

“It's nothing, I'm fine.”

Acknowledging Emotion and Affect in Archival Practice

Julia Holland | Danielle Robichaud | Anna St.Onge

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Definitions, Approaches, Ground Rules for Discussion

Emotional Labour

- Emotional labor refers to the process by which workers are expected to manage their feelings in accordance with organizationally defined rules and guidelines.
- Arlie Russell Hochschild's study *The Managed Heart: Commercialization of Human Feeling* (1979,1983) introduced the concept
- Majority of studies focus on service professions (airline staff, nurses, social workers, and yes, librarians) and role of empathic performance and “deep acting” in job success, and the negative impact affective labour can have on workers (burnout, empathy fatigue, [postemotionality](#))

Emotional Labour

- More recent studies have focused on other forms of emotional labour
 - doing “dirty” work
 - performing emotional neutrality
 - emotional capital in the gift economy
 - The work of “toxin handlers” within an organization
- Gaps in the literature, skews in the research
- Intersectional issues related to gender, class, race, etc.

Other terms we will be using

Emotion vs Affect

Precarity

Feeling Rules

Vicarious trauma | Witnessing | Secondary trauma

empathy fatigue | burnout

Ethics of Care

**Acknowledgement:
not everyone can/wishes/is able to participate**

Situating Ourselves

HT: Rosemary K.J. Davis, Rachel Mattson, Elliot McNally, Alison Reynolds.

[“Grant Cycles, Deadlines, and Labor Advocacy: Roundtable about the Changing Work of Project Archivists”](#)

MARAC 2016

Julia Holland

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Background/Education

BA Near Eastern Archaeology & Anthropology

Niagara College - Cultural Resource Management diploma

Algonquin College - Archives Technician diploma

University of Toronto - Faculty of Information Studies, MIST (Archives)

Job Description

Archives Assistant

Funding/Salary/Benefits

University staff, Union membership, Benefits, Pension

My First Experience of EL

Phone reception and Reference desk at the United Church/Victoria University Archives

Danielle Robichaud

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Background/Education

BAH Sociology & Psychology (University of Guelph)

MA Sociology (Queen's)/MLIS (Western)

Archival and Records Management Practices Certificate (George Brown)

Job Description

Digital Archivist (as of February 2016)

Funding/Salary/Benefits

University staff, Union membership, Benefits, Pension

My First Experience of on-the-job EL

Working to permanently close the Transport Canada Library while simultaneously negotiating the financial and emotional realities of being laid off.

Anna St.Onge

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

Funding/Salary/Benefits

Continuing appointment & academic status at university, academic freedom, benefits, emphasis/encouragement to pursue research agenda

My First Experience of on-the-job EL:

Learning unspoken “feeling rules” as a library page about how to deal with patrons

Rules of Engagement

Taking Stack Moderation

7 Guiding Questions and Personal Anecdotes

Time Boxing (approx. 10-15 min per topic)

[Keeper of the Stack](#) (Rebecka)

Thanks to Sam Winn for suggesting this approach!

Ready? Let's Go!

How does emotional labour play out in your work life?

Is it acknowledged? Were you prepared for it as a young professional? Was it even on your radar?

How do you deal with loss?

(job loss, budget cuts, death of donors, record destruction, natural disasters)

**What about emotional
neutrality?**

Precurity

What are the emotional implications of job instability?

What impact does precarity have on our community?

The Really Uncomfortable Topic

Or,

The Question That Cannot Be Named

Also Known As

Archival Silences/Silencing

**How does power and privilege
feed into emotional labour?**

So what do we do about it?

How do you cope?

What has worked for you?

What changes would you like to see?

How can we fail better?

Acknowledgment of influences

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- 2010 survey on emotion in archives by Sabine Mas and Louis Gagnon-Arguin
- Early conversations with Rodney S. Carter, Mary Flynn, Melanie Delva and Sarah Romkey
- MARAC 2015 discussion facilitated by Sam Winn
- Special issue of *Archival Science* edited by Anne Gilliland and Marika Cifor, “Affect and the Archive, Archives and their Affects”
- AAO panel discussion in 2012 by Kim Arnold, Nancy Hurn, Nichole Vonk
- ACA panels in 2014 by Jonathan Pringle, Raegan Swanson, Kim Lawson, Sherry Lawson, Joanne Evans, Mike Jones and Greg Rolan
- Work of Ann Cvetkovich, Zoe Todd, Crystal Fraser, Chelsea Vowel, Erica Violet Lee, April Hathcock, Debby Irving, Sarah Ahmed, Lauren Berlant, Arlie Russell Hochschild, Jenna Ward and Robert McMurray, Kate Kenny, Marianna Fotaki, Bracha Ettinger, Tim Sherratt, Mark Matienzo.

Thank You!

[Link to Reading List and Additional Resources](http://bit.ly/1T6dZmn)

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