

Introduction

Something Queer at the Archive

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One of Amy's favorite books as a young child was titled *Something Queer at the Ballpark*. It was part of a series of books written by Elizabeth Levy about a young sleuth named Jill, her best friend Gwen, and her dog Fletcher, who investigated mysteries in different locations. Something was queer at the ballpark as well as the library, circus, cafeteria, and of course, outer space. Jill was adept at entering these spaces and determining what was amiss and dislocated. And the solution of the mystery was always unexpected, operating outside the typical narrative of children's mystery books. Amy thought of Levy's book series last summer while conducting research at two different archives in the downtown San Antonio area for another book project on the history of gay men's participation in a San Antonio festival event called Cornyation, a mock debutante pageant dating back to the 1950s.

One morning, I conducted research at the Daughters of the Republic of Texas library on the site of the Alamo.¹ When I entered the library, the librarians questioned why I was there—apparently many tourists haphazardly wander into the library inconveniently sandwiched between the Alamo and its gift shop. I was nervous discussing my research project with the archivists, and I found myself convincing them that they

held materials that would inform my work. This nervousness stemmed from a strange sense of dislocation researching gay history at a site that garners such patriotic fervor from my fellow Texans. I wondered if I could excavate queer history from boxes containing debutante pageant programs and newspaper clippings from the 1950s. I searched for clues in these programs and clippings, reading between the lines and looking for places of dislocation and mystery.

In the afternoon, I walked over to the Happy Foundation, a community archive in the back room of a local gay bar, which is run by Gene Elder, an older gay artist who opens the room a few afternoons a week for me. At times I have had to work closely with him to ensure the room will be open when I arrive, often picking him up from his house or the mechanic on the way to the bar. We do not have your typical archivist-researcher relationship, and I often have to convince him that the materials he holds are relevant to my project. The difference between the two archival spaces is jarring. The Happy Foundation is a room stacked to the ceiling with boxes, files, books, ephemera, and uncataloged materials. It smells musty. We have to clear off miscellaneous papers and books from a desk to make room to do research. I often feel hesitation to move materials out of the way, even if they are old magazines stacked on the floor or Barbie dolls strewn across the research desk, because the materials in this archive feel like Elder's personal possessions. Yet he also shares. I sit down to read through old LGBT community newspapers and Elder reminds me that I am welcome to take home any duplicate newspapers. I feel guilty sliding a few newspapers into my bag, relieved that I am rescuing them from their musty home but feeling defiant of traditional archive rules. I feel a strange sense of dislocation here as well, a redefining of the relationship between myself and the archive in which the rules of the archive have to be personally negotiated. I was acutely aware of the fragility of holdings in both archives, the way lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) history in San Antonio relied on archivists who saved things and on intrepid researchers who could dig deep into unexpected materials to find a queer past. At the end of the day, something did indeed seem queer at the archives.

This volume analyzes this queer experience as it explores the complexities of archival research on LGBT history. Archival research that utilizes special collections, manuscripts, personal papers, organizational files, and other ephemera is a critical part of constructing LGBT history. And yet there is something undeniably queer about LGBT archival research. We interrogate the way that this archival research evokes older meanings of the word “queer,” the way experiences in the archives can be odd and perplexing, can spoil or ruin an existing understanding of history, and can involve deviations from standard archival protocols. The experience of researchers in archives is at the center of this volume, including both affective and intellectual challenges to LGBT archival research in a variety of settings. This volume also uses more contemporary understandings of the word “queer” as it explores the way archival research involves serendipity, creativity, and an examination of items beyond the scope of the traditional archive. This creativity is often a response to a long history of LGBT life being “hidden from history,” obscured within existing sources, or discarded entirely. Indeed, in the attempts of historians to “document the history of homosexual repression and resistance,” many scholars “have recovered a history suppressed almost as rigorously as gay people themselves.”² Thus, LGBT archival research becomes queer when it becomes part of a process of recovery and justice for a queer past and present—shifting the presence of LGBT lives and histories within archival scholarship from margin to center. The excavation of LGBT history is critical for preserving culture, as “culture requires memory. Memory requires an archive.”³ The archive then becomes a place of recovery, a recuperative project of moving from silence to productive, transformative discourse.

The Closet and the Archive

Scholars have constructed the closet as a space of silence, of hiding or obscuring, whereas there is a proliferation of discourse and visibility in the archive.⁴ It is narrowly conceived to think of going from the silence of the closet to the discursively promiscuous archive. The closet and the archive are both queer spaces; they contain, organize, and render (il)legible certain aspects of LGBT life. Inside both the closet and the archive are systems of logical organization and also systems of secret keeping. They both hold things. They both also show things. They spill their secrets forth. Coming out of the closet, that metaphor so central to public disclosure of a previously held secret, locates and constitutes sexual and

gender identities not only within the speech act itself, but as Eve Sedgwick reminds us, within a multifaceted web of privileged, circulated knowings. The archive, much like the closet, exposes various levels of publicness and privateness—recognition, awareness, refusal, impulse, disclosure, framing, silence, cultural intelligibility—each mediated and determined through subjective insider/outsider ways of knowing. These relationships strike a delicate balance between reachability and remoteness, between precariousness and pleasure.

The relationship between the closet and the archive is undoubtedly a historical one. Queer strategies of recognition have changed dramatically since the early days of homophile activism. Historical research on pre-Stonewall gay and lesbian life in the United States suggests that the closet was not a meaningful symbol deployed by early queers.⁵ In his analysis of letters to the editor of *ONE Magazine* by gay men and lesbians across the country in the 1950s and 1960s, historian Craig Loftin argues that the mask was a more legible way of understanding early gay and lesbian life in the public sphere.⁶ What appears as silence and closeting may have been a proliferation of signs, symbols, and strategic display of queer identities.⁷ Yet absence and the closet have been marked as a kind of gay and lesbian legibility. Benjamin Kahan argues that one of the problematic practices of queer studies is that it reads “‘absence’ (preterition, silence, the closet, the love that dare not speak its name, the ‘impossibility’ of lesbian sex) as ‘evidence’ of same-sex eroticism,” which can obscure alternative sexual formations.⁸ Stonewall evidenced a watershed turning point in how to do the sexual politics of visibility and self-disclosure. Multiple ways of belonging developed as geographies surrounding the regional and national, the public and private, and insider/outsider emerged and became central to living a public self.

These differences in the visibility and disclosure of sexuality complicate the ways in which archives gather, group, and display materials relating to sexualities. But they also create a rather tricky paradox for scholars negotiating and interpreting LGBT presence or absence: that is, reading queer sexualities and identities in many places at once while simultaneously nowhere at all. The elusively unfixed nature of the closet and cultural intelligibility (or lack of it) of queer lives lends itself to what Derrida terms *hypertopicality*.⁹ The hypertopical posits both a sense of placelessness and an aura of the overplaced. It aptly describes the experience of sexuality studies researchers buried in archival spaces. These archival spaces are peculiar, betwixt and between liminal edges, evidencing both the “queer time” and “queer space” described by Jack Halberstam.¹⁰

This queer time and space operates against logics of heterosexuality and reproduction while exhibiting alternative relations to normative time and space. The peculiarity of archival time is inseparable from that of archival space; queer lives, often marked by their ephemeral, nonlinear, and nonsequential nature, are contained in archival spaces that are equally textured and complex.¹¹

The assumption in the contrast between the archive and the closet is that the archive creates some order and legibility to what was previously hidden and illegible. Archives supposedly create legibility, a tidy organization of records that correspond to the organization of sources into neat boxes and files. This meticulous organization is, however, the product of subjective determinations made by curators, historians, and archivists at different moments and against imprecise standards—emotion-laden struggles and challenges that extend to the researchers handling those materials. When materials are placed in a queer archive, they are marked as queer in some way. Yet the actual narratives and ephemera and archival documents may not render queer lives any more legible, especially, perhaps, for LGBT persons living, working, and loving in times without social movements to provide visible community and group formations. Christopher Nealon discusses this experience of studying dreams of collectivities during this time period:

Later, working in the human sexuality library at Cornell, I became interested in the ways that lesbian and gay writers who lived before a time of a social movement were dreaming of collectivities, and forms of participation in History-with-a-capital-H, that they might never, themselves, experience. I was struck by the strangeness of witnessing that dreamed-of collectivity realized long after the fact, in the archive: a history of mutually isolated individuals, dreaming similar dreams, arrayed before me in the aftermath of collective struggles and new identifies.

This two-part sense of queer sodality—fluid in the present, expectant in the past—led me to write about “historical emotion.” That phrase seemed to name both those earlier dreams of belonging to “History” and the feeling a latter-day queer subject might have reading the archive of those dreams.¹²

Out of the Closet, Into the Archives engages with the experience of this “latter-day queer subject” as he or she reads the archive of the queer past.

The historical emotion of the past and the present is intertwined in the body of the scholar reading and handling documents from the queer past. We propose new forms of relationality between the researcher and documents that account for the way rubrics of time are inherently enmeshed in the physical materialism of archival documents and ephemera. This historical analysis is intimate and foreign or in keeping “along the seam of its becoming-historical, which is a way to keep it in touch with that which eludes it.”¹³

Archival Conditions

In his germinal work on the history of gay life in prewar New York City, George Chauncey remarks that “the methodological problems facing the historian of homosexuality appear, at first glance, to be unusually daunting.”¹⁴ For Chauncey, the dispersion of sources throughout the city and the lack of a guide to finding references to gay lives in the sources was the most daunting part of this archival research. In the archives, homosexuality was hidden, obscured, and not cataloged. Allan Bérubé began his project on gay and lesbian lives during World War II with letters that his neighbor retrieved from a dumpster. Rather than a typical visit to the archive, Bérubé’s research methodology entailed unearthing sources and eventually creating an archive. Like many other scholars, he had to be an intrepid and creative historian, retrieving materials from the dustbin of history.¹⁵ Even with suitable archives, LGBT history includes omissions and erasures. For example, in her work on transgender history, Susan Stryker criticizes the erasure of events such as the Compton’s Cafeteria riots, a predecessor to the Stonewall Riot, as rendering transgender history invisible. Stryker notes that the history of the Compton’s Cafeteria riots has instead been researched, written, and published outside of formal academic channels.¹⁶

This volume situates this queer archival experience within the *institution* of the archive. The humanities and social sciences have seen an influx of critical scholarship reconsidering the archive; analytically, this turn to the archive has shifted from viewing the “archive-as-source” to the “archive-as-subject.”¹⁷ This “source” archive is assumed to be conventional in nature and purpose, one maintained and organized by government, academic, or other major institutional forces. With the publication of works such as Jacques Derrida’s *Archive Fever* and scholarship on the colonial archive, scholars have analyzed the role of this archive in main-

taining state power.¹⁸ Scholars have reframed archives as a site of the production of knowledge itself and control over the archive as critical in the maintenance of power. Derrida argues that “there is no political power without control of the archive, if not memory. Effective democratization can always be measured by this essential criterion: the participation in and the access to the archive, its constitution, and its interpretation.”¹⁹ Archival exclusions are reframed as intentional, pervasive reproductions of social order. In this case, the erasure of LGBT lives may reproduce the social order of heteronormativity. Conversely, the inclusion of LGBT historical documents in conventional archives has relied on the premise that queer lives ought to be worth preserving. It is only recently that LGBT history has become a legitimate subject of knowledge and that the political power of LGBT people has extended to participation in and access to the archive. With this, there has been a corresponding growth in collections, including the Cornell University Human Sexuality Collection and the National Transgender Library and Collections at the University of Michigan, along with women’s history collections that include rich information on lesbian history, such as the Sallie Bingham Collection at Duke University. These archives have served as important locations for LGBT historical research and frequently one of the few sources of funding for scholars studying LGBT history. For example, the inspiration for this volume emerged out of a group of scholars who received the Phil Zwickler Memorial Research Grant to conduct archival research at the Cornell University Human Sexuality Collection. This institutional support is critical for the growth of LGBT historical scholarship.

Along with challenging and expanding the existing conventional archives, LGBT history has queered the archive by creating counterarchives or community-based archives that operate outside of government or academic institutions.²⁰ This volume includes the experience of scholars conducting research in both conventional and counterarchives in the English-speaking world. Counterarchives such as the Lesbian Herstory Archives, the June Mazer Lesbian Archives, the Pop-Up Museum of Queer History, and the GLBT Historical Society have emerged out of the growth of LGBT academics and the movement, but also in response to the exclusion of LGBT history from conventional archives and the marginalization of early LGBT historians. For example, many early historians, such as Gayle Rubin, Allen Bérubé, Susan Stryker, and Jonathan Ned Katz, spent part of their academic career working outside of regular institutional structures or employed by counterarchives. However, these counterarchives are not just smaller replicas of their conventional forefathers. Many

scholars have analyzed the ways that Lesbian Herstory Archives create a counterarchive through their use of volunteers and space, and through the expansiveness of the collection. Although all archival research can be emotional, counterarchives may be particularly emotional.²¹ According to queer studies scholar Ann Cvetkovich, these counterarchives “address the traumatic loss of history that has accompanied sexual life and the formation of sexual publics, and they assert the role of memory and affect in compensating for institutional neglect.”²² This “institutional neglect” of LGBT history has made counterarchives play an important role in countering that neglect.

Even with institutional support from conventional and counterarchives, for multiple reasons LGBT lives do not always fit neatly into archival spaces. Using the concept of “quare lives” from black queer studies, this volume examines that which does not fit into the traditional LGBT archives, either through archival or ideological erasure.²³ Most of the chapters in this volume address the experience of researchers studying lesbian, transgender, or minority history. These histories are frequently not captured well by traditional archival practices. Archives mainly contain paper documents and thus disproportionately collect that which is recorded. If the “love that dare not speak its name” also did not write it down, store it somewhere, and bequeath it to an archive, those LGBT lives are often not preserved. Archives often privilege the experiences of white, middle-class or upper-class gay men, and visible queer life that is organized into activism, bars, or social clubs. Thus, LGBT archives often underrepresent the lives of nonwhite and economically marginalized LGBT individuals. For example, there are ongoing challenges in the preservation of materials related to black lesbian lives. Rochella Thorpe’s path-breaking work on African-American lesbian nightlife in Detroit from 1940 to 1975 illustrates the complexities of studying black lesbian history and suggests that “one reason historians of lesbians have not been successful locating lesbians of color might be that they have assumed bars have been the center (both theoretical and actual) of lesbian communities.”²⁴ Thorpe had to engage in oral histories to uncover a world of black lesbian house parties and other forms of nightlife. Some parts of LGBT history also suffer from ideological exclusion, as “it would be a mistake ever to think that there could be an archive without a *politics* of the archive.”²⁵

As Stryker suggests, there are normative forces at work in archives and the making of LGBT history, downplaying the history of some things over others. Stryker argues that “multiple normativizing frames of refer-

ence” obscured the Compton’s Cafeteria riot, including “the confluence of class, race, and gender considerations, as well as the homonormative gaze that did not construct transgender subjects, action, embodiments, or intentions as the objects of its desire.”²⁶ Similarly in *If Memory Serves: Gay Men, AIDS, and the Promise of the Queer Past*, scholars Christopher Castiglia and Christopher Reed argue that AIDS created a form of gay amnesia, “wiping out memories not only of everything that came before but of the remarkably vibrant and imaginative ways that gay communities responded to the catastrophe of illness and death and sought to memorialize our losses.”²⁷

Chapters in this volume include an analysis of LGBT experiences that are often excluded ideologically from archival research, such as the erotic lives of gay men. Thus, what makes LGBT archival research queer is rendering visible that which is obscured from normalizing frames of reference. However, some marginalizations are not addressed by this volume, because it focuses on archival research in the English-speaking world with a disproportionate focus on the United States. Linguistic and cultural differences in the construction of the archive and postcolonial power dynamics are important archival marginalizations that are beyond the scope of this volume.

However, in other ways this volume broadly explores the archival experience. We assert that LGBT archival research is queer because it defies existing binaries of archivist and historian, queer and straight, rationality and emotions, intellect and embodiment. This volume intentionally uses a broad concept of the researcher and the archive. The researcher is not a formally trained historian, but rather a scholar engaged in a multidisciplinary conversation about how scholarship uses archives in fields such as history, English, women and gender studies, American studies, and sociology. In counterarchives, these researchers often serve as archivists themselves or are involved in creating new archives, such as the Transgender Archives at the University of Victoria. Additionally, the archive does not end at the university doors but rather extends to the emotional and ephemeral parts of LGBT lives. The archival experience is not merely intellectual but also emotional, erotic, and embodied.

What makes LGBT archival research queer is the expansiveness of the concept of the archive. From the expansive definition of the archive used by Michel Foucault to the analysis of the “archive of happiness” or “archive of emotion and trauma” by scholars such as Jack Halberstam, Ann Cvetkovich, and Sara Ahmed, the archive has been extended into a broader discursive formation uncontained within institutional mate-

rial boundaries in order to capture the complexities of LGBT lives.²⁸ For example, Halberstam describes the archive of materials on the murder of Brandon Teena as “simultaneously a resource, a productive narrative, a set of representations, a history, a memorial, and a time capsule.”²⁹ This expansive understanding of the archive responds to the ephemeral nature of queer life itself. According to José Estaban Muñoz, “Instead of being clearly available as visible evidence, queerness instead has existed as innuendo, gossip, fleeting moments, and performances that are meant to be interacted with by those within its epistemological sphere—while evaporating at the touch of those who would eliminate queer possibility.”³⁰ Because this queerness is more ephemeral, it is not always captured on the written page. LGBT archival researchers often work with “objects that do not fit” into conventional archival findings. From porn videos and vibrators to gardens and nude photographs, this volume examines the way LGBT researchers expand the notion of the archive to capture the fullness of LGBT lives.

This collection also challenges the privileging of the historian in archival research. Several of the authors in this volume are in the early stages of their careers or are pursuing alternative scholarly tracks; their vantage point allows us to see how amateur archival research may involve different time schedules and resources and be driven by personal investment. It is in this spirit that we embrace the seriousness of the amateur, whether imagined through a work identity (alternative academia, the archivist as researcher, the dissertation project) or through the subject position (advanced graduate students or the emergent, junior scholar). Carolyn Dinshaw traces a powerfully queer amateur potentiality in *How Soon Is Now? Medieval Texts, Amateur Readers, and the Queerness of Time*, stating, “amateurs—those fans and lovers laboring in the off-hours—take their own sweet time, and operating outside of regimes of detachment governed by uniform, measured temporality, these uses of time are queer. In this sense, the act of taking one’s own sweet time asserts a queer force. *Queer, amateur*: these are mutually reinforcing terms.”³¹ Thinking from the perspective of another temporal period begs us all to be amateurs as we clearly (queerly) disengage with our everyday scholarly practices—those pockets of time that are routinely structured by the rhythm of academic demands around service and teaching. That tactile, bodily experience of being in the archive—phantasmally dramatized by the archive’s very materiality in structure and physicality in space—begs for queer touches across time, where materials become imminent (and perhaps immanent) in a way that they are ordinarily not. There’s an associative logic to time

spent in the archive—much like the ordering and organization of the archive itself.

We share Dinshaw's call to remember the etymology of the word *amateur*: love and labors of love, or “positions of affect and attachment . . . desires to build a new world.”³² At the heart of this volume lies a desire to engage with the complexities of researchers' experiences in the archive—taking readers into the experience of how it feels to do queer archival research and queer research in the archive. LGBT archival experience often extends beyond an intellectual exercise, and this volume analyzes how archival research is embodied and internalized. In *Bodies of Evidence: The Practice of Queer Oral History*, editors Horacio Ramírez and Nan Boyd argue that the body is central to queer oral history practice and that bodies are part of the production of queer historical knowledge.³³ We extend their argument to the archive, arguing that the archive itself is an embodied experience for researchers. In this volume some scholars describe their experience of doing research as “living with ghosts”³⁴ or being haunted by the queer past. Other scholars experience the archive as passionate and full of thrilling discovery, particularly when they have that “pay-dirt moment” of excavating a critical source. For some, the archival experience is one of passion, intimacy, or lust.

This volume challenges scholars to engage with their affective experience of being in the archive: how time moves differently within the archive, how the space and materiality of the archive require a deeply personal, embodied research. Engaging in archival research offers a profoundly queer temporal experience—and temporary existence. Research within the archive necessitates a dissociative shift in being and thought: scholars become lost in the present, enveloped into the past. A temporal paradox is revealed: any attempt to reconstruct a particular moment in time freezes that moment in place, creating a warped, queer sense of timelessness. This is why we often feel a disturbing vertigo upon exiting the archive—a separation in our being and thinking with the past. Part of this vertigo is the experience of handling material artifacts that carry with them an aggregate, temporal stickiness that accrues through each reading and interpretation: then, now, and all the intervening, cataloging years.

Out of the Closet, Into the Archives is divided into four sections that address pressing issues in LGBT archival research. Throughout the volume, scholars engage with questions of embodiment, affect, and the queer nature of LGBT archival research. The first section focuses on the materiality of the archive, the institutional forces, material conditions, and materials of the archive that shape researchers' experiences. The sec-

ond section uses a more expansive, queer understanding of the archive to analyze nontextual materials. From the garden to the bedroom, the nontextual archive is a nonnormative one indeed. The third section interrogates the way that marginalized queer lives are included in the archives and how to do justice to archival representations of racial, ethnic, and gender marginalizations in the archive. The final section focuses on autobiography, agency, and the ways LGBT lives are cataloged in the archive.

Archival Materiality

It is impossible to consider archives without thinking about their material conditions, and this volume reflects on the issue of archival space, staffing, and materials. From the experience of studying gay pornographic videos in the Cornell University Human Sexuality Collection to the moment of discovering a vibrator in the Minnie Bruce Pratt papers at Duke University, the materials of the archive affect the experience of the researcher. This is a pressing and important issue because of the dramatic differences in material conditions in LGBT historical research.

From the Library of Congress to the haphazard back room of a local gay bar, archival research occupies a physical space. And this space, whether it be inviting or foreboding, is central to the experience of researchers studying LGBT history. In this section, chapters by Agatha Beins and Craig Loftin consider the experience of working in counterarchives and the space that the counterarchive creates for researchers. In chapter 1, Beins compares the counterarchives of the Lesbian Herstory Archives with conventional archives such as the Sophia Smith Collection at Smith College and the Schlesinger Library at the Radcliffe Institute. In chapter 2, Loftin describes his experience archiving and researching letters to *ONE Magazine* in the ONE Institute Archives, and also the blurry boundary between historian and archivist. Both authors argue that these counterarchives are formed differently than conventional archives. Beins analyzes how the Lesbian Herstory Archives, as a counterarchive established by the lesbian community, has developed as an intentionally domestic and lesbian space run by volunteer labor and guided by a lesbian feminist ethic of inclusivity and accessibility. This chapter critically analyzes how archive space affects the researcher's experience, reinforces boundaries, and defines what counts as an archival object. This space created a different affective experience for the researcher. Although the ONE Archives and other counterarchives are increasingly professional-

ized, for Loftin part of his research experience was volunteering to archive and catalog materials as the ONE Archives were being assembled in a University of Southern California donated building. The nature of these counterarchives blurred the boundary between historian and archivist. As a volunteer, Loftin had his own key and wide permission to explore and catalog materials that he would then use for his own research. Both Beins and Loftin analyze how the process of archival discovery is embedded within the space of the archive itself.

But this process of discovery is also about the papers themselves and the materials in the archives. So often LGBT historical research is about the meaning of the presence or absence of papers. Central to LGBT archival research has been the meanings attributed to the destroyed letter, the speculation on omitted diaries, and the archival discovery of hidden evidence. For Loftin, discovering yellowed pages of handwritten letters from gay men and lesbians was about excavating voices of everyday gay men and lesbians in the 1950s, a counterhistory that contradicted police reports, newspaper stories, and psychological studies. The yellowed pages themselves became meaningful, a reflection of hope, passion, and excitement. In chapter 3, Maryanne Dever argues for a renewed emphasis on the material properties of documents, calling for a nuanced sensitivity to the design and expressive possibilities of paper, and asking readers to look beyond words on a page. Dever examines the correspondence from Greta Garbo to Mercedes de Acosta at the Rosenbach Museum and Library and the papers of Australian writer Eve Langley at the Mitchell Library, the State Library of New South Wales. She describes the intimacy and lure of paper in the archive, both the lack of explicit textual evidence for a relationship between Greta Garbo and Mercedes de Acosta and the heap of text in the papers of Langley. Dever argues that the archive gives weight to the declaration, the written text, such that scholars have been searching for the textual outpouring of passion that is assumed to accompany genuine sexual passion between Acosta and Garbo, whereas Langley presents the issue of too much paper—her papers are unwieldy, excessive, and incoherent. Dever proposes a new methodology for archival research that accounts for paper and the material state of archived sources.

Beyond the Text

Like Dever's focus on paper materials, this section is attentive to a different kind of materiality. This section is centrally concerned with nontext

materials in queer archives and archives with LGBT collections. Posters. Artwork. Objects. Oral history tapes. Videos. Parade, election, and home movie films. Ephemera in archives provide another point of view from which to historicize sexuality studies research, and they constitute a significant portion of archival holdings in LGBT collections. These materials can be difficult to contain in archival spaces; video and animate materials, such as plants, may present preservation difficulties.³⁵ The section is critical for understanding the queer nature of LGBT historical research, as nontextual evidence provides a different window into the lives of LGBT people.

Chapters in this section demonstrate the expansive breadth of materials available to researchers uncovering the LGBT past and how these materials shape archival research. In chapter 4, Greg Youmans offers research that is attentive to the lives of objects, by analyzing the gardens of Elsa Gidlow as a way of understanding her autobiography. In chapter 5, Whitney Strub examines the Gay Male Pornographic Video Collection at Cornell University's Human Sexuality Collection, arguing that this enormous, monumental, forgotten collection constitutes a valuable window into the private construction and organization of desire, as mediated by available technology, during some of the bleakest years of modern gay history. In chapter 6, Julie Enszer takes up unconventional objects from lesbian-feminist archives to tell different stories, stories that invite the reader to reimagine lesbian-feminism as a vital and vibrant theory and practice that can inform our lives today.

In all three of these chapters, the unconventional objects lead to a more embodied and affective LGBT history. Youmans brings a passion to his study of Gidlow, and he models how to study the ephemeral nature of queer life through a creative approach to LGBT archives, which in turn creates a new mode of doing history. By focusing on that which is poorly contained within the archive—plants and gardens—Youmans proposes a more embodied LGBT history that allows him to understand the complexities of Gidlow's life. The continuing existence of Gidlow's plants and gardens also pulls Gidlow's past into the present, allowing Youmans to analyze the way she has influenced a broader community. For Strub, the gay male archivist who organized and dubbed gay pornography at the height of the HIV/AIDS crisis provides a window into erotic meaning during a critical time in LGBT history. The erotics of the archive are central to Strub's analysis of how pornography is an important but difficult-to-preserve medium through which to understand gay life. Enszer analyzes a set of photographs, the structure of four archives from lesbian-feminist publishers, and a vibrator. Like Youmans, Enszer

documents a personal, affective journey, an engagement of the past in the present as a way of exploring lesbian-feminist history.

Archival Marginalizations

Enszler's engagement with lesbian-feminist history includes an analysis of the way that lesbian-feminist history has been destroyed, marginalized, and omitted from archives. Similarly, this section details the way marginalized queer subjectivities are included in LGBT archives, specifically the marginalization of black, Chicano, and trans* lives.

E. Patrick Johnson theorizes about "quare" lives, using the signification of his grandmother's pronunciation of the word queer as "quare" to theorize race at the heart of queer studies but also to signify the culture-specific positionality and specificity absent from an often white-dominated definition of queerness.³⁶ This volume is an important intervention in a field that is largely preoccupied with the history of white gay men, and the contributions of this section specifically draw attention to the complexities of studying "quare" history in both conventional and counterarchives. The first two chapters of this section engage with the way Chicano and black gay and bisexual lives have been included in the archive. In chapter 7, Robb Hernández analyzes oral history transcripts of Chicana and Chicano artists compiled by the Smithsonian Archives of American Art to excavate queerness from artist storytelling narratives. He analyzes breaks in the sexual neutrality of the Chicano art archive embedded within an ostensibly heterosexual archive by examining three discursive formations—queer points of encounter, sexual disclosures, and AIDS cultural memory. He uses an important metaphor in Chicano studies "phantom culture," in which Chicanos and Chicanas are ephemeral and unrecognized by Eurocentric cultural elites, to talk about AIDS cultural memory. In chapter 8, Rebecca Fullan provides a personal account of her relationship with the biography of Essex Hemphill, a black gay poet and activist. As she charts similarities between her life and that of Hemphill through her examination of the Essex Hemphill/Wayson Jones Collection at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Fullan explores the way Hemphill is remembered at his funeral and the process by which his materials were archived. Both chapters engage with erasures and elisions of queer lives in the archive but also with the ephemeral traces of queerness in "quare" archival representations specifically. Both chapters situate these findings within the larger relationship between minority groups and the archive.

Susan Stryker has documented the process by which trans* histories have been marginalized within queer scholarship and advocacy in their own, distinct ways, as the relationship between transgender and queer studies is, at best, a tenuous one. As David Valentine reminds us, “homosexuality and transgenderism can be read against and with one another in ways that subvert the easy division between them, historically, cross-culturally, or in the contemporary United States.”³⁷ Trans* histories are frequently co-opted, ignored, or misunderstood within queer archives: “the decision about whether a book or article can be understood to be a part of this field is not only a decision on the part of an author, bookseller, or library cataloger. It is also a social practice of figuring out the ‘transness’ of a particular text by teachers, scholars, and readers.”³⁸ Chapters 9 and 10 explore the creation and exploration of transgender lives in the archives. In chapter 9, Liam Lair analyzes the way trans* narratives based on medicalization and pathologization are produced and challenged in the archives. Through analyzing correspondence and autobiographies in the Lawrence Collection at the Kinsey Institute, Lair provides an affective account of his experience as a trans* researcher interacting with these stories, and also provides a radical retelling of the narratives of trans* people during this time. Similarly, in chapter 10, Aaron Devor and Lara Wilson elucidate the importance of an archive devoted to trans* lives at the University of Victoria in Canada.

Cataloging Queer Lives

This section on cataloging lives utilizes the lived experiences of individuals as a critical point of departure for exploring the intersections between archive, biography and autobiography, and researcher. Chapters in this section notably incorporate specific “papers” within the archive, usually donated or willed at the subject’s behest to preserve a living record of the individual’s contributions to history. We are particularly interested in how these individuals, their preserved materials, and the various ways in which researchers interpret these lives and materials coalesce to form a part of the queer community’s collective memory and past.

The first chapter engages with the role of agency and self-empowerment in the creation of queer archives. In chapter 11, Linda Morra examines Jane Rule’s memoir *Taking My Own Life*, held at the University of British Columbia; Morra argues that Rule’s unpublished memoir is a consummate expression of self-empowerment and agency despite its vulnerability to posthumous editorial control. Rule’s painstaking safeguard-

ing of her papers offers an example of how imaginative and even literal space might be created and contribute to the history of sexuality. Morra considers the issue of memory and how individual LGBT individuals are remembered posthumously. An analysis of what is included and what is omitted in individual archives is central to this inquiry.

The final two chapters of this volume use the autobiography of the individual to capture community dynamics and histories. In chapter 12, Yuriy Zikratyy examines the sexual record of Thomas N. Painter, an informal collaborator with Alfred C. Kinsey's Institute for Sex Research, who since the mid-1930s documented in writing and photography his commercially based sexual relations with lower-class men. Painter's thirty-volume sexual journal is as much a record of his erotic desires and romantic disillusionments as it is a faux-ethnographic, erotically charged panorama of the sexual lives of the "urban proletariat" whom Painter idealized as paragons of masculinity and sexual uninhibitedness. The article addresses this vicarious logic of queer reflexivity and self-documentation, as evident in the erotically invested "catalogs" of homosexual men's paid sexual partners, and poses critical questions about the role of class, money, and commercial sex in the production of queer archives. In chapter 13, Jaime Cantrell examines the lesbian-feminist small press publication *Feminary*, arguing that the journal explores, celebrates, and problematizes identities as the southern experience and lesbian experiences are entwined and, inevitably, in tension. Cantrell illustrates how archive formation was a key thematic, strategic dynamic, and organizing principal for *Feminary*, from its humble origins and throughout its multiplatform publication run. As such, *Feminary* is a *representative* example of community formations through archive, valuable for understanding and reading other "traditional archives," as evidenced above, or even "counterarchives" of lesbian southern experience produced through community formation. As a material object, the journal contained information and wisdom that formed an archive of previously silenced knowledge surrounding ideas and identities of southernness and sexuality—an archive that circulated and produced sociality in the process.

Notes

1. This is now called the Alamo Research Center.
2. Martin B. Duberman, Martha Vicinus, and George Chauncey, *Hidden from History: Reclaiming the Gay and Lesbian Past*, vol. 1. (New York: Plume, 1990), 3.

3. Catherine Lord, "Medium: Ink on Paper," *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 17, no. 4 (2011): 639–641
4. Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (University of California Press, 1990); Steven Seidman, *Beyond the Closet: The Transformation of Gay and Lesbian Life* (New York: Routledge, 2013).
5. George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Makings of the Gay Male World, 1890–1940* (New York: Basic Books, 1994); Craig M. Loftin, *Masked Voices: Gay Men and Lesbians in Cold War America* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2012).
6. Loftin, *Masked Voices*.
7. Chauncey, *Gay New York*.
8. Benjamin Kahan, "The Viper's Traffic-Knot' Celibacy and Queerness in the 'Late' Marianne Moore," *GLQ* 14, no. 4 (2008): 509–35, 510.
9. Jacques Derrida, "Living On—Border Lines," in *Deconstruction and Criticism*, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Seabury, 1979), 105.
10. Judith Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Place: Transgender Bodies, Subcultural Lives* (New York: NYU Press, 2005).
11. *Ibid.*; Elizabeth Freeman, *Time Binds: Queer Temporalities, Queer Histories* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010); José Esteban Muñoz, "Ephemera as Evidence: Introductory Notes to Queer Acts," *Women and Performance* 8, no. 2 (1996), 5–16.
12. Christopher Nealon, "Theorizing Queer Temporalities: A Roundtable Discussion," *GLQ* 13, nos. 2–3 (2007): 178–79.
13. *Ibid.*
14. George Chauncey, *Gay New York*, 365.
15. Allan Bérubé, *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War II* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010). John D Emilio, "Allan Berube's Gift to History," *Gay and Lesbian Review* 15, no. 3 (2008): 10. For the history of the Gay and Lesbian Historical Society of Northern California, see Nan Alamilla Boyd and Horacio N. Roque Ramirez, eds., *Bodies of Evidence: The Practice of Queer Oral History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 18n4.
16. Susan Stryker, "Transgender History, Homonormativity, and Disciplinarity," *Radical History Review* no. 100 (2008): 145–57.
17. Ann Laura Stoler, "Colonial Archives and the Arts of Governance," *Archival Science* 2, nos. 1–2 (2002): 87–109. See also Anjali Arondekar, *For the Record: On Sexuality and the Colonial Archive in India* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009). Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2010).
18. *Ibid.* Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996). For an overview see Marlene Manoff, "Theories of the Archive from Across the Disciplines," *portal: Libraries and the Academy*

4, no. 1 (2004): 9–25. See critiques of this analysis of the archive in Carolyn Steedman, “Something She Called a Fever: Michelet, Derrida, and Dust,” *The American Historical Review* 106, no. 4 (2001): 1159–80. Thomas Osborne, “The Ordinarity of the Archive,” *History of the Human Sciences* 12, no. 2 (1999): 51–64.

19. Derrida, *Archive Fever*.

20. The use of the term “counterarchives” comes from Ann Cvetkovich, *An Archive of Feelings: Trauma, Sexuality, and Lesbian Public Cultures* (Durham, NC: Duke University, 2003). Authors throughout this volume also refer to these counterarchives as “community” or “community-based” archives.

21. *Ibid.*, 241.

22. *Ibid.*, 241.

23. E. Patrick Johnson and Mae G. Henderson eds., *Black Queer Studies: A Critical Anthology* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2005).

24. Rochella Thorpe, “‘A House Where Queers Go’: African-American Lesbian Nightlife in Detroit, 1940–1975,” in *Inventing Lesbian Cultures in America*, ed. Ellen Lewin (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996), 41. See also Elizabeth Lapovsky Kennedy and Madeline Davis, *Boots of Leather, Slippers of Gold: The History of a Lesbian Community* (New York: Penguin Book, 1993). Alexandra Juhasz and Ming-Yuen S. Ma, “Lesbian Archives,” *GLQ* 17, no. 4 (2011): 619–20. Attempts to remedy the absence of black lesbian life in the archives include oral history projects such as the Mobile Homecoming, Queer of Color Oral History Collective, and Black Queer Elders Project.

25. Osborne, “The Ordinarity of the Archive,” 55.

26. Stryker, “Transgender History, Homonormativity, and Disciplinarity,” 153.

27. Christopher Castiglia and Christopher Reed, *If Memory Serves: Gay Men, AIDS, and the Promise of the Queer Past* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2012), 3.

28. Particularly Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Place*; Cvetkovich, *An Archive of Feelings*; and Lauren Berlant, *The Queen of America Goes to Washington City: Essays on Sex and Citizenship* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997).

29. Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Place*, 23.

30. Muñoz, “Ephemera as Evidence,” 6.

31. Carolyn Dinshaw, *How Soon Is Now? Medieval Texts, Amateur Readers, and the Queerness of Time* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2012), 5.

32. *Ibid.*, 6.

33. Boyd and Ramírez, eds. *Bodies of Evidence*.

34. Julian Gill-Peterson, “Haunting the Queer Spaces of AIDS: Remembering ACT UP/New York and an Ethics for an Endemic.” *GLQ* 19, no. 3 (2013): 279–300.

35. For issues on preservation of moving images and video and their role in LGBT history, see Kristin Pepe, “Outside the Hollywood Canon: Preserving Lesbian Moving Images,” *GLQ* 17, no. 4 (2011): 632–38. Lucas Hilderbrand,

“Retroactivism,” *GLQ* 12, no. 2 (2006): 303–17. Jim Hubbard, “Fever in the Archive,” *GLQ* 7, no. 1 (2001): 183–92. Pepe suggests that “the preservation and collection of LGBT moving images have historically posed unique challenges for traditional archives. The nature of LGBT films—the how and why they are made—is intrinsic to the lack of support for archiving and restoring these films. Many of them are made from personal experience by people trying to figure out both their sexuality and the world around them. They are films documenting milestones of the gay liberation movement. They are attempts at creating images of love that are different from what we usually see. . . . Furthermore, many of these filmmakers, since their films are generally personal and produced outside the constraints of commercial demand, make only one or two films. This is especially true of work by lesbian filmmakers of color” (633). There have been attempts to remedy these exclusions with efforts such as The Legacy Project and the Royal S. Marks AIDS Activist Video Collection at the New York Public Library.

36. E. Patrick Johnson “‘Quare’ Studies, or (Almost) Everything I Know about Queer Studies I Learned from My Grandmother,” in *Black Queer Studies: A Critical Anthology*, eds. E. Patrick Johnson and Mae G. Henderson (Duke University Press, 2005).

37. David Valentine, *Imagining Transgender* (Duke University Press, 2007), 169.

38. *Ibid.*, 144. See also Halberstam, *In a Queer Time and Place*.

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