

# Already Enough Ghosts:

## The Invisibility of Emotional Labour in Archives

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# Theoretical frameworks

Trauma theory

Affect theory

Emotional labour

# Emotion in the archives

- Sabine Mas and Louise Gagnon-Arguin's survey published in *Archives* in 2010 and presented on at ACA 2013 (Winnipeg) on the emotive aspects of archives
- 2014 ACA (Victoria) paper by Ann ten Cate that touched on the emotional impact of archival documents and what was obscured/lost through digitization and description
- ACA SISPA (Special Interest Section on Personal Archives) guided discussion by Rodney S. Carter on Archival Work and Emotion in Spring 2016.
- Sam Winn at 2015 MARAC Roanoke unconference on secondary trauma and self care for archivists.
- Affect and the Archives Conference hosted by UCLA Human Rights Archives Symposium Series in 2014. (work of Anne Gilliland and others)

# Trauma Theory

- Cathy Caruth, *Unclaimed Experience: trauma, narrative and history*. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press. 1996.
- Work of WITNESS to speak about secondary trauma experienced by archivist, citizen journalists, metadata technicians etc.

# Affect Theory

- Ann Cvetkovich
- Sara Ahmed
- Lauren Berlant
- Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick

***Marika Cifor and Michelle Caswell have already done an excellent job of pulling together the work of affect theorists Ann Cvetkovich, Sara Ahmed and Lauren Berlant for an archivist audience. (Go read their articles in Archivaria 81 and Archival Science 16!)***

# Emotional Labour

- Arlie Russell Hochschild, *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1979.
- Jenna Ward and Robert MacMurray. *The Dark Side of Emotional Labour*. London/New York: Routledge, 2016.
- Implementing an Ethics of Care
- Kate Kenny - Marianna Fotaki - Bracha Ettinger

# Aspects of Emotional Labour

- “Dirty work”
- Performing emotional neutrality
- Navigating unspoken “feeling rules” within groups
- Empathy maps
- Emotional capital
- “Toxin handlers”

Not always negative, not always alienating, sometimes doing the hard work of emotional labour can be rewarding!

Theory in practice  
Praxis in theory

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## So what's to be done?

- Case studies to consider: Iceland, Scotland and Australia
- Training, professional development, shifts in practice
- TRC Recommendations: how can we take them *all* to heart and make real change?
- How can we adjust our practice/professional training/protocols to respond?

# Iceland

- Work of Svanhildur Bogadóttir of the Reykjavik Municipal Archives
- Presented at the ICA Conference in Iceland in 2015 on the issues of case files of children under state care and providing access to adult survivors (timeline of 2002-2014)

# Scotland

- Embedded social worker part of the archival team
- Survivor Scotland Strategy
- Take Care Scotland
- In Care Survivors Service Scotland
- See also: Judith Etherton Borough, “The role of archives in the perception of self,” *Journal of the Society of Archivists* 27: 2 (2006): 227-246. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00379810601101301>

# Australia

- Facilitating access to records of adult survivors of institutional care in Australia
- Thoughtful, compassion-driven design for online discovery portals.
- [FindandConnect.gov.au](https://findandconnect.gov.au)

*(Don't talk to me, though, find Joanne Evans from Monash University during lunch!)*

This issue is not limited to certain kinds of archives.

Emotional labour and related affectual elements of archival practice can be addressed within all institutions and at the pedagogical level. This is not a niche concern.

The issues are not external afflictions that only concern certain user groups. These issues have an impact on an individual level and an institutional level.

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If we work to create networks of support it will contribute towards holistic change and healthy work environments.

# Thank you

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