# CHAPTER 3
# HISTORY, MEMORY, AND POWER

Note: Original Google slides are available to _view online or copy to edit_.

## Slide 1

The concepts and theories presented in this chapter are very important within the field of archivism. They are often heavily discussed in professional publications and conferences. Often, they can be contentious and difficult even for professional archivists to discuss. You are not asked to agree with everything presented in this chapter. Instead, this chapter is intended to familiarize you with major concepts and conversations that you will undoubtedly encounter as you enter the field.

## Slide 2 – Archival silences

This chapter is structured around a framework proposed by anthropologist Michel-Rolph Trouillot in his book, _Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History_ (1995). In this book, Trouillot discusses the process of "historical production," referring to the ways we develop our commonly shared beliefs and understandings about history.

The chapter further draws on the use of Trouillot's four silences by archivist MIchelle Caswell, in her book _Archiving the Unspeakable: Silence, Memory, and the Photographic Record in Cambodia_.

## Slide 3

Trouillot asserts that there are silences that occur in the process of historical at four key moments. Michelle Caswell uses the word "encoded."

## Slide 4

Caswell explains how the four silences relate to archives in this way.

The difference between the last two moments is like the difference between the process of putting forth one historical argument in an academic journal and the process by which historical narratives become accepted by the general public as historical truth, written into our textbooks, or memorialized in statues and museums.

## Slide 5

As a quick clarification – in the framework presented above, both Caswell and Trouillot actually use the word fact rather than record – as in "the moment of fact creation," "the moment of fact assembly," and so on. However, I dispute this usage, for minor semantic reasons.

As we will see, the word "fact" or "record" in this framework refers to individual points of data, bits of information, or pieces of evidence that can be assembled and used to create historical narratives.

And I ask you: what fact is represented in this historical document?

Without knowledge of the date, location, or circumstances of the photo's creation, the most we could say is that a dog once wore a top hat. Different historians could find very different meaning in this image, depending on whether they study photography, fashion, or pet culture through history.

I would argue that "fact" is more synonymous with "narrative" in Trouillot's framework. What fact is evidenced in a particular document depends on the synthesis of other contextualizing information, and the meaning or significance of that document depends on how it is used. I contend that "record" is a more appropriate term in this framework, according to the definition of record we saw in Chapter 2 ("information, stored on a medium, that can be useful as historical evidence").

## Slide 6

Another way that Trouillot's framework is useful is that is each of the moments he identifies may be moments when a subjective decision is made that affects what is included in our historical record. When a photographer takes a picture, they decide what to include or exclude from the frame. When a historian writes an article, they decide which pieces of evidence are relevant to their argument. Archivists decide which collections are preserved, and, for some reason, politicians decide which versions of history will be taught in our schools. Each of these individuals brings to their decisions their own background, values, and perspectives. For this reason, I would further amend Trouillot's proposition by saying that there are silences and subjective values/judgments that occur in the production of historical knowledge at these four moments.

## Slide 7

Importantly, recognizing and acknowledging where silences occur in the production of history is not always a negative criticism. To a certain extent, these silences are inherent to the nature of history, memory, and information. Despite our best efforts and intentions, there is a limit to how much material our archives can hold, and there is a limit to how much information our minds can retain as we move through the world.

## Slide 8

The creation of a complete archive of all of humanity is not our goal – because it is not possible. Instead, our goal in using Trouillot's framework is to identify and acknowledge where gaps and silences occur in our records and in our work. In this chapter, we will address each of the four silences, in attempt to answer these questions.

## Slide 9 – The moment of record creation

Since truly the beginning of cinema, there has been the idea that moving images could offer an unmediated view of history. In 1898, the Polish photographer Bolesław Matuszewski wrote a pamphlet called "A New Source of History," where he advocated for the establishment of a historical film archive. His pamphlet included a number of declarations about the cinema as an ideal means of recording history.

## Slide 10

Matuszewski asserts that cinema offers a direct view of history, that watching historic footage is like being a direct witness of a historic moment as it unfolds: "Animated photography will ... became an agreeable method for studying the past; or rather, since it will give a direct view of the past, it will eliminate, at least on certain points of some importance, the necessity of investigation and study."

## Slide 11

"Thus the cinematographic print… constitutes not only a historic document, but a piece of history, a history that has not vanished and needs no genie to resuscitate it.".

## Slide 12

Though he admits that the cinematic image may be limited – by the size of the frame or the duration of the film – he argues that what we see on screen is "incontestable and of absolute truth."

What might Matuszewski be missing about the "truth" of the cinematic image? Where might there be silences or subjectivities in the photographic record? Some possibilities follow:

## Slide 13 – Context

Like the picture of the "Dog in top hat" above, the usefulness of a photographic or cinematic image often relies on our ability to identify it. Who created the image? When, where, and why? Who or what is depicted in the image? Without knowledge of this context, we cannot gather much historical information from a film or image.

## Slide 14 – Manipulated images

In the 21st century, we are well aware of ways that images can be "photoshopped" or "deep-faked." In fact, Matuszewski addressed this possibility at the time. Though he admitted that photographs could be easily manipulated, he argued that a reel of film had too many frames that were too small for anybody to bother to manipulated all of them.

## Slide 15 – Framing/perspective

A cinematographer decides what is or is not included in the camera's frame. Not only can important information be excluded from an image, but the framing of the image and the placement of the camera

can be used to create misleading perspectives. For example, Harold Lloyd used rear-screen projection to give the illusion of hanging over a city street, while he was really only feet off the ground.

### Slide 16 – Editing

Also obvious to us now, an editor can cut information out of a film or can put disparate parts together to create new effects. For example, magician Georges Méliès was already producing trick films and special effects by the time Matuszewski wrote his pamphlet.

### Slide 17 - Interpretation

Last, whatever the content of a film or photograph, different viewers may draw different conclusions about what they see.

Clearly there are many reasons that filmic records may contain silences and subjectivities that create gaps into the information provided by film as historical evidence. Additionally, as Caswell notes, not all events and people are ever recorded to begin with. Often, the film and media material available to preserve in an archive are limited to the perspectives of people who have access to recording technologies or who were deemed significant enough to record in the past. In paper records, our archives often lack the perspectives of people who could not read and write or who did not have the institutional power to create official documentation. Likewise, there are many indigenous cultures with oral traditions that pass cultural information directly among people without creating records that can be accessed outside of those personal contexts.

### Slide 18 – The moment of record assembly

The second of Trouillot's four moments of silence is the "moment of record assembly" or "the creation of archives." Importantly, the information that becomes available for researchers to use as evidence depends on what materials and collections are chosen and deposited in an archive. The process of choosing what to keep in an archive is called appraisal, addressed in Chapter 4. In general, there are many factors that influence what makes it into an archive, including:

### Slide 19 – Institutional priorities

In the most straight-forward way, archival institutions decide what material they want to collect. As a result, the material held by an institution often reflects the knowledge, interests, and perspectives of its administration, which may not be inclusive of all perspectives held by users of the archive or communities in the area.

### Slide 20 – Physical condition

Only material that is preserved by its original creators, users, or collectors can be deposited in an archive. As we saw in Chapter 2, moving image film was not treated as worthwhile historical material for many decades. Due to heavy use, nitrate fires, and the general feeling in the industry that film had no value after its point of profitability, up to 70% of our early cinema is believed to be lost.

### Slide 21 – Limited resources

An archive only has so much physical (or digital) space to store material. Once material is acquired, the work of managing, preserving, and providing access to collections can be expensive and labor-intensive. It is considered unethical archival practice for an institution to take in collections that it does not have the resources to care for and to make available to users. In the end, an archive must choose which collections it will prioritize.

### Slide 22 – Format/technology

Unlike paper records and photographs, film and media material is technologically dependent. An archive must have the appropriate equipment to project a film or play a tape recording, and it is not easy to find and keep outdated media equipment in working condition. As a result, many smaller archives do not have the technological capacity to take in more obscure media formats, like the 2" videotape reels that were used for professional television broadcasts. There are even many formats of digital media that are no longer readable on modern machines without specialized software or hardware. This technology gap limits an archive's ability to take in more complex film and media collections.

### Slide 23 – Donor relationships

Most archival material is donated to archives directly from the original creators or collectors. Donors choose to deposit their collections in repositories they trust to preserve their material well and to represent their histories accurately and respectfully. People from historically underrepresented groups – especially those who have experienced systemic exclusion, mistreatment, or surveillance from major state institutions – may be reluctant to entrust their personal and cultural heritage material to archives within the same institutional systems. It is the responsibility of the archival institution to build and maintain relationships of trust with donors, potential donors, and community members.

### Slide 24 – The moment of record retrieval

Trouillot describes the third moment of silence as "the moment of record retrieval" or "the making of narratives." Though much of the work and decision-making within this moment is done by individual researchers, there are many circumstances that influence who is able to access archival material to begin with.

### Slide 25 – Barriers to accessing archival matrial

- Institutional barriers – Though most archives today are fully open to public users, some archives still require users to have advanced academic degrees or official government or legal credentials

- Material barriers – Though material is increasingly available online as digital collections, the vast majority of records have not yet been digitized and can only be accessed by visiting the archives. Many archives' Reading Rooms are only open during limited weekday business hours, when a lot of people are at work.

- Financial barriers – Research trips to relevant archives may require transportation or even extended travel funding. For media material, archives may charge patrons for the cost of digitization or the creation of access copies. Archives may charge additional fees to license media material or photographs for publication or re-use.

- Psychological barriers – Many archives are located within academic or government institutions in major cities, and collection material is often only accessible within supervised Reading Rooms. These conditions can be overwhelming and intimidating to new users, especially to those who have experienced institutional exclusion or surveillance.

- Knowledge barriers – Conducting archival research is a specialized skill that requires a fair amount of knowledge about the ways archival materials are collected, arranged, and described. It can be difficult for any new user to understand how to identify and navigate material within archival collections. The description decisions made by archivists and their implications on the research process are discussed more in Chapter 7.

## Slide 26

On the part of the researcher, there are subjective judgments and decisions made in the work of interpretation of records as evidence; synthesis of evidence into historical arguments/stories; and dissemination of arguments/stories to an audience.

Obviously, different researchers may interpret and use the same record differently. This could reflect their personal values and biases, but is also influenced by their background knowledge and their field of research. Remember the "Dog in top hat" image in Figure 3.1. A fashion historian may note the particular fabric of the dog's clothing, while a historian of photographic technology may note something about the focus or quality of the image. A social historian may leverage the photograph to discuss the position of dogs in Victorian society. Researchers choose which pieces of evidence to use to make their arguments or to tell their stories. This does not necessarily mean that other evidence is suppressed or ignored. The nature of knowledge and information is such that no single story can represent all evidence from all perspectives.

Finally, the "making of narratives" depends on a researcher's ability to disseminate their historical arguments or stories to an audience. An individual may choose to present their narrative as an academic article or conference presentation, a documentary film, a museum exhibit, a creative performance, or a work of visual art. The researcher or artist may choose the audience for their narrative, often depending on their intended outcome: to reveal underrepresented histories, to celebrate historical individuals or events, to inspire political or social action, etc. At the same time, there can be continued institutional, material, and financial barriers that limit who has access to public platforms or resources for dissemination, which can influence what narratives are heard.

**Slide 27 – Case study: Conducting archival research**

Archival researchers are only able to study material that was created, preserved, and made accessible for use. This poses a particular issue for historians of early film and media, because so many live radio and television broadcasts were never recorded, and so much early nitrate film has been lost. Sometimes the work of conducting archival research involves developing informed hypotheses from limited scraps of evidence or extrapolating from indirect data. The case study below presents one example of using indirect archival evidence to make a historical argument.

## Slide 28

In his 1995 article, "Manhattan Nickelodeons: New Data on Audiences and Exhibitors" (*Cinema Journal* 34.3), film historian Ben Singer set up to determine: "What was the make-up of the nickelodeon's audience in terms of class and ethnic composition?"

Nickelodeons were the first dedicated motion picture theaters, which usually operated in converted storefronts and played repeating programs of short films throughout the day. The nickelodeon industry developed quickly and somewhat spontaneously around 1905, and it only lasted until about 1915, as the rise of feature-length films necessitated larger, more comfortable cinema spaces.

## Slide 29

In the absence of original demographic surveys that identified the class and ethnicity of nickelodeon audiences, Ben Singer had to search for indirect data to address his research question. His project followed one common model for conducting archival research: First, consider the type of information or evidence that might offer insight into your research question. Next, consider what types of documents might provide that information or evidence. Business ledgers? Magazine articles? Oral history interviews? Finally, consider what archival collections or repositories might contain these documents or materials.

## Slide 30

Ben Singer hypothesized that, because New York City neighborhoods in the period were highly segregated by class and ethnicity, he could search for data on the locations of nickelodeon theaters in Manhattan. By mapping these theater locations against known demographics of people who lived and worked in different neighborhoods, he could make an informed assumption about the demographics of people who attended those theaters.

## Slide 31

To gather data about nickelodeon theater locations, Ben Singer first searched in New York City business directories and film industry trade papers, which he accessed in the archives of the New York Public Library.

**Slide 32**

However, because the film distribution and exhibition industries were just developing, there was not comprehensive information available in business directories and trade papers. To find more data on nickelodeon theater locations, Ben Singer decided to access New York City building permit ledgers in the New York Municipal Archives. Because nitrate film was extremely flammable, nickelodeon storefront theaters had to be specifically permitted to exhibit film prints. Ben Singer found that these municipal building ledgers provided more information about where permits for film exhibition had been issued.

By mapping nickelodeon theater locations against known neighborhood demographic data, Ben Singer was able to make new inferences about the class and ethnic composition of early cinema audiences in New York City. His project is a strong example of the ways that archival researchers must sometimes seek out indirect sets of data when there may not be direct evidence to address their research questions.

## Slide 33 – The moment of retrospective significance

The last moment of silence that Trouillot addresses in the production of historical knowledge is the "moment of retrospective significance" or "the making of history." From all the stories or historical arguments written or disseminated by individual artists and scholars, only a small number get written into textbooks or taken up by institutions and the general public as authoritative and generally agreed-upon understandings of historical truth. These dominant historical narratives are the things made into statues and monuments, the things depicted in major motion pictures, and the things presented by docents and reenactors at national historical sites. The people who decide what our dominant narratives will be are often people who have the political and financial power to design curriculum for schools and colleges, to fund construction of memorials and major museum exhibits, and to influence programming of major films, television programs, and podcasts.

In order to accurately evaluate dominant historical narratives, we need to understand where and why silences and gaps occur in the processes of record creation and record assembly. When we can see how and why certain narratives emerge in common discourse, we may more effectively trace back and analyze the subjective interpretations of evidence that were made to produce them. Of course, this does not mean that dominant understandings of history are necessarily incorrect or malicious. However, because all histories are inherently limited in scope and perspective, it is important to consider what perspectives may be excluded, to determine whether or how our collective understanding of history may be more accurate or better informed.

## Slide 34 – Impacts of archival silences

Why is it important to understand and address silences and subjectivities in our archival records and dominant historical narratives?

## Slide 35 – Justice and accountability

As we saw in Chapter 2, the concept of accountability was one of the establishing values of modern archivism, as liberal democracy relies on government transparency and ability of citizens to access

government records and information. In our contemporary culture, there are innumerable examples of the ways social media video and police bodycam footage are collected and dissected by law enforcement, judges, the media, and the public to establish narratives around contentious events like the January 6, 2021 attack at the United States capitol. Access to authentic and comprehensive documentation about the past – even the recent past – is vital for processes of justice and accountability on all levels.

As an example, the University of Colorado Boulder Libraries holds a number of collections related to Rocky Flats, a nuclear weapons manufacturing plant near Denver, Colorado, which operated from the 1950s to the 1990s. Material in those collections is often accessed and used by advocates for former Rocky Flats workers and people who lived in neighboring areas, as lawsuits continue to be filed related to health effects and environmental contamination from the plant. At the same time, government bodies and related corporate organizations can draw on archival records that document their operations protocols and compliance with health, safety, and environmental regulations.

## Slide 36 – Representation

Representation is often misunderstood as a superficial concept, where one identity group is substituted for another within the same narrative. In fact, representation is a matter of including alternative narratives in the archival record, from the perspectives of people who are not otherwise represented.

## Slide 37 – Symbolic annihilation

In the 1970s, media theorist George Gerbner coined the term symbolic annihilation. Scholars Robin Coleman and Emily Chivers Yochim explain symbolic annihilation by saying, "poor media treatment can contribute to social disempowerment [because] symbolic absence in media can erase groups and individuals from public consciousness." The same can occur when certain identity groups are excluded from archival records and dominant historical narratives.

Despite the limitations of archives discussed in this chapter, archives are often looked on by the public as authoritative and definitive representations of our history and culture. If archives do not collect evidence of, for example, queer and transgender stories from the past, it may be easy for opponents of gender equality to assert that queer and transgender people did not exist in the past. It may be easy to assume that gender nonconformity is a new phenomenon, rather than something that has been an authentic element of human experience in different ways throughout history. In this way, the absence of historical evidence can lead to policy decisions in the present that can have profound consequences for queer and transgender people.

## Slide 38 – Community archives

Other chapters of this course address ways that archivists can address silences, gaps, and subjectivities in their practice, in effort to create more accurate and inclusive records and to facilitate more equitable access and use of archival material. One alternative model of archivism that addresses many of the issues discussed above is community archiving:

**Slide 39**

In their 2009 article, "Whose memories, whose archives?," archivists Andrew Flinn and his coauthors define 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."

**Slide 40**

In her article on the South Asian American Digital Archive, Michelle Caswell explains, "Community archives are part of larger social and political movements whereby groups who have been ignored, misrepresented, or marginalized by mainstream archival repositories launch their own archival projects as a means of self-representation, identity construction, and empowerment."

In short, community archives are collections created and controlled by communities, usually outside of traditional archival institutions. In practice, many community archives develop in collaboration or partnership with major institutions, in order to have access to sustained support and resources.

**Slide 41**

Community archives can address gaps, silences, and subjectivities in the production of historical narratives in many ways:

- The moment of record creation (the making of sources): Community archives generally contain records created by the people documented, in their own words, and on their own terms. This is in contrast to institutional archives which often contain records about communities from the perspectives of people in power, like government records and anthropological studies.

- The moment of record assembly (the making of archives): Community archives give people authority to decide what records about their communities are valuable to preserve. Community archives are often democratically run, even by volunteers, which allows community members to maintain ownership and control over their own cultural material.

- The moment of record retrieval (the making of stories): Community archives are often located in or nearby the communities they document, allowing more open access and use. Community archives are more likely to allow users to browse material from the stacks, which is not possible in traditional archival Reading Rooms. Moreover, the products created from archival material is often more flexible and directly engaging than traditional academic articles and exhibits. Community archives are more likely to have performances, public art and mural projects, and more family and community-oriented events.

- The moment of retrospective significance (the making of history): The ultimate goal of community archives is to affect or to counter dominant historical narratives by bringing public visibility to underrepresented perspectives and to shape public understanding about their communities.

**Slide 42**

In 2016, Michelle Caswell conducted a study with Marika Cifor and Mario Ramirez to determine the impact of the South Asian American Digital Archive (SAADA), a community-led archive in Philadelphia. They interviewed members of Indian, Pakistani, Nepalese, and Sri Lankan communities in the US about their experiences using the SAADA, and they heard several common responses:

**Slide 43 – Addressing historic gaps**

Before the SAADA, many interviewees felt it was difficult to locate historical information about South Asian American history. Some subjects explained that their experiences in American communities – where a variety of cultures and customs are very present and active – are rarely represented in versions of American history and culture that appear in textbooks and media.

**Slide 44**

Some interviewees expressed real emotional responses to the archive. For members of South Asian American communities, the SAADA offers more than just underrepresented historical information. The stories in the archive were reflective of their own cultural experiences in very personal ways.

**Slide 45**

One person said, "The value of the archive is profound. And I think that may be true for a lot of people who suddenly are able to discover themselves, existing, being documented."

**Slide 46 – Diverse representation**

Mainstream archives sometimes tend to represent histories of minority communities either through the perspectives of people in power or through celebration of individual "great men." In contrast, the SAADA is able to represent more than limited or stereotypical stories of South Asian immigration.

**Slide 47**

One survey subject explained, "It represents a wide range of religious backgrounds, linguistic backgrounds, regions of origin, times of migration, reasons for migration." The breadth of the archive's collections allow for the representation of everyday experiences of South Asian American communities from their own perspectives.

**Slide 48 – Community-building**

As a gathering place for South Asian American community members, the SAADA also hosts events and exhibits for community members related to their own cultural heritage. The more they were able to participate in activities of the archive, the more they felt their histories and perspectives could be understood in broader American narratives.

## Slide 49 – Representational belonging

The authors of the study assert that the SAADA offers to members of South Asian American communities more than representation in the historical record. It offers representational belonging, which they describe as "the power and authority to establish and enact their presence in archives in complex, meaningful, and substantive ways." Community archives are not just collections of material that can be accessed and used by members of the communities they represent. Community archives enable groups of people who are historically excluded or misrepresented in mainstream repositories to actively contribute to the collection, preservation, and interpretation of their own historical narratives.

## Slide 50

While the term "community archiving" can be useful to identify and describe a distinct model of archiving that centers leadership and participation by members of communities documented in the collections, the term "community archive" has sometimes been used in the field to dismiss or invalidate grassroots organizations as less professional or legitimate than institutional repositories. More often, archivists within institutional repositories have increasingly considered the ways they can incorporate the values and methods of community archiving into their own practices, by forming more collaborative and supportive partnerships with community groups, by consulting with community members about collection development decisions, and by seeking input from members of underrepresented communities about the ways they identify, describe, and understand their own histories and cultural heritage material. One significant model for this type of work is offered by…

## Slide 51 - Protocols for Native American Archival Materials

… the Protocols for Native American Archival Materials.

In most countries in the Global North, indigenous communities historically have faced symbolic – if not literal – annihilation. In addition to physical genocide and geographic displacement, many indigenous communities in the 19th and 20th century had their children taken away to residential schools, where they were not allowed to use native languages or to learn and practice their own cultural customs. Around the world, the cultural heritage material of indigenous groups has been removed from communities by colonizing forces and held in museums and archives, where it is often misidentified, misunderstood, and mishandled. The legacy of indigenous materials in archives and museums is one of the clearest examples of the ways traditional archivism can cause community members to lose control of their own historical narratives and shared cultural memory.

In response to that legacy, American Indian and other indigenous activists have worked for decades to advocate for the repatriation of cultural heritage material back to tribal communities. In the 1970s, for example, activist Vine Deloria argued before Congress that withholding from tribal members access to records of their ancestors and their traditional knowledge is a violation of original tribal land treaty rights. In 2006/2007, a group of archivists, historians, and other cultural heritage professionals from fifteen tribal communities came together and drafted the Protocols for Native American Archival Materials. The Protocols have long been considered in the field of archivism to be standard guidelines for the ethical

stewardship of material by or about indigenous people – though they were not formally endorsed by the Society of American Archivists until 2018. Often oriented toward major institutional archives, the Protocols include recommendations for many aspects of archival practice, including:

### Slide 52 – Consultation and concurrence

Members of tribal communities represented in archival collections should be consulted by archives administration about decisions and policies for the acquisition, handling, and use of archival material related to their own cultural heritage, for reasons discussed below.

### Slide 53 – Native American values and perspectives

The fundamental concepts of knowledge, information, and ownership can differ significantly from one culture to another. For example, in some cultures, the idea of preserving material in an archive separate from the context in which it was meant to be used is antithetical to natural lifecycles of objects. Understanding indigenous knowledge systems can help non-indigenous institutions to develop policies that respect the needs and perspectives of indigenous community member.

### Slide 54 – Rethinking accessibility and use

Most archival institutions strive to make their material as openly accessible to as many people as possible. However, open access to Native American materials may violate cultural protocols for information-sharing. In some indigenous cultures, information is only shared with certain groups of people or at specified times. For example, in some communities in the Great Lakes region, some stories are only meant to be told when there is snow on the ground.

To develop more culturally responsive access policies, a digital archive system called Mukurtu has been in development since 2007 at the Center for Digital Scholarship and Curation at Washington State University. The system allows tribal members to tag certain archival materials with Traditional Knowledge (TK) labels, which indicate their preferred access conditions. For example, there may be some material that should be accessed only by men, women, family members, or tribal community members.

### Slide 55 – Special treatment for materials

As some knowledge may be restricted in certain ways, some objects may have specific protocols for handling and use. Archives should consult with tribal community members to identify and understand the ways cultural material should be stored, treated, and used.

### Slide 56 – Culturally responsive context

Throughout the 19th and 20th century, much Native American material in archives and museums was identified and described from the perspective of non-indigenous people like anthropologists and historians. As a result, many of our archival objects and collections continue to be misidentified or incorrectly described, even in terms that are offensive and derogatory toward indigenous people.

Archives should consult with members of represented communities to understand the context of archival material and to identify and describe material with the vocabulary used within the community.

## Slide 57 – Copying and sharing of materials

Archives traditionally take in and preserve original, authentic material. Some archives even specify that they will not accept copies or duplications of material if the originals exist elsewhere.

## Slide 58 – Post-custodialism

However, archivists have increasingly accepted what is called the post-custodial model of collecting, in which the original creator of a collection maintains physical possession of their material while the archive produces the labor and infrastructure to create a digital collection from the material that allows for public research access and use. In the post-custodial model, the original creator is often closely involved in the process of identifying, describing, and contextualizing their material, in a way that gives them more control over the way their histories are conveyed. Through digitization, an archive may be able to repatriate Native American archival material back to tribal communities, while maintaining surrogate copies in the archive that can continue to be used for research.

## Slide 60 – Institutional priorities

While the Protocols for Native American Archival Materials were created specifically for material from and about indigenous communities, their recommendations provide a useful model for archivists to develop more ethical and inclusive archival practice for all collections. Archivists can begin to address the gaps in our historical records by forming respectful, reciprocal relationships with members of historically excluded or underrepresented groups, to facilitate the creation, collection, and preservation of more authentic, inclusive, and accurate heritage materials, from the perspectives of people represented in them.

## Slide 61 – Bibliography and suggested resources

## Slide 62 – Image credits