archival image as “a social tool for the work of collective memory “and “a neutral, or even ethically benign, tool which is the product of a deliberate effort to secure the prestige of the past” by pointing out its intentionality and constructed nature, Appadurai posits the need for a more positive image of archive. For him, “rather than being the tomb of the trace [of transactions], the archive is more frequently the product of the anticipation of collective memory and the material site of the collective will to remember”. It is not an accidental repository of default communities but deliberate site for the production of anticipated memories by intentional communities - repository of intentional remembering. Electronic archiving restores the link between archive and popular memory and practices but also allows formation of new imaginary communities or prosthetic socialities transcending geographical limits through electronic and social media.

Contrary to the prevalent perception of migration as a narrative of abject loss and need, Appadurai draws attention to the positive potential of migration to metamorphose lives, to revitalise existing at the same time forming new relationships and build newer memories of the process. Appadurai’s migrant / diaspora archive is in cyberspace, operating outside both home and host society, a bridge between memories of the past and memories for the future - “[A] continuous and conscious work of the imagination, seeking in collective memory an ethical basis for the sustainable reproduction of cultural identities in the new society ... a map ... a guide to the uncertainties of identity-building under adverse conditions.”

The celebratory image of migrant community archives as a bridge between memory/ past and desire or aspiration/ future is of immense significance. It accords dual significance to their current struggle for recognition and social justice from the host societies – as an aspiration for better life now and an inspiring legacy for tomorrow.

Migrant community archives, Collective memory, Migrant community archives as legacy
3.003


This article is an account of archives of another unique diaspora – the post-World War II East European Émigrés in the US; the displaced persons or DPs from war-torn nations and cultures under the threat of annihilation feeling an acute need to preserve their cultures in exile.

Wurl aptly points out that “for the post-war émigrés, archival sources were not only a window to their pasts, they were a tool for ensuring the continued vitality and fortitude of a community struggling against both the forces of cultural repression in Europe and assimilation in America.” As he observes, “[v]iewed through this perspective, archives represent strategic assets in establishing legitimacy. For cultures at risk, archives can be seen as a vital haven for what is and was and the building blocks for what will be.”

Migration here is forced and life-saving at the same time and archives have a vital role to play in the life of this diaspora – as evidence of the past, memory of the loss and the new beginning. What Wurl highlights is true of all migrant communities, even for those whose need does not stem from similar situations.

Exile, forced migration, Diaspora, Annihilation, Culture, Memory, Identity, Diaspora archives

3.004


This article explores the ambivalent relationship between “informal archives organisations representing diasporic communities and more formal archives institutions within the professional context of increased emphasis on agendas of ‘inclusion’, emanating from both government and professional bodies”. Hopkins argues that this relationship remains ambivalent because diasporic communities find the ‘inclusion initiatives’ merely tokenistic since the formal archival and heritage discourse and institutions fail to address the real issues leading to the exclusion from or misrepresentation of the diasporic communities within the formal archival institutions.

Hopkins draws attention to the constructed nature of archival representation of the past and to the power dynamics inherent to the processes of selection, collection and representation by and in heritage institutions which remain otherwise obscured by naturalisation of these processes and their perceived neutrality. Hopkins finds diasporic community archives as a direct response to the marginalisation within the formal archival institutions.

The list of examples demonstrates that Hopkins does not make distinction between diasporic communities formed through forced and voluntary migration and thereby creates, whether intentionally or not, a bond between the Black and other migrant community rights movements.

Traditional archival practices, Migrant community archives

3.005


This book chapter, using exile as theme, sketches how “engagement with a theoretical discussion might help change our perspectives on archives and reshape our understanding of some familiar collections and archives”. The exile here is, both, real - the banishment of people from the home country - and perceived - the feeling of unbelonging or being away from home.
This chapter presents an overview of exile as a theoretical perspective, its central place in theories of Western medieval and modern history followed by various examples of exiled individuals or communities.

Prescott offers a fascinatingly different and insightful take on this unique ‘migrant and diasporic condition’ and its representation in the archives.

Migration, Identity, Migrant communities, Migrant community archives

3.006


This chapter seeks “to add to the literature by examining independent community archives as social movements (or as elements of social movements) and by identifying individuals involved in community archives as political and cultural activists campaigning for equality and cultural recognition and against racism and discrimination.” Through observation of and interaction with independent and community archival activity amongst communities of predominantly African and Asian heritage in the UK, Flinn and Stevens wish to “explore the motivations, challenges and impacts of community history initiatives”

On the basis of interviews with active participants in community archives and earlier work, the authors claim that the creation of a community archive is often “a response to societal conditions and an act of challenge to and resistance against historic and ongoing discrimination and subordination in national narratives”.

Flinn and Stevens place community archives movement and migrant community archives firmly within the tradition of ‘social movement’ and in resistance to discrimination and marginalisation by the host society.

Community archives, Resistance, Discrimination, Subordination, Marginalisation

3.007


In this article, Caswell introduces SAADA (South Asian American Digital Archive), an independent, digital repository founded in response to the marginalisation of South Asian Americans in the US mainstream archives as an alternative venue for them to make collective decisions about what is “of enduring value to them, to shape collective memory of their own pasts, and to control the means through which stories about their past are constructed.

She presents a model of community based archives that aligns with Flinn, Stevens, and Shepard’s broad working definition of community archives as “collections of material gathered primarily by members of a given community and over whose use community members exercise some level of control” wherein “political activism, community empowerment, and social change were [are] prime motivating factors undergirding these fiercely independent archival efforts” (Flinn, Stevens & Shepard 73).

Community-based archives, Migrant community archives
3.008


This article traces the representations of ethnicity and immigration in mainstream American and Canadian archives since the 1950s, examining the various political, economic, social and technological factors that affected ethnic archives within the context of changing scholarly and popular conceptions of ethnicity in North America.

Daniel describes the relationship between ethnic archives and their historical context as ‘dialectical’ - where archives are shaped by the context within which they are developed and managed and through their preference for certain ethnic groups and certain conceptions of ethnicity – and asks to be wary of falling victim to the illusion of ethnic authenticity. Daniel is pointing to the constructed nature of mainstream archival representations of ethnicity and the hegemonic historical norms – in terms of scholarship, socio-cultural and political ideas, and government policies - that shape them.

Daniel alludes to the rise of ethnic historical societies in response to the exclusion from mainstream archives, which are ethnic community archives by another name. Community archives movement and ethnic minority/ migrant community archives are a response to both, exclusion/ marginalisation and mis/representations/manipulations of ethnic identities. They fight so that these communities can tell their own stories and retain their distinct identities without being tethered to a stereotype or being assimilated into the hegemonic national identity.

This is an important and highly informative resource as it provides a succinct account of the history of archiving ethnicity and references to a number of resources relevant to this history.

History of archiving ethnicity, Ethnicity, Archives, Migrant community archives

3.009


This book is an anthology of essays on the theory and/or practice of on archiving ethnicity in the US and Canada. In the foreword, the Introduction and through the five sections – Theorizing ethnicity in the 21st century, Setting the stage: personal reflections, Toward culturally sensitive archiving, Creating and re-creating identity and Archiving ethnicity on the web – the anthology engages with various aspects of archiving migrant communities of various ethnicities and migrant community archives. Only the first five essays in the anthology are annotated below to indicate the richness of the resource.

The essays of utmost relevance, from this anthology and in the order of appearance, are –

1) Bastian, J. A. Documenting Communities through the Lens of Collective Memory. (pp. 15 -34).

“This essay seeks to theorize archives through a collective memory lens, in particular exploring how this lens enhances the ability of archivists to document peoples and communities outside the societal mainstream. It also endeavors to place collective memory itself within an archival context, suggesting ways in which archivists can both appropriate the memory tools already developed by other disciplines and add them to their existing archival tool boxes in order to imagine and develop structures for acquisition, appraisal and description that embrace the (often) non-traditional records and expressions of ethnic and diasporic communities.”
Bastian presents collective memory as a framework for group and individual identity and as a perspective through which to approach documenting communities. She argues that the lens of collective memory will allow archivists to understand the significance of non-record forms of memory production (such as rituals, oral traditions) as representative ‘documents’ or records of a community and thus to devise strategies and practices of archiving that will result in more representative and inclusive archives.

Collective memory, Community, Identity, Cultural texts

2) Caswell, M. Inventing New Archival Imaginaries: Theoretical Foundation for Identity-Based Community Archives. (pp. 35-55).

Using SAADA as the primary research site, this essay proposes “three major theoretical concepts undergirding the formation of identity-based community archives based on the author’s experience as a cofounder and board member of SAADA: strategic essentialism, memoryscape, and archival imaginaries.”

Caswell posits postcolonial theorist Gayatri Spivak’s notion of strategic essentialism as “the key to understanding how complex and contested communities can come together to form seemingly cohesive archival organizations based on contingent ethnic identities.” Drawing upon Arjun Appadurai’s concepts of memoryscape and imaginary, Caswell argues that “community-based digitization practices create transnational sites where memory is shared, contested, and reconstructed on a global scale” and also that “community archives create liberatory archival imaginaries that re-envision future trajectories of the past for social justice aims, changing our notion of what archives and archival work make possible.”

Caswell’s model of migrant community archive strategically uses an ethnic identity to create transnational sites of memory but also solidarity beyond the borders of community and nation to envision a future where archives represent the plurality of a multicultural society and strive for social justice.

Migrant community archives, Social justice, Postcolonial theory, Identity, Strategic essentialism, Memoryscape, Archival imaginaries

3) Stolarik, M. M. Building Ethnic Archives in the Unites States and Canada since the 1960s. (pp. 59–68).

This essay presents the history of Immigrant Archives at the University of Minnesota established in early 1960s in response to the absence of southern and eastern European ethnic communities in the formal archives.

Stolarik, through his own professional trajectory, points out the differences between the US and Canadian archival systems and practices, the latter more inclusive of all forms of material artefacts (3D objects). He lauds the role of Immigration History centre at the University of Minnesota and Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies (now Historical Society of Pennsylvania for their pioneering work in documenting all ethnic groups in the US.

Ethnic archives, Archiving Ethnicity, Ethnic archives in the US and Canada


This essay is an account of two parallel histories – one, of a search for the history of emigration from America to and the archives of these diasporas in other places, and the other, of the search for the archives of East European diasporas in the US.

Dispelling the American illusion or lack of awareness and acknowledgment of American migration in other countries, Wurl brings up two interesting points – 1) the impetus that researchers/scholars from outside the US provide to the archival research on diasporas of
their countries residing in the US and 2) the need for the archivists of migration (immigration and emigration) and the migrant communities to think beyond one nation’s borders in considering the scope and scale of archives and to initiate collaboration between archives to form a transnational archive for the community.

Wurl highlights the impact that non-neutral archivists/ researchers/users, who have ‘vested’ interest in archives of the communities with whom they share bonds of place, origin and/or ethnicity, can have on archival research. This rings true in the case of community archives movement and migrant community archivists. More importantly, infusion of archivists from minority/migrant communities is something that the archival profession needs to de-whiten and revitalise itself.

Migration, Immigration, Emigration, Diaspora archives, Diasporas of archives, Collaborative archiving


This essay explores “the innovative ways in which a small group of young researchers of Portuguese descent and a university archive have developed an effective partnership to bridge the gap between immigrant and academic communities.” The aim is to dispel the prevalent perception about immigrant communities in Canada and the United States as “homogenous ethnic groups rooted in an essentialized “old-world” heritage reinforced by policies of multiculturalism” as this perception “overemphasizes ethnicity as the basis of representation and dislodges other identities and sources of solidarity”.

In place of the “top-down” traditional/formal archiving of ethnic communities, the Portuguese Canadian History Project (PCHP) promotes and facilitates patron driven or “from below” archival practices to “problematicize the narrative of Portuguese immigration by including diverse experiences, soliciting public commentary, and contextualizing it within the histories of Canada and Portugal”.

This is of high relevance to migrant community archives movement. The migrant community archives are focused on asserting and preserving a distinct cultural identity in their fight for recognition, equal place and visibility in the host nation’s history. The cultural identity that they wish to assert and preserve is, as this essay points out, not homogenous. It is imperative that migrant community archives do not reflect the power relationships within the community they represent in the way that formal archives do. Equally important is that they do not end up imposing an essentialised monolithic identity on the diversity within their community by silencing or marginalising weaker groups and members.

Migrant communities, Multicultural society, Top-down archiving, From Below archiving, Migrant community archives

3.010


This paper defines and explains the concept of participatory microhistory through an examination of the South Asian American Digital Archive’s First Days Project, a community-based online project that solicits short audio, video and written narratives about South Asians immigrants’ first day in the United States.
The authors highlight that participatory microhistory projects “generate new records that represent perspectives not commonly found in archives, convey an important sense of emotion and affect, and effectively solicit community participation in the archival endeavour.” In acknowledging interventions to ensure that the archive collects “records that should exist”, they proudly defy the traditional practice of privileging the powerful along with the expectations and pretensions of archival neutrality in their goal to give voice to the underrepresented and validate lived experiences of the everyday people.

SAADA and the first day project stem from sound theoretical rationale and impassioned belief in the social role of the archives and as such provide a highly successful model for other migrant community archives.

Migrant community archives, Participatory microhistory

3.011


Drawing upon the author’s experiences as founder of a community archive (SAADA) and the concept of symbolic annihilation as ‘erasure, marginalization, under-representation, negative representation or trivialization of a community or group by the mainstream media’, this article posits that “independent, community-based archives are crucial tools for fighting the symbolic annihilation of historically marginalized groups.”

Inspired by the community archives movement in the UK and the prominent thinkers within it, SAADA was founded in response to the neglect that South Asian American community suffered in the American history and archives - as the means of “self-representation, identity construction and empowerment” for the community but also with the larger aim of “challenging and subverting the distortions and omissions of dominant historical narratives and institutions such as archives and heritage collections that sustain them” through participation in archiving stories, documents and other cultural texts of enduring value to the community.

Rejecting the traditional notion of archival neutrality, Caswell describes community archives movement as a call for highly political, participatory and reflexive archival practice.

Community archives movement, History, Marginalization, Symbolic annihilation, Migrant community archives

3.012


This article observes the need for empirical research to “investigate the commonly-held assumption that community archives’ collections accurately reflect the interests and needs of their home community”. This article is an account of one such empirical study conducted by Caswell to explore what one particular subgroup of SAADA expected the archive to collect.

Caswell reminds readers and community archivists that such empirical work is “[e]ssential to ensuring the continued relevance of the organization’s collections to the communities they are based in and serve.”

Migrant and other community archives and archivists need to take note of the point that Caswell makes and find ways and establish practices that keep them in touch with their communities’ needs and interests.

Community archives, Collection priorities, Participatory collecting practices, Community participation

This forthcoming article emphasises the need to conduct empirical studies, for professionals and academics in the archival discipline, “to truly understand the nature, function, and impact of community archives”. The article is a report of one such empirical study based on a series of qualitative interviews conducted with South Asian American educators regarding their responses to the South Asian American Digital Archive (SAADA).

The authors observe that community archives change the “nature of the archival endeavor” by taking into account evidential as well as affective value of records. The interviews indicate that discovering one’s community represented in the archives produces “affirmations of existence and feelings of belonging” in the community members.

The importance of studies along these lines is dual – it not only highlights the relevance and the social value of the community archives movement and migrant community archives but demonstrates that the theoretical arguments about their potential to shape identity and collective memory as well as challenge and change hegemonic archival, social and political norms are not just theoretical.

Community archives, Migrant community archives, Representational belonging, Affirmation of existence, Impact of community archives, Empirical study
IV Influences from archival / heritage discipline

This section of the bibliography includes resources from the archival and wider heritage discipline exploring concepts such as memory, identity, collective memory, power in relation with archives/heritage. These are resources that do not directly focus on community or migrant community archives or the community archives movement but in their critical engagement with archives are highly relevant to both. They are akin to additional readings for a lecture or a course. They are included with the aim to introduce the researcher to a wider range of critical perspectives and deeper thinking that the community archives movement and the awareness of the need to democratise archives stem from. They widen the understanding of and the thinking about challenges to and potential changes in archival practices and perspectives as well.
4.001


This article emphasises the heritage value of archives and libraries and is the first in this research to use the term collective memory and identify archives as shapers of collective memory of the posterity.

Archives, Local heritage, Collective memory

4.002


This essay traces the evolution of archives and archival practice over a century. It “analyzes “the history of archival thought since the publication of the Dutch Manual a century ago and suggests that from this inspiring past a new conceptual paradigm is emerging for the profession.” The focus is on theorists and theories that have “recognized and articulated radical changes” in all aspects of the archival discipline and the aim, to reconceptualise the traditional archival principles and practices so that the collective memory of nations and peoples is preserved “in the best manner”. As the title indicates the aim is future oriented, where understanding of the past is necessary and past is the prelude to these new beginnings.

Cook was a leading scholar and thinker in the archival discipline. His comprehensive and thought provoking overview of the developments in archival theory and practice is an essential resource for critical engagement with and understanding of any aspect of the archival discipline.

This is an important resource leading readers to key resources in the discipline.

History of archival theory and practice, Evolution of archival theory and practice

4.003


This article distinguishes between archiving as the actual act of creating an archive and archivalisation as "the conscious or unconscious choice (determined by social and cultural factors) to consider something worth archiving."

Ketelaar draws attention to the ways in which archivalisation leads to silencing voices or facts that do not fit in with the hegemonic political, social and cultural norms of the moment, thereby emphasising the importance of context to the interpretation of archival information and through it history.

Ketelaar is pointing out the constructed nature of archives, the power of the hegemonic norms as expressed in and through archives.

Archives, Power, Construct, Archivalisation, Hegemony, Norms, Context
4.004


This article explores the themes ‘Archives, records and power’ with the goal to dispel the prevalent myths that archives are “passive resources to be exploited for various historical and cultural purposes” and “neutral repositories of fact”, and archivists are impartial, neutral, objective and passive keepers of archives. It argues that “archives are established by the powerful to protect or enhance their position in society. Through archives, the past is controlled. Certain stories are privileged and others marginalized.” And archivists are “an integral part of this story-telling”, as they “continually reshape, reinterpret, and reinvent the archive” through practices of appraisal, selection, description, preservation and controlled access. Drawing attention to the immense power this gives the archives (and archivist) over memory, identity, and values of a society, Cook and Swartz emphasise that archives are “not passive storehouses of old stuff, but active sites where social power is negotiated, contested, confirmed” stressing need for debate and transparent accountability in the discipline.

As is evident, this call for denaturalisation of the power of the archives, so that it is recognised and contested, has great relevance to the community archives movement. Postmodern theory holds a very important place in the archival scholarship given its influence on contemporary critical thinking outside and within the archival discipline.

Another very important resource for understanding the evolution of the archival thought.

History of archival theory and practice, Evolution of archival theory and practice, Archives, Power, Identity, Postmodern theory

4.005


This article is an account of archives and archivists in the context of South Africa’s transition from apartheid to democracy. Harris argues that “[f]ar from being a simple reflection of reality, archives are constructed windows into personal and collective processes. They at once express and are instruments of prevailing relations of power.”

Harris’s argument is shaped around “three themes - race, power, and public records.” The point he makes is “the constructedness of memory and the dimension of power are most obvious in the extreme circumstances of oppression and rapid transition to democracy” but are “realities informing archives in all circumstances”. This is call for archivists to engage with these realities in the cause of justice.

The same awareness of the role archives play in the power dynamics of a nation and the belief that archivists can and should make a difference animate the community archives movement.

Archives, Power, Social justice, Construct, Oppression

4.006


This essay draws attention to the power that archives have to support both sides of a power relationship such as the one between the nation and the individual or a particular community. They are temples of power and have the potential to be a ‘record-prison’ where information is
emprisoned for use against citizens and to serve the hegemonic state in surveillance and control. Ketelaar points out that the archive’s power is (should be) the citizen’s power too, and can be used in the cause of social justice.

The idea that archives are expression of power and means of control but also a tool to fight social injustice is the central focus of archives for social justice movement and the community archives movement.

Archives, Power, Control, Surveillance, Social justice

4.007


Describing archives as constructed memory and a reflection of the power relationships in the society, this article explores the way they exercise power over collective memory. It traces the dual relationship archives have with power – power that the hegemonic norms (societal, cultural and professional) and those in power hold over archives as well as the power that the archives themselves wield through professional practices such as selection, acquisition and appraisal over records, over future collective memory through such constructed representation of the past, of society and its various communities and also over the interpretation of the past and understanding of history.

Jimerson observes that archivists concerned with the forgotten voices of marginalised groups need to be aware of their own subjectivity and in their position as mediators between records, repositories, creators and users, past and present need to move away from privileging the elite.

This article draws upon and links us to other resources for further insight into these concerns.

Archives, Power, Memory, Marginalised voices

4.008


This article presents the concept of place as provenance. Exploring the connections between archives, collective memory and place and memory, Bastian points out that notwithstanding the customary focus on the contents of an archives as the loci of memory, “memory may also attach to the physical spaces themselves. When this happens, these spaces become powerful self-referencing contexts for collective memory as well as overarching physical environments that bind the contents within them into a coherent narrative”.

Although Bastian is referring here to the ‘physical’ archive as a place, place is an important factor in community formation. It is often the strongest bond that brings a migrant community together. Recognising place as provenance is crucial in representing the multicultural society and history of one nation or locality as it offers visibility and recognition to the existence and participation of all the communities in that locality. Allowing for more than one places as provenance or more than one provenances will allow access on the basis of places that a community is linked to and also reflect the multiple ‘loci of memories’ of one community.

Provenance, Place, Migrant community archives
4.009


This article extends the traditional definition of the principle of provenance to encompass ethnic communities. Using as example Bastian’s study on the impact that loss of historical records had on a Caribbean community, Wurl emphasises that the traditional practice of recognising the record creating authority as provenance results in partial contextualisation of a record and takes the ownership and custody of that record away from the community.

Wurl argues that “to fully represent the experiences of immigrant peoples and their descendants in the archival record of a nation, we have to begin with this fundamental awareness that ethnicity is manifested in interpersonal and interdependent frameworks - frameworks that need to be understood and respected as embodiments of provenance”.

Wurl’s point has relevance to formal and community archival practices as it deals with archival description and access. It will facilitate ethnic communities’ access to their own records and making the community more visible within the formal archives. However, perhaps because he is speaking about documenting immigrant experience in formal archives, is that ethnicity is not something that only migrant communities have. Only when ethnicity is made integral to archival description and provenance in documenting all communities, including the majority community/communities, would it cease to be a permanent marker of minoritization, marginalisation and certain identity constructs leading to misrepresentation. This holds true of all such contextual markers that identify communities such as faith, sexuality, gender.

Provenance, Ethnicity, Traditional archival practices

4.010


These articles present and expand the concept of parallel provenance. Hurley observes that records/archival description, in order to accurately and precisely contextualise a record, must acknowledge both sides of the transaction that it is evidence of.

Although Hurley is referring to the formal archival practice, this is of significance to both formal and indigenous, minority, ethnic and migrant communities since it makes visible their equal participation in transactions and so in the history.

Provenance, Parallel provenance, Marginalised communities, Minority community archives

4.011


This article brings archival study and postcolonial perspective together to question “the dominant narratives of the colonizers records and to search for the voices of the colonized”. It presents an overview of postcolonial scholars’ critical engagement with archives as institutions that reflect, are shaped by and influence the colonial agenda(s) and silence or misrepresent the colonized. Bastian draws attention to the fact that colonial archives / archives of the colonizing country are often the portals to postcolonial societies and their histories and therefore wield a power over the image of and the perceptions about both.
Postcolonial theory has greatly influenced scholarship about minorities, marginalisation and resistance to it. The potential postcolonial perspective brings to archival studies, especially migrant and minority community archives is evident. Many of the points made here are of high relevance to minority/ethnic/migrant/ communities and their archives – the power archives hold over a community’s identity, history, present and future image, the potential of archives to reveal the hegemonic forces that shape them and to help discover the silenced voices of the invisible presences, the concept of the memory text as “a narrative combining history and myth, performance and reality – a non-textual way of remembering, recording and communicating culture, history and identity” bringing oral histories and cultural expressions (paintings, murals, performances, literature) within the archives as well as allowing visibility and voice to dominant and alternative political discourses within a community.

Last but not least, the very democratizing concept of community as provenance “that accommodates a wide variety of cultural touchstones, traces and texts in addition to traditional records, and re-examines the role of the record creator in relationship to the context and content of the record.”

Archives, Postcolonial perspective, Postcolonial societies, Colonial archives, Power, Diaspora – host society relationship

4.012


This article highlights the inadequacy of the still-widely-in-practice traditional concept of archival provenance - especially since the awareness of the plurality and complexity of history has grown and under the influence of postmodern and record continuum perspectives, archival theory is moving away from the idea of a single person or institute as provenance towards the view that “records are the product of a variety of factors acting across their entire history—from literal inscription through to archival actions with records, and even to readings of the records in archives by their users”.

Nesmith presents and expands on the concept of societal provenance or society as provenance emphasising that records and archives reflect and shape societal processes. He observes the significance of the societal dimension of records and archives in enhancing their usefulness to complex concerns such as intercultural relations. This is of relevance to indigenous, minority, ethnic and migrant community archives as societal provenance recognises them as co-creators and owners of records rather than passive ‘subjects’.

Provenance, Societal provenance, Archives and intercultural relations

4.013


This book explores connections between the concepts of identity as fundamental to politics and contestation on global scale and heritage as the means of articulating the sense of belonging that defines identity. The introduction draws attention to the selective and constructed nature of heritage as a resource that allows enlisting past in the service of the present and emphasises the need to ask whether and how heritage in all its forms reflects and represents the heterogeneity of the increasingly multicultural societies. It also points out that “the continuing privileging of national compromises and constrains effectiveness of other forms of presenting heritage and identity” at the same time as “the national scale embodied in the nation-state is compromised by transnational identities [and] is also undermined by regional, more local and even personal identities.” This critical
perspective has significance for the community archives movement in general and for the migrant community archives movement in particular.

Heritage, Identity, Representation

4.014


Encouraging archivists and users alike to recognise the power of the archives to shape memory and to thereby have an impact on the greater society, this book advocates for a socially accountable archival practice. Challenging the traditional archival discourse of neutral and impartial archival practice, Jimerson urges archivists towards active critical thinking about the actions they perform and a more socially responsible professional ethic.

The community archives movement and activism draw upon the same beliefs.

Archives, Power, Memory

4.015


This article explores the power dimension or the undercurrent of politics in the community-heritage relationship with emphasis on “motivations, issues of authority and the value of community-heritage engagement as a means of control.”

Crooke observes that community is a political and social construct and is powerful as a concept and a form of engagement that challenges the established practices in society and the heritage sector. For those working at the grass roots it is the idea of social action, an issue of exploring democracy, accountability and relations of power. Within the established heritage sector - a rethinking of expertise and authority in the interpretation and presentation of histories and cultures. As Crooke points out, as community becomes the focus of heritage practices and government policies, the question that needs to be asked is whether culture is being used as a means of social management or true inclusion. A question that community archives need to ask, especially when collaborating with mainstream institutions.

Community archives, Politics of heritage

4.016


This article draws attention to the concept of community the way it is used within heritage and political discourse – homogenously and harmoniously formed around shared affinities and imbued with positive potential. Waterton and Smith caution against appropriation and institutionalisation of a simplistic and positivistic notion of community in the popular discourse. They point out how the term is often used to signify a minoritised and marginalised other thereby according and naturalising a hegemonic normative status to the ‘White middle class’ (as if it is not a community) whether in heritage discourse, profession, practice or in what constitutes heritage (e.g. elitist cultural expressions and experiences). They warn formal heritage sector against the pitfall of a patronising attitude towards community heritage professionals and practices as well as imposition of the western authorised heritage discourse / expectations on them.
This resource is valuable for the cautionary note that it adds to the otherwise celebratory tone of the discussion about the potential of the community archives/heritage, especially considering the rarity of minority presences within the archival profession. It raises some valid points that community archives movement scholars need to ponder.

Community archives, Heritage and hegemonic discourse

4.017


This article explores the history and evolution of thinking on archival appraisal through three phases: “the curatorial guardian assigning appraisal responsibility to the creator or administrator of records; the historian-archivist making appraisal decisions indirectly through the filter of trends in academic History; and the archivist as expert directly assessing contexts of function and activity to discern appraisal value.” Cook posits that “[a] fourth phase is now beckoning: participatory appraisal with various communities of citizens so that silences long haunting our archives may at last be heard.”

Pointing to the highly selective nature of the process of appraisal of records for their long term value and selection for preservation, Cook emphasises that archivists’ decisions are subjective and shaped by the hegemonic norms of their times and profession as well as personal and professional preferences. Appraisal thus determines “which documents are destroyed, excluded from archives, their creators forgotten, effaced from memory” thereby constructing a certain history, collective memory and identity of the society and shaping its ideological, social and cultural contours.

Cook highlights the power and bias inherent to traditional archival practices but obscured by naturalised professional norms and resulting in marginalisation of certain voices. Community archives movement and migrant community archives are a direct response to such marginalisation, and the importance of Cook’s work is evident from the number of times it is cited in the work on community archives movement.

History of archival theory and practice, Evolution of archival theory and practice, Appraisal, Selection, Exclusion, Marginalisation

4.018


This essay argues that there is a shift in the archival paradigms or rather mindsets “from juridical legacy to cultural memory to societal engagement to community archiving” that corresponds with the shift in the focus of archival thinking “from evidence to memory to identity and community”.

Cook emphasises that “[c]ommunity archiving and digital realities offer possibilities for healing these disruptive and sometimes conflicting discourses” within archival profession.

As Cook shies away from the formal recognition and acknowledgement implicit in the word paradigm, he acknowledges that the change is nascent and not complete. He is, however, explicit that community archives movement and migrant community archives have the promise of “a democratizing of archives suitable for the social ethos, communication patterns, and community requirements of the digital age.”

In emphasising that the key concept of the new paradigm is community Cook is emphasising collaboration, cooperation, sharing of knowledge between the formal and the community archiving in order to achieve more inclusive, and representative archives.
This resource is as important as Cook’s other work for a comprehensive understanding of the archival discipline.

History of archival theory and practice, Evolution of archival theory and practice, Evidence, Memory, Identity, Community, Community archiving

4.019


This article highlights the role archives can play in a power relationship by pointing out that "[a]rchival description and recordkeeping metadata more broadly can be instrumental in perpetrating, as well as in providing for recovery from and reconciliation regarding historical injustices and silences in the historical record." Gilliland argues that "archivists have an ethical imperative to pursue descriptive mechanisms for representing both creator and co-creator worldviews and experiences, and supporting diverse user needs and concerns, within and relating to a given community of records."

Gilliland draws attention to the role archival description plays in reflecting and shaping interpretation of archival material and to its potential to perpetuate the dominant perspective and narrative by subordinating or excluding the narrative and perspective of the under-empowered community. She also points out the pitfalls that although the concept of co-creatorship challenges the traditional archival principle of provenance, it might project a false sense of agency on the part of those who were coerced or unwitting participants in the documented activity.

This is a point that all community archives need to ponder, especially if they wish to collaborate with an official funding or custodial archival institution.

Archival description, Provenance, Co-creator rights, Power, Discourse, Agency, Subordination, Hegemony

4.020


This article is an account of the development of the Los Angeles based Japanese American National Museum from a small community organisation to the largest collection of Japanese American historical artefacts and documents in the world. The aim is to examine "how a postmodern-influenced discourse of identity shapes and influences critical analysis of community archives, both internally and externally, and asks if the accompanying terms of engagement shift focus, to negative effect, from the more pressing needs and challenges of these institutions and projects."

In a cautionary voice, Paschild argues that "an overarching emphasis on questions of identity can distract community institutions from pragmatic evaluations of sustainable practice and can inadvertently mire archivists in a marginalizing rhetoric that blurs the issues at hand."

Though contrary to and contradicting the passionate and celebratory belief in the potential of community archives within the community archives movement, this is something that needs to be considered, by scholars and practitioners alike, in introspective and self-reflective honesty and in full awareness of the precarious nature of sustainability of community archives.

Community heritage, Community archives movement, Identity, sustainability, Archival practices
4.021


This dissertation explores how archival theory and research tackles the colonial roots and routes of archives, archivists and archival theories and practices. Gordon examines the work of contemporary archivists and theorists who critically interrogate the ways archives and archivists reproduce unequal social relations of power with the aim to observe “the tension within these critiques between developing more democratic, socially just and postcolonial archives and archival theory, and the Eurocentric intellectual frameworks that reiterate the divisions between West and non-West, modern societies and traditional communities, literate and oral, and between reason and feeling.”

Gordon’s thesis points out a potential pitfall for the thinkers engaging with the community archives movement given that the majority of them come from the mainstream archival world where minority presence is still rare.

Critical archival theory, Eurocentric frameworks, Hegemonic norms, Community archives movement.

4.022


This introduction explains that the special issue on archiving activism and activist archiving “examines the intersections between contemporary archival practice and activism in different national, political, socio-economic, technological, archival settings, and inspired by a variety of motivations and objectives. The practices examined in these articles go beyond advocacy for more active archival approaches to incorporate the spaces and endeavours where archivists seek to creatively document political and social movement activism as well as those projects which engage with archives and the archival process as part or in support of political, human right and social movement activism.”

The writers emphasise that activist archival approaches have an explicit alignment with political activism and social justice objectives and “embrace a view of archival practice as a form of social, cultural and political activism”. These approaches intersect with “other contemporary archival debates about more creative, collaborative and participatory recordkeeping practices, especially with regard to furthering human rights agendas” that share an understanding of the power of the democratization of knowledge creation and the potentialities of new technologies to enable that democratization.

Community archives movement and migrant community archives are part of these activist archival approaches.

Archival activism, Community archives movement

4.023


This article highlights that "[a] right to preserve one’s culture is recognised in the United Nations human rights treaty system." Iacovino argues that "[i]ndividual and collective cultural identity within government and private archives can be enabled through a participatory approach which acknowledges record subjects as record co-creators"
This is of relevance to the migrant/ minority/ indigenous/ communities as it accords them an equal place and visibility in the national narrative but also control over and access to their own cultural narrative through participation in the archival processes such as appraisal and selection.

Community archives, Participation, Right to preserve one’s own culture

4.024


This article traces the history of social justice as a concern in archival studies and identifies “development of community archives and inclusion of under-represented and marginalized sectors of society” as two of the five areas of archival scholarship where social justice prominently features in the discussion. Since migration policies and the host-diaspora relationship are expressions of the hierarchy and power of the host society, migrant communities are often responding to issues of racism, exclusionary policies, inequalities in treatment, status and opportunities.

‘Archives for social justice and archival activism’ are approaches to archival thinking and practice that have charted ‘a way of being in this world’ for archives and archivists. They have an important role within the migrant/minority/ community archives movement. This article leads to more resources and to the work of leading thinkers and scholars taking us beyond the community archives movement.

Human rights abuse, Social justice, Community archives
V Influences from other disciplines

This part of the bibliography includes theoretical perspectives from other disciplines that have relevance to and influence on critical archival thinking. Some of the seminal pieces here have become so integral to archival thinking that their presence here would perhaps be looked at with surprise. They are included here not to ‘other’ them within the archival discipline but in recognition of their contribution to and importance in the archival discipline no matter what their intellectual provenance or discipline of origin. They form an intellectual diaspora within this community of archival resources on community archives movement and migrant community archives. A few other resources are here because they very specifically talk about a particular theory or a perspective from a different discipline to argue their relevance or rather importance to archival thinking.

The list here is very small and indicative only. Many of the resources in the preceding sections present their authors’ readings, interpretations and representations of some of the resources in this part of the bibliography in order to construct an archival argument. Hence, the annotations, here, are kept minimal and consist mainly of a subjective and partial selection of teasers - direct quotes relevant to the themes of identity and memory construction, marginalisation, power dynamics inherent to processes of selection description representation, silence or absence of the marginalised from dominant discourses. This is done with the view to invite fresh readings and interpretations of these resources in conjunction with a particular resource from the archival discipline that is or should be here.

As archival discipline invites in more and more interdisciplinary perspectives, this list will continue to grow.

A seminal text that influenced theoretical thinking in various disciplines of study such as postmodern theory, deconstruction theory, postcolonial theory.

‘Evolutive’ historicity, as it was then constituted - and so profoundly that it is still self-evident for many today - is bound up with a mode of functioning of power. No doubt it is as if the ‘history-remembering’ of the chronicles, genealogies, exploits, reigns and deeds had long been linked to a modality of power. (pp. 160-161)

“The power in the hierarchized surveillance of the disciplines is not possessed as a thing, or transferred as a property; it functions like a piece of machinery. And, although it is true that its pyramidal organization gives it a ‘head’, it is the apparatus as a whole that produces ‘power’ and distributes individuals in this permanent and continuous field. This enables the disciplinary power to be both absolutely indiscreet, since it is everywhere and always alert, since by its very principle it leaves no zone of shade and constantly supervises the very individuals who are entrusted with the task of supervising; and absolutely ‘discreet’, for it functions permanently and largely in silence.” (p. 177)

Like surveillance and with it, normalization becomes one of the great instruments of power at the end of the classical age. For the marks that once indicated status, privilege and affiliation were increasingly replaced - or at least supplemented - by a whole range of degrees of normality indicating membership of a homogeneous social body but also playing a part in classification, hierarchization and the distribution of rank. In a sense, the power of normalization imposes homogeneity; but it individualizes by making it possible to measure gaps, to determine levels, to fix specialities and to render the differences useful by fitting them one to another. It is easy to understand how the power of the norm functions within a system of formal equality, since within a homogeneity that is the rule, the norm introduces, as a useful imperative and as a result of measurement, all the shading of individual differences. (p. 184)

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This is the founding text of postcolonial theory. Needless to say it has generated huge amount of discussion, debate, criticism.

“The Orient was almost a European invention, and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences.” (p.2)

Taking the late eighteenth century as a very roughly defined starting point Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient—dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient. (p. 4)

In any society not totalitarian, then, certain cultural forms predominate over others, just as certain ideas are more influential than others; the form of this cultural leadership is what Gramsci has identified as hegemony, (p.8)

In a sense Orientalism was a library or archive of information commonly and, in some of its aspects, unanimously held. What bound the archive together was a family of ideas and a unifying set of values proven in various ways to be effective. These ideas explained the behavior of Orientals; they supplied Orientals with a mentality, a genealogy, an atmosphere; most important, they allowed Europeans to deal with and even to see Orientals as a phenomenon possessing regular characteristics. (pp. 42-42)
Said is highlighting the ‘constructed’ nature of the image of the ‘orient’ as it exists and is perpetuated in the western discourse. The orient does not speak. It is silenced and (mis)represented.

Power, Hegemony, Construct, Discourse

5.003


This is a seminal essay in the discipline of postcolonial studies. Subalterns are the marginalised groups within the colonised society such as women, servants, indigenous people or those of the lower classes. Spivak asks whether those who are doubly oppressed under colonial rule and social injustices of the ‘native systems’ like women or lower classes can ever speak or be spoken for; and emphasises that the answer is no.

Spivak’s point here is that the one who feels and understands the need to speak out, and does so is already resisting the imposed silence and marginalisation and is on the path out of ‘subalterneity’.

The marginalisation and silence imposed by and in hegemonic narratives, whether colonial or from within the community, take away agency and shape the identity of a subaltern. Understanding this and resisting it by speaking up is to become an active agent of change. The connections between migrant community archives and Spivak’s argument are obvious.

Marginalisation, Subaltern, Silence, Hegemonic narratives, Resistance, Agency

5.004


This essay is a seminal text in the discipline of archival theory. Derrida is one of the leading thinkers in the discipline of deconstruction theory.

Let us not begin at the beginning, nor even at the archive. But rather at the word "archive"-and with the archive of so familiar a word. Arkhe we recall, names at once the commencement and the commandment. This name apparently coordinates two principles in one: the principle according to nature or history, there where things commence - physical, historical, or ontological principle - but also the principle according to the law, there where men and gods command, there where authority, social order are exercised, in this place from which order is given” (p. 9)

“ Archive is “not only the place for stocking and for conserving an archivable content of the past which would exist in any case, such as, without the archive, one still believes it was or will have been. No, the technical structure of the archiving archive also determines the structure of the archivable content even in its very coming into existence and in its relationship to the future. The archivization produces as much as it records the event.” (p. 17)

“what is no longer archived in the same way is no longer lived in the same way. Archivable meaning is also and in advance codetermined by the structure that archives” (p. 18)

Archive, Construct, Structure, Content, Power

5.005


This essay explores the nature of postmodernism and archival science, and suggest links between the two.
Process rather than product, becoming rather than being, dynamic rather than static, context rather than text, reflecting time and place rather than universal absolutes—these have become the postmodern watchwords for analyzing and understanding science, society, organizations, and business activity, among others. They should likewise become the watchwords for archival science in the new century, and thus the foundation for a new conceptual paradigm for the profession.

(abstract)

The postmodernist tone is one of ironical doubt, of trusting nothing at face value, of always looking behind the surface, of upsetting conventional wisdom. Postmodernists try to de-naturalize what society unquestionably assumes is natural, what it has for generations, perhaps centuries, accepted as normal, natural, rational, proven -- simply the way things are. The postmodernist takes such "natural" phenomenon -- whether patriarchy, capitalism, the Western canon of great literature, or archives -- and declares them to be "unnatural," or "cultural," or "constructed," or "man-made" (using "man" advisedly), and in need of deeper research and analysis (p.8)

Postmodern theory, Archives, Context, Social memory

5.006


This essay highlights the potential of postmodern concepts to enrich the archival thinking.

Postmodern concepts offer possibilities for enriching the practice of archives. Scholars in a wide range of disciplines are looking anew at authorship, media, representation, organizational behaviour, individual and collective memory, cultural institutions, history, and, most recently, at archives themselves as institutions, activities, and records. Postmodernism is, therefore, addressing almost everything an archivist thinks and touches, and, as a result, should command the attention of all archivists. While postmodernism is difficult to define and fraught with controversy, it would be irresponsible not to engage with ideas that are fundamentally affecting society, and society’s perception and use of the archive.  (abstract)

With its focus on issues concerning race, class, gender, post-colonialism, and various other marginalized groups (aboriginal people, gays and lesbians, subalterns, etc.), postmodernism is also criticized as being merely a left-wing political ideology dressed up to academic respectability. (p.16)

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Postmodern theory, Archives, Context, Social Constructs, Hegemony, Subaltern

5.007


Drawing upon insights from postcolonial theory, this book examines the impact of colonisation in colonising the indigenous ‘world view’ and knowledge production. It highlights the way hegemonic ‘colonial’ system marginalises, silences, classifies and controls the image and the identity of the indigenous communities by creating a discourse about them. Describing research as a tool of colonisation and emphasising the need for “reading the ‘colonial archive contrapuntally’, Tuhiiwai-Smith calls for ‘researching back’ to decolonise knowledge and research on indigenous communities, to create a counter-discourse, an indigenous discourse.

Quotes from the Introduction to the book –
The ways in which scientific research is implicated in the worst excesses of colonialism remains a powerful remembered history for many of the world’s colonized peoples. It is a history that still offends the deepest sense of our humanity. (p. 13)

It appalls us that the West can desire, extract and claim ownership of our ways of knowing, our imagery, the things we create and produce, and then simultaneously reject the people who created and developed those ideas and seek to deny them further opportunities to be creators of their own culture and own nations. (p.13)

“This collective memory of imperialism has been perpetuated through the ways in which knowledge about indigenous peoples was collected, classified and then represented in various ways back to the West, and then, through the eyes of the West, back to those who have been colonized. (p.13)

‘We are the most researched people in the world’ is a comment I have heard frequently from several different indigenous communities. The truth of such a comment is unimportant, what does need to be taken seriously is the sense of weight and unspoken cynicism about research that the message conveys. (p. 13)

Many researchers, academics and project workers may see the benefits of their particular research projects as serving a greater good ‘for mankind’, or serving a specific emancipatory goal for an oppressed community. But belief in the ideal that benefiting mankind is indeed a primary outcome of scientific research is as much a reflection of ideology as it is of academic training. It becomes so taken for granted that many researchers simply assume that they as individuals embody this ideal and are natural representatives of it when they work with other communities. Indigenous peoples across the world have other stories to tell which not only question the assumed nature of those ideals and the practices that they generate, but also serve to tell an alternative story: the history of Western research through the eyes of the colonized. These counter-stories are powerful forms of resistance which are repeated and shared across diverse indigenous communities. (p.14)

Whilst indigenous communities have quite valid fears about the further loss of intellectual and cultural knowledges, and have worked to gain international attention and protection through covenants on such matters, many indigenous communities continue to live within political and social conditions that perpetuate extreme levels of poverty, chronic ill health and poor educational opportunities. Their children may be removed forcibly from their care, ‘adopted’ or institutionalized. The adults may be as addicted to alcohol as their children are to glue, they may live in destructive relationships which are formed and shaped by their impoverished material conditions and structured by politically oppressive regimes. While they live like this they are constantly fed messages about their worthlessness, laziness, dependence and lack of ‘higher’ order human qualities. This applies as much to indigenous communities in First World nations as it does to indigenous communities in developing countries. Within these sorts of social realities, questions of imperialism and the effects of colonization may seem to be merely academic; sheer physical survival is far more pressing. The problem is that constant efforts by governments, states, societies and institutions to deny the historical formations of such conditions have simultaneously denied our claims to humanity, to having a history, and to all sense of hope. To acquiesce is to lose ourselves entirely and implicitly agree with all that has been said about us. To resist is to retrench in the margins, retrieve ‘what we were and remake ourselves’. The past, our stories local and global, the present, our communities, cultures, languages and social practices – all may be spaces of marginalization, but they have also become spaces of resistance and hope. (p.14)

Communities and indigenous activists have openly challenged the research community about such things as racist practices and attitudes, ethnocentric assumptions and exploitative research,
sounding warning bells that research can no longer be conducted with indigenous communities as if their views did not count or their lives did not matter. (p.18)

Discourse, Archive, Hegemony, Knowledge, Power, Indigenous knowledge, Decolonisation, Marginalisation, Resistance, Hope, Postcolonial theory

5.008


This article is an introduction to the special issue of the journal HAGAR dedicated to the theme of Memory and Periphery. In the preface to the issue, the editors Bendrihem, Kabalek and Ram introduce the issue as an anthology of texts that “advance a view of memory that pays attention to the experiences of the marginalized, exposes the power mechanisms behind hegemonic narratives concerning the past, and offers new ways to conceive of memory.”

Questions that guide the issue and Kabalek - What is the role of peripheral perspectives in a research discipline that seems to still focus on the alleged “center” of society and on collective, cultural or social memory as representing the elusive notion of a “majority”? Which aspects or objects of remembering can be considered “peripheral”? What constitutes their peripherality? - are as valid in thinking about memory and archives on the peripheries of the mainstream that are part of the community archive movement.

Various perspectives that Kabalek draws on - postcolonial and feminist conceptualization of margins as sites imbued with transgressive capacity to destabilize and transform the centres, recognition and appreciation of the memories of the marginalized being akin to social justice, silencing the voices of the marginalized as expression of power, the right of the marginalized to a place in the hegemonic narrative of history and the past as well as their right to forget, the margins increasingly taking the centre stage - resonate with the community archives movement.

Memory and Archives, Peripheral archives
VI Expressions of migrant experience

This section consists at present solely of a selective list of community archives. The list includes a few examples of migrant and other minority/ethnic community archives as many, though not all, of their concerns overlap – the most significant bond that creates solidarity is of the shared marginal/minority status. This list is not annotated but provides links to the websites of these archives, so that the community tells its own story to those who visit the websites.

Part B of this section will be developed, eventually, to include other expressions of migrant experiences that look at the process of migration, of settling down in the host country or at the relationship with the host society. This desire stems from the firm belief that such expressions - whether fiction or non-fiction and in any format whether print/oral/audio-visual or other – are an important part of the story and the history of the migrant community, and as such should have a place in the archives of migrant communities and their host nations.

Their absence from this bibliography at this time reflects their absence from the archives as well as archival thinking and discourse. As migrant community archives grow and archival discipline becomes more affect (rather than evidence) oriented - expressions of migrant experiences - films, documentaries, oral history videos/recordings, fiction (novels, short stories) and non-fiction narratives will find a place within these archives, and also within the discipline. Perhaps, the wait would not be too long as initiatives such as SAADA’s First Day Project, a project that invites migrants to tell the story of their first day in the host country, become popular and gather strength.
A.

Selective list of migrant/minority/ethnic community archives

SAADA – South Asian American Digital Archives, US
https://www.saada.org/

Making Britain, UK
http://www.open.ac.uk/researchprojects/makingbritain/

NetherlaNZ Foundation, NZ

The Dutch ConneXtion, NZ
http://www.dutchconnection.org.nz/

Temple Sinai, NZ

Lesbian and Gay Archives of New Zealand, NZ

Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, US
http://www.nypl.org/locations/schomburg

The Disability Archive, UK
http://disability-studies.leeds.ac.uk/library/
B.

Expressions of Migrant experiences

This title is inserted only as a pointer towards future. The only purpose is to foreshadow the nature of the resources to be added in this section of the bibliography.
PART 3
Conclusion
This conclusion is by no means a summing up or reiteration of all the arguments made in the first part or in the bibliography. I only intend to end with a few observations, random and highly subjective but, relevant to the subject of this bibliography, and a suggestion with regards to future additions to this bibliography.

This is not a complete annotated bibliography of the resources on Community archives, community archives movement and migrant community archives. As mentioned at the outset, it is open and admittedly full of gaps. The aim of the project is to invite collaboration so that those in the discipline, those interested in the subject make it their own; to add older and newer resources.

While working on this project, what I notice most is the passion and the faith in the potential of the archives to be socially relevant, bring about worthwhile changes, make a difference and leave a more inclusive society for the future. Most of the scholars here draw attention to the biases and the lacunae in the archival profession, discourse and practices calling on the archivists to be more active, inclusive and socially aware. As necessary and valid as these observations and critiques are, it must be acknowledged that the same profession, discourses, practices have managed to produce these thinkers and they are shaping the future of the profession and of the community and migrant community archives movement. And for the discipline that is able to do this - there is of course hope and future!

Some of the resources here speak more to community heritage rather than community archives. They are included nevertheless from a firm belief in the social and cultural heritage value of archives in general and migrant and minority community archives in particular. In a recent tweet, Andrew Flinn (2016) hoped for synergy between critical heritage movement and Archives. This project might be a step in that direction.

In the course of the research for this bibliography, I have become highly aware of the omnipresence of migration and the diversity in the manner of formation of diasporas / migrant communities. I hope the bibliography manages to convey this diversity to the scholars engaging with it whether as users, service providers or active participants. The migrant community archives movement is a call for recognition and open acceptance of difference on equal terms. It would not do for us, as its practitioners and thinkers, to impose a hegemonic homogenous concept of migrancy, of what migrant community archives are and what they do / should do or how they should engage with the mainstream/ formal/professional archival and heritage institutions and practitioners.

As this bibliography is partial, indicative and open to addition, any reader is free to add more resources to any section of the bibliography and more information/ explanation/ interpretation to any of the resources. I would like to express two expectations before I send this bibliography out in the field – The first that new information should be added without erasing or editing existing information. This would allow the bibliography to be a living archive of resources and plural readings of these resources, valuing all voices in this community without marginalising, silencing or erasing any. The second that the community should be kept informed of the new additions or changes.
PART 4
Index
### Index - Keywords & Entries

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