

**It's not supposed to be comfortable:
Affective Responsibilities of Archivists
Following the Calls to Action of the Truth and
Reconciliation Commission (TRC)**

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How can settler allies fully engage in the necessary work of decolonization in archival institutions?

- In ethical ways?
- That attends to the affective landscape and embodied experience of our work?
- That does not risk...
 - re-inscribing historical injustices
 - centring whiteness
 - colonizing emotional capital
 - re-traumatizing communities

“If it doesn’t feel uncomfortable, it’s not real reconciliation,” she says. “The feel good stuff tends to be superficial and doesn’t address substantive oppression and dispossession”.

Pam Palmater

Chair in Indigenous Governance at Ryerson University

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=89s3l2mYGWg>

<https://www.uregina.ca/external/communications/feature-stories/current/2018/02-12.html>



Situating Myself | Role of Positionality

7th Generation Settler from Rural Northern Ontario

My family is deeply implicated in the Canadian colonial enterprise

Working in education, ecology, agriculture, mining, pulp, education, health care, social work, libraries

We are the stereotypical “[perfect strangers](#)” as described by Dr. Susan D. Dion.

Background/Education

BA Hons History & Celtic Studies (University of Toronto)

MISt (Archives & book history and print culture) (University of Toronto)

Certified [Nice White Lady™](#) (I'm working on getting disbarred)

Job Description

Archivist, Digital Projects & Outreach

Who is churning through my brain right now

Jessie Thistle	Linda Tuhiwai Smith	Christina Harlow	Doreen Manuel
Melanie Delva	Sarah Ahmed	Tove Jansson	Allison Mills
Rebecca Sheffield	Krista McCracken	Ann Cvetkovich	Melissa Adams
Michelle Caswell	Peter Van Garderen	Kate Kenny	Mike Jones
April Hitchcock	Rosa Orlandini	Marianna Fotaki	Anne Gilliland
Tara Robinson	Nick Ruest	Brachta L. Ettinger	Jennifer Douglas
nina pinkamaganda	Svanhildur Bogadóttir	Hilary Mantel	Jarrett M. Drake
Sarah Hurford	Eve Tuck	Marisa J. Fuentes	Nathan Sentance
Rodney Carter	Erica Violet Lee	Jenny Ward	Pam Palmater
Mary Flynn	Mark A. Matienzo	Cathy Caruth	Eugene Arcand
Danielle Robichaud	Chrystal Fraser	Haydée Faimberg	Art Manuel
Zoe Todd	Chelsea Vowel	Billy-Ray Belcourt	Sam Winn
Kent Monkman	Marianne Hirsch	Kim Lawson	Lynn Gehl
Sarah Story		Damien Lee	Jeff Barnaby
			Stacie M. Williams

Self Fragilization
Fascinace
Matrixial Borderspaces

Hospitality

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“Corporeal ethics specifically focus upon the politically engaged affective body that responds openly to others without always having to consider the self.”

[Kate Kenny and Marianna Fotaki](#)

citing work of Bracha L. Ettinger

Work Worth Doing



Thank you!

(and an addendum...)

Thank you for the feedback, recommendations, reinforcement

- Sangeeta Desai for helpful encouragement about theory
- Libby Coyner for the philosophy recommendations!
- Holly Smith for an inspiring keynote
- Dr. L. Teresa Church for a profound statement about peoples as repositories and vaults and the requirement that we respect autonomy of knowledge keepers
- Michaela Hart and Nicola Laurent for their useful and moving presentation
- Sara Whisnant for helpful feedback and encouragement
- Kelly Wooten and the host committee for their hospitality